

Bevel Cut Article Wood Finishing

Andrew Davis, December 2016

Does Wood Finishing Drive You Crazy?

If you're like me, by the time you have your parts cut, joined, glued, clamped, assembled, and finally sanded, the final finishing task feels like being surprised to find you have one more paper to write after you've been sunning on the beach. Then comes the chemistry exam – what's the best finish for the project? Wax, oil, varnish, shellac, lacquer? Spray or paint? Stain or dye? Oil-based or water-based? Sand between coats or not? And why are some products sold as finishes so much more expensive than others?

Deep down you know that different finishes offer varying degrees of protection, durability, ease of application, repairability, susceptibility to water or alcohol stains, and aesthetics. But do you remember which does which? And are the expensive products really better?

Lastly, you know that despite all your clever work, the finish is what people will see.

I've purchased several woodworking books with tips on finishing, but they offer too many options in my humble opinion. I've come around to trying to focus on one method and master it, rather than experiment with a different approach on every project. I'm honing in on Watco. Supposedly simple, but at least in my case, not foolproof.

I also remember a FIG meeting a few years ago where someone asked someone else what finish he used for the project he was showing and he answered, "my standard – 1/3 X, 1/3 Y and 1/3 Z" but I can't remember what X, Y, Z were except that one of them was Waterlox (expensive).

Maybe the assembled EMGW guys can shed some light on this topic. If not, I'm thinking of resorting to latex paint !

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Cqn6iX1MLg>