

## "Pheasant"



### Introduction

Welcome to marquetry kit "Pheasant" from QJS Marquetry. This design is quite complex, and maybe a little daunting, but can still be completed by a relative novice with care. (Please note that the colours may differ slightly from those shown in the pictures.)

### What Do I Need?

In addition to the kit you will need a sharp craft knife, a surface to work on (a craft cutting mat is ideal but a kitchen board or some strong cardboard will do), a metal ruler or straight-edge, masking tape (or clear tape) and some PVA wood glue.

Unless you have specifically requested to have un-shaded veneers, most of the veneers in your pack will have had their edges shaded by being dipped into hot sand. This enables you to include more detail in your picture, with better definition between the feathers.

### Are you Ready?

At a minimum you should have followed our "Introduction to Marquetry by the Window Method" and made the "leaf" practice piece satisfactorily. Better still, you will have successfully completed one of our introductory kits such as "Hummingbirds" or "Kingfishers". These instructions will simply refer to "cut in" or "insert" and assume you have the basics.

*(Basic instructions available at <http://qjsmarquetry.co.uk/downloads/instructions-window-method.pdf>)*

### Preparing your Background

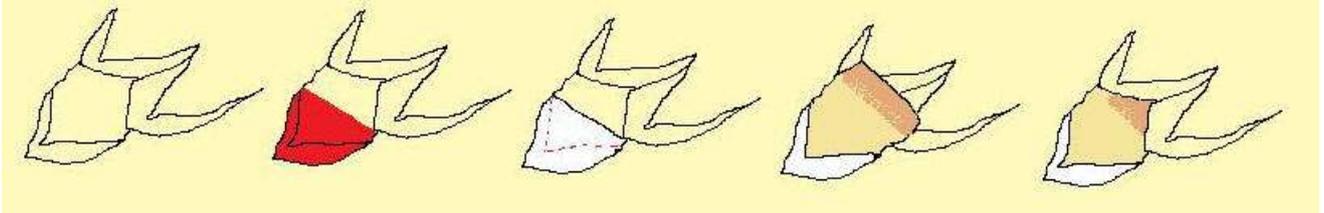
You will first need your background. This may be supplied in two pieces. If it is, you will need to make a join as follows: Using a straightedge, carefully trim a sliver from the two edges you want to join so that they fit tightly together. Holding them flat on the table, tape the face-side of the join using two or three pieces of tape. If you stretch the tape slightly it will help to pull the joint tight. Then tape the whole length of the join. Turn the work over and rub PVA glue into the join (if you flex the joint slightly you can be sure the glue gets onto the joint surfaces). Scrape off excess glue, tape the back and allow to dry. Once dry, remove the tape from the front, but leave the tape on the back for added strength.

## Getting Started

With your background ready (either single, as supplied, or joined) - tape the drawing in place, ensuring the design is positioned where you want your pheasant to be.

## The Body

With almost any bird design the place to start is the bottom row of feathers. This is because you can simplify the pieces you cut in. As you add the subsequent rows the pieces in the lower rows, almost magically, take on more complex shapes and make your final picture look amazing!



Many of the body feathers are bi-coloured, which makes them look much more complex than they actually are – don't panic! Copy through the basic outline of the feather and mark the light highlight. Now cut out a simple triangular shaped piece which does not go beyond the line you have drawn, but encompasses the entire white feather tip (as shown red above). Cut and glue in a piece of plain white (don't use your shaded edges here).

Once the white tip is securely glued in place, and taped on the back, copy through the inner shape and cut in the rest of the feather. Simplify the upper part of the feather as you can cut away part of it later as you add further feather rows. This is the time to start using the scorched shading ... position the insert such that the feather darkens towards the top. As further feathers are added this will give a 3D effect by replicating the shadows under each layer of feathers.

Keep adding the body feathers with their white tips.



**Hint:** you don't have to follow the drawing to the millimetre! When I made the original picture (from which the line drawing was made) I was working to a photograph. There were far too many feathers to make a life-like copy, so I had to improvise. No two pheasants are the same, so adapt and modify as you see fit.

## The Coloured Feathers

When adding the red and purple feathers to the front of the neck, and especially later when adding the blue and green feathers, utilise the shaded areas so the bottom tips of the feathers are bright, but the top is more subdued. As further rows of feathers are added this will give the impression of the shadows caused by overlapping feathers.

## The White Ruff

The tiny zig-zag cuts along the white ruff look difficult, but are fairly straightforward if tackled carefully. First tape the back of the area to be cut, then cut out a small section – don't try to cut the whole ruff in one go. Extend the window above the top "zig-zag" and cut it with a simple straight top. Place a piece of the white veneer under the window, ensuring the grain is running into the points. It's best to tape this piece in place so it can't move accidentally. Carefully mark through the zig-zag and other edges, then remove the piece, finish cutting out and insert as normal. Pushing the narrow points together should ensure a tight join, but you may find a small gap at the top of your insert. Don't worry, that gap will be lost when you cut in the next row of feathers.



Once the white ruff is in place, continue cutting in the blue, green and black feathers of the neck using the same zig-zag cuts. The photo shows how to select from the shaded edge of the veneer so that the feather tips are bright but the higher part of the feather is more subdued.



**Hint:** use the light transfer paper when marking onto the black feathers – the light line can be easier to see than dark carbon marks.



### The Crest

The white crest is best added first as a single piece with the inner edge simplified into the head area. Once this piece has been glued in the finer details can be added individually.

With these fine details it's difficult to use the "window" method. It can be simpler, and quicker, to just cut a sliver from the edge of the insert veneer, matching its taper by eye. Try the piece in the aperture and adjust, or cut another sliver, until it fits. Then push it into position and trim off the bottom to fit. Glue in as normal.



### Beak

The beak is cut in two, or more easily three, pieces. Utilise the shading to give some definition between the top and bottom beaks. The black area of the chin is shown on the drawing as a single piece, but if necessary insert two or more pieces to fill this area, it won't affect the look of the picture.

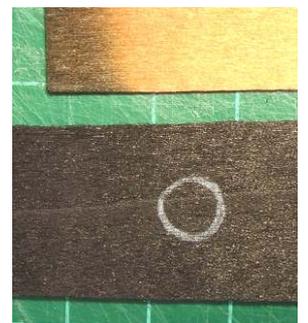


### Eye

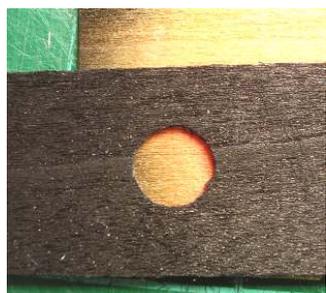
The eye is one of the key elements of the design, so take your time to get it right. It is easier to assemble parts of the eye separately and then insert the whole assembly into your picture. Start by inserting the main red area of the face and leave that for the glue to dry.



Take a piece of black veneer and "drill" a small hole using the point of your knife. Work from both sides so the hole is uniform. Cut a small sliver of white veneer with a width about the same as the diameter of the tiny hole. Trim the end of the sliver square, then carefully chop off a tiny cube from the end. Push this into the hole in the black veneer, glue up as normal and leave to dry.



Place a different piece of black veneer on top of your picture, under the eye on the drawing. Transfer through the edge of the iris. Cut out this piece – the hole should be close to a perfect circle – and insert a piece of orange. Choosing an area which has a little shading will give a more rounded look to the finished eye. Glue in and leave to dry.



Tape the back of the orange iris, then cut out the aperture for the pupil. (It's easier to just cut a uniform distance from the edge of the iris than to try to trace from the drawing.) Position the black veneer with the small white highlight and choose the position you want for the highlight. Tape everything together and carefully cut out, insert and glue in the pupil. Leave to dry.





Now cut the aperture for the eye in the red area of the face. Position the completed eye behind the aperture and choose its position. Take care with this step as tiny changes of position really affect the expression of your pheasant (see photos).

When you are happy, cut in the eye assembly.

Finish off with any extra feathers, tufts, etc.

### Preparing the Mounting Board

Assuming you wish to mount your picture onto the MDF board provided and not stick it to some other object you will need to prepare the board.

First, stick the backing veneer to one side of the board. This will be the back (so the veneer provided may not be very decorative) but will help balance the board and prevent warping. You will need two firm pieces of flat board at least as big as the baseboard, strong clamps, some soft packing material (such as newspaper) and a sheet of plastic (to protect from glue). Place the packing material on one of the boards, topped with plastic. Place the veneer on the plastic. Apply adhesive evenly to the MDF baseboard (not the veneer or it will curl) and press it onto the veneer, add the second large board and clamp firmly. When you come to glue your picture onto the board the procedure is the same, but you need to ensure you have removed all tape from the back of the picture and that you place it **face down** onto the plastic sheet. Once glued – perhaps an hour in a warm room - remove from the clamps and carefully trim and sand the edges.

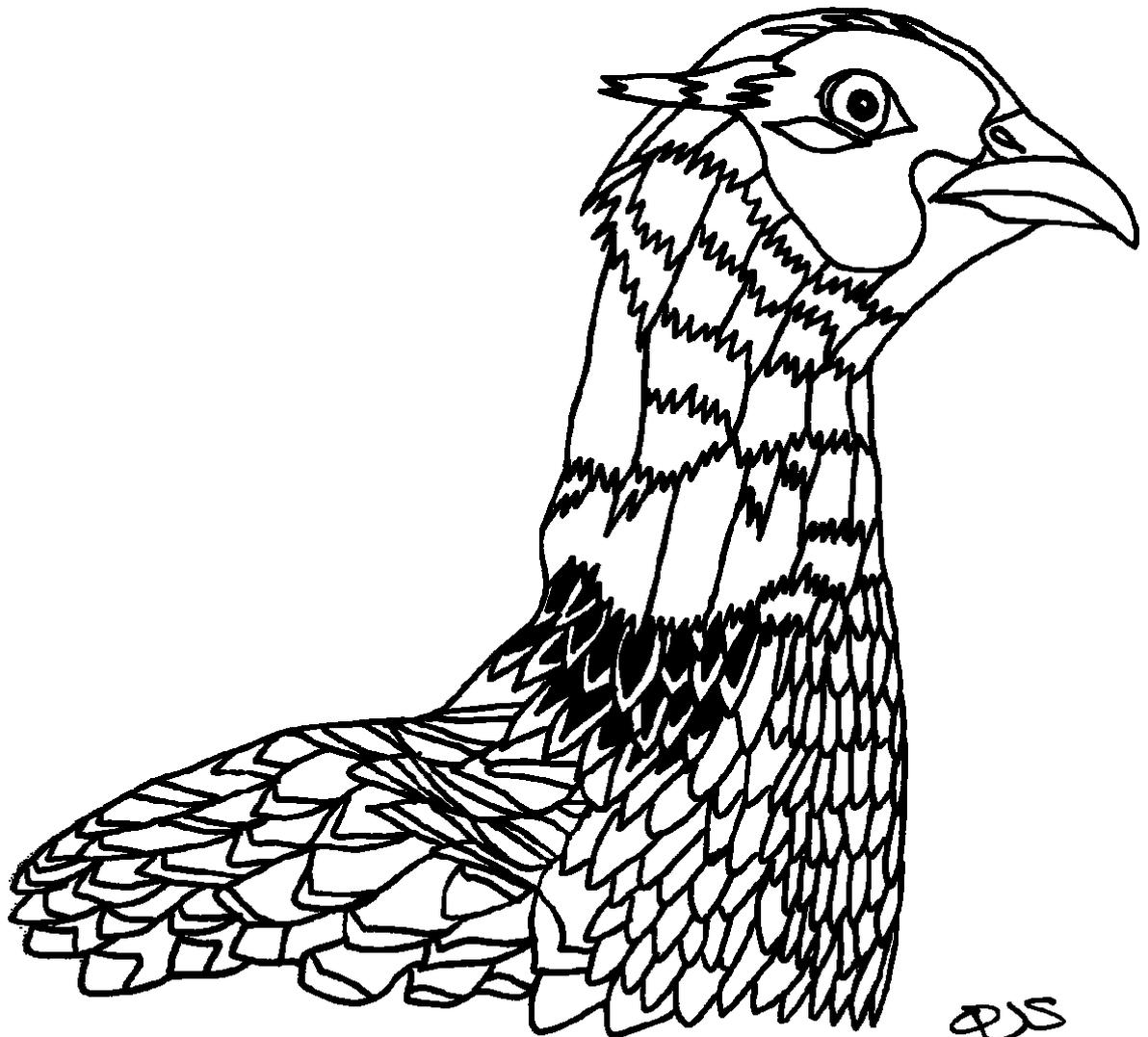
Conventionally marquetry pictures are not framed, so the edges of the board need to be veneered as they will be visible when the picture is hung. (If you are going to put your picture into a frame you don't need to veneer the edges). Strips of both maple and black have been provided for the edges – choose which you prefer. Cut strips of veneer slightly wider than the thickness of the board and glue them in place, holding them with tightly stretched tape while the glue dries. You can do two opposite edges at the same time, then trim those down and repeat for the other two sides. Once your board is veneered on the back and sides you can glue down your picture (this order minimises the number of exposed veneer edges visible when viewing the hanging picture. Tape the front for protection and carefully remove all tape from the back before gluing.

Once your glue is dried and you have trimmed up your picture give it a careful sanding using a moderate grit abrasive paper (180-240). Take care to remove dust (the brush on your vacuum cleaner is ideal) as contrasting colour dusts can get into the dark and light veneers and make your picture look dull. Finally a coat or two of lacquer or varnish (follow the manufacturer's instructions) will bring up the colours and make your pheasant look splendid.

More detailed instructions for mounting, sanding and polishing your picture can be found on our website at: <http://qjsmarquetry.co.uk/downloads/instructions-finishing.pdf>

For more help and information about marquetry please contact:

- **QJS Marquetry**  
01785 850614  
[www.qjsmarquetry.co.uk](http://www.qjsmarquetry.co.uk)
- **The Marquetry Society**  
[www.marquetry.org](http://www.marquetry.org)



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**Packing list:** veneers, baseboard, instructions, abrasive paper, carbon and transfer paper, Marquetry Society leaflet, practice exercise