



Scott Horsburgh
Designer and Maker of Fine Handcrafted Furniture

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Piece: Sideboard

Subject: Carcass Construction.



Above is a basic drawing of the sideboard I am currently making. I want to discuss the basic construction methods so you understand why I am doing things a specific way.

As you can see it is a leg and rail carcass. There are four drawers and four doors and there is also a void in the middle which can be used to house a large serving tray or anything too large for the interior.



The two end frames are leg and rail with a panel. See above picture. I have two choices when it comes to the panel. I can either use a solid piece of wood or I can use a veneered substrate. In deciding which way to go I looked at the drawers and how they will operate. Where are the drawer guides, runners and kickers? I will be screwing the guides and kickers to the end frame panels and also screwing the guides and kickers to the two interior vertical panels. If I use solid timber I will need to slot screw these pieces when screwing them so as to enable the panel to move freely across its grain. If I do not slot screw, the guides and kickers are fixed and when the panel wants to expand and contract with the changing humidity I will have trouble. I was reluctant to slot screw as I want the drawers to be a perfect piston fit, not only when I fit them, but also in twenty years time. The movement of a solid panel is a little risky as it may change very slightly the location of slot screwed guides and kickers. If they move even a fraction the drawers will not fit as well as when they were first planed to fit. Of course there is also the fact that the location of the guides and kickers may not change at all. However I decided to use veneered panels so I could permanently fix the guides and kickers without any movement of the panel.

Because I am using veneered panels I need to veneer both sides of the substrate. I am using jarrah veneer on the outside and white birch on the inside to lighten the interior of the carcass. This is an added bonus of using veneered panels – I can use different veneers on either side of the substrate.

I want the base of the sideboard to fit very snugly into the carcass. If I were using a solid piece I could fix it at the front but would need to allow for movement at

the back. By using a veneered panel I can fit it snugly all of the way around. This will mean I can avoid any dust or small bits of stuff falling into a gap at the rear of the carcass.

The two vertical interior panels will also be veneered. The top of each side of these panels will have drawer guides and kickers screwed to them. Where the void is I will be using a jarrah veneer and all of the rest will be white birch.

The two horizontal panels will also be veneered.

One thing that concerned me was having drawers running on a thin commercial veneer. I was concerned that the 0.6mm veneer which may be 0.4mm when finished is too thin and may wear under use. I will be inlaying some hardwood strips into the veneer for the drawers to run on so this potential problem will be avoided.

I am not yet sure of the top, but I am thinking it will be solid. The back panels will also be veneered to continue the white birch interior and jarrah exterior.

I found a magnificent piece of curly jarrah with wonderful colour variation and have decided to use this for the doors. The drawing shows the doors as frame and panel but they will now be veneered throughout.

Scotty Horsburgh
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