

The Brassy Bareau

A mid-century modern take on the Hemnes Dresser and Chest



Ikea Items Used:

- Hemnes 8 drawer dresser (Article Number: 003.185.98)
- Hemnes 6 drawer chest (Article Number: 803.742.79)

**Only do one at a time to set yourself up for success.*

Project Items Used:

- Minwax Mahogany Gel Stain
- Minwax Pre-stain wood conditioner (optional)
- Minwax Polyurethane semi-gloss
- Random orbital sander
- Shopsmith 80 and 120 grit sanding pads
- Sanding block with 120 and 300 grit sandpaper
- Shop vac (optional but preferred as it helps sanding go faster)
- Cheap foam brushes in 2", 3" and 4" sizes (stain application)
- Wooster or similar high end 3" foam brush (polyurethane application)
- Bag of rags
- Satin brass dresser knobs (Martell Hardware, Forged Hardware Studio)
- Nitrile disposable gloves
- Tack cloth
- Mineral spirits

Instructions

Step 1

Use your random orbital sander along with 80 grit sandpaper to remove the Ikea stain from the dresser. Once you have most of the stain off you can swap over to the 120 grit and smooth out the finish. Make sure to have plenty of light to inspect the wood after sanding it.

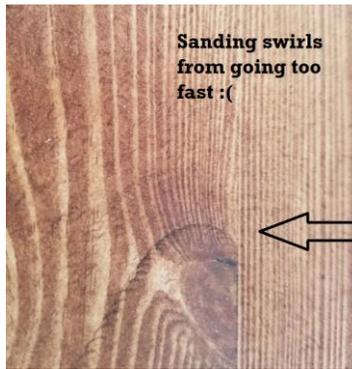


I sanded one of these before assembly and one of these after assembly. Each way has its own pros/cons but I prefer sanding before assembly as it allows you to skip certain areas that are not going to be visible (IE: the bottom of the dresser top).



Don't let her fool you. She was just watching and not sanding!

TIP: Take your time sanding and be sure to go slow and steady at the end. If you go too fast the sander will leave swirly circle marks from the vent holes in the sanding pads. These can be hard to spot and will look awful once the stain hits it. Use a bright light or the sun to closely inspect wood after sanding to see any potential marks.



Step 2

You now want to sand your dresser with a sanding block or sponge using 120 grit. Sand with the grain of the wood. This step takes out any potential light swirl marks from the orbital sander. If you find any deep swirls (like the image above) then use the orbital sander to remove them. The hand sanding will only remove the lighter swirls to ensure that the stain looks as good as possible.

120 grit will be as fine as you go and will give the stain enough teeth to stick to. A finer sandpaper will make it harder to get a deep, dark stain. I found this out by trial and error on the first one that I did.

Step 3 (Optional)

At this point your dresser should be fully sanded and inspected. Use your tack cloth to wipe down the furniture to remove dust and prepare the surface for staining.

Side note: I have mixed feelings about using the pre-stain conditioner. I used it on the first dresser I did and let it sit too long as it wouldn't allow my wood to get dark at all. The directions state to start staining within two hours and I waited almost that long. I ended up sanding the dresser down and not using it on the second round. The dresser turned out great without it but my second dresser did have a few splotches. If you decide to use it, I would recommend applying it and wiping it off right after. I would then recommend staining when you are done and not waiting like I did. A pre-stain conditioner is basically a wood sealer so the longer it dries the more the wood will be sealed.

Apply the pre-stain conditioner with a cheap foam brush and wipe off 5 minutes later. Make sure to cover the dresser evenly so that you don't have any spots that show up darker (due to being missed). You can allow the conditioner to sit longer on the two end pieces of the top. These two sides (on each end) are the grain sides and will tend to collect more stain making them darker. Once you are done wiping the conditioner off proceed to the next step. If you prefer a lighter finish then allow the pre-stain to sit longer but no longer than 2 hours as the directions state.

Step 4

Get your bag of rags, a trashcan with a fresh liner, your nitrile gloves and a timer or visible clock of some sorts ready. It is now time to stain the dresser. Gel stain is unique as it is applied thick (like finger paint) and needs to be wiped off after sitting on the piece 3-5 minutes. If you wait too long it becomes hard to get off and can leave dark spots on the dresser. I highly recommend doing manageable sections at a time to prevent overwhelming yourself and having some of it dry on the wood. Start with a small easy piece (IE: the rear of the furniture legs) to get the hang of it.

I applied stain to one section or piece at a time in a brisk fashion and then would wait around 3-4 minutes before starting to wipe it off. There is a fine line of wiping it off too soon and waiting too long. You will figure it out. Keep in mind that you can always do a second coat (the following day) but it will not darken it much further. Use the small brushes on the legs, the medium brushes on the smaller drawers and the larger brushes on the top and big drawers. The top can be done in two pieces or you can have someone assist you to do it all together.

TIP: Once you do a few pieces you will not want to have to wait 3-4 minutes after each piece. To speed things (once you get the hang of it) you can do a piece, mark the time, do a second piece, mark the time, come back and wipe the first piece and then wipe the second piece. This allows you to work a bit faster.

Once you are finished, allow the stain to dry 24 hours before attempting to go to the next step.



Step 5

TIP: At this point you have a fully sanded and stained dresser. Your garage or working area is most likely a total dusty mess. Stop and take time to clean and dust your work shop or garage. During the next step the polyurethane takes a while to dry and any dust in the room can (and will) make its way into your finish if your working area is not clean. Every time you walk or move stuff around the dust goes airborne. I cleaned out my shop vac and used the brush attachment to vacuum all of the dust up. I then did a good job of sweeping up the floor.

Polyurethane. Let me warn you.. If you attempt to google how to apply polyurethane you will find 1,999,999 ways and will be so scared by everyone's warnings that you will want to abort. I promise you that, with a little patience, it is not bad. For this project we will be doing three coats. The first coat will be diluted the most to make it easy to go on with very little trouble.

Wipe down your dresser with mineral spirits on a clean rag to prep the surface for the polyurethane. Open the polyurethane and stir it with a mixer. Be careful to stir nice and slow to prevent bubbles. Use a smaller clean scoop and measure out three scoops of polyurethane and then slowly add one scoop of mineral spirits. Mix it up and this will be what we use for the first coat.

Dip your fancy foam brush into the mixture only deep enough where the pointed part is submerged. Pull it out and wipe one side of it on your container. Flip the brush around and use the side that was not wiped on your wood. Start at one end and slowly move towards the other. If your coat looks wavy you can start at the opposite end and lightly touch the brush head on the poly and pull towards to the other end with just the weight of the brush on the surface. The next stroke you will apply right beside the first one in the same fashion. Do not worry about it looking perfect on the first coat. Most bubbles will eventually pop on their own when it settles. Finish your dresser and allow it to dry 24 hours.



The second coat will be 9 parts polyurethane to 1 part mineral spirits. The same process will be used. Allow to dry 24 hours.

Before doing the third and final coat you will want to sand the surface with a 300 grit sandpaper. This will remove any imperfections and allow a nice even final coat.

The third coat will also be 9 parts polyurethane to 1 part mineral spirits. Use a new brush for the final coat.

TIP: Do not overwork the polyurethane if you see bubbles. Overworking it can lead to more problems than it solves. A lot of bubbles will pop on their own.

24 hours after your final coat you can inspect for any issues. If you run into any problems you can always sand them out and put another coat on.

Step 6

Apply your fancy knobs and assemble your masterpiece! Avoid setting hard items on the dresser for a week until the polyurethane cures.





I obtained my original inspiration from the Overzealous DIY'er who posted the hack "IKEA HEMNES Dresser Turned Mid-Century Modern".