Subject: Ready, Set, Shoot
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Spraying LacquerSome ideas to get you started for spraying a finish. You first have to have all your prep work in order. Then choose a good material that will be correct for your application. This summery is for Lacquer and does not take into account the pros and cone of any other types of finish. There are a vast amount of wood finishes available today. Varnish, Shellac, Polyurethanes, Water based, Oils, and Waxes to name a few. We are just going to talk about Lacquer for now since it sprays on easily. Builds and dries fast, and is easy to work with.First we have preparation. Remember that a clear wood finish will not mask any flaws in the wood. In fact, stains or finish will accentuate the flaw. So a good fit between parts is a must and sanding with the grain using 220 paper helps out. Work your way up to 220 grit in steps. Unless you have some major sanding to

using pre-veneered plywood then you should start with 150 grit paper. Random orbit sanders are a great thing but always end your sanding adventure with hand sanding in the direction of the grain with garnet sand paper. Or, better yet, do no sanding and use a scraper.Now that our cabinet is finish ready we can choose a finish. Sherwin Williams has local stores in all big cities

water white lacquers because I prefer the amber mellow tone you will get in a few months. If you want a finish that will have virtually no yellowing, use the a water based Lacquer/Varnish/Polyurethane. For the ultimate in amber and mellow ageing tones, use Varnish. I only use Spar Varnish since it is also waterproof and you will never have water damage from a open window, plant or drinking glass. Minwax Helmsman is adequate choice for Spar Varnish. Mohawk, Crystalac, Pianolac, McFadden and Target are some suppliers for quality wood finishes, to name a few.I use Hood Finishing products, Magna-Shield lacquer. You can look at their products at http://www.hoodfinishing.com. This is a Pre-Catalyzed lacquer that has 40% solids and complete burn in between coats so sanding is not required between coats as with polyurethane or varnish. For added depth use 75% sheen and rub it down to a satin luster. Use a self sealing lacquer because they sand easily. Your first coat will be a sealer and lock the wood fibers down and "pop" the grain. Even with careful sanding some of the wood fibers will be locked in an upright or out of alignment position. This is why after applying the first coat of a finish you will have some fuzzy texture to your project and it will need smoothing.The better spray gun you can afford the less headache you will have. Having said that, there are a few HLVP conversion guns on the market for $100 that will suit your needs quite nicely. HLVP is a must. The stuff stinks and

spraying it all over hells half acres. When your done, Clean your gun.Good finish techniques that will give you a durable finish as well as a rich look consist of 5 coats and a little elbow grease.Spray sealer coatWait 1 hour and sand smooth with 220 production trimite paperSpray full wet coat No.2Wait 1 hourSpray full wet coat No3Wait 1 hourSpray full wet coat No.4Wait 24 hoursSand with 220 paperSpray full wet coat No. 5Wait minimum 3 days. (3 weeks would be fantastic)Sand with 400 paperSteel wool using 0000 grade steel wool and use a wool oilWash off all excess wool oil with damp cloth a few timesPaste wax with Johnson's paste wax. Wipe off when hazyNow you can sit back and admire your work. I'll talk more about touch ups and repairs another time. If you hanker for an Oil finish, you'll have to consult upon Dr. Epstein since he has some cool tricks for Tung oil, Danish oil, French polish and Shellacs. Bill