



Country Dry Sink

This dry sink will give your kitchen a feel that no modern cabinet could.

Traditional American dry sinks were made from yellow pine and had deep wooden troughs on top that were useful for storing pitchers, churns and buckets of liquids. Now that we've got refrigerators and ice makers, the dry sink has graduated to become an expensive item at antique markets.

This updated version preserves the form of the traditional dry sink, with its high splash guard on back and storage down below, but I've altered a few key components. Instead of a sunken wooden trough on top, I've added two drawers. And instead of yellow pine, this dry sink is made from curly maple. Put the finished project in your kitchen to add a country touch to a farm home, or use it as a buffet in an informal dining room.

Traditional Construction

I build all my casework the same way, and

1



Begin building the top by gluing and nailing the side splash pieces to the back splash pieces. I like to hold the back splash in place using a vise to keep everything in line as it's nailed together.



I'm convinced that these methods will ensure that the furniture will be around for a long time. Begin by building the face frame of the cabinet because most of the cabinet dimensions are based on the face frame. I use mortise-and-tenon joinery to join the rails and stiles. I make the tenons on all the rails 1" long, and all the mortises 11/16" deep, which will ensure your tenons won't bottom out in your mortises and give some space for excess glue to go. Dry-fit the face-frame parts, then put glue in the mortises and glue up all the rails and stiles. Start with the center rail and stile and work out.

Doors Next

Once the glue is dry from the face frame, I like to make my doors because they are easier to hang and fit while the face frame can be laid flat on my bench. The doors are built much the same way as the face frame, with 1"-long tenons on the rails. To hold the panel in place, I plow a 3/8" x 3/8" groove down the inside edge of all the door parts. Be sure to make the tenons on the rails haunched because of this groove.

Once you have the rails and stiles fit, measure the opening for the panel and cut your stock to size, making sure that you leave a 1/8" gap all around to accommodate wood movement in the panel. I cut an 8° bevel on the edges of the panel using my shaper, though you can easily cut this bevel by tilting the blade about 12° on your table saw. Finish sand the panel and add one coat of stain.

Place the panel in the groove, glue up the mortise-and-tenon joints and clamp the doors. You'll notice that I make the doors the same size as my opening in the face frame. This is on purpose. Once my doors are complete, I trim them to size on my jointer. Hang the doors in the face frame, then remove the doors and move onto the case.

Build the Case

Begin building the case by gluing up some boards to make the side pieces and shelves. Once those are cut to finished size, cut 3/4"-wide x 1/4"-deep dados to hold the two fixed shelves in place.

The bottom dado is located 4 3/4" from the bottom edge of sides. This will make the bottom shelf stick up 1/4" above the bottom rail of the face frame and serve as a door stop.

5 the splash upside-down and put a bead of glue on the entire back third of the side splash. If you glue the entire side splash, your top might bust apart after a few seasons.



3 Place the top on the splash assembly and nail it in place through the underside of the top.



Now put a bead of glue on the side pieces and top rail of the face frame. . . .



. . . The sides will expand and contract the same as the

Toenail the top into the case piece.

The second dado should be flush to the top of the center rail because the drawers will ride on that shelf. Now cut $\frac{1}{2}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ " rabbets in the sides for the back.

Put a bead of glue in the dados, then put the shelves in the dados and nail the case together through the sides. Some people might wince at nailing a case together this way; I don't. I figure that when the glue finally gives way, as it will someday, it's the nails that will hold the piece together.

Now nail the nailing strip between the sides. The nailing strip should be flush to the top of the sides and $\frac{1}{2}$ " in from the back edge of the sides. You'll nail your back to this when the project is complete.

To complete the lower case, glue and nail the face frame to the case. When the glue is dry, cut the shape of the base on the front and sides using a jigsaw. Then clean up your cuts using sandpaper. Now it's time to move on to the top.

Make the Top to Last

There's some cross-grain construction in the top, so you need to be careful about how you put it together to ensure the top doesn't self-destruct.

Begin by gluing up the boards for the top piece, cutting the top to finished size and sanding it to its final grit. Cut a $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ " chamfer on the top edge to soften the edge. Cut your three splash pieces to size and cut the curved parts. The back splash gets a 3" radius cut on either end. And the side splashes get a 1" radius cut on the front edge as shown in the drawings. Finish sand all the pieces and follow the instructions under the photos.

Finishing Touches

I make the drawers using half-blind dovetails. I build a simple jig that cranks these out in just a few minutes. See the jig in action at www.popwood.com/features/fea33.html.

To keep the drawers running straight, I nailed in $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 1" strips of wood on the upper fixed shelf and stops at the back of the case to keep the drawer fronts flush to the front of the case.

The back is made from ½"-thick poplar boards that I shiplap so the edges overlap. I also cut a bead on the shiplapped edges using a beading bit in my router. Fit the back pieces, being sure to leave a gap between each board; don't nail them in place until the dry sink is finished.

Now finish sand all the parts, putty your nail holes and dye the project. I use a diluted red aniline dye, followed by three coats of lacquer. PW