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**Faux Painting,
Ebonizing Wood**

Real ebony has been treasured since ancient times, but using real ebony is usually not practical. Fortunately, it is easily emulated on wood moldings, furniture and other items using a variety of stain and faux techniques.

by Susan Brimo-Cox

Classic black. It adds distinction. So, too, can ebonizing.



Ebonized wood had its heyday in the late 1800s. "People who traveled to the Orient brought back ebony with gilding — and everyone wanted it," says Cheryl Campbell, owner of [Urban Revivals LLC](#) in Washington, D.C. Ebonizing was a decorating rebellion, of sorts, and for furniture and decorative wood moldings, ebony was definitely "in."

As a home accent, Campbell says, ebonizing is often associated with the furnishings of Charles Eastlake. Herter Brothers also set the standards for its use in furniture during the Renaissance Revival. But by 1905-1910, "decorating styles changed again and ebonizing fell out of favor."

Now, 100 years later, ebonizing is becoming popular again, maybe because it complements contemporary furniture styles so well. Perhaps it is because in spartan rooms with neutral color schemes it adds just the right accent. Or maybe it just adds a rich, lustrous touch that is hard to beat.

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