

A Few Remarks about the Small Office Cabinet Project

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A WARNING - PLEASE READ

Woodworking can be dangerous! It's up to you to determine if you can safely use the tools and perform the tasks needed to complete this and any other woodworking project. If you are unsure, STOP! Get advice from someone knowledgeable or do some careful studying on your own. Be safe!

Always wear at least an appropriate N95 dust mask or respirator when sanding or spraying paint. For advice about dust masks and respirators, visit this link:

<https://woodworkingtoolkit.com/best-dust-masks-respirators/>

**READ, UNDERSTAND, AND FOLLOW ALL OF THE
INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS THAT CAME
WITH YOUR TOOLS. BE CAREFUL!**

This Is Not Standard Documentation - Fill In the Blanks

I generated the original material in this ZIP package just for me, not for a general audience. This gave me the freedom to create a minimal amount of written design documentation. And it allowed the documentation to be technically incomplete. I simply carried some ideas around in my head.

So, for example, the SketchUp design doesn't show any molding since it was a nuisance to include that in the drawing. But I simply knew that molding would be part of the final product, so there was no real need at the time to include it. But now I'm telling you about it.

Please be aware that I might not have included every detail that you need to build this project. So I suggest that if you want to build it, carefully look things over and determine ahead of time if you have enough information to go forward.

It might be sufficient to simply guess at any needed information if you can't find it in the included files.

Please be aware that there might be mistakes in the documentation that I accounted for during the build but failed to note in the documentation.

Non-standard Dimensioning

My attitude toward dimensioning is to make it "good enough." Professional mechanical designers follow certain conventions regarding dimensioning. I'm not that careful. So understand this ahead of time when you find any dimensioning that is unconventional.

The Cabinet

This is a small cabinet of furniture quality. I built it for use in a small area in my home. It was painted since the materials weren't suitable for staining. The color was chosen to blend reasonably with its surroundings.

- Height: 36-3/8", approximately
- Top: 15-7/16" wide by 11-1/4" deep
- Base: 14-7/16" wide by 10-3/4" deep
- 4 shelves, including the bottom
- The top shelf is broken into 3 cubbyholes
- The cubbyholes are formed with 1/4" Baltic birch plywood partitions that have solid wood edging along their front edges
- The cubbyhole dividers are designed with tongues on their tops and bottoms that fit into grooves cut in the top shelf and the cabinet top, thus keeping them aligned
- The true top of the cabinet, the cap assembly, is formed of plywood with solid wood edging on 3 sides
- A small 3/8" molding covers the seam between the top and the body
- The carcass is 1/2" Baltic birch plywood
- The back is 1/4" Baltic birch plywood
- Each 1/2" Baltic birch plywood shelf is edged on the front with solid wood to give the edge a clean appearance as well as to make each shelf look thicker
- The inner edges of the side frames are trimmed with cove molding that is 5/8" wide
- The 3/8" molding under the top and the 5/8" cove molding inside the side frames was selected from available stock at the local Lowe's
- Two coats of primer were applied to the bare wood using a brush: Zinsser/Rust-Oleum Bulls Eye 1-2-3 Primer (it's white)

- The finish is two coats of spray paint on top of the two coats of primer:
Rust-Oleum Universal Advanced Formula, Satin, Paint and Primer in One, in Espresso Brown

A SketchUp File and a PDF File

File *Office Cabinet 05.skp* is the SketchUp design for the cabinet. This is useful since I think all of the necessary details are incorporated here. So, for example, if you find a dimension or other detail missing, it can be determined from this file. And, you can orbit and move the model around for a better look at everything.

File *Office Cabinet 05.pdf* contains all of the images from the SketchUp file. Use this if you're not familiar with SketchUp.

Note that certain details are deliberately missing: no molding is shown in these files. You should refer to the pictures and to the dimensions noted above.

Note that the "Side Plywood" page in the plans says "X2" suggesting there are two of these. But the two sides are not duplicates; they're mirror images of each other.

Customizing the Frames

Though dimensions are specified for the front frame and the side frames, you should use those only as guides. I recommend that the frames be custom cut to fit the carcass exactly.

The same advice applies to any solid wood edging.

The rails (horizontal pieces) of the front frame should be located so their tops agree exactly with the tops of the shelves. Hence no vertical spacing is given in the drawing.

The center rail of the side frames has a dimension such that it will be located to cover any nails that pass from through the side of the carcass into the associated shelf.

Of course, the moldings should be custom fit.

Primer, Filler, and Paint

I used a 23-gauge nail gun to hold critical pieces in place while the glue set. The nails left tiny holes. I applied Zinsser/Rust-Oleum MH Ready Patch spackle to patch the holes and any open seams. The spackle was applied over the first coat of primer.

The spackle was sanded flat once it was dry, and the primer was given a light sanding before another coat was applied.

I reapplied the spackle wherever it shrank. The spackle was again sanded flat after it was allowed to dry. A second coat of primer was brushed on and lightly sanded after it had dried.

Painting Problems

Painting the cabinet was a nightmare. A can of spray paint was used. The turbulence of the spray when spraying into the shelf cavities, and cubbies was a serious problem. All of that paint came back at me. The resulting coverage inside the cavities was thin and uneven. It took a lot of frustrating effort to get good coverage without apply so much paint in some places that I got runs.

I didn't paint the cabinet's bottom so as to avoid having paint rub off onto carpeting or hard flooring.