

home & garden

Veneer Still Used In Fine Furniture

There is an important element in the fine furniture of today that goes back a long way — 3,500 years to be exact — to the days of the Egyptian Pharaohs. For it was then that the fine art of veneering first began.

In those days, just as today, skilled craftsmen would select thin sheets of rare, figured wood to beautify plain, sturdy furniture.

It was early Roman artisans who first learned to match exotic patterns of wood to resemble figures — "the spots of the leopard," "the swarm of bees," "the tawny lion," "the stripes of the tiger."

When this country was young, much of our furniture was made from solid wood, with its own set of advantages and beauties. Many furniture manufacturers still use this solid form of construction today.

According to the Hardwood Institute, a large percentage of today's furniture makes use of artistic veneering applied over a plywood construction.

Plywood (often mistakenly thought to be a particular species of wood) is, in fact, a sandwich construction of glued wood panels that are made up of two or more thin layers (usually three, five, or seven) with the grain of adjacent layers placed at right angles to each other.

Since wood has more strength in one direction than in another, this alternating of grain direction multiplies the strength of the wood used. In fact, plywood is so strong (yet very light in weight because of the thinness of its layers), that weight-for-weight it is stronger than steel.

With plywood and veneer, the strength of sturdy though less attractive woods can be combined with the beauty of fine cabinetwoods, thus stretching the availability of the rarest and most beautiful species.

When producing a suite of furniture or paneling the walls of a large room or hall, the matching of symmetrical patterns can become important.

It is through the use of veneers that this effect can be best achieved. Veneers are peeled from the tree trunk in such a way that nearly identical patterns are produced on consecutive sheets.

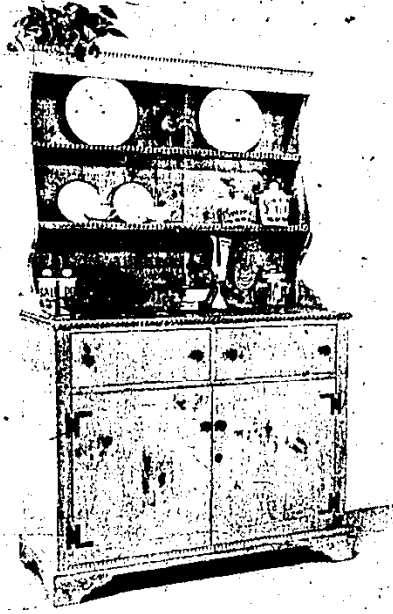
According to the Hardwood Institute, it is important for the consumer to be aware of just what plywood and veneer are, since they are

sometimes confused with other furniture materials that do not have the same advantages.

For example, any substance can be printed with a pattern that resembles genuine hardwood. These prints (called "mahogany - printed," "walnut - patterned" or the like), pick up the color and try to imitate the grain pattern of the hardwood whose name is used.

You can recognize genuine hardwood veneer visually because it will have a greater depth and more varied pore structure and figure pattern than the imitations.

Today, plywood and veneering maintain all the beauty and craftsmanship of the fine veneered objects that were sealed away in the tombs of the Pharaohs.



KNOTTY PINE PLYWOOD is used in this colonial hutch. Full size pattern is available by sending \$1 in check or money order to East-Bld Pattern Co., PO Box 215, Briarcliff Manor, N.Y. 10510. Ask for hutch cabinet, pattern 270.

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Shade Trees Need Autumn Feeding

Either after the leaves have fallen from a shade tree or just when new ones appear in the next growing season are the two times when it is best to feed the tree with fertilizer — and the job should be done once a year according to the American Association of Nurserymen.

The nursery professionals provide these instructions to make the results most effective!

Feed the shade tree when the ground is damp. Use a crowbar or some similar tool to make a circle of holes in the ground about 18 inches apart, ideally eight to 12 inches deep, underneath the tree at about the point of the

end of the longest limbs. Put two or three tablespoons of fertilizer in each hole, top them off with soil, and the job is done.

This process assures two benefits. The fertilizer is applied near to the root of the tree where it will do the most good, and it is beneath the level of grass roots to avoid over-abundant growth where it is not desired.

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