



# Homemade stools

These beautiful, deep-coloured stools look so much like logs they almost make you feel like you're camping out in your own home. If you have even basic wood-working skills you can make these, as long as you don't mind getting a little messy.

## Gather your supplies

### Makes 2 stools

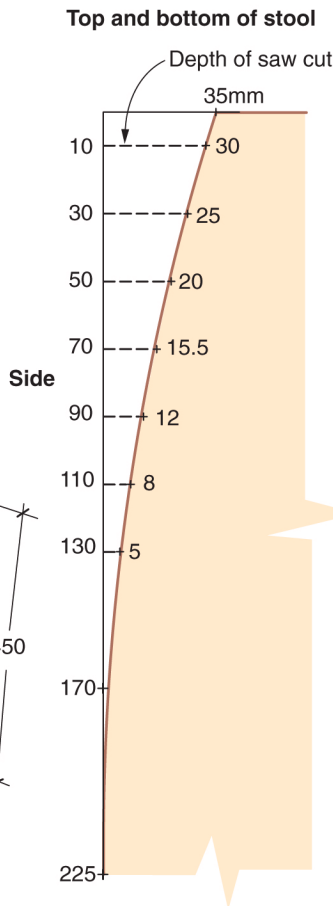
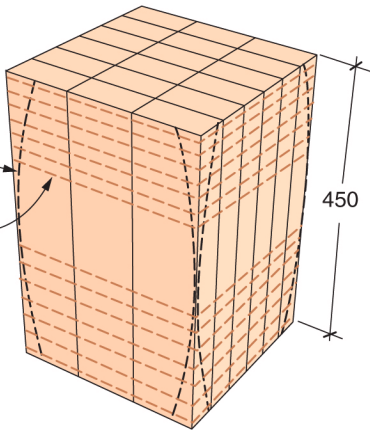
36 pieces of 100 x 50 x 450mm Oregon; Megapoxy 69 (2 litres each of Parts A and B, about \$86)

### You'll also need

Two ratchet straps; spare ¼ sheet of thin plywood (due to mess); 2 corner forms each made of two 420mm-long pieces of 290 x 19mm timber or similar; cling wrap; tape; disposable rubber gloves; black oxide (optional); spare 300 x 300mm squares of old plywood for mixing glue; Black Japan; polyurethane; furniture wax

Curve from template

Saw cuts



## Here's how

**STEP 1** As old rough-sawn Oregon is found in nominal sizes, select pieces that are similar in sectional size. Remove nails or metal from timber, then wire-brush or belt-sand surface to remove loose material. Cut into 450mm lengths.



**STEP 2** Lay the thin plywood on your bench for protection, then lay out the ratchet straps about 350mm apart. On top of these, place the corner form, then cover its surface and a little beyond with cling wrap. Tape the cling wrap to the bench to make it easier to handle.

**STEP 3** Sort 18 lengths of timber for 1 stool into 3 stacks of 6 to find the best fit of all the components. Take the stack apart in order and mark the position of each block. Ensure everything is at hand,

then, wearing some disposable rubber gloves, mix equal generous amounts of the 2 parts of the epoxy adhesive. (For black joints, add black oxide). If you are careful, you can make both stools with the two 2-litre packs.



**STEP 4** You have about 45 minutes to glue the blocks together. Butter the glue to an edge and top surface of the first piece and put in place. Apply glue to 2 edges and a flat of the next piece and add it to the first. Always place glue to glue. Don't rely on glue from 1 piece binding it to an adjacent piece. After you have put down 2 layers, add glue to the tops before you add the next layer.

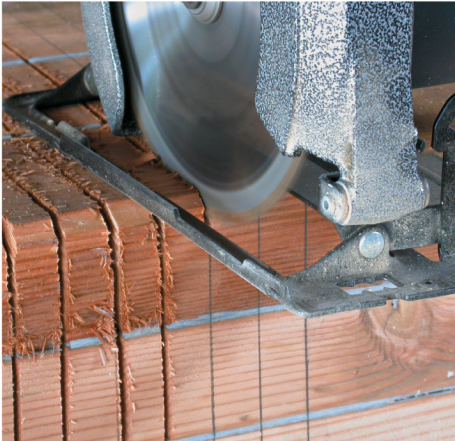


**STEP 5** Once all pieces are properly positioned, wrap the block in cling wrap, then sit the other corner form on the opposite corner. Bring straps over the top, and, if necessary, place an extra spacer, pieces of scrap timber (40 x 19m), where

the form does not reach the edge of the block to avoid pulling it out of square. Tighten the ratchet firmly.

**STEP 6** Spread cling wrap on the ply beside the block, stand the combined pieces on end and hammer in any misaligned pieces. Tighten the straps to minimise joint widths. Ensure the end-grain is well filled, then cover with plastic, flip over and repeat for the other end. Let the epoxy cure for 24 hours.

**STEP 7** Unwrap the block and belt-sand the faces and ends. Most belt sanders have a dust bag fitting, so take off the bag and fit the hose of a vacuum cleaner to suck away the dust. Some vacuums made by power tool companies allow sanders to be plugged into a power outlet on the vacuum so it starts and stops with the power tool.



**STEP 8** Measure 10mm from each end, then 30, 50, 70, 90, 110, 130 and 225mm (see diagram above). Square lines around the stool at these points. Hold block firmly on the bench by screwing down scrap timber for a bench stop. Set the circular saw to cut to a depth of 30mm, and cut along the lines closest to the ends of the stool at both ends, making 8 cuts in all. Reset the saw to cut 25mm deep. Cut all the second lines from the ends, and so on, using the diagram on opposite page for cutting depths until you finish with a 5mm-deep cut at the 7th line. The 225mm line will become the widest part of the stool.



**STEP 9** Use a wide chisel to lever out the waste. Angle the chisel and follow the curve to shape it roughly. The bottom of the cuts are your guide to the curve's depth. Shape 2 sides this way, then use the belt sander with a coarse belt to refine the shape. Keep sanding until you reach the bottom of the saw cuts.

**STEP 10** Set up a cradle by wrapping rags around two 40 x 19mm offcuts and placing them under the curved ends to stop the blocks rocking. Continue to chisel out the waste, shaping with the chisel and refining with the belt sander. Change to a succession of finer papers to sand out all the marks from the coarse paper. This may also be done with an orbital sander, which can also be used to smooth and slightly dish the top and bottom of the stool to highlight the end-grain.

**STEP 11** Once smooth, clean off all dust and coat each side in turn with a coat of Black Japan oil stain. Wipe off immediately for a light stain, wait a while for a darker stain, or repeat for more colour. Apply 2 coats of a satin polyurethane such as Cabothane. Rub wax in and polish.

### Versatile Oregon

Oregon is one of Australia's favourite and most commonly used construction timbers. It's old rough-sawn framing timber that is fairly light in weight and looks great. As old homes built with Oregon are being demolished, people are throwing it away all the time. But it's not rubbish. It's prime seasoned timber ready for a new lease of life. So, if you see any lying around, grab it.

**Stockists:** Stools developed and built by **Neil Wing**. Megapoxy 69 (2 x 2 litres, about \$86), **Hoskin Diamond Products**, (02) 9360 4427 or [www.hoskindiamond.com.au](http://www.hoskindiamond.com.au) Recycled Oregon, see 'Building Materials - Secondhand' in the *Yellow Pages*. Belt sander, **Bosch Australia**, 1300 307 044. Feast Watson Black Japan and Cabothane in paint stores nationally.