

Creating Wood Kitchen Cabinets with foam core and veneer - Part 1

By Luci Hanson, Hanson's Cascade Miniatures

SUPPLIES

- 1/4" foam core 7-1/2" X 7-1/2"
- 1/32" wood veneer 3" x 12"
- Styrene sidewalk 1/8" squares 5" x 5"
- Craft knife
- Quick Tacky Glue
- Metal edge ruler
- Cutting mat
- Pencil
- Cello Tape
- Fine emery board
- Stampendous Diamond Dots (1/16" peel and stick dots)

Recently I wanted to create a modern kitchen in half scale and couldn't find the cabinets to go along with the half scale kitchen appliances that I already owned. The appliances were regular household refrigerator magnets with very nice detail.

After giving it some thought I realized that it wasn't necessary to have doors and drawers open so why not make them myself.

I used the training I had acquired in cabinet and furniture making. The upper cabinets are 12" deep in real life so the half scale cabinets will be 1/2" deep. The lower cabinets are usually 24" deep so the lower half scale cabinets will be 1" deep. The average sink cabinet is 48" wide by 24" deep. Most of the other lower cabinets are anywhere from 18" to 48" wide by 24" deep. Most cabinets are approximately 36" high which in half scale is 1-1/2" tall.

With these measurements in mind I set out to make a sink unit, a corner unit and a drawer unit. At first I made each piece individually. Then I realized that when we are dealing with the smaller sizes the bulk that is created placing two finished cabinets together does not look realistic. Something had to be changed.

Why not make all three cabinets in one unit? It was much easier than making three separate units the exact same height and depth.

I used foam core for the frame



of my cabinets. Then I covered the foam core with 1/32" oak veneer. In my real kitchen my doors and drawer facings are 3/4" thick oak. In half scale that equates out to 1/8" thick. I ran a small sheet of 1/16" oak veneer thru my Xyron machine. This holds the rather fragile thin oak together while cutting it and also provides a sticky surface to eliminate the use of glue.

After making the cabinet unit I needed to install the counter top. I wanted a white tile counter so I used Evergreen Scale Models Sheet Styrene Item # 4514. It is scribed in 1/8" squares, which in real life is equal to 3" tiles. Before cutting my tile counter I cut an 8" strip of a single line of tile to make the backsplash. Next I fit and glued the backsplash to the counter top and set it aside to dry.

The one thing to remember when cutting out the countertop-there is almost always a 2" overhang so leave about 3/32" to 1/8" overhang on the front. If an appliance is going to be placed at the end of the cabinet it is best not to have the overhang on the ends of the cabinet. This gives a snug clean look to the kitchen without gaps.

I used a modified sink magnet as my double sink. After cutting the hole in the foam core for the sink it was

necessary to cut out the tile countertop. It is best to place the cabinet unit in the corner of a room box and then glue the countertop onto the base unit. Let it dry and then cut out the hole for the sink using a very sharp craft knife. Drop the sink unit in and glue in place. I finished the oak surface with furniture polish and rubbed it smooth-then attached the peel n stick knobs.

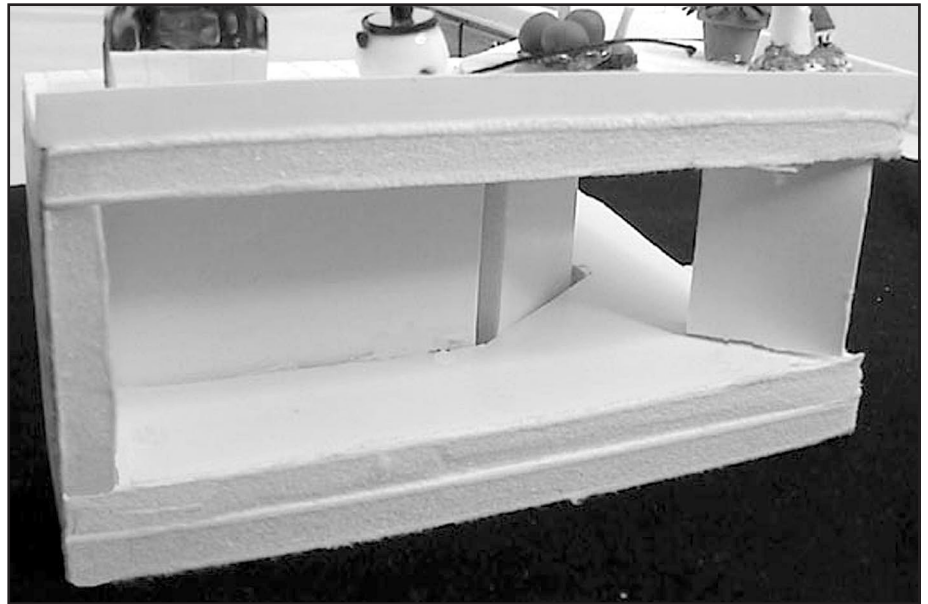
It may sound complicated to some but the truth of the matter is that it took longer to type the instructions than it did to make the finished project.

The following is a step by step process for making the lower cabinet:

1. Cut foam core parts A x 3, B x 3, C x 1. Make sure all Part A's are the same shape and size. Same for Parts B.
2. Glue two Parts A together forming a double layer
3. Glue 1 Part B to the end of Part A forming a side wall. Repeat on the other end.
4. Glue the third Part B to the middle point of the double layer as shown. These three pieces will support the top of the cabinet. Allow 10 minutes for unit to dry.

1/2" SCALE

5. Glue the third Part A to the tops of the Parts B flush with the front edge.
6. Score Part C on the dotted lines. **DO NOT CUT ALL THE WAY THROUGH.**
7. Fit and glue Part C to the front of the cabinet unit flush with the top. This will leave 1/4" on the very bottom of the unit for a kick plate. Set the unit aside to dry.
8. After the unit has dried sufficient to handle, cut out for the sink.
9. Cut out a counter top and back-splash. Glue the counter top to the face of the backsplash.
10. Position the counter top on the cabinet unit flush with the two back sides, and mark the cutout for the sink. Carefully cut out the hole for the sink in the styrene counter top.
11. Glue the completed unit to the cabinet top.
12. Cut the wood veneer to cover the front and sides of the cabinet unit, making sure the grain of the wood is vertical.



13. Glue the wood cabinet facing to the foam core cabinet front and sides. Sand any joints smooth. Remove all excess glue.
14. Cut a strip of veneer 1/4" wide by 7" long. Paint it black. After it dries glue it to the bottom kick plate.
15. Cut door and drawer fronts using

the veneer. The drawer fronts are cut with a horizontal grain. Doors are cut with the grain vertical. Glue in place.

16. Finish sand the cabinet with a fine emery board and polish the wood with furniture polish.
17. Position the dots (knobs) as desired.

