
Subject: 7Pi cabinet building
Posted by [JSP](#) on Sun, 28 Apr 2024 00:16:14 GMT
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I'm starting to look out towards possibly building a pair of these next winter. I'm wondering how many sheets of plywood you need to build a pair of these. I've seen a few different size sheets available from woodwork supply stores. Not just the standard 4'x8' sheets.

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 28 Apr 2024 01:06:56 GMT
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I should know that answer but I don't, sorry. I kind of lean on my cabinet shop for this stuff. Hopefully one of the regulars here will chime in.

But you're right - Common sizes are 4 x 8 and 5 x 5. Baltic Birch tends to come in 5 x 5 and other stuff usually comes in 4 x 8.

Be careful about your choices though. Definitely do not use any other plywood than Baltic Birch. I tend to prefer MDF if the speakers are going to be semi-permanent (rarely moved) and won't be exposed to lengthy periods of very high humidity. When speakers will be used indoors, at home, MDF is a great material to build with. But if the speakers will be moved a lot or might get wet occasionally, then Baltic Birch is a better bet.

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building
Posted by [JSP](#) on Sun, 28 Apr 2024 01:12:45 GMT
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Wayne Parham wrote on Sat, 27 April 2024 20:06
Be careful about your choices though. Definitely do not use any other plywood than Baltic Birch.

What's special about Baltic birch that makes it so strongly preferred? Why not some other species like walnut, hickory, maple, alder, oak etc?

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sun, 28 Apr 2024 01:33:06 GMT
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Most plywood products are made without any attention paid to the possibility of having voids between plies. It's not usually a problem when making furniture. But for speakers, a void is often (usually) fatal. Because where there's a void, there's usually debris in the void. And even if

there's no debris at the time of manufacturing, some will material will likely break free when subjected to the vibrations of sound.

And the debris buzzes.

More on this:

Plywood voids

No matter what material you use to build your cabinet, you can always veneer it with any wood you want. I always love an attractive wood veneer.

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building

Posted by [JSP](#) on Sun, 28 Apr 2024 04:18:38 GMT

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Ok. So it's the generally thinner plies that make BB different from other plywoods that cause it to be better.

The mention in those search results of the bamboo ply were interesting. Did anyone go ahead and do that with some good test results?

As far as BB goes, is there a good way to try and make sure you get good quality sheets?

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building

Posted by [Rusty](#) on Sun, 28 Apr 2024 12:49:54 GMT

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Baltic birch is consistently good quality. Just very expensive now. Like everything. I'm helping a friend build some 2Pi towers that stand almost 48 inches. It's taken two 5/8th thick 4x8 MDF panels to make the cabinets. BB ply for the Pi 7's might take 4 or more sheets.

Here's a good freebie called Cutlist Optimizer for figuring how much you can get per sheet of whatever.

<https://cutlistevo.com/>

Veneer is expensive as hell now too. So we used some 1/8th thick ash stock glued up to width to cover the sides, top and front.

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building

Posted by [JSP](#) on Mon, 29 Apr 2024 04:18:37 GMT

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Ok. So it shouldn't be too difficult to find good BB then. Definitely not looking forward to the cost of building the cabinets, but who knows when the costs might improve. It's just going to be what it is.

I have no idea what kind of veneer or finish I might want to use.

Wayne, can I get the build plans so I can figure out how much plywood I need to plan for?

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Mon, 29 Apr 2024 14:45:05 GMT

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You've got mail!

Subject: Re: 7Pi cabinet building

Posted by [JSP](#) on Tue, 30 Apr 2024 13:46:05 GMT

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Thanks Wayne. Looks like it'll take a lot of reading and questions as I get into the build. Hopefully I'll be able to get into it this coming winter.
