



Simple coffee table

There are no difficult joints in this project

Every lounge room needs a coffee table, and a sturdy one at that. This project is easy to make because it has a simple design and all the parts are the same size so you'll only need basic tools. Martin Lynes, who plays Dr Luciano (Luke) Forlano, the surgical registrar from All Saints, helped us make it. By Dieter Mylius

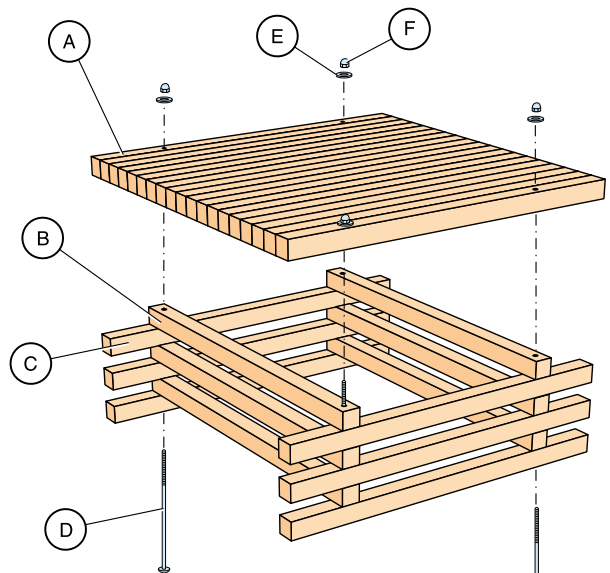
Here's how

We started with 50 x 50mm oregon and planed the thickness to suit. You can also buy ready dressed timber at 42mm square or use recycled timbers. As the cutting is simple, your timber supplier may be happy to cut all the lengths for you.

- 1 Cut all the slats and rails to a length of 800mm if not already cut by your supplier. You will need 31 pieces. Select the 19 best pieces to use as the table top slats (A) and on each of these use a pencil to mark the best face with the best edges. Set aside.
- 2 On the remaining rails sand a small bevel on each end edge and lightly sand edges to remove splinters.
- 3 Measure 21mm in from

each end of the rails with the end holes (B) and find the centre of timber. Drill through the pieces at this point with a 10 or 12mm bit for the bolt holes. To help avoid splintering, drill the holes with the rail over a scrap of timber. 4 Measure 150mm in from each end on remaining rails (C) and find and mark centres of timber. On two rails use a 25mm spade bit or Speedbor to drill a 5mm deep hole at this point in the underside of the pieces. Then drill through with a 10 or 12mm bit for the bolt holes in these and all remaining pieces.

5 Of the 19 tabletop slats select two end slats with a good edge as well as top face and mark and drill 10 or 12mm holes at the 150mm mark as in the previous step. Set out all



the pieces on a flat benchtop, good side face down with a drilled slat at each edge. Align both ends of all the pieces with a straight length of timber. Use pipe or sash cramps to hold together. Place two of the end drilled pieces (B) in position and insert bolts to make sure they are correctly located. Drill through top rails with a 4mm bit where they cross each slat and screw the rails to slats. Remove clamps and check the top is square. If not, adjust by tapping with a hammer using a softwood block.

6 Turn over top and sand the surface smooth. Sand a small bevel around the tabletop and at each corner. 7 Insert bolts (D) into the bottom-most rails (with the counterbored hole) and stand so bolts are vertical. Successively add the other pieces finally adding the tabletop assembly. Fit a washer (E) and screw on a

dome nut (F) at each corner. Check that ends of table are properly aligned with a square, then tighten nuts firmly with spanner – but do not over tighten. 8 Finish the table with a clear finish of your choice. We used three coats of tung oil for a low sheen finish. You can oil pieces before assembly to make this task easier.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Apart from common hand tools, it will help if you have a sander and cordless screwdriver. A drill with 4mm and 10 or 12mm twist bits and 25mm spade bit is essential.

Item	Part	Size	Material
A	Top slats (19)	42 x 42 x 800mm	Oregon
B	End hole rails (6)	42 x 42 x 800mm	Oregon
C	150mm hole rails (6)	42 x 42 x 800mm	Oregon
D	Cup bolts (4)	10mm dia x 300mm	Bright zinc coated steel
E	Washers (4)		Bright zinc coated steel
F	Dome nuts (4)		Chrome steel

All parts are prefabricated. All the necessary timber can be cut from 11 lengths of 2.4m 50 x 50mm oregon (leaving two pieces spare) dressed down to a standard 42mm square. The cost of materials should be less than \$150.