

General info

- When making sample pieces of different dyes and stains write down everything you do, including types of sanding (orbital, hand, etc), grits of sandpaper, type of sandpaper, so that you can reliably recreate the result.
- Very important to keep the pieces clean. Use a vacuum, not compressed air which will blow the grit into the pores.
- Before sanding use Paint Thinner grade Mineral Spirits to wipe down the project to look for imperfections [Don't use regular mineral spirits, it has oils in it]. Wipe it down in sections with a cotton cloth. Look for scratches, dings, glue smear, imperfections, switchback grain. Write down every imperfection you see so you can keep track of where to sand.
- If you used Titebond Original you can use white vinegar to remove glue smears. Saturate the glue stain with vinegar, leave for 15 minutes to 2 or 3 hours, then the glue smear can be wiped off with a clean rag with vinegar on it. Or, if it's dried, use a stiff nylon brush to brush it clean.
- After the piece has been sanded, go over it again with the paint thinner to look for remaining or induced imperfections.

Prepping info

- Pretreat the surface to fill pores to avoid blotching.
- Pretreat using very thin Rabbit Skin hide glue.
- Keep track of how you make the mix so you can recreate it.
- Half pound mix of shellac is also a great pretreatment, especially for softwoods (e.g, pine, poplar). If you only want a little bit of color, shellac is the way to go.
- To apply the shellac as a pretreatment, wipe it on and off as fast as you can.

Stains

- Stain is pigment held in a vehicle (usually mineral spirits) with a binder (usually varnish). With stain, the pigment is held in suspension, not solution.
- Use the best quality stain you can buy. To get the best stain go to a store that caters to Pros (e.g., Benjamin Moore), and buy their most expensive stain.
- If you don't like the way the stain looks, you can remove it with citrus stripper or naphtha

Dyes

- Dyes are pigments in solution, not suspension. Because the pigments in dye are so

small they are able to get around the fibers of the wood.

- Transtint (available from homestead finishing products [Jeff Jewitt]) is good dye that's already in liquid form. Easy to measure drops and recreate your recipe, even for small amounts
- Use pure distilled water to mix powdered dyes. Don't use tap water, it has minerals and impurities in it.
- You can use alcohol to mix the dyes, but because it evaporates so fast it's hard to control, so water based is better.

Ebonizing with Ferrous Acetate (Reactive dye)

- Ferrous Acetate is 0000 steel wool dissolved in white vinegar. Wash the steel wool in naphtha or acetone to get any oils out. Let it sit in a jar for a few hours to a few days. The liquid will be clear until exposed to air.
- The Ferrous acetate reacts with the tannic acid in the wood.
- To make the wood even blacker, make heavily brewed black tea. Put a wash coat on the wood and let it dry, then use the ferrous acetate. This preloads the wood with tannins.
- The black is not deep into the wood, so you might go through it on the edges, but you can use a black marker to touch it up
- There's never a problem with blotching for splotching when using ferrous acetate because it reacts with the tannic acid, and it's not dyeing the wood otherwise.
- If you don't like the way the ferrous acetate looks, you can wipe the piece with oxalic Acid. The oxalic acid is also good for removing black stains from wood when you've left a piece of metal on it.

DO NOT USE POTASSIUM DICHROMATE. It's toxic.

David