

The Wooden Whistle

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Introduction:

In order to make it easier for you to follow these instructions (and for me to write them), I have used specific sized pieces of wood using a specific sized drill bit drilling a specific depth hole. After you have made a whistle using these dimensions, you will realize that the specifics are really not needed. You can be creative and use different sizes and shapes of wood. The depth and diameter of the hole you drill will determine the tone of the whistle. Deeper holes with larger diameters produce a whistle with a lower tone. Not so deep holes with smaller diameter will produce a whistle with a higher tone. In these instructions, I have recommended a large diameter dowel for the body of the whistle, but frankly, I have made a great square whistle out of a block of wood which is 1" x 1" x 4". I have also made a cool little whistle out of a pencil.

CAUTION: When you make your whistle, you should remember to use safety goggles while drilling, and take all appropriate safety precautions when using tools. Also keep in mind that whistles are items which are put in the mouth, and therefore should not be used by children under the age of three or by any child who might chew or choke on it. Chewing on the end of a wooden whistle could cause pieces to break off creating a choking hazard. A person can also choke if a small whistle is swallowed, so take care in the use of your whistle.

Tools needed:

- Hacksaw or small handsaw
- Drill and 3/8" drill bit
- Utility knife
- Sandpaper

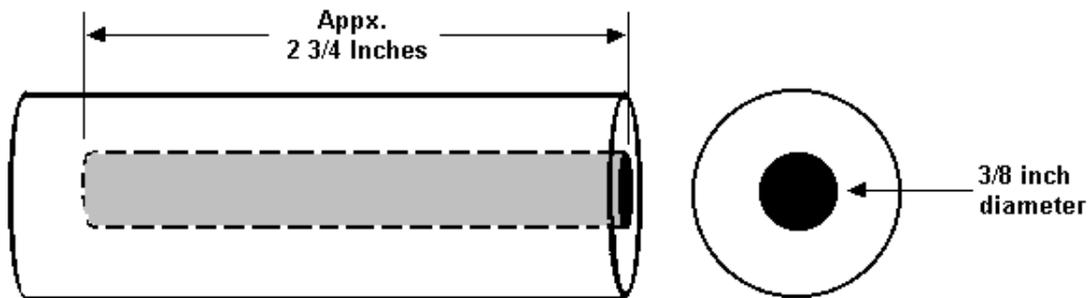
Materials needed:

1) A 3 inch long piece of 7/8" or 1" diameter dowel rod (a piece of an old wooden broom handle works fine for this, or a piece of a tree branch. If you use a broom handle, be sure to sand any old paint off of the wood before using the whistle, as some paint is toxic.)

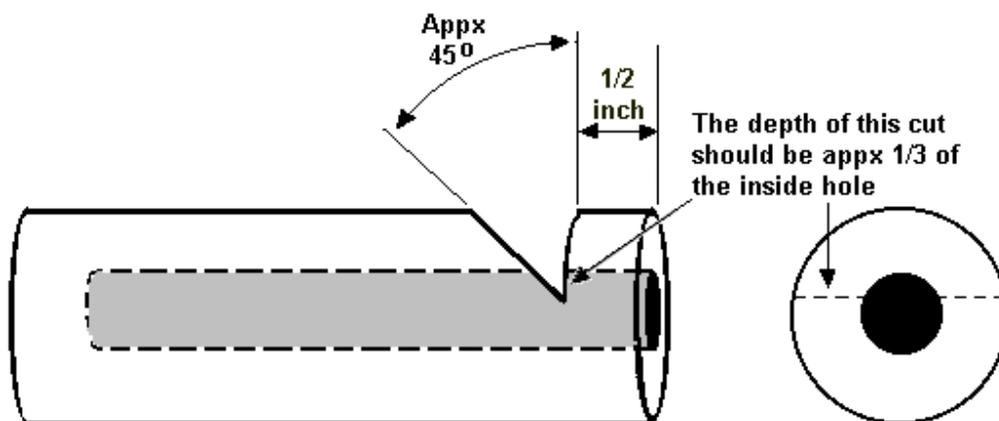
2) A 4 inch long piece of 3/8" diameter dowel rod (any cylindrical piece of wood will work. Again, you can even use a piece of a tree branch. The diameter of this piece, as you will see in the instructions below, should be the same as the diameter of an available drill bit. For illustration purposes, we used a 3/8" dowel and a 3/8" drill bit.)

3) A non-toxic wood glue

Step 1: In the center of the large diameter dowel rod, drill a 3/8" diameter hole about 2 3/4 inch deep, as shown in the diagram below. (Be sure to securely clamp the dowel in a vise or similar device and wear all appropriate safety gear to avoid injury while drilling the hole.)

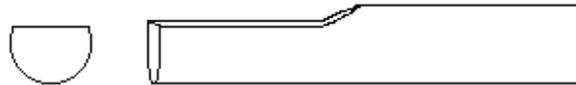


Step 2: Using a saw, make a cut into the dowel which is approximately 1/3 of the way into the hole you just drilled. This cut should be about 1/2" from the end of the dowel. Then make another cut at about a 45° angle from the first which meets the first cut at its deepest point. When you complete these cuts, you will have cut a small wedge-shape out of the dowel which exposes the hole you have drilled. Using the utility knife, clean out any small splinters which may appear around the interior hole. See the diagrams below.



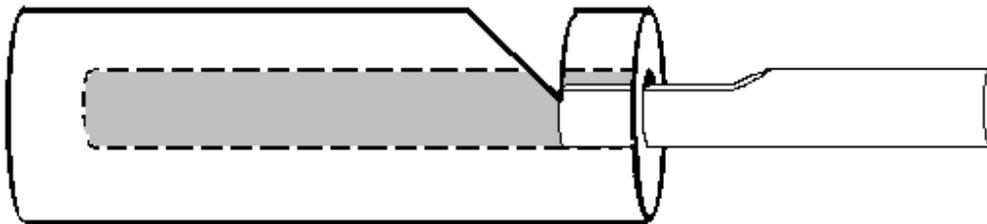
The next two steps in making your whistle may take a little trial and error. Minor adjustments in these steps can make a big difference in how well your whistle will work.

Step 3: With the utility knife or the sandpaper, flatten about 1 inch of the smaller 3/8 inch diameter dowel rod as shown below. The depth you flatten will determine how well your whistle will work. Start by flattening about 1/4 of the diameter of the dowel. You may have to flatten it a little bit more later.



On the small dowel, flatten about 1/4 the diameter for approximately 1 inch

Step 4: Insert the flattened end of the smaller dowel into the hole on the larger dowel with the flat side up. It should be inserted until you can just see it through the wedge shaped hole on the top of the large dowel.



Insert the small dowel until you can just see it through the wedge shaped hole on the top of the large dowel.

Gently blow through the hole in the end of the large dowel. Blow from the top, do not stick the protruding end of the small dowel into your mouth. If your whistle doesn't whistle well try moving the smaller dowel in or out a tiny bit until the whistle works. If it still doesn't work well, you may have to flatten the top of the small dowel a bit more. Patience and small adjustments will pay off here.

Step 5: After you have a working whistle, mark the small dowel with a pencil so you know how it is inserted, then remove the dowel. Put glue on the round section of the dowel being careful not to allow the glue to get on the flattened portion (A hardened drop of glue on the flattened portion of the small dowel can impede the air flow and cause your whistle not to work. However, be sure to cover the entire curved portion of the dowel with glue so that the small dowel will be securely glued into the larger dowel.)

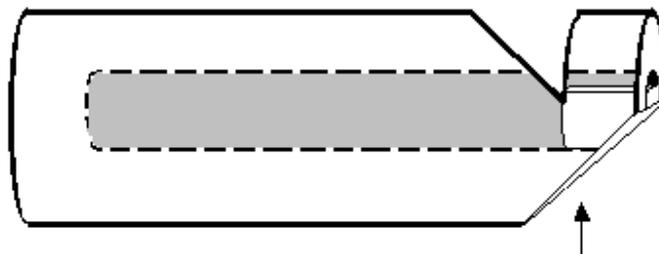
After you have put glue on the small dowel, reinsert the small dowel into the larger dowel. Test blow your whistle again, then put the whistle aside and allow the glue to fully harden.

Step 6: After the glue has fully set, use your saw to carefully cut off the small dowel flush with the end of the larger dowel. You now have a functioning whistle.



Cut off the small dowel flush with the large dowel.

Step 7: Then use your saw to cut a wedge shape off the bottom of the whistle. Your whistle will look like the picture below. This step is optional, but if you do it your whistle will look better and be easier to blow.



Cutting an angular section off with your saw will make your whistle easier to blow.

Step 8: Use the sand paper to sand any rough edges or saw marks from your whistle. Be sure no splinters are on your whistle.

When you have finished, your whistle should look like the picture below.

