



## European Telephone Console

*Keep your phone, phone books, keys and other small items in order.*

Being worldly woodworkers, the *Popular Woodworking* staff spends time checking out woodworking ideas from Britain, Australia and even Germany. It was in a German woodworking magazine called *Selbst* that we saw a similar entry hall stand. Its clean lines and utilitarian efficiency caught our eye, so we decided to give it a little American schooling and share it with our readers.

### Two Triangles

I was able to get all the necessary parts (except the back) out of a 4' x 4' piece of cherry plywood. Start construction by ripping two 12½"-wide pieces from the sheet of plywood, then crosscut the pieces

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These first six photos show the sidebar "Iron-on Wood" below. Start with a piece of tape that's about 2" longer than the edge you are covering. Your iron should be on a cotton setting, with the steam turned off. Make sure the tape overhangs the edge evenly, then start ironing. Make long passes over the edge, not stopping in any one place for any length of time, applying heat evenly. The tape will start to curl up a little as the glue melts.

to 38" long. Next, strike a pencil line from one corner, 12" from what will be the back edge, and connect it to a point on the opposite corner, 1½" from the same back edge. Mark both pieces, making sure you have left- and right-facing pieces.

Head to the band saw with the two pieces and cut along the pencil line, leaving about an 1/8" wide of the line. Then take the two pieces to the jointer and trim the angled edge straight and fairly close (1/16") to the line. To make the two pieces identical, clamp them together, flushing up the back and top edges. Using a sharp bench plane I made a few passes on the angled edge to even up the pieces.

## Parts for the Middle

Grab what's left of your plywood sheet and rip an 11"-wide strip from it. From this 11" x 48"-long piece you'll be able to get the door, the kick, the two cleats and the shelf. Crosscut all the pieces except the shelf to size. The piece that is left is enough to make the shelf, but I turned the shelf so the grain would run longways to better match the veneer tape. Go ahead and cut the shelf to size now.

Now it's time to disguise the plywood as solid wood. The front and top edges of both sides receive iron-on veneer tape, as well as the front edge of the shelf, the top edge of the kick and the top edge of the lower cleat. Don't tape the door edges until the case is assembled. If it's your first time using veneer tape, see the instructions on the next page.

## Put it All Together

There are a couple of joinery methods you could use to join the pieces together, but I chose biscuits. Start by marking the location of the shelf on the two sides and cut those biscuit slots. Then mark the location of the upper cleat to biscuit it to the underside of the shelf and into the two sides. The lower cleat is biscuited flush to the back edge and bottom of the sides, while the front kick is flush to the bottom edge, but held in 1/8" from the front edge to add shadow lines and to keep you from having to align the door perfectly with the edge of the cabinet. With all the biscuit slots cut, sand the inside faces, add some glue

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Since trying to use the iron to hold the tape in place as the glue dries just re-heats the glue, switch to a simple block of wood. The chunk of poplar shown here works great. The bottom surface is sanded smooth and the edges are broken to avoid snagging or scratching. Simply apply pressure and make long passes over the edge for about 30 seconds. If you have a few pieces to veneer, set the first piece aside for now to let the glue cool.



3 To trim the edge, start by carefully bending over the ends until the veneer breaks. Make sure you apply pressure to the end of the attached veneer so it doesn't splinter back onto the visible edge. Then pull the "dangling chad" of veneer downward to tear it free. By the way, if you're doing four edges of a board, do two opposite edges first, trim the edges, then apply the other two edges.



To trim the long edges of the veneer tape,

and clamp the piece together. Though there's little chance of the piece racking, check it for square.

After the glue is dry, remove the clamps and roll the piece onto its face. Chuck a rabbeting bit into a router and cut a 3/8" x 3/8" rabbet in the back edge of the sides and in the top and bottom cleat. Cut a 1/4" back to fit the space and round the corners to let it drop into place. Don't put the back in yet as it's easier to finish and mount the door hardware with the back off. Go ahead and fit the door, then veneer all four edges.

## Finishing Touches: A Clear Top and the Right Hardware

The door is held in place using a continuous hinge mounted to the kick. You should be able to catch six holes in the hinge. Start by mounting the hinge to the kick, then use the two center holes to attach the door. Check to see if the hinge location allows proper clearance. If not, back out your first two screws and use two other holes to scooch the door one way or the other. When you've got it right, plug the misaligned hinge holes with a toothpick and some glue, then redrill the pilot hole and put the screws back in. The door is held in place using a brass lid support and a magnetic catch.

The clear acrylic top is the last construction step, and it's fairly easy to install. Simply drill four shelf pin holes in the sides to allow a 3/8"-thick piece of acrylic to rest 1/16" below the top edge. The acrylic piece is available as a 12" x 12" piece from a number of catalogs as a router-table insert. Cut the piece close to finished size on the table saw, then sand the piece to a press fit a little at a time. To make the two visible edges presentable, file the edges flat, then sand through 360 grit to a near-perfect edge.

Two coats of clear finish will protect the wood, and the piece is ready to hang. The upper cleat works great as a mounting point using a couple of molleys in the wall. Add a few simple cup hooks to the backside of the door, and you've got a convenient place to hang keys, phone books or any other "near-the-door" items. PW

**7** the tool of choice is a mill bastard file. Start by flushing the ends you just broke over, keeping the file flat to the side, and using only a pushing stroke. It should only take a couple strokes to flush up the end.



To trim the tape edges, use the file again, working right to left against the edge. The best method is to start the file at the end of the tape and push lightly against the overhanging edge to start a curl of veneer breaking away from the edge. Continue rolling the curl along the piece, keeping the file angled forward and at a slight bevel to the veneer tape. Once the curl is knocked off, lightly file the bevel again to remove any excess.



The file is too aggressive for a finished edge, so trade it in for some 220-grit sandpaper and finish cleaning up the edge. You'll find some of the adhesive is stuck to the face of the board. This can be lightly sanded off, but proceed carefully to avoid sanding through the face veneer. That's all there is to it, but don't go using the clothes iron, buy your own for the shop!



With all the cross members cut, the biscuit joiner makes it possible to pull the project together. This photo also shows the two cleats in place at the top and bottom of the case.

## 8 Sidebar: Iron-On Wood see first six photos

There are lots of reasons to use plywood in a project. Cost, weight, wood movement and even environmental considerations. But just because you aren't using solid wood, you don't need to give up the look of solid wood. Iron-on veneer tape has been around for a long while, but it has sort of a "cheap" reputation. I'm here to tell you it's worth a look.

Available in a wide variety of wood species, veneer tape is actual wood veneer with a heat-sensitive adhesive applied to the back. With the heat of a simple household iron and a few simple tools you can turn a piece of plywood into a finished and attractive piece of wood.

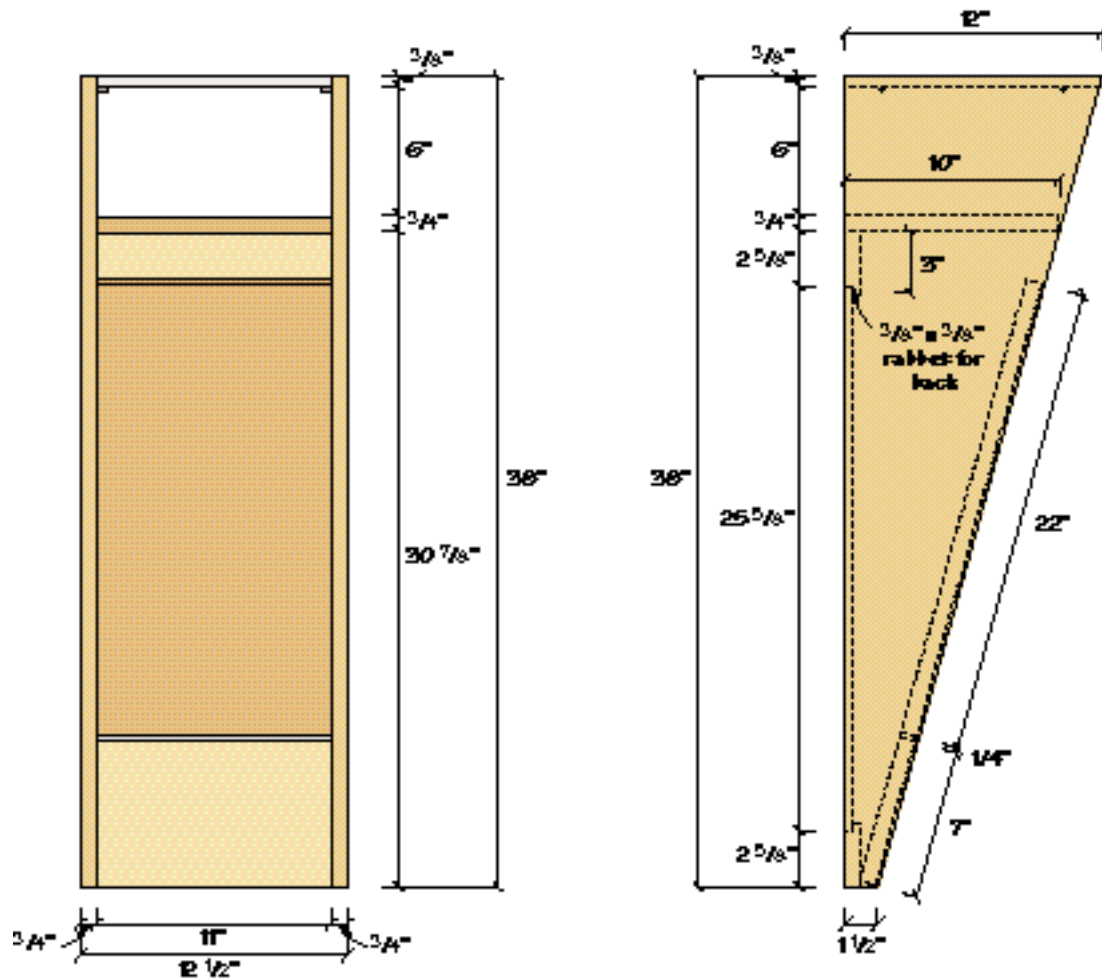
I've been asked about the durability of veneer tape. I can't honestly think of any application for solid wood where tape wouldn't hold up as well.

Follow the steps below for some tips to getting the best results from your veneer tape.



Once the two side wedges are cut to rough size, trim them a little closer to accurate on the jointer. Once you're within about 1/16" of the finished line, clamp the boards together and get out a bench plane. With a little hand work the pieces will match up perfectly.

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#### European Telephone Console

| No. | Item   | Dimensions T W L         | Material   |
|-----|--------|--------------------------|------------|
| 2   | Sides  | 3/4" x 12" x 38"         | Cherry ply |
| 1   | Shelf  | 3/4" x 10" x 11"         | Cherry ply |
| 2   | Cleats | 3/4" x 3" x 11"          | Cherry ply |
| 1   | Kick   | 3/4" x 11" x 7"          | Cherry ply |
| 1   | Door   | 3/4" x 11" x 22"         | Cherry ply |
| 1   | Back   | 1/4" x 11 3/4" x 25 5/8" | Cherry ply |
| 1   | Top    | 3/8" x 11" x 12"         | Acrylic    |