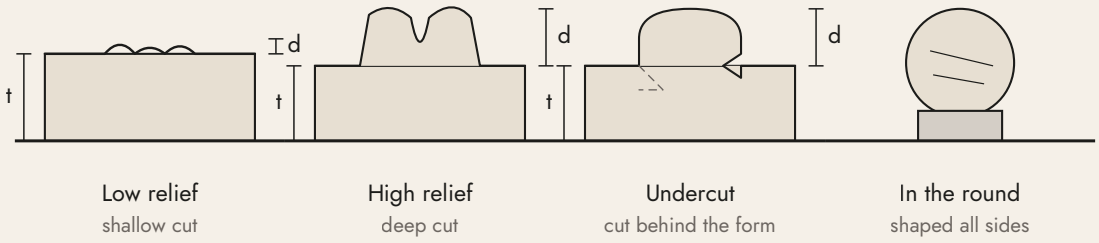
Hand carving *specification* for furniture and joinery

Four depths of relief in section, how hard three carving timbers are, and what to brief and approve. No depth rule was found: depths and sizes are for the partner carver to propose on a sample.

AT A GLANCE

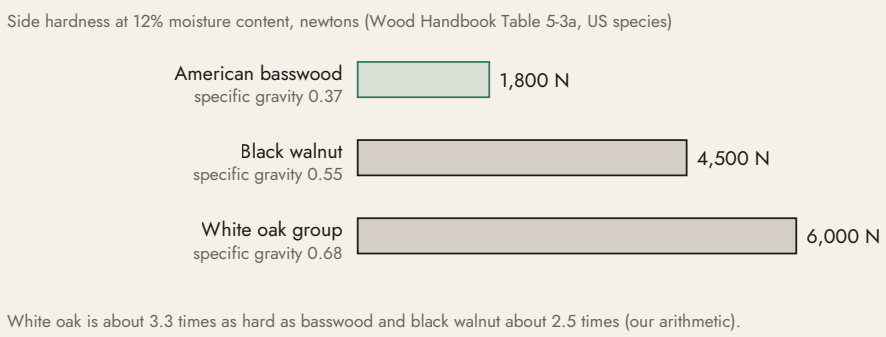
Kind	What it is	Timber	The risk	Brief with
Low relief	Shallow ornament standing slightly proud of the face	Fine, even timber; limewood is the usual choice on our pages	Depth set by the carver on a sample	Drawing, a motif sample, finish
High relief	Deeper modelling: acanthus, foliage, egg-and-dart	As above; oak or walnut where the grain is wanted	Blank must be thick enough behind the form	Blank thickness, joints in the blank
Undercut	Detail cut behind the raised form so it casts shadow	Fine, even timber: undercuts break in coarse grain	Fragile edges, handling, finishing	Where undercuts are allowed; protection
In the round	Corbels, capitals, legs, finials shaped on all sides	As above; solid or laminated blank	Short grain at thin parts	Blank build-up, grain direction
Rough by machine, finished by hand	A CNC rough-out followed by hand modelling (our journal describes the practice)	Any	What is machine and what is hand	State it, and what you accept

Descriptions follow our craftsmanship and journal pages. No depth or size rule was found; those are for the partner carver.



d is the depth of the relief; t is the thickness of the blank behind it. Depths are for the carver to propose on a sample.

Four depths of carving in section. d is the depth of the relief and t is the blank behind it. Schematic. Original drawing by Make Bespoke Studio.



Side hardness at 12 per cent moisture content for American basswood, black walnut and white oak, from the Wood Handbook, Table 5-3a. Original chart by Make Bespoke Studio.

SPECIFICATION WORDING

CARVED ELEMENT

[Carved acanthus relief] to [element] as drawing [ref], carved by hand in [limewood / oak / walnut], [solid / laminated] blank [x] mm thick, relief depth up to [x] mm, grain running [along the element]. Timber at [8] per cent moisture content (+/- [ ]) at carving. No joint in the blank through a carved detail. Machine roughing: [not permitted / permitted, with hand modelling of all visible surfaces].

FINISH AND PROTECTION

Carved surface [left natural and sealed / prepared as a ground for gilding / finished in [lacquer] at [ ] GU, measured at [60] degrees] to approved sample [ref]. Undercuts and thin edges at [locations] to be protected for transit and handling; repairs to a break to be agreed before they are made.

SAMPLE AND ACCEPTANCE

One carved sample of [motif] at the full depth, in the specified timber and finish, to be submitted and approved before carving begins and retained as the reference. Repeating motifs to follow the approved sample in form, depth and crispness; they are hand-carved and are not required to be identical. Approval under the project's final lighting.

TERMS USED

Relief
Carving that stands out from a background surface: low relief is shallow, high relief is deep and strongly modelled.

Undercut
Detail cut behind the raised form so that it casts shadow; the thin edges that result are fragile.

Arris
The sharp edge where two surfaces meet; a crisp arris is a mark of careful carving.

Side hardness
The Wood Handbook's measure of the load to embed a steel ball in the side of a piece, reported in newtons at 12 per cent moisture content.

STANDARDS AND SOURCES

- USDA Forest Products Laboratory, Wood Handbook: Wood as an Engineering Material, FPL-GTR-282 (2021): ch. 2 p. 2-4; Tables 4-3 and 5-3a; ch. 16 pp. 16-2, 16-29, 16-30; ch. 13 p. 13-3. US species only.
- Our craftsmanship and journal pages on hand carving: the stages, timbers and uses. No standard for carving was found.

Full guide: https://makebespoke.com/trade/technical/hand-carving-specification. Make Bespoke Studio coordinates manufacture through its partner workshops. Figures are guidance only and your specification governs; some may be superseded, so contact the studio to verify.