

## MONDHOLZ - it all depends on the right time!

Almost all people involved in logging and wood processing know that winter is generally the best time to harvest wood. The saps have descended, the wood "works" less after felling. However, beyond this, there are a variety of special dates that have clearly noticeable influences on the wood properties. The following, already quite comprehensive set of rules dates from very old times. The present copy is from 1912. All the rules given in this old document are still valid. They give precise indications of the wood properties to be achieved in each case. The rulebook, of course, requires "translation" to become understandable to everyone today. The explanation follows as well as additional notes.

### **CHARACTERISTICS FOR WOOD SLAWING AND SWIVELING** by Ludwig Weinhold *Written down by Michael Ober, master waggoner in St. Johann, Tyrol - transcribed by Josef Schmutzer on December 25, 1912*

01. Turn days are April 3, July 30 and Achazi day, better if selbe still in the waning moon or on a woman's day.  
These days are also good for bullets and shot casting.
02. Chopping wood so that it remains firm and glue is good the first eight days after the new moon in December, when a soft sign falls on it.  
The new moon and the scorpion are to be used to cut wood, beech wood, etc., so that it remains glue and becomes firm.
03. Wood cutting, that it does not rot, should be the last two days in March in the waning fish.
04. Chopping wood that it does not burn is only one day, which is in the month of March, even better after sunset, March 1.
05. Cutting wood, so that it does not shrink, should be the third day in autumn. Beginning of autumn on September 24, when the moon is three days old and on a woman's day, where the cancer falls on it.
06. Firewood to work that it grows back well shall be in October, in the first quarter recording moon.
07. Saw wood should be cut in the receiving fish, so the boards do not become wormy, as well as the timbers.
08. To bridges and arks one shall cut wood in the waning fish or crab.
09. To cut wood, that it becomes small, shall be in Scorpio and in August. Cut in Taurus, if the moon has decreased one day in August, it remains heavy.
10. To cut wood so that it does not become cloddy or rise shall be done before the new moon in November.
11. To cut wood that it does not tear, June 24 between 11 and 12 o'clock.
12. Wood for cutting or Machl wood should be cut the 26th of February in the waning moon, even better, when the Cancer falls on it. These signs are all proven and tried. felled wood does not grow back, even the root rots.

### **Turning days, grubbing and thinning**

Every commercial forest requires maintenance. Who would like to thin out and clean up a forest or forest edge, who would like to clear land, who pays attention to the Schwendtage (clearing days), after *the* set of rules thus on the *3rd April, the 30th July and the Achazitag (22nd June)*. The result of the work will be even better if these days fall on the waning moon or on a woman's day. Trees and shrubs cut on these days will not grow again.

Women's days are Marian holidays such as the Assumption or Candlemas. These days can be found in every farmer's calendar (like August 15 and September 8).

Alternative days for grubbing are the *last three days of February* when they fall on a waning moon.

### **Tool and furniture wood**

Gleim means "as glued", the wood remains firm, does not warp, does not dry apart, retains its volume - important, for example, for butt edges of floor and table boards. Cut during the first *eight days after DecemberNEUmond in Aquarius or Pisces*, you get this quality of wood. The expressions *Krechtholz* and *Machlholz* are no longer in use today. *Krechtholz* is just, right wood, - wood from which tools and implements (broom handles, axes) are made. It must be hard, handy and light. *Machlholz* is wood from which something is made: pieces of furniture chests, cabinets and the like.

When the NE moon falls on *Scorpio*, that is, usually in NovemberNE moon, the cut wood has the desired properties. However, it should be *debarked immediately*: For the bark beetle, wood felled during Scorpio or uprooted by a storm is the signal to attack. It then multiplies magnificently and also attacks healthy trees. The 12th rule here gives February 26 as an equivalent alternative, if it falls on the waning moon. Which is not always the case, especially when at the same time the moon is in the sign of *Cancer*.

### **Non rotting hard wood**

Non-rotting wood must be cut during the last two days in March when the moon is waning in the fish. These days do not occur every year. Therefore, in the past, people paid special attention to them or cut the wood on alternative days: *these are New Year's Day, January 7; January 25; January 31 and February 1 and 2*: wood cut during these six days does not rot and worm. Wood cut on *New Year's Day* and from *January 31 to February 2* also becomes rock-hard with age. The foundations of Venice's magnificent floating buildings are probably made of such wood. If they had not been cut on the right day, the grandiose city would probably have sunk into the water for good. Restoration of the foundations with such wood would be the ideal solution, because its durability can be judged by the age of the present wood. Any other solution (concrete, steel, etc.) is unsuitable in the long term. This wood is also suitable for landing stages and high pile buildings. Alternative days are *warm summer days when the moon is waxing*: the wood is suitable for pile foundations in water, for ship pontoons and bathing pontoons. It is in full sap and should be installed immediately.

### **Non flammable wood**

There are certain times whose impulses provide non-combustible wood. *Wood cut on March 1, especially after sunset, resists fire regardless of the position of the moon and the sign that the moon is passing through.* A strange but valid rule. Those who try it will find it confirmed. Many utensils, farm buildings, barns, log cabins and alpine huts were built in the past with this wood to make them fireproof.

A story about this:

*"One house, which burned out completely from the inside in 1980, was made of such wood. The metal of agricultural equipment in it, was afterwards partially melted, so great was the heat. The building itself remained standing, the wood was only charred on the outside. When it was to be demolished with a tractor, the wood did not give way. The house finally had to be sawed off log by log. It turned out that only a few millimeters of the top layer of wood had been charred, the inside had remained completely untouched. Some of the wood was subsequently reused in two new buildings."*

*As an alternative day for cutting fireproof wood, the NEW moon can be considered, but only if it just falls on the zodiac sign Libra (only once or twice a year): This wood does not shrink and can be processed green, without drying. Almost equally suitable are the last day before the DecemberNEW moon and the last 48 hours before the MarchNEW moon.*

### ***Shrinkage free wood***

For many applications it is important that wood does not shrink - that is, that its volume does not decrease. Such wood is best cut on *St. Thomas' Day (December 21) between 11 and 12 o'clock*. This day is the best day for cutting wood. After that, with some exceptions, wood should be cut during the winter only in the *waning moon*. Alternatives for cutting non-dwindling wood are the *February evenings after sunset in the waning moon, September 27, monthly the three days after the NEW moon, and women's days* (including August 15 and September 8) when they fall on *Cancer*. Also, wood cut at the *NEW Moon in the sign Libra* does not shrink and can be processed immediately. On top of that, wood cut in February after sunset becomes rock hard with aging.

### ***Firewood***

Despite all this, of course, good *combustibility* is often a desirable property of wood. On top of that, one does not always want to clear the whole forest for firewood production, so it would be favorable if the forest grows back well. The rule says that such firewood is best cut in *October in the 1 quarter of the waxing moon*, that is, during the first seven days after the October new moon. Generally, however, firewood should be cut *after the winter solstice, when the moon is waning*. The top should not be taken off immediately, and in the mountains it should lie downhill for some time, because it then draws out the last sap.

### ***Board, saw and construction timber***

For boards and saw wood, the time of the *waxing moon in Pisces* is suitable, because then the boards and wood are not attacked by pests. The zodiac sign of Pisces appears in the waxing moon only from September to March.

### ***Bridge - and boat wood***

Have you ever walked across a wooden bridge in the rain? You'd do well to hold on tightly to the bridge railing, so slippery and slippery are they at times. Raft trips can also become endless, sometimes dangerous slides if the raft wood was cut on the wrong day. Old wooden mountain stream bridges in the Alps, on the other hand, are sure-footed, do not rot, and seem built to last forever, without any treatment with wood preservatives.

Every mountain hiker has already experienced that today the Alpine clubs and tourist associations obviously no longer pay attention to such influences when building wooden bridges. Many a tourist would not have to be picked up by the mountain rescue service with sprained joints if the rules about the right time to cut wood were observed more. Wood for bridges, barges and rafts should be cut at *waning moon in a water sign* (Pisces or Cancer). It does not rot or

decay and is sure-footed. This rule was also observed in the past when choosing wood for washbasins, which are constantly

must withstand moisture and should not be slippery. Scorpio is also a water sign, but as a felling time is not so suitable, because then the wood becomes too light for this purpose and is also susceptible to pest infestation.

### ***Floor and tool wood***

Broom handles and other tool wood should be supple and firm in the hand, not easily broken, flexible and above all easily low. The best time for such wood are the *Scorpio days* in August, which are almost always just before the FULL Moon. If you want it to have the same properties, but remain heavy (for example, for heavily used wooden floors), choose the *first day after FULL moon*, when it falls on the zodiac sign *Taurus* (does not happen every year).

### ***Tear resistant wood***

Wood that should not crack and stop working from the beginning - for example, for furniture and Carving, is best beaten in the *days before the November NEUmond*. Equivalent alternatives are *March 25, June 29 and December 31*. Timber felled on these three days does not crack or split, but the top must fall towards the valley, or remain on the tree a little longer on level ground to draw out the last of the sap. Timber that is to be used quickly, for example after a fire for rapid reconstruction, must not crack later under any circumstances. The best time to do this is *June 24 between 11 u. 12 noon (12 - 1 pm daylight saving time!)*. In the past, this was a special time: in droves, the lumberjacks moved out and sawed for an hour what the blade gave. The wood was soon used to make roof trusses and the like. *Best bridge wood* becomes from it, if at the same time still NEUmond in the cancer prevails.

### **Christmas trees**

**Firs**, cut *three days before the eleventh FULL moon* of the year (usually in November, but sometimes in December), retain their needles for a very long time. In the past, these trees received a lunar stamp from the forester and were somewhat more expensive than the other Christmas trees. **Spruces** also do not needle then, but should be stored in a cool place until Christmas. Nevertheless, they lose their needles earlier than firs.

Of course, you can't always get your Christmas tree cut exactly three days before the eleventh FULL moon. Therefore, still the note that Christmas trees and flower arrangements also last longer and needle less quickly, if generally the waxing moon is observed as a date.

Also, dry arrangements of flowers that are suitable for drying, picked when the moon is waxing, have a greater shelf life.

### **Save sick trees**

All trees that no longer want to grow, take care of or are diseased, can be successfully treated in most cases, if you take care of them during the waning moon - in the 4th quarter or at the best to remove the tip at NEUmond, or several branch tips from the crown in deciduous trees. The tip should be removed in each case just above a side branch, which is suitable as a new tip when it grows upwards.

Excerpts from:

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