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DIY BATHROOM VANITY/WASHSTAND



Here's an idea to wash away all doubts: Give your bathroom the latest design look with our minimalist washstand. It sums up the concept that less is more.

The supporting elements consist of side panels enclosing shelf panels fastened with screws and a countertop on top of these. Another support is provided by a piece of square timber acting as attachment strip: This is fixed to the wall and screwed to the countertop.

The following assembly instructions are for 20-mm-thick beech glued laminated timber board. You must adapt the list of materials accordingly if you opt for other materials or thicknesses. If possible, ask your DIY store or carpenter to cut the required boards to size.

Instructions

- 1. Join the upper shelf panels and centre side panel together**



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Arrange the two upper shelf panels and the centre side panel on their leading edges to form a double T-beam in the way you want to screw them together. Now use a pencil to mark the rear edges so that you always know what goes where at a later stage of assembly. Carpenters normally use a triangular symbol for this purpose.

Draw the centre crossline on both shelf panels with a pencil. The holes used for screwing the centre side panel are positioned along this line. Always place the centring tip of the wood drill bit precisely on this line. Drill two holes in each shelf panel and countersink the holes from outside. Now assemble the double T-beam using the cordless screwdriver and screws (4 x 45 mm).

Tip for screwing together two pieces of wood

In the piece where you want to insert the screws first, always predrill a hole that is 0.5 to 1 mm larger than the screw diameter; the hole should be countersunk for the screw head. In the piece that you are going to drill second, predrill a hole that is always 1 mm smaller than the screw diameter.

2. Join the carcass sections together



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A note before we start: Experienced DIY experts can replace the visible screw joints with invisible (relatively simple) glued joints. What follows is a description of assembly with screws. To find out more about working with glue and wooden dowels, see step 4, which describes how to assemble the drawer.

First join together the double T-beam and the third shelf panel together with the side panels. Now place together the parts mentioned on their display sides as you want to



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assemble them. Once again, make a note of their positions with a triangle. Carefully draw the outlines of all three shelf panels inside the two side panels.

Using the drill and wood drill bit, insert three holes in the centre of each of these outlines for fastening the shelf panels to the side panels. Countersink these holes from outside and use the cordless screwdriver and screws (4 x 45 mm) to fit the side panels and shelf panels. Before doing so, see the tip on screwing together two pieces of wood in the previous step.

To attach the rear panel, lay the shelf structure you have made onto your work surface. Push the rear panel into place where you want to fit it behind the shelves. From the front of the shelves, use a pencil to draw the outlines of the lower and centre shelf panel on the rear panel and then remove the panel again. Drill five holes in the centre of each of the outlines. You can then fit the rear panel with flat head screws (4 x 45 mm). The carcass is now complete. Before doing so, see the tip on screwing together two pieces of wood in the previous step.

3. Fit the countertop and front panel





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The countertop is fastened with screws from below through the top shelf panel. First predrill the holes and countersink them from below. Align the countertop precisely on the carcass and fit it using the cordless screwdriver and flat head screws (4 x 35 mm). At the back, attach the countertop to the side panels with L-shaped brackets. Refer again to our tips on screwing together two pieces of wood. You must also take into account the location of the wash basin, the opening for the wash basin in the countertop and possibly in the top shelf panel. Make this opening once this particular step is complete.

You now need to fit the front panel, which conceals the plumbing outlets for the basin. The front panel is mounted with angle brackets, or L-shaped brackets as they are known. Screw these brackets using the cordless screwdriver and pan-head screws (3 x 17 mm) so they are flush with the leading edges, as far up and as far down as you can place them on the centre side panel and the side panel.

Now, attach the front panel. To do this, place the structure on its back and align the front panel with the carcass so that there is a 5-mm gap between the outer edge of the right-hand side panel and a 5-mm gap between the lower edge of the centre shelf panel. Secure the front panel in this position using clamp clips and fasten it with screws from behind using the cordless screwdriver and flat head screws (4 x 17 mm).

Finally, use the jigsaw to cut the opening for the wash basin and the required fittings in the countertop, depending on the design and plumbing requirements.

4. Join the drawer sections together



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Of course, you can also fit the drawer sections using screws (3 x 25 mm). If you do so, follow the procedure described in the previous steps.

For gluing corner joints like those in our drawer, we strongly recommend using a drill template and marking points, or dowel templates as they are known. Measurements and markings alone will not be sufficient to position dowel holes precisely enough so that they lie exactly flush with each other.



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A drill template is a device that is attached to the workpiece by means of a screwing mechanism. This device guides the drill bit vertically through a metal collar directly into the wood.

A dowel template is a metal pin with marking point. You insert this pin into the holes on the front side so that you can transfer their positions. To do this, you press the predrilled workpiece in position so that its edges are exactly flush with the surface of its counterpart.

First align all of the drawer sections on your work surface to form a box shape, with the top facing downwards. The front and rear sections are enclosed between the sides. Use the triangular symbol to mark all of the sections so that you always know what goes where.

Now drill two 6-mm holes for the dowels in the faces of both the front and rear sections. Insert the dowel templates in the holes and copy their positions to the insides of the drawer sides.

Dab glue into the dowel holes in the front and rear section and insert the 6-mm wooden dowels. Then dab glue into the holes in the sides and on their glue surfaces. Assemble the drawer sections and press the joints with clamp clips until the glue is dry (refer to the glue manufacturer's instructions). Wipe away any excess glue immediately with the damp cloth. When pressing the joints, make sure that the drawer sections are at exact right angles.

Once the glue has set, lay the frame (consisting of the front section, rear section and sides) with the top facing downwards on your work surface. Align the base so that it lies flush on top of the drawer. Using the cordless screwdriver and flat head screws (4 x 17 mm), mount the base using predrilled holes. Before doing so, refer to the tip on screwing together two pieces of wood in step 1.

Finally, mount the front of the drawer. You must first determine its exact location on the front section of the drawer. To do this, attach double-sided tape to the front section and push the drawer into its carcass compartment. You can now align the drawer front precisely on the carcass, pushing the drawer firmly from behind and then carefully pulling it forward together with the front, which is now attached to the tape.

Fasten the drawer front with screws on the inside using the cordless screwdriver and screws (4 x 35 mm). Before doing so, refer to the tip on screwing together two pieces of wood in step 1.



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Finally, drill the holes for the drawer handle in the drawer front following the manufacturer's instructions and fit the handle with the screws provided. The drawer is now complete.

Dowel tips

Use a wood drill bit to drill holes with the dowel radius into the two pieces that you want to join. The two drilling depths should amount to the dowel length plus 2 mm. For this reason, you should ideally use a drill bit with a centring tip and a depth stop: the latter is a locating stop ring with a setscrew that is fixed to the required drilling depth on the drill bit. Never drill a hole that is deeper than two thirds of the material thickness.

5. Sand wood surfaces



Take time to treat the surfaces so they are in the best possible working condition before starting assembly.

First chamfer all edges with sanding paper with a grit of 120 or 180 at a 45° angle to create a small bevel. Use your sander to sand all visible surfaces in the direction of the wood grain, first with coarse sanding paper (grit of 120, 180) and then with fine sanding paper (grit of up to 240).

Damp sponge the surfaces afterwards to wipe off the dust. Some loose wood fibres may protrude while the wood is drying. You can remove these with sanding paper with a grit of 180. The wood is now ready for surface treatment. Little tip: Make sure that the sanding paper is sharp enough to remove the wood fibres properly, not just flatten them.

6. Stain the surfaces



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Staining refers to the process used to colour the wood. The wood stain can be applied with a fine spray system. After the stain has been applied, the surface of the wood remains unprotected until wax or paint/varnish is applied.

First read the manufacturer's safety and handling instructions thoroughly. Make sure the room you are working in is well ventilated and not used for smoking, eating or drinking. You should change the paint tank if you want to apply another material with your fine spray system in the next step.

Staining tip

Always work on vertical surfaces, starting from the bottom and moving to the top. Since wood stain has low viscosity and the wood surface absorbs it quickly, the wood stain may trickle down and form lap marks that remain visible as they cannot be painted over.

7. Varnish the surfaces

A wide range of paints is available, of various types and price categories. The main criteria in choosing a paint should be its workability, the technical equipment you have at home, and the surface quality and durability you require. Ask for advice at a specialist retail outlet. If you are not an experienced painter, we recommend that you practice beforehand on a sample piece.

You will achieve the quickest and best result with acrylic paints. They are water-dilutable and are available at any DIY store in many different colours. It is particularly quick and easy to apply them using a fine spray system.

Pour the paint into the paint tank and dilute it if necessary with water. Using a test board, adjust the spray jet at the nozzle and the paint flow at the setting wheel. The spray jet can be set to horizontal or vertical for surfaces and tapered for edges. Ideally,



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you should first paint the inner edges, then the outer edges and then finally the surfaces; working on these with even, parallel strokes.

During this process, wood fibres may appear (as they may have already during the rinsing phase). You can remove these after the paint has dried by using sanding paper with a grit of 220 or 240 in the direction of the grain.

For the second coat, use the same base as you did during the priming stage. This time, you can apply a slightly thicker coat of paint. Start again with the edges and then work on the surfaces using even, parallel strokes.

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