







## Snake puzzle

The pattern has been pasted to the rod to show where the cuts are to be made. You will want to use a fairly fine blade. I used a #2 blade, but any blade from 2/0 to #5 should be OK.

Note that the pieces are numbered, either 1 - 28 or 31 - 58. I'll use the numbers 1 - 28 here. Pieces 1 and 2 and the unnumbered tailpiece are different from the body segment pieces.

Before starting to cut the snake, remove the bamboo-locking dowel (the eyes) and put it away somewhere safe. As you cut each piece, keep pressure on the square section at the tail end to hold the rod consistently upright (try not to let it roll around).

Then cut piece #1, following the pencil marks that I have drawn forward to the front of the snakehead. When piece #1 has been cut out, put it aside as the first piece in a line-up of all of the pieces on your bench. Then rotate the rod 90 degrees so that the number 2 is at the top of the rod, and cut piece #2, coming in from one side of the snake and leaving at the other side, and add this #2 head piece next to piece #1 on your bench.

Rotate the rod back 90 degrees to bring the next number (#3) to the top, cut this piece, then repeat rotating and cutting until you have cut piece #28. Note that pieces 3 - 28 are identical, or would be if it were possible to cut that accurately by hand.

As you cut each piece you add it to the line of pieces on your bench. When you get down to the last few cuts, the rod gets quite small and you need to take extra care and maybe slow your cutting speed to prevent the work piece from jumping around.

When you have cut all the pieces, you can cut off the tailpiece from the square section guide. Then, starting with the tailpiece, you can thread together all the pieces in the reverse order of cutting, and finally push in the bamboo eyes-dowel to lock the pieces. If the dowel should be rather loose, it can easily be made tighter by crimping the central part of the rod lightly with a small pair of pliers.

If the template hasn't already come off during the cutting, you can remove it by lightly dampening it with water and then scraping it off.

