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Message From The Author

Hello, I'm Jordy Christo.

I started building cabinets in 1982 in the South Florida area. After working for three cabinet shops, over the course of eleven years, I opened the first of three businesses related to the kitchen and bathroom manufacturing industry.

During the process of maintaining one of the cabinet manufacturing companies, I discovered that there was a market for all types of cabinet repair work.

This discovery launched me into a new direction where I began to fix water damaged cupboards, fire damaged kitchens and made alterations to existing cupboards in order to make new appliances fit. I've done everything from adjusting cabinet doors to removing entire kitchen cabinet sets while leaving the counter tops in place.

I've worked for insurance contractors, computer companies, hospitals and medical laboratories making existing cupboards work with new equipment or just fixing some sort of cabinetry damage.

Within the pages of this eBook and the http://fixmycabinet.com blog, you will find helpful tips on how to do a large variety of cupboard repairs.

Table of Contents

How to Fix Crooked Cabinet Door Handles....5
How to Fix Loose Thermofoil Door Edges....6
How to Fix Sagging Drawer Bottoms....7
How to Install Light Rail on Upper Cabinets....9
Removing Cabinets While Leaving the Tops in Place....11
How to Repair a Water Damaged Cabinet Bottom....13
How to Replace a Formica Backsplash....19
How to Fix a Burn on a Formica Counter....21
Lubricating Drawer Slides....24
Cutting Cabinets so New Appliances Will Fit....26

How to Fix Crooked Cabinet Door Handles

If by chance you need to know how to fix a kitchen or vanity cabinet door that has a crooked handle, I have the answer to your problem. It's really a rather simple operation. You are going to need a few tools though. Just common ordinary power tools that everyone should have hanging around the house. The drill bit that you are going to need is a three sixteenths thick bit.

Usually situations like this happened because the cabinet installer was careless when he drilled the doors for the handles. Hopefully they are not so bad that a correction can't be made.

Tools Needed:

1) Power drill
2) Extension cord
3) Shop Vac or dust pan
4) Three sixteenths thick drill bit
5) Phillips screwdriver

Procedure:

Remove the handles by using the Phillips screw driver. Before you do this though look at the handle and determine which way it needs to be moved in order to make it straighter.

What you are going to be doing is reaming out the existing hole to a larger size. Insert the 3/16" drill bit into the hole, pull the trigger on the drill and begin moving the drill in an oblong or oval motion to make the hole larger.

Re-install the kitchen or vanity bathroom cupboard handle and see if you corrected the crooked handle.

Oh, I forgot to tell you that you can either have someone hold the dust pan

underneath the area you are working on or vacuum the dust as you are drilling.

A Word of Caution: If you have a really skinny base on the cabinet handles, you may want to consider getting a different style. It really depends upon far out of alignment the handles are. You may have to make the holes oblong in both locations if the cabinet door handle is really out of alignment.

If you are considering European Style Kitchen Cabinets, it is a must that the handles get installed perfectly straight.

How to Fix Loose Thermofoil Door Edges

This "video" shows how to fix loose MDF, vinyl wrap or Thermofoil cabinet door edges. These plastic kitchen or bathroom vanity door edges can be re-glued with Elmers glue. Sometimes you can repair them without taking them off of the cupboards.

Materials Needed

1) Elemers Glue All
2) Damp sponge or rag
3) Screw driver

It will be easier to make the repair if you remove the doors from the cabinets. This is why you need the screwdriver. You do not have to do this though.

You can empty the drawers and remove them to fix the edges that are coming off.

Follow these steps:

Gently pull the vinyl edge back enough to insert the tip of the glue bottle between the board and the vinyl.

As you apply the glue, keep pressure on the edge in order to hold it back out of the way.

Press the edge down with your finger or a damp sponge or rag.

Wipe the excess glue off of the door with a wet cloth or sponge.

Wait about twenty minutes and reapply pressure to the Thermofiol cabinet door edges.

At this point the glue is stickier than when you first applied it on wet. This will cause any remaining loose vinyl to adhere to the edge of the door.

Wait ten to twenty four hours and lightly sand the vinyl to ensure that someone won't catch the edge with their fingers again a peal it off.

That's how to repair an MDF vinyl cabinet door that has loose edges. It is possible to do this procedure while the doors are still on the cabinets, but it's hard to squirt the glue on the bottom edges of the Thermofoil base doors.

What causes these door edges to become loose?

There are several different reasons why a Thermofoil cabinet door will have loose edges. The one we used in the video appeared to not have enough glue on it form when it was manufactured. In some cases it's not possible to re-glue the vinyl because the customer was not educated in vinyl clad cabinet door protective care. As a result of their ignorance, the doors were exposed to heat sources that caused the edges to pull away from the door.

How to Fix Sagging Drawer Bottoms

This is a common occurrence with many older kitchens. How does a sagging drawer bottom get this way and what can I do to fix it? The main reason that the floor gets bowed is because the manufactures used one eight inch thick material when the drawer was fabricated. Generally, this is OK except when the drawer's

interior width exceeds about eighteen inches. This is when problems begin to occur.

Kitchen cabinet drawers in need of repair usually are scrapping the frame of the cabinet underneath. In some cases where there is not a frame, the warped bottom will rub against the European cabinet doors below. You should get this fixed right away before further damage occurs.

Here's how I fix drawers that are rubbing on the frame underneath because the bottom has a big dip in it. The fastest and easiest way to mend this problem is by dropping by a local cabinet manufacturing company and asking them if they can quickly cut and staple a half inch or five eights thick board to the bottom (inside) of the drawer.

The sagging drawer bottom also needs to be stapled to the new piece of wood so that the bow is taken completely out. Obviously this is going to make the drawer shallower (in height), but it is an inexpensive way to get it fixed quickly.

I only recommend doing it this way because a cabinet company can fix your warped drawer bottom in a matter of minutes. You could go through the hassle of going somewhere like Home Depot or a lumber yard and spend a lot of time purchasing the materials that you need to "do it yourself." I'm offering my quick fix so that you will not have to run all over and waist your time trying to repair the sag yourself.

If you like doing these type projects, then perhaps you want to waist some time in order to save a few bucks.

Depending upon the color of the interior of your drawer, you may need to settle for a different color. If your drawer was fabricated with a material that looks like real wood, you can get the cabinet company to cut a piece of plywood and then stain it yourself to match the original color of the drawer. Any local paint or hardware store should be able to help you match the color close enough. Staining and finishing the drawer could get to be an expensive and time consuming project.

Sometimes there are a few troublesome things that people discover as they are trying to repair the drawer. For instance, oftentimes the sagging drawer bottom will have groves that it was installed in. As the warp got worse through the years

it eventually pulled the bottom out of the groves. If this is the case, it is going to be very important to fix this area before cutting and fitting the new bottom into place.

If it is recommended by the cabinet company where you take your drawer that you should build a new one, then this means there are broken parts that are really a waist of time trying to repair. Don't just trust what they say though. If you think the method that I have explained above on How to fix a kitchen or bathroom vanity drawer that has a sagging bottom will work in your case, go to a different cabinet manufacture.

How to Install Light Rail on Upper Cabinets

The number one question about installing special trim to hide the lighting fixtures on kitchen cabinets is does the light rail get installed flush with the face of the cabinetry or should it get set back?

Professional installers usually attach the molding so that it leaves a slight recess from the face of the cupboards. This set back is applied to the front edges of the cabinetry and also the side areas. There are a couple of locations in the kitchen where this technique does not apply though. For instance, when you are installing the light valance boards next to the microwave/hood area, it is best to attach them flush with the side of the cabinets. I would not recess the trim pieces more than one quarter of an inch. Anywhere from a sixteenth to a quarter of an inch is fine.

Method of Installing Lighting Valance Boards

Obviously your going to need a chop saw, there are no exceptions to this rule. If you want your kitchen cabinet molding to look professional installed it, then you must use the correct woodworking tools. There are only a few steps to the method that I use for installing the lighting rail. Most importantly, you must take your time and be patient. Having tight seams is a top priority when you are installing the valance boards.

How to Install Light Rail Cabinet Molding

Here is how to cut and install the light rail. This method works great every time. This cabinet molding is not difficult to work with because it is small. You must use a chop saw when you are cutting the light rail or a good table saw. NEVER attempt to make your miter cuts with a hand saw. You will only ruin the decorative kitchen molding.

1) Always cut your largest pieces first. If you can work on the longest piece first by cutting the necessary angles, this is best. That way if you mess up you can use the long piece for shorter sections.

2) Use clamps to hold the molding in place while you fit the seams perfectly.

3) Once you have a couple of pieces ready to attach to the cabinets, clamp them really well and pre-drill holes from the inside of the cabinets bottoms. Make sure that you countersink the screw head so that it is flush with the cabinet bottom or frame. If you're working with hardwoods like maple or oak be careful not to tighten the screws so tight that you snap them off. I usually get the screws good and snug with my electric or cordless drill and then use a hand screwdriver to tighten the final turn off the screw head.

4) Use yellow glue on the miter joints when you are installing pieces of the light rail. There is no need to glue the valance pieces to the bottom of the cabinets. The screws will hold the boards good and secure.

5) To secure the finished end return pieces it will be necessary to add a cleat onto the light valance molding so that you have something to secure it to the bottom of the cabinet with. I have actually used 2" x 2" L-brackets for this part of the light rail installation.

6) It may be necessary to add small shims in various places so that the miter joints align properly.

7) Once all of the light valance boards are fastened use caulking or a wood putty stick to fill the miter joint seams.

Light rails should always allow no less than 1-3/8" of recessed void area underneath the kitchen cupboards. The smallest under cabinet lighting fixture

that you can get is about one inch in height. The additional three eights of an inch, created by the size of the molding, will help hide the florescent tubes. There really is not a standard size that the lighting valance should be. In most custom cabinetry shops that I have worked in the sizes seemed to fall between one and three eights inches to two and a half inches.

Tips:

* Always take your time when cutting the light rail pieces. There's no reason to hurry during this critical part of your kitchen cabinet installation.

* When installing the molding onto the bottom of the upper cabinets, pay particular attention to the fact that the pieces are basically right in your face when working at the counter top.

* Always recess the molding. It should never be installed flush with the cabinet bottom. The only time that it should be flush with anything is when the molding is designed to be flush with the doors. In such cases, you "must" install the cupboards perfectly plumb, level and square. You should do this anyway.

Removing Cabinets While Leaving the Tops in Place

The best way to learn how to remove kitchen or bathroom vanity base cabinets without un-installing the countertop is to just do it. You really can leave the counter in place and only take out the base cupboards, but you are going to need some two-by-four studs to use as supports.

Tip: As a word of caution, not all backsplashes are attached to the countertops. If for some reason you are eventually going to throw the top away, but for now you're just removing the cabinetry. You can screw through the back splash into the studs to support the back of the counter. Just make sure that the splash is screwed to the countertop.

Steps for removing cabinets and leaving countertops in place

1) Unscrew all of the installation screws that are securing the cabinets to the walls. If the cabinets were installed before the flooring, then you may not be able to remove them as a complete unit. If the toe base was built into the cabinets construct rather than being a separate piece, then you are going to have to destroy the boxes.

2) Cutting around the plumbing-Take a saber saw or salzsaw and cut the back of the cabinet around the plumbing. This cut will have to be large enough for the cabinet to slide past the sink.

3) An alternative to cutting the back of the cupboard around the plumbing area is to just knock the back off of the cabinet sides and leave it on the wall until you get all of the cabinets removed.

4) As you are removing the cabinet parts from underneath the counter cut, assemble and install the 2"x 4" studs to prop the countertop in place. Do not skimp on this step.

Prior to installing the new kitchen or bathroom cupboards make sure that you spray bleach or mildew killer on the walls if you have had some form of mild flooding or mild water damage that has occurred. Water damaged areas can contribute to health problems fi left unattended. If the walls were exposed to a lot of water and there's evidence of sufficient amounts of mold, consult with a professional mold removal and restoration company.

How to install the new cabinets once you remove the old ones is just a matter of thinking things through. You will obviously be gradually removing the props as you replace them with the new cupboards. You may have to cut a certain amount off of the new cupboards if you have purchased them from Lowe's or Home Depot. This is usually OK because the toe base can be cut to height.

Removing cabinets without uninstalling the countertop is just a matter of being patient and thinking things though as you go. Every situation will present its own set of difficulties. Some situations will allow you to remove the cabinets in whole sections and others scenarios will require that you knock the boxes apart and remove them in pieces. The main concern is always getting the countertop

sufficiently supported in the kitchen or bathroom vanity where you are doing the remodel work.

How to Repair a Water Damaged Cabinet Bottom

Click here to watch our video demonstration!

It's important to understand that the supporting structure of your cabinets comes mostly from the sides rather than the bottom. Therefore, fixing a water flood damaged sink cabinet bottom will not affect the support system of the counter top in any way. Depending on the extent of the damage, there are two basic approaches to take.

1) The entire bottom gets removed.

2) A new one is cut to fit over the top of the old.

In either case, please make a mental note that you will have to deal with the existing plumbing pipes being in your way. Also, the type of cabinet you have will determine the amount of piece work that may be required.

For a European style cabinet there will not be a center stile to contend with and you should be able to just slide a new one in without having to cut anything. For a face frame constructed box it may be necessary to cut the center stile out in order to get the new board in place. By examining the area very closely, you will be able to determine all of the cuts that will be required, either on the existing structure or the new part to be installed.

* Repairing a water damaged cabinet bottom by placing a new piece of wood on top. If you decide to just lay a new piece of wood on top here's a suggestion. Drill some vent holes in the toe base, as high as possible to allow for ventilation, so things can dry out underneath.

Then, you can spray some cabinet mold killer through the holes. Position a fan

to circulate air through the holes for several days.

Sometimes there is a warp or dip that will require placing some type of shim material between the new and the old cabinetry part. If you are dealing with a face frame style, you may have to insert two separate pieces in order to bypass the plumbing structure. It will be important to use caulk in the seam and any void areas along the edges.

After the new cabinet bottom is in place you will either need to fill and paint the edge or laminate a strip of veneer or plastic laminate (or, “Formica”) over the two edges. In cases where I have had to use two separate pieces of wood for the bottom because of the plumbing obstacles I then was able to laminate a third piece of 1/8″ Masonite or mica over them. Both of these thin materials are flexible enough to aid in working around the pipes sometimes.

* Fixing a water damaged sink cabinet bottom by tearing (or, “removing”) it out all together. Well, obviously you will need to remove the old one and spray mold killer underneath. Use a pair of diagonal cutters or needle nose pliers then grab a hold of the staples and wiggle them back and forth until they break off. It will also be necessary to lay some 2″ x 4″ material or other boards underneath, built up to the proper height. You can liquid nail the support boards to the floor and then liquid nail the cabinet bottom onto the supports. It may be necessary to add some shims between the toe base and the new board to even things out.

L-brackets for cabinets can be useful in this stage also if you don’t mind seeing them. If strategically placed, they will not be very noticeable on some cabinet designs.

Those are the basics of how to fix a water damaged sink cabinet. A couple very important ingredients to being successful at this type of cabinetry repair (flood damage) are patients and planning. Oftentimes projects like this are worked out as you begin the hands on process.

Replacing a sink cabinet bottom can save a lot of money in a couple of ways. Otherwise there would be two expenses involved in replacing the entire sink cabinet. One being the cost of a plumber and two the purchase of the new cabinet. Possibly a third expense if you are uncertain about installing a new cabinet you will need an installer.

How to Replace a Formica Countertop Edge

The process of replacing a Formica Counter top edge is something that can be accomplished by the do it your self home owner. Let me give you quick word of caution though, use extreme patients when you are removing the broken, chipped, damaged, countertop edge.

Removing the bad mica is going to be the most difficult endeavor of this project. You must understand that one slip with the sharp object that you are trying to remove the plastic laminate edge with could cause damage beyond repair to the actual flat surface of the top. When you get a replacement piece, I recommend using VT thickness.

Tip: Take a small piece of the mica color to Home Depot, or Lowes to try and match the color by looking on their sample boards. You can look online too. The major brand names are Formica, Wilsonart, Nevamar, and Pionite. Once you have the color code go to cabinet shops in your area and see if they can sell you strips of the color you need. Oftentimes manufactures will have remnants of the color you will need.

Tools Needed To Replace A Mica Countertop Edge

Before you decide to jump in with both hands there are a few tools that will be need in order to replace the damaged countertop mica. The cost of hiring a professional may be cheaper than purchasing what you will need. Lets just say that to do this the correct way the replacement edge should be cut a little oversized and then trimmed off. This is where the expensive power tool comes into play.

The tools materials you will need

* Block Sander with 80 grit paper works well.
* Lacquer thinner...Read this article...How To Remove Contact Glue
* Contact glue...Read this article...What Kind of Glue Should Be Used on Formica.

* High speed router or laminate trimmer
* Flush trim bit for the router
* Small block of wood
* Speed Square
* Hammer
* Paring knife
* Putty knife
* Possibly a razor knife
* Tin snips or paper cutter
* Soap or wax
* File…Watch video…How to File Formica

It is possible to try replacing the edge by having the new one cut slightly oversized by 1/32 of an inch. Then, you can avoid the experience of purchasing a laminate trimmer. If you opt to try this look down the counters edge and see how straight it is. If there are humps and dips of considerable proportions you may want to reconsider having a professional do the project.

Steps for Formica Countertop Edge Replacement

By following these steps you will be able to accomplish the Formica counter edge removal process and replacement successfully.

Razor Knife

Using the razor knife start along the bottom edge inserting the blade between the plastic laminate and the board that it is glued to. The blade should only be inserted about 1/16” deep. Avoid wiggling the razor knife back and forth as this will only cause the Formica to chip. The less breaks that occur the better off you will be. What you are shooting for here is to remove this counter edge in one long unbroken piece. When you are working around the already chipped areas be extra cautious not to break the edge. To get the blade in about 1/16” you will have to gently, but with pressure, pull the knife toward you between the two surfaces. Make extra sure you are cutting the glue joint between the two surfaces and not into the actual mica. Once the razor knife is cutting through in long strokes at the 1/16” depth begin to apply more pressure and work your way to 1/8” depth on long even strokes. Keep working the blade deeper in long strokes until the entire blade is inserted as far as it will go. At this point the base of the razor knife will be hitting the bottom of the countertop edge.

Tip: You should remove the drawers because handles and knobs get in the way.

Pairing Knife

Now continue to separate the mica edge with the pairing knife using the same long pulling motions. Here's a reminder again, be extra patient and careful one slip and the Formica counters flat surface can become totally ruined. You may be able to remove the entire edge with the paring knife. By separating the two surfaces completely at one end, by using semi long strokes, you can now grab the Formica edge with your hand and pull on the mica as you are cutting with the knife. Depending upon how strong the contact glue bond is it may or may not come off easily.

Putty Knife

Once you have one end completely starting to remove from the board you can try using the putty knife in a pushing motion while pulling the laminate edge off of the board.

Tip: Be extremely careful, plastic laminate when it breaks is as sharp as a razor blade. You may want to use gloves.

Cutting the new edge to length

Now that the edge is removed it is time for the counter top edge replacement installation. Take your Formica edges and trim them to length using the tin snips or paper cutter. If you use the tin snips you should draw a pencil line using the speed square.

Applying the contact glue

It will be necessary to apply the contact cement to both pieces. If you're using a spray grade adhesive make sure that you cut a piece of card board to use as a shield for stopping the excess glue from getting on your cabinets or appliances. Refer to this article for glue recommendations, What Kind Of Glue Should Be Used On Loose Formica.

Sticking the new Formica edge to the countertop

If your working with a long piece, you should roll it with the adhesive on the outside of the roll. The size of a stool seat is a good rule of thumb to follow. Don't roll it to tight because it will break. Start in one corner and begin to apply the new piece of mica. As the two surfaces are adhering use upward pressure so that the new piece will seat tightly underneath the plastic laminate that is on the top

surface. Please note, once the two pieces stick together you will not be able to adjust the piece. Don't miss the mark.

Block of wood and hammer
Now take the block and place it flat on the surface of the new Formica edge and tap it with the hammer all along the entire edge. Your hammer hits should be firm not wimpy but also not so hard that it is dangerous. Be firm but gentle during this step.

Soap or wax
At this point the original countertop surface edge should be hanging over the new strip of mica. If you are using a router it will be necessary to apply wax or soap along where the router bit will be hitting the Formica edge. This will keep the bit from marring the surface.

Cutting the edge with the router (see our video)
The direction that you push the router should be counter clockwise. Keep the base flat to the surface of the main top, tight to the edge and keep moving while it is cutting. Do not stop while the router bit is turning and touching the edge, it will burn the laminate. You must keep the router moving during this process. Now you must trim the underside of the top too.

Sanding block and file (How to File Formica)
Use the sanding block along the underside of the counter edge to sand it flush and to knock off the sharpness of the mica. Now take the file and gently hone the main top edge flush with the new mica strip.

For cleaning with Lacquer Thinner refer to "How to Remove Contact Glue From Formica"

As always I recommend that you hire a professional to replace your countertop mica edge. These steps will yield excellent results, but if you are not familiar with working with Formica please use all of the resources available to you for studying. Go on Youtube and watch some counter mica laminating videos. As I mentioned earlier, it will be cost effect for you to just hire someone rather than purchasing a high speed laminate trimmer. Unless you think you will use it more after you make the replacement of the plastic laminate edge. Replacing damaged or chipped counter edges can be done by the weekend "do it yourself" handyman. The only thing that is really needed more than anything is be patient

and take your time.

How to Replace a Formica Backsplash

Is your countertop in good shape but your Formica backsplash is deteriorating?

The reason it's swollen is because the board was made from pressed wood/particleboard. If your mica is a current color and not considered discontinued plastic laminate, then it's possible to switch out the splash without removing the kitchen, bathroom vanity or laundry room counter.

Some mica backsplashes get screwed to the countertop from underneath and others only get glued to the wall to secure them. If yours is screwed on and you can remove the countertop easily, then take it out and remove the splash by removing the securing screws.

When the new backsplash is fabricated it should be made from pine or ¾" thick plywood. If you're making the replacement, fabricate it a little higher than the existing one. This will cover up the caulking and paint line on the wall.

How to Fix a Plastic Laminate Backsplash That is Damaged

I learned how to fix a water damaged back splash through trial and error. The insight I have gained will help you if you decide to replace the plastic laminate splash yourself. If you want to attempt repairing the damage here are a few tips.

- Cut the caulk line along the wall with a razor knife. Be extra careful with this tool.
- To remove the old splash, use a stiff putty knife and a hammer. Just be extra careful to not scratch the surface of the countertop. Work from the top of the splash, separating it from the wall. Be careful to not pry against the wall too much because it will collapse.
- If there are screws sticking up from the counter top, once you get the deteriorating particleboard piece off, either break them off or leave

them. If you decide to leave them in place, it will be necessary to notch out the new backsplash around them.

- Breaking the screws off is not really recommended as a first option. If you decide to break them off, do this by tapping them back and forth until they snap off. If this doesn't work, take a hack saw blade and cut the screw part way through and try tapping it again.
- Fabricate the replacement Formica backsplash using pine or plywood.
- Before gluing it into place put it on the countertop and see how well it fits. If there are gaps, apply pressure downward, to see if the splash will rest tightly on the surface of the countertop. If not, you have two options: 1) Scribe the backsplash with a belt sander to fit the contour of the Formica top. 2) Loosen the screw that are holding the mica countertop down and place shims between the cabinet and the counter where the gaps are located. Do this until you have completely eliminated the gaps.
- Put a thin bead of colored caulking on either the bottom of the plastic laminate backsplash or on the Formica countertop.
- Because you cannot screw the splash into place, it will need to be adhered to the wall with an adhesive. You can do this with either Liquid Nail or caulking. Apply generous portions of the adhesive in large squirts about 2 ½" in diameter and place them about 12" apart on the back of the pine or plywood.
- Cut prop sticks that will be jammed between the backsplash and the upper cabinetry bottoms to hold the splash in place while it is drying.
- Wipe the colored caulking off really good. If you need to re-caulk the seam because there are minor voids do so. Just make sure that you don't leave a large caulk line that is visible. They look very unattractive. Professional cabinet makers never leave large lines of caulking.

So that's how you replace a swollen plastic laminate backsplash that has been water damaged. If there is not a lot of evidence of the particle board deteriorating but has expanded, it may be difficult to remove the splash from the counter top if it is screwed on. Do Not damage the plastic laminate surface of the countertop, be extra careful.

How to Fix a Burn on a Formica Counter

If someone has damaged your plastic laminate top with something hot, there are only a couple of ways to fix a burnt (or, “burned”) Formica countertop. Relaminating the damaged area or installing a “Surface Saver” or butcher block cutting board are the only methods that return professional results. If you were hoping to find easy ways to repair a kitchen, bath, vanity or laundry room mica counter that has a burn in it, these methods may not be what you are looking for.

I have made many repairs to areas that have been burned using these techniques. How hard or easy my suggestions may be will depend upon your level of skill and craftsmanship. If you don’t like my suggestions and think that you will be able to use some type of filler, please understand that no matter what you do, it will still look like a patch job.

Fixing a burn in a laminate top is not possible by sanding the area and applying some type of filler or what is refereed to as “seam fill.” The heat damaged area cannot be painted over and sealed either.

How to fix a burned mica countertop by installing a cutting board

We will look at two alternatives, one will be installing a glass top cutting board which will protrude just above the surface and the other will be replacing the effected area with a removable, real wood butcher block cutting board.

Using A Surface Saver:

If you plan on repairing a burnt area in your plastic laminate countertop by installing a cutting board, there are several sizes available from leading manufacturer which is “Surface Saver.” Obviously there are many colors to choose from and the most popular sizes are; 12” x 15”, 16” x 20” and 18” x 22.” There are a few things to consider before you decide to use this method though. When determining whether a Surface Saver cutting board will work for repairing a burnt mica top the following two observations must be made

Tip: When cutting the burned area from a Formica counter, use a saber saw (or,

"jig saw") with a fine blade for cutting plastic laminate. It is important to make sure the metal plate on the saw, which will be touching the surface of the counter, is smooth. You may place masking tape over the metal to ensure that you will not do any additional damage to your laminate top.

Is the burn right next to the sink area?
If your countertop was damaged near where the sink was installed, it is not advisable to make a cutout for installing the glass top Surface Saver. For obvious reasons, the two cutouts being so close to one another weaken the top too much.

Was the mica top burned over the Dishwasher?
In order to install cutting boards which have a glass and rim construction, like the Surface Saver brand, you must be able to tighten the installation screws from underneath the plastic laminate counter top. The only method that works is when the cutting board is fastened securely from underneath the Forimca counter. If the damage is in an area where you cannot access where the cutout will be you cannot install this type of system to repair the burn in your mica top.

Making the hole in a mica top for a Surface Saver inset cutting board
When you purchase the product, it will come with directions for using the template that is supplied with the cutting board. When you transfer the pattern onto the top, make sure that your pencil line is very dark because the saw dust is going to interfere with your vision as you are completing the task. It is extremely important to cut along the outside of the line and you must be using a new, sharp saber saw blade as well. The reason for this is because, if you do not get the hole large enough the first time, trying to cut Formica along the edge of the hole will increase the risk of chipping the plastic laminate. Jig saws pull from the bottom upwards and they will rip large chunks of the mica color away so much so that the rim of the Surface Saver will not cover the damage.

Tip: If you have to enlarge the cutout because you did not cut it large enough, this is best done by turning the saber saw upside down and making the alteration from underneath. If you place masking tape along the finished edge this will help strengthen the mica as you make the second cut. Another suggestion would be to use a belt sander or hand, block sander to increase the size of the hole.

After you have made the hole follow the direction for installing the Surface Saver.

Fixing a Plastic Laminate Counter Burn By Installing a Butcher Block Cutting Board

When you are fixing a burn area in your laminate counter , by installing a butcher block cutting board, the cutout process is going to be the same as described above for the Surface Saver brand. There are several sizes available, in pre- made designs that can be found at a local cabinetry supply center. By hiring an experienced cabinet maker, a custom size may be fabricated to suit your particular situation. Please be aware that anything that is custom made, in real wood, will come with a hefty price tag. These cutting boards generally come in a one inch to 7/8th thickness and will have to have a rabbit joint cut along the edges so that it will inset into the mica top.

Re laminating a burnt Formica plastic laminate counter top is the final option that I have to offer to you. This should be done by a professional. Being able to just cover over the burn area with new mica will depend upon the design of your tops and where the burned spot actually is located.

If there is a seam in the mica you should not try to peel the burned plastic off and fit it the the existing seam. All seamed areas should be completely replaced. The new laminate will not be the exact thickness or color. What I'm saying is that the new piece may stick out like a sore thumb. Fixing the problem this way is going to be a dusty and smelly job.

For more details about this process, please refer to my article: "all about cabinet resurfacing."

Installing cutting boards to correct the problem is going to be a lot cheaper than having resurface work done. However, cost is not the only consideration to be made. Is a cutting board going to actually look like it was designed to be there? Being able to repair the effected area with new mica will also be contingent upon whether or not the color of your top is still available. As previously mentioned, it is my opinion that there are really no other effective ways to repair a countertop that has a burn in it.

Lubricating Drawer Slides

This is a trick that I have used many times in my cabinet making carrier. If your drawer is not working smooth, just spray a small amount of WD-40 on the slides. It generally works best if you can apply it to both members on the cupboards and the drawers.

Caution:

If you put too much oil on the parts, eventually you will have a black dripping mess inside of your kitchen, bathroom or office cabinets.

To achieve the best results:

Take the drawer completely out of the cabinet and spray the lubricant on the entire interior surface of the slide parts on the cabinet and on the drawer. When you are spraying the lubricant, make sure that your arm is moving in a very swift motion. You only want an extremely thin coating to go onto the parts. If you stop while spraying, you will certainly get too much on the surface.

If you are spraying the WD40 on drawer slides that have ball bearings (full-extension style) you are going to be amazed at the improvement. Sometimes one small shot to the bearing area will yield amazing results. Even the best full extension drawer slides will operate better with a small application of the oil.

The use of the oil will generally make the operation of the drawer a lot smoother and it will open and close quieter as well.

It will fix squeaky, scratchy, noisy, clanking sounds when opening or closing a kitchen, bathroom or office cabinet drawer.

If you have locks installed on a file drawer, give the interior of where the key goes a short blast using the straw extension provided with the lubricant. This will make turning the key a lot easier.

You can also take a moment to apply a little to any spring cabinet hinges that are making noise.

Can I use WD-40 on any kind of cabinet drawer slides?

The answer is yes!

Anywhere that metal is rubbing on metal or even plastic wheels running on metal the oil can be used.

* It works on:

* Bare metal slides

* White epoxy coated or painted drawer slides

* Full extension styles

* Metal drawer sides

What if WD-40 doesn't work?

If you are still having difficulty opening and closing the member, then you will need to research how to fix a broken drawer. The chances are good that it is either too loose or tight and needs to be adjusted. It's also possible that you are missing a ball bearing, a plastic wheel has broken or some part of the wood on the cabinet has come loose. There are hundreds of possibilities or reasons why the cabinet part is not working properly.

Hopefully you will discover a quick fix that won't consume a lot of your time.

Changing drawer slides can be a rather frustrating task and time consuming task.

Cutting Cabinets so New Appliances Will Fit

Purchased a new refrigerator, range or hood and it won't fit? Need to know how you can cut the surrounding cabinets down to the correct dimensions for the appliances to fit? You may need to alter the countertops as well. Making changes to counters will not be discussed in this article.

First Step: Turn off the power supply to the appliance.

You are going to need a few tools for the job:

1) Skill saw

2) Table saw

3) Salsaw...if the cabinets get cut off in place

4) Cordless or electric drill

5) Prop sticks if you are working with upper cabinets

6) Framers square

7) Hammer

8) Screws or nail gun (stapler)

9) Glue

10) An assortment of hand tools such as a putty knife, screw drivers, diagonal cutters (dikes)

Measure the existing appliance openings in your kitchen and compare them to the new range, refrigerator, or hood that you will be installing.

With a pencil mark the existing cabinets where they need to be cut off. You should have studied the situation very well by now and have a good handle on how you are going to cut the cupboards down before making these marks.

Depending upon the style cabinets that you have, you may have to make the alterations with the cabinets remaining installed. Most face-frame cabinet styles will not allow for an individual cabinet to be removed. This means that you will have to cut the parts sown while they are still attached to the walls. You may need to peal laminate or veneer, cut center styles out and rebuild certain areas of the cupboards to make the new appliances work.

If you have a European style kitchen, then you should be able to take the cabinets out in order to cut them down and rebuild them. Most boxes are built as individual units with this specialized cupboard design. This makes them easy to remove, cut-down (alter) and reinstall.

DO NOT start removing anything until you have a solid plan. This is not the kind of project where you can't just start removing cabinets and cutting things down in hopes that the job will turn out OK. You must know what you are doing; otherwise, you will create a mess.

If you have any reservations about accomplishing this project successfully, please hire a professional cabinet maker to make the upper or base kitchen cabinet alterations.

Prior to cutting the cupboards down you may need to get a few new materials such as cabinet tops, bottoms or doors. It all depends upon the type cabinets you have and the alterations that you are making to them. Many appliance alterations that I have made allowed me to reuse some of the existing cabinet parts, including veneer or plastic laminate.

1) Mark the cupboards where they need to be cut off

2) Take the doors off of the cabinets

3) Unscrew them from the walls and countertops

4) Remove counters if necessary

5) Remove any plastic laminate from the cabinets that you are cutting down that will get reused. Refer to this article on how to remove Formica.

6) Use the skill saw, table saw or salsaw to make your cuts

7) Rebuild the cabinets with screws or staples

8) Re-laminate any damaged areas with new mica or the old laminate that will not be needed somewhere else

9) Cut the doors down and reinstall them

How you cut these cabinets down really requires a combination of skill and common sense. In order for the project's completion to look good and also function properly, YOU MUST NOT get in a hurry in any way. Every aspect of cutting the cupboards down and then rebuilding them is going to require that you take your time and think through what you are doing. Check, double check and then check it again before you cut anything. In some situations you absolutely cannot afford to mess-up.

The way that I learned how to make new appliances work with old cabinets was through examining every situation very carefully. I already had the cabinet making skills under my belt; the rest of the learning process was just using common sense.