

The Best Of "Creative Living with Sheryl Borden"



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Home & Hearth

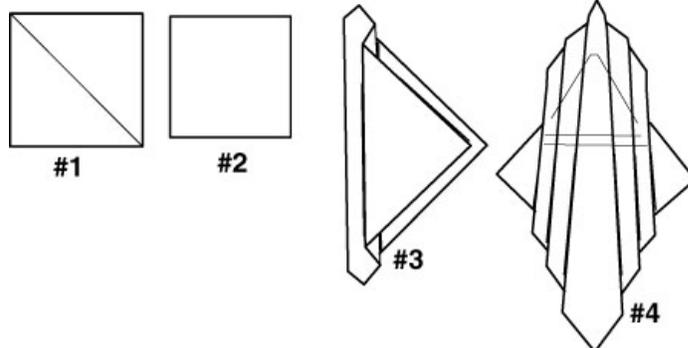
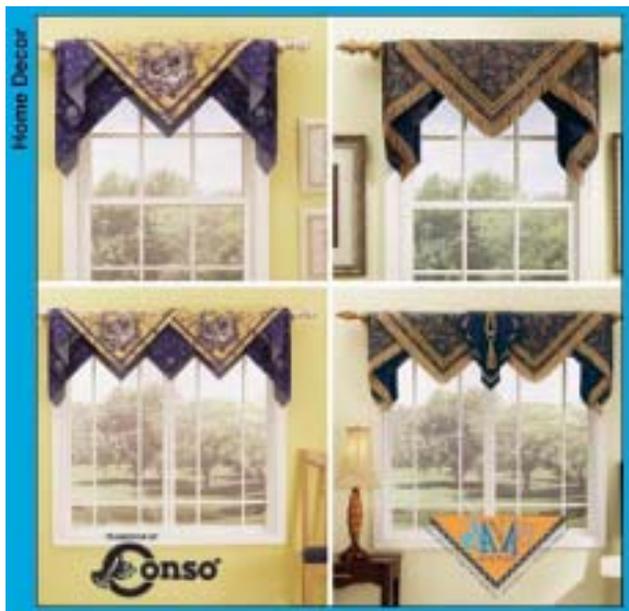
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Due to the size of this section, it has been divided into two section which will enable it to be downloaded much more quickly. For instance “Box Top Window Treatments” is in Section I on page 3 whereas “Hardwood Floor Finishing” is in Section II on page 8.

Box Top Window Treatments

Design: Simplicity #5865

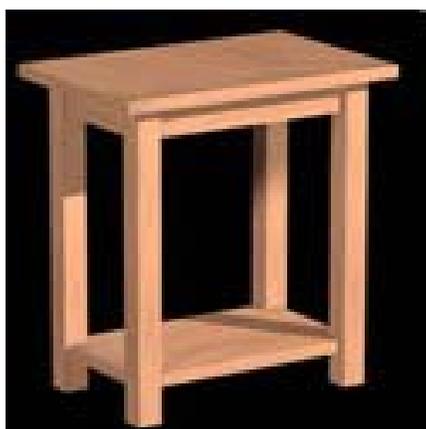
Sizes: One Size Window Workshop Box Top Valances. Create incredible valances by layering folded squares. Use this pattern to sew for any size window. Pattern includes instructions for the unique folds along with yardages and sewing information.



COURTESY: Jana Beus
Simplicity Pattern Co.
www.simplicity.com

Finishing Unfinished Nightstands

The nightstand is a small versatile and essential piece of furniture. In addition to being used next to a bed, it can also serve as a reading table next to a chair or sofa. Rather than settling for pre-finished (and more expensive) nightstands, Bruce Johnson has some ideas that will save money while providing you and your family with a fun and creative project.



Start by selecting unfinished nightstands. Then they will need to be sanded. After sanding, apply a wood conditioner as a pre-stain treatment. A water-based stain is a good choice for the following reasons: no fumes, there are many colors to choose from, it dries quickly, and cleanup is easy.

There are a number of ways to apply decorative touches — it's up to each person. Some ideas include decoupage, stencils and even wall-paper stickers.

COURTESY: Bruce Johnson
Minwax
www.minwax.com



Using the Right Colors in the Home

Color Schemes

A key element of a well-decorated room is color. It influences not only the look of a room but also the moods of those who use it. Chromodynamics, the study of phy-siological effects caused by observing color, proves that colors can affect vision, hearing, respiration and even circulation.

Reds, yellows and oranges make up the warm spectrum. Cool hues include blues, greens and violets. Neutrals, built around black, white, gray, beige and taupe, are ver-satile and work for nearly every style of décor.

Consider the natural light in a room when choosing color. A sunny room can be balanced by neutral or cool colors, while warm colors can make a north-facing room feel cozier.

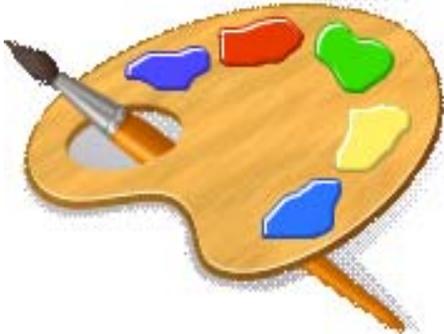
Artificial light also affects color. Incandescent light gives color a warm yellow cast, fluorescent bulbs cool down colors, and halogen light is very white, causing little color distortion.

Hang a color sample (at least 1 sq. ft.) on the wall and observe it at different times during the

day in both natural and artificial light. The variance can be surprising.

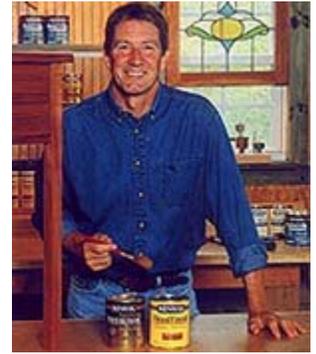
Lastly, before painting a room, consider the level of sheen or gloss. While flat paints are more suitable for a traditional look, higher sheens are more prevalent in contemporary décor. Bear in mind, however, that lower-sheen paints such as flat and eggshell tend to mask imperfections better, while light reflections from higher-sheen paints such as satin and gloss emphasize wall flaws. Semi-gloss and gloss paints are, however, easier to clean and often used for trim. New formulations of paint such as flat enamels combine the advantages of a low-sheen finish with the practicality of being washable and offer a good alternative to traditional formulas.

**COURTESY: Lacy Roberts
Havertys Furniture Co.**
www.havertys.com



Furniture Refinishing 101

People are drawn to kit furniture because of its high quality and excellent value. Compared to the price tag in furniture stores, the cost of a kit looks pretty attractive. And today's kits offer both a wide selection of quality woods and an equally broad range of designs, from basic styles to magnificent reproductions.



Kits also offer the convenience of ordering from home – from a catalog or the Internet – and you'll find that assembly tends to be fairly straight-forward and clearly described in the directions. And equally important, a kit gives you complete control over the stain color and finish, allowing you to coordinate the piece with your décor.

Like any kind of furniture, you want good quality in both the wood and the way the pieces go together. If it's not rustic pine, the wood should be knot-free; there shouldn't be any dings, dents or other blemishes; the color and grain of the visible pieces should be similar, and joints should fit snugly.



After the kit arrives, do a dry-fit assembly to make sure all the parts go together properly. Before staining the piece, which should be done before the assembly, sand away any scratches or roughness with 220-grit sandpaper. For irregular surfaces like lathe-turned legs, use a sponge-lock sander.

If you're planning to stain the piece with an oil-based stain, and if the wood is soft or porous, treat it first with oil-based Minwax® Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner. Use Minwax® Water-Based Pre-Stain Wood Conditioner first when using Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain on any type of wood. This ensures the most even stain absorption and prevents any blotchiness that can otherwise occur.

The stain can go on soon after the wood conditioner; apply it with a clean, lint-free rag or a bristle or foam brush, taking care to keep it out of glue joints. Staining before assembly prevents glue from getting on the wood surface which tends to seal out stain and produce uneven color. Staining first also ensures complete stain coverage, especially in hard-to-reach areas.



As for choosing a stain, you've got lots of options. Minwax® Wood Finish™, an oil-based stain available in 20 wood-tone colors, gives you plenty of working time to ensure even coverage. Oil-based Minwax® Gel Stain, available in eight wood-tone colors, is thick and viscous and offers more control and less chance of runs or splashes, especially on doors or paneling that you can't lay flat.

Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain comes in six ready-mixed colors, a white wash pickling stain and 60 decorator colors that are mixed in the store, allowing you to choose from a wide range of contemporary blues, reds, greens, yellows and other colors. For maximum convenience, consider using either Minwax® Polyshades®, an oil-based, one-step brush-on stain and polyurethane available in nine wood-tone colors in gloss and satin sheens, or Minwax® WoodSheen®, a rubbing oil stain and finish available in six wood tones and one white.

Whichever stain you choose, do some practice applications on scrap wood to get a feel for how it goes on, sets up and wipes off. You should always do a color test on a small and hidden portion of the kit. Try different waiting times between application and wipe-off, and you'll see slight variations in the resulting colors. And be aware that thin veneers and thick, solid pieces of the same species will absorb different amounts of stain. After staining, wait a day before proceeding with the assembly. Have a small wet rag on hand to wipe away excess glue that may squeeze out of joints. If you're using bar or spring clamps, the jaws should be padded or you should put softwood scraps between the jaws and the kit wood to avoid marring it.

Wrights® MAGIC CURTAIN TAPES

And unless the manufacturer recommends or provides something else, use yellow carpenter's glue, which creates a very strong bond. After reading all the directions, work slowly and steadily through each step. When you're done, set the piece aside for a day so the glue can cure before the topcoat is applied.



Your choice of clear topcoats includes products that can be brushed or wiped on, and some are even available in aerosol cans. Minwax® Fast-Drying Polyurethane is an oil-based topcoat that comes in gloss, semi-gloss or satin sheens. Minwax® Polycrylic® Protective Finish is water-based

and recommended for use over Minwax® Water-Based Wood Stain.

Polycrylic® dries crystal clear in gloss, semi-gloss or satin sheens and cleans up with soap and water. For interior and exterior wood that needs an extra measure of protection from sun, rain and temperature changes, choose Minwax® Helmsman® Spar Urethane in a gloss, semi-gloss or satin sheen.



For hand-rubbed beauty, use Minwax® Wipe-On Poly, a polyurethane that provides a thin but durable layer of protection in a gloss or satin sheen.



After the first coat of finish has dried, lightly sand the whole piece with 220 or even 320 grit paper to knock off any raised grain or bumps from dust. Do the same after each succeeding coat up to the final coat. After that coat you can achieve ultimate smoothness by giving the finish a final rubdown with 600 grit sandpaper dipped in a



mineral or lemon oil. That final step will make your finished kit look as good as or better than the piece that's still sitting in the furniture store.

COURTESY; Bruce Johnson
Minwax
www.minwax.com

GENERAL DIRECTIONS FOR MAKING PERFECT CURTAINS

In order to achieve the desired look for your window treatment a few initial decisions and measurements must be made.

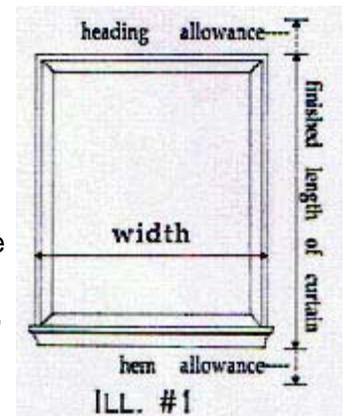
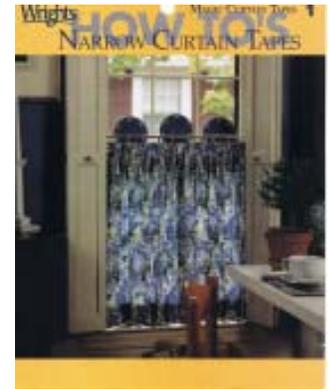
MEASURING

Accurate measurements are essential for a professional look. You will need to measure the exact area that the window treatment will cover. This could be floor to ceiling, wall to wall; or from just above the window frame to just below the sill with the width just outside the window frame. These are personal decisions determined by the look you want to achieve with your window treatment.

Decide on where you want the top of the curtain to be and measure down to the desired length of the finished curtain. Most window treatments will look best with, at least, a double three-inch bottom hem, and a double four-inch heading header at the top. To determine the cutting length of each panel add 6 inches for the bottom hem and 8 inches for the header to the desired finished length of your curtain. For example:

window length is	40"
+ double 3" hem	6"
+ <u>double 4" hem</u>	8"
	54"

Curtain fullness is determined by your tape. Different Wrights Magic Curtain Tapes produce custom fullnesses. Each tape is designed to give a specific fullness when the cords are drawn. To determine the width of fabric for the panel, take the finished window width (including the rod returns and/or overlaps) and multiply by the fullness of the tape, then add 4 inches for a double 1-inch hem



on either side of the panel. For example:

window treatment width is 36"
curtain tape is 2-1/2 to 1 fullness
36" X 2 1/2 = 90"
+4 for side hems

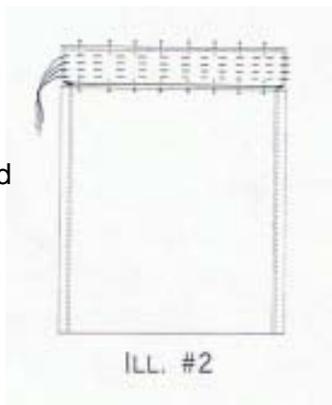
94" needed for width of fabric for single panel treatment such as a valance or a one way draw curtain.

For center draw curtains, the same procedure would apply, but a total of 8" would be added for the side hems (double 1" hem each side of both panels)

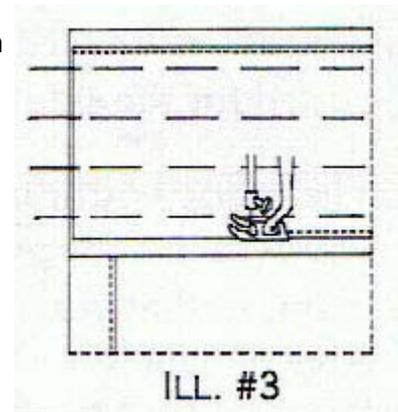
The fabric width measurement that you have determined will be the measurement you will use for purchasing the curtain tape that you will need. Always buy a little extra, so that you can lay out your pleats symmetrically, i.e. pleats begin and end at edge of panels. Unless absolutely unavoidable, you do not want to have half a pleat at the opening edge of your curtain, for instance.

ASSEMBLY OF CURTAINS MADE WITH WRIGHTS MAGIC CURTAIN TAPES

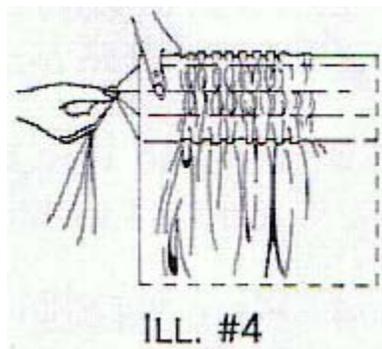
1. Cut and piece fabric to achieve the measurements that you have worked out. Remember to trim off fabric selvages.
2. Press to **WRONG** side 1 inch, then over 1 inch again on the **LENGTH** of each side of panel to form 1 inch double side hem. Stitch.
3. Press to **WRONG** side 4 inches, then over 4 inches again on **TOP** of curtain to form a 4-inch double header and pin in place.
4. Place Wrights Magic Curtain Tape, with the pastel marking line **VISIBLE ON THE FACE AND AT THE TOP EDGE OF THE TAPE**, on your header. Fold under raw edge on starting end and secure draw cords with knots to prevent cords from being pulled out when you are forming the pleats.
5. Pin end even with the side hem on the **WRONG** side of the curtain and down from the top of the header the desired distance. (see illus. #2).
6. On the other side edge, fold under about 1 inch of the Curtain Tape and stitch down, to prevent fraying, being careful not to catch the drawcords in your stitching.



7. Pin Curtain Tape in place along the length of the header to keep it from shifting when you sew.
8. Stitch the Curtain Tape to the header along the top of Tape, being careful not to catch the drawcords in your stitching. Stitch again along the bottom edge, always stitching in the same direction. You may want to add additional stitching lines in the body of the Tape. This will depend on the design of the Tape, the weight of your fabric, and the look you are trying to achieve. (see illus. #3).



9. To achieve the best results when drawing the cords, use a "third hand" or someone's assistance to keep the fabric taut while you draw the cords. Hold the cords in one hand, while you move the fabric along the cords. **DO NOT FORCE** the pleats. The Curtain Tape forms the pleat. (see illus. #4). When the cords that sit on the surface of the Tape disappear



into the pleat without puckering, you have successfully attained the perfect pleat. Knot the cords securely, close to the last pleat, and either cut off the excess cord or wrap it, so that you can release the knots later for ease in laundering.

10. Insert your hooks into the tapes and hang your curtains.
11. Always pin the hem of your curtains after they are hung to ensure that the hem will be even and the length will be perfect. Remember that you have allowed for a double 3 inch hem (an extra 6 inches.)
12. Remove curtains from rods, stitch hem and rehang.

**COURTESY: Pat de Santis
Wrights**
www.wrights.com