



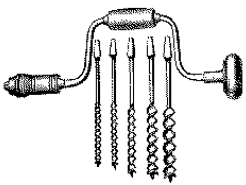
toolbox

Creating Visitor-Friendly Shops and Studios



When craftspeople applied to be listed in the *Craft Heritage Trails of Western North Carolina*, HandMade in America's* guidebook to studios, shops and other area attractions, they agreed to meet certain criteria. These guidelines are useful for any craftspeople or communities that wish to capitalize on cultural tourism by inviting visitors into their work space:

- ✓ All studios must **specify and maintain regular business hours**. Studios open to the public "by appointment only" or fewer than two days per week were NOT listed. Asking visitors to drive rural roads in unknown country is not practical if a studio is not open on a regular basis. Often a craftsperson will ask someone to "business-sit" on days the business owner can't tend the shop during regular hours.
- ✓ Locations and entry roads must be **easy to access, with adequate parking** provided for extra automobiles. The studio should be well marked, with a mailbox or sign visible from the road.
- ✓ Studios are asked to **be tidy** and to maintain house pets in a secure area. Any work areas should be made **safe for visitors/observers** by screening off the area and/or providing safety goggles, etc. A bathroom for visitors is encouraged.
- ✓ Studios should **provide interpretation** of their work through demonstrations and/or written materials. Craftspeople will often post local newspaper articles or trade magazines on the walls. A studio reflective of the craftsperson could include a display area or a selection of books and magazines about craft.
- ✓ Shops should **have adequate money** to make change. The ability to offer credit card service is a plus.
- ✓ Craftspeople should **be willing to direct visitors to other studios, shops or craft sites** in your community. A cluster of shops within a thirty-minute drive of each other will draw more visitors.



Adapted from "Visitor-Friendly Craft Studios Increase Sales in Appalachia" by Becky Anderson, *Crafts News*, Spring 2000, published by The Crafts Center in Washington DC; www.craftscenter.org.

*Handmade in America is an organization that provides assistance to artisans in western North Carolina. For more information, see the article on page 2.

