

Drawing full-scale templates in the design phase is often impractical, and using the grid approach to scaling free-form curves is neither quick nor accurate. For those who still prefer to hand draw their woodworking projects on paper, French curves are essential drafting tools for drawing organic curves through a set of points.

The set of six Veritas® French Curves consists of three **design** curves and three **build** curves. The build set is exactly four times larger than the design set. This is a physical expression of the 1:4 scale commonly used in furniture design. Together, the two sets of curves solve the transition problem of designing then building organic shapes, without the need for scaling grids and interpolation.

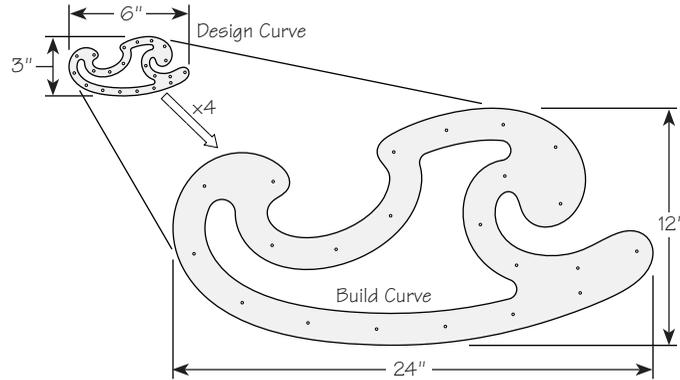


Figure 1: 1:4 scale between the design set and the build set.

For each curve shape, the relative locations of the reference holes are the same. This allows you to perfectly scale up any specific segment of a curve. The Baltic birch curves are unfinished so that you can make notes on them.

Blending Points

To blend a line through several points, place push pins at key locations on your design, then slide a curve along the pins until there is three-point contact. Different curves will produce different blends.

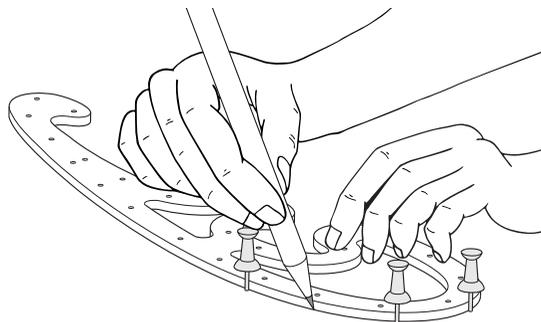


Figure 2: Blending points to make a curve.

Transferring Shapes

To scale complex curves from a plan that includes a quarter-scale grid, such as a back splat for a chair shown in **Figure 3**, place a design curve at one end of the drawing such that its shape matches that section of the part. Mark which portion of the splat shape has been matched on both the drawing and the design curve.

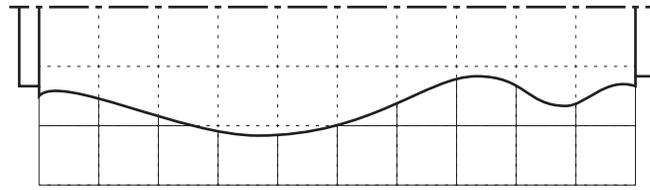


Figure 3: Plan showing quarter-scale grid of a back splat for a chair.

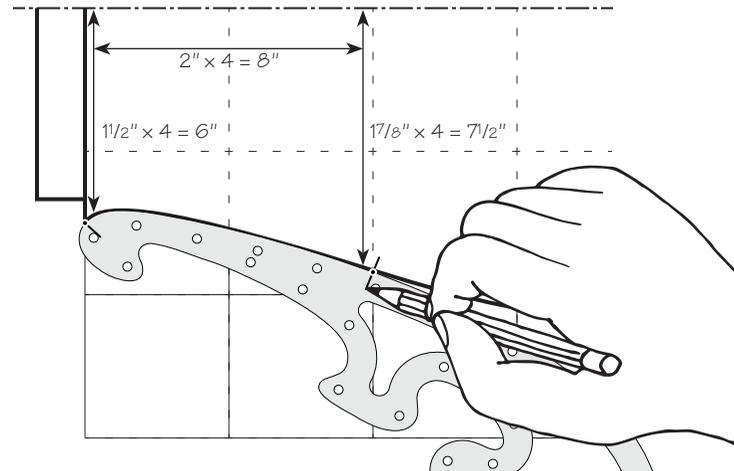


Figure 4: Using the design curve to match the shape of a part to be scaled up.

Transfer the reference marks made on the design curve onto the matching build curve.

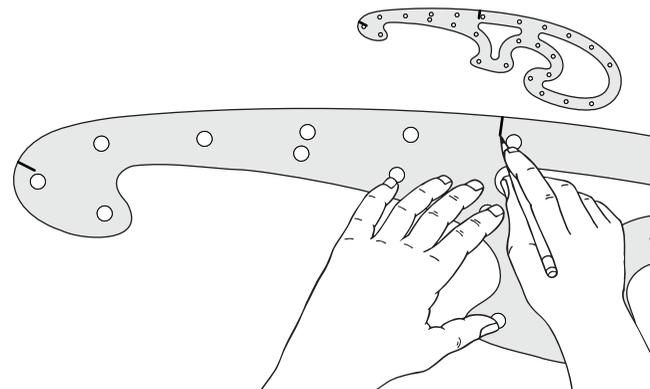


Figure 5: Transferring the reference marks on the build curve.

Use the build curve to lay out the start and end points on your workpiece, then trace the curve to create the matching (full-scale) line.

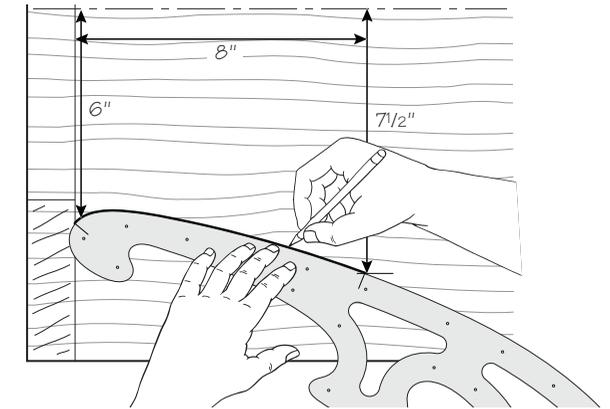


Figure 6: Using the build curve to create the full-scale line.

Continue working around the shape of the part until all the curved sections have been transferred.

Designing with Curves

To scale curves more quickly, it is helpful to label the points and faces of your curves. The six faces should each have a different label. In some cases, it will be useful to mark in-between points along an edge – but this should be done as needed.

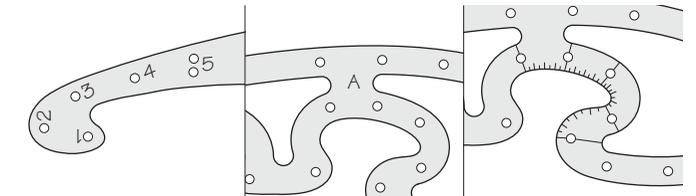


Figure 7: Labelling the curves.

Note: Since they will likely bleed, felt-tipped markers are not recommended for marking the templates.

As you develop your design, note the start and end points of which curve and which face that were used.

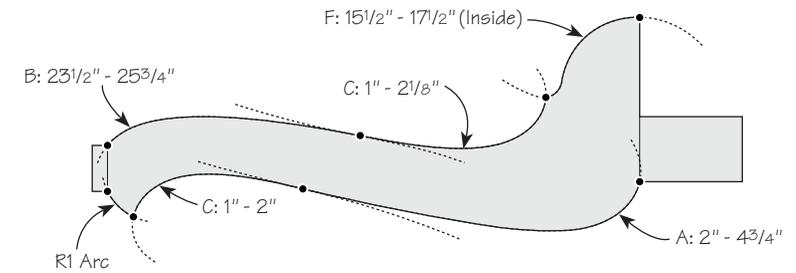


Figure 8: Design showing curve references.