



minimalist furniture & wooden objects
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Wood Care: Refinish Your Cutting Boards & Utensils Like a Pro with Allison Samuels for The Level Up Project

Saturday, September 19 // 4 - 5:30pm EST

if you requested a **material packet add-on**, all of these items will be included. you only need to supply your own work surface & small items to elevate pieces as you work

please have ready:

- range of dry sandpaper (ie 150, 220, 320, 400 grits)
- wet sandpaper in 400 & 1000 grits
- white Scotchbrite pad
- your preferred food-safe oils/waxes (ie mineral, avocado, walnut oil, and/or something already marketed as “butcher’s block oil”)
- disposable gloves
- clean rag, which you’ll cut into small pieces
- clean surface to work on that can get oily (ie cardboard, towel)
- something to elevate your tool from work surface (ie wood scrap, cardboard, rubber, clay baking cones, smooth rocks)

how to prep your space day-of:

Have all supplies laid out on top of your clean (but ready to get messy) surface. Rummage around your kitchen for all the utensils & boards that need some love, and have them gathered nearby. You’ll want to be wearing clothes that can get messy / dusty, and if there’s an option to set yourself up outside out of the way (fire escape, roof, empty lot, park, etc) or with window(s) open, it will help minimize dust in your home.

we’ll practice this series of steps together, which you can use going forward for future kitchen tool refinishing:

questions? feel free to reach out to Allison at hello@twotreestudios.com

if you are **sourcing your own materials**, please have these or similar supplies ready. they can all be found at your local hardware store, or if you would like to special-order, Allison **recommends** looking for these brands:

- Mirka or Abranet dry sandpaper (150, 220, 320, 400 grits)
- Dura-Gold wet sandpaper (400 & 1000 grits, the black kind)
- 3M Scotchbrite pad (white)
- Blackcreek Mercantile & Trading Co (or similar) board oil

www.tcpglobal.com carries all these supplies except the oil, though note that they are sold in bulk (ie a pack of 25 sheets, which will last you a near-lifetime)



Basic Refinishing Steps for Wooden Kitchen Tools

you will need: range of dry sandpaper (150, 200, 320, 400 grits); 400 & 1000 wet sandpaper; your preferred oils/waxes; disposable gloves; clean rag (cut into tiny pieces); white Scotchbrite; clean surface to work on that can get oily (ie cardboard, towel); something to elevate your tool from work surface (ie wood scrap, cardboard, rubber, clay cone, smooth rocks)

1. **Prep your work area** with cardboard & whatever you're using to elevate your piece from the "ground" (scrap wood / cardboard / clay cones / etc all would work fine). I recommend applying finish during daylight hours, near a window. Everyone has their own methods, but I believe it's easier to see "high" & "low" spots in the finish if you're working with natural light.

2. Depending on how worn your board / utensil is will **determine what grit dry sandpaper** you begin with. For very roughed-up tools, begin with 150 grit; medium-rough 220; gently worn 320; almost-new 400. Wrapping your chosen paper around a block, dowel or folded on itself, sand well or gently scuff (depending on grit) on all sides, top, bottom, handles, etc along the direction of the grain. Serious staining (ie turmeric or beet juice) might be tricky to get fully out, as will very deep knife cuts without using a machine (ie orbital) sander. Otherwise, it's best to keep your hand pressure medium & even throughout. This is why working in natural light is helpful, so you can move your piece around to catch the light in different ways and check your work for stray scratchmarks or unevenly-sanded sections.

3. When you're satisfied with an even sanding/scuff, take a small piece of rag & **wipe down your piece**, to remove wood debris hiding within the deeper grain pockets, shaking out your rag as it gathers dust.

4. Put on your gloves, and with a different scrap of rag, start by **applying your preferred finish** (oil, wax or an oil/wax blend). You'll need less than you think, especially if you've started with 320 or 400 and are only doing a quick freshen-up. Work your oil fairly quickly into your tool rubbing in circular motions. While it's hard to say via text how much finish is the "right" amount, a good working concept is that as you finish each section, it should look just a little bit glossy, and definitely not soaking. The earlier on in the finishing process you are (ie if you're applying your first coat of oil vs last), the wood will be thirstier; you'll want to lay more oil down during the first couple rounds than you will once you're at round three or four.

5. Let this oil wick up for a few minutes (between 5-15, depending on which round and what kind of wood / oil you're using). Before the oil is fully absorbed, give your piece a full pass with your **400 or 1000 grit wet sandpaper**, again depending on what stage of finishing you're at. You'll want to use 400 grit after your first application, and 1000 after your second. Working quickly, sand your piece along the direction of the grain, or in small circular motions, simultaneously rubbing the oil into the wood's fibers, removing any excess, and buffing. At this stage, your piece should not be wet but evenly, glossily matte. Again, natural light helps here.

6. **Let dry 12-24 hours**, then give your piece a wipe down with a tiny scrap of clean rag; you'll notice "dirty" oil coming off, which is oil and dust residue that's still sitting on the piece's surface. This preps your piece for the next coat(s) of oil.

7. **Repeat no.4 & no.5** as many times as you want! Depending on the piece, I typically apply 3-4 thin coats of oil, but of course if you've started with a nearly-new tool, you'll likely only need to apply one coat of oil. After allowing your final coat to dry, give it a **final buff** with a tiny piece of white Scotchbrite, and finish by buffing with a clean, dry rag.

7. After your final application **let dry for 48hrs**, and then you're good to go!