

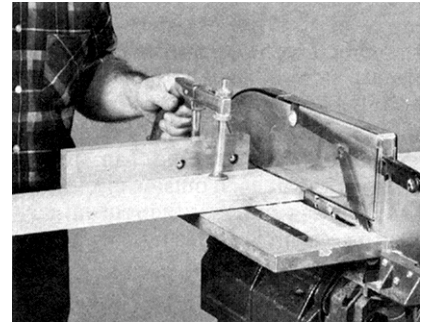
Making A Tambour

A *Tambour* is a sliding door that consists of narrow strips of wood glued to a piece of canvas. This allows the door to flex, conforming to a groove cut in two mating side pieces as it “rolls” up and down to open or close.

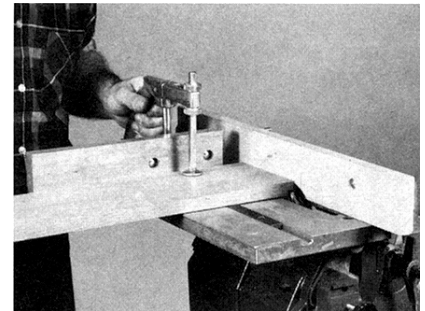
Tambours are typically used for Rolltop Desks, Bread Boxes, countertop “garages” for small kitchen appliances, etc. They add a touch of the unusual and a sense of “flair” to a piece of furniture.

To make a Tambour like the one on our Rolltop Desk, just follow these simple, step-by-step instructions.

Step 1 – Cut the Tambour stock to length. Using your MARK V Table Saw set-up, prepare your Tambour stock by first crosscutting your wide stock to the desired finished length. For proper support, it’s a good idea to use a Miter Gauge Extension for this operation. We also suggest that you prepare a few pieces of extra stock for set-up and to allow for any defects in your material or warpage which could occur once the strips have been cut.

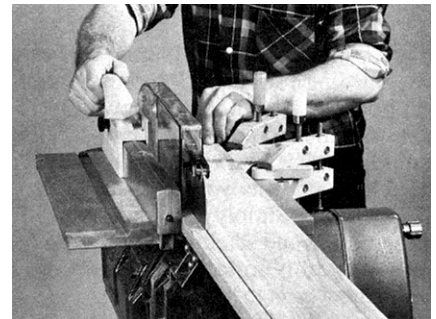


Step 2 – Cut the rabbets. Using your Dado set-up and a wooden shop-made auxiliary Rip Fence face, cut the rabbets that will form the *tongues* on the ends of your wide stock. These *tongues* will later slide into the grooves on the Tambour frame of your project. Allow 1/16” to 1/8” of clearance between the tongues and the grooves. For example, if your grooves are to be 9/16” wide, make your tongues 7/16” to no more than 1/2” thick.



Also, the end pins should be slightly longer than the depth of your track grooves to keep the “shoulders” of your Tambour slats from rubbing against the Sides as the Tambour is rolled up and down.

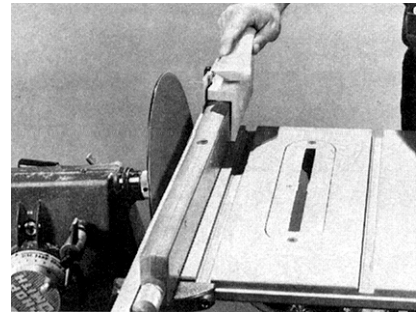
Step 3 – Rip the Tambour Strips to width. Again, using your Table Saw, rip your wide pieces of Tambour stock into the desired widths. Remember that the smaller your project, the narrower and thinner your Tambours should be.



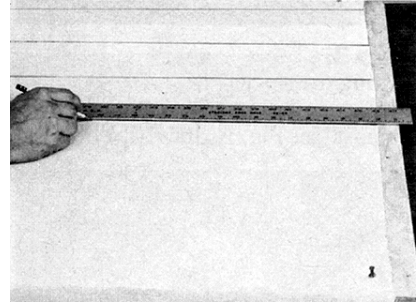
CAUTION: Be sure to use a Feather Board and a Fence Straddler to keep your hands out of harm’s way during this operation.

To allow for sanding, make your strips about 1/32” wider than your desired finished dimension. Allow the strips to “cure” and acclimate overnight so that any potential warpage becomes apparent to you.

Step 4 – Bevel the Tambour Strip edges. Both edges of each Tambour strip must be beveled to allow the strips to bend properly as the Tambour Top is opened and closed. First, discard any warped strips. Next, set up your Disc Sander, tilt your MARK V's Worktable to 5-degrees and offset the Rip Fence according to the directions in your MARK V Owner's Manual or your copy of "Power Tool Woodworking for Everyone". Use the MARK V's Quill to adjust the Sanding Disc's position properly. To complete your bevels, make two passes on each side of each Tambour strip.

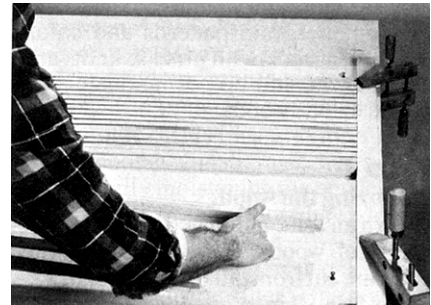


Step 5 – Prepare the canvas for gluing. Start by cutting your canvas about one foot longer than the Tambour when the strips are laid together...but one inch narrower than the width of the individual strips (rabbet-to-rabbet).



Tack your canvas to a flat surface. Draw a series of parallel lines that are square to the canvas edges to help you align the strips as you position them. As an option, you can clamp two pieces of straight wood to your benchtop at an **exact 90-degree corner** angle and use this as a guide to help you align the Tambour Strips on your canvas.

Step 6 – Glue the Tambour strips to the canvas. Apply a thin, even coat of contact cement to the back side of each Tambour strip....and to your canvas. Contact cement is better than yellow woodworker's glue since it remains fairly flexible once it dries. Allow the cement to dry, following the glue directions. If you like, you may apply a second coat to both the Tambour strips and the canvas. Again, allowing it to dry thoroughly. **Carefully** position each strip square to the canvas and butted up against one another, starting at the top and keeping all the ends lined-up as you go.



Once all of the strips are in place, turn the assembled Tambour over and press down on the canvas to be sure they're adhering properly. Place the Tambour bottom in position and screw a wood strip to it from the back side. Trim off any excess canvas and give your Tambour a trial fit. If it doesn't slide smoothly, a little filing or sanding may be all that's required. To help the "glide", rub a little candle wax or paraffin into your tracks.

Apply the finish of your choice, being careful not to saturate the canvas, as this will weaken the glue bond between the Tambour Slats and the canvas. Install the Tambour.