Fuming Wood

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*****NOTE**: This process should only be done in an environment with an abundance of air circulation, preferably outdoors. NOT in your closed up shop! Adequate ventilation is absolutely necessary, especially when using the stronger concentrations of ammonia.

*****WEAR PPE**. Specifically glasses/goggles, a respirator with an Ammonia/Methylamine cartridge, rubber gloves and long sleeves.

- **Ammonium Hydroxide** (30%) from a Scientific Lab Equipment Supply House (Nurnberg Scientific in Tualatin) *or* Janitorial Strength Ammonia (10%) (from Ace Hardware)
- **Plastic Storage Container** large enough to fit your piece in (You can add adhesive strip foam insulation tape around the edges of the bin) *or* an air-tight Igloo-type cooler (You can add a see-thru window on the lid by cutting a hole and using foil tape to secure a small sheet of plexiglass.)
- **Small plastic yogurt container** to hold the ammonia in the tub while fuming

Use ½ to ¾ cup of Ammonia. Leave the piece you are fuming in the tub for 2 days (30%) or at least 3 days (10%)

*****BE EXTREMELY CAREFUL WHEN OPENING THE CONTAINER!** You do NOT want the ammonia fumes in your lungs, eyes or nose!

I have found that warmer air temperatures during fuming create more reddish hues. Colder temperatures create greener hues.

Leave the fumed piece in a well ventilated area until it no longer has that strong ammonia smell. You can lightly sand the finished piece if you find the grain has raised after fuming.

Experiment with using a finish (wax, BLO, walnut oil, etc.) ***before*** fuming to add depth and richness to the final color. I have achieved colors ranging from darker coffee browns to dark golden hues.

Complete the project with your preferred finish. I find walnut oil works well. Have fun and BE SAFE!

Good article: **Fuming Wood with Ammonia by Chris Gochnour** in the May/June 2020 issue (#282) of Fine Woodworking