Online Extra

shop-made

Inlay Banding

The article in *Woodsmith* No. 186 covers the basics of designing and assembling shop-made banding. Those same techniques can also be used for a variety of other patterns. In this online extra, I'll show you three more banding design options.

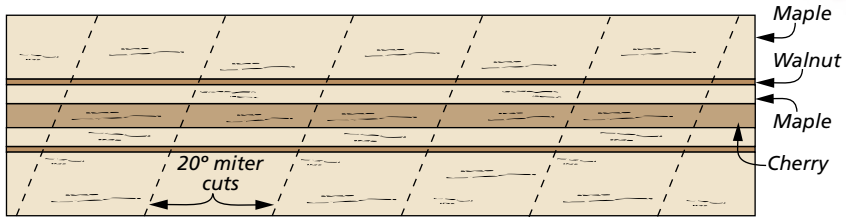
ZIG-ZAG. The inlay banding shown in the top photo above is a zig-zag pattern. This pattern looks great as an inlay around the edge of a tabletop or as a decorative accent on a box.

This design starts by gluing up a "sandwich" of contrasting wood layers. (I used maple, walnut, and cherry.) The top drawing shows you how the blank is assembled. You can vary the thickness of the layers to suit your taste. Just make sure that the finished blank is symmetrical from top to bottom.

After cleaning up and squaring the blank, use a miter gauge on the table saw to cut it into angled segments. For this example, I set the miter gauge to 20°. You'll need to pay close attention to the setup as you cut the blank. Any deviations will make it difficult to line up the blocks again when they are reassembled in the next step.

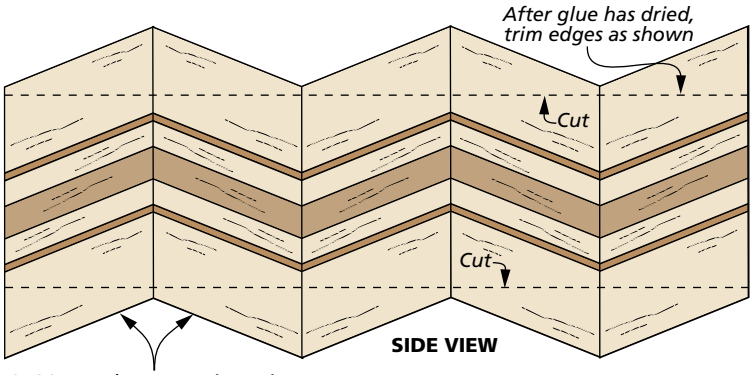
After cutting the blank into smaller segments, the next step is to glue it back together, alternating the angled blocks to form the pattern. The thing to watch out for here is the alignment of the blocks. I've found it best to glue up one joint at a time, aligning the pattern and securing the pieces with tape. Remember to make sure the pattern aligns on both sides of the blank before adding the clamps. The center drawing at right shows what it should look like when you're done.

As you can see, the blank now needs to be trimmed to remove the waste on both edges. The dotted lines on the center drawing show you where to cut. If you did a good job on the alignment, either edge can be placed against the rip fence to make these cuts.



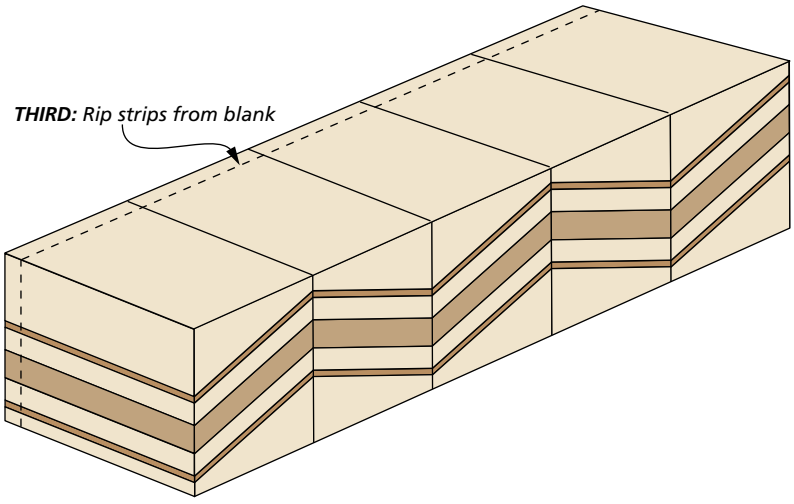
FIRST: *Sandwich and glue contrasting wood layers together, then make mitered cuts as shown*

SIDE VIEW



SIDE VIEW

SECOND: *Alternate orientation and glue back together*



With the blank squared, all that remains is to rip the thin strips of banding. As I mentioned in the main article, I prefer to use a thin-kerf, 7¼"circular saw blade to reduce the waste.

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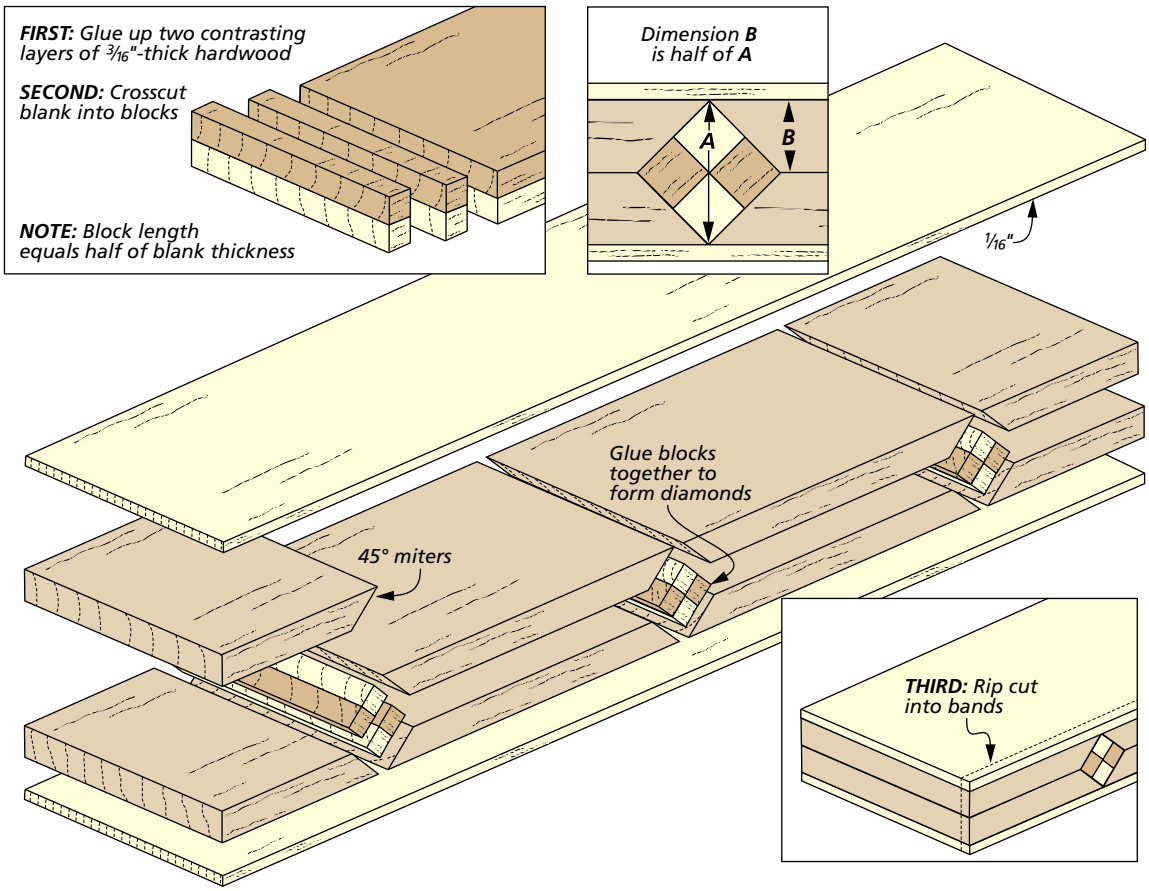

DIAMOND. The next design features a diamond pattern. And although this pattern is a little more complicated, it still relies on the same basic techniques.

Start with two contrasting blanks of equal thickness (I used yellowheart and purpleheart for one example and holly and ebony for the other) to form the diamond blocks. The two top drawings show you how it works. Use a caliper to measure the thickness of the blank and then crosscut the blank into pieces that are exactly half this thickness. Glue two pieces together to form each diamond.

Now make another measurement of the diagonal, as shown in the second drawing at the top of the page. This is the thickness you'll need for the next two pieces of the sandwich.

After planing these pieces to thickness, set your table saw blade to 45° and use a miter gauge with a stop block to cut them to length.

The last components of this design are the two thin strips that form the outside border on the top and bottom. With these pieces planed to thickness and cut to length, you can assemble the sandwich, using cauls on the top and bottom and clamps on the ends to prevent shifting. Ripping the blank into thin strips results in an attractive banding.

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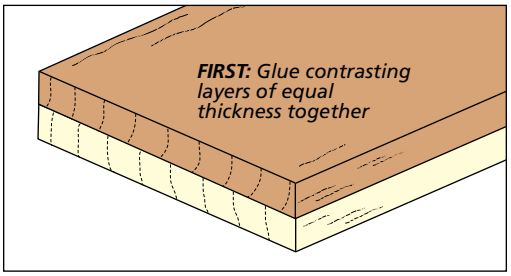

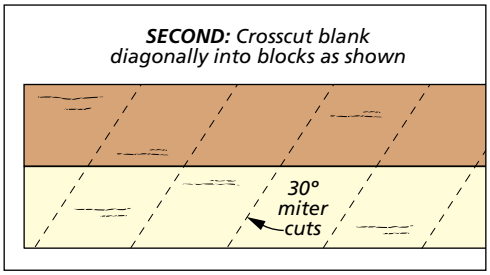

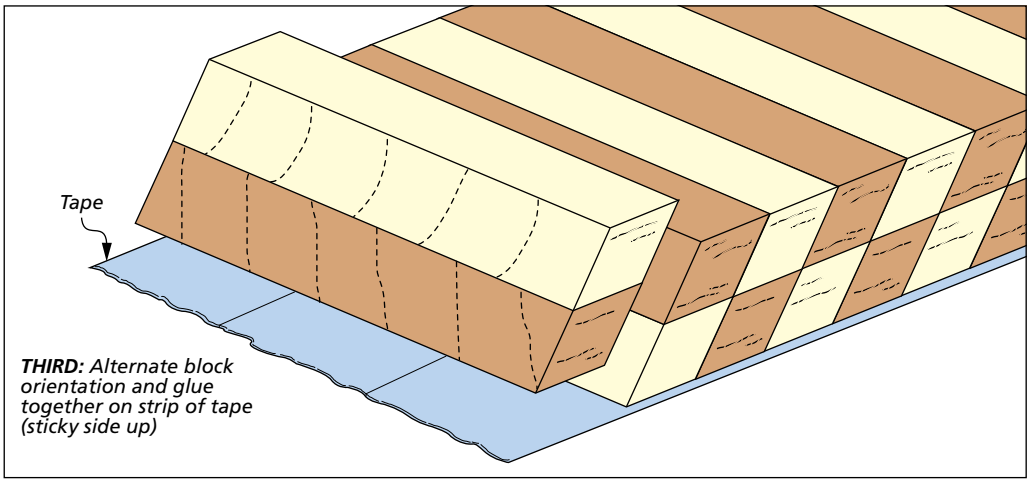

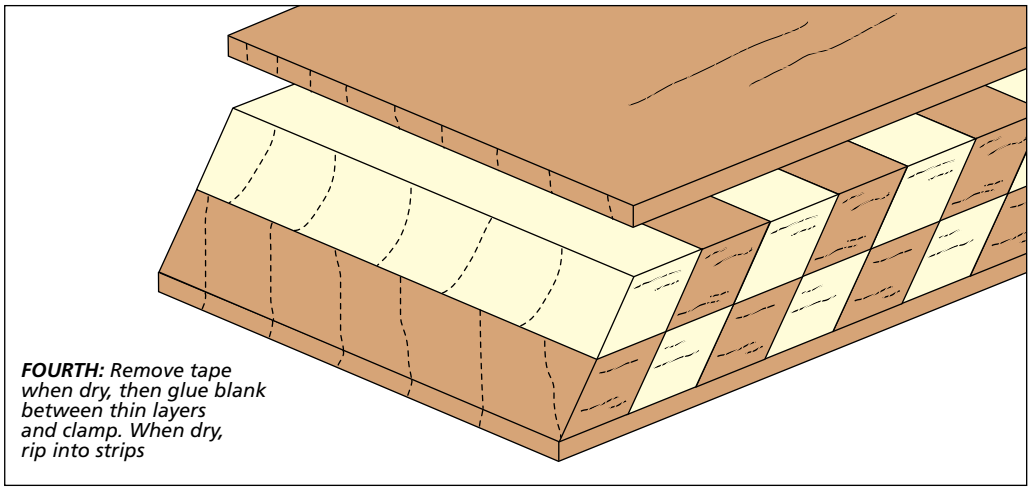

Finally, the angled pattern at left gives you another option. While this is pretty straightforward (simply cut angled pieces and assemble the sandwich) the glueup can be a little tricky. Once again, I relied on tape to keep things aligned.

Start by using a flat surface for the assembly. Place a couple lengths of tape, sticky side up, on the assembly surface and then add the segments to form the pattern. After adding the glue in the joints, use a waxed caul to flatten the assembly and let it rest for about half an hour to let the glue set up.

Now, remove the tape and attach the $\frac{1}{16}$"-thick border on each side of the blank and clamp it flat using cauls.

