

## General Info: Animal Glue

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Natural animal glues consist of complex animal proteins (collagen) which must be heated in order to be used. They are made from the processed hides and bones of animals and are chemically very similar to gelatin. Animal glues have been used for over 4,000 years and are ideally suited for making strong, non-toxic bonds which are resistant to the effects of age. Animal glue bonds can also be easily reversed by reheating them, meaning objects made using animal glue are easier to restore. A Stradivarius violin made 300 years ago is still impressive in appearance and sound, partly due to the special properties of the animal glue used to hold it together. Any woodworker who is interested in preserving the natural qualities of the wood in their work should consider using animal glues.



Contrary to popular belief, animal glues are relatively easy to use. The most critical factor is the glue pot itself. It must be water-jacketed to allow controlled heating and the strict maintenance of a defined temperature range (60° - 70° C) to prevent the glue from denaturing and losing bond strength. Glue should always be used the day it is first heated.