

December 08 Turning Tips

Want to try making a very high gloss durable finish?

Mix Plexiglas pieces with Acetone.

It's not easy, but most things really worth it fall into the not easy category. When you get it right this finish is really great.

First cut up some Plexiglas into small pieces (1/2" x 1 1/2" will work fine). Make sure it's Plexiglas and not polycarbonate. Put them into a glass container that can be sealed tight to about one third full. Carefully pour in acetone until about one inch above the Plexiglas. Cover tightly and wait for a few days for the Plexiglas to fully dissolve.

It will become your master mix. It will be very clear and very viscous.

To use it effectively will require some experimenting with the viscosity.

Use a clean piece of scrap wood or tongue depressor to scoop out the amount you think will cover your project. Put it into a small disposable container. Ceramic containers work great. Don't use a container that acetone will attack. Use the stick to stir in some additional acetone to the master mix. Try it on scrap wood to get the viscosity "right". You will need to experiment a few times until it works for you. Then write down your formula for future reference.

A water thin mixture works to stabilize wood and to prepare a surface for thicker coats.

The surface to be coated **MUST** be very clean and with no scratch marks or torn grain (catches). Also oily woods need to be cleaned with acetone just prior to applying the finish.

This finish will not like getting hot from sanding. Wet sanding works best as on any other plastic.

When done correctly you will get a finish that is to die for. Just don't die in the process.

I didn't say it would be easy, but it will be worth it.

Notes:

Make sure to take safety precautions when working with chemicals.

If your master mix becomes too stiff just add some acetone and wait a few days.

Make sure to keep the master mix container lid on tight as soon as you remove the amount you need. Acetone evaporates quickly.

