

Mini Minutia

Tips and Hints for Working with Basswood Flooring

<http://www.miniminutia.com>

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Installing Your Flooring

Preparing the wood - Lightly sand the flooring on the patterned side, and then use a tack cloth to remove all sanding debris. The flooring should be cut to size prior to any finishing being applied. First, make a template of the area in which the flooring will be installed. Make any necessary adjustments in size and shape to the template before using the template as a pattern to cut your flooring. If an electric jigsaw, table saw or scroll saw is not available, the flooring can be cut using a utility knife and a straight edge, preferably a cork-backed ruler to prevent slipping. Once the straight edge is in place, lightly score the wood with the knife to create a “track” for cutting. This prevents the knife being “caught” by the grain of the wood and veering away from the desired cutting line. Several light cuts are preferable to trying to cut the wood with one heavy stroke.

Preventing Warping - It is recommended that both sides of the flooring be finished to prevent warping. Minimize the degree to which the wood becomes “wet”. Stain pens or markers are the least likely to result in a warped floor. If your flooring does warp, dampen the curved side of the wood, and place under weights (a couple of heavy books works well) until thoroughly dry. Gluing the flooring in place and clamping until dry will also remove any warping.

Types of Finishes - This flooring can be finished with paint, stain, ink or wax finishes. All finishes should be tested on the back of the flooring to determine colour, coverage, etc. For fancy or complex finishes, see the previous page of this pamphlet.

- a) Paint - When using paint, apply a thin layer of paint and then wipe it off while it is still wet. Applying a second coat of a darker colour and then quickly wiping it off will also highlight the planks and patterns.
- b) Stain - either oil or water-based stain can be used, although the wood is less likely to warp using an oil-based stain. Stain pens or wood-coloured markers are the least likely to create warping.
- c) Alcohol Inks - can also be used.
- d) Wax Finishes - follow the product directions to achieve a mellow, buffed look to the floor.

Additional Finishing Effects - Once the basic colouration of the wood has been achieved, additional finishing effects can be applied. Some options, depending on the “story” you want to tell with your floor, include:

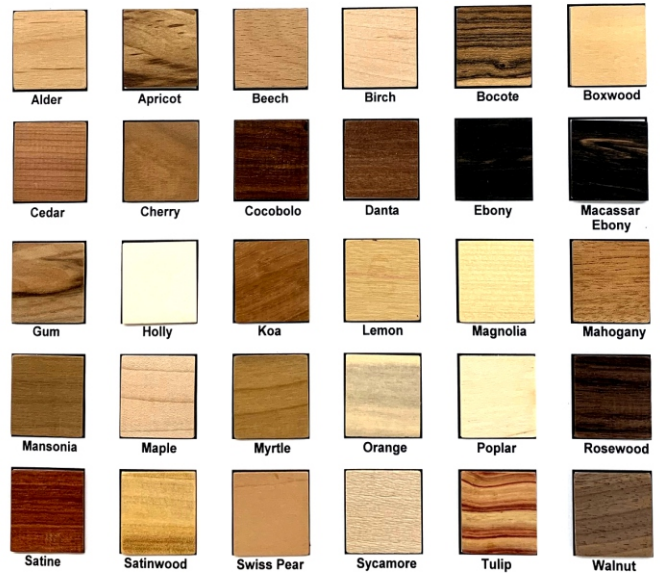
- a) applying one or more coats of varnish or sealer, in either satin, semi-gloss or glossy finishes. To build up the most effective finish, with depth and shine, lightly sand between coats.
- b) stencilling a design around the borders of the room.
- c) aging the floor to show traffic patterns by lightly sanding areas that would get the most wear.
- d) installing baseboards effectively highlights your floor, and adds to the realism of your scene.

Applying the Flooring to the Floor - A good wood glue is recommended for gluing the flooring in place. If the flooring is to be used in “scratch” building, attaching it to a non-porous, thicker piece of MDF is preferable. Apply the glue sparingly, making sure it goes up to the edge of the backing piece. Clamp the flooring in place, and set aside until the glue is completely dry. Then glue the walls of the room-box in place around the floor. To install in an existing dollhouse or room-box, clamps may not be possible. In this case, use weights to hold the flooring in place until the glue is dry.

Mixing Different Types of “Wood”

Basswood flooring is naturally a light beige in colour, and can be stained or finished to look like a variety of other woods. Using more than one colour of stain is effective in replicating grains and markings in the wood.

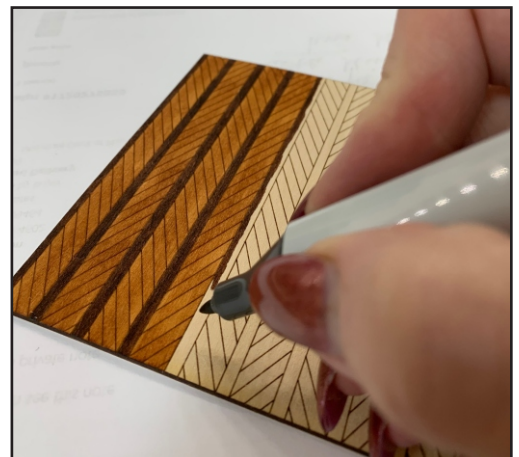
A recommended way of achieving this is to use Copic Markers. These markers come in a wide variety of wood colours, including walnut, light walnut, burnt umber, dark bark, chamois, sepia and light camel. These markers have dual ends: a chisel tip for covering larger areas, and either a brush or a point tip, depending on which type of marker is selected. The point tip is perfect for detail uses, including marking grains and knots.



When the flooring is made, the laser cuts a groove in the wood to delineate the patterns, and this groove prevents the stain/markers from “travelling” into unwanted areas.

Fancy Finishing

Using a Copic marker with a fine tip, and using two or three different wood colours, a number of effects can be achieved with the basswood flooring. This is a case of carefully colouring between the lines! Note that lighter colours highlight the “plank” lines, while darker colours obscure them.



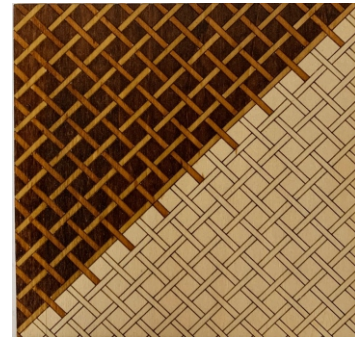
Examples of “Fancy Finishing”



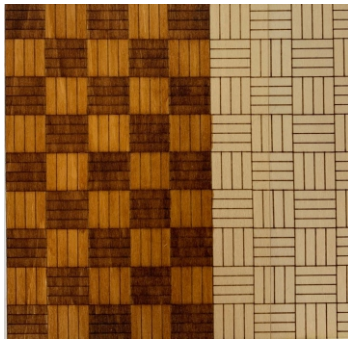
Herringbone



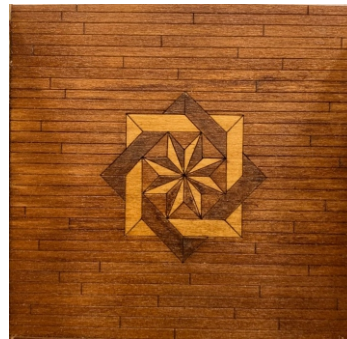
Separated Chevron



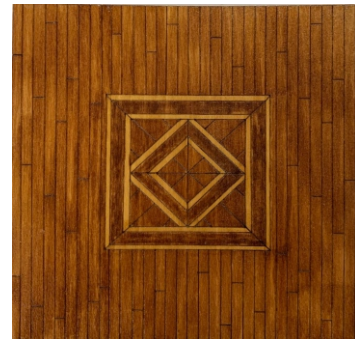
Versailles



Parquet



Medallion 1

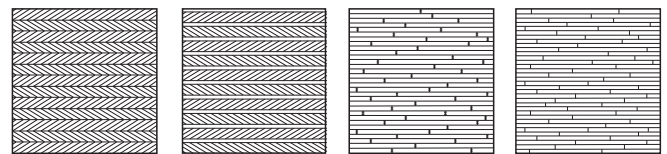


Medallion 2

Flooring Patterns and Scales

Wood is a natural material, and as such, has unique markings and patterns. Knots and grain lines are to be expected. There are myriads of different patterns in which floor planks can be laid. MiniMinutia offers 8 different flooring styles, in three different scales, as well as a variety of medallion patterns.

Flooring can be purchased in 1:24, 1:48 or 1:144 scale. All flooring is laser-cut from basswood, and can be painted or stained.

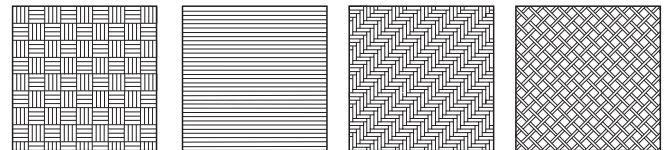


Chevron

Separated Chevron

Random Planks with Nails

Random Planks

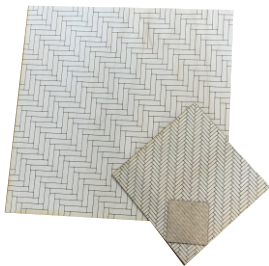


Parquet

Long Planks

Herringbone

Versailles



The 1:24 scale flooring comes in 8.5 x 8.5 inch sheets, 1:48 scale flooring comes in 4.25 x 4.25 inch sheets, and 1:144 scale flooring is available in 1.5 x 1.5 inch sheets. The 1:24 and 1:48 scale flooring is cut from 1/16" basswood, and the 1:144 scale flooring is cut from 1/32" basswood.

The width of the “planks” in the 1:24 scale flooring is just under 1/4" wide, the equivalent of 5 1/2" wide planks in real life. The 1:48 and the 1:144 scale flooring have “planks” that are proportionately sized.