

Laminated Pens

By Ron Sardo

Supplies:

Pen blanks

Veneer

Yellow Glue

Paper

Pencil

Slimline kit

Tools:

Scroll Saw or Band Saw

Clamps



Starting off:

On a sheet of paper trace the outline of your pen blank and cut out with a pair of scissors. Draw a pleasing curve inside the box. It's best not to make too tight of a curve until you are familiar with this process. A simple S curve is a good starter. With a pair of scissors cut along the curved line. This will be your template.



Transfer the image using your template onto the pen blank with a pencil.



Scroll saw:

Not surprisingly working with curves is easier than using straight lines. No matter how you cut the blank, you will always get a matching pair. Besides, it's simpler to cut a curvy line than a perfectly straight line on a scroll saw. I used a No. 12 blade which gives a nice smooth cut in hardwoods.

Veneer:

Cut a few strips of veneer a little longer than the size of your pen blanks. Be creative here, mix and match contrasting woods for a pleasing effect.



Dry run:

Gather your clamps, pen blanks and veneer. I use a spring clamp to keep the sections from slipping width wise and a smaller clamp across the endgrain which prevents the sections from slipping length wise

A quick note here, some veneers will crack if the curve is too tight. Soaking the veneer in water before glue up will help in most cases.

Glue up:

Apply glue to both halves. If you miss any surface, you may have a void in your blank. Once all surfaces have glue, arrange the blanks and clamp. You need to work quickly because you want to finish clamping before the glue starts to set.



When clamping you don't need herculean pressure, just even pressure. Too much pressure is as bad, if not worse than too little pressure, you don't want to squeeze all the glue out. Also, too much glue can be as bad as just a waste and messy. With practice you will learn to use the right amount of glue and clamp pressure.



The spring clamp helps prevent the two halves from slipping width wise while the bar clamp keeps the parts from slipping lengthwise. Once you get the big clamp in place you can remove the spring clamp and the bar clamp.

After about two hours you can unclamp and clean up any glue that has squeezed out. Place the template again on your blank and repeat the process.



There you go! Enjoy!