

# 25 Tips for Shop Storage





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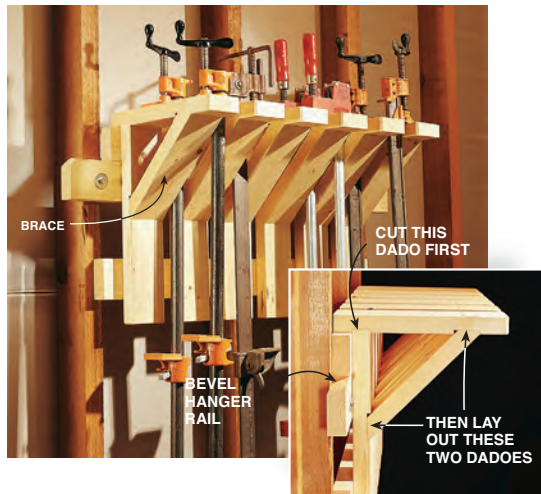
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## 1 Clamp Warehouse

**HANG YOUR LONG**, heavy clamps on this rack designed for strength. The braces are notched into the bracket arms in a simple version of a timber-frame joint. Mill 2x4 dimensional lumber straight and square to make these brackets. The braces form a 45° triangle with the two arms. Miter the ends of the braces first. Then cut shallow dadoes into the horizontal arms.

Assemble one pair of arms on a workbench. Make sure they're square. Lay a brace on top of the arms and mark the positions and depth of the dadoes. Assemble with glue and screws.

Cut a 30° bevel on the top rail and hanger rail. Space the brackets 1-5/8" apart. Drill holes in the hanger rail for large lag screws and space them to hit studs. Mount and level the hanger rail first, then place the clamp rack on it. If you fasten a vertical arm to the wall, the rack will be locked in place so it won't lift off the hanger rail.

## 2 Saw Blade Box

**SEPARATE CARBIDE SAW BLADES** in slots so their brittle teeth can't bang against each other. The angled top of this box makes it easier to handle the sharp blades.

Make the plywood box by cutting three tall sides and one shorter side. Build your box 7" wide and it'll hold both 7-1/4" and 10" blades. Pencil a 45° line on two side pieces. Lay out the length and spacing of the slots. Rip the slots on the tablesaw, stopping the cut on the pencil line. Then cut the tops of the two sides at 45°. Assemble the box with screws.



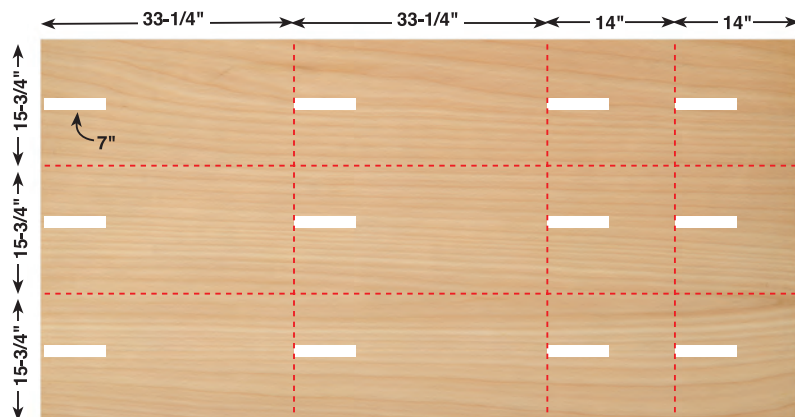
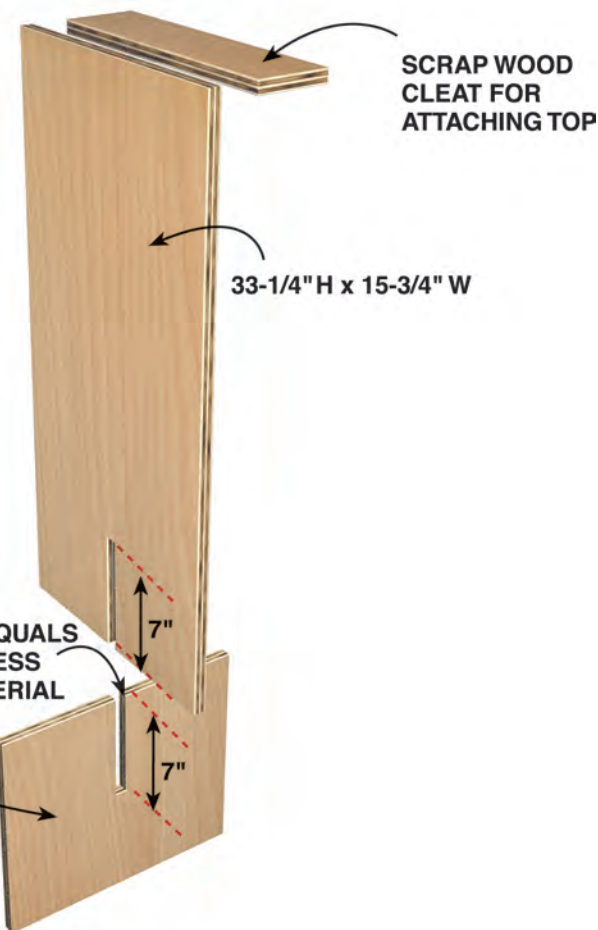




### 3 Collapsible Work Stands

In a small shop, the more things that can be folded up and moved out of the way, the better. These work stands are easy to build, easy to store and cheap. They're especially good for finishing and gluing up panels.

One sheet of 5/8" AC plywood will yield six stands. If you make them the same height as your table saw they will double as infeed and outfeed supports.



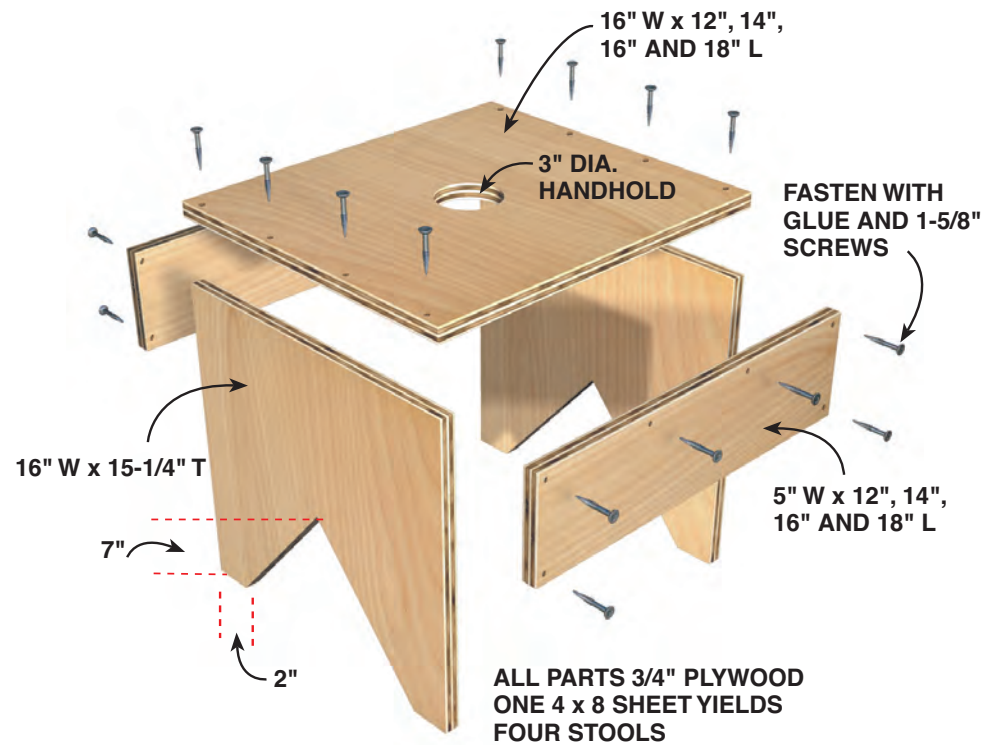
3/4" AC PLYWOOD



#### 4 A Nest of Crickets

Call them low boys, stools or crickets—whatever you call them, these stands are amazingly useful. And because they nest, they're perfect for a cramped shop.

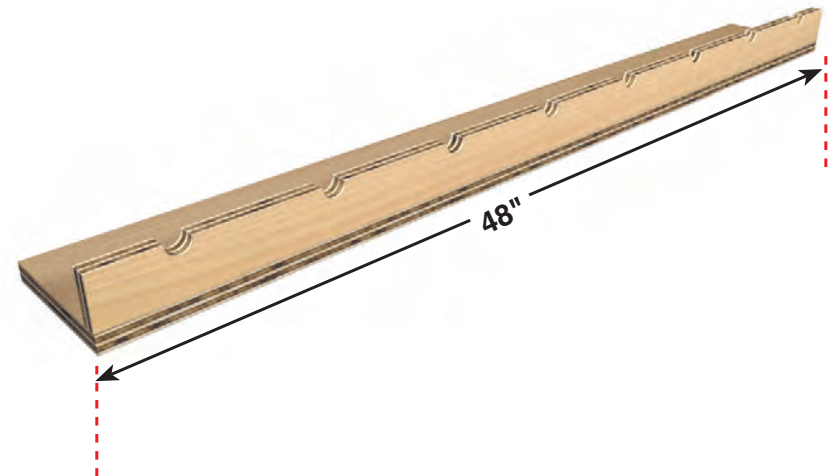
You can make four of them out of one sheet of 3/4" plywood. The 16" height is just right for large work that might not fit on normal sawhorses. For working around the house, that extra height makes it easy to reach the ceiling. If that's not reason enough, when your buddies come over to give you "helpful" shop advice, you've got plenty of seating!





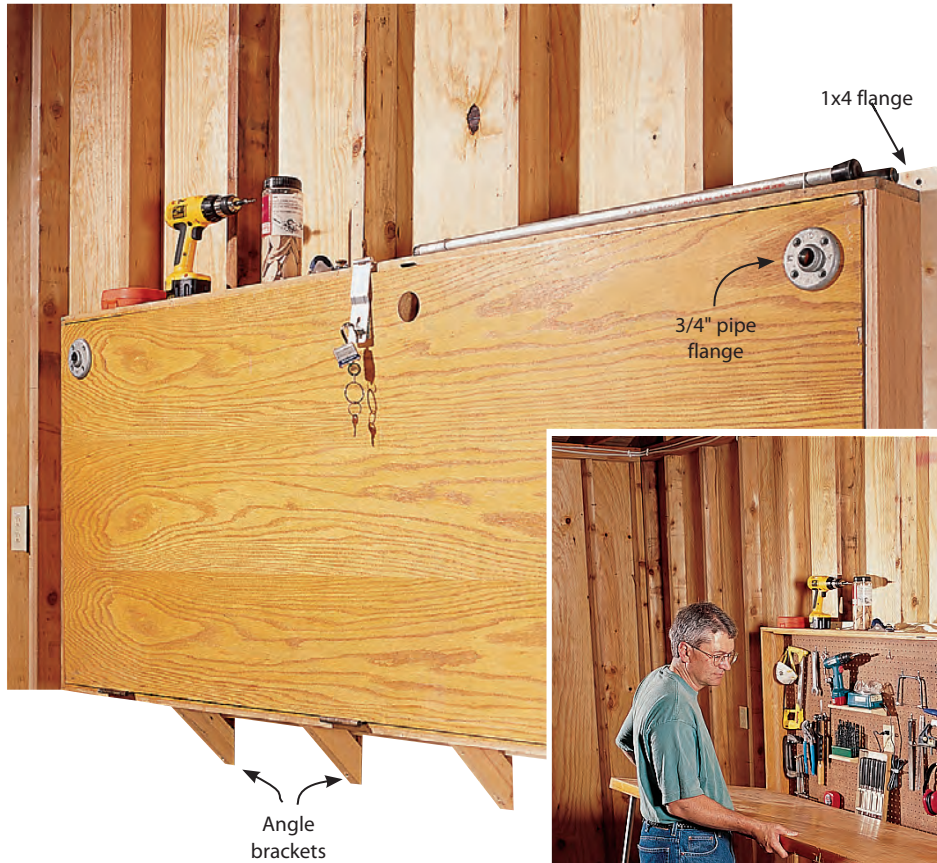
### 5 Easy-to-Store Clamp Racks

In a small shop, there's no room for a dedicated glue-up table, and often no room for much of an assembly table either. But you can make room for edge gluing with these clamp racks that fasten to sawhorses when needed.



1. DRILL HOLES SAME DIA. AS PIPE CLAMPS
2. RIP IN HALF
3. FASTEN TO C LEAT





## 6 Old-Door Workbench

**I thought I didn't have enough** room for a second work surface, until I made this one from a salvaged pre-hung door. Look for a flush, solid-core door with the jamb (door frame) attached. A solid-core door is sturdy, provides strong attachment for the bench legs and is heavy enough to take a pounding.

I reinforced the jamb with screws and added stock where the threshold used to be. Then I screwed a 1" x 4" flange onto the back edges of the jamb with #8 x 2" screws. The jamb is hung on the wall at a comfortable working height with #10 x 3" screws.

For convenient tool and accessory storage, screw perf-board to the flange that's inside the door opening. Make two legs from 3/4" threaded pipe and screw them into two 3/4" pipe flanges to support the workbench when it's down. Support the bottom jamb with angle brackets and add a hasp to hold the door shut.

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## 7 Lumber Rack Storage

I'd been using my typical cantilevered lumber rack for years when I realized I was wasting precious storage space.

By screwing 1/4" hardboard to the top and bottom of each support I created free storage space between the supports. I can fill the spaces with drawers or use them for general storage. Plus, I can store short stock without stacking it on long stock. Now there isn't a single inch of wasted space in my lumber rack.

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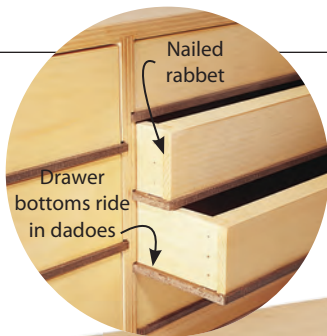
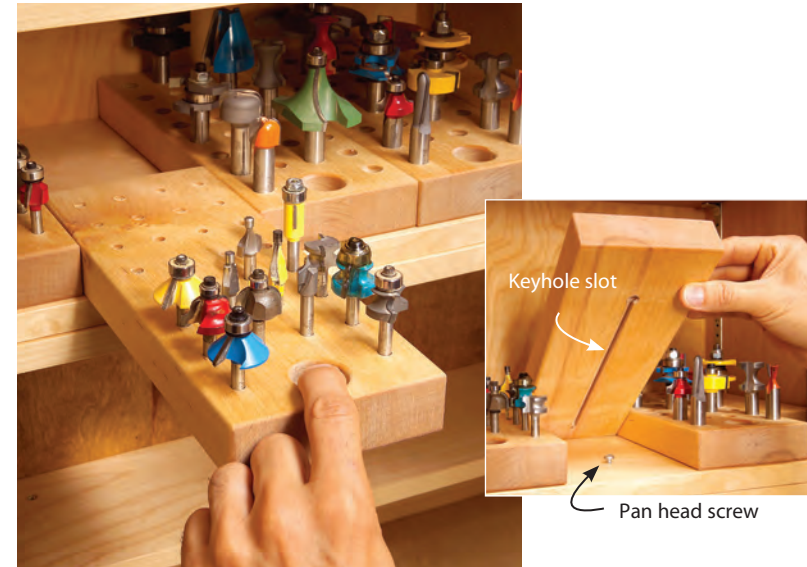




## 8 Eye-Level Bit Storage

**Lots of folks** store router bits in wooden blocks, but this nifty pull-out method keeps those blocks securely mounted inside your cabinet. The blocks become shelves that pull out and hang at eye level while you find the bit you need. Each pull-out block slides on a pan head screw captured in a routed keyhole slot on the bottom of the block (photo, below right). If you want to remove the block and take your bits to where you're working, just lift the block off the screw and go.

Rout the stopped keyhole slot in the center of each pull-out block and drill a 1" dia. by 1/2" deep finger hole in the front.



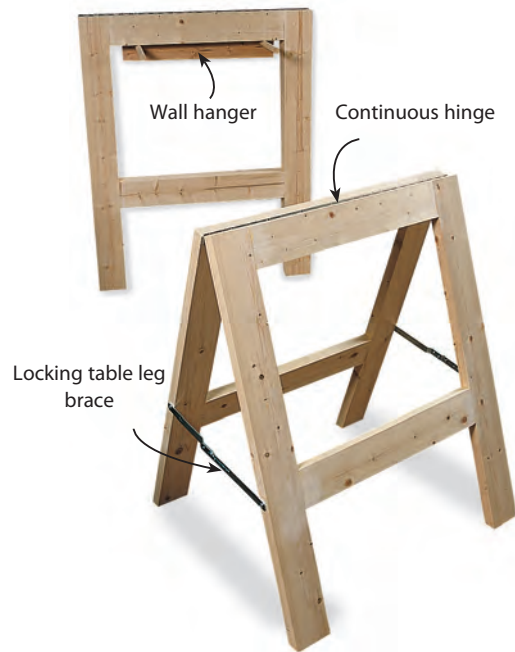
## 9 Small-Tool Cabinet

**Store your small tools** in this simple, easy-to-build plywood cabinet. The shallow drawers are ideal for layout tools or carving gouges, while the deep drawers are best suited for marking gauges and block planes. Place your cabinet on a shelf or hang it from a wall by fastening through the back.

Use 1/2" thick ApplePly or Baltic birch for the case and back, 1/4" tempered hardboard for the drawer bottoms, and pine for the drawer sides.

The drawer bottoms do double duty. They function as slides and pulls as well. Cut 3/16" deep dadoes in the case's sides for the drawer bottoms to slide in. Stagger the dadoes in the middle divider so it stays strong. The lowest drawers do not have dadoes. Cut rabbets for the cabinet's back and fasten it with screws or nails.

Simple rabbet joints hold the drawer sides together (the back of the drawer is made the same way as the front). Nail and glue the sides together, then even up the bottom edges. Glue the sides down to the hardboard bottom. The stiffness of the drawer sides keeps the hardboard from bending under the weight of your tools.



## 10 Folding Sawhorses

**These sawhorses are sturdy** and fold flat for easy storage. Building them is a snap: joint and plane 2x4 stock to 1"; then rip to 3". Crosscut at 30" for the legs and 18" for the stretchers. Use a biscuit joiner and double stack #20 biscuits at each joint. Assemble with a 1-1/2" continuous hinge and locking table leg braces.

### SOURCE

Woodworker's Hardware, [wwhardware.com](http://wwhardware.com), 800-383-0130, 48" brass hinge, #C11248, \$6.93; Stanley table leg brace, #S0446/14 2C, \$28.05 per pair.



## 11 Router Rack

**Keep your fixed-based routers** handy and ready to go with your favorite bits. Make this rack from scraps of 3/4" MDF or plywood. It measures 4" tall by 9" deep by 16" wide. Each slot measures 2" wide by 6" deep. To make the slots, just drill a 2" hole at the back of each slot and cut out the rest of the slot on a bandsaw. Router wrenches and extra collets fit nicely under each router.



## 12 Floor Drawer

**Here's a great space-saving tip.** I first made "floor drawers" like these for under-the-bed storage. They worked so well I decided to use them in the shop. Floor drawers work great for storing scrap wood or infrequently used tools and supplies.

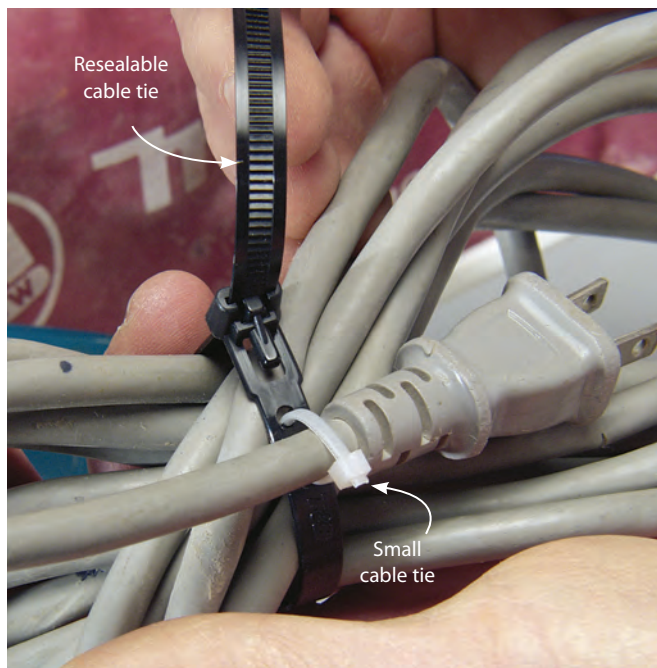
Make the drawers long but shallow so the contents are easy to get at. I made mine with non-swiveling wheels and an oversize handle so I can push them in a straight line with my foot.

### 13 Cable-Tie Cord Management

**My power tool cords** were always in a tangle, so I finally did something about it. All it took was a couple of cable ties; a small standard one and a large resealable one.

I drilled a couple of tiny holes in the resealable tie (near its clasp) and inserted the small standard tie. Then I fastened the small tie to my power cord. I use the resealable tie to hold the power cord when it is coiled up. It's a quick and convenient way to keep your power cords neat and orderly, and the ties stay with the cord.

Cable ties usually come in bags of 50 or 100. I don't have that many power tools—yet!—but I've found lots of handy uses for these ties around the house and yard.



### 14 Ceiling Drawers

**To eke out every cubic inch** of storage in a basement shop, try these boxes that hang between your ceiling joists. When a drawer is down, you have easy access to its contents.

A lag screw or bolt works well for a pivot and a pair of pivoting cleats holds each drawer in place. They're perfect for tools and supplies you don't need to get at very often.







## 16 Bench-End Tool Storage

**If you hate fumbling around** in drawers or digging into cabinets for tools, try this add-on for your workbench. It displays hand tools out in the open where you can grab them instantly.

Most workbenches have a perfect spot to hang some perf-board for bench tools between the legs. You'll enjoy having bench tools within easy reach, right where you're most likely to use them.

## 15 Bandsaw-Blade Clip

**You'll never think twice** about the spring tension in coiled-up bandsaw blades until you drop one. When a blade hits the floor, the coil can explode and the wild blade can bounce right back at you.

Binder clips are much more convenient to use than twist-ties and they make coiled blades easy to carry and hang. Binder clips cost less than a buck each and they come in a rainbow of colors; so you'll be able to color-code them by size.



## 17 Soda-Bottle Storage

I found a quick, cheap and easy way to store lots of little stuff like biscuits, screws, wood plugs and the like. Drill a hole in the cap of a plastic soda bottle and insert an eyebolt. Secure the eyebolt with two nuts, one above and one inside the cap. Finally, cut a round hole in the shoulder of the bottle.

One cool thing about this storage system is if I knock one of these bottles off my workbench, all the stuff inside doesn't spill out. It gets trapped in the neck of the bottle rather than spilling out the opening.



## 18 Sandpaper Press

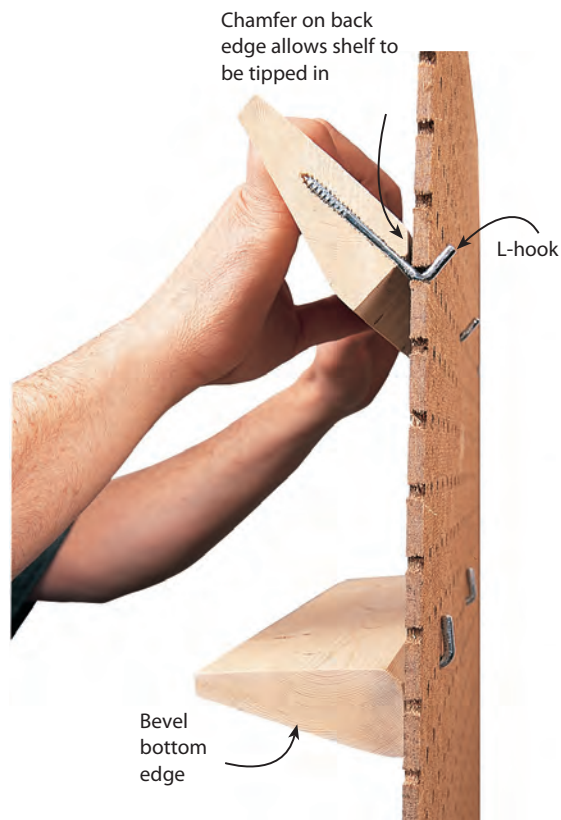
When stored loose in a drawer, sandpaper sheets curl like potato chips, making them difficult to handle. This simple sandpaper press solves the problem. The tray keeps an assortment of grits flat and ready for use. The lid is made from MDF, which is heavy enough to keep the sandpaper flat.



## 19 Perf-Board Shelving

I use a perf-board over my bench to keep tools organized and within easy reach. These shelves take the concept one step further and remove the clutter that tends to build up on a workbench.

Use 2x4s and 1/4" L-hooks to make the shelves. Chamfer the top back edge so the shelf can be tipped in and tighten the L-hooks for a snug fit against the perf-board. These shelves are surprisingly strong and can be sized to fit your specific needs.





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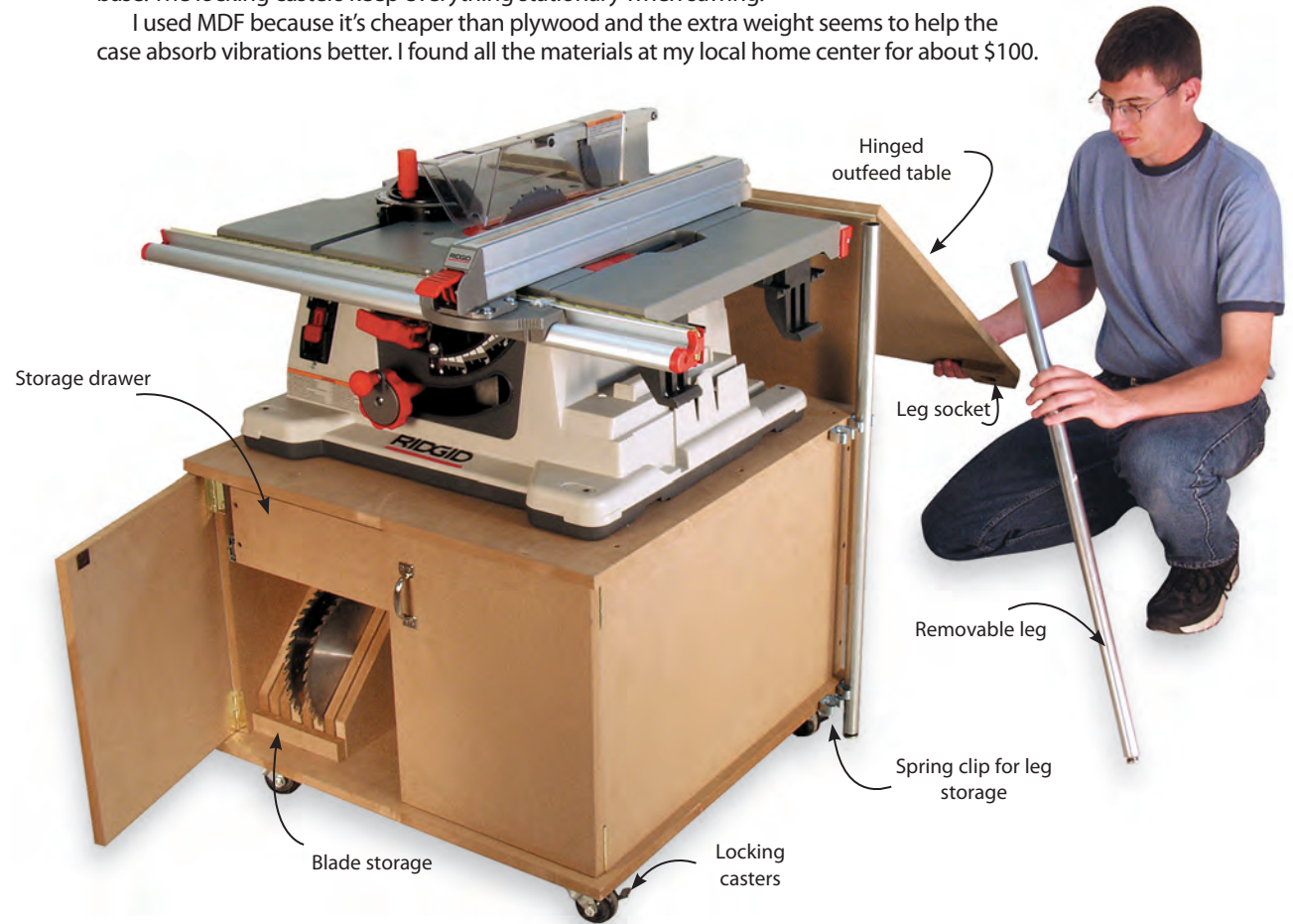
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## 20 Mobile Saw Base with Bonus Storage

**My tools need to be mobile** because I share my shop with two cars. This mobile tablesaw base offers portability and abundant storage. The base provides enclosed storage, including a full-extension drawer for small items. I made a hinged outfeed table and added a couple of wood blocks under the outer corners to provide a place for drilling the leg sockets.

The legs are 1" metal electrical conduit with leveling feet inserted in one end. When the outfeed table is folded down, I store the legs in a couple of spring clips on the side of the base. The locking casters keep everything stationary when sawing.

I used MDF because it's cheaper than plywood and the extra weight seems to help the case absorb vibrations better. I found all the materials at my local home center for about \$100.





## 21 Dado-Blade Carrier

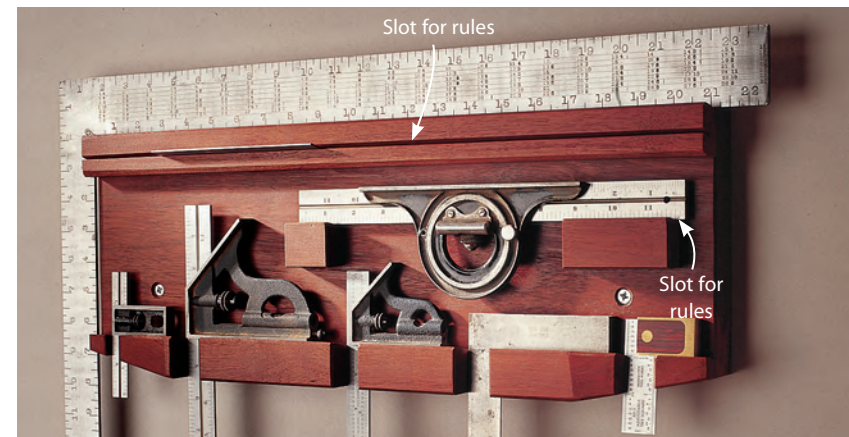
I recently bought a dado blade set and decided right off to build a carrier for it. I designed my carrier with a separate spot for each blade. This makes it easy to access blades individually and keeps the teeth from touching so they don't get chipped. The scoring blades are hung on a 5/8" dowel and a 1/2" rare-earth magnet holds them securely in place. One thing I like about my design is that there are no nuts to remove or loose parts to misplace.

### SOURCES

Lee Valley Tools, [leevalley.com](http://leevalley.com), 800-871-8158,  
1/2" rare-earth magnet, #99K31.03, \$1.04 ea.;  
1/2" magnet cup holder, #99K32.53, \$.70 ea.

## 22 Square Corner

Store precision squares in a safe, convenient place. The brackets have sloped tops, so the squares stay put if the rack is jiggled. Make the back at least 1" thick. Your tools are easier to grab if they sit well away from the wall.







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### 23 Drill Press Storage

**Pack plenty of storage** under your drill press by recycling an old kitchen cabinet. To make it fit around the drill press column, move the cabinet's back panel in about 8" and shorten the drawer to fit.

Add a plastic-laminate top and mount pull-out dividers inside, using full-extension drawer slides. Add a set of casters to make the cabinet easy to move when you must lower the table for thick stock. The removable drill bit indexes make storing and handling different bits a breeze.



## 24 Chisel Rack

**Grabbing the right chisel is** easy with this open rack because you can see all the blades. The long slots allow you to store chisels with blades that are wider than the locating holes. The bottom shelf prevents you from brushing up against sharp edges.

Make the 3-3/8" wide slotted rail by ripping three lengths of wood from one wide board. Cut the front piece 1" wide, the center piece 3/8" wide and the back piece 2" wide. Then clamp all three pieces back together without glue. Drill 5/8" dia. holes spaced 2" apart down the middle of the center piece. Unclamp the three pieces. Take sections of the center piece to make three short bridges, one for each end and one for the middle. Glue the rail back together with the bridges separating the outer pieces.

Cut 3/8" deep dadoes into the 3/4" uprights, slotted rail and shelf. Reinforce the joints with screws from the back.



## 25 Clamp Rack

**If you've got** a lot of clamps and not much space build this handy clamp rack. Just drill 5/8" dia. holes through 3/4" plywood at a slight upward angle and glue in 9" long 5/8" dia. dowels. Each pair of dowels holds six clamps, so you can hang 18 adjustable clamps and four spring clamps in only 2 sq.-ft. of wall space.

