

## The dressing procedure that minimizes tearout

**Q:** *All of the instruction I've seen on dressing stock stresses the importance of working in a certain sequence to ensure flat, straight, square pieces. Usually, the following approach is recommended: Joint one face, plane to thickness, joint one edge, rip to width, and then crosscut to length. But I've also heard that you can first joint one face and one edge. Since you're already at the jointer, this seems more efficient to me. So why bother to dress both faces before jointing an edge?*

**Steve Roswell**

via [woodcraftmagazine.com](http://woodcraftmagazine.com)

**A:** *Great question! The answer lies in grain direction, which dictates a board's feed orientation when jointing. For stability and clean-cutting, a board should be fed concave-face or -edge down, with the grain sloping downward toward the trailing end of the board. After performing this first step, yes, you could then orient that dressed face against the jointer fence and joint one edge. However, the grain slope may or may not be oriented properly. On the other hand, if you've already thickened the board, you can choose which face to run against the fence to yield the cleanest cut on the edge. This allows for an efficient, systematic approach to stock-dressing. For more on this very important topic, visit [woodcraftmagazine.com](http://woodcraftmagazine.com) and click on onlineEXTRAS.*



**Paul Anthony**  
Senior Editor,  
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A thickened board allows orienting either face against the jointer fence to minimize tearout.

## Cherry: Why fight change?

**Q:** *I prefer the lighter creamy color of natural cherry to the deep reddish color of aged cherry. Once I've applied a finish, will the wood still darken with age? And how do I correct light areas left behind from a vase?*

**"Tigger"**

via [woodcraftmagazine.com](http://woodcraftmagazine.com)



After only one day in the sun, shifting the coins on this freshly milled cherry board revealed light areas underneath.

**A:** *This is a classic "man versus nature" story, and the short version is that man doesn't usually win. If you're looking for cherry to stay as it is, prepare to be disappointed.*

*The honest answer is that it's probably not happening.*

*Cherry will continue to change color even when finished. In high-production facilities, the wood is typically stained to fake the process of natural aging. Unfortunately, staining strips the material of its clarity, and the color never comes close to the beauty of mature, aged cherry. Even finishes with UV inhibitors are likely to succumb to nature eventually.*

*Cherry changes most dramatically over the first 6 months. During that time, avoid keeping items in one location on the surface for more than a week at a time. The wood's color will continue to change for another three to five years, but as long as it's not in direct sunlight, lighter spots caused by objects shouldn't be a problem.*

*My advice would be to embrace the changing nature of this species and recognize it for the magical thing that it is. If you just can't have that, the grain structure of maple is very close to cherry, and you can mix up a stain to approximate the look of a lighter, adolescent cherry. This approach is certainly not without its own set of difficulties.*

*I recommend you keep finishing simple. Pick beautiful materials—like cherry—and finish them naturally to maximize their individual qualities. ■*



**Rob Spiece**  
Lohr Woodworking Studio

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and provide the answer.**

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