

Butcher's Block



Should you have a length of beech counter top left over, or have taken out a beech counter top from a kitchen refit and are wondering what to do with it, this could be the project for you. Jimmy used an old, free standing kitchen cabinet to make a base for the butcher's block.

What you will need

- A length of all beech counter (i.e. solid wood, rather than veneer)
- Hardwood planks, to tidy the edge of the finished block
- Wood glue. Setting times vary. Those with shorter setting times give you less time to adjust your work. The glue used here sets in five minutes and is resistant to water
- A powered saw
- A powered sander
- Sash cramps
- Hammer and nails (powered nail gun used here)
- Measure, marker and straight edge
- Preserving oil

Personal protective equipment

- Safety glasses
- Dust mask
- Ear defenders

Safety notes Always take care when using power tools and, as a precaution, have a first aid kit to hand. Work on a stable surface, in good light and with enough space for the project. Wear all personal protective equipment and suitable clothing. Those under the influence of intoxicants should not engage with this project. If any injuries occur, seek medical advice.

Butcher's blocks are traditionally made of hornbeam, but beech is a cousin. The end grain makes the best surface. The counter top is made up of sections of wood, arranged horizontally, so cutting through it at 90° to that arrangement, will give us the end grain that is needed.



Jimmy decided to make the block three inches (around 76mm) thick in order to build a 1.2m length block from a 3m length of worktop.





Use a circular saw to cut entire worktop into 75mm strips.

Caution: When using a circular saw always wear safety glasses to protect your eyes from dust and debris that may flick up from the blade. Always cut your wood in a well ventilated area to avoid breathing in the sawdust.



Once all strips have been cut line them all up on some sash clamps gluing them one by one with a waterproof PVA glue or Polyurethane glue.



When clamping, try to keep the strips level. Expect a little movement as pressure is applied, the wood strips can be tapped back into place with a hammer.



Level any uneven areas with a powered sander. You can do this by hand.

Caution: When using a powered sander always wear safety glasses to protect your eyes from dusts. Always sand your wood in a well ventilated area to avoid breathing in the sawdust and wear a dust mask.





Finish the block with a coating of oil, to help the wood repel water. Make sure the oil you use is food safe.

