

# How to add fabric to wooden furniture

Carpenter's beware in this blog post I am going to be teaching recyclers how to cover glorious timber finishes and turn old, drab and tired furniture into chic eclectic story telling shown room pieces.

**The trick with covering old furniture is:**

1. If it is flawless (no dints, grooves, holes, chips or broken bits) then fantastic you get to cover your furniture with whatever fabric you like be it printed or plain.
2. If your furniture is dented, grooved, holed, chipped or simply a bit banged up, then you are best to stick with a printed fabric here's why.



**Printed fabric will hide dints; holes and grooves in the furniture, an unprinted plain fabric will show what you are trying so hard to hide.**

Fabric can be amazing when fastened to furniture, a real story teller, and often your furniture will be the star of the room, because let's face it you don't see fabric covering wooden furniture that much. So you can go as wild as you wish with your choice and colour of fabric, the beauty and added bonus of this is that you can purchase a little extra fabric and make up some scatter cushions for the couch and presto your room is all coordinated perfectly.

**Let's look at a few examples of what you can do:**



This is the perfect example how fabric can achieve such a stand out piece of furniture. Purchased from the tip shop was an old dresser, I purchased two wooden legged chairs at the same time, then added them to the bottom of the dresser for a raised more modern feel. Using different cuts of the fabric it turned into such an amazing piece I couldn't sell it.



This chest of draws was painted blue originally and purchased from the tip shop for \$15, the metallic grey metal paint also found at the tip shop was for free, and the fabric was a mixture of two similar but different prints, novelty rose handles and looks great now and looks like designer 'expensive' furniture.

## How to cut the fabric to fit the timber furniture

Okay so you have your furniture and now your fabric, but how do you cut it out to match the furniture (the hard part) well there are a few different methods:

1. Use a trusty tape measure and measure the area and hope for the best (If your choosing this method allow a few millimetres extra, sometimes the fabric can stretch a little with cutting and you may end up a little shorter than expected, you can always trim later just make sure your scissors are nice and sharp.
2. If you have the luxury of doing draws or doors that you can take apart, then use these just as you would a dress pattern, lay the fabric out on the floor and place the item to be covered onto it use a pen to trace around.

**\*\*\*\*\*MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE FABRIC TURNED OVER TO THE WRONG SIDE\*\*\*\*\***

If your fabric is cut on the wrong side up it will not match your furniture when turned over unless the two sides are identical, so very important to make sure your fabric's right side is facing the floor not looking up to you.

**Remember your not gluing the print to the wood, your gluing the bad side to the wood, so your print is on the woods outside.**



## How do I attach the fabric to the furniture

When your ready to attach to attach your fabric to the timber you have again two choices:



British paints put out a varnish called water proof clear varnish. I like the gloss finish; it doesn't have an extreme glossy finish when used with fabric, but it's just right. It not like your normal timber varnish that has a slight brown colour, so don't be confused. This product is white in colour, be sure to stir it well before use. A 1L container from Bunnings (Australia) will set you back no more than \$20. Product is ready to use from the tin.



The second option is Parfix PVA Wood glue 5L, what I love about this product is it is in abundance with 5L's at your disposal you won't run out in a hurry and it's cheap as chips at less than \$20 (Bunnings warehouse for Australia) Now unlike the above British paints varnish where you're ready to go, with the Parfix PVA glue you need to mix it with water. You are looking for a water like consistency not a thick glue, consider thick water where it would drip off your brush quickly. I recommend a 50-50 mix and test it before use on a spare piece of fabric and wood. Different PVA glues may differ in thickness so play around with it until your get the right consistency. The beauty of this is you can use it for all manner of things as well.



## ALL MOST THERE !

Fabric can make the most normal look extraordinary, quirky and so so cool!



# Have you prepared your timber furniture?

If you want your fabric to stick longer than a day a week or a month, you need to prepare your surface for your adhesives to stick to it, and that my friends means sand paper.

Most furniture pieces have been varnished, and most painted surfaces have a finish that glue and varnish won't stick to long term when you are trying to attach something such as fabric to it. Thus you need to remove the sheen, you don't have to sand a painted or varnished surface back to the bare wood, you just have to remove the shine, removing the shine means your glue or varnish will have something to grab onto and will stick effectively. There are no short cuts here if you won't a good finished product.



## Adding your fabric to your furniture

Try not to over think this process, simply using a paint brush add some PVA or varnish whichever you have decided on, to one section of your furniture (one section at a time). then add your fabric, have a ruler handy or a plank of wood or your hand in my case to smooth it out as you go, it's a bit like adding contact to a book, bit by bit. Now try not to pull the fabric as you go as it can stretch and you will wonder at the end where all the extra fabric came from. You need to lay it gently as you go and smooth without dragging. It's very important, I suggest trying a spare fabric piece on a spare piece of timber before you do the real thing. Practise makes perfect.

Now before you move to the next area add PVA or varnish (whatever you chose) to the top of your fabric, make sure you get it all, this is very important, because if you miss a spot it can bubble up later, I tend to use an overlapping way of painting on my glue, back and forth and then in different directions, I prefer that finish when dried.

# REPEAT..... REPEAT..... REPEAT

You will want to give your fabric surface repeated coats drying between each coat; this adds to protect the fabric from stains and dust and allows you to wipe it down without damaging the fabric during cleaning. I recommend 3 coats for indoors, and a further two for undercover outdoors.

Your done phew - Now send us in a picture to put into our gallery we want to see what you've been up to.



Old tables can be a prime target for fabric tops, and easy objects to start working on

Why not make your own furniture from scratch from old pallet wood

