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Dave Campbell
Editorial Content Chief, *WOOD* magazine



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A TIMELY BOX

You'll find shop time passes quickly while creating this classy keepsake box befitting your collection of timepieces.

WRITER: BRYAN NELSON
DESIGNER/BUILDER: KEVIN BOYLE



OVERALL DIMENSIONS
11" W x 4 3/4" D x 3 1/4" H

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PHOTOGRAPHER: MARTY BALDWIN; ILLUSTRATORS: ROXANNE LEMOINE, LORNA JOHNSON

Small projects like this timepiece keepsake box allow you to use that special figured wood you've squirreled away for just the right project. Plus, this box provides the perfect opportunity to practice techniques such as miter-cutting small parts and gluing up small frames.

BUILD A BASIC BOX

Matching the top of a box to its base becomes a simple process when you start the build with an extra-tall box and rip the top free for a perfect match.

1 From $\frac{1}{2}$ "-thick stock, rip blanks for the front/back and ends of the box, making them $\frac{1}{8}$ " over-width ($2\frac{5}{8}$ "). Then miter-cut the front/back (A) and ends (B) to length [Materials List, Drawing 1], cutting an extra end or two from scrap stock for setup use later. Finish-sand the inside faces.

2 Rabbet the lower inside edge of the front/back and ends [Exploded View, Drawing 1], then glue up the box. Once dry, finish-sand the outside faces and edges.

3 Cut the box top from the box base [Photo A], then sand the edges to remove any blade marks [Photo B].

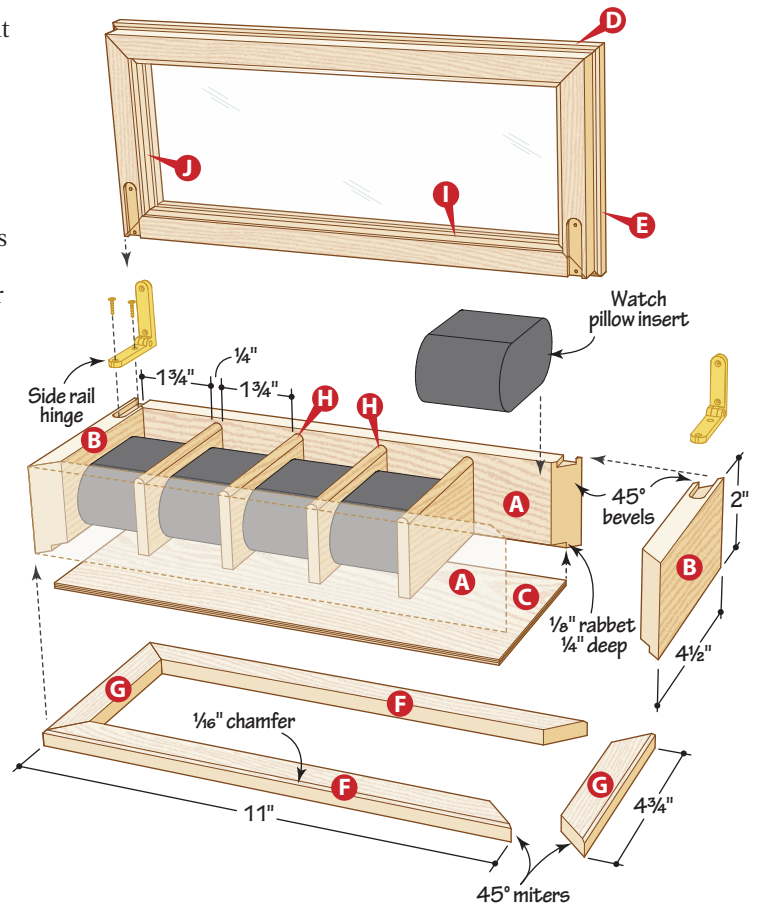
4 Install a $\frac{5}{16}$ " straight bit in your router table. Set the height to match the thickness of one of the hinge leaves [Sources] and adjust the fence to center the bit on $\frac{1}{2}$ "-thick stock. Clamp a stopblock to the fence to create a $1\frac{5}{16}$ "-long groove. Rout a test hinge mortise in one of the extra ends cut earlier.

5 Rout the hinge mortises in the box base and top [Photos C, D, Drawings 1a, 2a].

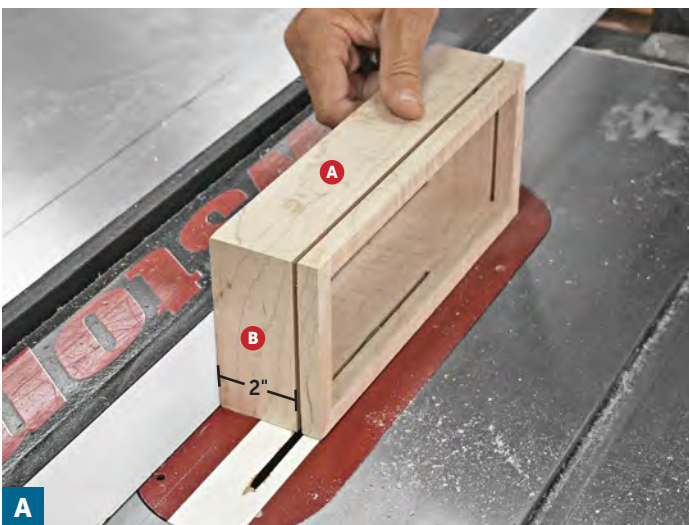
TIP!

Make a pencil mark across the end before cutting the top free to help orient the top and base later.

EXPLODED VIEW



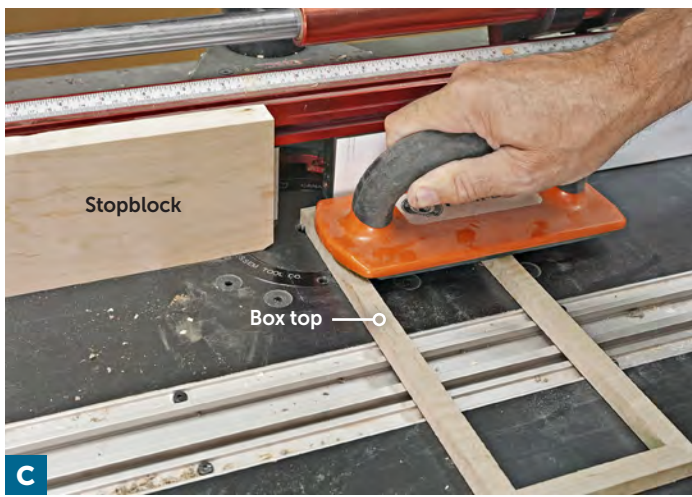
6 Cut the box bottom (C) to size, finish-sand, and then glue it into the rabbet in the box base [Exploded View, Drawing 1b].



Set the rip fence 2" from the blade to size the box parts, then make a pass across the ends of the box. Rip the top free by making a pass through the front and back of the box, allowing the top to fall free.



Attach 150-grit sandpaper to a flat surface. Remove any blade or burn marks on the mating edges of the box top and base by sanding in small, circular motions.



C After verifying the stopblock, fence position, and router bit height using the test piece, rout the hinge mortise in one corner of the lid. Repeat the process for one corner of the box.



D Reposition the stopblock to the other side of the bit for the remaining mortises. Set the top (and base) against the stopblock and lower it onto the spinning bit, then pull the workpiece along the fence.

FRAME THE TOP AND BOTTOM

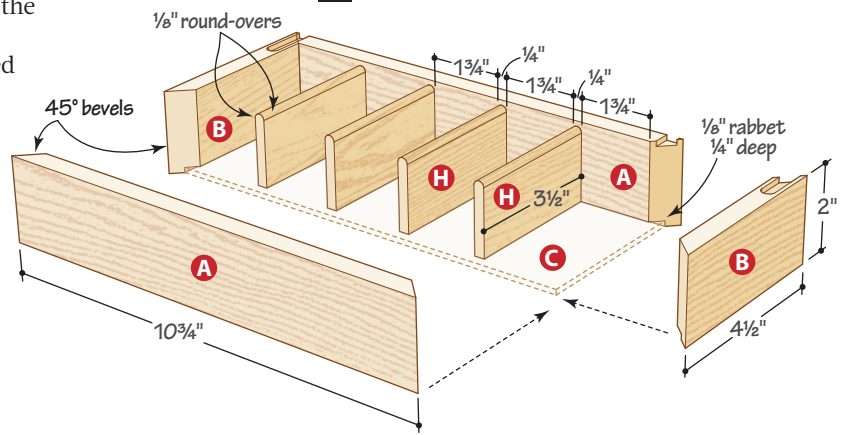
- 1** Rip $\frac{3}{8}$ "-thick stock to a width of $\frac{3}{4}$ " for the base and lid frames, then miter-cut the lid front/back (D), lid ends (E), base front/back (F), and base ends (G) to final length [Exploded View, Drawing 2].
- 2** Rout a chamfer on the top inside edge of the lid front/back (D) and ends (E) [Drawings 2, 2b]. Glue up the lid frame (D/E) and base frame (F/G) [Photo E] and finish-sand both.
- 3** Rout a smaller chamfer on the lower outside edge of the lid frame (D/E) and the top outside edge of the base frame (F/G) [Drawings 1b, 2b].
- 4** Glue the base frame centered on the box base (A-C) [Exploded View, Drawing 1b] and the lid frame centered on the box top [Drawing 2, 2b].
- 5** Cut the dividers (H) to size, then rout round-overs on the top edges [Drawing 1]. Glue the dividers into the box base [Photo F].
- 6** Rip $\frac{1}{8}$ "-wide strips for the glass stop, then miter-cut the long and short stops (I, J) to fit inside the lid (A/B/D/E). Finish-sand them and then set them aside.

- 7** Check the fit of the hinges to the box base and lid, then screw them into place. Once the fit looks good, remove the hinges. Complete any touchup sanding and apply a finish to the box base, lid, and glass stops. We sprayed on a couple coats of satin lacquer.
- 8** Install the glass in the lid and pin-nail the stops into place, then reinstall the hinges and add the watch inserts. Gather your watch collection; it's time to slip them into their new home! 🌲

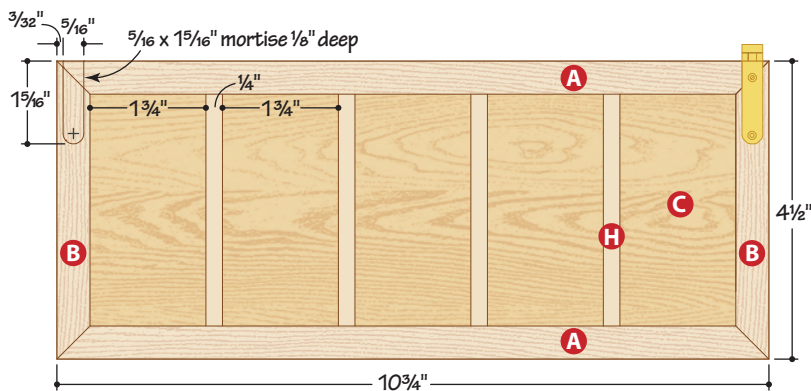


Watch a video on safely ripping thin strips.
woodmagazine.com/thinstrips

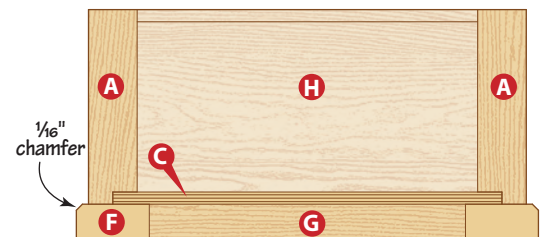
1 BOX ASSEMBLY



1a HINGE MORTISE DETAIL, BOX BASE

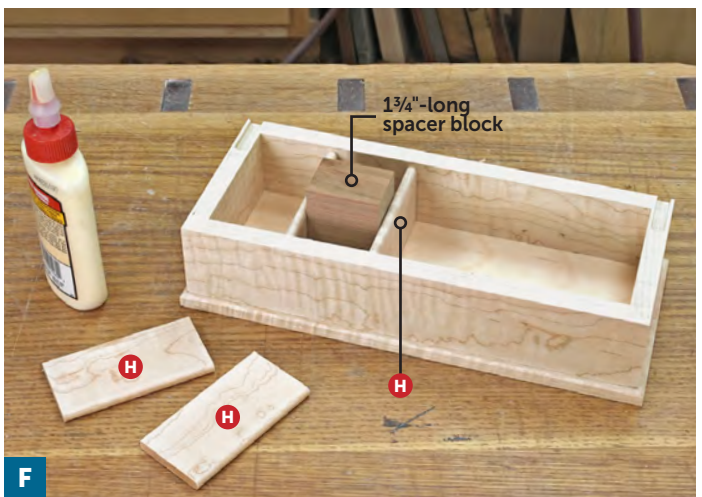


1b BOX END SECTION VIEW



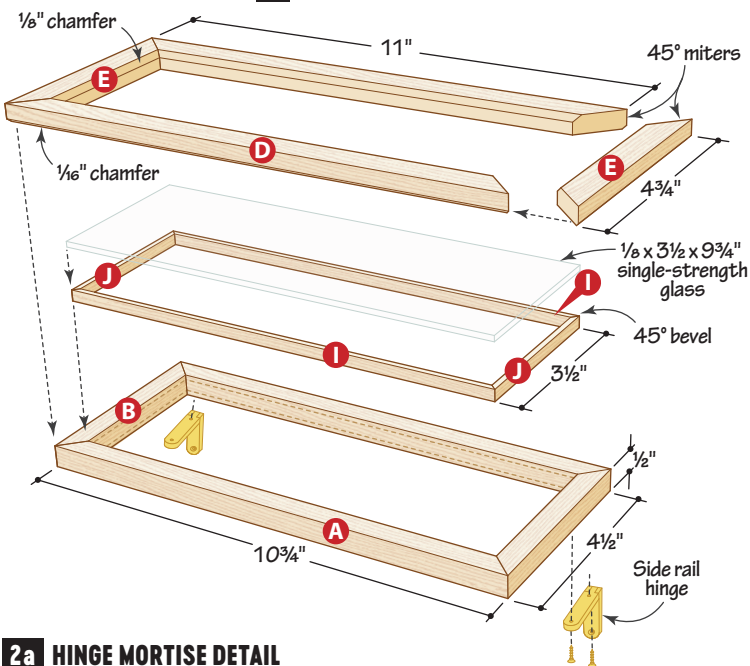


Use painter's tape as hinges on three of the joints, add glue to the miters, fold into a frame, and tape the last joint. If needed, add a band clamp to pull the joints tight.

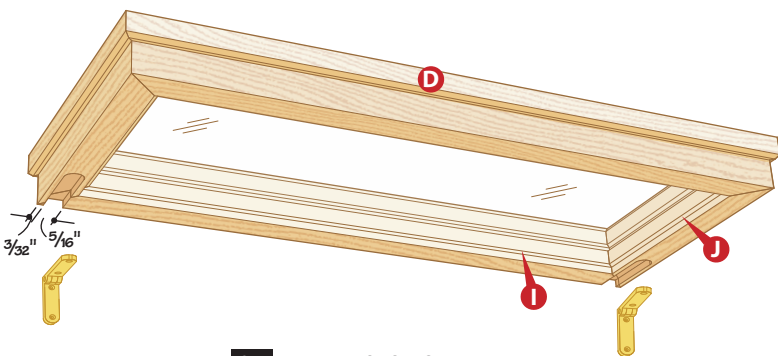


Cut a spacer block to help position the dividers (H) evenly across the box base. To aid cleanup, use only a light layer of glue when attaching the spacers, wiping away any stray glue before it hardens.

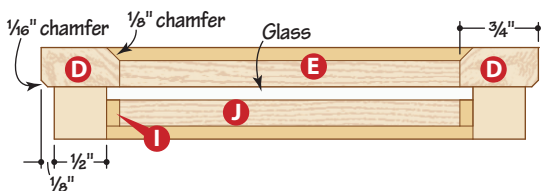
2 LID ASSEMBLY



2a HINGE MORTISE DETAIL



2b LID END SECTION VIEW



MATERIALS LIST

PART	FINISHED SIZE			Matl.	Qty.
	T	W	L		
A*	1/2"	2 1/2"	10 3/4"	CM	2
B*	1/2"	2 1/2"	4 1/2"	CM	2
C	1/8"	4"	10 1/4"	MP	1
D*	3/8"	3/4"	11"	CM	2
E*	3/8"	3/4"	4 3/4"	CM	2
F*	3/8"	3/4"	11"	CM	2
G*	3/8"	3/4"	4 3/4"	CM	2
H	1/4"	1 3/4"	3 1/2"	CM	4
I*	1/4"	1/8"	9 3/4"	CM	2
J*	1/4"	1/8"	3 1/2"	CM	2

*Parts initially cut oversize. See the instructions.

MATERIALS KEY: CM—curly maple, MP—maple plywood.

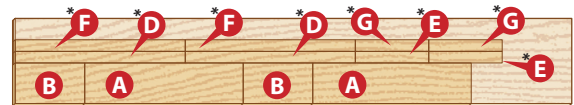
SUPPLIES: Single-strength glass.

BITS: 5/16" straight, 45° chamfer, 1/8" round-over router bits.

SOURCES: Side rail hinges no. 161694 (1 pair), Woodcraft, 800-225-1153, woodcraft.com. Watch pillow inserts, woodmagazine.com/watchinserts.

CUTTING DIAGRAM

This project requires 1.4 square feet of 1/2" curly maple and 0.5 square feet of 1/4" curly maple based on example boards shown.



1/2 x 5 1/2 x 36" Curly maple *Plane or resaw to the thickness listed in the Materials List.



1/4 x 3 1/2 x 18" Curly maple



1/8 x 6 x 12" Maple plywood