

Do It Yourself

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Butcher Block Table: Finishing Touches

From "[Wood Works](#)"

episode WWK-506 -- [More Projects](#) »

With the tabletop made and the base assembled, the final steps in the creation of the butcher-block table include detailing the tabletop, attaching the top to the base and applying a wood finish.

Materials:

Drum sander
Table router
Random-orbital sander
Cordless drill; screwdriver attachment
5/8-inch Forstner bit
Hand scraper
Salad-bowl wood finish
Figure-8 fasteners
Paint brushes
Rags
0000-grade steel wool

Safety Alert: *Always* wear safety goggles or safety glasses when working with wood, power-tools, saws, drills, routers, etc.

Safety Alert: *Always* wear protective gloves, and ensure adequate ventilation, when working with wood stains, solvents and other toxic solutions.

Tabletop -- Final Prep

- Use a scraper to remove any excess glue from the fully dried tabletop, then run the top piece through the drum sander to flatten the surfaces (**figure A**). This process may take a little while. To ensure full coverage, rotate the stock.



The eye-catching pattern of contrasts and colors make this functional butcher-block table an elegant addition for any kitchen.



Figure A

- After smoothing both surfaces at the drum sander, clean up the sides with trim-cuts at the table saw.
- Radius the edges of the tabletop at the table router using a 3/16-inch radius bit to soften all of the edges of the top (**figure B**).
- Smooth the end-grain, and remove any leftover saw-marks, using a random-orbital sander (**figure C**).



Figure B

Attaching the Tabletop

The top will be attached to the base using three figure-8 metal fasteners along each side of the base, and two for each end (**figure D**). Although the tabletop is made by laminating many small blocks, it may still expand and contract along the width of the grain just as if it were a solid piece of wood. To avoid cupping or warping of the top piece, the figure-8 fasteners are used and will allow for wood movement while holding the top securely to the base.



Figure C

- To install the figure-8 fasteners, use a 5/8-inch Forstner bit to drill the recesses in the top edges of the base, pre-drill the holes for the screws then secure the figure-8's with screws (**figure E**).



Figure D

- With the fasteners attached to the base, position the base on the bottom surface of the butcher-block, making sure to leave a 1-3/4-inch overhang along the sides and a 1/2-inch overhang on the front and back (**figure F**).



Figure E

- Mark the position of the figure-8 fasteners (**figure G**), and secure the base to the tabletop with screws (**figure H**).

Butcher-Block Wood Finish

- To apply a wood finish, you'll need to temporarily remove the butcher-block tabletop.
- Any time you're applying a wood finish that will come into contact with food, it's a good idea to use a **salad-bowl wood finish**. Once cured, this finish is non-toxic, and can also be used on children's toys.
- The end-grain of the butcher-block will soak up a lot of finish. Apply



Figure F

several coats using a brush (**figure I**), and rubbing the finish in using a lint-free rag. Rub the finish between coats using "0000" steel-wool. This finish deepens the natural colors of the wood, and highlights the contrast between the different varieties of woods used.

Care Tip: As the surface of the butcher block wears over time, you might consider re-sanding and re-applying the salad-bowl finish as needed.

[Click here](#) to order your tools and materials for this project from **Woodcraft!**

• **ALSO IN THIS EPISODE:**

[Butcher-Block Table: Tabletop](#)

[Butcher-Block Table: Base](#)

[Butcher Block Table: Shelf, Joinery and Base-Assembly](#)

[Butcher Block Table: Finishing Touches](#)



Figure G



Figure H



Figure I