

Cabinet Renewal – Installing pull out shelves

Level of Difficulty – 1

If you generally like your cabinets, but the finish is showing some wear, with a little time and elbow grease, you can restore the finish to look close to the original. This procedure works well, assuming that your cabinets are in pretty good shape, with only minor flaws such as a finish that is thin or wearing through.

Here's what you'll need:

- Cordless drill w/driver bits
- Silicone Adhesive, or panel adhesive
- Plywood or MDF, cut to size (if desired)

Step by step instructions:

1. Measure the opening in your cabinet, left to right.
 - a. For cabinets with a face frame, the opening is between the face frame, not the available space behind the frame
 - b. For cabinets with no face frame, it is the actual interior space
 - c. Both, minus space for any hinges that may be bumped by the pull outs.
2. If you have a half deep shelf in the back of the cabinet, you can either keep it and only install the pullouts on bottom, or you can cut the shelf in half and carefully remove it. *Tip: For an unmarred outside, pull out finish nails or cut them off from the inside of the cabinet.*
 - a. To add another shelf for a second level of pull outs, have your home improvement store cut three pieces of plywood or MDF for your cabinet. One piece (the shelf) that is the width of your interior left to right by the depth available, behind the face frame. The second two pieces (the shelf supports) should be the same depth as the shelf by about half the available height. *Tip: Measure carefully and subtract 1/8" – 1/4" from each dimension so that they are easy to install without binding.*
 - b. You can use a silicone adhesive to hold the shelf supports in place on both ends. Just apply several large (1") dots of silicone on the surface and press firmly into place. This will spread the silicone and hold it in place as the adhesive dries. Set the shelf directly on top of the shelf supports.
 - c. Hardware is not required, but if you choose to use nails or screws, make sure you will not pierce the exterior of the cabinet with nails that are too long.
3. Preparing the cabinet is the hard part, now it's time to make it functional. Select cabinet pullouts that make the best use of the space you have available. There are a few common sizes that are available off the shelf. You can combine the available sizes to fill most of your cabinets, or you can custom order pullouts and have fewer pullouts at larger sizes.
4. To install, set your pullouts in the cabinet space and verify that they will not bump into framing or hinges when you pull them out. When you're satisfied that they will function properly, mark the mounting holes (typically 2 front & 2 back) with a pencil on the shelf. You can then remove the shelf from the mounting assembly if needed to install the screws. Once all mounting screws are in place, reinstall the pullout shelf and test it out. *Tip: Whenever you see a mounting hole that is oblong, not round, think adjustable!*
5. If you need to move your shelf slightly, simply loosen the screws slightly and slide the entire assembly over, then retighten.