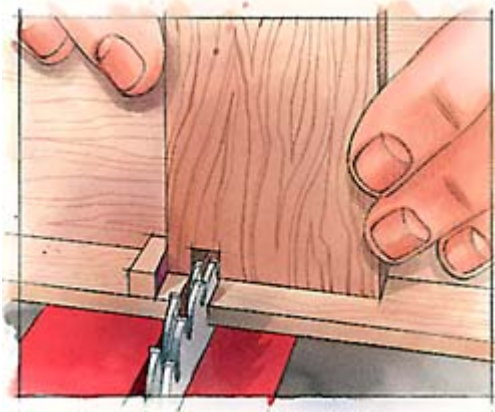


Making Box Joints

Before the advent of cardboard boxes, manufacturers joined the sides of thin wooden boxes with these joints because they were strong and fast to make. Today, box joints have taken on practical and decorative roles in projects ranging from jewellery cases to hope chests. After you build the jig featured in the **Box-Joint Jig Project**, follow these steps and see firsthand how easily you can master this joinery method.

1. Before you cut the actual box joints, keep in mind that the width of your box sides must be an increment of the finger width. Otherwise, you'll wind up with less-than-pleasing partial fingers at the bottom of your box. So, in the example of 1/4"-thick stock discussed here and in the jig-building article, the width of the work pieces must be an increment of 1/4" (such as 5", 5 1/4", 5 1/2", etc.).

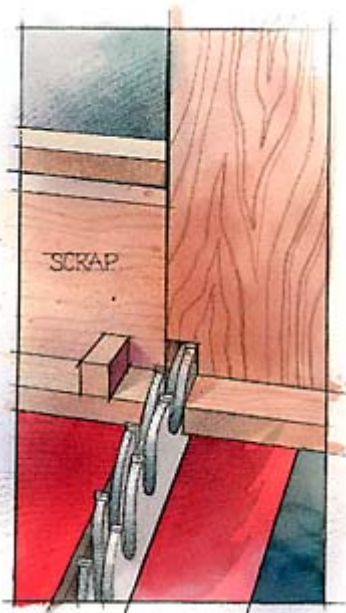


2. Mark the front, back, and side pieces of your box. Also, mark the top edge on each of these pieces.

For each box you make, you cut the sides consecutively, and the front and back consecutively. It doesn't matter which pair you do first, so we'll start with the sides.

For all of the following cuts, hold the top edge of the work piece toward the jig pin for the first cut. Now, put hand pressure on the jig to hold

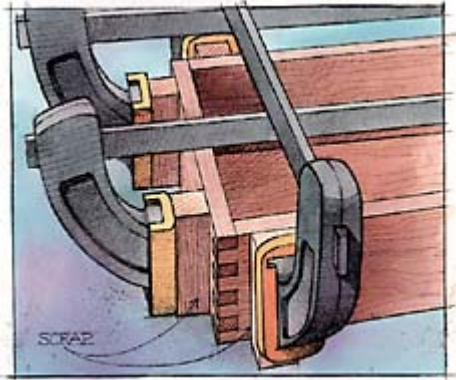
its mitre-gauge bar firmly against the right side of the table saw channel. Make the first cut as shown *above*. Place the just-cut notch over the jig pin and repeat to cut fingers along the full width of the work piece. Cut the other sidepiece in the same fashion.



3. Before you cut the front and back, cut one notch into a scrap piece, just as you cut the first notch into the sidepiece earlier. Position this notch over the pin as shown *at left*, and butt the top edge of the front piece against the scrap before making a cut.

Make the remaining cuts in the front piece by removing the scrap, placing the notch over the pin, and proceeding as described earlier. Cut the back piece just as you cut the front.

Making Box Joints



4. To join your box pieces, apply glue to all of the mating surfaces with a small brush. Tap the joints together with a rubber mallet if necessary. Clamp the box together as shown *above*. (You may need to position a clamp diagonally to square the box.)

Note that we used scrap pieces on each side of the corners to evenly distribute the clamping pressure along the joint. Wider boxes may require additional clamps.

After the glue dries, sand the fingers flush with the sides, front, and back. Be careful not to round over the corners.