



# Advanced Timber Framing: Joinery, Design & Construction of Timber Frame Roof Systems

By Steve Chappell

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## Advanced Timber Framing: Joinery, Design & Construction of Timber Frame Roof Systems By Steve Chappell

Drawn from over 35 years of experience building and teaching advanced timber framing, this book combines both the nuance one might expect, and also a broad and colorful overview of the history and development of compound hip and valley timber frame roof systems and joinery. The work is divided into two parts, *Book One: Design & History*, and *Book Two: Geometry & Joinery Systems*.

Book One begins with a chapter titled, *The Elements of Design*. In this section, Chappell draws parallels between the significance of proper design proportions, harmonics and the feel that resonates between these elements and the craftsman's touch. Through the proportions of the golden mean, phi and the Fibonacci sequence, metaphors to music and the jazz of timber framing, Chappell begins to develop a template that includes both sound and harmonics as fundamental aspects of the design medium.

Chappell then goes on to explore the early development and history of timber framed roof systems from the 12th century Stave Churches, medieval Tithe Barns and Market Halls of Europe, to the ancient Pagodas of China and Japan. The focus is on discovering the systems and techniques used to build vernacular medieval timber framed roof systems.

Book Two moves into the technical aspects of how to begin the process of designing complex, compound joinery by first developing the geometric model. Though the subject can be quite complex, the emphasis on developing a strong visual mental image at the outset is strengthened through the use of numerous photographs and illustrations. The book goes on to thoroughly discuss a very broad variety of design options and joinery details for virtually any situation one may ever confront in constructing complex, joined timber framed roof systems.

Beautifully illustrated with over 870 color photographs and illustrations, Chappell presents a complete and comprehensive geometric and mathematical system in this work. One that can be used to design virtually any conceivable arrangement of complex structural members that one may ever face--all using mortise and tenon joinery.

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**Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #235300 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Fox Maple Press
- Published on: 2012-11-15
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 11.25" h x 9.00" w x 1.25" l, 4.32 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover

- 368 pages

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

Steve Chappell's *Advanced Timber Framing: Joinery, Design & Construction of Compound Hip & Valley Timber frame Roof Systems* is the most detailed and comprehensive book available on how to layout and cut mortise and tenon joinery for complex roofs. But this book is invaluable to any craftsman-builder in a number of other ways as well.

It includes an in-depth review of the history of timber framing, including insights into the evolution of joinery, building form and design from ancient times to the present. Inherent in this development was an understanding by ancient builders of proportion and geometry in both the natural and man-made environments, and Chappell carries these lessons forward to apply them to modern timber roofs.

Whereas all of this drawing can now be done by computer, the traditional training of the craftsman includes learning to draw it by hand, thus increasing the artistic abilities and visualization skills of the craftsman. This ability to see the roof framing in one's mind's eye enables the problem-solving ability of the builder, and offers a wider variety of possible solutions to a problem, including the use of naturally curved or free-form materials. The author is able to successfully extend these concepts to musical analogies as well, which have been a big influence on his work over the years.

The techniques Chappell has developed and presents here are applicable to other building challenges that require three-dimensional visualization - stairs, furniture and boats, for example. Anyone faced with a problem that involves a structure being built at varying angles through space (not just square, plumb and level) will find many useful tools here.

The layout of mortised and tenoned joinery in heavy timber is especially challenging and presented here in a clear and methodic manner. The many photos alone are valuable to see potential solutions to a myriad of compound roof problems (especially valley systems) a framer might encounter in their career. There is a vocabulary of compound joinery that shows many of the ways roof timbers can come together, and it's hard to imagine a junction that isn't shown here.

Finally, the guidelines are condensed into a number of axioms that summarize the basic rules to follow to successfully execute one of the most difficult skills in timber framing today. --Will Beemer, Director, The Heartwood School for the Homebuilding Crafts

**We are happy to announce that *Advanced Timber Framing* has been selected as the Silver Medal Winner in the 2013 Independent Publishers Book Awards (IPPY Awards) in the category of: Architecture --2013 IPPY Award Committee**

*Advanced Timber Framing* has been awarded the Gold Medal in the 2013 IBPA Benjamin Franklin Book Awards. --2013 IBPA Benjamin Franklin Book Award Committee

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## Award Committee

### About the Author

Steve Chappell has been building, teaching and writing about timber framing and traditional building for more than 35 years. He is an early pioneer of the timber framing revival, and one of the co-founders of the Timber Framers Guild in 1984. As the founder and director of Fox Maple School of Traditional Building in 1983, Chappell has taught many hundreds of students the finer aspects of timber framing, and has been a prominent and enthusiastic advocate of traditional timber framing and natural building systems. As the publisher and editor of *Joiners' Quarterly* for many years, Chappell has written extensively on the subject of traditional building, and is also the author of the book, *A Timber Framers Workshop*.

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