

## Staining the Platform Bed



The cherry platform bed in Woodsmith No. 160 features two contrasting stain colors on the headboard. This “two-tone” scheme is the same combination used on the matching pieces in the suite.

**ANILINE DYE.** All the solid Cherry parts of the bed are stained with a custom-mix, water-based aniline dye. The formula goes as follows:

- 12 oz. warm water
- 2 tsp. *Moser’s Natural Antique Cherry*
- ½ tsp. *Moser’s Cherry Amber Maple*
- ½ tsp. *Moser’s Dark Red Mahogany*

**THE APPLICATION.** Since the dye is water based, it will raise the grain of the wood, leaving it with a rough feel. To avoid this problem, I first “pre-raised” the grain by moistening it with a damp cloth. After it dries, you’ll want to sand everything smooth again before applying the dye. The water from the dye won’t raise the grain a second time.

When applying a dye, it’s important to keep the entire surface wet until it’s completely covered. Then wipe off the excess with a clean cloth. This way, you’ll avoid lap marks.

**WOODSMITH CHERRY STAIN.** The plywood headboard panels were stained with our own “custom-mix” cherry stain. It’s a simple recipe and it goes like this:

- Combine 3 parts *Zar Cherry Stain* with 1 part *Jel’d Cherry Stain*.
- Stir or shake until the mixture is creamy and free of lumps.

**WIPE ON.** You apply this mix just like you would an oil stain. Wipe it on, let it sit for a minute, then wipe off the excess. You’ll find that this formula combines the ease of application of an oil stain with the “blotch resistance” of a gel stain. And to top it off, the color looks great on cherry.

**PRE-STAIN.** As mentioned in the article, it’s easier to pre-stain all the headboard parts before assembly. I

just took a little more care not to ding or scratch anything when I glued the headboard together.

**THE FINISH.** When all the parts were stained, I applied three coats of wiping varnish. Avoid putting a water-based topcoat directly over the water-based dye. The dye will redissolve and leave a muddy look. You can use a water-based finish if you seal in the stain first.

**SOURCES.** *Moser’s Aniline Dyes* are available only from *Woodworker’s Supply* (1- 800-645-9292). You can buy it in 1 oz. packages.

*Zar* stains can be found at many home improvement or hardware stores. If you can’t find a local dealer, give the company a call (570-344-1202) or check their website ([www.ugl.com](http://www.ugl.com)).

To find a source for *Jel’d* stains, call the company (800-843-7666) or you can go to their website — [www.woodkote.com](http://www.woodkote.com).