

How to Build Reclaimed Wood Shelves



Step 1: Choose Lumber and Sketch a Design

To find wood, Amy goes to a specialty lumberyard dealing in antique lumber. She settles on reclaimed timber with the distinctive grain that marks old-growth wood.

Measure the space and sketch out a design for the project. Unlike most shelving units, this one isn't held together by glue or nails. Instead, a few large pieces of wood fit together with notches, like children's building logs. Two pieces of notched wood will attach to the wall, with the shelves fitting into the notches. Two more vertical supports will fit on the outside of the shelves. The big, sturdy beams from the lumberyard are perfect for this sort of project.



Step 2: Plane the Wood

The rustic look of this salvaged lumber can be a little too rough-hewn for shelves. To create flat, smooth sides, measure and cut the lumber for the project, then run the pieces through a planer. Lay out the shelves side by side to make sure they are the same thickness. Assuring like thickness is especially important because the notches on the shelves and legs will need to match exactly.



Step 3: Mark and Cut the Notches

Carefully measure the thickness of the shelves. Line up the four legs side by side and mark the position of the shelves on the legs. Cut a wooden template to match the shelf

thickness; use this template to mark the notches in the four legs.

Cut the notches in the legs using a circular saw. Make several cuts inside the marked area, then use a chisel to remove the chips of wood.



Step 4: Add Shelves and Mount the Unit

Locate and mark the studs where the supports will attach to the wall and measure the distance between the studs. Use this measurement to mark the location for the notches on the shelves; the center points of the notches should be the same distance apart as the wall studs. Cut the notches in the shelves using the method above.

Mount two of the legs on the wall by driving screws through the notches and into the wall studs. Make sure the legs are plumb and the notches line up perfectly before attaching them to the wall.

Line up the notches on the shelves with the notches on the legs and force the shelves into place. It may be necessary to tap the shelves with a rubber mallet to mount them properly. Once the shelves are in place, fit the notches in the other two legs over the notches in the shelves.

For a finished look, sand the piece and rub it with tung oil.

