

Plexiglass Finish

To start you need to make a thick solution. I did this by melting plexiglass in acetone. I started with a new 1 gallon paint can from any box store or paint store. I used enough plexiglass to cover the bottom of the can with about 1-2 inches. I then added enough acetone to cover the plexiglass. For the next couple of days I would stir the solution periodically and add more acetone as necessary.

After the initial solution is made you need to take some of the solution and thin it for the finish. I thin the solution to a consistency a little thinner than thick CA glue. This can be adjusted to individual preference. I tried the thick solution and it did not work for me the finish just clumped up because the quick drying time. I keep my thinned solution in a squeeze bottle that was purchased at a beauty supply shop. I have had it in the same bottle for about six months with no problems.

To start I turn the pen just as I would with any other finish. I turn my pens, sand and finish with the lathe running at the same speed about 1800 rpm's. I sand with 150, 220, 400, and 600 and then stop with the first grit of MM. Prior to applying the finish ensure that you don't have any sanding rings or defects.

At this point I wipe the blank with DNA with the lathe running.

To start with I use rubber gloves and apply the solution with a paper towel. I won't get into specifics as to which paper towels because of debate over which is better. I fold the paper towel up to where it is about a 1/4 of an inch wide.

I start by soaking the paper towel with the solution. The first coat I start applying the solution at the nib end of the pen and work toward the finial end. After each coat I apply a small puddle of solution to the paper towel. Unlike the CA finish I use the same portion of the paper towel. The only time I switch to another section of towel is if I delay between coat and the solution on the towel dries. Each coat after is started at the opposite ends of the pen to ensure an even coat on the entire pen.

I apply as much solution as I feel necessary to the blank. I typically apply between 5-10 coats. This varies depending on the amount of solution applied to the paper towel per coat. This finish can be sensitive to the amount of pressure used to apply it. I have found that if too much pressure is applied during the process the finish will flake or resulting in you having to start over again with sanding. After the last coat is applied let the lathe continue running for about 30-60 seconds for the solution to cure.

At this point start wet sanding. Depending on the smoothness you have after applying the solution it will determine which grit to start with. I usually start wet sanding with the first grit of MM and wet sand all the way through. The first grit I will spend about 30 seconds the rest of the grit I sand for about 15 seconds each till the last 2 which I once again spend about 30 seconds each. Between every couple of grits I will wipe the blank down with a paper towel moistened with water.

Once the sanding is completed and the finish is smooth I move to the final stage of finishing. I use a plastic polish that was purchased at Wal-Mart I believe that it is GS-27. I apply 2 coats to make sure that all scratches are removed then follow up with a coat Meguires car wax.

Once all of the steps are completed I remove the blank from the bushing with a pair of pliers with a slight rocking motion. I then carefully trim the excess film left on the end with a straight edge razor blade. Then finish assembly of the pen as per the instructions

I have found that some oily woods benefit from a sealer coat of CA prior to applying the Plexi finish.