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Free Woodworking Plans

Whenever possible I locate free plans on the internet, and occasionally I draw some up that hopefully will be beneficial to you. On the following four pages you will find a list of both types of free plans.

We all would like to see more free plans available to us at a click of the mouse. There are many unique [plans available on the internet](#).

There are links to thousands of plans on this Woodworking site. More plans will be added on a regular basis. If you can't locate a plan at this time, please take advantage of this Woodworking.About.com's [Forum](#). Someone may see your posted question, and know exactly where you can find what your looking for, or perhaps you can help out another fellow woodworker, by answering a question they may have.

Free Plans From the Internet A-C

[Aldo Leopold Bench](#)

Wild Ones has a free bench plan that is made from 2" x 6", 2" x 8", and 2" x 10" material.

[Aquarium Table](#) new

An article that describes how to make a table that can support a 3' long fish tank. The table also includes a shelf underneath. Material list measurements are in millimeters.

[Artist's Easel](#)

Benjamin Grosser shows how to build a heavy duty easel with free drawings and instructions.

[Baby Changing Table](#)

Amateur Woodworker has instructions, and a

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material list for building a Baby Changing Table,
that can also be used as a chest of drawers.

Ball and Bat Rack

HouseNet has a full-sized building diagram and
instructions for a Ball and Bat Rack that is
designed for two bats and three balls.

Barrister Bookcases

Popular Woodworking magazine offers a free
download construction drawing in PDF format
of Barrister Bookcases.

Baseball Cap Rack

Minwax® has this page that has free assembly
diagrams, procedure information, tips, plus a
tools, and materials list in order to make a
Baseball Cap Rack.

Bathroom Vanity

Popular Mechanics has a free project plan,
materials list, plus instructions for a bathroom
vanity that starts on this page.

Bedroom Organizer

Minwax® has this page that has free assembly
diagrams, procedure information, tips, plus a
tools, and materials list in order to make a
Bedroom Organizer.

Bedside Table

Minwax® has this page that has free assembly
diagrams, procedure information, tips, plus a
tools, and materials list in order to make a
Bedside Table.

Bench

California Redwood Association has free plans
and step-by-step instructions for building a
Mendocino Bench.

Birdhouse 1 new

L & R Designs offers a free PDF download plan
to build a traditional 9 1/2" high x 8 1/2" wide x
10" deep birdhouse. All built from 1" x 6"
material.

Birdhouse 2

Johnathon Press Home and Workshop Online has
a free plan and instructions for a family project
for a birdhouse that kids could make.

The Bird Ornament Patterns

WoodCraft Projects has free full scale patterns of
various bird ornaments for a weekend wood/craft
hobbyist. Painting instructions are included.

Blanket Chest 1

August Home Publishing Co. has free plans and
descriptions to build a Country Classic Blanket



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Chest.

Blanket Chest 2

Popular Mechanics has a free project plan, materials list, plus instructions for a blanket chest that starts on this page.

Bluebird House Plans

Here's an article that describes how to build a bluebird house, complete with step by step instructions.

Booklet With Weekend Projects

Minwax® will send you a free Easy Weekend Projects booklet just by simply filling out a request form.

Book/Magazine Stand

Popular Woodworking Magazine offers free instructions, a material list, and a downloadable construction drawing for building a tall book/magazine stand.

Bread Box

Amateur Woodworker offers a free plan and instructions for building a Bread Box. Tools required are a drill, sander, jigsaw, and router.

Build An Office Desk

Popular Mechanics has a free project plan, materials list, plus instructions for a office desk that starts on this page.

Building An Inexpensive Wine Rack

 from About.com

Your About Wine Guide Lisa Shea has very nice colored photos and free instructions for building a wine rack with plywood and PVC pipe.

Bungalow Mailbox

Popular Woodworking magazine offers a free download construction drawing in PDF format of a Bungalow Mailbox.

Byrdcliffe Cabinet

Popular Woodworking magazine offers a free download construction drawing in PDF format of a Byrdcliffe Cabinet.

A Cabinetmaker's Toolchest

Ralph Brendler offers his free basic plans and a description of a toolchest.

CD Carousel new

Freeplans.com™ offers a free detailed plan and instructions for building a CD Carousel that looks like it could hold somewhere around 96 CDs.

CD Holder

Minwax® has this page that has free assembly diagrams, procedure information, tips, plus a tools, and materials list in order to make a CD Holder.

Chattahoochee Chair

Wolmanized® offers this page with material list, and detailed plan.

Classic Winter Sled

Drawings, instructions, material and hardware lists are included on this page to build a Classic Winter Sled that is just under four feet long, and it can be built with common tools.

Coffee Table

Popular Mechanics offers free instructions and photos for building a knock down Coffee Table that looks similar to a trestle table.

Computer Desk

Instructions and a cutting diagram for making a Computer Desk or Study Carrel from a single sheet of plywood.

Computer Desk, and More

Black & Decker has free project instructions, and detailed plans on how-to build an Adirondack Chair, Computer Desk, Indoor Firewood Rack, and an Outdoor Wood Organizer.

Corner Cabinet

Jeff Greef Woodworking supplies detailed instructions and photos for building a small wall mounted Corner Cabinet.

Corner Cupboard

Popular Mechanics offers detailed two part plans, with details on how-to do the case construction, doors, and trim, plus a materials list.

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Free Plans From The Internet D-P

Continue on to a list of more free plans from the internet.

Free Plans From The Internet Q-Z

Continue on to a list of more free plans from the internet.

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Amateur Woodworker

Baby Changing Table

Baby changing tables are a wonderful - yet expensive - addition to any nursery. With that in mind we set about building a baby changing table that would provide a strong combination of practicality and price. The resulting table has subsequently been "battle-tested" for the past month and has stood up to the demands of both mother and



Even better, when your baby (finally) outgrows the need for diapers, the changing table can be used as a children's chest of drawers. Note that the baby changing table does not have a rail around the top. Instead, it is designed to accommodate one of the standard curved foam changing pads.

Construction

Tools required: router, drill, sander

Wood required: pine and plywood

Description	Qty	Width	Thickness	Length
Front frame				
Small verticals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	32"
Long verticals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	35 1/2"
Top/Middle long horizontals	3	2 1/4"	3/4"	30 1/2"
Base plank	1	2 1/4"	3/4"	47"

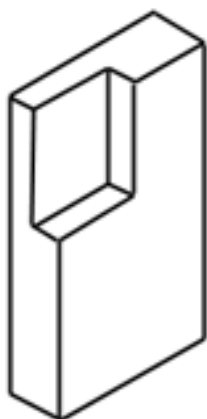
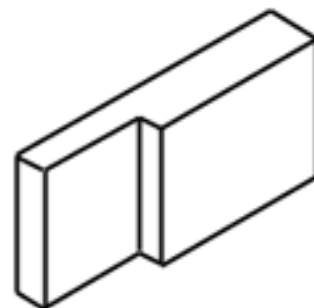
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Top/Middle short horizontals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	14"
Rear Frame				
Small verticals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	32"
Long verticals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	35 1/2"
Top long horizontals	1	2 1/4"	3/4"	30 1/2"
Base plank	1	2 1/4"	3/4"	47"
Top short horizontal	1	2 1/4"	3/4"	14"
Side panel (small)				
Verticals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	32"
Top/bottom	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	16 1/2"
Side panel (large)				
Verticals	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	35 1/2"
Top/bottom	2	2 1/4"	3/4"	16 1/2"
Middle panel (plywood)				
	1	16 1/2"	1/2"	4"
Tops				
Large (plywood)	1	19 1/2"	1/2"	34 1/4"
Small (plywood)	1	19 1/2"	1/2"	18 1/2"
Edging (large top)	1	3/4"	1/8"	55"
Edging (small top)	1	3/4"	1/8"	60"
Molding (large top)	1	3/4"	3/4"	55"
Molding (small top)	1	3/4"	3/4"	60"
Base board				
Front	1	3"	3/4"	51"
Side	2	3"	3/4"	19"
Large drawers				
Sides	6	5 1/2"	3/4"	16 1/2"
Inner Front/back	6	5 1/2"	3/4"	26"
Front	3	9"	3/4"	30 1/2"
Knobs	6			

Narrow drawers				
Sides	4	10"	3/4"	16 1/2"
Inner Front/back	4	10"	3/4"	9 3/4"
Front	2	14"	3/4"	16 1/2"
Knobs	2			
Back panels				
Large (hardboard/plywood)	1	32"	1/8"	32"
Small (hardboard/plywood)	1	16"	1/8"	35 1/2"

1. Prepare front frame pieces (left side)

Firstly, cut lap joints that are 1 1/2" in from each end into the two top pieces (long and short), the middle drawer pieces (two long, one short) and the base plank. Next, cut a slot out of the base plank 13" from the right and 29 1/2" from the left (hence, 4 1/2" wide). Note that when deciding which end is the right and left of this plank, lie the plank flat on the ground with the cut out lap joint part facing upwards (see diagram).



- 29 3/4" to top

Now that all of the horizontal pieces are prepared, we need to prepare the vertical planks. Firstly, take one of the two shorter vertical pieces and nominate it as the left vertical. Cut out grooves that are 3/8" deep and 1 1/2" in (matching the cut on the horizontal pieces) at the following positions from the bottom:

- Bottom to 2 1/4" high
- 10 3/4" to 13"
- 20 1/2" to 22 3/4"

Next, take the second small vertical and nominate it as the middle-right vertical. Make a mirror image of the above grooves in this piece, so that the horizontal planks will slot in. The one difference is that the base to 2 1/4" high cut should be made as a lap joint (i.e. all the way across the wood, rather than just 1 1/2" in) in order to slot into the middle groove cut out of the base plank.

2. Prepare front frame pieces (left side)

Now take one of the two longer vertical planks and nominate it as the right vertical. Cut out grooves that are $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep and $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in (matching the cut on the horizontal pieces) at the following positions from the bottom:

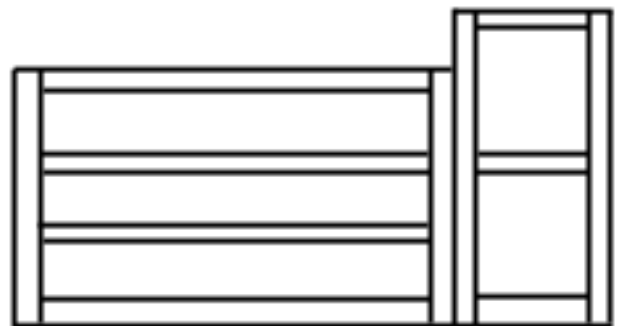
- Bottom to $2\frac{1}{4}$ " high
- $17\frac{1}{2}$ " to $19\frac{3}{4}$ "
- $33\frac{1}{4}$ " to top

Next, take the second long vertical and nominate it as the middle-left vertical. Make a mirror image of the above grooves in this piece, so that the horizontal planks will slot in. The one difference is that the base-to- $2\frac{1}{4}$ " high cut should be made as a lap joint (i.e. all the way across the wood, rather than just $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in) in order to slot into the middle groove cut out of the base plank.

Finally, take the middle-right and taller middle-left planks and glue them together, side by side. To make this joint use either dowel joints or biscuits. The result should be a double width piece that has one side taller than the other. Not that when looking at this piece from the front, it should look like one solid piece - the grooves should be in the back, not the front.

3. Glue front frame together

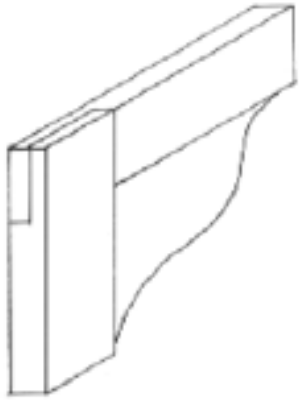
Once the middle, double plank has dried, it is time to connect the rest of the front together. Glue and screw the pieces together, ensuring that the finished frame is square. To help build a solid frame, clamp overnight to ensure a strong bond.



4. Prepare back frame

The back frame is relatively simple to construct as it consists only of an outer frame. Repeat step 2, but omit the horizontal planks that define the drawer spaces (but include the inner-left and inner-right vertical planks that are glued together as on the front). One prepared, glue the pieces together (as with the front). Again, ensure that the frame is square.

5. Build left (small) side panel



Take the two vertical side pieces and cut lap joints into them, and matching lap joints in the two small horizontal pieces. By so doing, the four pieces should fit together into a rectangular frame (see diagram). Next, rout out a groove on the inner, back edge of all four pieces. This groove should cut in 1/2" and be 1/2" deep. By making this groove all the way around the inside edge, the plywood sheet that forms the side panel can rest in place. Once routed, glue and screw the four side planks together - making sure the joints are square - and then glue the plywood panel into place

in the center (which will help strengthen the unit).

6. Build right (larger) side frame

Repeat step 5 for the right hand panel. Remember that this panel is larger due to the fact that the right side of the front frame is also taller.

7. Build main frame

Now that the two sides, front and back have been built, it is time to put them together. Sandwich the left hand side panel between the front and back panels and screw the three pieces together by driving screws through the front frame into the side as well as from the back frame into the side panel. Then attach the right hand panel to complete the frame. Make sure that the completed frame is square.

8. Add middle panel

Next, add the small middle panel, gluing and screwing it into place. This panel should fill the small void at the point where the front/back steps up from the lower height to the taller level. At this time you should also add a small strengthening bar to the bottom middle of the frame, running from front to back. To add it, glue and screw into place from the front and back.

9. Add tops

The final strengthening trick is adding to table tops. First add the larger, lower top. This should overhang the front and left hand side by 1", over-hanging the back by 1/2". To attach this top, glue and nail - or screw - down into the frame.

Add the smaller top to the higher part of the table next. Again, the overhang should be 1" to the front and both sides.

10. Add edging strip and molding to top

Add the edging strip to front and sides of both tops. Use glue and small finishing nails to hold the strip into place against the plywood edge of the table top. Next, add the small molding to the meeting point between the top and the main frame, thus making the two look more like one unit.

11. Make base panel and attach to base.



To finish off the main unit we need to add a base board that will serve as feet. This is one solid plank that runs the entire length of the unit. Route a curve out of the top side to round it off (see diagram). Add to front and sides - using a mitered cut at each end - using screws and glue. The board should overlap 1" with the frame, providing adequate bonding space.

12. Make drawers

Take the two side pieces, the back and the inner front piece. Cut a groove in each one that is 1/4" from the bottom of each piece and is 1/4" wide. This groove will allow the base to slot into the drawer frame. Once you have cut the groove, glue and screw the sides to the back piece, slot the base into the groove and then glue and screw the inner front board. Make sure that the unit is square. The result is a box without a lid.

Attach a 16" drawer runner mechanism to each side of the drawer, and to the corresponding "hole" in the main unit of the chest. Ensure that all drawer mechanisms are attached at the same height, so that the drawers are interchangeable in the unit. To attach the runners to the main frame, you may need to add a strip of wood to the rear verticals.

Finally, you need to add the front of the drawer to the box unit. However, before doing this, you need to shape the front of the drawer. The edge of this should be rounded using the same router bit as you used for the edging around the bottom of the main unit. Once you have routed all four sides of the drawer front, attach it to the drawer unit by gluing and screwing from the inside of the drawer outwards.

13. Finishing

Finally, nail the two back panel pieces on to the back of the unit and sand the entire unit thoroughly and paint.

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Joints

This section describes in detail all of the joints used in current and past projects. As projects require new methods of joining wood, this section will be expanded. If anyone has any suggestions for this section, please feel free to [email](#) them in. Any suitable contributions will be added to this section, with a credit to the original author.

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Smooth Transition



The Dryerbox is a small idea, but a good one. Very good, in fact. It's made of 22-gauge aluminized steel, drawn deep into a pan shape. It's sized to fit between wall studs, and it provides a nice clean cavity that receives the exhaust from a dryer. The device makes for a neater installation, a smoother transition from the hose to the back of the dryer, and it allows the dryer to be positioned without fear of kinking the exhaust hose. It's about time somebody came up with a piece of hardware to solve all these problems.

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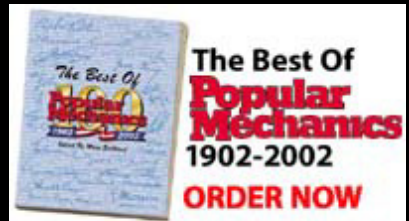
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Monthly Reader Q & A Column

BY NORMAN BECKER, P.E.

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Questions About Mold

I have heard many reports of mold in houses in the Houston area. What is mold and how can I prevent it from occurring in my house?

YOUNG NGUYEN
ADDRESS WITHHELD

Mold is the common name for simple plants or fungi that are usually microscopically small. There are many varieties--some estimates put the number at a minimum of 40,000. These plants thrive on cotton, wool, paper, leather and wood, and they will grow anywhere in the home where there is moisture. The moisture may be in the material itself or in the form of airborne vapor. A typical mold is the one found in the grouted tile joints of shower walls.

Most mold spores found in homes do not present a serious health problem. However, people who have mold allergies could experience symptoms such as nasal stuffiness, eye irritation and difficulty breathing.

In the mold-related incidents you are referring to, severe moisture problems in a number of houses led to a comparatively



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Mold can grow anywhere in a house--in the attic, basement and crawlspaces, on interior and exterior surfaces, and in wall cavities. The best method to combat it is to keep surfaces and interior spaces dry. ILLUSTRATION BY GEORGE RETSECK

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rare mold condition--that is, a concentration of the mold species called Stachybotrys chartarum. The family living in one home suffered a number of severe health-related problems.

There isn't room here to present a complete discussion of mold, but the drawing above gives an overview of the parts of your house that require careful inspection and maintenance. Pay particular attention to the roof and to chimney flashing to be sure that neither is admitting water. Likewise, leaks around doors and windows can admit water as can cracks in a basement floor. Condensation on windows, leaking plumbing and moisture vapor from a crawlspace are other sources that can cause mold to form. The best way to control mold is to keep building surfaces and cavities as dry as possible.

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Smoke Alarm Signal

My husband and I were awakened recently when all our hard-wired smoke detectors went off at once. We checked everything and found no problem. Do you have any idea what causes this?

AMANDA COLE
VIA INTERNET

A smoke alarm can be triggered by a buildup of dust, dirt or an insect building a nest inside it. To prevent this, gently vacuum a smoke alarm periodically, and change its battery once a year. When smoke alarms are hard-wired and one unit is activated, all the others will be activated. The fact that the alarms went off at the same time indicates that they are working properly.

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REVIEW: Appliance Repair Help

The most important tool is information, and when it comes to appliance repair, that may mean getting a service manual, such as the one shown here. Your best one-stop source for manuals, parts and information is RepairClinic.com. It carries a wide selection of current appliance repair manuals for General Electric and Whirlpool products, as well as some for Sears Kenmore. It's also

the best full-service appliance part source we know of. The company says that on any given day it has 90 percent of the parts requested, with 600,000 parts available through online ordering. And it has industry contacts to find stuff that is out-of-date. Simply put, before you give up, contact this company. Finally, if you need help with the repair itself, the company's technicians offer advice via e-mail. Contact RepairClinic.com, 47440 Michigan Ave., Suite 100, Canton, MI 48188; 800-269-2609. Or go to the company's Web site: www.repairclinic.com.--
Roy Berendsohn

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Horizontal Water Heater

Can the average upright water heater be installed horizontally as a spacesaving measure?

BILL AKERMAN

VIA INTERNET

No. An electric water heater is designed for upright installation. Even shipping one in a horizontal position can damage it. The heater's anode and the water inlet pipe are not supported. Placing the water heater horizontally can cause the pipe or the anode to flex against the tank's vitreous glass lining, damaging it.

Also, a horizontal installation would not be energy efficient. In an upright installation, the water inlet pipe terminates near the bottom of the tank. As the water is heated, it rises to the top of the tank where it is drawn off at the hot-water outlet. A horizontal installation would put the inlet and the outlet in the same plane and cause cold and hot water to be mixed.

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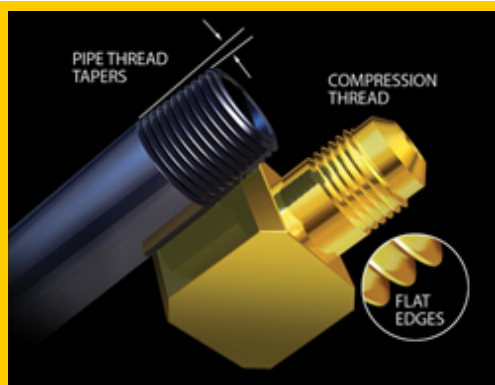
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Do You Have A Home-Maintenance Or Repair Problem?

Just ask Norman about it. Send your questions to Homeowners Clinic, POPULAR MECHANICS, 810 Seventh Ave., New York, NY 10019. While letters cannot be answered individually, problems of general interest will be discussed in the column.



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SERVICE TIP: MAINTENANCE

Gas Appliance Safety

Illustration by George Retseck

When you bring a new gas dryer or range home, or move a gas appliance to a new location, there are several things to be aware of so that the installation is troublefree and safe. First, the most important piece of advice is a general one, and that is to make the connection from the appliance to the gas supply using some form of flexible connector. This will allow movement of the appliance without the risk of breaking the seal on gastight connections, an obvious fire hazard.

Second, if you've never worked with pipe before, have a plumber or an appliance technician do the installation to be sure that it is gastight. If you have experience working with pipe, there are still several things to be mindful of :

1. When joining threaded fittings, be sure to make connections with compatible threads. Iron pipe thread is wedge-shaped and tapered. It will not make a gastight connection when joined to a flare-compression thread. For example, to make the connection to a dryer's black iron pipe nipple, you have to use a fitting that has a female iron pipe thread on one end and a compression thread on the other.
2. When working on black iron pipe, use

Teflon tape or pipe thread sealant that is certified for gas fittings. On flare-compression fittings, use thread sealant only. Be sure the sealant is rated for natural gas or propane, or both. Tape for working with gas fittings is yellow and is thicker than the white tape used for sealing water plumbing. Both the pipe thread sealant and the tape are clearly labeled as approved for gas connections.

3. In many cases, the entire job can be simplified with a dryer or range connection kit. This consists of a flexible connector, a variety of fittings, Teflon tape, leak-test solution, and instructions. These kits cost \$20 to \$25.

4. If you find that an existing gas appliance (in most cases, a range) is joined to the house's gas supply with a connector made from bare corrugated brass tubing, be sure to replace it. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has issued a warning that this kind of connector has tubing that separates from its fittings. Visit the CPSC Web site for more information at www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/gasconn.html.

Finally, be sure not to overtighten flare-compression fittings. A snug fit is all that is required to provide a gastight seal. When you're done, leak test all connections using a solution of dish detergent and water, or use ready-made leak-test solution.--*R.B.*

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Best Of The Builders' Show

19 new tools and building materials.

BY ROY BERENDSOHN

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There's nothing like the International Builders' Show. We attended the event recently in Las Vegas and looked over the offerings of 1300 manufacturers who brought 300 separate product categories to show. They spread it all out over 1.2 million sq. ft. of floor space. Although luxury products abound--from state-of-the-art stainless steel appliances to luxury spas--it's still at its heart a show for people who drive a pickup to an open space and build a place to live. That's what it's all about--tools, sawdust, concrete, fixtures, building wire, pipe and tubing. And sweat. Here's the best stuff from the show.

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This is Part 1 in a two-part series on the five things to consider when buying sandpaper for your woodworking and finishing projects. This part covers types of abrasives used in sandpaper and grit sizes. Part 2 addresses binders, backing material, and optional adherence materials.

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[How to Choose the Right Sandpaper - Part 2](#)

This is Part 2 in a two-part series on the five things to consider when buying sandpaper for your woodworking and finishing projects. This part covers binders, backing material, and optional adherence materials. Part 1 addresses types of abrasives used in sandpaper and grit sizes.

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[How to Prepare Lumber for Your Woodworking Projects](#)

Your guide takes you through the eight steps on how to prepare lumber for your next woodworking project. Whether you buy lumber rough or surfaced from the mill, the lumber yard, a home center, or a specialty wood store you have to prepare the lumber for use.

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[Planning for Wood Expansion and Contraction](#)

Wood expands and shrinks. Your guide discusses why wood moves, provides a formula for calculating the movement, and points out where wood movement can be an important consideration in your project design.

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[A Hand Tools List for the Beginner](#)

Every woodworker needs hand tools. Here's a list of tools for the

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woodworker just starting out. This list is by no means exhaustive - its only meant to be a guide. A future article will include an extended list for the more experienced woodworker.

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[The Types of Files and Rasps Used in Woodworking](#)

Your guide discusses the basic types of files and rasps used in woodworking. The difference between files and rasps is explained. Then the purpose of each type of file and rasp is discussed.

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In The Spotlight

[An Inlay Design for Concrete Patio Floors](#)

Using concrete as a surface for patios is practical -- too practical, for some. To spice up bare concrete with home accents, incorporate inlay designs. This article details many concrete patio designs, including the planning required to implement such designs successfully for your new patio or landing.

[Thursday September 18, 2003](#) #

Wildflower Identification: Name That Wildflower!

Landscaping enthusiasts and nature-lovers often

take
great
pride
in
being
able
to
identify
plants
on



and around their landscapes. Here's your chance to test your knowledge! See if you know the wildflower pictured on your right. To verify that you've arrived at the correct answer, please read my follow-up in the [Landscaping Discussion Forum](#), where I've revealed the wildflower's name. This entry is the 4th in a series of wildflower identifications.

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Hint: The photo to your right has been used elsewhere on this Web site, in a story on poison ivy.

[Thursday September 18, 2003 #](#)

Mulch to Consider

Mulch is mulch, isn't it? It's just something to spread around beneath plants, to suppress weeds, right? Wrong. There's much to consider when choosing between mulches for your landscaping and gardening needs. Learn about some of those considerations here.

[Wednesday September 17, 2003 #](#)

Garden Railroading: Mobile Landscape Design

"Garden railroading is the art of combining a model railroad and a beautiful garden to create a railway-like atmosphere," says the Garden Railways Magazine Web site. Read the rest of their [Brief Overview of Garden Railways](#) to find out what it is that makes this fast-growing landscaping technique so popular.

[Wednesday September 17, 2003 #](#)

Top 10 Shrubs and Vines for Fall Foliage

Trees don't hold a monopoly over providing attractive fall foliage. Shrubs and vines can be used to complement the fall foliage produced by the trees in your landscaping. Consider the choices presented here.

[Tuesday September 16, 2003 #](#)

Landscape Design Ideas: Building Berms

Landscaping berms are mounds of dirt that are often erected to add visual interest to the landscape. This [article on building berms](#) from the Home and Garden Television Web site offers ideas on incorporating

Did You Know?

Edgar Allan Poe, master of the macabre, was instrumental in the development both of the detective story and science fiction. But this eclectic genius also penned some compelling landscape design ideas

[Edgar Allan Poe and Landscape Design](#)

berms into a Japanese-garden landscape design.

[Tuesday September 16, 2003](#) #

[Sumac Trees for Fall Foliage](#)

Sumac trees are sometimes despised as being little better than weeds. But fall foliage lovers know better! Sumac trees put on one of the landscape's showiest fall foliage displays. And as if its foliage weren't colorful enough in fall, it also bears an attractive red seed tuft throughout the autumn season. Eighth in a series of articles on fall foliage trees, all of which can be accessed from the [fall foliage index](#). In addition to their fall display, the sumacs have an interesting story to tell....

[Monday September 15, 2003](#) #

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Online Resources for Landscape Design Ideas

Are you looking for ideas to design that "master plan" for your landscape? This [landscape design link](#) provides online resources that will allow you to explore everything from conducting soil tests to planting according to plant hardiness zones.

[Monday September 15, 2003](#) #

[Hurricane Preparedness: Readyng the Yard for Isabel](#)

Hurricanes can bring costly damage to yards and homes. As we watch Isabel's progress, let's look at a checklist of 10 reminders for hurricane preparedness for the yard. The items on this hurricane preparedness checklist run the gamut in terms of ease of implementation. Most are just reminders to take simple precautions. But one involves a landscaping project of some difficulty for do-it-yourselfers. And another may require you to enlist the services of professionals.

[Sunday September 14, 2003](#) #

Build a Bat House for Mosquito Control

In this [Plant Man column](#) Steve Jones talks about attracting wildlife to the landscape. Not surprisingly, he touches on installing birdhouses. You may be a bit surprised to hear him speak of *butterfly houses*. But here's what may really catch you off guard: Steve talks about installing houses for *bats* to keep the mosquito population under control.

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Landscape Design Ideas - Garden Photos

Guide picks

Pictures and explanations of garden and landscape design ideas. Let these free ideas from landscapers inspire your new garden or landscape design. Landscaping can increase the real estate value of your property by 15%. Why not mine this free source for pictures and information to work home improvement wonders in your backyard?

[Landscaping Pictures: A Landscape Design Photo Gallery](#)

Need some ideas for your landscaping? Browse through the pictures in this landscape design photo gallery. Analyses accompany the images. Some of the landscape design samples covered are arbors, fences, focal points, hillside landscaping, and making use of the concept of "line" to guide the viewer's eye to where you want it to go.

[Free Landscape Design Plan That is Deer-Proof, Tick-Proof](#)

Free landscaping plan to promote beauty and health on your borders! Deer are garden pests, but deer ticks are worse than pests -- they're downright dangerous. To minimize infestation of these Lyme disease-bearers, follow a deer-resistant border design. This free landscape design plan is supplemented by pictures and descriptions of plants

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suitable for a deer-proof border.

[Landscape Design Ideas for Selling Your Property](#)

When you're designing a landscape that will be going on the real estate market, you're designing for someone else's tastes -- the buyer's -- not your own. You need ideas about what buyers are currently looking for. You'll get those design ideas in this article, plus advice on exploiting other sources for design ideas.

[Landscape Design Theory for Beginners](#)

Outdoor aesthetics 101. A practical introduction to the principles of landscape design architecture, as well as the basic elements upon which they are grounded. Starting point for backyard makeovers. Unity (harmony), colors, focalization, perspectives, textures, forms, massing, repetitions, balance, symmetry.

[History of Landscape Design: Two Schools of Thought](#)

Learn about the historical development of the two major schools of landscape design: formal and informal. Do it yourselfers planning major outside home improvement projects will profit from clarifying their own stance on this debate.

[What is Landscape Design?](#)

Definition of landscape design for the do it yourselfer. Hardscape and softscape themes discussed, both from practical and aesthetic standpoints. Garden types, lawn space and principles of design outlined. Practical considerations covered include hiring arborists and tailoring a landscape for the real estate market.

[History of Landscape Design](#)

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A short history of landscape design, from your About.com Landscaping guide. From the Roman Pliny to the American Olmsted, see how landscape design has evolved. Learn what distinguishes "formal landscape design" from the informal, more "natural" style. This article is helpful for those laying the groundwork for a makeover of their own landscapes.

Edgar Allan Poe and Landscape Design

Edgar Allan Poe, master of the macabre, was instrumental in the development both of the detective story and science fiction. But this eclectic genius also penned some compelling ideas on the subject of landscape design. Read about the landscape design at Arnheim, as well as the reason why its designer undertook the project.

Product Review: Landscaping Book by Better Homes and Gardens

Your About.com Landscaping Guide's review of a design book by Better Homes and Gardens. "Home Landscaping: Plants, Projects, and Ideas for Your Yard" is a great gift idea for gardeners. Purchase a gift for them that will give them something to get through the winter months -- planning next year's landscape design. Smart consumer's choice for the money.

The Basic Principles of Landscape Design

Part of a comprehensive Web site dedicated to landscape design, this article lays out the basics of designing a landscape. Learn about the landscape design concepts of unity, balance, color, transition, line, proportion and repetition.

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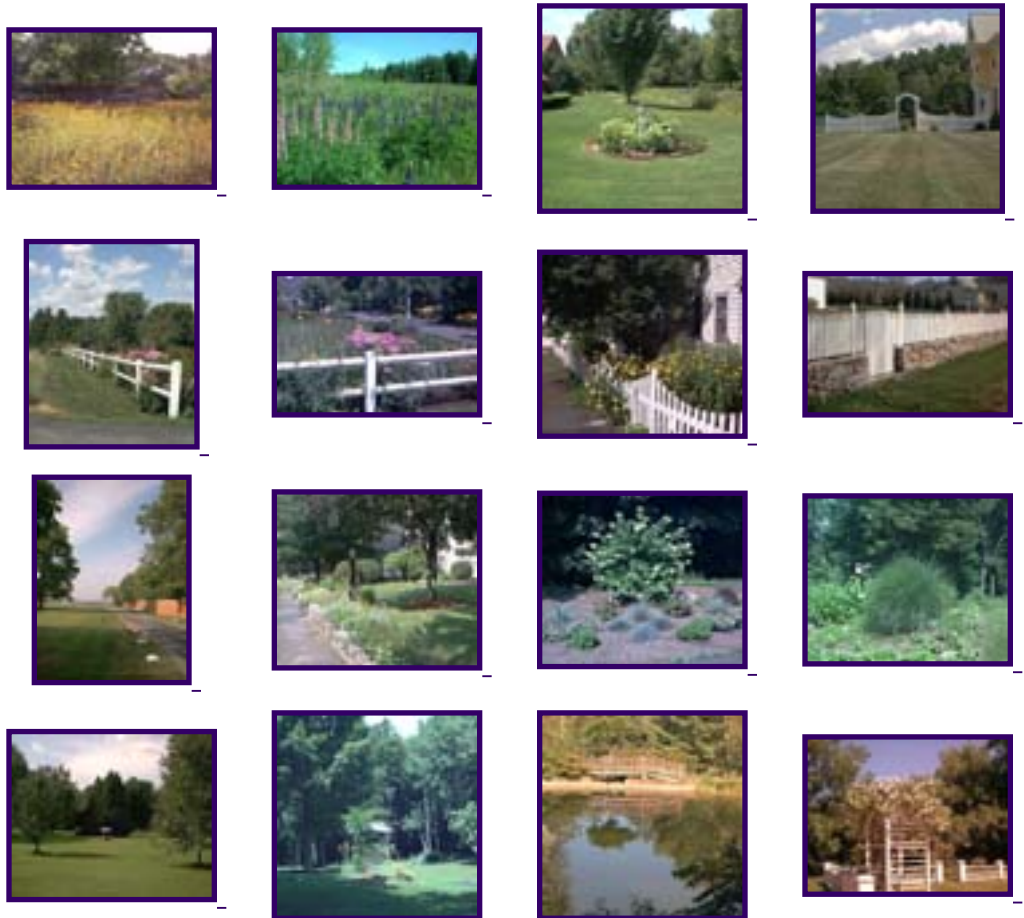
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Landscaping Pictures: Photo Gallery

Photos of Landscape Design Ideas

A picture is worth a thousand words. Sometimes you can get ideas for landscaping projects by looking at other people's landscape designs. Let the landscaping pictures in this photo gallery inspire you in your DIY landscaping projects!

Click on any of the thumbnails in the photo gallery below to view the full-size version of the image.



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Landscape Design Ideas for Beginners

Part 1: Principles of Landscape Design Explained, With Pictures



Photo by David Beaulieu

This picture illustrates "texture," specifically the textural contrast between zinnia and cosmos.

"Landscape design theory." Sounds rather imposing, doesn't it? And, to be sure, one could spend years studying all the ideas in the field of landscape design. But what if you simply need to give your lawn and gardens a makeover? If you need to spruce up the landscape design of a house that you are about to sell, or if you simply want to enjoy an enhanced design for your home's lawn and gardens, you could profit

More of this Feature

- [Part 2: Basic Landscape Design Ideas](#)
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from a straightforward, no-nonsense look at the ideas behind landscape design theory, supplemented with pictures.

Whenever you put something together yourself, you are engaged in **designing**, however humble the project. Sometimes we take our designs for granted, because what we're putting together is so commonplace for us that we are no longer conscious of the designing process. For instance, you are employing design techniques when you compose a letter to send to somebody. Your basic design "elements" to accomplish such a task include vocabulary, spelling and grammar. Somewhat more complex elements, or design "principles" build directly on the basic elements. Letter-writing principles include conveying your ideas clearly and coming across as a courteous, intelligent individual. Your success with these principles will largely determine whether or not your letter achieves its ultimate objective.

And so it is with landscape design theory. First you must learn the basic design elements that underlie all landscape design theory. These fundamental elements will then serve as building blocks for learning and implementing the more advanced principles of landscape design theory. These tried and true principles are the cornerstones of the world's picture-perfect gardens.

The basic elements of landscape design theory are:

- Color
- [Form](#) (see picture on Page 2)
- [Line](#) (see picture on Page 3)
- Scale
- [Texture](#) (see picture above)

These five elements must be considered in designing both the [hardscape](#) and [softscape](#) of a landscape, the latter consisting mainly of gardens, lawns, shrubs and trees. While **color** is self-explanatory (for our purposes), and **scale** is simply the size of one component relative to adjacent components, the other three elements require some explanation. What can make these terms confusing is the fact that their meanings intertwine with each other, as we'll see on [Page 2](#)....

Next page > [Defining Form, Line and Texture in Landscape Design Theory](#) > [Page 1](#), [2](#), [3](#)

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Definition: (landscape design terminology) The shape of a plant, e.g., upright, oval, columnar, spreading, broad spreading, or weeping.

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Frugal Landscaping for Cheapskates

Guide picks

Resources for the budget landscaper committed to frugal living, alias tightwads and cheapskates. These resources are dedicated to the proposition that ingenuity can create a landscape that looks like a million bucks. Learn how the drought-tolerant plants used in xeriscaping save money on irrigation, and how lawn alternatives save can save money on poisons, fertilizer and mowing.

Saving Money Through Prevention: Hurricane Preparedness **New**

A checklist of ten reminders for hurricane preparedness. Hurricane damage can be costly to your yards and homes. Reduce the costs of potential hurricane damage through prevention. Some of these tips are simple reminders; others involve more complex projects that need to be planned well in advance of stormy weather.

How to Build a Cheap Garden Arbor: Free Plans

A garden arbor can serve as a landscaping focal point. Learn how to build an easy, cheap do it yourself garden arbor with the tips provided here. Article includes a free garden arbor plan. Learn about shopping for cheaper prices on lumber. Fine living and frugal living: they are not mutually exclusive!

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[Frugal Water Gardens With Do-It-Yourself Water Fountains](#)

Ideas for cheap water gardens. Buy a low-cost statue at a salvage goods yard, and turn it into a homemade water fountain. This do-it-yourself project will make your garden the envy of all frugal living connoisseurs. Add in some free decorative rocks and end up with a fountain that *looks* anything but cheap!

[Clover Lawns: Frugal Living Alternative to Grass](#)

What do clover lawns have over grass lawns? How about drought-tolerance, low-maintenance, cost-savings and environmental safety? Interested? Clover is insect-resistant and competes well with weeds, eliminating need for insecticides and herbicides. Raking, mowing and other lawn care is also reduced with clover. Have a green lawn all summer without losing "green" out of your wallet.

[Attractive Landscaping for Free With Pussy Willows](#)

Great idea for cheap landscaping: Pussy willows are easy to grow in gardens, and they're free! Discover their botany, easy incorporation into the landscape or garden, and minimal pruning requirements. Pussy willows are an inexpensive landscaping alternative to store-bought shrubs.

[Xeriscape: The Cheap Landscape Alternative](#)

As drought becomes a reality in North America, xeriscaping presents itself as a landscape alternative. The price tag on the extra watering required for turf grass is by no means a "cheapskate's delight." It may be time to look into a cheaper landscape alternative -- the xeriscape.

[A Hypertufa How-To](#)

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Deborah Simpson's article on avoiding the cost of "hypertufa" articles such as stepping stones and birdbaths. A step-by-step approach to making your own, Portland cement, sand and peat moss.

Alternatives to Turf Lawns: Cheaper Landscaping

There are cheaper alternatives to grass lawns for those committed to frugal living. Save money by growing cover crops or clover, instead of costly grass. Perennial flower beds also cut down on lawn expanse and expense. Cheaper also translates into "less work," in this case.

Bella's Tips for Frugal Living

Ideas from Bella Online for saving money while meeting your landscaping needs. Tips ranging from acquiring plants for free to fighting weeds using homemade herbicides.

Do-It-Yourself Landscapers

A story on do-it-yourself landscapers by Victoria Sizemore Long of "The Kansas City Star." Featured is a man who removed an existing fence on his property and replaced it with a new one. Proper landscaping greatly enhances the real estate value of your property.

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Garden Arbor Design

How to Build Garden Arbors

Building small garden [arbors](#) is an easy do-it-yourself project -- cheap, too, if you're willing to shop around a bit for your pressure-treated lumber. The garden arbor design in this project calls for a 2-post arbor; but you can apply the same principles to a larger wooden arbor. It will take the average do-it-yourself landscaper 2 days to build this garden arbor.

The Basics of the Garden Arbor Design: An Overview

Think of this project as involving five architectural layers:

1. Concrete placed underground will secure the structure.
2. Two 4X4 posts will be sunk into that concrete.
3. Two 1x6 crosspieces will run along the sides of these posts at the very top, perpendicular to them. One

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The Garden Arbor
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crosspiece will be on the outer side, the other on the inner side; thus they will "sandwich" the top 6" of the upright posts.

4. 2x4 rafters, in turn, will lie atop the crosspieces, perpendicular to them.
5. And 2x2s will lie across the rafters, perpendicular to them.

Cost of the Garden Arbor: Shopping Around for Cheap Lumber

The cost of lumber for this garden arbor project depends to some degree on the do-it-yourselfer's willingness to shop around. I went to a discount store to purchase the pressure-treated lumber for my own project. Now, to be sure, a lot of rejects end up in the lumber bins of such a store. I had to sort through about 20 boards on average to find 1 good board. Is it worth the extra work? Well, judge for yourself as you look over the following list of surprisingly cheap prices (all measurements are in feet):

- Five 2x2x8s at \$1.50 each
- Three 2x4x8s at \$2.48 each
- Two 1x6x12s at \$3.88 each

Even after the price for the two 4x4s is added in, the total for lumber came only to about \$30. If your information about building arbors derives from television shows, it may be hard for you to believe at first that the wood for a small arbor can be purchased for around \$30!

Supplies -- The Materials for the Garden Arbor:

- Pressure-treated lumber:
 - Five 2x2x8s
 - Five 2x4x3s
 - Two 1x6x12s (hereafter referred to simply as the "crosspieces")
 - Two 4x4 posts
- Gravel or crushed stone
- Pre-mixed concrete
- Deck screws
- Bolts, washers and nuts
- Scrap lumber

Note:

When I give lumber dimensions here, I am following a convention. Please note that a 4x4 is not really 4" by 4". Sounds odd, I know. But everyone calls them 4x4s, so I'm following that convention. In fact, they measure 3.5" x 3.5". Likewise, the so-called 2x4s are really 1.5" x 3.5".

Tools to Build the Garden Arbor:

- Wheelbarrow
- Garden hose
- Shovel
- Carpenter's level
- Jigsaw
- Circular saw or handsaw
- Drill
- Wood chisel
- Spade bit
- Stepladder
- File
- Tape measure
- Hammer
- Wrench

On this page I've supplemented the overview with photos illustrating steps involved in the building of an arbor. Photo #1 above is a picture of the finished wooden garden arbor. Photo #2, accessed by clicking on the first photo to open up the mini-photo gallery, is a picture illustrating an alignment tip. Photo #3, accessed by clicking on the first photo to open up the mini-photo gallery, is a picture of a design you can cut into your rafter ends.

Step-by-step instructions to begin building an arbor are presented on the following pages, beginning with some concrete work on Page 2 to ensure the sturdiness of your arbor design....

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