



Scott Horsburgh Designer and Maker of Fine Handcrafted Furniture

Article 27: 2nd August 2010

Piece: Sideboard

Subject: Planing the Doors to Fit and Hinging the Doors.

I know that if I plane the edges of the face veneers to be flush with the lipping, the door will fit very snugly into its opening. I do this carefully making sure that I get no tearout when planing the veneer end grain. Once I have planed the face veneers to be flush with the lipping I know that the doors will fit snugly into their respective 'door openings'. Before I start planing the inside and outside faces of each door I need to plane a little more of the top and bottom of each door so that the hinges can fit and allow the doors to open and close freely. The pivot hinges that I used have two sleeves (one for the door and one for the carcass) separated by a brass washer that is 0.6mm thick. If I am inlaying my hinges flush with the doors and carcass rails then I need to allow for the 0.6mm thickness of the washer. I laminated some white paper so that the thickness of each this laminated piece was 0.6mm. I planed the tops and bottoms of the doors so that each door could sit on these strips and still allow me to slide them in at the top. Basically the door height was then 1.2mm less than the opening height in the carcass. Now I am ready to plane the door faces to a lovely clean, crisp finish.

I will plane both the inside door face and the outside door face. I will not start to mark out for the door hinges until I have completed planing the door front and am very happy with the finished surface. I will be using marking gauges with the same setting as I used when marking out for the hinges on the top and bottom rails. When marking out for the hinge location on the doors my face side is my outside face so I want to have that cleaned and ready for a very light sand before I commence marking out for the hinges.

When I am happy with the planed finish on the inside and outside faces of the doors I am ready to mark out for the hinges. I will use my two marking gauges

with the same settings that I had when marking out for the hinge locations in the carcass. My procedure is exactly the same.

So I now have the doors actually planed to fit. They are sitting on top of the two 'laminated paper' strips and I am also to slide these same strips in at the top. It is this 0.6mm clearance that allows the doors to open and close smoothly without rubbing on any of the timber surfaces. If the thickness of the strip does not equate accurately to the thickness of the washer on the hinge then the doors will either be too tight or too sloppy depending on whether the laminated strips are too thin or too thick.

The photo below shows the doors fitted with the small gaps along the top and the bottom of the doors which equate to the washer thickness.



When I fit doors I have a specific method which I always follow (I have demonstrated this in detail in the DVD on Door Making, Fitting and Hanging). I start with the bottom of the door and ensure it sits flatly and evenly along the bottom rail. I then slide the door up to its vertical stile and ensure it touches the stile evenly all the way along the side of the door. If it does not, I will rectify any errors with my handplane. I then seek even gaps and uniformity along the top of the door to the corresponding rail. Finally it is the last remaining vertical side, which in the case of two central doors as above, represents how they meet in the middle. I am striving for uniformity in gaps. Plane these edges to fit and take your time. It is a matter of planing a little and then checking the fit, etc.....



Inlaying the hinges on doors is a job for chisels. I do not take out any waste with a small hand held router as it can be difficult to balance the tool accurately. I prefer to take my time and chisel the waste out gradually until I reach the required depth. Mark out with your gauges and squares and then start to carefully remove the waste with chisels. Using sharp chisels will ensure you get crisp, accurate cuts and make the job much easier.

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