

2023 GMWC Club Project Elephant – Blocking in Part 4

Basic shape of the trunk:

At the March CarveIn, we continued to block in the basic parts of the Elephant, starting with the ears. To complete the basic features of the elephant, we will now move on to the head and trunk. Due to the shape of the trunk and direction of the grain, we have to be careful not to create a trunk that will snap off. With the large portion of the block on the blank, you shape the trunk to suit what you want, fairly straight up, or with lots of curves. Draw the profile you like and then with a coping saw or knife, cut the profile.

Tusk location and shape:

Before shaping the trunk, it is necessary to layout the location of where the tusks are on the side of the face, so you don't remove them by mistake, the trunk is inside the tusks. Draw the rough location, so you don't remove the wood while shaping the trunk. You can then begin to shape the face transition into the trunk, which will be refined later.



Starting on the trunk:

From the photos, you will see the trunk begins between the tusks and then begins to taper along its length. The bottom of the trunk is fairly flat to start carving, while the top tapers into more of a triangle shape. Take your time, remove a bit at a time, and work down to the shape and size you like. Grain direction will also play a part while carving the trunk. You also have a decision to make, how detailed do you want your elephant to be? This is also a good time to draw in the eye location



Mouth and tusks:

As you shape the trunk, you can also start to carve the head transition into the tusks, with the trunk between the tusks. While working on the underside of the trunk, also start to outline where the mouth lays below the trunk and between the tusks. The tusks can be made at this point to guide you in setting the parts of the face, trunk and tusks together. You can carve them from a green twig, or a piece of antler, straight or slightly bent.

**Homework:**

Up to this point we have focused on one of the main features at a time to get everything in place. The basic features of the elephant are now located and in place. Look over the reference photos and start working over all of the parts and begin to blend them into each other. Carve and rough set in the tusks, determine the eye locations, work on the ear folds, and legs, start to fine tune the basic shapes to blend together.