
Subject: Edgebanding plywood

Posted by [Bill Epstein](#) on Thu, 14 Dec 2006 01:40:25 GMT

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Here's the tips on edgebanding plywood none of you asked for. Edgebanding is real wood veneer with a polyester backing coated with hot-melt glue. There is also peel-n-stick available but I've never used it. Woodcraft sells 50' rolls of peel-n-stick for 31.99. I buy 250' rolls of hot melt for \$35 from a friendly small cabinet shop who just adds it to his regular order from a distributor. That price gets you birch or oak or walnut. A few things you need to know to smooth the way. Cut the banding with ordinary scissors as close to the ends of the piece as you can. Long tails are tough to trim off. Use an ordinary household iron on medium heat and position it a little ways in from the end and heat and press that end. Then work along in the opposite direction the length of the edge. Go slowly and use moderate pressure. The iron won't want to stay flat on a narrow 3/4" edge so watch for that. Pause a bit at the end to make sure you get a good bond there. Let it cool a minute then tap-tap with your finger tip, listening for a clicking sound. Clicking means the veneer is loose because the glue cooled away from the edge and needs to be re-heated just a bit and then pressed down with your finger. Like any veneer, do the sides and then the top of the workpiece. Trim the sides before gluing the top. You can trim off the excess from the 15/16" wide tape with a block plane or razor knife. I prefer the block plane; I can't cut reliably close with a knife and when I've tried to sand off the excess the tape just folds over. The best way to trim is with a Fast-edge or Virutex double laminate trimmer, about \$18 from Woodcraft, E-Bay, Amazon or locally. It's a 2 piece plastic block with a knife on each spring-loaded side. You simply grip the board and push or pull it along, cutting both waste pieces at once. If you use a plane, try to have all the waste to one side so you cut the job in half. Your scissors will leave about a 1/4" tail on each end (I use a pair of Greenlee electricians scissors I've had for years. They cut wire, veneer, almost anything and never get dull). Trim that off with the block plane always working from the end in so you don't tear away the tape. Now you can tape the top and bottom edges. You'll have at least 2 pieces to do for speaker cabinets. Put aside the piece with 2 long edges done and do the other before attempting any trimming so the tape cools and the glue has a chance to bond. It really is easy and only gets easier with practice.
