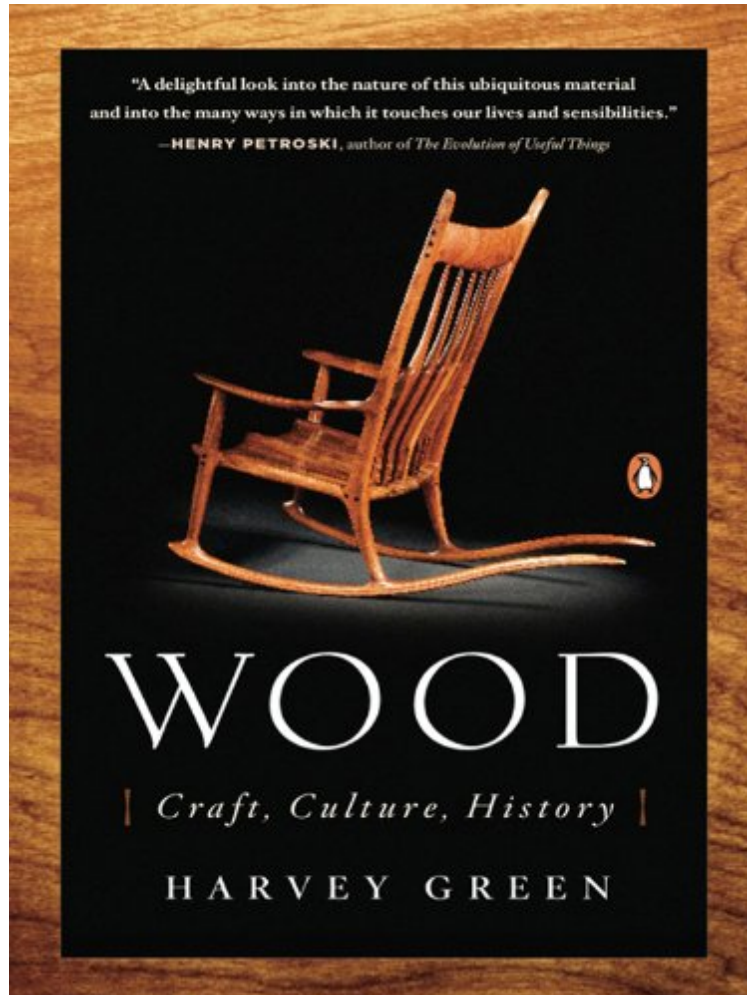


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Wood: Craft, Culture, History

Harvey Green

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A rich, authoritative look at a material that plays an essential role in human culture Wood has been a central part of

human life throughout the world for thousands of years. In an intoxicating mix of science, history, and practical information, historian and woodworker Harvey Green considers this vital material's place on the planet. What makes one wood hard and one soft? How did we find it, tame it? Where does it fit into the histories of technology, architecture, and industrialization, of empire, exploration, and settlement? Spanning the surprising histories of the log cabin and Windsor chair, the deep truth about veneer, the role of wood in the American Revolution, the disappearance of the rain forests, the botany behind the baseball bat, and much more, *Wood* is a deep and satisfying look at one of our most treasured resources.

From *Booklist* Histories of materials continue to rise in popularity, exemplified by this excursion into the uses and aesthetics of wood. Green, a student and practitioner of the craft of woodworking, spans the remarkable range of objects created from trees throughout human history. In addition to defining terms, such as the distinction between hard- and softwoods, Green reiterates throughout this fluent and pleasing work the uniqueness of wood, which contributes to its attraction. No two pieces are alike in appearance, and specific species of trees are preferred for specific purposes: ash for baseball bats, oak for ships, cedar for furniture. Whatever object Green investigates, he discovers its layers of historical, commercial, environmental, and artistic significance, not least in the substitution for wood by other materials. Despite this trend, however, wood is always more appealing to sight and touch than its competition: nobody loves a titanium golf club the way they do a persimmon-headed driver. Sophisticated but approachable, Green's work richly satisfies curiosity about the subject. Gilbert Taylor Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "Like a walk along a quiet forest rail, reading this book provides opportunity after opportunity to reflect upon the meaning of trees and the things that come from them." — Henry Petroski, author of *The Pencil* and *The Evolution of Useful Things* About the Author Harvey Green teaches history at Northeastern University in Boston and works in wood at his shop in rural New Hampshire. He is a two-time Fulbright Scholar and the author of three well-regarded books on American material culture.