

A 6x6 Box Bed for Camping or Home Design by Douglas Toth

This bed stores flat and uses no hardware to assemble once the pieces are cut out.

Remember...measure twice...cut once!

What you will need.

1, 4x8 sheet of 3/8" plywood

4, 8 foot 2x4 (untreated pine is fine)

2, 3x6 panels of 1/4" plywood or masonite for the bed board.

A jig saw

A hammer

A 3/8' chisel

Your favorite wood finishing product (I used a polyurethane stain).

If you refer to the diagram you can see that what you are constructing is a square frame with the 2x4 supports across it to hold the bed board mattress and you! Obviously this plan can be adjusted by simply changing the location of the slots in the frame and the lengths of the various pieces.

The Frame

Cut the 3/8' ply wood into four, one foot by eight foot strips.

Measure one foot from each end of the plywood strips and use the jig saw to cut slots that are 3 inches deep by 3/8 inches wide.

It is a good idea to fit the four pieces together now, just to be sure that they fit comfortably. Snug is okay but you should not need to beat them together or have to struggle to get them apart.

Key Holes

The 'key holes' for the cross braces can be tricky. The holes near the head and foot board should allow the boards to be close to the cross brace to avoid a gap that will eat your blankets. You will also want to leave enough material between the key hole and slot for strength.

The 2x4 should go into the hole smoothly but it should be snug in the notch.

Cross Braces

Cut the 2x4s so they are 6 feet 6 inches long. Measure in 3 inches from each end and then mark where the groove will be. Only carve a groove on three sides so the top side will add strength.

If you are an experienced wood worker you will have your favorite method for cutting the notches....skip ahead.

To cut the notches I measured a 3/8 inch stripe around the three sides of the 2x4 and cut in with the jig saw a little. Then I used the hammer and chisel to cut away the wood. It pays to experiment on a scrap piece a few times to get a feel for the tools and wood.

I also advise taking off less than you think you should and testing the fit. You can always take more off, putting some back on is not possible.

The Bed Boards

Cut the material you will use for your bed board so it fits easily inside the box. These instructions will give you a 6'x6' interior space for the board. Two 6'x3' pieces are ideal.

Feet

You do not need to do this but when I saw the scrap 2x4 bits and noticed that the ground is rarely level I decided to cut notches in the scraps so I could use them to level the bed.

Finishing

Sand and finish the pieces as soon as you can. Raw wood will warp on a humid day and this will cause some problems when assembling and disassembling the bed.

I recommend rounding all of the corners, it helps reduce the chance of damage to the bed and to yourself.

I chose a polyurethane finish to protect against moist environments. Two coats is the minimum for good results.

The final touch is a mattress of some sort and blankets.

Other Stuff

As stated earlier you can adjust this to be a little larger or a whole lot smaller. If you think you need more support in the middle it should be an easy task to make a center support. You could also make two single size beds that can rest side by side. The head and foot boards are also a blank canvas for those that are creative.

Have fun, rest well.

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