

# Comfort Hedgehog



**Comfort critters are easy to make with basswood eggs and a simple template**

*By Steven Kulp*

**B**asswood eggs are easy to carry in your pocket or pack, and this hedgehog makes a fun trail project. If you don't have an egg, whittle a branch or piece of scrap into an egg, and start carving.

## Getting Started

Purchase a basswood or butternut egg made for carving. Use a marker to make a dot on the point of the egg (the nose). You will be using this reference point throughout the carving process, so be careful not to rub the mark off.

## MARKING THE BLANK

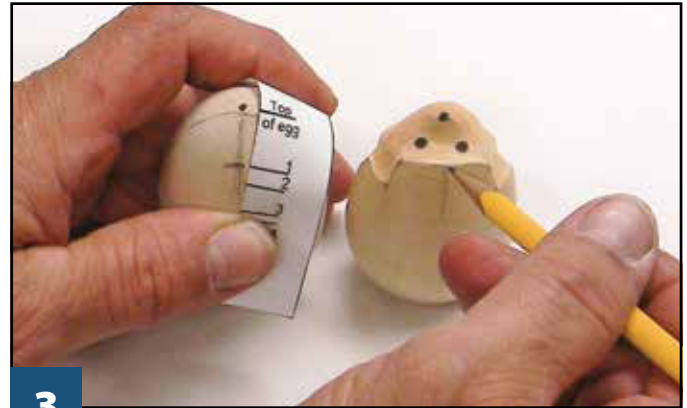


**1**

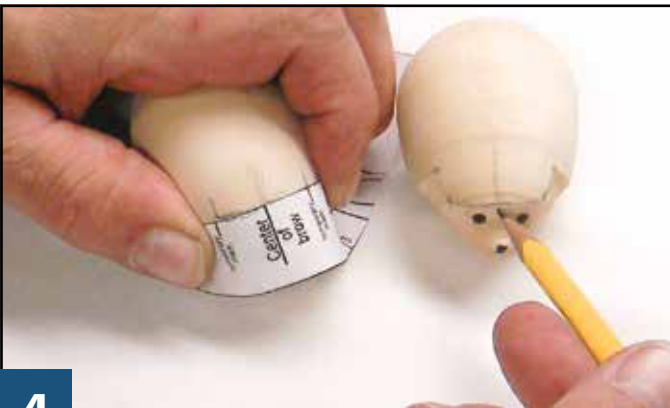
**Draw a line from the point of the egg to the edge of the flat spot on the bottom.** Use the edge of the template or a piece of tape as a flexible ruler. The line represents the bottom edge of the hedgehog's spiky coat.



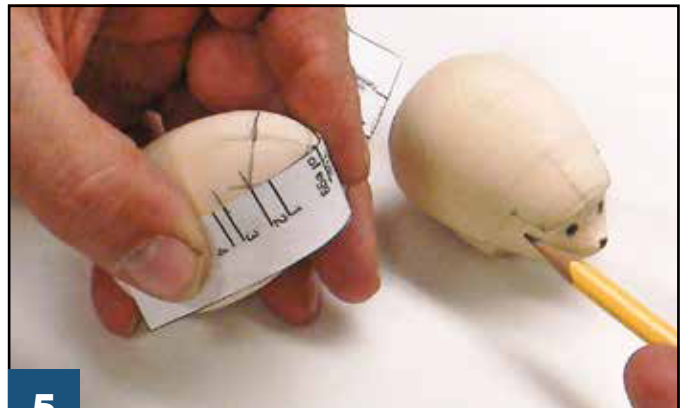
**2** Draw a centerline on the top of the egg from nose to tail. Use this line to align the template on the egg.



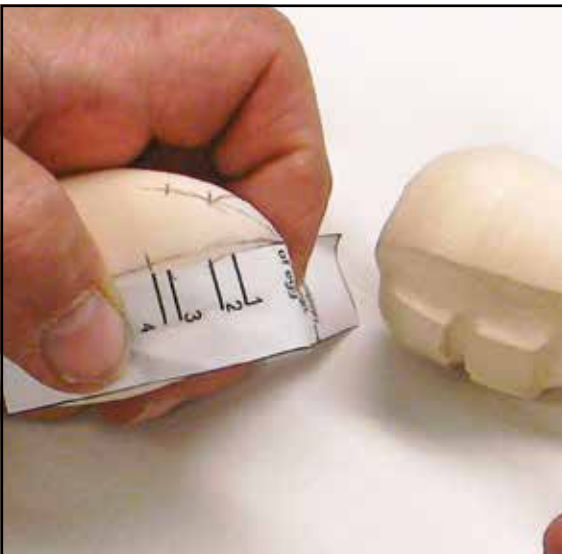
**3** Position the template's Top of Egg mark on the on the nose dot. Align the template with the centerline and make a mark where Line 1 intersects with the centerline.



**4** Position the template's Center of Brow mark where the centerline and Line 1 meet. Rotate the template 90°, draw the two Temporary Marks, and draw a line between them.



**5** Position the Top of Egg mark on the nose dot. Align the edge of the template with one of the Temporary Marks (drawn in Step 4). Line 2 should align with the Temporary Mark. If not, check the other side; you might be a little off square. Adjust as needed, and draw a line along the edge of the template from Line 2 to Line 3 on both sides.



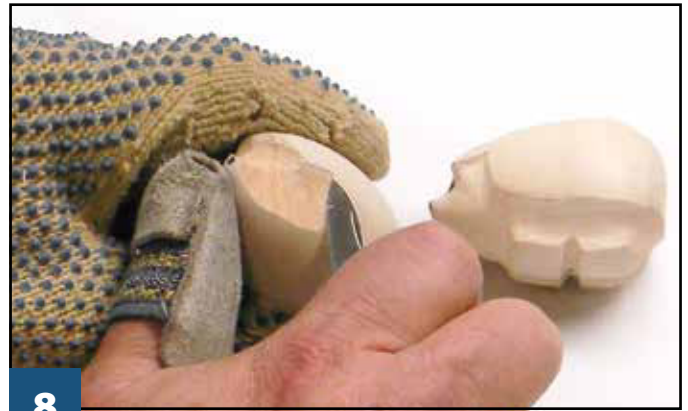
**6** Place the Top of Egg mark on the nose dot. Align the template with the edge of the coat. Make a mark on Line 4 on both sides. Draw lines between the Line 3 and Line 4 marks to represent the back of the ears on both sides.

## CARVING THE PROJECT



7

**Carve down from the brow toward the nose dot.** Make a scooping cut to give the nose a hook shape. Do not carve off the dot; we will still be using it as a reference point.



8

**Carve from the ear line toward the nose dot on both sides.** Make a V-shaped groove on the line, and then taper toward the dot on both sides. Keep both sides symmetrical.



9

**Remove the wood below the spiky coat line.** This forms the outside of the legs. Remove the same amount of wood from both sides, or the hedgehog will lean to the side (which is hard to repair).



10

**Draw a centerline from the nose dot to the center of the bottom.** This marks the separation between the right and left legs. Draw a line for the front of the feet a little behind the back of the ears. Draw another line halfway between the front feet and the back feet to separate the front and back legs.



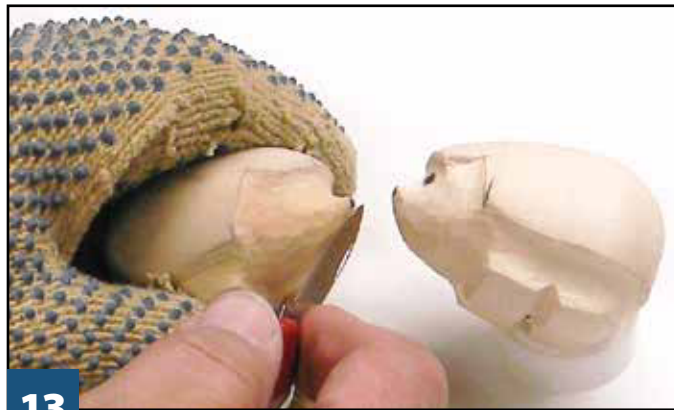
11

**Carve from the front of the front legs toward the front of the egg.** Carve grooves between the left and right legs and the front and back legs. *Note: I usually make the groove between the right and left legs wide enough to sign my carving.*



12

**Refine the wood in front of the front legs.** Follow the shape of the egg and create a curved shape. Clean up and round the rest of the carving around the face.



**13**

**Carve from the bottom curl to the point of the egg.**

Create an upward sweep that makes it look like the hedgehog is sniffing around. Round the flat spot on the bottom of the egg and clean up any remaining rough spots.



**14**

**Add the details.** Stab, paint, or burn the spines. Burn or paint

the eyes; they are located halfway between the center of the face and the edge of the brow (a little above the nose). Blacken the tip of the nose with a woodburner or paint. I sometimes drill a small hole and use cyanoacrylate (CA) glue to attach tiny beads for the eyes. Apply a coat of boiled linseed oil to the completed carving.

**materials & tools**

**MATERIALS**

- Wooden egg, basswood or butternut: any size you are comfortable carving; I used a hen-size egg for this article
- Boiled linseed oil
- Paint: black (optional)
- Beads: 2 each black (optional)
- Cyanoacrylate (CA) glue (optional)
- Pencil
- Tape (optional)

**TOOLS**

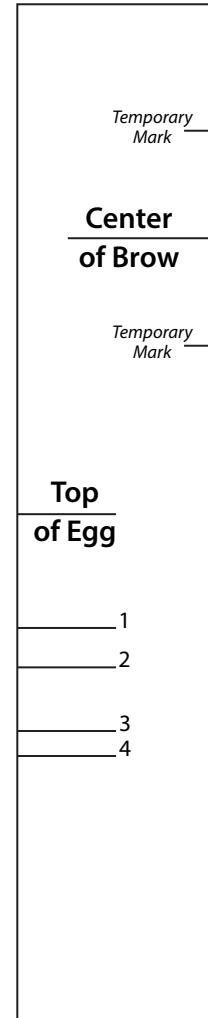
- Knife
- Marker, fine point: black
- Drill bit: small (optional)
- Woodburner (optional)

**SPECIAL SOURCES**

- Hen-sized basswood eggs are available from:
- The Woodcraft Shop, 800-397-2278, TheWoodcraftShop.com
  - Chipping Away, 888-682-9801, ChippingAway.com

*The author used these products for the project. Substitute your choice of brands, tools, and materials as desired.*

**Egg Marking Template**



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**Using the Template**

This template is for a hen-sized egg. However, due to variations in egg sizes, check that the distance from the bottom of the template to the "Top of Egg" mark matches the distance from the bottom of the egg to its tip when placed next to the egg (not wrapped). Adjust the template as needed.

To size the template for other eggs, decrease it 76% for a pigeon egg 2" (5.1cm) tall or increase it 115% for a goose egg 3" (7.6cm) tall. Then check the template as described above and adjust as needed.