



Cozy & Worn

The Complete How-To Guide To
Painting & Distressing Furniture

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STAINING & GLAZING

Using wood stain or antiquing glaze is one of the most effective and popping effects that you can utilize to antique a piece of furniture. There are so many options with these two. You can take a piece of furniture with a brand new paint job, and add decades or centuries of wear in just a matter of minutes, and the results are incredible.

Depending on the piece you are working on, using stain or glaze can be a tedious job, but the results are well worth it. What it does is add a darkened patina to the top of your piece, and places dark buildup in any crevices, lines, and design work your piece may have.

So what is the difference in the two? Truth be told, not much. Both essentially perform the same function and perform it well. Wood stain is very thin and can be a little messier to work with. Glaze is generally thicker, will finish a bit darker, and sometimes is more of a paste. Both come in multiple colors and shades. Stain tends to work better if you are working on a flat surface, but glaze would be better on anything with design carvings, lines and crevices. The glaze sits down in those surfaces very well with very little running, and gives your piece a fantastic, authentically aged finish from another era.



To show you how to do it we will take a look at a cabinet door that we were recently working on for a client of ours. We glazed all of their cabinets using M.L. Campbell Vintage Alkyd Glaze in a 'Raw Umber' color. The cabinets were a pure white, and they wanted them to look antiqued a bit to add some character.

What You Will Need

- **Glaze or Stain** – In the picture you can see the Campbell Glaze and also the Valspar Antiquing Glaze. **You do not need both of these.** We are just showing you some of the available options. Both are great choices.
- **Foam Brushes** – You can use regular brushes, but these foam brushes are excellent for flat surfaces, and for getting the glaze to stick in crevices. Plus they are very cheap so if you don't get one cleaned in time, it's not a big loss.
- **Clean Dry Cloths/Rags** – We recommend soft t-shirt or sheet material cut into smaller pieces. Lowes sells a bag of pre-cut t-shirt material cloths for about \$2. They work very well with glaze and stain.
- **Wax/Polyurethane or Other Sealant** – For more info on what to choose see the “Waxes and Sealants” chapter.



- **Mineral Spirits** – Mineral spirits will be needed to clean up any glaze or stain that goes awry, fix mistakes, and sometimes you just may need to start over – Don't feel bad, it happens.

HOW IT'S DONE

- Start by cleaning your piece **VERY** well. Warm water and a mild soap or detergent can be fine if it is dirty. You can also use a cheese cloth. Whatever is needed, just make sure it is clean.
- When the piece is clean and dry, mix your glaze (or shake it well), and dip your foam brush in. Now begin applying the glaze to the surface. It will look awful at first, don't worry.



- Wait a few seconds. How long you wait depends on how dark you want your finish to be. The longer you wait the darker it will get. But don't wait too long. It will also begin to dry and will be hard to remove. 10-15 seconds should be plenty for most projects.
- Now take a clean cloth and begin wiping the glaze off. It will take a little practice to get the feel for this. Just work with it. You have at least 15 minutes, and maybe more depending on humidity, climate, etc. so just work with it until you get the look you like. Add more glaze if you take too much off, and use the mineral spirits to clean up mistakes or remove the glaze all together.



- Next you want to start working into any grooves, lines, design work, etc. This is where the best effects are made with glaze and stain. On this cabinet door you can see we had some nice grooves to work with, and this is where the foam brushes come in handy.
- Dip the brush in the glaze and use the pointed tip to work the glaze into the grooves. Wipe any runs, and wipe back some of the glaze in the grooves if you get it darker than you like. Just work with it until it starts looking authentically aged. Go with your instincts. You will know when it looks right. The keys with this technique are being patient, and working with it until you get it right.
- Let it dry – we would generally recommend waiting at least 24 hours, but 48 would be better. Just make sure it is fully dry before sealing the piece.



Now seal it with wax or polyurethane and you are all set.

Using wood stain is the exact same process as the glaze. Just follow the steps above if you want to use stain.

To get an idea of how it can look, here is an old ladder that was antiqued with wood stain.

It was initially painted in a taupe with dry brush strokes of white and some distressing on certain areas.

The wall behind the ladder is the exact taupe that we used on the ladder. You can see how the stain gives the patina a richly aged look.



We hope you have enjoyed this free chapter on staining and glazing. Learning this technique alone can **save you literally hundreds, possibly thousands of dollars.**

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