



PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER SEFTON

Above: Solid timber lippings being applied to a tabletop

Left: Wrapping a 3mm lipping around the veneered table top

Insight

Lippings

Peter Sefton explains the process of applying lippings on your work

The application of lippings is a key element when undertaking veneered work and there are several methods to choose from. In our school workshop, we're usually trying to hide and protect the substrate, most commonly MDF.

Process

The first key point to consider is: do you wish to hide the lipping by veneering over it – known as pre-lipping. This is the easiest option, but does leave a vulnerable veneered edge. This is normally accomplished by using the same lipping timber as the finished veneer.

The other and better quality way is to post-lip, where the MDF is surface veneered and the lipping is then applied. This can be done using the same timber as the veneer or using a contrasting lipping, which offers us more design opportunities.

Kevan, one of our full-time students at the school, has used two variations of the post lipping method, on different sized tabletops. Both tops were veneered using 12 consecutive birdseye maple (*Acer saccharum*) veneers in a sunburst pattern, radiating

from the centre. The smaller table was lipped using a 3mm-thick piece of American black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) wrapped around the circumference and glued in two stages. The edging was cut over-length and left 4mm wider than the veneered top's thickness. This was glued around the tabletop using Titebond III.

The glue was only applied to half of the circumference at this first stage and clamped under the pressure of a ratchet strap. The following day the ratchet strap was removed and the unglued section was carefully allowed to unfurl. A block plane was used to produce a flat surface, about 50mm long, at a tangent to the circle. Then, glue was applied to the remainder of the tabletop's circumference and the lipping was again put under pressure with a ratchet strap. After the second glue-up the over-length lipping was cut off and then the overlapping lipping was planed back into a true circle. This is a quick, easy and attractive lipping option for circular tabletops.

End result

Kevan's larger tabletop had 12 solid lippings all internally moulded to



Above: Veneer edge lippings in a contrasting timber, being clamped in place

match the 1,200mm diameter of the tabletop. These lippings were all cut with mitres on the ends to match the veneered joints. They were glued using Cascamite and biscuits both around the circumference and between the mitres. After gluing, they were planed flush with a jack plane and then routed to the finished diameter prior to profile moulding, sanding and finishing. The solid timber lippings are a lot more complicated, but worth the extra effort as the end result is stunning. ■

Peter Sefton

Peter Sefton is a well-known furniture maker who runs courses in fine woodworking, teaching and mentoring students at the Peter Sefton Furniture School. He also owns Wood Workers Workshop and he is a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Furniture Makers.
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