Subject: Woodfinishing experts...seeking advice
Posted by jlharden on Wed, 19 Nov 2003 17:24:26 GMT
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I've nearly decided on using the baltic birch ply for the corner cabinets. I don't have any hands on experience finishing birch ply and am going to defer to those that do. I don't want to darken the wood with stain and don't want the yellow look that is common with some woods after finishing. What are my options and what techniques have yielded the best looking results? Thanks! Jerrod

Subject: Re: Woodfinishing experts...seeking advice
Posted by Matts on Wed, 19 Nov 2003 17:55:01 GMT
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My best advice is....test strips. Keep scraps of wood from construction and test finishes on them. I made Baltic Birch cabs and it didn't take stain very well. I used "Tried & True" products- few coats of its "Linseed Oil and varnish" product, with its "Linseed Oil and Beeswax" as a final coat, and they look very nice and are aging nicely. These products are very good, but I imagine other good oil finishes would look similar.

Subject: Re: Woodfinishing experts...seeking advice
Posted by Tightwad on Wed, 19 Nov 2003 21:26:35 GMT
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I'm a total hack, but I've made a couple projects.I like the "Scandinavian" look of birch-veneer plywood with clear finish (see photo, not my work, but a good example).I think clear urethane stuff works pretty well, just spread it on thin in many coats.Also, be very careful about glue, especially on the edges. It can escape detection, and end up looking crappy after finishing.

Subject: Re: Water Base
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Wed, 19 Nov 2003 22:35:32 GMT
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If you want the finish to stay nuetral, clean, and colorless. The water base polyurathane's are going to be the best bet. Lacquers, oil's and especially varnish all carry an amber tone to enhance the grain and give the wood a warmth. All of these are going to become a more golden

to amber colour with age. Water white lacquer's are less amber and designed to be now yellowing, so you have less aged look over time. The blonde shellac's can stay pretty clear but basically anything made with petrolium type products and distilates requiring alcohol or a thinner for cleanup is going tone out with age even when sheilded from UV. The water base poly is easy to apply, easy to clean up and is as durable as the best of anything. The biggest problem with the water borne finishes, be it poly, lacquer or varnish. Is that the water borne does not do exactly what you are looking for. They have no amber tone unless it is added. They dont pop the grain in high figure woods and veneer, and they wont yellow, amber, tone out or show virtually any sine of age to give a petina or look of age and depth. Get your self some Minwax water base poly and your birch wil stay as clear and blonde as you like. Use a non yellowing silcone wax after your all done and stay away from any paste wax or similar product that will deposit a film that can tone out. Spraying finish is always best but if your going to brush then great results can be had with care. Buy a good brush and keep it clean as new and it will last a long long time. do some research on brush care. strain your finish as you use it. Dont use the finish out of the original can. Open the can, pour out what you need and close it up again. The first coat is going to rais the grain a little. if you sand with 400 it will be less. It really doesnt matter because you HAVE to sand poly in between each coat. Poly and varnish have 0 burn in and require a mechanical bond from one film to the next. You must sand with 220 in between each coat if you want to achieve the best finish. So sand off the first coat since all the wood fibers will get locked down in all kinds of kamasutra type positions. apply a second coat, sand, apply a third coat, sand, apply a fourth coat if you like a smooth build. 3 coats might make you happy and it's a commercial standard. 4 or better coats with good sanding in beteen to make sure the surface is leveled and uniform can look dynamite. If you want glossy gloss then your last coat needs to be heavenly perfect or you have a lot of rubbing to do, but if this type of "piano" finish is what your after this isnt the right stuff. Most folks like a fairly smooth satin with just a hint of gloss to it. For this I always use a gloss finish and rub it down to a satin. Sand your last coat with 400 paper, now steel wool using 0000 steel wool, and then apply wax.One last note if you use a water borne finish. Do not use any stearated sand papers. Do not use any steel wool in between coats, and any of the scotch bright pads for rubbing and sanding are also a bad idea. Bill

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Subject: Re: Woodfinishing experts...seeking advice
Posted by Manualblock on Wed, 19 Nov 2003 23:24:33 GMT
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Hey JL;Martinelli knows most about finishing wood but I will chime in to say that on birch I think the wood looks like knockdown furniture with waterbase finish. Try some websites that deal with shellac; good shellac can be mixed to give any level of tint and imparts a nice organic glow to birch. Its really not hard to do either.

Subject: Re: Woodfinishing experts...seeking advice
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Thu, 20 Nov 2003 00:15:59 GMT
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Yeah, the water base stuff is pretty sterile insnt it! I've used it a on a couple different things and years later I look at them amazed that there just isnt anything to the finish other than clear. The advances in the water products gets better each year. There are some higher priced types out there that are acting more like a good finish. Some water borne lacquers even have complete burn in. I've only played with shellac a few times. Maybe Epstein Has more info on the shellac too. I know he likes those and uses them often. When I retire I'll do more with the different types and maybe some french polish as well. For speed, durability and import to me, colour. You cant beat catylized lacquer. One birch my personal choice would be a spar varnish. I like the way it looks with a little time. Bill

Subject: Re: Water Base
Posted by jlharden on Thu, 20 Nov 2003 15:37:24 GMT
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Thank you Bill, Ask and you shall receive!....lots of great info, and I'll folllow the advice on the clear water based poly. I've been interested in experimenting with it anyway. I've done a lot of work with pre-cat laquers, but don't currently have access to the equipment. My shop equipment is very limited right now. You recommend the Minwax brand, is the satin preferable to gloss, or better to build up with gloss and rub the finish down to satin? Is the siliconized wax a liquid type? Thanks! Jerrod

Subject: Re:Olive Oil
Posted by BillEpstein on Thu, 20 Nov 2003 18:41:02 GMT
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Nah, maybe not!But shellac, once you have the brushing strategy down on test pieces is really great for an undercoat. At least peruse the catalogues. There's super blonde, blonde, la-la-la, garnet and then a really dark one I can't remember. Still celebrating ugly spinster daughters engagement.I think there's a shellac.com but Constantines.com and GarrettWade.com have good info as does Behlen and Mohawk. Thing about shellac is it's dead easy,really versatile, and is the best dang sealer on the planet. Even "Trust Fund Kids" like Martinelli who have spray equipment use shellac as a sealer against the dreaded "fish eye". Or should, right Bill?Thing is, the Birch is darn near non-porous except where it isn't and there it's too dang porous so you really can get horrible blotching. Or a " plotcher" if it's the 'Crepitation Contest'.So you need a sealer or pre-stain thang or sanding sealer. Shellac is all the above. Ya' haf ta' practise the technique tho' cause it dries right off the brush and so doeasn't "flow" from one stroke to the next. But don't be off=put.

it's still easy.And the warmth the other guy mentioned is there. I'd say use de-waxed Blonde and forget about it. Highly water reistant but not alcohol resistant so use the AOL coasters.Creating is more like performing than listening

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Subject: Re:Olive Oil
Posted by Manualblock on Thu, 20 Nov 2003 19:28:49 GMT
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If I may offer there is a site called shellac.net that has it all!And reasonably priced too.

Subject: Re:Olive Oil
Posted by Matts on Thu, 20 Nov 2003 20:51:23 GMT
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If you want to experiment with shellac, my local hardware store (the one besides H.D.) has a pack of 6 colors/types of shellac for $14.99- enough to experiment with and see if you like it and what color to get. Bill- you would like their spokeshaves and scrapers, not to mention their handmade Swedish axes.

Highland Hardware

Subject: Re: Water Base
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Fri, 21 Nov 2003 01:47:18 GMT
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Hi Jerrod,I try and recommend Minwax, Parks and Sherwin williams stuff on forums because almost everybody has a Depot or Sw store near them. The Minwax water Poly and Helmsman varnish are tough products to beat for the money. Almost always I buy gloss for the depth it has and rub it out to the desired sheen. I'm just a small fish by most standards so I can have gloss or anything else with one product and dont have pails and drums all over the place in various.... There are a half dozen really good professional products out there and they are better than a lot of store bought things for both performance and ease of use. They are not always cheaper just better suited for different applications. I use Hood and you can check out some of their things at the web site.I a liquid silicon called "new car finish" kmart use to have it! If you put this on anything. Forget about recoating it for the rest of your life with any more finish! Silicone is the ultimate contaminent and you'll have blue marlin fish eyes in schools. The new pre-cats dont so

much need the shellac base or a sanding sealing like the nitro used to. I hear tell that base coat of a good shellac to pop the grain and then followed up with water borne can look like the real thing. It wont be long before solvent type finishes are nothing more than passages in history book. (maybe a recipie in Epsteins kitchen) Bill

http://www.hoodfinishing.com

Subject: Re:only extra virginia
Posted by Bill Martinelli on Fri, 21 Nov 2003 01:48:52 GMT
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Lets go to Toronto and Celebrate!
