The Bevel Part 2. Preparation and Gluing the Top:

In this section, we start with the top already fit to the sides, with the upper and lower face braces tied into the kerfed linings, and into the bevel backing as needed. I'm not going to go into detail on fitting the top, since this is already covered in the main book, chapter 1.3, pages 47-50. It is necessary to have the braces tied into the kerf and the bevel backing, since this anchors the top. When the top braces "click" into their respective slots, there is almost no movement, and the top will be in very nearly exactly the same place each time you put it in place.

Photo 17

In photo 17, you can see that the main braces are tied into the kerfed lining and and in one case, the basswood bevel piece. It is critical to have top tied properly into the kerf and the basswood piece. This enables the top to be taken off and put back in almost exactly the same place each time it is removed—and it will be taken off and put back several times during the coming steps.

Photo 18

Photo 18 shows a special pencil made to trace the edge of the guitar sides and the unersideof the top. It is simply a piece of drafting pencil lead glued into a hole drilled into a dowel.

Photo 19

As you can see, in Photo 19, I'm tracing the underside edge of the top against the side, and the bevel backing piece.

Photo 20

In Photo 20, I'm cutting just outside the line I just traced. The line doesn't have to go all the way around the guitar, just where the bevel is going—from the end block to just above the waist. I'm cutting outside the line.

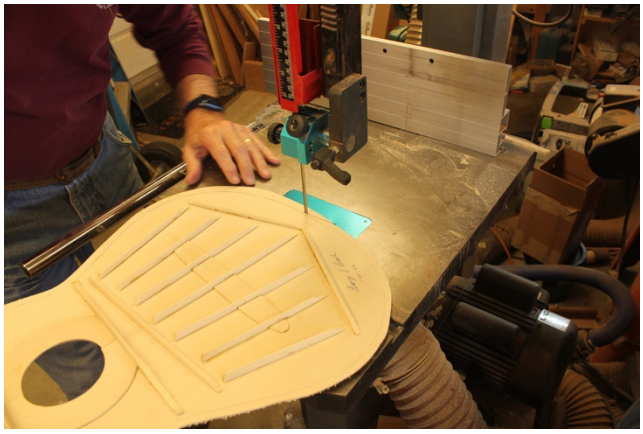


Photo 21

In photos 21 and 22, I'm using my edge sander to sand back exactly to the line. The flat edge sands the outside curve well,

Photo 22

As can be seen in Photo 22, the roller on the belt sander sands the inside curve, --the waist, very well.

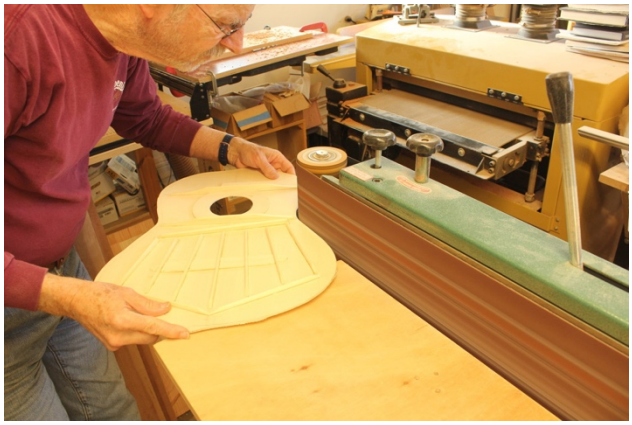


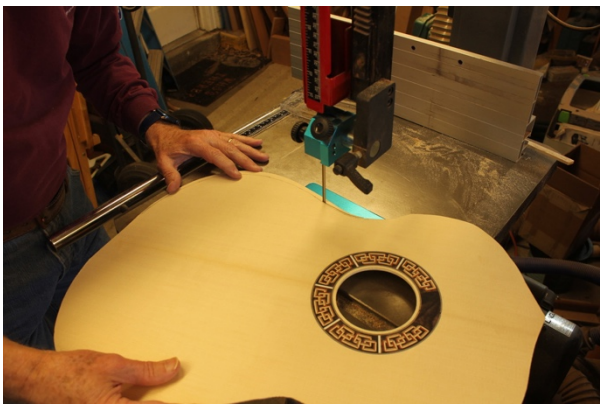
Photo 23

In Photo 23, I have placed the top back onto the sides, and it “clicked” right into position. The edge of the top is right on the edge of the basswood piece, and I’m ready to draw the bevel position onto the top.

Photo 24

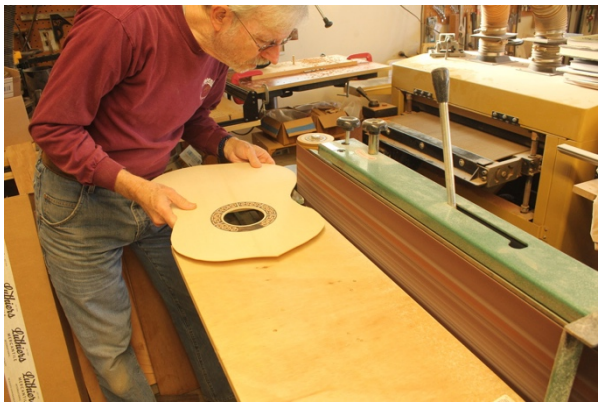
In Photo 24, I’m drawing just where I want the edge of the bevel to be on the top. Since on the side, I went down ½” for the drawing, I’ll go in ½” for the line on the top. At the edges, where the bevel must blend with the binding and purflig. Just be as accurate as possible.

Photo 25



In Photo 25, I'm using the bandsaw to cut very close to the line I just drew—leave the line and save this piece of wood. We'll use it later.

Photo 26



Next, we'll o back to the edge sander and smooth out the jagged edges from the bandsaw. This edge needs to be virtually perfect. It's the edge everyone will see. Go slowly.

Photo 27

Once you're happy with the shape and edges you've sanded, it's time to glue on the top. I use cauls to help even the pressure on the top.

Photo 28

Here is a photo of the top after gluing. Everything is looking good. Any glue squezeout around the top must be cleaned up. This edge is important, and must be very clean.

Photo 29

If there are any bumps or ripples in the top edge along the bevel, they must be sanded out. We're going to glue a purfling piece (black-white-black) against this edge, and any irregularities will show. In photo 29, I'm sanding the waist area with a curved sanding block, just to even things out.

Photo 30

In Photo 30, I'm using a flat sanding block to sand out the lower bout to the end block. These sanding blocks will be used again soon.