

O.B.'s Shine Juice

By Capt. Eddie Castelin

Several years ago I attended a demonstration where the turner was making a little bottle stopper project called the "hidden pill" stopper. He turned a piece of cocobolo and then sanded it using wax as a lubricant. I hadn't seen this method before and I had created some nice work with cocobolo and just didn't get the right finish. I thought it was the secret to a great finish until he pulled out this little squeeze bottle of finish and proceeded to put a glass finish on it.

The turner was O.B. Lacoste of Lafayette and he soon became one of my mentors. The product he used was a mixture of shellac, boiled linseed oil and alcohol. We came to call this concoction "O.B.'s Shine Juice".

Ingredients:

3 ounces of plain, uncolored shellac. (Zinsser's Bulls Eye Shellac, Clear)
3 ounces of Boiled Linseed Oil. (Do not boil plain linseed oil)
3 ounces of Denatured Alcohol (do not use any other alcohol product)

I use a pint sized Mason jar for mixing and long term storage of the materials. Pour exact amounts into the Mason jar and mix thoroughly. Do not over agitate.

Pour a day's use into a small squeeze bottle (Harbor Freight # 94392-OVGA) for use.

Note: The alcohol will evaporate from open containers and the squeeze bottle. Return what you don't use to the Mason jar for a pure finish.

To use:

With the lathe stopped, using a paper towel, rub in a good coat, covering all the surfaces of the piece. Rub it in well and wait a minute, repeat the process. Now, with the lathe running at 500-1000 RPM, add some finish to the paper towel and apply it slowly to the surface.

Keep the towel moving and the finish spreading. As the shellac adheres, the oil will begin to catalyze and the alcohol will evaporate. All three steps are necessary for a good finish.

The coating will begin to build as you apply. At some point you will treat the finish as complete and stop adding material and polish the surface. If it begins to attract the towel or get gummy, stop lapping and allow it to set for a minute. Start again when it sets up. A coat of wax makes a finished product with great results.

As O.B. Lacoste put it one time, "If it was any easier, I'd have to come over to your house and do it for you."