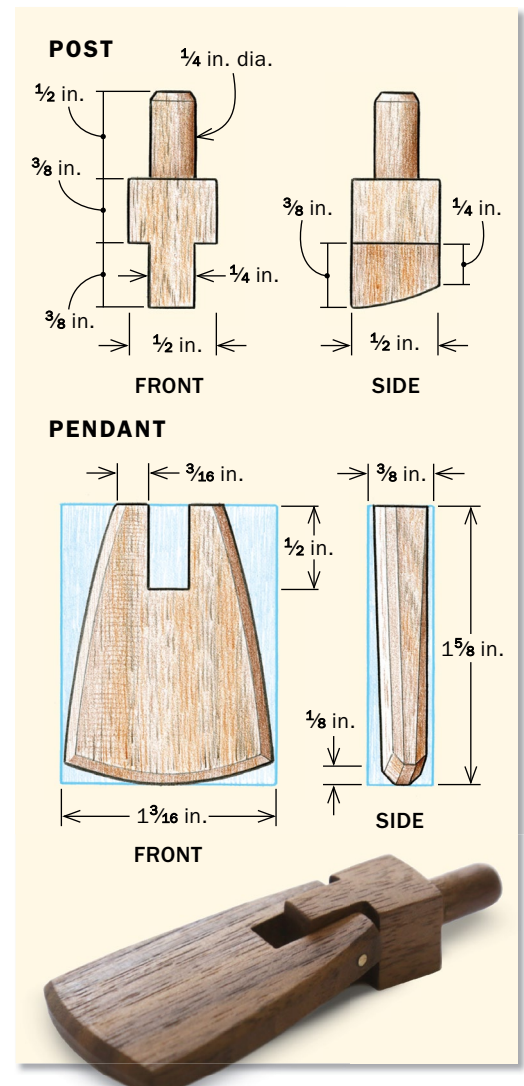


Make a Wooden Pendant Pull

Functional details create an elegant way to open and close drawers and doors

BY PHILIP MORLEY

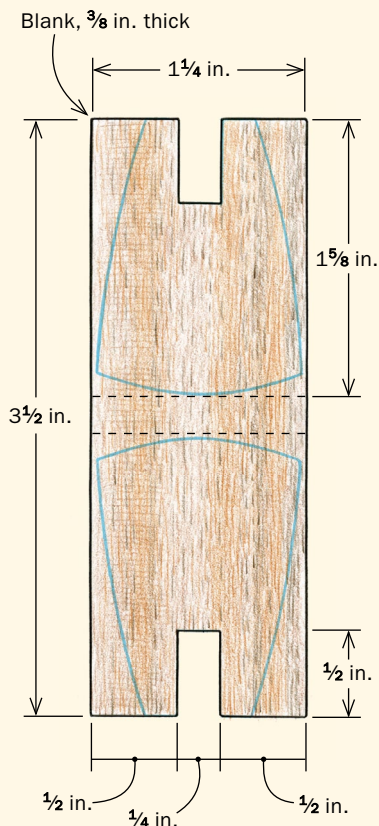
I designed this pull for a cherry credenza I made for some special clients, my in-laws. It's based on a cast brass pull I designed for another piece. My plan was to make these pulls from brass as well, but the artist who cast the first ones for me had moved away so I decided to make them from wood. The challenge was to make them both delicate-looking and strong enough to withstand years of use. As it turns out, I'm very pleased that I was forced to make them from wood. I like



PENDANT SWINGS ON A POST

There are two parts to this pull: a post and a pendant. To make the small parts easier and safer to machine, make two from each overlong blank.

PENDANT BLANK

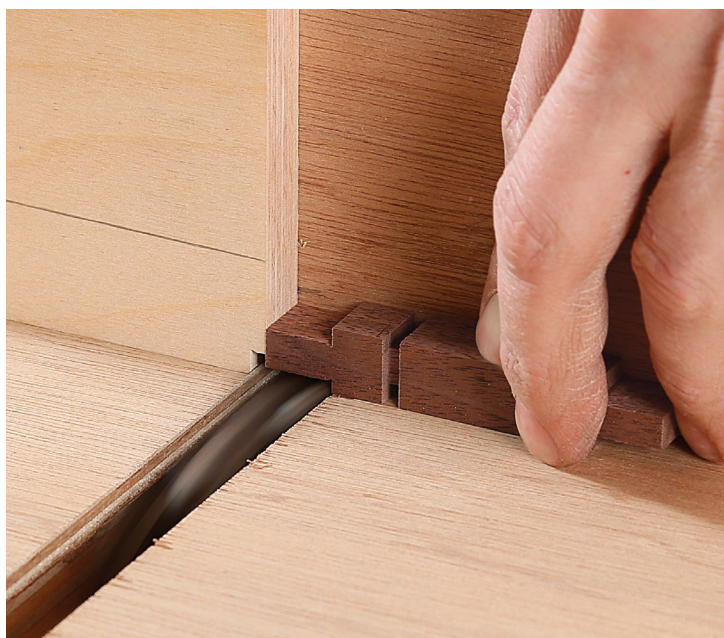
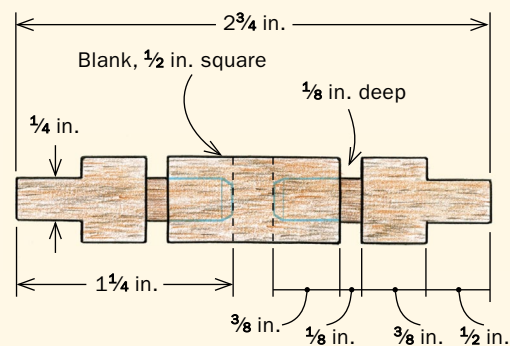


Notch the first blank. Use a tall stop block to center the notch and support the pendant blank during the cut. Morley cuts the notch with a dado set.



Square shoulders for a round tenon. To create a shoulder for the round tenon, cut a $\frac{1}{8}$ -in.-deep kerf around all four faces of the post blank. Flip the blank end for end and repeat.

POST BLANK



Post needs a tongue. A dado set cuts the tongue's full length in one pass (above). Sneak up on the tongue's final thickness, flipping the blank over to cut both faces. The tongue should fit snugly into the notch in the pendant blank (right).



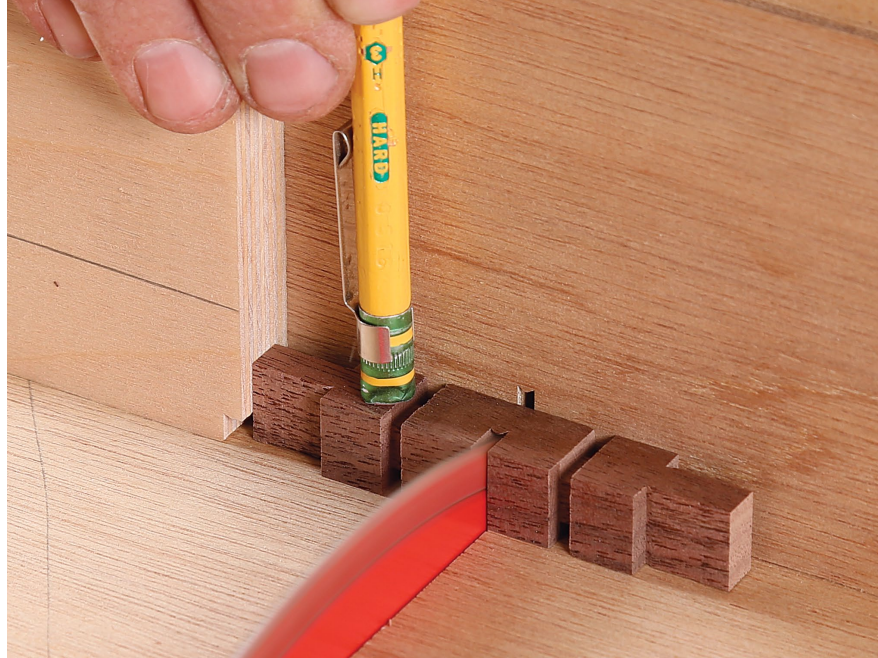
the way they look and feel, and I think they complement the credenza much better than brass pulls would have.

The pull is made from two parts: a post that is glued into the drawer front (or door stile) and a pendant that hangs from the post. The pendant is concave on the back side and convex on the front. The shape fits nicely between your thumb and finger.

Although the pull isn't tiny, the parts are still too small to make one at a time. For safety, and to speed things up when I need multiple pulls for a piece of furniture, I make blanks for the pendant and post that give me two pulls from each set.

Hinge the parts first

The post and pendant are held together with a finger joint that has a thin brass pin running through it as a hinge so the pendant can swing up and down. Start with the pendant blank, cutting a notch into each end with a dado set. Switch out the dado set for a blade that cuts a flat-bottomed kerf and cut a shoulder around the post blank for the round tenon. Put the dado set back in, and cut the finger that fits



Two posts from one blank. Cut both posts to length using a stop.



Simple fixture holds the post. Press the post blank into a grooved piece of plywood until it bottoms out. The stop stabilizes the blank.



Cut the round tenon. A plug-cutter is the perfect tool for the job. Morley sets the stop so that the blank is centered under the cutter.



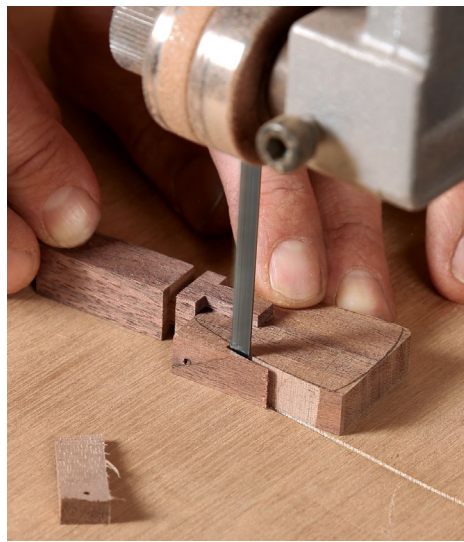
Drill for the pin. Fit the post and pendant blank together using a $\frac{1}{16}$ -in.-dia. drill bit as a spacer. Push the pendant blank into the groove and against the stop (left). Then drill a $\frac{1}{16}$ -in. hole through the pendant and post (above).

ELEGANT AND FUNCTIONAL

The softly curving faces provide a comfortable grip for your fingers and give the pull a light, graceful beauty.



Cut the pendant blank in two. A stop ensures that all of the individual pendant blanks are the same length.



Rough out the pendant. After tracing a template onto the blank, bandsaw to the line. A spare post blank serves as a push stick.



Online Extra

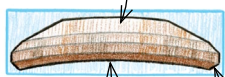
Hot-melt glue is a great way to safely manage small parts. Watch the video at FineWoodworking.com/271.

Glue on a temporary handle. A small scrap, glued to the front face with hot-melt glue, provides a way to grip the pendant in the next step.



Hollow the back. Morley uses the large end of an edge sander to create a comfortable hollow.

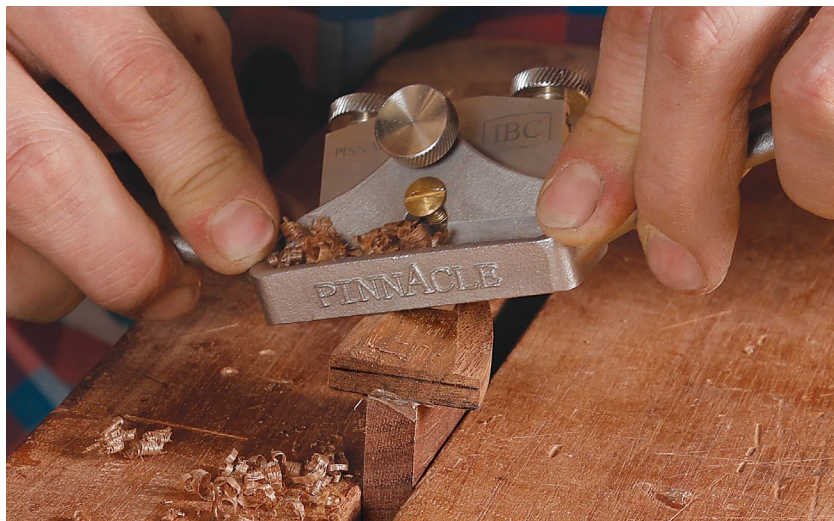
2. Round the front.



1. Hollow the back.

3. Add a small chamfer around the edges.

BOTTOM VIEW



Round the front. After removing the temporary handle from the front of the pendant, hot-glue a handle to the hollow back. Clamp it in a vise, and round the front of the pendant with a spokeshave or a small block plane.

into the pendant's notch. Aim for a snug fit.

Next, cut the post blank into two separate posts. At the drill press, use a plug-cutter to form a round tenon. To steady the post and keep it plumb during the cut, I put the finger into a groove cut into a piece of plywood, with a stop pressed against the post.

To drill for the pin, put the post into the notch in the pendant blank, using a $\frac{1}{16}$ -in. drill bit as a spacer between the post and pendant blank (see bottom photos, p. 47).

This space is necessary for the pendant to swing on the post. Place the pendant blank into the groove in the plywood, and drill a hole through the joint. Repeat the process at the other end of the pendant blank. After both ends are drilled, cut the pendant blank in two. Set the posts aside, and get to work shaping the pendant.

Function makes for a beautiful form

A pull is easier to grasp and use if it fits the curves of your fingers. The gently concave back

SECURE THE PENDANT TO THE POST

A thin brass pin runs through the pendant and pull, holding them together but allowing the pendant to swing up and down.



Just a bit of glue. Put a few drops of cyanoacrylate glue on the side of the pendant where the pin will exit, and let it drip into the hole.



Add the post to the pull. Slide the tongue into the notch, trying to line up the holes through both.



Tap in the pin. Supporting the post on a block of wood, use a hammer to knock the brass pin through the pendant and post. It should end up a bit proud on both sides.



File it flush. A small triangular file should let you flush off the pin without marking the pull's surface.

and convex front face of this pull fit your fingers nicely, and the shape is graceful. It's a great example of allowing a part's function to dictate its form.

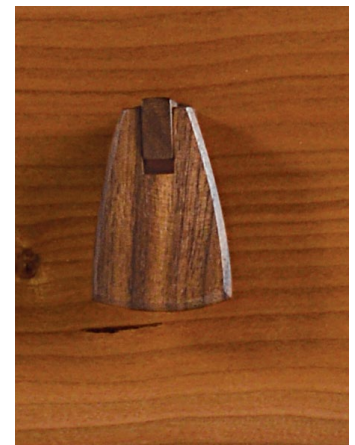
I start by shaping the back of the pendant, using a benchtop belt sander to sand a curve into the surface. Because the pendant by itself would be difficult to hold, I attach a small handle to its front face with hot-melt glue. The bond is more than strong enough for the job, and the handle pops off without trouble after I'm done at the sander.

To shape the convex front face, I use a spokeshave. I glue a handle to the back face this time, clamp it in my vise, and set to work with the spokeshave. I first shave the curved front face, and then add a small chamfer around the edges.

Next I finish both parts of the pull with a few coats of shellac. When it's dry, I assemble the complete pull, driving a brass pin through the holes. To ensure that the pin doesn't eventually work itself out, I squeeze a few drops of glue into the pin hole on the side

of the pendant that the pin will exit when I tap it in. If you used glue on the entry side, it could get pushed through the entire hole. The pin would get glued in place, and the pendant wouldn't swing. Tap the pin into place, and then file both of its ends flush to the pendant. All that's left now is to glue the pull into the drawer front or door stile. □

Philip Morley is a professional furniture maker in Wimberley, Texas. To see more of his work, go to philipmorleyfurniture.com.



Hanging beauty. Morley's pendant pull is a superb example of how thoughtful consideration of function can produce an exquisite design.