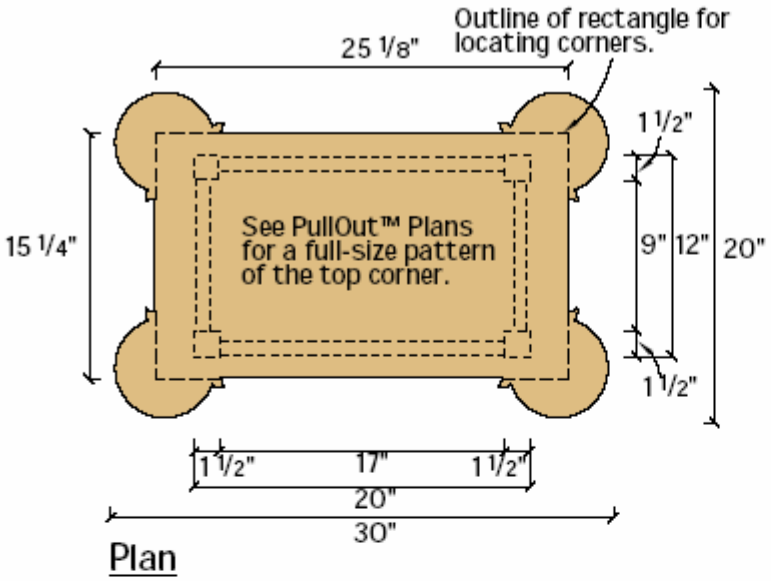
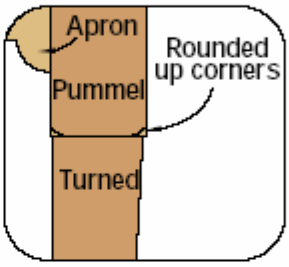
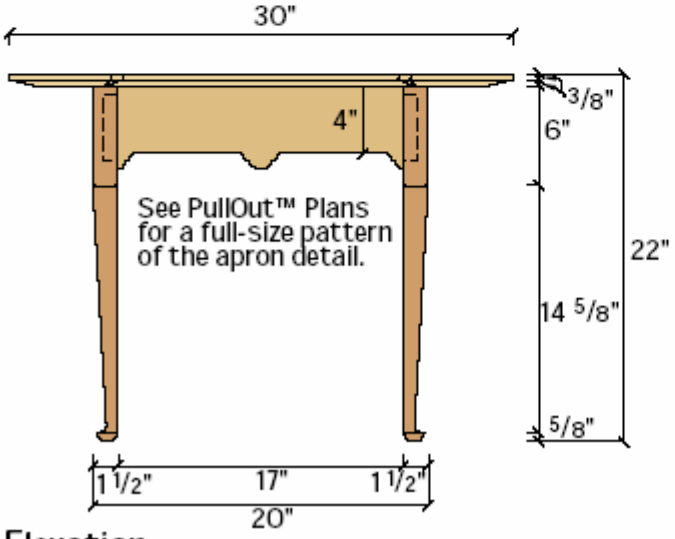
86
QUEEN ANN SIDE TABLES



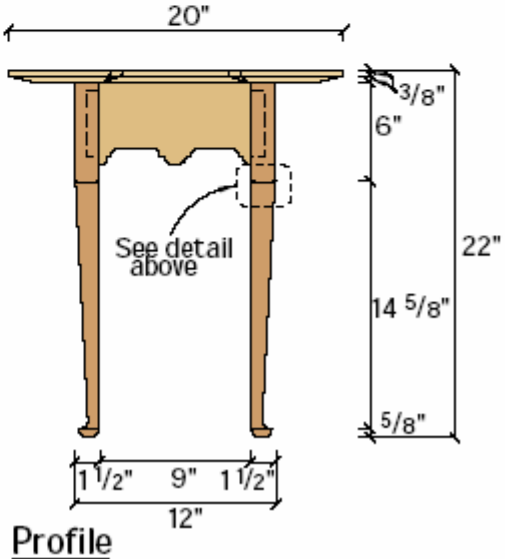
Plan



Detail of leg transition at top of turning



Elevation



Profile

Schedule of Materials: Queen Anne Side Tables

No.	Item	Dimensions	Material
1	Top	3/4" x 20" x 30"	Maple
4	Legs	1-1/2" x 1-1/2" x 21-1/4"	Maple
2	Long Aprons	3/4" x 5" x 18-3/4"	Maple
2	Short Aprons	3/4" x 5" x 10-3/4"	Maple

Making Aprons • These tables were made with simple mortise-and-tenon construction. Start by cutting the apron parts according to the Schedule of Materials. Next cut the 3/8" x 4"-wide x 7/8"-long tenons on the ends of the aprons.

Making Pockets • The last thing to do on the aprons is to drill the pocket holes for attaching the base to the top. Do this on a drill press with a 1-1/4" Forstner bit. Use a shop-built jig to hold the aprons in place for drilling.

Leg Blanks • Although the legs look complicated, they are not. The secret is an offset turning technique. First cut the blanks 1/8" longer than in the schedule. This gives you some room to work with when turning the pad on the end of the foot.

Use a straight edge to make an "X" from corner to corner on both ends of the blank. This will aid in finding the center as well as marking the offset. Now, on the bottom of the legs, determine which corner will face out. On the bottom of each leg, measure 1/2" from the center to the corner opposite the outside corner. This is the offset for the leg. Remember, the farther away from the center you go, the thinner the ankle (the area just above the pad) will be. Going any farther than 1/2" is dangerously close to having a leg pop off your lathe.

Mark a line completely around the blank 6" down from the top of the blank. To save time roughing the blank, lay out a 1-1/2" diameter circle on the bottom of the blank. Set your jointer to 45 degrees. Using the circle as a guide, lower the infeed table to the point where you can take the corner off, leaving about 1/32" to the circle. Go slow and joint to within 1/8" of the line where the turning starts. Now mount the blank in the lathe.

After mounting a blank between centers with the top towards the drive center, cut a small kerf at the line where the turning stops. Don't cut too far or you won't be able to remove the kerf. With a roughing gouge and skew chisel, turn a cylindrical blank from the saw kerf to the foot. At this point use a skew chisel round the corners of the pummel, the square part of the leg, where it meets the turned portion. Repeat on all the legs and you're ready to do the offset turning.

Turning the Offset • Before resetting the legs, measure up from the bottom 1/8" and from that mark another 5/8". Turn the lathe on and follow the marks around with a pencil. Take a parting tool and set it on its side. Cut a small incision at the 5/8" mark . This creates a shadow line from which to begin the offset turning. Set the lathe for its lowest speed and reset the tailstock so the leg center is mounted in the offset mark. This might look like an awkward setup but as you remove material the leg will turn with more stability. Finish the straight part of the leg with a skew chisel and the ankle with a roughing gouge. Finally, turn the pad foot as shown in photo 5. Now is the time to sand the legs. Start with 120 grit sandpaper and finish with 150 grit.

Now cut the 3/8" x 7/8" x 4" mortises in the legs, 5/16" in from the edge and 1/2" down from the top. Be careful when marking the locations of your mortises to make sure the turned feet face out. You'll notice that the mortises meet slightly at their bottoms. Simply plane away a little of the tenon where they meet. Now glue the base together. Start by gluing the short ends together and then attaching them to the long aprons.

SCROLLING THE APRONS • Lay out the scrollwork on the bottom of the aprons using the patterns supplied in the PDF from the "Making Pockets" step. Glue the patterns to 1/4" plywood, cut them out, trace the pattern on your aprons and cut them out on a band saw. Make relief cuts on the inside radii so you can scroll them out easier.

DRILL POCKET HOLES • Make sure that the bottom of the pocket is at least 7/8" from the top edge of the apron to prevent the screws from poking through.

CUTTING CORNERS • First mount a blank between centers with the top towards the drive center. Then use a saw to cut a small kerf on each corner at the line 6" from the top. Don't cut too far or you won't be able to remove the kerf. With a roughing gouge and skew chisel, turn a cylindrical blank from the saw kerf to the foot. At this point use a skew chisel to cut a small rounding up on the square corners of the top (see diagram). Repeat on all the legs and you're ready to do the offset turning.

After the glue is dry, finish sand the entire base, then lay out the holes for the cherry pegs. Any dark hardwood will do for the pegs, but cherry sands smooth and the end grain stains a dark color. Drill a 1/4" hole 1" deep. Follow suit with 3/16" and 1/8" bits, creating a tapered hole. After shaping 16 square pegs (tapered on four sides to a point), tap one in until you feel and hear it seat. The sound of the hammer hitting the peg makes a distinctly different sound when it seats. No glue is required for this as you are running a peg completely through the leg. It won't be coming out anytime soon. Cut the pegs, leaving 1/32" showing and sand until it is a rounded-over bump. Drill 1/4" holes into the pockets from the top of the base for attaching the top.

Make and Attach the Top • The top is the easiest part, but it can make or break the whole project. Wood selection is key. One hundred years ago, you could get extremely wide, highly figured curly maple at a low price. Amazingly most old porringers were one- or two-board tops. That's clear-figured wood 10- to 20-inches wide! Regrettably, those days are gone, and you will have to make do with the painfully high-priced, narrow lumber you get today.

Poplar is easy to get in a decent width and length, but I had to try the Amish sawmills in eastern Pennsylvania to find a retail source for decent curly maple (see the Schedule of Materials for one such mill). I managed to find decent 4/4 that's about 7" wide and a nice piece of 8/4 for the legs (I wasn't sure how thick the legs would be when I started so you could probably get away with 6/4 for leg stock).

The tops for both types of tables are the same size. They just require a different edge pattern. For the porringer top, lay out a 15-1/4" x 25-1/8" rectangle in the center of the top. Make a pattern for the top with 1/4" plywood as you did with the aprons. When you lay the inside corner of the pattern over the outside corner of the drawn rectangle, the outside of the radius should just touch the edge of the top. Trace the pattern on all four corners and jigsaw the top out.

For the "clover" shaped top, things are easier. Trace the double radius on all four corners. When you are done cutting the shape of the top out, chamfer the edges.

Chamfering the edges lightens the overall look of the table, and the chisel work underneath has a very sculptural feel. Before chamfering, use a marking gauge to mark a line that is half the thickness of the top on the entire outside edge of the top. Next, use an adjustable square to mark a line around the underside of the top. For the porringer the measurement is 1-1/2" and for the clover use a 2-1/4" line.

I chamfered the edges with a power planer. It's a tool used mostly by carpenters to remove material from doors when fitting and installing them. And in that role, this tool is unequalled. Finish sand the top to 150 grit.

The last assembly chore is to screw the top to the base. Begin by laying the top upside down on a blanket. Center the base on the top and screw it down with #10 x 1-1/2" wood screws.

In finishing the clover table, I sprayed on a custom-mixed aniline dye followed by three coats of clear finish. This turned the poplar to a mahogany-like color.

The porringer was a different story. To begin with, I hand scraped the top with a Stanley #80 cabinet scraper. With the lack of abrasive sandpaper 250 years ago, this is how the old tables were made ready to finish. Scraping with a properly prepared scraper blade will show up as rows of slight depressions (1/32" deep) with ridges about 2-1/2" apart. I stained the wood with aniline

A WELL-TURNED ANKLE • When you turn the lathe on, the leg's spinning creates a ghost image of what the finished leg will look like. Remove that "ghost" material with a roughing gouge. Stop at the second line that you drew earlier. Lay the gouge on its left side at the second line and slowly rotate the gouge clockwise as you go to the left. Go very slowly until you get the hang of how the wood reacts to the gouge.

TURNING THE PAD • The last thing to do on the legs is turning the pad on the foot. You do this last, as removing the foot material also removes the offset center. Reset the bottom of the leg into the original center and using a parting tool, turn away this "extra" length until it's about 3/8" diameter. This gives you some extra distance from the live center. Then using a small spindle gouge, turn the pad of the foot till it meets the 3/8" diameter. Sand the pad the same as the leg and you're done turning.

SCULPTING UNDERNEATH • When you've done all you can with a power plane, use chisels and planes to remove material down to the marked line.

How thick is it anyway?

When lumber yards count up the board footage that you buy, it's referred to as a tally. The "tallyman" carries a special notebook and a strange floppy stick called a "tallystick" (go figure!) with odd measurements on it. The lumber you buy is sorted by how many quarters of an inch thick it is. This system starts at 4/4 for 1" thickness on up to 16/4 for 4" lumber

dye and then applied one coat of boiled linseed oil and finished the table with four coats of dark shellac. This imparts a nice honey brown color to the curly maple and is easy to repair. Now where did I put that drink?