

Biscuits: They're Not Just for Breakfast

A great way to make glued-up panels stronger is to put "biscuits" between adjacent boards every foot or so.

Biscuits are thin wafers of wood that are inserted into glue-filled slots cut with a tool called a "biscuit joiner." Exposed to glue, biscuits swell and make it almost impossible for adjacent boards to separate. You can also use biscuits to connect shelves to uprights in cabinets or to mop up extra gravy from the pot roast.

Biscuits come in three sizes – small, medium and belt-buster. (I'm kidding.) The largest is a #20, which is 2-3/8 inches long by 1-inch wide. Next is

the #10, 2-1/8 inches by 3/4-inch. The baby of the bunch is the #0, 1-3/4 by 5/8 inch. They're all about 1/8-inch thick.

Most tool manufacturers offer at least one biscuit joiner, some cordless. Mine, a DeWalt, has operated flawlessly for about five years, probably because (true confession time) I don't use it much.

Don't get me wrong... If I was worried sick about a glued-up panel splitting along the lines where the boards are glued together, I'd use biscuits in every project. But I'm not. In fact, I've never seen that happen. Today's ordinary white carpenter's glue is very strong stuff. Glue two boards together, let it dry and whack your panel with a hammer; I'll bet it won't break along the glued line. And the space-age synthetic stuff like "Gorilla Glue" is even stronger. If you're the type who likes everything strong enough to drive across, however, biscuits will help ease your mind.

There's just one caveat when it comes to using a biscuit joiner (beyond the usual good ideas like being sure the blade has stopped turning before you allow it anywhere near body parts).

In cutting slots for your biscuits, the joiner will throw out lots of wood debris and dust. Wear eye protection, for sure, and try to corral as much of that debris as you can, either with a dust bag or vacuum. Be sure it doesn't build up on the top of your workbench. For consistent glue-ups, both your boards and the joiner must be at the same level when the slot is cut otherwise boards won't lineup and your panel will be upsy-downsy.

That's it for this month. Take advantage of this nice spring weather; get out there and build something!

Lightning Hazards

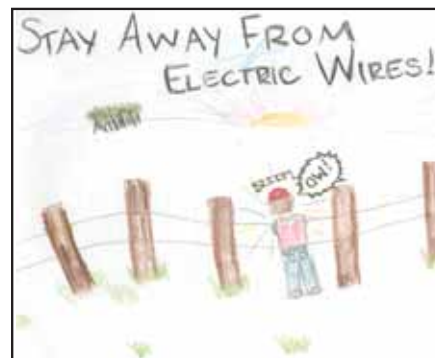
The Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) urges increased awareness of lightning hazards and recommends following these guidelines to stay safe during electrical storms:

- If possible, go indoors.
- Once indoors, stay away from windows and doors.
- Do not use corded telephones except for emergencies.
- Unplug electronic equipment before the storm arrives and avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords during storms.
- Avoid contact with plumbing, including sinks, baths and faucets.
- If outdoors, go to a low point. Lightning hits the tallest object. Get down if you are in an exposed area.
- Stay away from trees.
- Avoid metal. Don't hold metal items, including bats, golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets or tools. Avoid metal sheds, clotheslines, poles and fences.
- If you feel a tingling sensation or your hair stands on end, lightning may be about to strike. Crouch down and cover your ears.
- Stay away from water. This includes pools, lakes, puddles and anything damp, such as wet poles or grass.
- Don't stand close to other people. Spread out.
- Don't forget pets during thunderstorms. Doghouses are not lightning-safe. Dogs that are chained can easily fall victim to a lightning strike.

Victims of lightning strikes should be given CPR if necessary and seek medical attention.

Kids' Corner Safety Poster

"Stay away from electric wires!"



Kristen Koistinen 13 years old

Kristen is the daughter of Ronald and Darlene Koistinen of Hayti, S.D. They are members of H-D Electric Cooperative, Clear Lake, S.D.

Kids, send your drawing with an electrical safety tip to your local electric cooperative (address found on Page 3). If your poster is published, you'll receive a prize. All entries must include your name, age, mailing address and the names of your parents.

Ethnic Entrees

Bohemian Ribs, Kraut and Dumplings

- 3 to 4 lbs. spare ribs
- 1 or more (15 oz.) cans sauerkraut
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 tsp. caraway seed
- 2 tsp. brown sugar
- 4+ cans hot water

Season spare ribs and roast at 350°F. for 1-1/2 to 2 hours. Cut apart ribs. Add remaining ingredients to ribs and roast an additional 30 minutes or until kraut is very hot. Add dumplings on top of kraut and ribs 30 to 45 minutes before eating using either potato dumplings or baking powder dumplings. May need a little more water just to cover ribs and kraut but not dumplings.

- Potato Dumplings:
- 4 cups cold mashed potatoes
 - 1 egg
 - 3 cups flour
 - 1 tsp. Watkins chicken soup bullion or salt

Mix all ingredients well and roll into logs the size of large eggs. Place on kraut and ribs. Can be made ahead and frozen. Takes about 45 minutes to cook dumplings.

- Baking Powder Dumplings:
- 2 eggs
 - 2 cups flour
 - 1 tsp. chicken bullion or salt
 - 3-1/2 tsp. baking powder
 - 1/2 cup milk

Mix all ingredients and knead with just enough flour to make a stiff dough. Make into 2-inch thick roll. Cut into 1-1/2-inch slices. Place on kraut and ribs. Turn in about 15 minutes. Cook an additional 10 minutes.

Sharon Steckley, Geddes
Cooperative Connections

Stay Crisp Rosettes

- 2 eggs, beaten
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1/2 cup flour

Combine eggs, sugar and salt; beat well. Add remaining ingredients; beat until smooth. Heat rosette iron in deep, hot oil (350°F. to 375°F.) for 2 minutes. Drain excess oil from iron; dip in batter to 1/4-inch from top of iron, then immediately into hot oil. Fry rosette until golden, 10 to 30 seconds. Lift out; tip upside down to drain. With fork, push rosette off iron onto rack placed over paper towels. Reheat iron 1 minute; make next rosette. If you have two rosette irons, reheat one while using the other. Stir batter from time to time as you will get some oil in it. Sprinkle with powdered sugar if desired.

Janet Agre, Brandon, *Cooperative Connections*

Stirrum

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- Flour
- 3 T. shortening

Beat eggs in bowl; add milk, baking powder, salt and enough flour to make a batter the consistency of medium-firm pancakes. Melt shortening in heavy skillet. Pour mixture in pan when hot. Brown on both sides. Cut into small pieces, stirring until all sides are browned. Serve with lettuce and onion in a cream-vinegar dressing.

Betty Littau, Winner, *Cooperative Connections*

Kuchen

- 1 package dry yeast
- 1/2 cup sugar + 1 T. sugar, divided
- 1/4 cup lukewarm water
- 2 cups warm milk
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 6 to 8 cups flour
- 1 tsp. salt

Dissolve yeast and 1 T. sugar in lukewarm water. Combine milk and eggs, beat well. Add shortening, beat again. In a large bowl, combine flour, remaining sugar and salt; add first mixture, mixing well.

Knead until dough is smooth and elastic, sprinkle with a little flour at a time. Put in warm place to rise until double in bulk. Divide dough into 8 equal parts. Roll each piece to fit a pie plate. Let rise 20 minutes. Put fruit on top – can use apples, peaches, raisins or prunes.

Filling:

- 2 cups sweet cream or sour cream
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 T. flour
- 1/2 tsp. vanilla
- Cinnamon

Combine first 5 ingredients. Top fruit with cream filling. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Bake at 350°F. for 25 to 30 minutes or until brown.

Pictured, *Cooperative Connections*



Frickadeller – The National Dish of Denmark

- 1/2 lb. ground lean beef
- 1/2 lb. ground pork
- 4 slices whole wheat bread
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 small yellow onion, finely minced
- 1 egg, well-beaten
- 1/2 cup club soda

If possible, have butcher grind both meats together twice. Soak bread slices in heavy cream. In a large bowl, mix meat, nutmeg, salt, pepper and onion. Add egg and cream-soaked bread, beating vigorously until thoroughly blended. Slowly add club soda, beating gently so mixture becomes slightly fluffy. Place bowl, covered, in refrigerator for approximately 45 minutes to chill. Remove mixture from frig and proceed making small oblong shapes or, if you prefer, small patties. Heat skillet, add small amount of vegetable oil and 1 pat of butter, coating bottom thoroughly. Place patties in skillet, lower heat to medium and cook until bottom of patties are crisp and crusty. Turn over patties, cooking until well done – about 8 minutes on each side. Continue this procedure until all patties are cooked, placing each batch on a warm platter. This dish is traditionally served with either pickled beets or red cabbage and boiled potatoes.

Nancy Brooks, Rosebud
Cooperative Connections

Please send your favorite salad recipes to your local electric cooperative (address found on page 3). Each recipe printed will be entered into a drawing for a prize in July 2006. All entries must include your name, mailing address, telephone number and cooperative name.