Subject: 2 Pi tower baffles
Posted by Shane on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 05:23:43 GMT
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Put this in the construction forum also.Having now got the kit from Wayne sitting in my living room I am thinking about what I want to do with the cabinets. I think I would like to use MDF with oak veneer (to match all the dark red mission furniture), but would like to have hardwood rounded corner edges that are say 1/16" proud on the front with a lighter stained front baffle as well as oversize hardwood base and top plates. It seems to me the only easy way to do this would be to double the front baffle, as I wouldn't think any type of spline to attach the corners would be very strong between the hardwood and MDF. Plywood I could see, but not the MDF.Also, will doubling the front baffle, but leaving the suggested inside dimensions the same, cause any acoustic problems?

Subject: Re: 2 Pi tower baffles
Posted by BillEpstein on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 09:47:14 GMT
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I've built several Pi Speakers and always double the baffle. For the way it looks. Perhaps the reinforcement even sounds better.This, of course, isn't in the Pi Catalogue but is strongly influenced by Wayne's expertise (I have none, just tools). The hardwood corners left proud is a fine idea I've contemplated in the past and could be embellished by routing a narrow reveal 'tween the board and panel. Go for it!

Subject: Re: 2 Pi tower baffles
Posted by spkrman57 on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 09:53:16 GMT
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Bill - you are too modest!Ron

Subject: Re: 2 Pi tower baffles
Posted by elektratig on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 13:53:04 GMT
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Shane,I responded to your post over in the Craftsmen Forum before seeing the thread here.

Subject: Re: 2 Pi tower baffles
Posted by Shane on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 15:24:12 GMT
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Bill, you're work is just fantastic. I'm looking for the WAF on this project and she really likes the idea of say a 2" wide solid oak edge on the front baffles similar to your picture there. A small reveal is a good idea, better than leaving the pieces pround I think.

Subject: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by GarlandGarland on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 15:47:55 GMT
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...then I would strongly suggest using baltic birch plywood. MDF is ok for loudspeakers but it's not too durable, hard to get good strong joints with, and doesn't take screws very well. I also feel that the dense BB ply sounds better- more alive. Also, when you're finished, the little bit more you spent on the cabinets will enhance the overall value and your pride in making them yourself! BTW, are you the Shane from the New England Bottleheads? If so, Hope to see you at a future get together, if we can ever get back into having them!Garland

Subject: Re: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by Shane on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 16:01:42 GMT
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I'd like to use BB, but haven't found anything but the stuff from HD or Lowes. There is a very small hardwoods place that I will check out tomorrow, since they aren't open on the weekends. I want to keep the costs reasonable, but am definitely willing to spend the extra to make them look nice.Nope, not from New England. Amarillo, TX. But I do check in on the BH forum occasionally as I am thinking of making a Seduction for my future TT.

Subject: Re:Hey 2XGarland
Posted by BillEpstein on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 16:42:20 GMT
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The 'Baltic Birch' I find here in the mid-West has "footballs" in the good side. I suspect 'Baltic' has fallen victim of Glasnost. At least it's cheap and void free but needs to be veneered. Is the old good stuff still available under another name? Maybe Latvian or Hungarian or Tjadikastanian?

Subject: Re: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by Wayne Parham on Sun, 24 Jul 2005 17:38:55 GMT
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Call around the lumber wholesalers. Chances are there's a large warehouse in Amarillo that provides materials for all the cabinetmakers in the area. They'll have dozens of sheets of genuine Baltic Birch, and can probably recommend someone you can buy it through. Maybe they'll even sell you a sheet directly.By the way, the real stuff has cyrillic markings, as you might expect. The

Subject: Well, the BB I bought was very dense...
Posted by GarlandGarland on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 00:17:57 GMT
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... and though lacking the markings Wayne talks about I feel it still is worth the $$. And veneering isn't that hard to do or if that's too much, the stained birch beats out MDF IMHO. As an aside, Sorry about the moniker! When Wayne switched over to the roundtable I found that I couldn't use my old moniker to log on so this is what I ended up with. -not meant to reveal my vanity, lord knows one of me is more than enough! And Bill, how's that GE oil cap breaking in? yuck yuck!G.

Subject: Re: Well, the BB I bought was very dense...
Posted by Wayne Parham on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 01:06:29 GMT
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If you'd like, your original username can be deleted so you can reuse it. Then you'd just have to register the name again.

Subject: Found a place to get wood!
Posted by Shane on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 13:24:38 GMT
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Get this, right behind where I work! They are a hardwood supplier for individual or contractor. The only BB they have is 1/2", but they do have oak veneered 3/4" MDF which would save me from messing up a veneer job. Never done it, wouldn't know which kind to get, etc.....

Subject: Re: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by GarMan on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 19:44:25 GMT
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Shane,Don't let the higher cost of BB over MDF scare you. If you get some BB that's nicely surfaced (no footballs) and work carefully with it, there's no need for veneer. I figure you'll need at least 30 sq ft of veneer plus 20% waste to cover the Towers and that can cost you about $100. Sometimes, it's worth paying extra for the BB to avoid the cost of veneer. You'll just have to think of a creative way to work with the edging, either hiding it or incorporating it into your design. Also, I find the birch can do a passable imitation of cherry if finished properly.

Subject: Re: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by Shane on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 20:16:56 GMT
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What would you recommend for finishing BB? I'm not worried about the cost, just not having ever veneered I can see myself messing it up. I've done furniture with hardwood before, but not messed much with MDF and never with veneer.

Subject: Re: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by Shane on Mon, 25 Jul 2005 20:17:32 GMT
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Also, I can't seem to find any 3/4" BB here, just 1/2".

Subject: Re: If your doing something kinda fancy...
Posted by Matts on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 01:14:48 GMT
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I've used an oil finish on it- the "Tried & True" linseed oil with varnish added, or there's one with beeswax. They look very good- have aged to a very nice golden/lt. brown color. Whatever you do, sand them with a few progessively finer grades of sandpaper first, then finish. birch can look "smeary" with many stains, so you have to be careful with that. Some of the dyes can look good. Best thing to do is save your scraps and use them for testing whatever you want to try (and let it dry well) before you actually do the speakers.

Subject: Finishing BB
Posted by GarMan on Tue, 26 Jul 2005 14:10:58 GMT
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To add more detail to what Matt said, BB is nothing more than layers of birch veneer sandwiched together to form the plywood. In 19mm BB, you have 13 plys. The surface you end up with is no different than birch veneer. The option to finish it is endless and there's a lot of good suggestions in the Craftsman forum. Epstein has a few good posts about his oils.Don't sand it down until all the construction is complete. You don't want get your surface smooth only to have it pick up new scratches when you're making that one last cut. I find birch pretty porous so I like to sand it down to 220 grit. I start with 150 Aluminum Oxide, to 220 Aluminum Oxide, and then 220 garnet.I find BB looks very nice with just an oil wipe-on finish. Tung oil will tone it gold and make the grain pattern pop. Do a search in Craftsman for oil and there lots of info.Colouring BB can be a bit tricky because it has a tendency to blotch. Sanding it down with 220 garnet helps a bit with even coating as it burnishes the grains. If using oil/gel stain, a coat of conditioner first will help with blotching. Again, Epstein had a post in Craftsman on how to make your own conditioner (or you can just buy it off the rack).This year, I discovered and fell in love with water-based aniline dye. The colour is deeper, richer and more transparent. Unfortunately you have to go through the extra steps of grain-raising, but for me, I think its worth the effort. To keep this dye from blotching, I first spray the surface lightly with water and wait one minute for it to absorb before applying the dye.Gar.