

TABLE SAW: You could use a portable circular saw, but a table saw will do a better job of making straight, parallel cuts.

ROUTER TABLE: This tool not only serves to cut the moldings, but it handles the rabbets in the side and end panels. Plus, you can use it to joint the edges



of your stock so they're straight and smooth. To do this, install a straight bit and set the fence to take about a 1/16-in. cut. Then, shim the outfeed side of the fence the same amount so it supports the stock after it's trimmed.

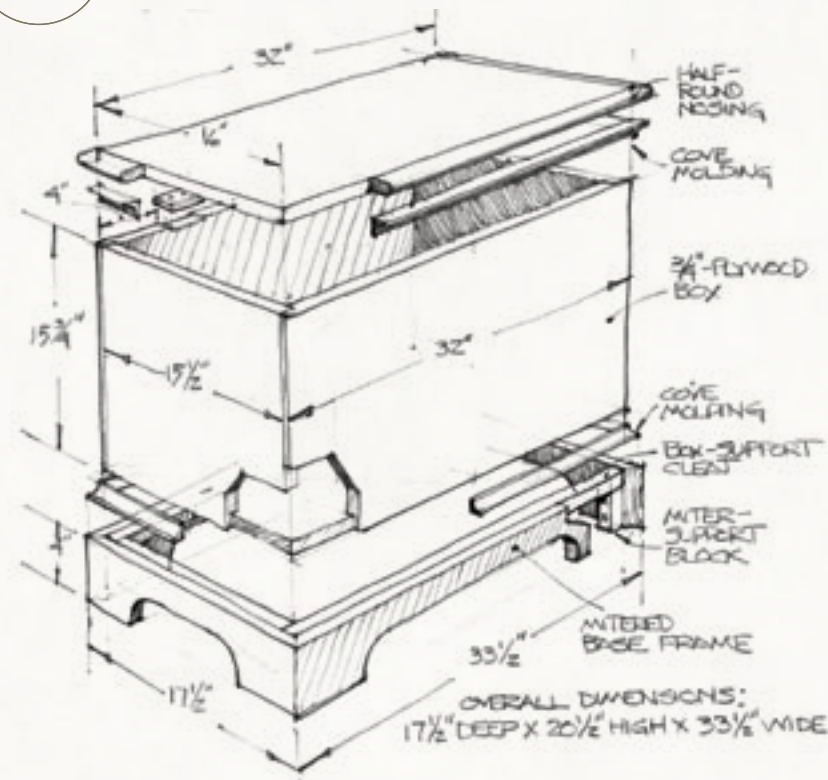
Tools & Hardware

YOU'LL ALSO USE: Portable drill and bits, Jigsaw, Block plane, Orbital sander, Hammer and nailset, 3/8-in. straight bit, 1/2-in. cove bit, 3/8-in. half-round bit.

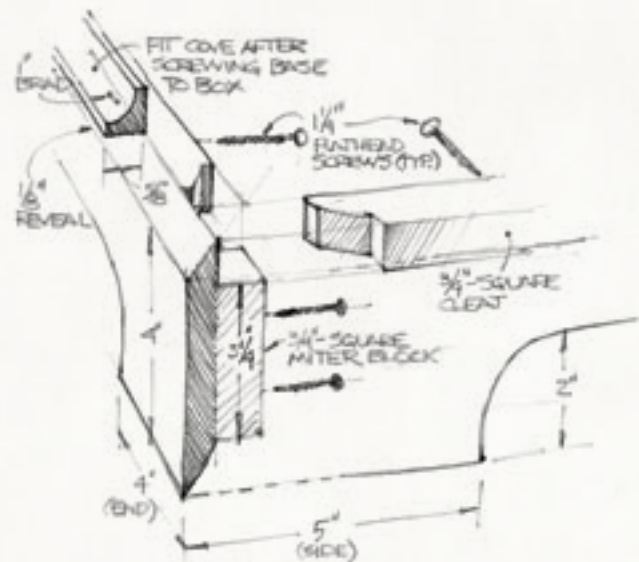
HARDWARE: We used 70 x 40mm solid brass hinges (No. 01D7040), available from Lee Valley (www.leevalley.com; 800-871-8158). To support the lid, we installed left and right friction lid stays, also available from Lee Valley (Nos. 00T0750 and 00T0760).

PAINT: Soldier Blue milk paint, (No. 811153), available from Woodcraft (www.woodcraft.com; 800-225-1153).

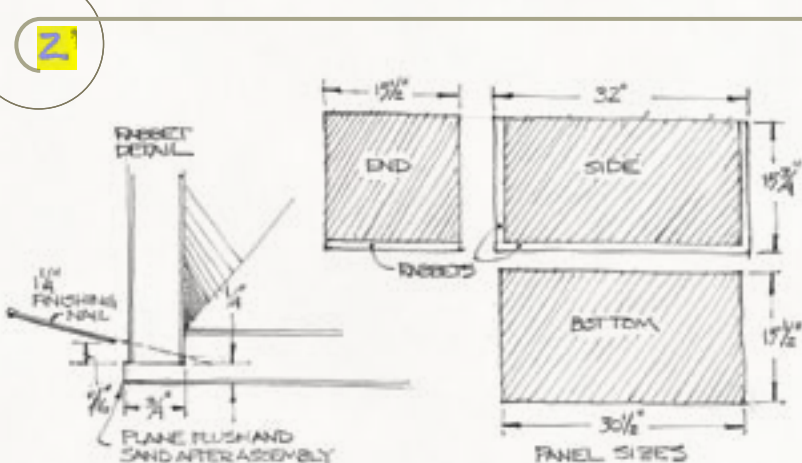
BLANKET CHEST



The chest is made in three parts: the box, the stand and the lid. If you can't find lumber-core plywood (your dealer may be able to order it) you can use veneer-core. But, edge-band the top edges of the sides and ends, and the back edge of the top, with 3/4-in.-square pine. We also used pine for the moldings and cut the shapes on the router table.



Miter the 4-in.-wide pine base frame pieces to length so the inside dimensions of the assembled frame match the outside box dimensions. Use a jigsaw to cut the leg profiles. Before assembling the frame, glue and screw miter blocks to the pieces to support the miter joints and make assembly easier. Then, assemble the frame and glue and nail the miters. Glue and screw support cleats to the inside of the frame. When the glue is dry, place the base on the inverted box, make sure it's centered and secure the box with screws. Attach the cove molding with 1-in. brads, set all nails and fill.



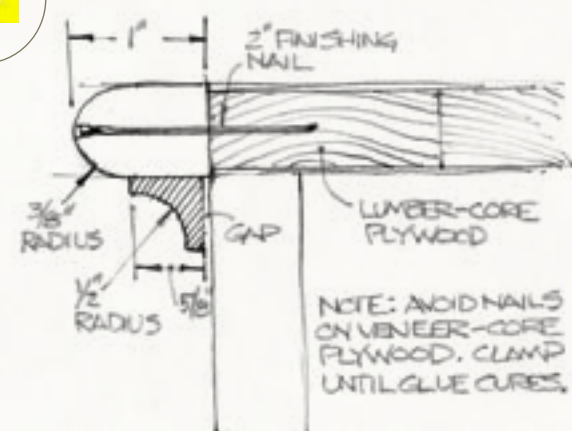
We assembled the sides and ends first, then cut the bottom to fit. Cut the side and end panels slightly longer than necessary and just a shade over in width. Joint the ripped edges so they're straight, smooth and parallel. Then, crosscut the pieces squarely to exact length. The squareness of the box depends on like pieces being exactly the same length, so take care when crosscutting.

Rout the rabbets in a series of steps to reach the finished 3/4-in. depth. This is not only easier on the router, it means you can use a 1/2- or 5/8-in. bit for the job. Note that 3/4-in. plywood is really 23/32 in. thick. This will leave a 1/32-in. overhang in the assembled joint that you can trim flush.

Spread glue in each joint and secure with 1 1/4-in. finishing nails. Angle the nails slightly to draw the joint tight and drive them nearly flush so your hammer doesn't strike and mar the wood. When the glue is dry, set the nails below the surface and fill with wood filler.

Quick Tip

Wet glue is slippery. To keep things in place while nailing, dry position the parts and drive the nails so they just poke into the adjacent piece. Then, spread glue and use the points to align the joint.



Cut the top panel just larger than the box dimensions and joint the edges to exact size. We glued the pine nosing to the front and side edges of the panel and used 2-in. finishing nails for clamps. Let the nosing extend past the rear edge—you can cut it flush later. If you're using veneer-core plywood, avoid the nails since they're likely to

split the veneers apart. Take great care to align the nosing so it's flush or just slightly proud of the plywood surface. The veneer is extremely thin—forget about planing it down to match the nosing. To install the cove, lay the box upside down on the inverted top and use thin cardboard spacers to maintain a uniform gap around the box.

Correction: In our picnic table project (August '05), a problem in the final stage of production caused the lettering to become misaligned in two drawings. You'll find the corrected drawings at www.popularmechanics.com.

CUTTING THE HINGE MORTISES

The hinge leaves are 1/16 in. thick. To set each one flush, first scribe the outline of the leaf with a knife and use a marking gauge to lay out the mortise depth. Make vertical cuts just shy of the knife lines with a sharp chisel. Then, angle the chisel and make a series of cuts that reach the mortise depth (near right). Pare the material away (far right) and finish the mortise by cutting up to the scribed lines.

