

Boat Building



**Captain John Smith
Chesapeake National
Historic Trail**



Boat Building

Like most English boats of the period, John Smith's shallop was built from oak planks joined with wooden pegs.

Shipbuilding was done by carpenters, people who are experts in building with wood. Carpenters Robert Small and Edward Pising were important crewmembers on Smith's voyages because they could fix the shallop if it needed repairs. American Indian boats were also wooden. Many coastal tribes made their canoes by burning and carving the trunks of trees. Some tribes further inland formed canoes from birch bark, which made for very light and fast canoes.