

# Do-it-Yourself Workshop

## Three Easy Steps To A Beautiful Finish

by Bruce Johnson

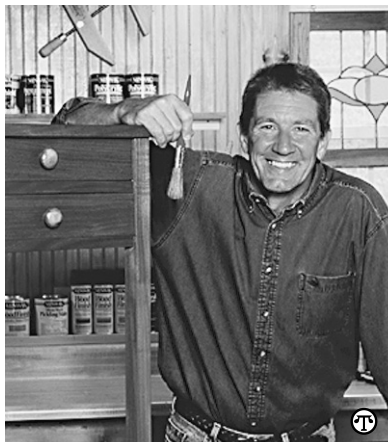
(NAPSA)—Decorating with wood is a popular and economical way for do-it-yourselfers to make their homes more beautiful, welcoming and comfortable.

That's because adding a colorful stain to unfinished furniture, restoring the sheen to old hardwood floors or bringing out the natural beauty of paneling and trim is easier than you might expect. Just follow these three simple steps:

- **Step One:** Make sure the wood is ready to stain by first sanding it lightly in the direction of the grain with a medium grit sandpaper, followed by a fine grit. Tip: After sanding, if the wood is soft or porous, always use a pre-stain wood conditioner to prevent blotching. If you are using a water-based stain, be sure to use a pre-stain wood conditioner, regardless of wood species.

- **Step Two:** Select and Apply Wood Stain—Choosing a wood stain is a matter of personal preference and do-it-yourselfers have a variety to choose from. Stains such as Minwax® Wood Finish™ feature traditional wood tones, while the company's Water-Based line (which includes six wood tones and 60 custom colors) allows you to select a stain color to coordinate with your decor. Tip: Before staining, always test the selected stain on a hidden area of your piece, or on scrap wood that matches the wood species of your project.

- **Step Three:** Add a Protec-



**Free booklet provides helpful tips on wood finishing projects.**

ive, Clear Finish—After staining, always top coat with a clear finish. It will protect the wood against water, household chemicals, food stains and everyday wear. Tip: To minimize brush marks and bubbles, “tip off” each section of your project before the finish dries. Hold the brush at a 45-degree angle and lightly run the bristles over the entire length of wood.

*Bruce Johnson's Guide to Wood Finishing* booklet provides more wood finishing tips and techniques. It's available free at area retailers, by writing Bruce Johnson's Guide to Wood Finishing Offer, PO Box 2027, Grand Rapids, MN 55745-2027, or by visiting [www.minwax.com](http://www.minwax.com).

- *Bruce Johnson is a noted author, craftsman and wood finishing expert.*