

Introduction

Carving realistic eyes can provide a significant challenge for the beginner and intermediate carvers. Indeed, creating the eye that displays emotion can be a daunting task for an experienced carver or sculptor. Once a person looks at a carving or sculpture the person's eyes are drawn immediately to the face and to the eyes. Just as "eyes are a mirror to the soul", so are the eyes the essence of a carving. There are any number of eye carving methods and no way to say which is the best. As an instructor, I have demonstrated this technique to literally thousands of carvers over the past 25 years. I am writing this tutorial so that I can share with you how I carve realistic eyes. As with all serious craftsmen, the secret to becoming a good carver is learn a technique and practice, practice, practice.

For a catalog of my rough out blanks send \$2.00 refundable with your first order to;

A wood carving of a Native American man with a red hat and a woman. The man is in the foreground, looking to the right, and the woman is behind him, also looking to the right.	<p>Martins Wood Carving 19836 Amity Ct Goddard, Ks 67052 800-766-6127 http://stumartin.com</p>	A wood carving of a Native American woman with a red headband. She is wearing a fringed garment and has a feather in her hair. She is looking to the left.
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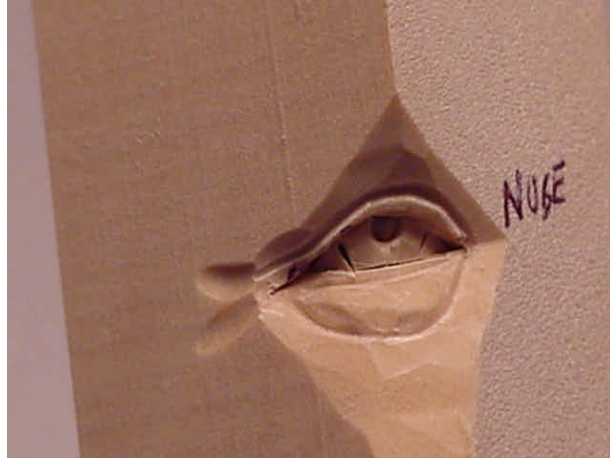
I now carry the Ortel V gouge for setting the socket and highly recommend this tool – Price of tool is \$22.00 + 6.00 shipping.

For the long knife contact

Bud Murray,

Camdenton, Mo

(573) 346-7321 and Request the Stu Martins narrow knife.



Carving an Eye

List of Materials

Knife – Thin Trapezoidal point
1-1/2” by 1-1/2” by 12” Basswood
#8 – 11mm Gouge or equivalent
#11 – 1/8” gouge or equivalent
Vee – 1/8”
Large 70-90 degree “V”

Safety Tips

Remember to wear appropriate safety gear, carving glove, thumb guards, etc. and to practice safe carving techniques. Always keep your fingers out of the path of the knife or gouge in the event that it slips.



Tools: left to right #11-8mm gouge; Ortel round bottom v-gouge; 3/16" deep bent veiner; 1/16" deep veiner; 1/16" 45degree v-tool; long tapered knife.

Carving an Eye



1. I set the eye socket using a large 'V' tool. Preferably, 70-90 degrees with 3/8-5/8" sides. My first cut is away from centerline starting from the side of nose bridge.

(This picture is of the eye area of one of the roughouts that are available from Stu Martin.)

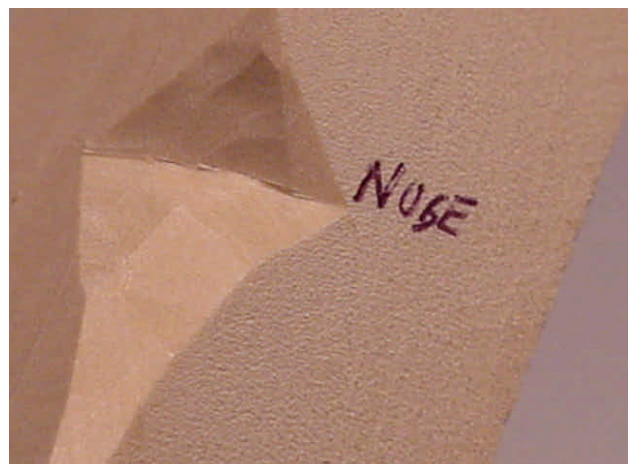


2. To set the depth of the socket at the corner of the nose, I cut towards the centerline using the cheek side of the "V" tool only.

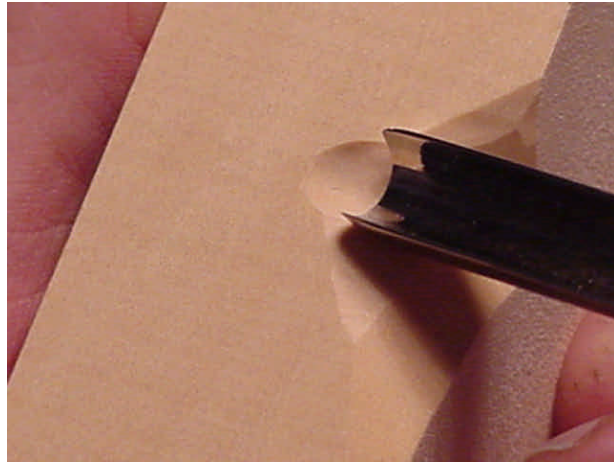
(This picture is of the eye area of one of the roughouts that are available from Stu Martin.)



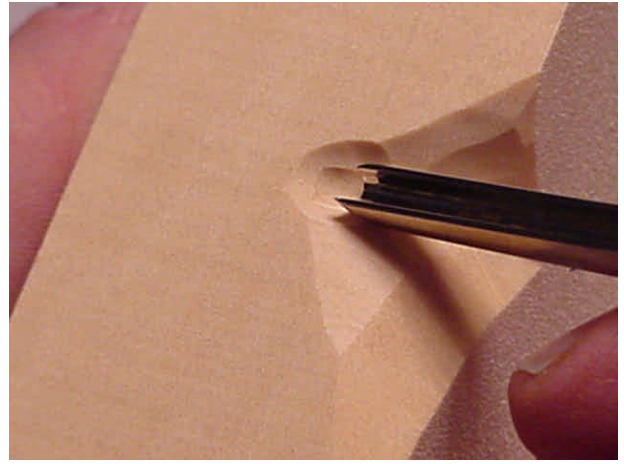
3. On the practice stick, (2 inch by 2 inch by 6 inch) prepare the surface by making "vee" cut with your knife across the corner of the wood. This will duplicate the cut made on your roughout using the "V" tool.



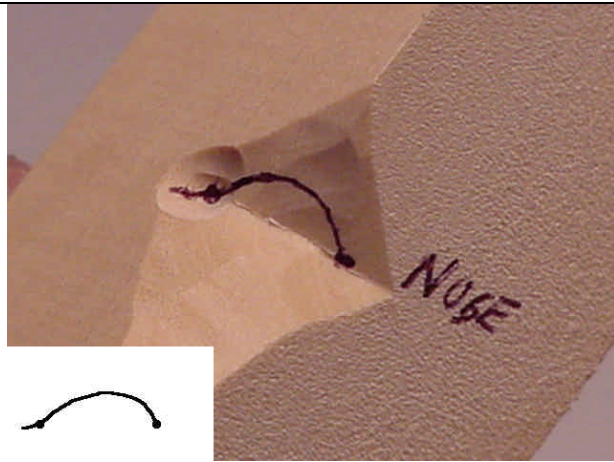
4. Since this is a practice stick, make a note indicating the nose side. As you develop your skill make alternate left and right eyes, working on size duplication.



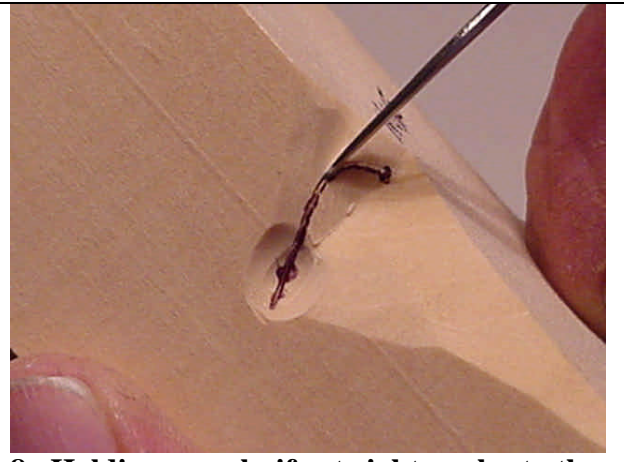
5. For the larger faces, 4 inches and up, I use a #11-8mm gouge to set the outside corner pocket. Make this cut away from the center line.



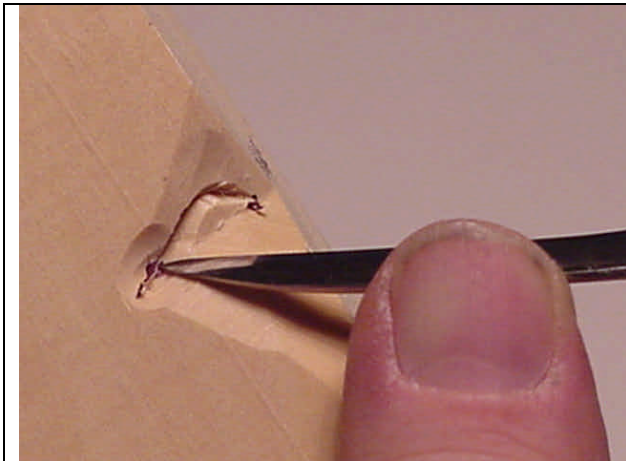
6. Using the 3/16" deep bent veiner, deepen the center of the cut made in step 5. This cut is made away from the center line.



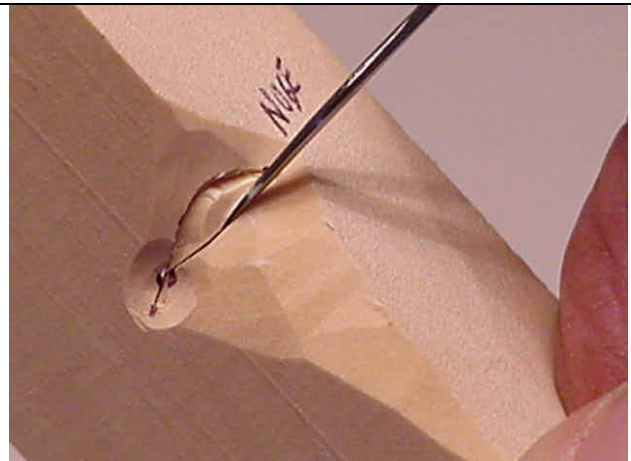
7. Mark the corner of the eyes. The outside corner mark will be in the center of the gouge cuts made in steps 5 & 6. Draw in an eye shape, letting the upper lid extend past the outside corner dot. See inset.



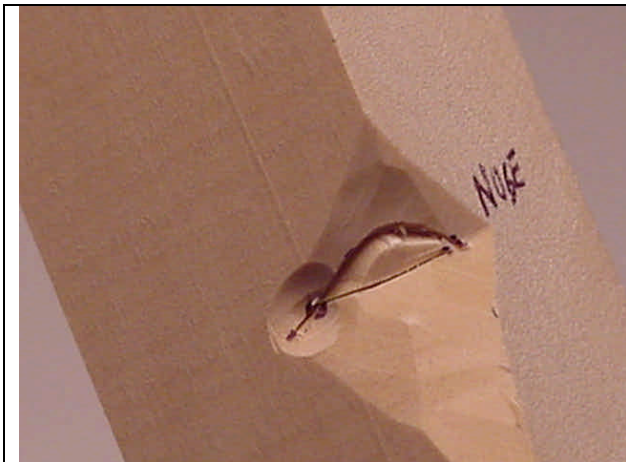
8. Holding your knife at right angles to the face, make a shallow cut around the eye outline. This cut extends past the outside corner of dot.



9. Lay your knife as flat against the cheek as possible. Rotating your knife around your opposite thumb cut a small sliver of wood off the top of the eye.



10. The lower side of the eye will have very little curvature. Holding your knife at right angles to the face, make a shallow cut from corner dot to corner dot. This cut will be through the bottom of the original "V" cut.



11. Progress So Far



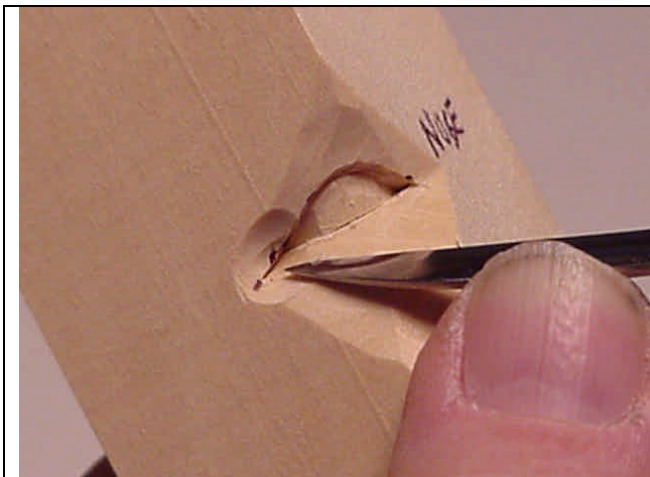
12. Deepen the cuts in the outside corner, then cutting downward, cut out the eye corner. This will add curvature to the eye on the outside corner.



13. Turn the stick over and deepen the cut on the inside corner. Cutting downward, remove the eye corner. Now you have curvature on the inside corner.



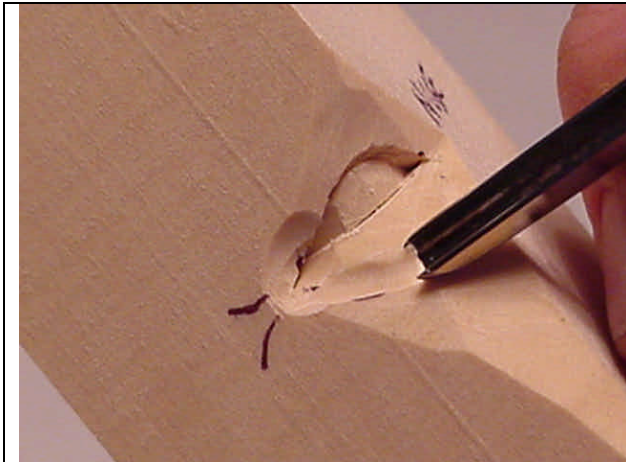
14. Turn the stick over. Now, cutting downward on the eye, just barely set the lower center of the eye inside the lower lid.



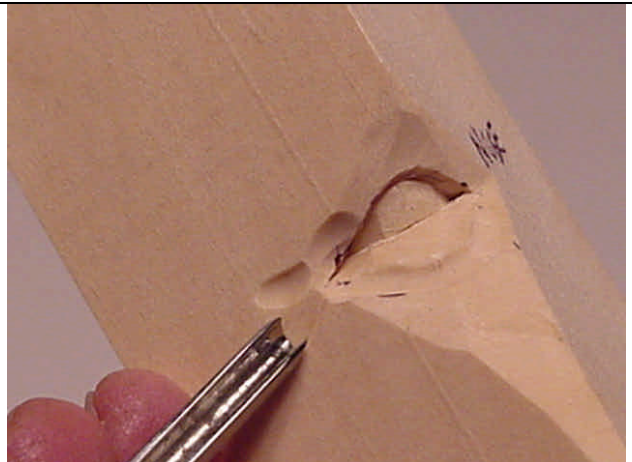
15. Trim the lower lid back against the eye, letting the upper lid hang over the lower lid on the outside corner.



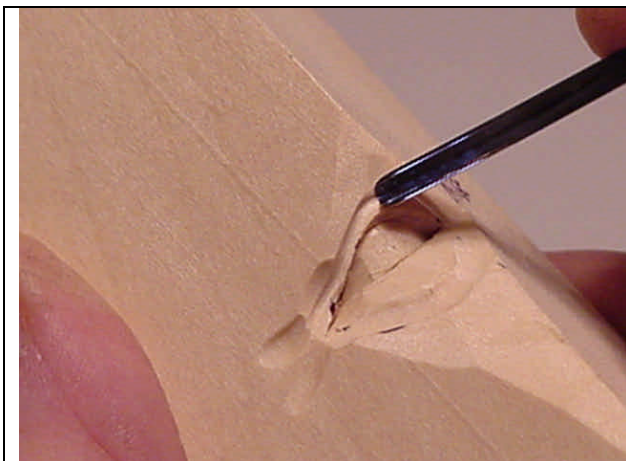
16. Draw in the crowfeet wrinkles. Draw a half-circle under the eye from inside corner to just outside of the outside corner. See Inset



17. Using the 3/16" deep bent veiner, start in the middle of the eye and cut towards the both corners.



18. Using the same gouge, cut the crows feet, by cutting towards the centerline.



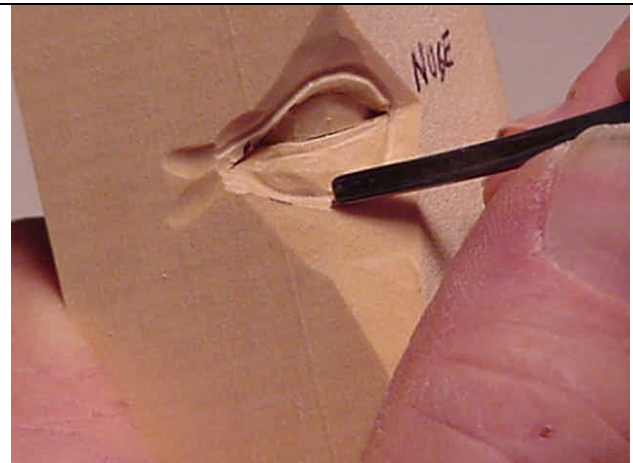
19. To make the top lid use a 1/16" v-too. Starting in the middle, cut towards each corner following the shape of the eye.



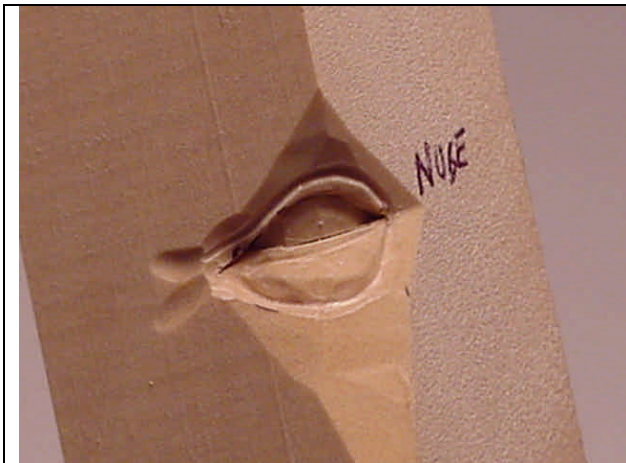
20. Progress so far!



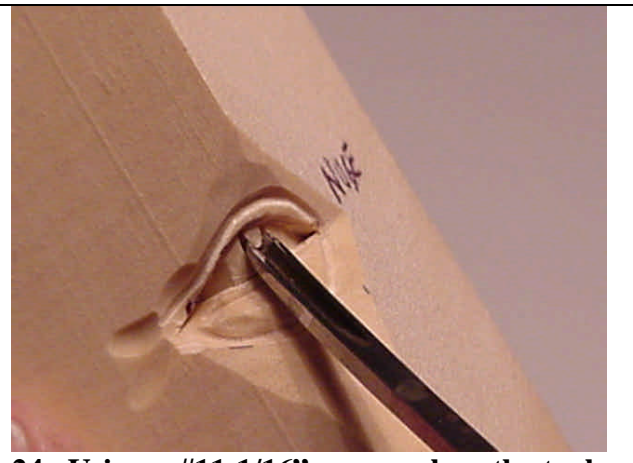
21. Using the 1/16" v-tool, cut in the lower lid, working towards centerline.



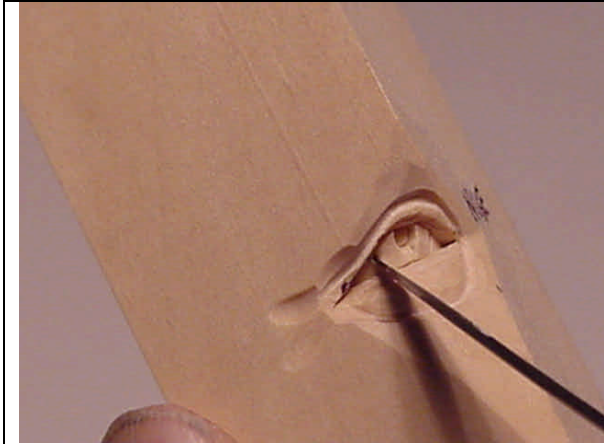
22. Using the 1/16" v-tool, highlight the crowfeet and bag under the eye,



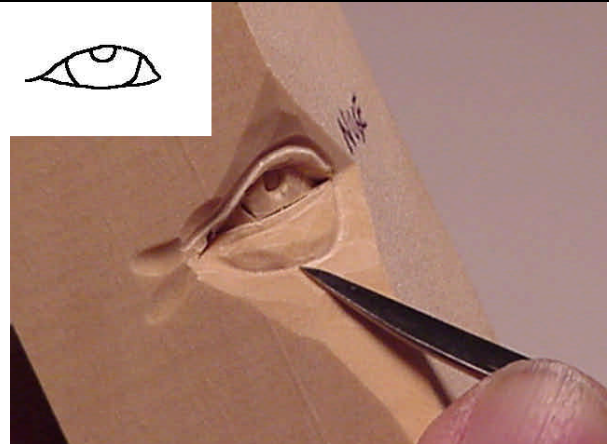
23 Almost done now.



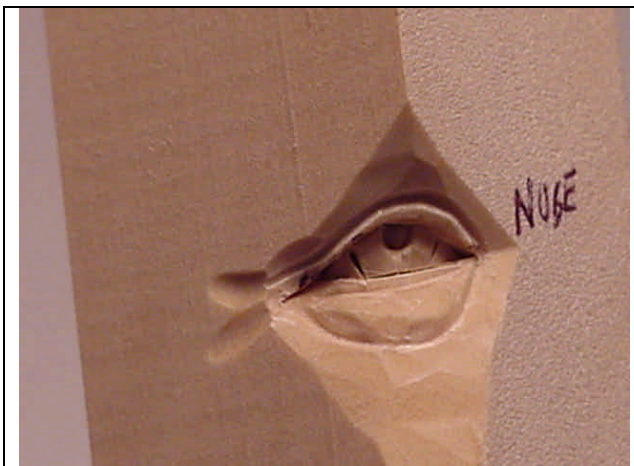
24. Using a #11-1/16" gouge, place the tool under the eye next to the upper lid. Push the tool straight in a short way. Using the knife, cut across the top of the gouge cut.



25. Using the knife, gently pop out the pupil. Make a shallow stab cut on both sides of the iris.



26. Relieve the sharp edge of the veiner cut under the bag of the eye with your knife.



27. The finished eye.