# TECHIE TIPS #6

When planning a table, you may find that the timber available is too narrow. If you don't want to use ply, here is a way to *'stretch'* the width of your timber. Well, not really stretching but adding extra timber on the side We call it making **wide board**s.

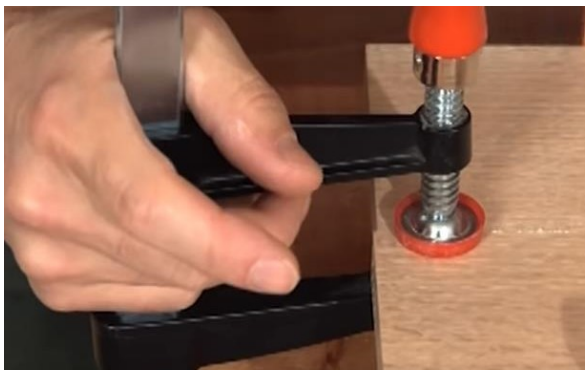
**Wide boards** are parallel boards **glued on the edges** until the desired width is gained. For a good result, the **preparation of the edges** is critical and best done on the **table saw**.

Firstly, check the timber for *'bowing'* [*see Tips Oct*]. A sideways bow will leave a gap between it and an adjacent straight edge, creating a weakness in the joint. You will need to correct the bow before beginning.

**Begin by** placing a **pencil mark** (eg. sequential numbers) on the *'show'* face of each piece of timber and then run the timber through your circular saw – but here's the trick. **Place** the first board **face up** and the second board **face down**. And the reason? If the blade is only just half a degree off perpendicular, your boards **will not clamp flat** with all faces up.

With the **face up-face down** technique, the edges **will complement each other** and be perfectly flat.

**Carefully** continue face up-face down cutting until all boards are completed



Place your boards loosely on a pair of T-bar or pipe board clamps and check the end alignment is correct. Then **one-by-one**, turn each board up in turn, run a continuous bead of glue along the length of the edge and spread evenly. How much glue to use? The answer is **'enough'**. Tighten the clamps evenly until you see **small beads of glue along the joint line.** If the edges tend to slide up, use a small F-clamp at each end to hold the boards in alignment.

Leave the boards for 20-30 minutes for the initial set, then without unclamping use the square end of a steel rule to carefully **shear** (cut by pushing) the beads off the surface with a slightly slicing motion. Repeat on the underside if the surface will show on the completed piece.

**For a stronger joint**, *'biscuiting' or 'splining'* the edges before glueing gives a mechanical reinforcement as well as more surface area for glue to timber fibres.

**Biscuiting (left)** is done with a special tool that cuts a **half moon slot** in the edge of the timber. **Hardwood biscuits** are coated with glue and inserted in the slots at approximately 100 to 150mm spacing.

**Splining** (below) is done with a table saw or a router to **create a trench** for a lengthwise hardwood insert (the spline).