

Intarsia Feb 2024

Week 1 :

Explain the use of coloured wood in Intarsia projects.
Wood grain directions by showing some patterns.
Review the use of the Scroll saws and how they work.
Review the use of the band saws and how they work.
Review belt sanders use and safety.
Cut a small pattern on both saws, and try the belt sanders.
Choose a pattern each to work on.
Discuss wood selections and purchase opportunities.

Items Required :

Pen, pencils and carbon or tracing paper.
Push pins
Thin wood for backing.
Woodworkers glue – supplied
Different shades of wood

Step #1 Layout

Select which wood will be used for the different shading in the patterns.
Use the carbon paper on top of the desired wood / wood grain.
Use push pins to hold the pattern in place.
Draw all the way around the part to be cut out.
Number each part, to keep them straight.
Lift the corner or side of the pattern by removing a couple of push pins, don't remove them all.
After you've copied all the parts your ready to cut them out.

Step #2 Cutoff

You can use a bandsaw or a scroll saw to cut out your pieces. Whichever saw you choose accuracy is the key element.
After sawing remove the burr, or tear out from the bottom of the piece created by the saw blade going from top to bottom.

Step #3 Shaping the Parts

You can leave your parts flat or choose to add dimension. Either way sand the face of the wood and lightly sand the edges to remove the hard edge.
Assemble the parts as pictured in the pattern. Make sure everything fits together, trim or sand any areas that need it.
Shape the parts to your liking to add dimensions.

Use of backing wood is also a method to increase the heights, but may force more rounding of the parts.

Step #4 The Backing

Assemble the parts on your backing, once you have a good fit trace around the exterior of your picture.

I prefer to cut the backing a bit smaller than the actual piece, that's a personal preference.

Once the background is cut out remove any burrs by giving it a light sand.

Stain the backing a dark colour to reduce the visibility of the backing.

Step #5 Gluing it down

Start with the outside of the project to hold it in place, careful not to use so much glue that it's visible or that pieces slide around. Some clamping may be necessary.

Step #5 Finishing the Project

There are multiple methods for finishing the project.

One method is that you complete the glueing 1st and once your project is all together you spray an aerosol finish such as a clear Krylon over your project. Apply a heavy coat initially, let dry, re-apply two more coats allowing it to dry each time. Once this is complete sand the face of the project with a fine sandpaper at least 240 grit then blow off all the dust using a compressor. Now you can apply a final light covering of spray aerosol. It is critically important that this is completed in a very clean area free of dust as this will be picked up in the air and deposited on your project.

The method I prefer is to finish each piece individually using a clear liquid water based finish that won't yellow with age. I will sand each piece in between coats to eliminate any rough surfaces with a fine sandpaper 180-240 grit. I use sponge brushes that clean up easily in water. Apply 2-3 coats until satisfied with the level of finish. Again this needs to be completed in a dust free zone.

A hybrid method is to complete the glueing process then apply the liquid finish, however care must be taken to ensure no pooling occurs in between the joints which will have an undesirable finish. Again a light sanding between each coat is required, and blowing of the project with a compressor is needed.

Final points :

I like to sign & date each of my projects using a wood burner, personal choice.

I like to keep a list of the woods used on each project and I usually attach the list to the back of the finished project.

Most Intarsia projects have unusual shapes so I am not discussing framing, however some patterns are framed so that changes the backing size and mounting.

I use an eye hook style which is screwed into the backing board to hang my projects. You need to determine a location for this hook that will allow your project to hang the angle that you desire as most of these are not square.

Lastly have fun and enjoy this artwork, don't make yourself crazy with the small details. If you make a mistake, unless it's glaring you'll most likely be the only person that ever knows it's there. The more you work with it the better you're work will turnout.