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Subject: I just ordered Pi Stage 4's, give me some ideas on bracing, and any other construction tips

Posted by [Pfenning](#) on Sat, 10 Sep 2005 12:14:22 GMT

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I will be building the cabinets for my Stage 4's next weekend, so just a few questions. Should I use MDF or ??? What is everyone doing for bracing on these cabinets? Can I change to a round fared port? If I can, what size and how many? Should I build them in mirror image of each other? How high should they be lifted off the floor? I'll be building stands also. Should I mod the kit at all (like change internal wiring, upgrade cross over components or ???)? What type of speaker wire should I use? My runs will be around 8'. Give me all the info you've got, I'm ready to get going on these. Thanks, Justin

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Subject: Re: I just ordered Pi Stage 4's, give me some ideas on bracing, and any other construction tips

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Sat, 10 Sep 2005 13:46:16 GMT

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This cabinet is pretty straightforward and easy to build. If you will always use them indoors and rarely move them, MDF is a great wood to use. It is acoustically inert and easy to work with. But Baltic Birch is much stronger and resistant to humidity. So if they will be moved much or might be in humid environments, you might want to think about that. I don't suggest changing the port. Occasionally someone does, but I really like the way it is now. It's a tried and true design, one with known good performance. And it looks great like it is. Make 'em mirror images as stereo pairs.

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Subject: Re: I just ordered Pi Stage 4's, give me some ideas on bracing, and any other construction tips

Posted by [Matts](#) on Sat, 10 Sep 2005 14:19:35 GMT

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I just built a pair- used butted screw/glue construction w/out mitred corners. I used 3/4" plywood. I didn't add any additional bracing as it didn't seem to need it- mine were very tight and solid. I figure I could add some bracing later if I want, but don't think I will need it, so far. I built mirror- they look good in the room. I made ports out of 1/8" ply from hobby store, painted flat black inside.

Also, I'd wait to make stands to see what works best in your room with your system. I'm still experimenting. They sound good on the floor in my room. Good luck with them! I'm very happy with mine...

Subject: BB Ply or MDF

Posted by [GarMan](#) on Sat, 10 Sep 2005 22:54:22 GMT

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I have a love/hate relationship with both Baltic Birch ply and MDF as building material. I like MDF because it's inexpensive and it's one of the easiest material to work with. Dimensionally, it's very precious. 3/4" MDF is within a few thous of 3/4". However, it's horrible with dust. Its dust is very fine, clings to plastic like iron filing to magnets, and if you don't wear a dust mask, you'll be coughing it out for a couple of days. MDF also requires you to either paint or veneer, so overall, it can be more expensive than BB ply. BB ply is more expensive than MDF but don't necessarily need veneering, so it can have a lower overall cost. It has pretty heavy sawdust so clean-up is not a big problem. On the negative side, I don't find it easy to work with. Blow-outs, chip-outs, splinters happen pretty easily and can be frustrating if you plan on using the BB ply as the finished surface. The way it takes on stain is also very sensitive to surface prep, so if you're inconsistent with sanding, you will get colour blotches. This is true with any wood but I find BB ply to be very much so. Gar.

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Subject: Re: BB Ply or MDF

Posted by [Matts](#) on Sun, 11 Sep 2005 02:13:11 GMT

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The dust IS the killer with MDF. I don't have any problems with cutting plywood as long as I use the best sawblades for the job- good brands made especially for ply. Here's a pre-finish filler an owner of an architectural restoration store used on my last ply cabs- put it on really thin with a wide putty knife and it \*will\* sand as smooth as glass with 500 or 600 paper, and take a finish very well. Very good stuff!

Bartley's Filler

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