

Building a Bench for your deck



You can build this sturdy bench (or a couple benches) in an afternoon. It makes a good edge bench to define the ends of a low deck, or a bench that you can use near a pool's edge or even against a railing. Its clean simple lines would make it fit in with most any decor.

You can build it out of any wood to match your deck, and depending on lumber sizes, you may have to modify the sizes slightly, but I give the dimensions here in typical pressure treated lumber sizes. The bench is given as an 8 foot long bench, but it can be shortened (or lengthened) to any length that suits you.

Below are the cutting dimensions:

	3	bench seat 8' 5/4x6
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	2	apron 7' 10 1/2" 1x4
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apron	2	15 3/4" 1x4
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frame	2	7' 9" 2x4
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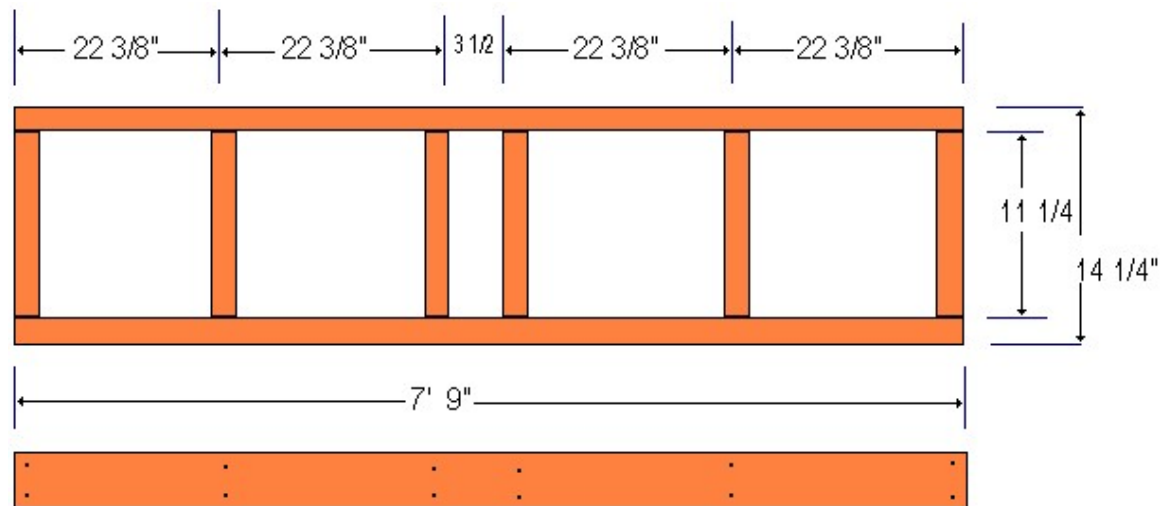
frame	6	11 1/4" 2x4
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leg	6	15" 4x4
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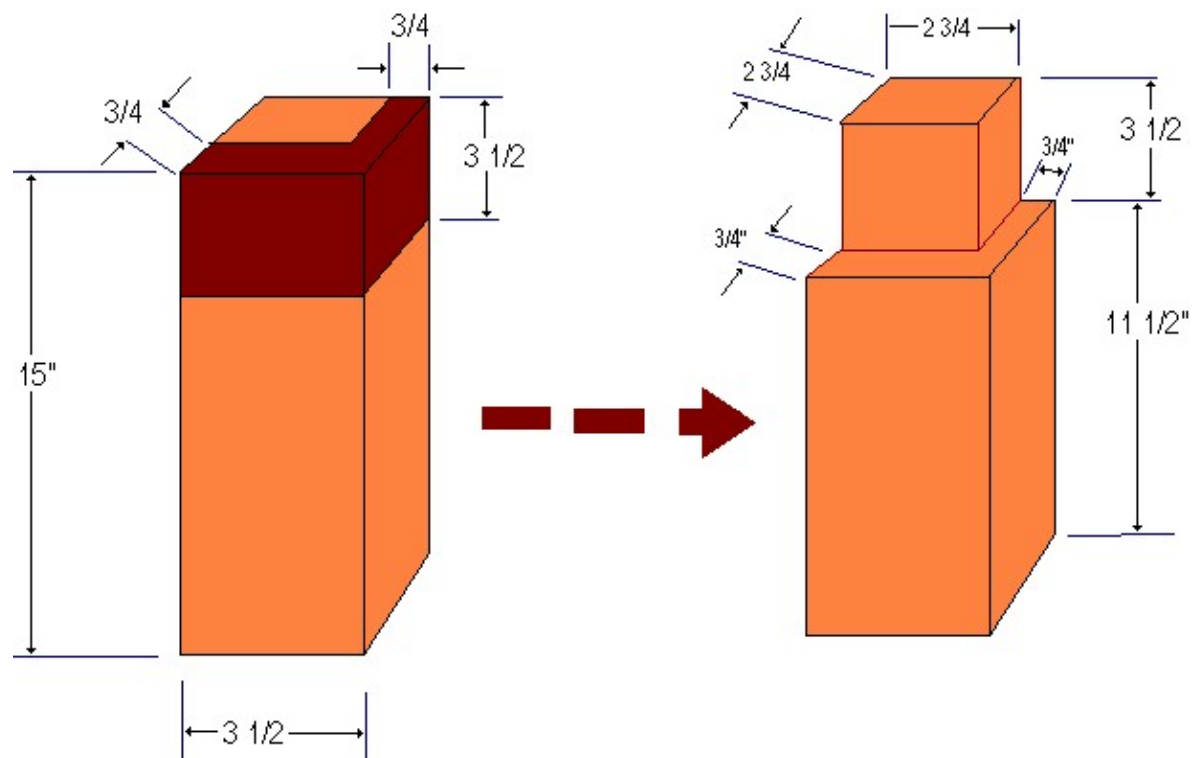
base	3	16 1/2" 2x6
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Start by building the 2x4 frame that will support the top and the legs. This is a simple box made of 2x4s. Cut 2 boards 7'9" each, and cut 6 boards 11 1/4 inches long. Use a 4x4 to gauge the distance between the two center boards since the center legs will fit between these two. Nail them all together using 16 penny galvanized twist or ring nails.

(see figure below)



Cut 6 legs 15 inches long from the 4x4s. The legs have shoulders cut on them. Cut the shoulders 3/4" wide and 3 1/2" deep. The 4 corner legs have a shoulder cut on two sides, the 2 center legs have a shoulder cut only on one side. (note that I only show the corner legs' shoulders below, for the center legs, only one shoulder is cut.)

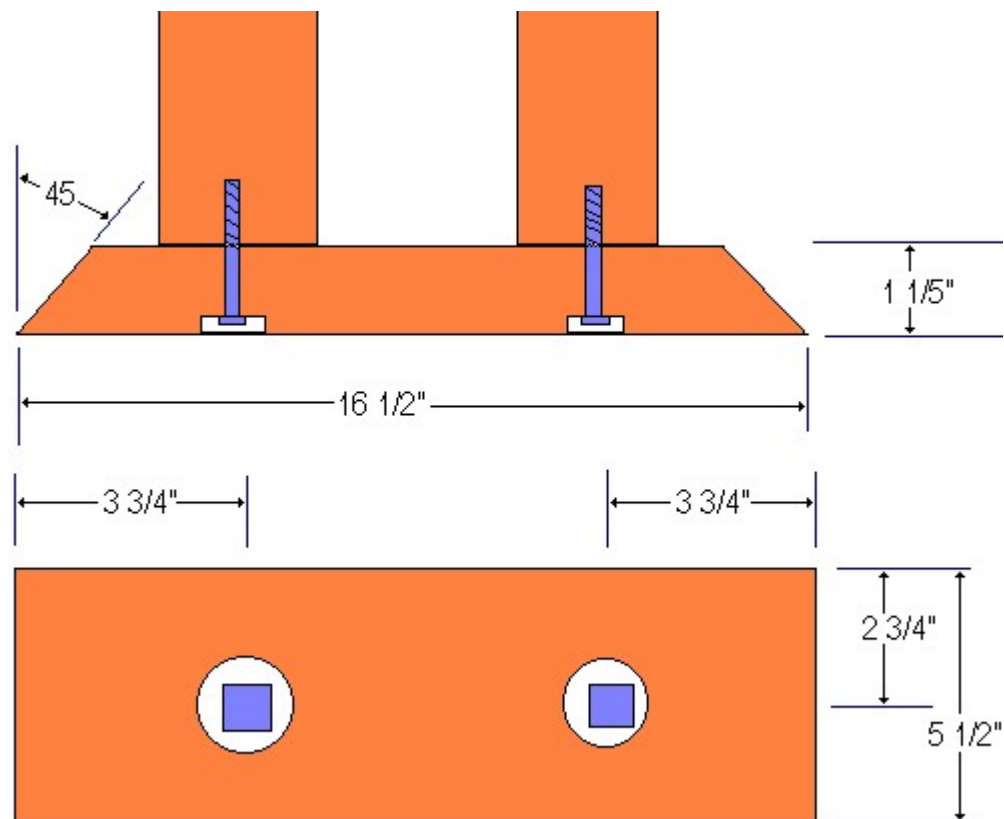


Mount the legs in the frame. Nail these in using 16 penny nails. Nail the corner legs to the frame from two sides, and nail the 2 center legs in from three sides.

Cut the 3 leg bases from the 2x6. Each base should be 16 1/2 inches long. Cut the ends at a 45 degree angle.

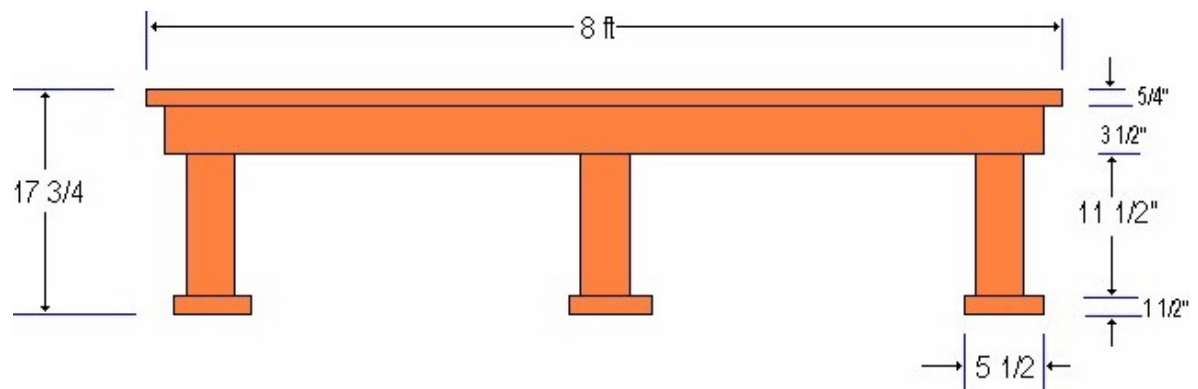
Mount the bases to the legs. First drill a hole 1 inch in diameter, 1/2 inch deep. Then drill a 3/8 inch hole through the base in the center of the 1 inch hole. Set the base on the legs, and center the base on the legs, and mark the location of the hole in leg. Remove the base and drill a 1/4 inch hole in the leg for the bolt.

Attach the bases to the legs with 3 inch long, 3/8" lag bolts. One bolt per leg is sufficient.



Before you mount the seat boards, your bench can have a more finished appearance if you use a router to route a corner bead all the way around each board. If you don't have a router, then use a block of wood with sand paper wrapped around it to round over the edges.

Flip the base over upright, and attach the 3 seat boards of 8' long 5/4 boards. (You can use 2x6s for the seat top, these should be routed to reduce the appearance of their thickness). Attach the seat boards to the 2x4 frame underneath using 2 inch screws or 12 penny galvanized ring nails.



Now, flip the bench over upside down again, and attach the 1x4 apron boards to the 2x4 frame all the way around. Miter the ends by cutting them at a 45 degree angle. I gave you the sizes, in the cutting list above, but it helps to make these cuts after measuring the actual dimensions, to assure a nice clean fit. Attach the apron boards using 8 penny galvanized finish nails.

Finish the benches in the same manner as the deck, with clear wood finish, or stain, etc.

Attach the bench to your deck by screwing the base sections to the deck boards through the angled edges of the base. Predrill the holes in the base sections at a 45 degree angle to the deck (perpendicular to the angle part of the base).

Enjoy...

Shopping List

All Pressure treated lumber (or your choice)

1. 3 8ft 5/4x6"
2. 3 8ft 1x4
3. 4 8ft 2x4
4. 1 8ft 2x6
5. 1 8ft 4x4
6. 6 3in 3/8" lag bolts, and flat washers (galvanized)
7. 16 penny galvanized ring (PTL) nails
8. 12 penny galvanized ring nails
9. 8 penny galvanized finish nails