

## Twisted wooden handles

This is Fairly straightforward to do but perhaps interesting - I have used Holly, mahogany, laburnum & walnut but I expect other woods would also work. I start by making 4 10\*10\*240 mm rods, a pair each of two contrasting woods (see picture). Then these are steamed over a



large stainless steel saucepan, resting on the edges above gently simmering water beneath, and covered by a foil 'lid'. This is left for 45 minutes or so after which the rods are quickly fitted into two thick ply plates, one each end, that have had tightly fitting square holes made in them (ie 20mm square holes). One can also hold the rods in place with intermediate ply plates with ~25mm round holes which will be a tight fit (you can relieve the rod corner edges to fit if necessary).

Then the ply end plates are twisted and clamped to a board - at least 180 degrees rotation should be OK. It may help to briefly place the whole clamped assembly back on the saucepan with the foil confining the steam to the wooden rods.

Note that the rods are not glued at this point and will spread slightly at the ends when twisted.

The clamped assembly is then allowed to cool and dry - I find it helps to leave it some time, perhaps a day or two. After this the setup is marked (ie the arrangement of rods is marked with a pencil to show which fits where) and disassembled. It will untwist a bit but as in the photos a considerable twist will remain. The rods are then glued together and clamped at several points, including in two directions at right angles near each end to suppress the 'spread' (for which a small clamp may be needed). It may help to use the 25mm round hole ply pieces (lightly waxed inside to avoid sticking) to hold the rods in place along their length but there is no twist force applied during gluing.

When the glue is set the rod can be turned as shown, and used for any purpose, such as the gavel handle on the right (which actually tapers - see below).

**Will Stewart**

Tudor Rose 28/6/15

