Lizard Bar Stools



Sold

I made these four bar stools for a client who wanted timber from their farm to become part of something their family could use for generations. The seats echo the shape of old tractor seats. Each one rests on a hand-forged steel lizard, with a smaller lizard gripping the timber backrest.

This was the most complex commission I'd taken on. The timber had wormholes, cracks and splits that I wanted to keep visible. Shaping it into a tractor seat took me into a kind of 3D modelling I hadn't tackled before. The steel bodies posed a different problem. I had to make the lizards strong enough to carry the seats while keeping the character of my forged lizard sculptures.

Farm-sourced timber, forged steel, black epoxy resin and aluminium badges with resin infill. Polished steel with a clear polyurethane finish.

Dimensions to be confirmed.

Lizard Bar Stools up close



All four stools together in my studio.



The curved timber seat takes its shape from an old tractor seat.



A smaller forged lizard grips the timber backrest.

How it was made

Timber from the farm

The timber from the farm was part of the brief from the start. When I looked closely at the slabs, I found wormholes, cracks and splits. I wanted to keep those features visible in the finished stools because they belonged to this particular timber.

Shape the tractor seat

Turning an old tractor-seat silhouette into a sculpted timber seat was my first major exercise in modelling an organic shape in 3D CAD. I made a full-size prototype and built a three-axis CNC machine to machine the seats and backrests.

Keep the timber’s character

I filled and stabilised the wormholes, cracks and splits with black epoxy resin. Once I machined the surface back, the grain was visible again and the resin stayed in the openings. The finishing clip shows the CNC working across the top of a final seat made from the client’s timber.

Give the steel lizards strength

I’d forged plenty of lizards before, but these were the first that needed substantial bellies to carry a seat. I developed a robotic MIG welding process to build up the steel in that part of the body, then brought the forms together with the forged legs and the rest of the assembly.

Fabricating the forged steel

I used a jig to hold the forged parts in place while I welded each main body. With the bodies assembled, I chose a backrest lizard for each stool, then laid out and tested the fit against the timber. The smaller lizards each had a different pose, so I shaped their tails to fit the main bodies.

Finish the set

I polished the forged bodies to bring out the warm colour of the steel, then protected them with clear polyurethane. The four engraved badges gave each stool its own mark. Seeing the set together in the studio was the first chance to look across all four and see how the different lizards held their backrests.



The farm timber slabs as they arrived.



Four roughly machined seats prepared for resin casting.

How it was made



CAD render of the tractor-seat design.



My first full-size seat prototype, made from seasoned glulam timber.



Two backrests covered in black epoxy resin.



Timber backrest with resin infill and machined surface ready for hand sanding.

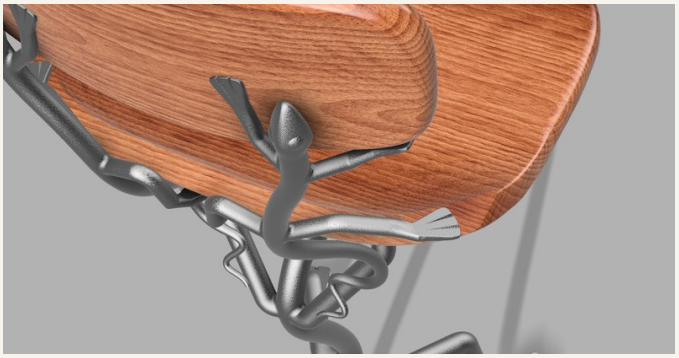


The hand-sanded backrest with resin remaining in the openings.



A close-up of a resin-filled wormhole after machining.

How it was made



CAD view of prototype two lizard backrest support.



Trying the first stool body prototype.



Steel before and after robotic MIG deposition for the lizard bellies.



The steel lizard body with its built-up belly, held in a workshop vice.



I set up the jig to hold the forged lizard components in place for welding.

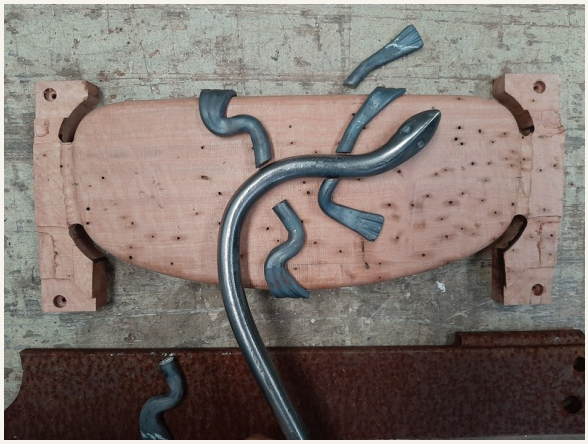


The main lizard body after welding.

How it was made



Choosing which backrest lizard would go with each stool.



Laying out the forged lizard parts against the raw timber backrest.



Testing how the smaller lizard fits the timber backrest.



The tail of the backward-looking backrest lizard, ready to be shaped to fit the main lizard.

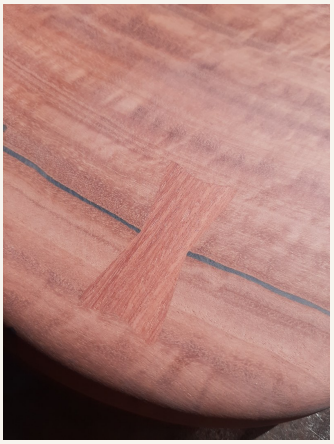


Freshly machined engravings in aluminium, one for each stool.



Resin infill makes the lettering stand out on the individual aluminium ID plaque.

How it was made



A bow-tie insert across a split in the finished timber.



The finished timber and warm tones of the clear-coated steel on a backrest lizard.