

## LESSON 5

### DECORATIVE WOOD IN DESIGN:

#### I. REVIEW: Design Study Lessons 1, 2, 3, and 4:

1. Vertical and Horizontal Line designs in low, shallow containers;
2. Vertical Line-mass design in tall or low containers;
3. Mass designs in tall or shallow, compote-type containers.

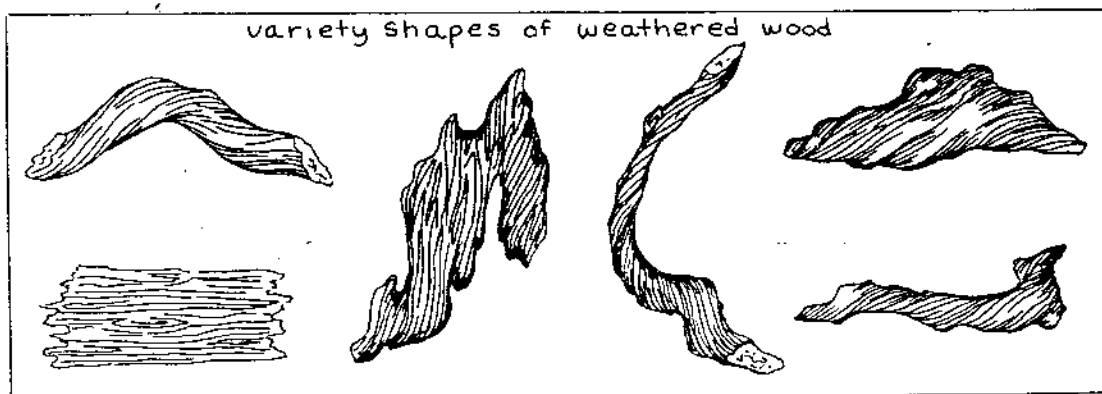
#### II. DECORATIVE WOOD AND ITS USE IN DESIGN:

##### A. Decorative Wood Defined and Sources:

1. Decorative wood is an all inclusive term that includes weathered wood (wood that has had its surface color, texture and/or form altered due to exposure to weather, wind, sun, etc.). Some wood has been changed in texture from rough to smooth by pebbles and stones. It may be dried branches; sections of tree limbs or trunks, cypress knees; wood whose surface has been waxed, varnished, or otherwise treated. Heavy, woody vines may also be decorative wood. **All decorative wood is plant material.**
2. Interesting unusual shapes appeal to the designer. The different forms and textures of wood, and the rhythm of the grain are eye catching. In particular, cypress knees, gnarled roots, decayed stumps and driftwood washed up on the beach or river banks may be exciting.
3. Excavation sites expose all kinds of decorative wood. Roots that are no longer part of living trees. Dried tree branches with interesting shapes, such as Manzanita, Live Oak, Sweet Gum, peeled Wisteria, fasciated weeds, and heavy woody vines may all be called Decorative Wood.

##### B. Preparation of Decorative Wood. NOTE: After cleaning, let the wood dry thoroughly before treating.

1. First, spray decorative wood with strong jets of water to remove insects, soil, dust, sand, etc.
2. A narrow bottle brush may be needed to clean crevices of imbedded particles. Use a wire brush for more extensive cleaning. This intensifies the weathered look and enhances the grain.
3. Rotted sections should be scraped out with a knife, or cut off with a saw, and then smoothed with sandpaper. Insect repellent should be used to protect the wood.
4. Damaged bark may be peeled from wet roots or tree trunks. If the roots are dried out, soak them in hot water, then peel, using a sharp knife.



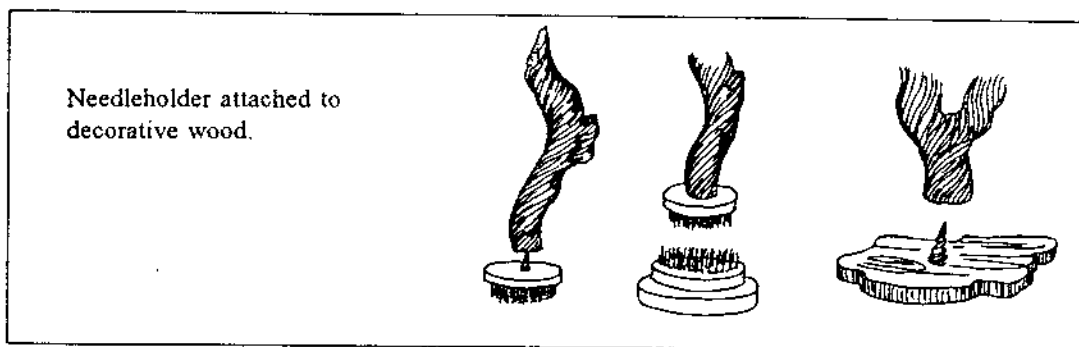
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C. **Methods of Treatment:** There are many ways to change the patina of wood. Here are a few:

1. Experiment by bleaching. Soak for an hour or more in equal parts of household bleach and water. Rinse carefully in fresh water. The wood will dry to a warm tone. Sunlight will also bleach wet wood.
2. The wood may be waxed, oiled, or stained.
3. The wood may be lightly wiped with paint to enhance its color, or painted to change the color and enhance the drama. Painting may change the grain.

D. **Methods of Using Decorative Wood:** There are several ways to join and support decorative wood:

1. For hard pieces of wood that have a narrow end, saw to flatten the part that will rest in the bowl. Pieces may be joined with a dole inserted into each piece to connect together.
2. Some needleholders have a hole drilled for a screw to be used to anchor to wood. Secure another needleholder right-side up in the container and lock the pins of the small holder that has the wood attached into it.

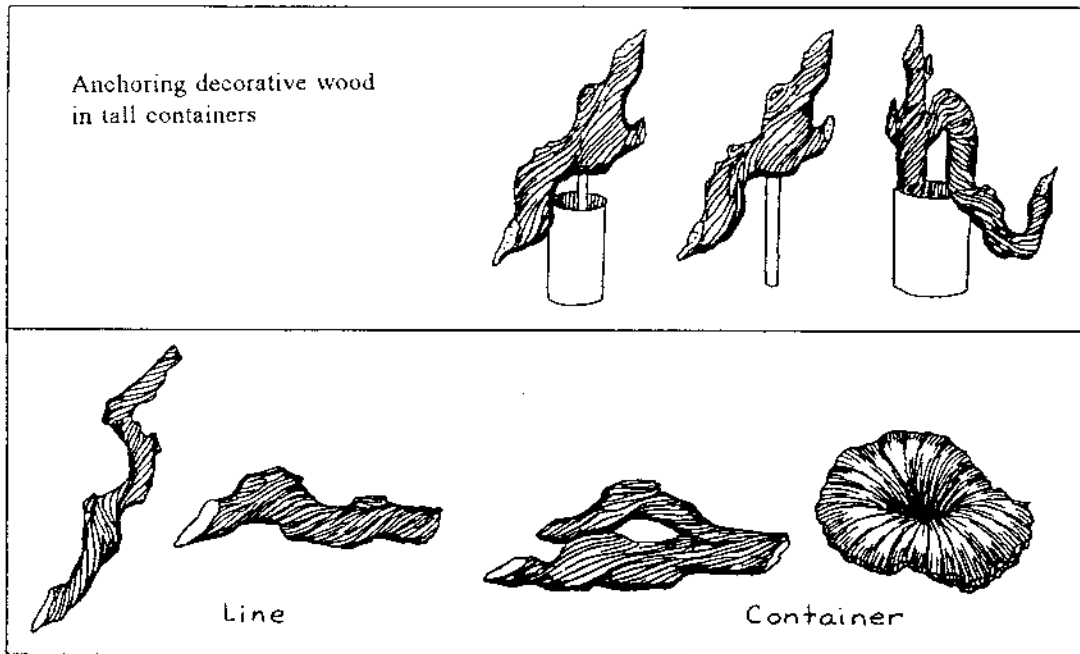


E. **Mechanics:**

1. Sections of wood may be joined together by drilling holes and fastening the pieces together with screws. Cover these mechanics by using wood filler, sanding, or paint to match the wood.
2. Wire can be cut from metal coat hangers into pins and inserted into drilled holes to connect different pieces. Wooden dowels may be used in the same manner.
3. In tall containers drill a hole in the wood and insert a wire the length of the container. Place the wired wood into the container, perhaps bending it over the edge.
4. Look for pieces of wood that have a natural projection to hang on the container. The wood **may also rest on the table** for better balance.
5. Decorative wood can be used in a design in many ways: As a line, a container, and to cover the needleholder.

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E. Mechanics: continued.



F. Decorative wood as a CONTAINER: Design may be Line, Line-mass or Mass.

1. Mechanics: Select a piece of decorative wood that can stand on its own. A flat area may be cut on the bottom. It may need to be placed on a base. Any line may be used for the design. Work with the wood to select the style of design. Let the wood show you the way.
2. Use a cup needleholder, or a needleholder may be placed in a small can painted in a harmonizing color.
3. The **measurements** of the design will vary. For a vertical design, visually consider the size of the weathered wood and measure the main line at least 1 1/2 times the visual weight of the wood. The other lines, flowers, and transitional materials will be measured for a vertical design as described in Lesson Plan No. 1, Line design, and Lesson Plan No. 3, Line-mass design.
4. **Horizontal placements:** If the plant material, such as a beautiful branch, has a flowing line, use it in a horizontal or a diagonal design.
  - a. First line: place slanting slightly toward the front to the right or left.
  - b. Second line: Cut 3/4 shorter than first line, placed toward back, slanting slightly backward.
  - c. Third line: Cut 3/4 shorter than second line, place lower than first line, slanting over the opposite side toward front.
5. **Flowers and transitional materials** may be placed as described in Lesson no. 2.

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### G. Decorative Wood used as LINE.

1. **Container:** Select a tall, short or low container, and suitable piece of wood. The wood should have a liner form and be important enough to lead the eye if it is used as the line material.
2. **Mechanics:** Insert large needleholder in the bottom of the container. Prepare mechanics to join decorative wood to a needleholder with a screw. Place on the needleholder in the container, page 19.
3. **Flowers:** Select flowers that are compatible with the wood. Spiked forms as well as round forms may be needed. If spiked or linear forms are need to add to the dimension of the wood, place them high in the design in back of the decorative wood. Others may be placed lower in the design to accent the wood. Place several flowers close together over the lip of the container to create a center of interest.
4. **Transitional material:** Finish with transitional material placed behind and between flowers as needed. One or more pieces of decorative wood may be used to cover mechanics, if they contribute to the overall design.



### III. APPRECIATION TIME!

Stand back from the design and check it overall. Appreciate the beauty that has been achieved. What did you learn? Is it visually stable? Does the eye go easily through the design. Is the rhythm of the wood expressed in the overall design? Is anything too large or too small? Is there contrast of rough and smooth? Is the wood used for a reason? Can it be seen or is it hidden?

Less of other kinds of plant material is often required in designs that include decorative wood. **Remember that line is the basic foundation of all design.** The lines create the visual framework of the design. All lines of a design should contribute to this order.

Color harmony is important in creating a design of decorative wood. Texture is also important to consider, as the surfaces of the decorative wood vary from rough to smooth and should be considered to blend well with the textures of the flowers and house decor, or other placements. Light, Space, Line, Pattern, Texture, Color, and Size are elements of design which the designer works.