



## In a Modern Mood

by Fran Casselman

### Setting:

- #42382 Natural Grasscloth Wallpaper
- #7021 Black Walnut Flooring
- #25110 Popcorn Carpeting

### Furnishings:

- #76194 Large Natural Open-Back Shelving Unit *(modified; details below)*
- #1226 Retro Sofa Kit *(as finished by Kris Compas)*
- #40530 Braided Wicker Ottoman
- #1227 Retro Chairs Kit *(as finished by Kris Compas)*
- #76829 2-Pc. Butler's Tray Table

### Accessories:

- #28113 Mass Cane Potted Plant
- #22841 German Shorthaired Pointer
- #40530 Braided Wicker Ottoman
- #40620 Stack of Big Books
- #78433 Sunburst Mirror
- #65576 Logan Candlesticks
- #12536 Alexander Table Lamp
- #59101 Yellow Orchid
- #22759 Tiny Buddha Statue
- #61089 Pair of Dried Grass Arrangements
- #28111 Corn Stalk Dracaena
- #78548 Messina Wall Clock
- #66901 2-Pc. Olive Jar Set

- #5013 Set of 12 Handcrafted Large Books
- #54022 Pair of Simple Shapes Accent Jars
- #40601 Row of Old Books
- #40610 Row of Worn Books
- #78519 Hourglass
- #40340 Horsehead Bookends
- #40640 Stack of Encyclopedias
- #61045 Asian Bamboo
- #17659 Wooden Serving Tray
- #67052 Cobalt Pedestal Bowl With Fruit
- #24284 White Ginger Jar

### Finishing Tips:

- The candles used with the Logan Candlesticks were substituted with short lengths of thin beverage straw, painted white.
- Modified large natural open-back shelving unit on following pages.
- Modern, white-brick fireplace on following pages.

# Contemporary storage/display shelf

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## Materials & tools:

- #76194 Large Natural Open-Back Shelving Unit
- #7123 Random-Width Southern Pine Flooring (#7023 is fine, also)
- #5019 Medium Louvered Shutters (four sets)
- #17511 12-Pcs. of 1/8" x 1/4" Strip Wood Set; total length about 12" or scrap pieces if available.

Scraps of foam core

Wood stain (*Kiwi Liquid Shoe Polish in brown was used here but other stains or markers may be used.*)



Cut flooring to fit back of shelf unit, making sure boards run vertically. Using the lower portion, cut five shutters to fit height of lower section of unit, making sure louvers point down (the measurement is slightly more than half of the shutter height, so you cannot get two short shutters from one full one). Cut four strip wood pieces the same length. Stain flooring, two full shutters and five shortened shutters, and strip wood.

Cut scraps of foam core to fit between the upper shelves of the unit. These are to fill the open sides visible when a full shutter is applied to the upper shelf unit. Stain at least one side of the foam core to match the wood.

When all stain is dry, glue the flooring to the back of the unit. Let dry.

For the upper section, put the foam core pieces into the shelves, stain side out and flush against the sides to keep them straight. Carefully apply white glue only to the exposed foam edge

without getting any on the shelf unit. Put the full shutters in place with the louvers pointing down and just at the edge of the foam core (not overlapping the sides of the shelf). Apply masking tape while the glue dries.

Once the glue has dried you should be able to pull the shutter straight out from the shelf unit and reposition it. For the look shown you will have to reverse the left and right shutters from the gluing positions. You could choose to have a closed area just in the center, or at only one side, with one "door" or two.

These should stay in place without glue but may be permanently attached if preferred. The same method can be used on the lower unit if you do not want a fully closed look.

For the lower-unit look shown, glue a shutter and then a strip wood piece in place, alternating to fill the shelf width. Use white glue if you will never want the base open, or rubber cement if you might want to change the look in the future.



**Materials & tools:**

- #7314 Brick Siding by Houseworks
- Recycled rigid packaging foam  
*(builders' foam or Styrofoam; sheet or block)*
- Foam core
- White printer paper/bond paper
- Thin cardboard *(cereal box or legal pad backer)*
- #1249 Weldbond or White glue
- #16001 Light Duty Knife with Safety Cap
- #10115 12" Stainless Steel Ruler
- #600021 Self-Healing Cutting Mat
- #55670 Razor Saw Kit with 2 Blades & Handle or Serrated a knife
- Utility paintbrush
- Finish paintbrush
- Gesso
- White paint
- Masking tape
- Straight pins
- Pencil

# Modern, white-brick fireplace

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The example used single-layer pieces of 5/8"-thick rigid foam packaging material for the base and main section, and 3/16"-thick foam core for the hearth and mantel. The base is 1 1/2" deep and the main section is 4" high; the hearth is 1 3/4" deep and the mantel is 1" deep.

Based on the materials you will use, determine the size of the fireplace for your space. Make a simple paper template to help you visualize. The firebox can be on the left or the right, whichever works best for you.

Using a serrated knife or saw, cut the foam pieces to size. Keep all lines straight. Cut the firebox opening in the main section piece. (The example is 4" wide, placed a ruler-width from one end and from the top.)

Using a craft knife and metal ruler on a cutting mat, cut the foam core pieces.

Using a craft knife and metal ruler on a cutting mat, cut the brick sheet to size for the front surfaces. Plan carefully and deal with each surface separately. Do not try to bend the sheet around the corner. For vertical lines, cut in a grout joint to affect as few bricks as possible. Keep the pattern correct on the open end and don't worry about the wall end. Do not cut out the firebox opening yet.

For horizontal lines, the overhang of the hearth and mantel will disguise any odd cuts caused by a difference in the thickness of the foam material and the size of the bricks. Plan for those cuts to be at the top and have a clean grout line at the bottom.

Cut the brick sheet for the end pieces, also in a grout joint. A full brick on the face should join a half-brick on the end, so the cut edge of your previous piece will not line up correctly.

With the utility paintbrush, cover the red brick areas with gesso. Use a dabbing or stippling motion to leave a slightly rough surface. Gesso is an excellent primer but you may need a second coat for good coverage over the red bricks.

Tape the main section foam and brick sheet together. Make sure they are correctly aligned on the outside end and mark the firebox opening. Remove the tape and carefully cut the opening with a craft knife and ruler. Mark the top of the cut out piece; you will use it later to line the back of the opening.

Use a craft knife and ruler to cut a strip of white paper the thickness of the main section. Glue it inside the firebox opening to finish the raw edges of the foam. Cut strips of white paper the thickness of the foam core and glue on to finish the raw edges of the hearth and mantel. Spread the glue thinly but cover the entire edges. When the glue is completely dry, sand any rough edges if necessary.

Glue the front brick sheet pieces to the foam pieces. Make sure the glue is well set, then glue the end pieces. Do not worry about the small openings visible at the corners. Tape or hold in place until well set; allow to dry thoroughly.

If there is any overhang of the brick sheet at the wall end, carefully trim it away.

Assemble the fireplace: Glue the hearth to the base, making sure the wall ends are square and the backs are flush. Glue on the main section; you can use straight pins up through the bottom to help secure the unit. Glue on the mantel.

Cut a piece of thin cardboard to fit the main dimensions of the assembled fireplace (don't worry about the hearth and mantel overhangs) and glue the fireplace to it. In the thicker areas, you can use straight pins from the back to help secure everything together. Glue the cutout into the firebox. If necessary, weight the fireplace to keep it flat while the glue dries.

When everything is dry, add another coat of gesso if it is needed to cover the red, and gesso the openings where the brick-sheet pieces meet at the corner. Gesso is thick and should fill the gaps; you may need more than one layer but it does dry quickly.

Add a finish coat of paint; preferably in matte for the brick areas and satin for the rest.

**Variations:**

You can use this method to create a fireplace in any size or finish, using any type of brick or stone texture sheet. You can score and paint the foam-core hearth to resemble stone slabs, make the mantel of wood, or continue the brick/stone texture up the wall like a chimney. You can cut other openings in the main section for an oven or firewood storage. It can be wired, and is completely customizable for the exact look you want.