



Figure 24: Dan and Hilo work on a truss in one of my hands-on courses. Note how the nail in hinge point helps position the flat surface that is used to trace the cut line onto the log. (This is sort of a portable C-jig, turned on its side.)



Figure 25: The hinge point is half way through the log. If we removed all that wood from the tie beam, it would be much too weak. So we leave a large block of wood — a tenon—in the beam.



Figure 26: Cleaning out half of a joint. Note the lines on the top that are for tenon layout.

for example). The tenons, and the mortises to match them, are laid out from the chalklines / centerlines that you snapped on every log in the truss.

Cutting the Parts

Whether you marked the cut lines with a C-jig, or a laser, or my metal hinging jig, now you score the cut lines on each part with a utility knife, to prevent splintering. Cut the truss joints with a chainsaw or electric chainsaw (for small logs), and plane the joints flat with a hand or electric planer, a grinder-sander, or a slick (large chisel) (Figure 26). Test often with a straightedge and framing square (Figure 29). All the surfaces at joints are flat planes, so cutting them and getting them trued up is quite easy—unlike cutting a coped / scribed truss notch with its concave hollows and fragile edges. You want substantial flat-on-flat bearing inside the mitered joints (not edge on flat bearing like log wall corner notches).

Half of the joints have mortises, and these are easier to cut and true-up: no tenon to block the testing. For these joints, cut the larger of the two bearing surfaces first, and completely finish it. Reconnect the chalklines across the end-grain surface you just completed. Only then should you start cutting the second of the two surfaces (Figure 27 right & Figure 28). If you cut both surfaces, but forgot to connect the chalklines after the first surface was done, then you'll discover that it's now very difficult to draw the centerlines and mortise boundaries.

Fitting & Bolting

Test fit the truss, with the truss lying down flat, but high enough off the ground that you can see how well the joints fit on both the top and bottom. Support the truss pieces a few feet away from the joints or you won't be able to see the fits (Figure 30). Use truck ratchet straps, or come-alongs and nylon slings, to tightly pull the truss parts together.

The joints usually fit nicely the first time. If not, there are several possible causes. If the lofting deck was not flat, level, or not stiff enough, the C-jig would not have lofted accurately. Could you feel a bounce when you walked on the deck? Another cause for a bad-fit is if a truss part moved after the first joint was lofted and marked. Unfortunately, that part will not fit, and might have to be done again with a new log.



Figure 27: Left: Jordan chainsaws a tie beam joint where the rafter tail will be placed.

Right: Travis planes a rafter tail joint. Once smooth, he will extend the log's centerlines over this surface, and then draw the mortise, centered on these lines, and cut the mortise.

Log Construction Manual

Emilie Sanchez

A red circular graphic with a gradient, appearing as a stylized arrow or a partial circle, located to the right of the author's name.

Log Construction Manual:

Log Construction Manual Robert Wood Chambers, 2003 Log buildings are embedded deeply into North American history and culture For more than one thousand years builders have been weaving logs into homes shelters barns and churches Today however the buildings where we live and work are rarely handmade from natural materials In this context handcrafted scribe fitted natural log buildings are an attractive and uplifting alternative to conventional buildings and building materials This book tells you what you need to know to build your own log home and also reveals the deep rhythms and patterns of log construction Author Robert Chambers shows how to take naturally shaped tapered round logs and scribe fit them one to another so that they look like they actually grew together in the woods The Log Construction Manual is filled with information available nowhere else including the Log Selection Rules Chambers s brilliantly simple method for choosing which log to use next instructions for building hip and valley log rafters and roof trusses from full round logs step by step directions for laying out the sill logs for virtually any floor plan including hexagons pros and more state of the art compression fit saddle notches and underscribing to keep fits tight over time details on scribing and cutting long grooves and corner notches just like the pros and more Chambers also offers advice on organizing and financing a log home project and has loads of experience to share on cutting costs and avoiding common pitfalls He presents practical ideas for saving money and controlling costs Although handcrafted log homes are expensive to buy they are within reach for many as owner managed building projects Written concisely with great care in explaining important details the Log Construction Manual brings clarity insight depth and even humor to the log builder s craft This is a comprehensive book for log home owner builders beginners as well as professionals **Log Building Construction Manual** Robert Wood Chambers, 2001

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Table of Contents Log Construction Manual

1. Understanding the eBook Log Construction Manual
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Log Construction Manual
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Log Construction Manual
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Log Construction Manual
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Log Construction Manual
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Log Construction Manual User Reviews and Ratings
 - Log Construction Manual and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Log Construction Manual Free and Paid eBooks

- Log Construction Manual Public Domain eBooks
 - Log Construction Manual eBook Subscription Services
 - Log Construction Manual Budget-Friendly Options
6. Navigating Log Construction Manual eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Log Construction Manual Compatibility with Devices
 - Log Construction Manual Enhanced eBook Features
 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Log Construction Manual
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Log Construction Manual
 - Interactive Elements Log Construction Manual
 8. Staying Engaged with Log Construction Manual
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Log Construction Manual
 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Log Construction Manual
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Log Construction Manual
 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Log Construction Manual
 - Setting Reading Goals Log Construction Manual
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Log Construction Manual
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Log Construction Manual
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development

- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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