

Reloading Bench Plans

Plans courtesy of the National Reloading Manufacturers Association

Are you looking for a way to help streamline your reloading? Here is an easy-to-follow set of plans for building a sturdy, practical and simple bench for reloading rifle, handgun or shotgun ammunition. The bench is designed to be extremely sturdy to withstand the pressures of reloading presses and tools. It has plenty of room to mount presses and other equipment and storage areas for accessories and components, with a special drop-down shelf for your powder scale.

This bench was designed to be as versatile as possible to meet the needs of most reloaders. However, the plans can also be considered a starting place for the imaginative builder who wants to customize the bench to meet his own specific needs. For instance, it can be made larger or smaller to meet space requirements or quantities of equipment and components. As it is currently designed, the work area is about waist-high for a 6'2" person. This can be adjusted to fit your height simply by making the legs longer or shorter.

These plans include drawings and photos with construction details, a materials list and a guide for cutting the pieces from ordinary plywood.

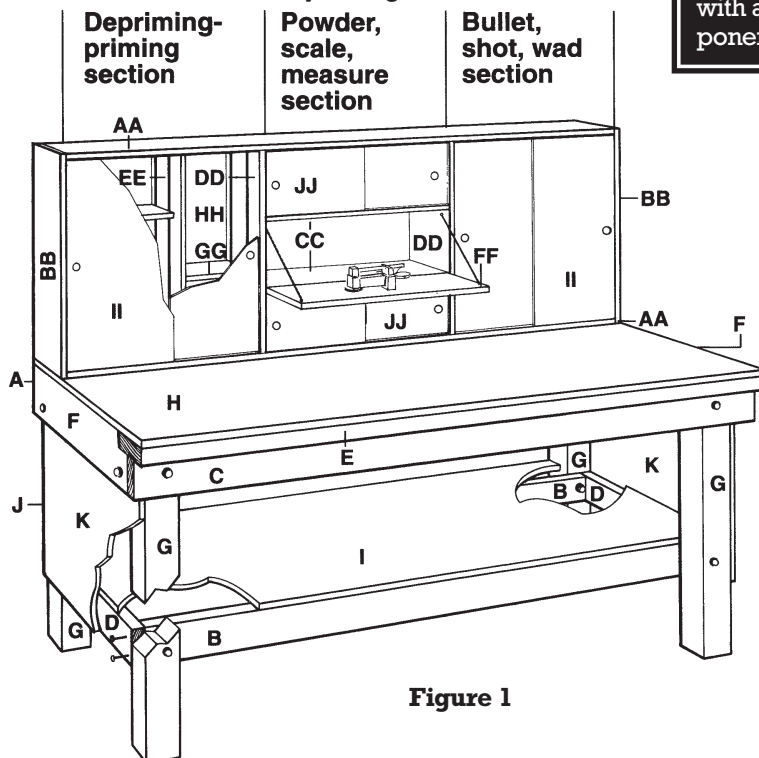
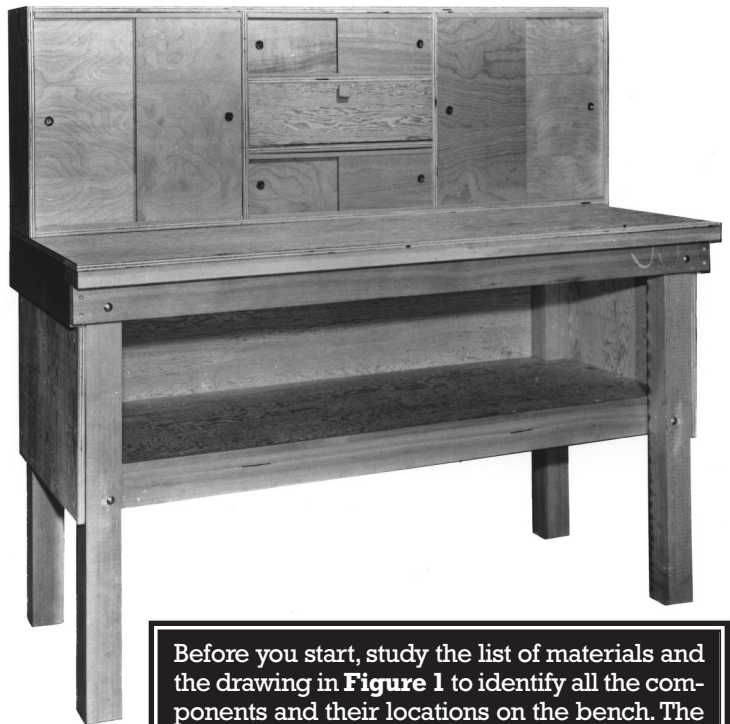


Figure 1



Before you start, study the list of materials and the drawing in **Figure 1** to identify all the components and their locations on the bench. The bench and cabinet sections should be built separately then joined after completion. This is a very large bench which may not clear doorways when assembled, so plan ahead. As with any project, it is best to assemble all components, hardware and tools before you start.

cabinet shop accurately cut the components for you. A precise fit will not only make your bench better looking but will also make using it more enjoyable.

The entire bench is assembled with bolts and screws for strength. After construction is completed, you may wish to paint or stain your bench.

These plans allow you to separate the three major reloading processes, keeping the necessary accessories and components separate and ready for use. The left-hand compartments are for resizing, removing spent primers and priming the hull or shell. The middle compartments can contain your powder scale, powder-measuring devices and powder canisters. The right-hand compartments are for bullets, shot, wads and other components for the completed shells, as well as accessories. There is also a generous lower shelf for storing larger quantities of components.

MATERIALS LIST

(NOTE: Materials are listed separately for the lower "bench" section and upper "cabinet" section.)

BENCH LUMBER

ITEM	SIZE	# OF PIECES	LENGTH	LOCATION ON DRAWING
Top frame	2x6	1	69"	A
Bottom frame	2x4	2	66"	B
Top frame	2x4	1	72"	C
Bottom frame	2x4	2	22"	D
Top frame	2x6	1	72"	E
Top frame	2x6	2	30½"	F
Legs	4x4	4	42"	G

Suggestion: Two 8-foot 2x4s and one 6-foot 2x4.
Three 6-foot 2x6s.
Two 8-foot 4x4s.

BENCH PLYWOOD

ITEM	SIZE	# OF PIECES	DIMENSIONS	LOCATION ON DRAWING
Top	¾"	1	34" x 72"	H
Lower shelf	¾"	1	25½" x 69"	I
Back panel	¾"	1	18" x 69"	J
End panels	¾"	2	18" x 29¾"	K

Suggestion: Three 4'x8' sheets of ¾" plywood for the above pieces, plus the ¾" pieces for the cabinet. See cutting guide.

BENCH HARDWARE

12 – ⅜" x 6" carriage bolts, nuts & washers
25 – ¼" x 3" flat-head woodscrews
9 dozen – ⅜" x 1¾" flat-head woodscrews

CABINET PLYWOOD

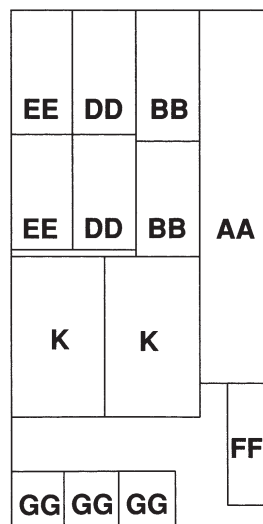
ITEM	SIZE	# OF PIECES	DIMENSIONS	LOCATION ON DRAWING
Top & bottom	¾"	2	12" x 70½"	AA
Ends	¾"	2	12" x 24"	BB
Center shelves	¾"	2	12" x 23"	CC
Center uprights	¾"	2	12" x 22½"	DD
Shelf dividers	¾"	2	10¾" x 22½"	EE
Center door	¾"	1	6¾" x 23"	FF
Shelves	¾"	4*	10¾" x 10⅝"	GG
Cabinet back	¼"	1	24" x 72"	HH
Sliding doors	¼"	4	22¼" x 12"	II
Sliding doors	¼"	4	6¾" x 12"	JJ

*One for each compartment. Additional shelves can be added as desired.

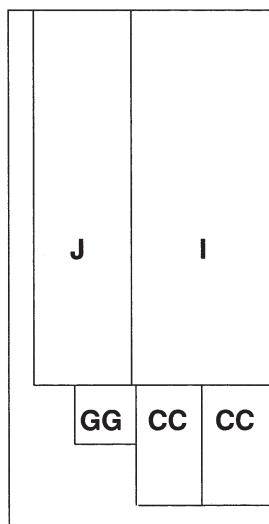
CABINET HARDWARE

4 sets double track for sliding doors, each 23" long
32' adjustable shelf track with sufficient brackets (4 per shelf) and ½" flat-head nails
3 dozen ⅜" x 1¾" flat-head woodscrews
2 dozen 1" woodscrews for cabinet back
1 piano hinge 23" long, with mounting screws
1 length of chain, 10" long, plus 2 screw eyes for shelf support
8 finger grips for sliding doors
1 door pull for shelf door
1 latch for shelf door

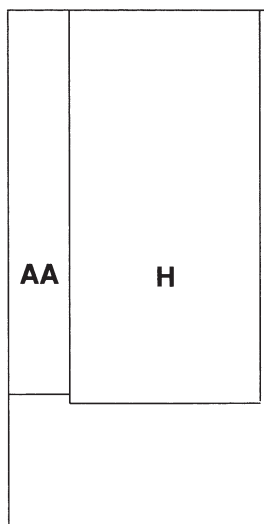
GUIDE TO PLYWOOD CUTTING



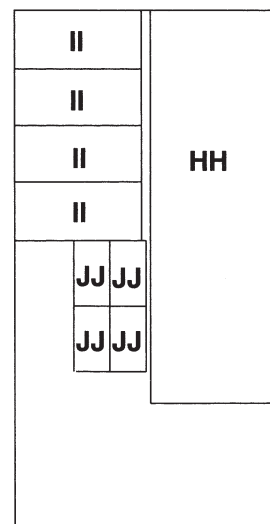
4' x 8' x ¾" plywood



4' x 8' x ¾" plywood



4' x 8' x ¾" plywood



4' x 8' x ¼" plywood

BENCH CONSTRUCTION

STEP ONE

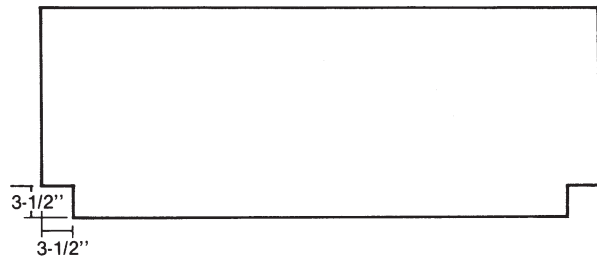
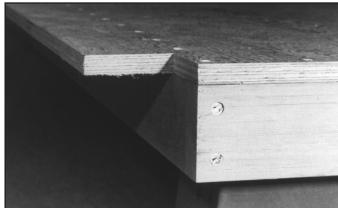
Saw all lumber and plywood for the bench. Double check dimensions and sand any rough edges. **Be sure to drill and countersink all screws.**

STEP TWO

Assemble the lower shelf frame using two 3" woodscrews at each corner.

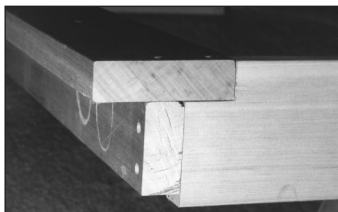
STEP THREE

Saw a 3½" x 3½" notch at both rear corners of the lower-shelf plywood. This will accommodate the rear 4x4 legs.

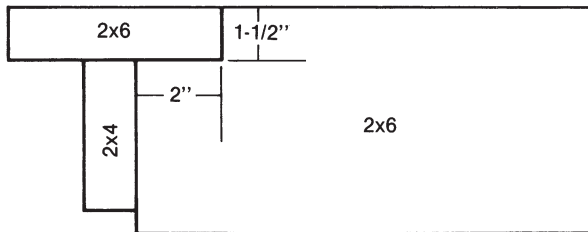


STEP FOUR

Assemble the top frame. Saw a notch in the two 2x6 pieces that form the ends of the frame. Each notch should be 2" long and 1½" deep.

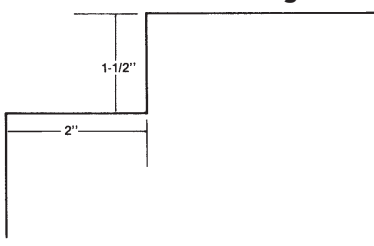


This accommodates the 2x6 front edge support and allows for the necessary overhang (see photo). Use two 3" woodscrews at each corner and to fasten the 2x6 front edge support.



STEP FIVE

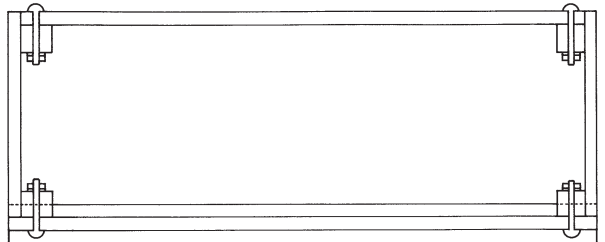
Saw a notch into the top of both 4x4 front legs. **No notch should be cut into the rear legs!** The



notch on the front legs is 1½" deep from the top of the 4x4 and 2" from the side (see drawing). This will enable the leg to nest under the front 2x6 edge support (see photo).

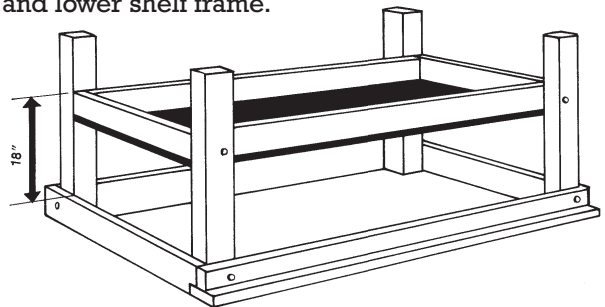
STEP SIX

Turn the top frame upside-down on workbench or floor and position all four legs. Using a ⅜" drill bit, drill holes through the frame and legs. Insert bolts, add washers and lightly tighten nuts.



STEP SEVEN

With bench still upside-down, hold end panels against legs so they are flush against the 2x6 end pieces. The edge of the end panel determines the bottom edge of the lower shelf frame. Mark the legs, then drill ⅜" holes for bolts in the legs and lower shelf frame.



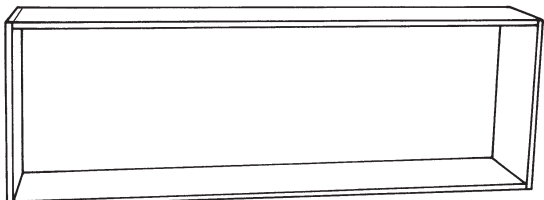
STEP EIGHT

Before bolting the lower frame to the legs, attach the plywood shelf to the frame with 1¾" screws, then bolt the frame to the legs. Check to make sure all pieces are properly assembled, then tighten all bolts. Turn bench right-side up and attach the plywood top, end panels and back panel with 1¾" woodscrews. Your bench is now complete!

CABINET CONSTRUCTION

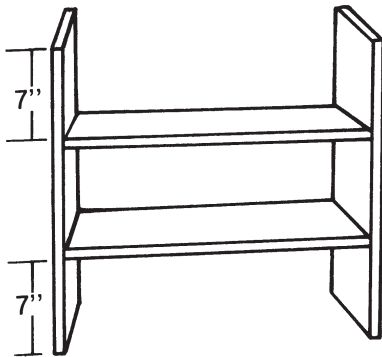
STEP ONE

Assemble top, bottom and ends of cabinet with 1¾" woodscrews. Attach the plywood cabinet back to the outer frame; this will automatically square up the cabinet for subsequent steps.



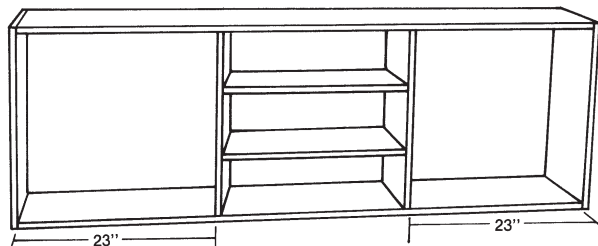
STEP TWO

Assemble the center section with two center uprights and two center shelves. Place a mark exactly 7" from the top and bottom of the uprights to indicate the location of the top of the top shelf and bottom of the bottom shelf, creating a 7" center section. Measure carefully, then assemble with $1\frac{3}{4}$ " woodscrews.



STEP THREE

Place the center section in the cabinet frame. Center this section, leaving a 23" opening at either end. Measure carefully, then assemble with $1\frac{3}{4}$ " woodscrews.



STEP FOUR

Position shelf dividers in the end compartments. When they are precisely centered, there will be an $11\frac{1}{8}$ " opening on either side of each divider. Measure carefully, then assemble with $1\frac{3}{4}$ " woodscrews.



STEP FIVE

Cut shelf track to size, then nail into place. Add brackets for each shelf and place shelves into position.

STEP SIX

Drill $\frac{1}{2}$ " holes for finger grips on the sliding doors and glue the finger grips into place. Fit the double track, making sure the deep



track is at the top and the shallow track is at the bottom so the doors can be properly inserted. Glue or nail the track into place *only* after making sure everything fits properly. (You may want to delay permanently attaching the track until after painting or staining is done.)

STEP SEVEN

Attach the powder-scale door with the piano hinge. Assemble so the door is flush with the cabinet when closed. Use the chain with the screw eyes to hold the door in a level position when open. **Make sure this shelf is absolutely level to insure the best operation of your powder scale.** Attach the drawer pull and your choice of catch to hold door closed. (Note: Fitting the door may require additional sanding, depending on the type of piano hinge you choose.) Your cabinet is now complete!

FINAL ASSEMBLY

When the bench and cabinet are complete, join them with woodscrews to avoid any possibility of movement when operating your reloading presses. Be sure the bench rests solidly on the floor, with the top of the bench absolutely level to prevent components from rolling.



A complete, illustrated brochure entitled *Set Yourself Up To Reload!* containing these plans and basic, easy-to-understand reloading information, checklists and a source guide, is available. Send \$6 per brochure to NRMA Booklet, One Centerpointe Dr., Suite 300, Lake Oswego, OR 97035. The NRMA's safety folder, *The Basic Rules For Reloading Safety*, is included with each booklet. Visit the NRMA web-site at www.reload-nrma.com.

(This Blast From the Past feature last appeared in the July 2002 issue of Shotgun Sports.)