



It Begins with a Question about Modifying a Flush Plane Blade & Ends with an Easy Way to Trim Edge Bands.



Q&A: Blades & Trimming Edge Bands

One Question, Two Answers— Planes and Blades, and How to Use Them.

From *Sharp & to the Point; A Shameless Shill for Hock Tools*, #4/2017

We usually toggle our Q&A issues between *blade or metal related questions* and *woodworker related questions*. Ron Hock (our one and only Hock Tools' Ron) answers the first. Our colleague and kit designer/builder, and general all-round woodworking maven, Isaac Fisher answers the latter.

Knowing Hock Tools will often modify a blade for a woodworker, this question from Geoffrey Sarkissian asks Ron whether he thinks it a good idea to modify a certain blade for better results from a specific task. Ron also sent the question on to Isaac for his input, which makes this a double hitter Q&A!

This question from Geoffrey Sarkissian:

Geoff's First Question: I'm wondering if you sell, or can make or modify a blade for the Veritas Flush Plane.

Ron's First Answer: We can make one for you. Why not just buy one of theirs?

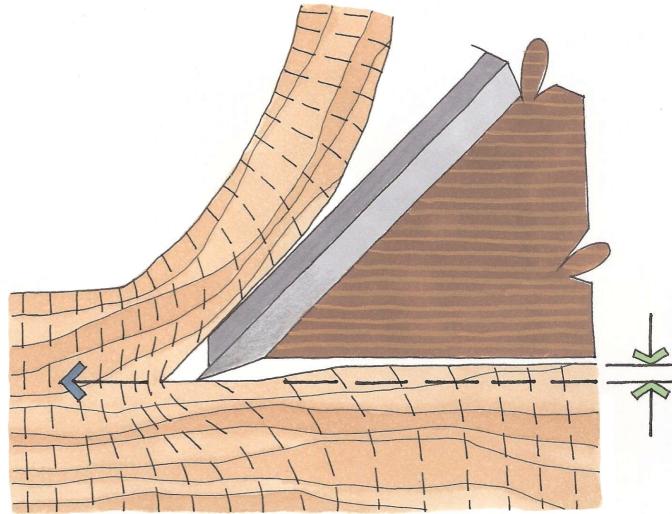
Geoff: I have and use their plane. The blade is .080" or about 2mm thick, and is too thin for the intended use, in my opinion. The blade extends about 1" in front of the handle, and there's enough flex so that it sometimes rides over the wood you're trying to remove. I'm thinking that something like 2.5 to 3mm thick blade would be much better. Is this possible?

Ron: We can do that. But, if you're trying to cut shavings from wood, it won't solve the problem. You cannot cut a shaving without

some relief behind the edge. The cutting action compresses the wood fibers ahead of the blade. As they're cut, they rebound slightly. If there is insufficient relief behind the edge, the rebounding fibers will lift the blade from the cut. If this describes what you're experiencing, you need a real plane.

Geoff: Aha! That's exactly what I'm trying to do, flush cut 3/4" edging glued to a piece of plywood with the typically thin veneer---without digging into the plywood.

In my years as cabinet maker, I've tried lots of approaches, but was never really satisfied. Hand tools are not my expertise. I have a lipping planner, but its big and heavy and noisy and takes skill to use...and would rather use some specialty hand tool. Any recommendations?



The leading edge of the mouth acts as a pressure bar to hold down the shaving as it is being sheared by the blade. This helps reduce tearout by preventing the levering up of fibers ahead of the blade. From page 62 of **The Perfect Edge: The Ultimate Guide to Sharpening for Woodworkers**, by Ron Hock.

And this is when Ron referred the question on to Isaac for his recommendation:

Isaac: First, don't give up on your flush-trimming plane. I don't think it's really suited for trimming edge bands, but you'll probably find it useful for other purposes. Some things that come to mind are trimming the protruding ends of plugs or through-mortises, cleaning up corners of stopped rabbets, and removing dried glue from inside corners.

I trim edge banding pretty frequently, and I've tried a few different techniques. If I have a large pile of parts, I'll go to my lipping planer as the first step. I set it up to cut the edge bands as close

to flush as possible without cutting into the plywood. Usually that's about .001-.002" proud of the panel, assuming the plywood is flat to begin with. Afterward, I go through the pile a second time with a card scraper to clean up any remaining glue squeeze-out. If the lipping planer was set correctly, a sharp scraper will remove the remaining glue with just one or two quick cuts. All that is left to do afterward is the finish sanding.



However, if I have only a few pieces of edge banding to trim, it's most efficient to use a hand plane. For most woods, I use a standard-angle block plane. I think that both Stanley and Lie-Nielsen call this size a #9-1/2, and most other plane makers produce something similar. A low-angle plane will do in a pinch, but it's really a tool for slicing end grain. When working long grain, a standard-

angle plane is less likely to cause tear-out than a low-angle plane. The first step is to set the plane for a moderate to heavy cut and plane the edge band down until it's nearly flush to the panel. I keep an old Stanley block plane by my bench just for tasks like this, and I sharpen it once or twice a year whether it needs it or not.

I skew the plane about 20 degrees so that the rear of the plane is riding on the plywood panel and the cutting edge is directly above the edge band. This leaves the front of the plane extending out past the edge of the panel. For the finishing touches, I use a sharp block plane with the iron tilted slightly to one side. This arrangement lets me cut a



on the inboard side.

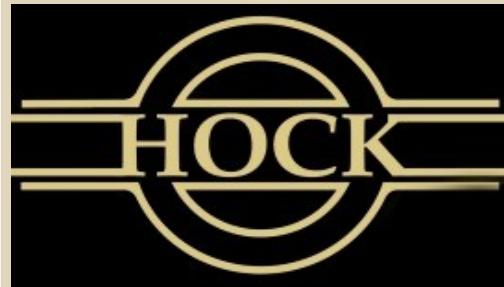


If I keep my weight on the rear of the plane during the cut, it will keep taking shavings off the edge band until it is flush with the plywood, and then be unable to cut any deeper. I can usually clean up about 90 percent of the edge band this way. But If the plywood isn't totally flat, there may be a few spots to touch up with a card scraper before sanding.



*I hope you find this helpful.
Happy Woodworking!
Isaac Fisher*

You may know Isaac Fisher from his helpful video about shaping planes to fit your hands, the article on how to use a scratch stock, the article on building a scraper plane, and other projects. Isaac comes from an architecture background and makes his living as woodworker and cabinetmaker. He either helps Ron design or fully designs tools for Hock Tools, builds all of our kits, and is otherwise a total maven when it comes to working wood.



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