



Build a dock box

Storage designed for waterfront living

It's a beautiful day in cottage country, and you're about to step into the boat. The sun is warm, the water is glistening, life is good. It's a perfect scene, the kind of thing summer memories are made of—at least, until the clammy embrace of a cold, mouldy life jacket hits your arms and shoulders. One of the troublesome truths of lakeside living is that life jackets get wet much more easily than they dry out; solving this cosmic imbalance is what my dock box aims to do. It conveniently stores life jackets out of sight while providing more than enough sheltered ventilation to help everything dry quickly.

The arched lid and cedar side/front panels give this project a traditional look, but there's more here than meets the eye. The base is made using rot-proof composite plastic decking material in an arrangement that's fitted with netting to provide water drainage and air circulation while keeping insects and rodents at bay. It's easy to make because all of the cedar parts are cut from standard 1x6 and 2-by lumber, held together with waterproof glue and stainless-steel screws. Shop-cut, tapered cedar hole plugs make this project both beautiful and outdoor-tough. No life jackets to deal with? You'll find this box is also ideal for use around the pool or on the deck. Just omit the hanging rail and you're all set.

Construction details

My design includes four rail and stile frames—one front, one back and two side frames—all joined at the corners by legs. The cedar panel boards interlock with lap-joined edges and fit into grooves cut in the rails and legs. The four frames support a base of composite deck material that forms the floor, with spaces between deck boards for air circulation. Once assembled, the frames are capped with a top moulding that hides the frame joinery and supports the hinged lid. The lid has a frame of its own, supporting multiple cedar slats that are bevelled to create a convex crown. Life jackets hang from a rail mounted to the inside of the lid.

| You will need: | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------|
| PART | MATERIAL | SIZE | QTY |
| Legs | cedar | 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 28" | 4 |
| Upper front/back rails | cedar | 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 45" | 2 |
| Lower front/back rails | cedar | 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 45" | 2 |
| Upper side rails | cedar | 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 45" | 2 |
| Lower side rails | cedar | 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" x 25" | 2 |
| Leg filler strips | cedar | 3/8" x 5/8" x 2" | 8 |
| Panel boards | cedar | 5/8" x 5 1/4" x 23 3/4" | 28 |
| | composite | | |
| Bottom slats | decking | 1" x 5 3/8" x 25 1/2" | 7 |
| Top face moulding | cedar | 5/8" x 1 7/8" x 47 3/4" | 2 |
| Top side moulding | cedar | 5/8" x 1 7/8" x 27 3/4" | 2 |
| Lid arches | cedar | 5/8" x 5" x 30" | 3 |
| Lid slats | cedar | 5/8" x 1 3/4" x 47 7/8" | 21 |
| Lid rails | cedar | 1 1/2" x 1 3/4" x 47 1/8" | 2 |
| Edge slats | cedar | 1/4" x 2" x 47 7/8" | 2 |
| Hanging rail | cedar | 1 3/8" x 1 3/8" x 47 1/8" | 1 |