

TRESTLEWOOD MANTELS

“Do It Yourself” Finishing Tips

PREP FOR FINISH

Depending on type of mantel you are working with and the desired finished surface, use one or more of the following to prepare the unfinished mantel piece:

1. Chisel (Hand-Hewn): When working with a hand-hewn piece, Trestlewood will often back-chisel the hew marks, removing the clefts left by the axe marks and making them more into depressions.



2. Sand: Using either a belt sander or sanding by hand, Trestlewood uses progressively finer sandpaper (100, 150 and then 220 grit) to smooth out and/or remove any undesired texture or features.



3. Nylon Brush: Generally with hand-hewn or rough textured pieces, Trestlewood will use a simple nylon brush to get excess dirt and dust out of the hewn and texture marks.

4. Clean: Finally, Trestlewood uses a clean rag dipped in mineral spirits to scrub all of the remaining dirt or dust off of the piece and out of any pockets or holes. They then take a rag dipped in mineral spirits and wipe the whole piece one last time.

5. Dry: Depending on the type of mineral spirits used, drying can take up to an hour or more. Placing a fan in front of the piece will speed up the drying process.

APPLY FINISH

Trestlewood does not stain, glaze or paint its mantels (although you may if you wish 😊):

1. Create Your Mix: Trestlewood generally uses a mix of mineral spirits, tung oil (regular or dark) and polyurethane (satin, semi-gloss or gloss) for its finishes. Thin the chosen tung oil with mineral spirits by mixing equal parts of each. Stir until the mix is uniform in color. Next, add the desired polyurethane to the mix so you have roughly a 1:1 ratio between the polyurethane and the tung oil/mineral spirits. Stir this combined mixture again until it is uniform in color.

2. Test the Color: The final color achieved is largely a natural function of the species/type of wood being used, whether the area is fresh sawn or weathered, and the darkness of the oil or other finish being applied. Trestlewood recommends testing your mix on the backside or other less-noticeable area of the mantel to ensure you are happy with the result!

3. Apply the Finish: If the piece is relatively smooth, the color mix can usually be applied by just dipping a rag in the mix and wiping it on. With hand-hewn or rough pieces, however, you will likely want to use a brush to better get into the hew marks, pockets, cracks and holes.



4. Dry: After the finish has been applied, Trestlewood generally lets the piece dry at least overnight.

5. Smooth and Repeat: In preparation for the next coat, Trestlewood often uses a fine abrasive 3M pad or steel wool to smooth out the wood and then clean the piece with a rag dipped in mineral spirits. Trestlewood then repeats the finishing process above two more times.

6. Wax and Buff: If you desire a more polished look, you may want to wax and buff the piece after the final coat has dried.

Note/Warning: Be sure to follow all manufacturer’s instructions and recommendations regarding proper use and safety when using finishing products and tools. This includes ensuring proper ventilation and use of a respirator as applicable when sanding, brushing and/or working with mineral spirits, tung oil, polyurethane and similar products.