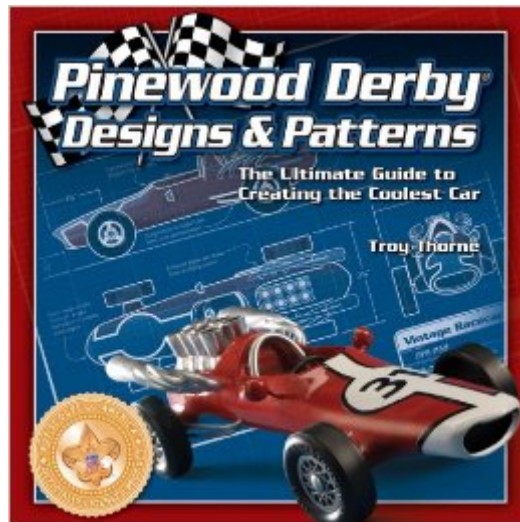


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Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns: The Ultimate Guide To Creating The Coolest Car



Synopsis

Build the coolest car in the pinewood derby! In this ultimate design guide, Troy Thorne shares his expert tips, techniques and amazing patterns so parents and scouts of any skill can build a jaw-dropping, prize-winning car that's quick out of the gate.

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Customer Reviews

Toolmonger wholeheartedly recommends Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns to anyone looking to introduce their children to woodworking and the shop via building a 'Derby car. This book will serve as an excellent guide to the entire process, and will dramatically improve your chances of turning out a winning car - regardless of your past carving and woodworking experience. This last weekend my neighbor and his son (age 7) invited my son, Decker (almost 5), to come and watch his Cub Scout Pinewood Derby race. If you're not familiar with this event, the Cub Scouts host a race every year where the participants take a standard block of wood and four plastic wheels and turn it into a pure racing machine or something else. It's been over 30 years for me, but I still remember my dad taking me out into the workshop and helping me use his bandsaw and sander to carve up my own car, #87. It wasn't much to look at, but it was mine. It still sits on a bookshelf in my office as a reminder of not only the race but also the time I spent with my dad at a very young age, learning to use some basic woodworking tools. Decker isn't quite old enough yet for the Cub Scouts, but he absolutely loved looking at the 100+ cars sitting on display for the judges to examine and weigh. All cars must weigh less than 5 ounces, but racers try to hit as close to 5 ounces as possible because

the weight of the car affects its speed when it is released on the downward-pointing ramp. There were a lot of interesting solutions to getting the cars up in weight (the block weighs about 1.4 ounces and the wheels and paint add enough to bring it up to about 4.3 ounces so there's some wiggle room for embellishment and personalization of a racer's vehicle.) Races this day were performed 4 cars at a time. To ensure fairness, multiple races were performed with each car racing on a different track (1, 2, 3, or 4); I'm guessing this is done because maybe one or more tracks run faster or have a better/smooth surface. Whatever the reasons, each scout gets to see his car race multiple times. Awards were given out for 1st, 2nd and 3rd place finishes for different troops/ages as well as some design awards. In addition to taking my son, I also took along a set of 4 books provided to me by Fox Chapel Publishing that relate to the Pinewood Derby. I passed the books around to the various scouts and parents, letting them take a look at the information that I'd already read and discovered about creating a great racer. The first book, *Getting Started in Pinewood Derby* by Troy Thorne, is the clear choice for the beginning scout. It's a full-color book with some really detailed photos showing how to cut, carve, paint, and decorate your racer. There's advice on safety, tips on making the wheels run faster and smoother, help with getting your car to the proper weight, and a great little documentation section at the back for recording information about your racer such as race times and taping in some photos. You'll also find a small number of templates that can be cut out (or photocopied) and taped over the block of wood, helping you make the proper cuts to shape your block of wood into some really cool designs. Hands down, this is one of the best little books I've seen on basic woodworking skills, and I'm very impressed with the cartoon character of Dash Derby who provides tips and advice throughout the book on improving your racer's odds in the final race. The actual instructions in the book are written for a young reader, and I'm very happy to see that Thorne wrote the book not for the parent, but for the scout - simple language and short sentences for each full color photo make it easy to follow along and tweak your racer's wheel alignment, decal placement and many other racer details. The book follows loosely the format of a comic book in many sections, with balloon windows showing a step and POW BANG BAP sound effect graphics added for fun. This 96 page book is the perfect gift for any new Cub Scout, but honestly the book is pure fun and would make a great parent/child project for any weekend. I'm already planning on visiting the scout supply store here in Atlanta and obtaining the block/wheels kit because Decker asked after the event if we could make a car. Actually, I plan on buying two kits one for him and one for me. Why my own kit? Because of the next book. *Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns* is another book by Troy Thorne. This 118 page book follows a similar format as the previously mentioned book, but this one is all about variety. It does have some additional

woodworking tips and advice, but these are scattered throughout the book and picked up depending on the type of racer you wish to create. The racers in the *Getting Started in Pinewood Derby* book are great, but if you've got a child looking to create a real eye-catching racer, this is the companion book you'll want to grab. I'm not kidding - some of the designs in this book are almost unbelievable given that they all start with a single small block of wood. And the painting and decal applying tips are much more advanced in this book, but still within the skill range of any young child with some adult supervision. Much of the design work in this book is done using a Dremel or similar rotary powered tool, and one look at some of the car shapes in its pages will tell you that a small coping saw won't be enough. That said, you can still do all the major cuts with a basic saw and then switch to the rotary tool for the more detailed shaping. At the back of the book you'll once again get some templates for a variety of designs including a Mini Cooper, a NASCAR stock car vehicle, an Army Jeep, a Ferrari, and a couple of classic jalopies. (The Stock Car and Army Jeep are unbelievable in their details, but just take a look at the cover to see the #37 Red Racer with exposed carburetors and exhaust to get an idea of just how crazy this book takes the subject of design.) But let me repeat my earlier statement - after reading through this entire book, there is nothing in here that a scout couldn't do with help from a parent. Kids age 7 or 8 and up should be able to do much of the work themselves if they read the instructions carefully and have an adult on hand to help with the more dangerous tools. And by the way, the section on applying decals is excellent - I've always wondered how one might go about applying custom color designs and the information on the use of tape, wax paper, and a few other tools is well worth the price of the book alone. The third book turned out to be the most popular - I had a lot of parents and kids writing down the title and a few asking if they could borrow it for a few days. It's titled *Pinewood Derby Speed Secrets* and it's written by David Meade (and illustrated by Troy Thorne). This book is all about the competition, but it's got some really amazing bonus items such as a great little essay in the front on the history of the Pinewood Derby. It's so cool to see photos of the early days of this event as well as the typical design and look of the earlier racers. There's also some great advice for parents early in the book about working with your child, teaching them concepts of racing (such as aerodynamics, potential energy, friction, and inertia) and discussing some pros and cons of design. (I never really gave much thought to the shape of the nose, but the author makes a solid point in explaining why you don't want a tapered nose on your car - lesson learned.) The first project in the book is called *The Winning Car* and it's a beautifully shaped vehicle that looks almost like my original car so many years ago (it's the red racer in the back on the cover. It's a tapered design and I believe most kids would be able to build this racer on their own. What's nice is that this basic racer is used to teach so

many tool and woodworking techniques that are then used again throughout the book. Two additional racers (The Champion Car in the middle on the cover and The Ultimate Car, the yellow vehicle at the front on the cover) are covered in detail and then additional chapters cover wheel and axle preparation. This book, however, has the ultimate tips and advice on wheel prep in my opinion, and I'm blown away by the time spent on prepping the wheels to run smoother and faster and the techniques used. The book finishes up with some great full-color examples of other racers as well as a handful of new templates that can be copied and glued onto a block for cutting and shaping. Finally, the last book I shared with the parents and scouts was the Pinewood Derby Workbook & Logbook by Troy Thorne. This short 32 page book is a real eye-catcher. Full color photos of some car ideas adorn the inside cover and then the book offers up a variety of workbook pages that allow your young racer to document things such as their prototype design sketches using some graph paper templates. Other templates allow you to transfer your side and top prototype designs to a wraparound templates that can be cut out and taped or glued to the block for the actual cutting and shaping part of the project. There are templates for designing the car's color and decal placement (the back inside cover has a large assortment of full-color patterns for the car's color scheme) and a really useful page for recording the weights of all the individual pieces prior to assembly - shaped and painted block, four wheels, four axles - so you can determine the amount of extra weight you need to add to bring the car up to 5 ounces. Then the workbook moves on to pages that allow you to troubleshoot alignment by recording various test runs and writing down your observations about the car's behavior. The book finishes up by providing some Race Day logs for recording the Lane # and the Time and Position of your racer. Some tips and reminders for race day are included in a small checklist so you don't forget things like glue, graphite, screwdriver, tape, camera, and pen or pencil. The last few pages includes a place to glue or tape in photos of your car in the various building stages and record details about your car, your friends' cars, and the race results of the day and, of course, your favorite memories about the event. A nice big page offers a place for a larger photo of your final vehicle. If you've got a Cub Scout or a young boy who will be joining the Cub Scouts soon, you're going to be swamped with information about all the events this organization puts together. But the Pinewood Derby event is one of the most memorable ones at least to my memory. It's not about winning, of course, but I have to admit that it's awfully fun to have a car that can really put on some speed and a good showing. Any of these books would make a great gift for a young scout or really any young child. Boy or girl, building a racer with your child is one of those projects that can be done in an afternoon and will be memorable to all involved. Even if you're not involved in the Cub Scouts, there's nothing to prevent you from designing a few racers and having

your own race - there are instructions and vendors all over the Internet for putting together your own track, so don't let that stop you. Decker's not letting up on his request to build a racer, so I've got to get over to the scout supply store sometime this week so we can start on a couple of racers this weekend. I think I'm looking forward to it even more than he is not the final racer, but the time spent together. Pinewood Derby races are a classic childhood memory, an icon of American boyhood. They can be a challenge to a son's creativity--and to his dad's patience--making an incredible bonding experience for both of them. Dad dreams of the fastest car, while his son dreams of the coolest looking car. Excitement builds and plans start spinning as they wait to receive their Derby kit. For some, the excitement cools when they are faced with a small, plain block of light wood and tiny plastic wheels. What can be made from that? Troy Thorne has written an awesome book that can tell you exactly what can be made from that! It's called Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns: The Ultimate Guide to Creating the Coolest Car. The book is officially licensed by the Boy Scouts of America, and it offers so much more than a tutorial for Derby cars. The guide is written to the parents, providing them with everything they could possibly want to know from start to finish. I love that the introduction begins with a reminder of what the car creating process is really about. Safety and integrity are stressed throughout the book, with excellent suggestions and tips. I love that it is written at a level that anyone can understand, regardless of experience level. Detailed descriptions of the tools needed and how to use them are offered, with full-color photographs and very clear directions. At first, three basic designs are shared, with step-by-step instructions and a photograph for each step. Later, 31 amazing patterns are provided, with full-scale templates and even a page of decals. The amazingly detailed photographs and simple instructions make this guide very easy to follow. From preparation to Weigh-In, readers are given every detail in building, painting, and prepping their cars, even down to polishing the axles. "The idea is to use the least amount of wood, with the most amount of weight in the back," Thorne says. LANCASTER COUNTY, PA - TROY Thorne has carved out a niche in cutting-edge race cars that fit in the palm of his hand. For anyone who has ever been a Cub Scout or the parent of a Cub Scout, Pinewood Derby cars will need no introduction. According to Wikipedia, this 54-year-old trademark event, held annually in school cafeterias and gymnasiums nationwide, is the most popular of all Boy Scout events, and it has spawned a large cottage industry of customizing supplies and information. In this book, author Troy Thorne, a graphic arts designer and father of a Cub Scout, has joined that club with a detailed, clearly-illustrated step-by-step "how-to" and idea book for wannabee race winners and their parents. The designs are gorgeous and, in many cases, quite elaborate, with high wings, flame decals, wire exhaust pipes, windshields and slick paint jobs. Thorne also shows several performance-enhancing

tricks such as adding weight and polishing wheels and axles. The book is written directly to the parent, with the expressed intention that all the tricks and techniques in the book should be shared with and taught to the Cub in a rewarding and bonding experience for both. The book begins with a long, illustrated list of tools and supplies that will be needed to accomplish all the modifications described in the how-to chapters. Several of these were quite a revelation for me, as I was pretty naive about such things when my son was in Cub Scouts twenty years ago. I just showed him how to cut out interesting shapes with a coping saw and polish the axles with fine sandpaper and graphite. Granted, my son's entries weren't exceptional looking, and they never won top prizes, but they were his creations, not mine. Thorne takes the position that it's okay for dads (or moms, I suppose) to do a lot of the work, as the book illustrates procedures like using Dremel tools, a benchtop bandsaw, a scroll saw and airbrush equipment - equipment your average Cub isn't likely to have access to - with instructions like, "Provide a secure platform that's a safe distance away from the front of the saw so your child can watch you cut and see how the saw works." He does say that all of the designs can be cut out with a coping saw, though, so the unspoken implication is that it is up to individual parents and Cubs to decide where to draw the line on parental involvement, as it always has been. I have no doubt that the average Cub Scout is clever and coordinated enough to learn most of the skills and awarenesses in this book, but the advantage clearly goes to the Cub whose father has the tools and skills to make all these embellishments possible. Moral quandaries aside, I think Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns is a valuable book on small-scale model making that can benefit all kinds of woodworkers, young or old, Scout or not. If you happen to be the father of a Cub Scout who wants the fastest and fanciest Pinewood Derby car, this book will be of particular interest to you.

TM reader Brenda wrote to ask where she might find help with teaching her son to make a Pinewood Derby car. And it's a great question: Where does a parent who's not that handy turn to give their kids the full Pinewood Derby experience? I can think of one suggestion: Start with long-time Toolmonger reader (and friend) Troy Thorne's book Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns. Troy is the creative director over at Fox Chapel publishing, and he's definitely a handy guy. By day he lays out awesome woodworking books. But he spends his nights in the shop, tweaking his home-built Cobra replica and building furniture and canoes. He knows a thing or two about Pinewood Derby cars, too. Designs & Patterns presents the whole building process from start to finish along with specific plans for a couple of hot-ticket cars. Officially licensed by the Boy Scouts of America, this 118-page softcover (ISBN: 978-1-56523-341-6, \$12.95) by Troy Thorne includes easy-to-follow steps for building various pinecar racers, patterns and designs, techniques for creating custom decals, applying a high-quality finish and helpful tips for preparing wheels, axles

and weight for the race. For more information, call 1-800-457-9112 or e-mail Sales@FoxChapelPublishing.com. This complete guide will help you to create the coolest derby car in your troop! From Safety, Tools, Painting Supplies, to Adding Weight, Patterns, and Race Day Prep, you will be fully prepared for the big event! Color photos and diagramed patterns provide great visual help, too! In this book, author Troy Thorne, a graphic arts designer and father of a Cub Scout, has joined that club with a detailed, clearly-illustrated step-by-step "how-to" and idea book for wannabee race winners and their parents. The designs are gorgeous and, in many cases, quite elaborate, with high wings, flame decals, wire exhaust pipes, windshields and slick paint jobs. Thorne also shows several performance-enhancing tricks such as adding weight and polishing wheels and axles. The book is written directly to the parent, with the expressed intention that all the tricks and techniques in the book should be shared with and taught to the Cub in a rewarding and bonding experience for both. *Pinewood Derby Designs and Patterns: The Ultimate Guide to Creating the Coolest Car*, by Troy Thorne, features 34 patterns with measured drawings. Here's a chance to let your kids make something fun in your shop. The book provides detailed instructions such as what size drill bits to use and how deep to drill. But what kid (or parent) doesn't want to build the fastest car? Tips, such as where to place weighted sinkers are included. It also covers painting and making decals.

Build the Coolest Car in the Pinewood Derby! Want to craft a cool-looking car that's quick out of the gate? In this ultimate design guide, Troy Thorne -- woodworker, artist, and Derby-winning dad - shares his expert tips, techniques, and amazing patterns so parents and scouts of any skill level can work together to build a great looking, prize-winning car. With *Pinewood Derby Designs & Patterns*, parents and scouts can build the coolest, trophy-winning car while building memories that last a lifetime! This handy and informative guide will show you: " Easy-to-follow steps for building the High-Wing Racer, Stock Car, and Vintage Racecar " 34 jaw-dropping patterns and designs " Techniques for creating custom decals and applying a high-quality finish " Helpful tips for prepping the car's wheels, axles, and weight for the race

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