

Wood Projects: Pioneer Log Cabin



What is a pioneer?

- A person who is among those who first entered or settled a region.
- Every pioneer family's first job was to build a shelter.
- Most of these shelters were either made from logs, sod or a combination of the two.

Sod Houses

- **Sod houses** or "soddies" were built before log cabins during the frontier settlement of Canada.
- The prairies did not have the necessary building materials such as wood (trees) or stone; however, sod from thickly-rooted prairie grass was abundant (lots of it!). Prairie grass had a much thicker, tougher root structure than modern landscaping grass.
- Building a sod house involved cutting patches of sod in rectangles and piling them into walls. Sod houses accommodate normal doors and windows. The resulting structure was a well-insulated but damp dwelling that was very inexpensive. Sod houses required frequent maintenance and were vulnerable to rain damage. If it rained outside for two days, it rained inside for a day!





Photographed
Aug 4th 1888
By S D Butcher

No 579

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The “Burdei” at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village.

A type of half-dugout shelter, somewhat between a sod house and a log cabin.



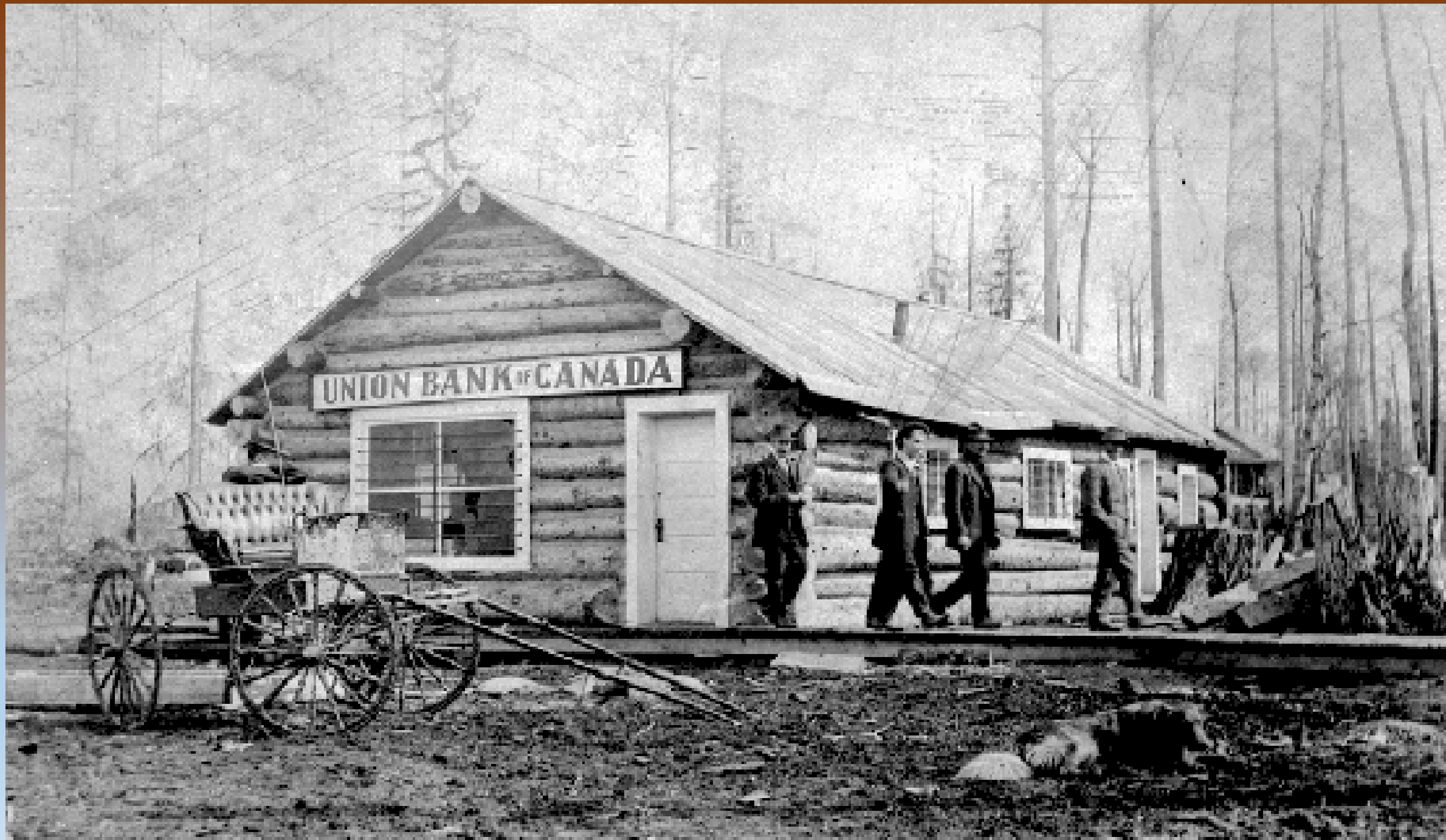
- Most soddies were built between the late 1800s and the First World War and replaced by wooden homes when rail lines were established and building materials could be shipped.
- Most sod houses were only built to last a couple of years until the family could build a home out of logs.

Log Cabins

- Log cabins built by the pioneers were generally a 16 to 18 foot square box. It was limited to this size because a 16 or 18 foot log was generally what one man with a mule could bring in from the forest. It was also about the largest that two men could lift as they built up the walls.
- It was usually one storey high with a sleeping or storage loft beneath the gabled roof. The main room could be either one large space, or divided between a kitchen/living area and small bedrooms. The construction was concentrated at the corners, where 'notches' would assemble the logs.
- A saddle notch, one of the simplest notches, was very commonly used. The single saddle notch is where one log has a notch cut near the end of the log to fit the next log. Roofs were generally clad with cedar shingles.







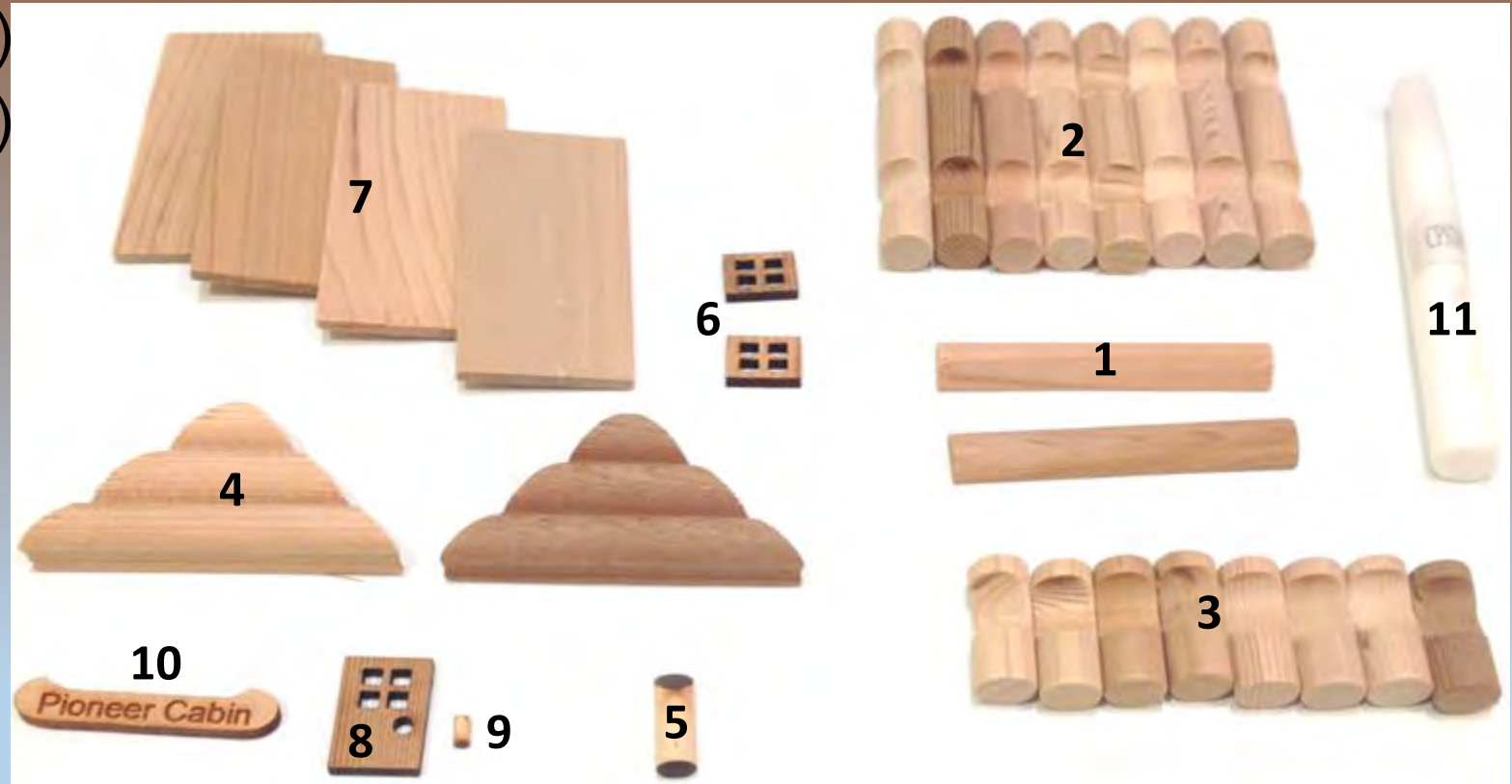


- The log cabins we will be building are made from 100% Western Red Cedar.
- Assembling your cabin will mimic the techniques used by pioneers when building their homes.
- All the wood is local to British Columbia and most is reclaimed waste wood from other industries such as door manufacturing. Local and renewable materials are used as much as possible so as to offer a truly authentic and environmentally friendly Canadian product.
- Log Cabin Toys are a true to life replica of historic log buildings.

**Time to
Build!**

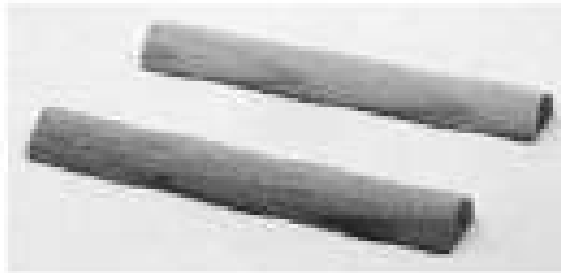
Materials

- 1) 2 – Half logs (7.5 cm)
- 2) 8 – 2 notched logs (7.5 cm)
- 3) 8 – 1 notched logs (2.8 cm)
- 4) 2 – Gables
- 5) 1 – Chimney
- 6) 2 – Windows
- 7) 4 – Roof pieces
- 8) 1 – Door
- 9) 1 – Door knob
- 10) 1 – Pioneer cabin sign
- 11) 1 – Bottle of glue



First, we are going to assemble our cabins step-by-step, without glue, to be sure we understand where each piece belongs.





1



2



3



4



5



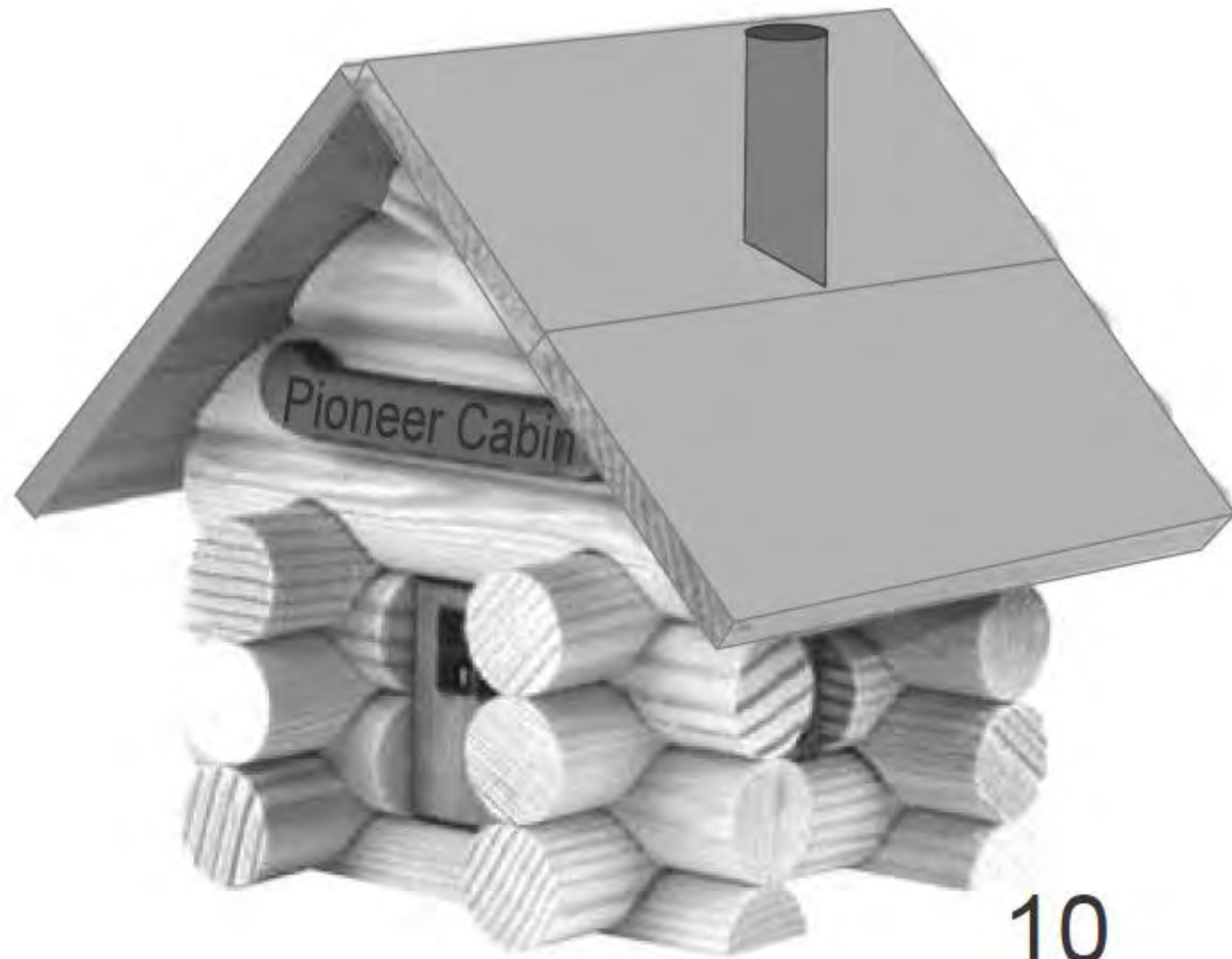
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7



8



10

Time for Glue!

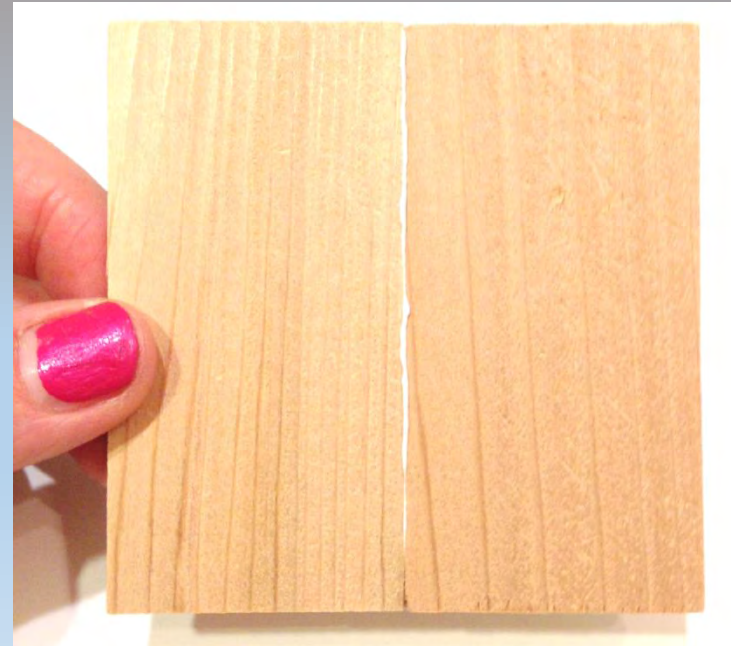
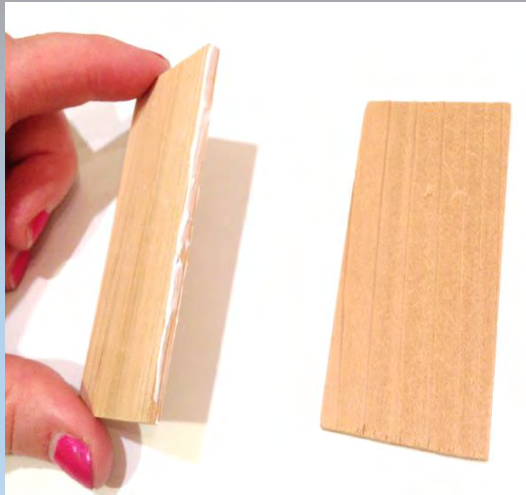
Step 1

Squeeze a small amount of glue in the hole in the door and place the doorknob in the hole. Twist the doorknob to spread the glue around the hole. Make sure the knob is sticking out on both sides of the door. Set aside to dry.



Step 2

Squeeze a bit of glue down one of the long, thin edges of the roof. Spread the glue using the tip of the glue bottle. Press 2 roof pieces together and set aside to dry. Repeat with the other 2 roof pieces.



Step 3

Squeeze a bit of glue on the back of the 'Pioneer Cabin' canoe sign and attach it to one of the gables (on the wavy side of the gable, not the smooth side). Set aside to dry.



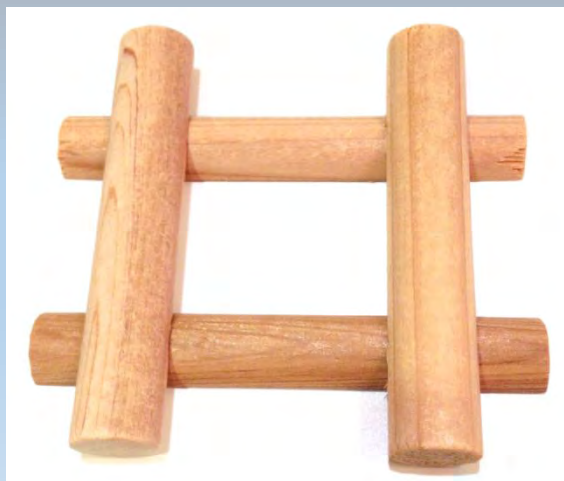
Step 4

Line up the 2 half logs as shown.



Step 5

Place two of the 2-notched logs on top of the half logs. Once you've lined them up, remove the 2-notched logs, add a dab of glue to the notches and place them back on the half logs.



Step 6

Find another 2-notched log, place a dab of glue in both notches and line up the log with the back half log.

Glue two 1-notched logs to frame the door.



*Be sure to look at your cabin from all angles to make sure the logs are not crooked

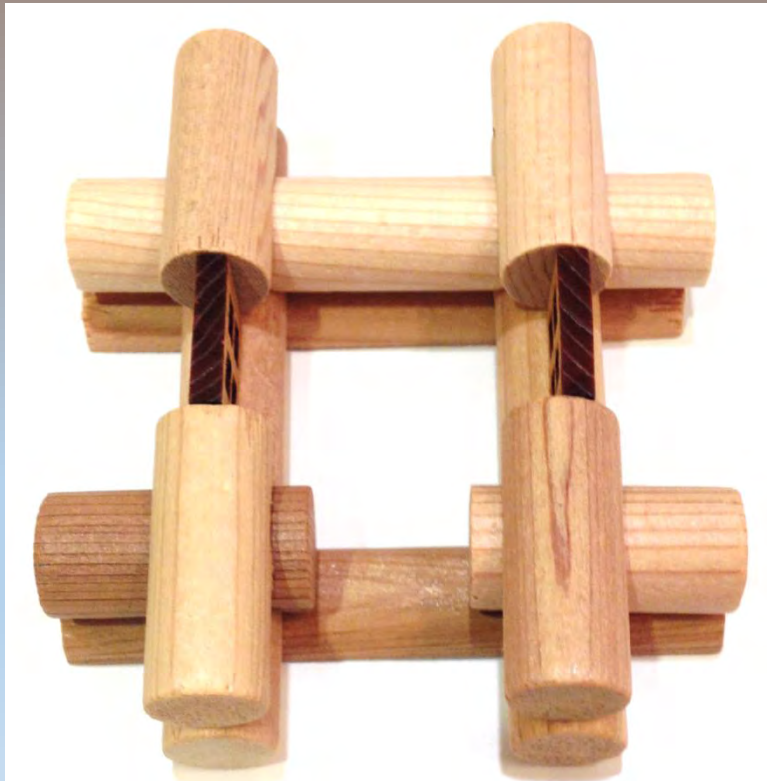
Step 7

Glue four 1-notched logs as shown, to frame the windows.



Step 8

Place a small amount of glue around 3 sides of a window (the 2 short sides and 1 long side) and carefully fit it into the space as shown. Repeat with second window.



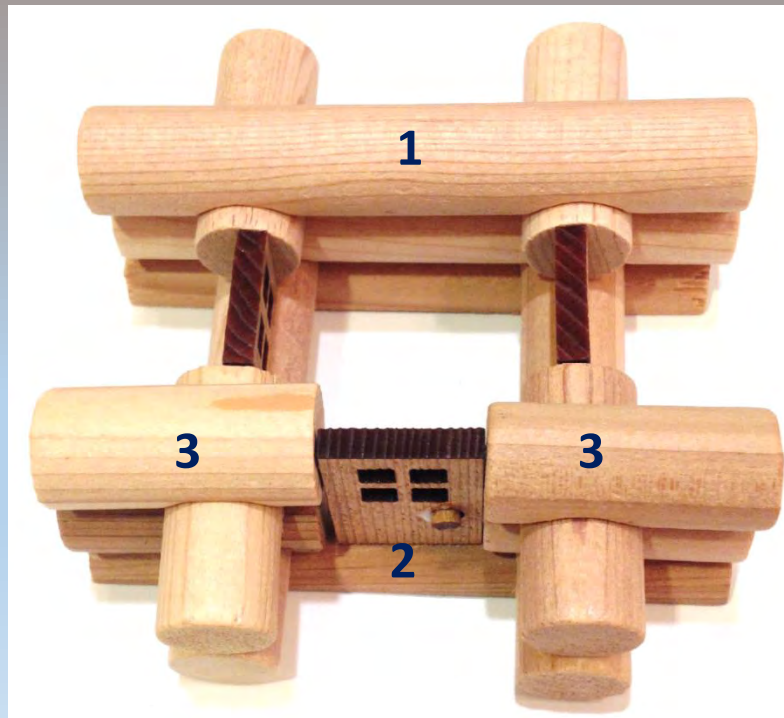
Note:

- Once the windows are in place, gently push the logs right up against the edges of the windows.

Time for a
break?

Step 9

- 1) Glue another 2-notched log on the back wall of the cabin.
- 2) Place glue around 3 sides of the door and carefully fit it into the frame.
- 3) Then add two more 1-notched logs to the front wall of



Step 10

Glue two more 2-notched logs above the windows.



Step 11

Glue your last two 2-notched logs on the front and back walls of the cabin.



Step 12

Place some glue on the bottom of the gable with the 'Pioneer Cabin' sign and place it on the top log on the front wall of the cabin.
Repeat with second gable on the back wall of the cabin.



Step 13

Place some glue on the slanted sides of the gables and glue the roof pieces on evenly.



Step 14

Place a dab of glue on the angled side of the chimney and glue it on either side of the roof.

Press gently, then let your cabin dry fully!

