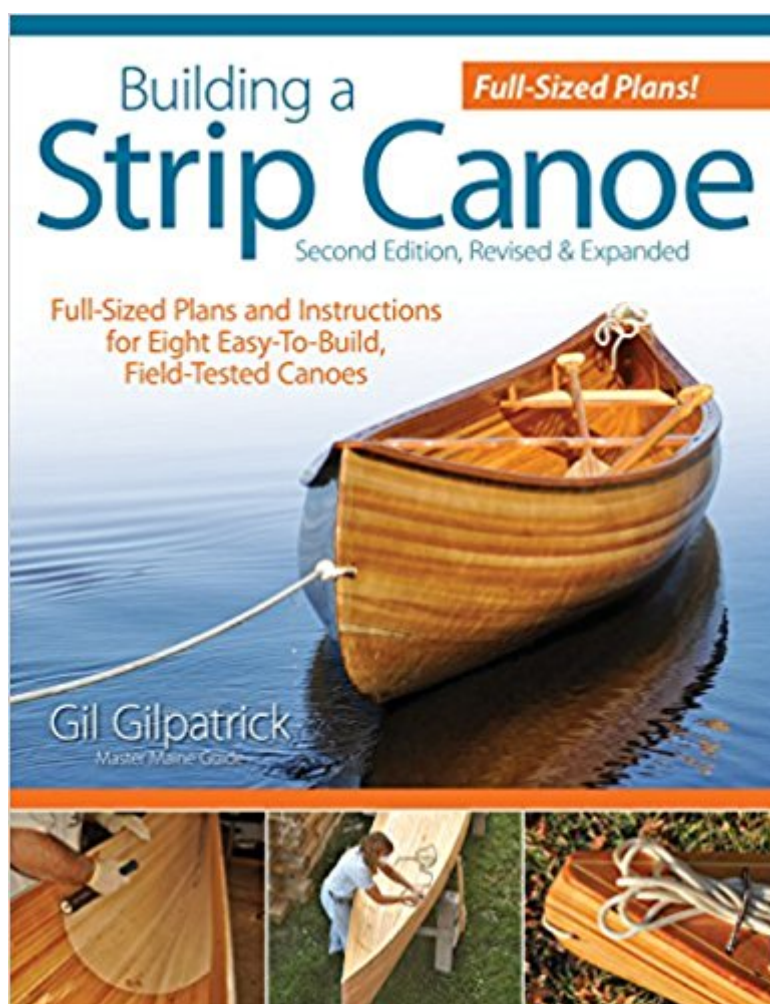


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# Building A Strip Canoe, Second Edition, Revised & Expanded: Full-Sized Plans And Instructions For Eight Easy-To-Build, Field-Tested Canoes





## Synopsis

An expert outdoorsman and canoe builder who has supervised the construction of more than 500 canoes, shares his voice of experience in guiding both novice and accomplished woodworkers in building a canoe with easy step-by-step instruction.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

If you have never paddled a canoe maybe it is time to do so. Once you have enjoyed the quiet and calmness of riding in a canoe on a calm lake at dusk, you will be hooked. Doing so in your own strip canoe is the epitome of bliss. Author Gilpatrick is an outdoorsman that has written several other outdoor related books. If I were going into the woods he is the guy I would choose for my guide. Any guy that has taught outdoor resource classes for over 30 years should know how to get me back home safely. Gilpatrick has written books about building outdoor furniture, paddles, snowshoes, canoes and cane seats. Native North Americans know the advantages of travelling by canoe, the serenity of the calm lakes and being one with nature allows us to reflect upon its beauty. This is even more enjoyable in a self-built strip canoe and Gilpatrick walks us through the process. In fact, there is a set of full size plans included for eight different canoes. Gil shows you how to make paddles and also goes into the details of making your own cane seats. Maybe the 19' 6" Grand Laker model is for you and the author even shows you how to add a motor if this is your desire. Gilpatrick has built over 500 canoes in his 30 years of experience. This book is the perfect book for both first timers and veterans alike. I enjoyed reading the book and studying the photographs. I'll use

some of his methods and refer back when I get into another boat building jam. It may even keep me out of trouble. And I will pick it up many more times just to look and think about my next stripper.' This book will provide hours of fun and satisfaction for making superb canoes that work.' BUILDING A STRIP CANOE, by Gil Gilpatrick, is a revised edition that guides readers on building a canoe for any type of water. The author has built more than 500 canoes in his 30 years of teaching, while serving as an Allagash River master guide. Gilpatrick has field-tested countless canoes and made modifications to their designs. This step-by-step guide presents plans for building eight canoes. It begins with important safety advice and includes instructions for caning seats and making paddles. It's suited for the beginner who's never built a canoe or the experienced woodworker who wants to try a new design.

There are many things I want to do in my lifetime. I can check off skydiving, writing a book, and a few others that I've counted myself fortunate enough to complete, but still there are more. I grew up in Florida, and I was lucky enough to have access to a number of rivers, a few bayous, and, of course, the Gulf of Mexico. During my high school days, one of my favorite summer activities was canoeing. I spent many days on Coldwater River or Blackwater River either with friends or solo (often on an ocean kayak because it was lighter and more fun to me). I will never forget one summer day by myself on Coldwater (frigid water year round) when I quietly rounded a bend on the water and came face-to-face with a mother bobcat that had come out from the woods with her two babies to drink from the river. She looked at me and gave the scariest deep growl/screech I'd ever heard - I think I almost flipped my canoe trying to get back out into the center of the river. She scurried away, but my heart was pounding an hour later. Another time I was out by myself was right after some major storms. I would often show up at the canoe outfitter north of town around 8am or 9am to get on the river before the crowds. On this particular day, I had asked them to drop me off about 15 miles north of the outfitter's final stop, considered The Day Trip. Probably thirty minutes down the river, I ran into a series of downed trees that completely crossed the river, forcing me to climb out of the canoe while standing on foot wide tree trunks. The tree line was too thick to try to go around the trees by pulling the canoe through the woods, so I was forced to carefully pull, push, and slide the canoe and my supplies over three or four trees that moved up and down in the water under my weight. When I finished the route about 7 or 8 hours later, I informed the outfitter about the trees and was told they'd dropped off about 30 other people at the same starting point, many with larger coolers and kids. Bad day for canoers. I haven't been canoeing in a few years, but I've got two boys, ages 2 and 5, who I hope will get a chance to do some canoeing on those same rivers someday. But before I take them, one thing I've always wanted to do is to build my own canoe. Specifically, a cedar strip canoe. I'm thinking an 18 foot flat

hull might be nice for a trip with the boys. Maybe even a few handmade paddles to match. But I'm getting ahead of myself first, I need to actually figure out how to build one. And for that, I'm going to be eternally grateful to Gil Gilpatrick. Gil's been a guide in Maine for over 30 years, having carried his share of tourists down rivers galore. But it's not his river skills that I need right now (although he's got those in spades). What I need are his detailed instructions for constructing my own canoe, all covered in his book, *Building A Strip Canoe*, 2nd Edition. Before I tell you a bit more about this book, let me tell you that I've spent hours and hours hunting down techniques and discussions on the Internet related to building canoes. There's a lot out there, believe me. You'll find dozens of differing techniques and conflicting advice. It's a mess out there. But if you pay careful attention to many commenters and builders and check out who they often refer back to it's Gil Gilpatrick. When I started noticing his name on many websites, I quickly discovered that many canoe builders who have documented their own builds used the instructions provided by Gilpatrick. Be aware that many of Gilpatrick's earlier books, including the first edition to this book, are difficult to find or expensive to obtain. I tell you this only because if you ever think you might want to build your own canoe, now is the time to grab a copy of this book before it too becomes difficult to find. This one is in full color, and it even comes with removable templates in the back of the book for cutting out the patterns used to shape the eight different canoes he covers in this single book. It's a large sized book, too, so you won't be squinting at the photos wondering about any particular step. I've been mulling over building my own canoe for a little over a year now, and I've finally decided to do it. (My wife reads my posts, so I imagine as she's reading this she's shaking her head and considering calling her attorney.) I've got the space in my garage ready. I've got all the tools minus one (a router table fence for doing the bead/cove on the cedar strips - call my dad, Ashley, and he'll tell you the correct fence I need for my upcoming birthday). And I've read the book probably five or six times now, so I'm confident in the order of the process. The only part that makes me nervous is the fiberglass portion of the project, and I plan on practicing on scrap before I approach the real hull. *Building a Strip Canoe* covers everything - safety, prep work and supply assembly, building the backbone (the frame you'll first need to build along with the patterns from the included templates) that will provide your canoe support as you glue, staple, and form your canoe. And while I'm not 100% convinced that just anyone can build a canoe, I'll be the first to admit (as a technical writer by trade) that the instructions Gilpatrick provides are the clearest I could imagine, and after reading the book just once I knew that it contained the right details for me to follow along. I'm comfortable working with wood and many of the tools required, but I believe that even a novice with the right help (and maybe a friend with a table saw and some time) can build a canoe. Gilpatrick covers it all, including putting

together authentic cane seating and paddles as well as a list of specialty supply vendors (in case you live somewhere that doesn't offer access to the fiberglass/epoxy materials and even the wood). This is really the only book you'll need should you decide you want to now (or ever) build your own canoe. I'm much more confident in this upcoming project with this book in my hand. Step-by-step instructions and plenty of photographs explaining how to build a strip canoe; full-sized plans for eight different canoe models. There are two ways in which people are likely to start building a canoe. The first is when they are already accomplished woodworkers and they see the building of a canoe as a development of their interests and skills. The second is when they have little knowledge of woodworking but have an interest in and possibly a better than average knowledge of canoes. This book has been written with both types of reader in mind; it contains a single project with a number of variations. After a brief introduction and a discussion about safety issues, Chapter 2 begins with an examination of some of the variations which are possible in canoe design. For example, the bottom of the canoe may be flat or rounded and it may be built with or without a keel. Four profiles are suggested: General Purpose, White Water, Streamlined and Freighter. These variations are condensed into the 8 designs presented; they range in length from 4.9 to 6 metres. Construction of a canoe is undertaken by first making a strongback and mounting it at a convenient height at which to work. The strongback allows erection of the 'stations' along its length. Full-sized patterns of these stations for each of the canoes are contained in a sealed packet on the inside back cover of the book. These are the key to achieving exactly the shapes required. The pre-formed strips of wood that form the hull of the craft are then laid over and secured to the stations. Once the structure of the hull is complete, including the necessary filling and sealing, the stem is reinforced and the fibreglass applied. The inside of the canoe comes next then the decks, thwarts and seats. Each step in the construction process is explained in easy-to-read text supported by clear photographs. A special chapter is devoted to the making of repairs where these may be necessary and the final part of the book covers the construction of the paddle. The author claims to have supervised the building of some 500 canoes over a period of 30 years. His intensely practical book is a revision of an earlier work which was published under the same title. I read it front to back immediately and have returned to review selected chapters since. The directions and illustrations are excellent. Thanks for making your vast experience and knowledge accessible to the rest of us. I now wish that I could take one of those Allagash trips with you.

**Build a Canoe with a Master Maine Guide** After supervising the construction of more than 500 canoes during his nearly 30 years as an outdoor resources instructor in the Skowhegan, Maine,

school system, Gil Gilpatrick shares his voice of experience in guiding both novice and accomplished woodworkers in building a canoe with easy step-by-step instructions. This revised and expanded 2nd edition of BUILDING A STRIP CANOE includes plans and patterns for eight well-proven designs, most of which are Gil's own adaptations, and are accompanied by more than 100 photographs and illustrations. Also included are directions for making handwoven cane seats and attractive lightweight, stalwart paddles. Over many years of experimenting and refining his methods, Gil offers an extensive listing of sources for lumber, tools and supplies. His contemporary construction methods augment the traditional wood strips with fiberglass and WEST SYSTEM epoxy. From safety in the boat shop to repairs, Gil explains the shortcuts learned from experience. A Maine Guide, he uses his own canoes and tests their performance on the challenging Allagash River every summer.

If you have any interest at all, in building, or even just finding out about strip canoe construction, this book is an absolute gem and "must have!" The style of writing is easy to follow, direct and casual - as one would expect from a former H.S. shop teacher who worked on a daily basis with high school students who were more kinesthetic than "cerebral." Any classroom handouts for these students had to be simple, direct and getting to the heart of things quickly - which is exactly what this book is about! The author explains in simple language why he does things the way he does (decades of guiding canoe river trips during the summer, when not teaching H.S.) and why it matters to do it that way. For example he does not use the very rich looking and elegant bent hardwood bow and stern stem pieces in his designs since they are very frigid and time consuming to get right while adding little to no durability to his designs (assuming you sheath them in fiberglass or Kevlar and epoxy). He also explains why it is not necessary to use epoxy to glue the strips to each other during construction, and why it is best to run a "cove & bead" on all your strips before starting construction. In addition to being a "how to" book, there are plans for eight different strip canoe plans which the author has built in his HS and Adult Ed. courses. He even includes details and suggestions on how to lengthen or shorten a particular canoe design, so if you consider you can build any of the eight canoes "as designed," longer, or shorter you're actually getting plans for 24 different canoes. It also seems that the author's whole system is set up to allow you to build a strip canoe about as quickly as is possible. Having built both "stitch-and-glue" plywood kayaks, as well as "canvas over frame" canoes, frequently one of the major obstacles for building a small boat/canoe is that once you construct the building frame/jig for that design, you can only reuse it to build another one exactly like the one you just built. The beauty of the author's designs and unitized

strongback for those eight designs is that once you build one strongback then there is very little to be done to change it and use the same strongback to build one of his other designs. In between building strip canoes the strongback can be hung in the garage/shed until you decide which design you'll build next. Another major innovation the author makes in his system is that he tells the reader up front that while they can spend as much money as they want on getting only Northern White Cedar, or Western Red Cedar and various hardwoods, there are actually a variety of locally available softwoods and hardwoods (which he names) than can be used to build strip canoes. Finally, in addition to giving the reader/"perspective builder" eight different designs to choose from, the author includes patterns for the yoke and a "go to" paddle design which can be custom built to fit to any paddler. Regarding the paddle design, the author then goes a step beyond to show how to make a simple addition to the blade that will protect it and make it last much longer than you've ever experienced before with canoe paddles. Considering that this book is one of the least expensive in the market about strip canoes, it is worth the price for the canoe plans alone. When also considering the clear writing style and ingenuity incorporated in the author's building system and other areas of construction, this book is an absolute steal! I had another (more expensive) strip canoe building book (which has yet to arrive) ordered along with this one, but am so confident in the information/designs presented in this book I have already chosen the design I'll build and have begun building the strongback so I can get started as soon as I strip out the white pine I'll be using to build my canoe. Buy this book!

Well, this was purchased for my husband and he reads in this almost everytime he sits down. He is so busy though, I don't know when he will ever have time to start this project but he is happy and that makes me happy. I know he has the talent and patience but I wonder about the time element.

Like the previous reviewer, I built a boat from the first edition of this book, which I long since lost. I didn't find the newer glossy pages a problem; the finish is like a glossy magazine, but better paper. The full size plans included are a great value. Other books include offset tables, which can take some time (not to mention frustration the first time you do it) to loft. Most designers charge almost \$100 for the full sized plans for each boat. The steps are great for a first time builder. Gilpatrick's methods tend to be more pragmatic and utilitarian than other authors. They're designed to be used, and used a lot. That said, a little bit of nice wood, and one could make these boats just as fancy as any. Also the cedar strip paddle design is also unique and interesting, though I've yet to build it.



Gil Gilpatrick is the name in building a strip canoe. His extensive practical experience working with people building these canoes as well as his love of using this equipment in his home state come through. The book is well written, easy to follow and well illustrated. The new edition is well worth the price - I have an older one as well, but use this one exclusively. In addition, it is possible to contact the author through his web site and ask questions should you have some during the construction process. I have done so and have found him responsive, humble, kind, generous and helpful. A true craftsman with a deep love for his craft that he seems to thoroughly enjoy sharing with others.

Takes the reader from ignorant to expert quickly and concisely. Well detailed steps with pictures as it progresses. I bought this book on a whim after looking at what most places want for their plans. I was just trying to get a better understanding of what was involved in the process of building one of these boats before shelling out the \$50-\$100 for a single set of plans. I was impressed enough to dismiss my original idea and just build one of the eight designs in this book. All the full-size plans are included - no lofting required! Gil Gilpatrick covers every step from building the strongback and forms, sawing the strips, machining the strip profiles, scarf joining the strips, epoxy coating and fiberglass cloth, gunwales, decks, thwarts, and seats. There is an extensive section on caning seats as well as making paddles and even damage repairs if you happen to crash into a rock. One thing that popped out during the construction of the boat is that wetting out fiberglass cloth for an amateur is a 2-3 man job - which he forewarned about. The other information to be aware of is the amount of machinery needed if you plan to make your own strips. At a minimum you need a good table saw with thin kerf blade, a router table with feather boards, a cove and bead bit set, a lot of patience, and a very understanding spouse. For the remaining construction you will also need a table saw, a good RO sander, a stationary disc/belt sander, and a truck load of sanding discs. I highly recommend this book even if you don't plan on building one of these designs. Sixteen buck is cheap if you don't know what your getting yourself into.

As a novice boatbuilder I really wanted basic, good information about this technique. The book has that in spades. The fiberglassing technique alone is worth the price. I can't wait to get started on my first canoe now.

This is second time I have purchased this book. After a recent move, I could not find my first purchase, and I thought enough of what this book offers to buy it again. A wonderful tutorial for

building your own strip canoe no matter your skill level.

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