

Now draw the female shape of the dovetail onto the maple block/headblock making sure that the centerlines are perfectly aligned. Place the body assembly flat on the bandsaw and rough cut the slot.

From here on, it's hand fitting until you get both pieces to fit perfectly and at the correct neck pitch angle. Refer to Drawing #8 to check this neck pitch angle.

You can also cut the dovetail in the headblock before you attach the headblock to the rim but this takes extra care to ensure that the back edge of the cap is precisely perpendicular to the centerline of the instrument.

To prepare the headblock, follow this sequence: 1) cut the headblock to shape; 2) cut the cap to its basic shape leaving the curved edge slightly oversized where it joins the neck; 3) sand the back edge of the cap square (where the 15th fret cross piece goes); 4) attach the cap to the headblock, ensuring that the cap and headblock are both on the same centerline; 5) cut the cap to its final shape; and 6) cut the dovetail opening through the cap and headblock.

When you attach the headblock to the rim assembly, be sure that the back of the headblock cap, where the 15th fret cross piece goes, is perpendicular to the centerline of the instrument. Construct the rim assembly before you do any final fitting of the neck and dovetail joint.

Attach the soundboard as shown earlier in this chapter. After the soundboard is glued to the rim, remove the assembly from the body fixture and do the final fitting of the neck to the dovetail joint.

It is acceptable to use thin wood shims to fit the neck joint properly. Check your angles and alignment to ensure that you have a good snug fit. Use Titebond Cement to glue the neck into the body assembly.

Set aside to dry for at least 24 hours.

Proceed to Chapter 9.

Editorial correction page: Please tape this page over page 71 in your book

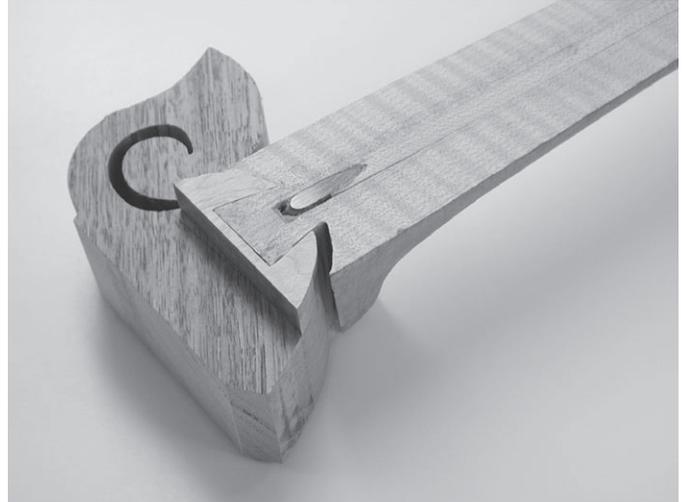


Fig. 8.21 If you prepare the dovetail before attaching the headblock to the rim, be sure to cut the headblock's shape before cutting the cap. If they are cut when glued together, there will be a notch on the treble side of the cap (above) where it appears that the rim will fit, but this is wrong. The cap must overlay the rim as shown in Fig. 8.22 (below).

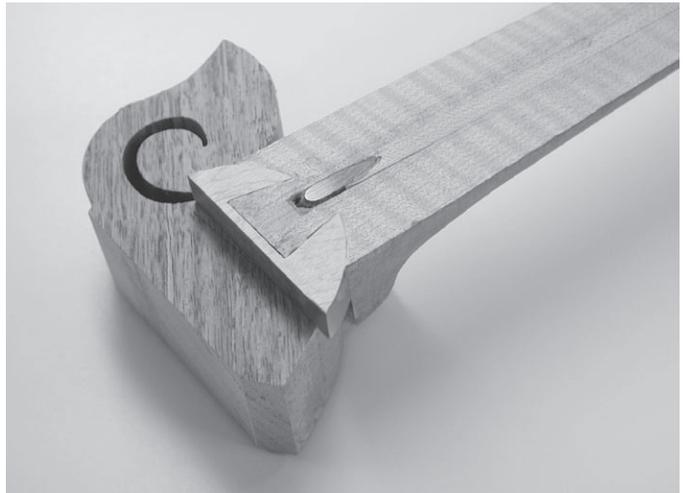


Fig. 8.22 A successful dovetail is an exciting component of an instrument that no one but you will ever see! Compare this photo with Fig. 8.21 and notice how this headblock cap correctly overhangs the headblock on the treble side.