

Colin Knecht's - Check List for Biscuit Joiners Used with Natural Woods

The following check list consists of every problem contingency that can occur when using a Biscuit Joiner to connect NATURAL WOODS -only- when using or attempting to use wooden or similar biscuits, or to make your own connection tabs.

If you are already getting good results using your biscuit joiner, regardless of the materials you are joining, there is no need to change your processes. If it works, leave it alone. If you are having problems this checklist covers every aspect of joining natural wood with a biscuit joiner.

Note: for use with particle board, MDF, Plywood or other man made materials other processes will be required, not covered here.

- 1 - Set the machine for the type of biscuit you are using, #20, #10 or #0
- 2 - Check how well biscuits seat by drawing a line through a seated biscuit then flip it upside-down to see if the line sinks below the base line of the cut
- 3 - Double check the height of the carriage so the biscuits will go into the wood where you want them, usually near the middle
- 4 - Make clearly visible, straight alignment marks on BOTH pieces of wood that are going cut slots into
- 5 - When you make the cut, MAKE SURE the biscuit joiner is not jostled up or down during the cut, if it does you cannot get nice clean cut. Do not rush your cuts, secure your wood with clamps
- 6 - Examine EVERY cut you make in every board and if needed cut away any end tear-out with a sharp utility knife or chisel
- 8 - If biscuits are a "sloppy fit" in the cut, DO NOT USE THEM. There is no value in using biscuits that are not "snug" in the slot
- 9 - If needed make your own connection tabs. They will need to be slightly larger than 5/32" or 4mm. These can be cut on a planer or cut on table saw then lightly sanded to the correct thickness. If using the #20 biscuit setting, the tabs should be 21/128" or 4.23mm the stock should be 1" or 26mm wide then cut tabs that are 3/4" or 19mm long. Test to ensure snug to tight fit. If not, re-do them
- 10 - Now you can apply glue to the boards mating surfaces only. There is NO NEED to apply glue to the biscuits or the slots, in fact you are better NOT adding glue. Biscuits that are glued only make more mess which adds needless amounts of extra glue squeeze-out and more glue to clean up. Glue on boards mating surfaces is more than adequate

