

# Simple Workshop Cart

(with hidden drawer)

## Intro: Simple workshop cart (with hidden drawer)

For the last couple of months I've been busily reorganizing my workshop.

I've built all sorts of new stuff, including several cabinets, a large outfeed work table, and this new mobile workshop cart.

I wanted a simple but heavy-duty cart to hold my jointer and planer that allowed them to be moved around easily, and this is what I came up with. I was able to incorporate a slick little hidden drawer to boot!

This basic design could be adapted or modified for all kinds of uses, or even just simply used as a stand-alone portable work table.

A cart like this can be made pretty quickly (minus the drawer) from six 8-foot framing studs, some scrap material for the top, two casters, glue and screws, and some finishing supplies.





### Step 1: In use

Here's the completed cart, with my jointer and planer bolted in place. The lower shelf fits my scroll saw perfectly for storage.

This cart is rock solid, and exactly what I needed. I wish I would have built it years ago.

Alright, let's build this!



#### Image Notes

1. After a lot of research and consideration of my intended usage, I went with the Dewalt 734 planer, and the Porter Cable 160 jointer. If money and space were more abundant I'd go bigger and better, but for now these have been great. Even better now that they're on this fancyash cart!

### Step 2: Begin with the top

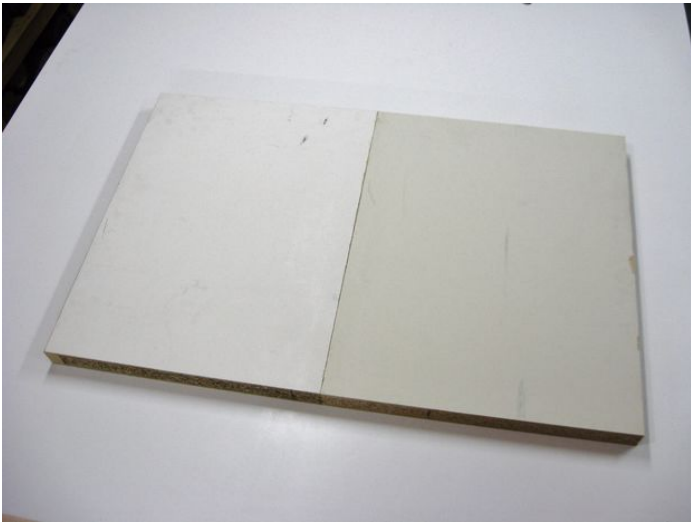
Almost the entire cart was built upside down. That sounds a little funny but it works out nicely.

Begin by choosing the material you will use for the top, and cutting that out to the desired size.

You could use pretty much any kind of sheet material for the top of a cart like this. Plywood, MDF, real wooden boards . . . whatever you've got handy.

I had two small pieces of old solid-core doors left over from a previous project, and this is what I used. They were first trimmed as needed and then glued together with clamps to form one solid piece. The finished size was 38 1/2" by 25" (completed with trim in place as seen in the intro, the top is 40" by 26 1/2", and the cart is 30" tall.)

If I didn't have the door pieces I used, I would have doubled up two pieces of 3/4" plywood for the top.



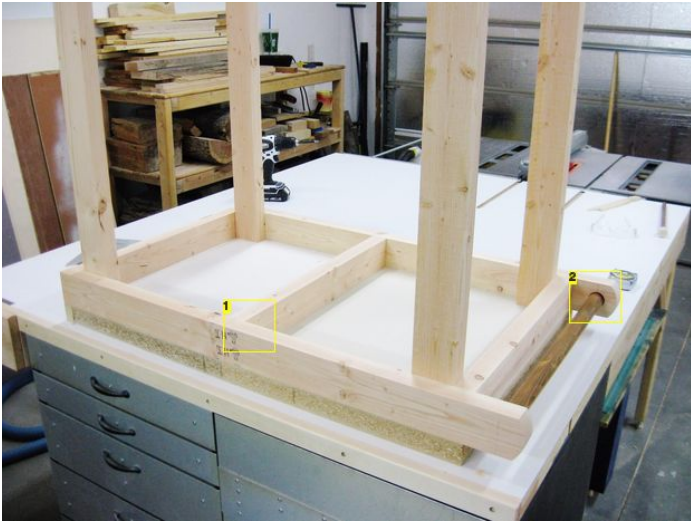
### Step 3: Cut boards for frame

I used standard framing studs to build a structure to support the top.

The frame consists of two main runners that extend beyond the top, which allowed for a handle to be built in. The handle was made from a section of an old wooden curtain rod.

See photo notes for various details. (The main photo in the next step has all of the dimensions I used.)

After trimming each board to the desired length, I ran the edges through the jointer and then table saw to trim the widths down to 3" and to square up all the edges. This is completely optional, but it creates cleaner looking joints when the doubled-up legs are made.



#### Image Notes

1. Laying out all the pieces--nothing fastened at this point. The top board is used as a guide to help prepare all the pieces as needed.
2. Holes were bored out with a forstner bit to receive the ends of the handle.



#### Image Notes

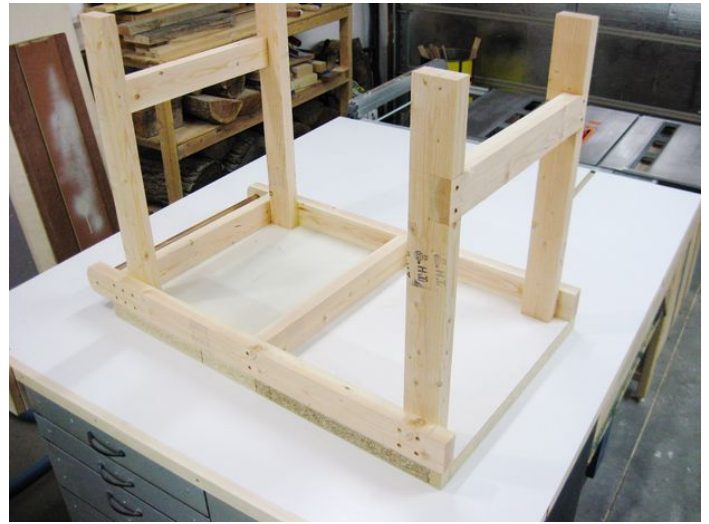
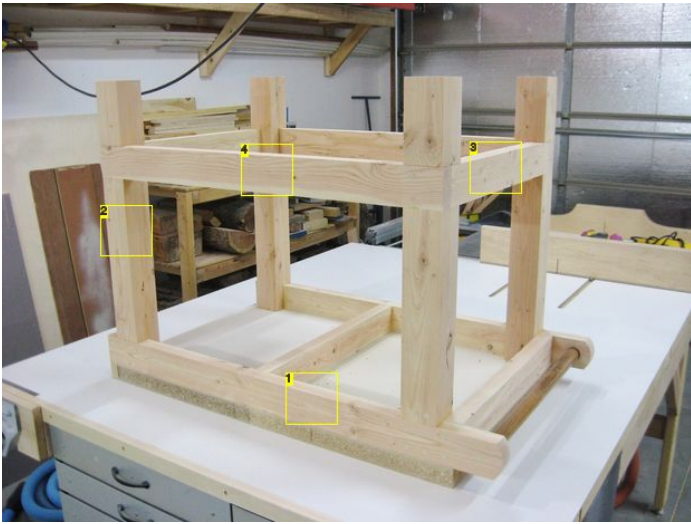
1. These are the inner leg boards. These notches were cut out on a band saw and will receive cross-piece boards.

### Step 4: Assemble frame

All the boards were fastened together with wood glue and 2 1/2" screws, fastened into holes that were pre-drilled and countersunk.

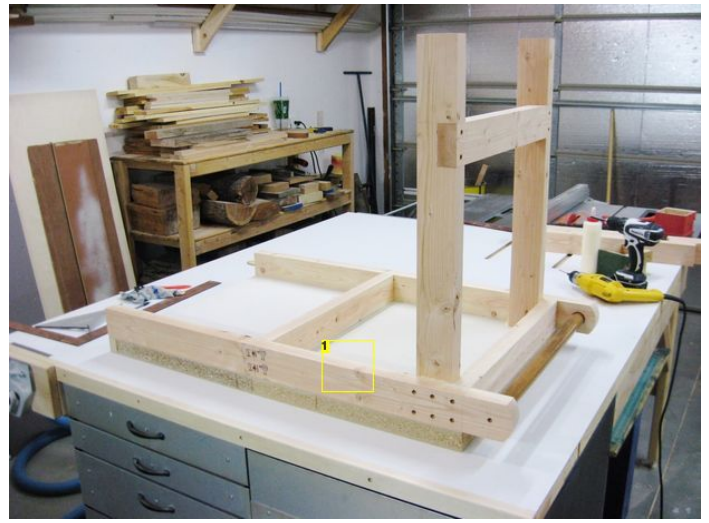
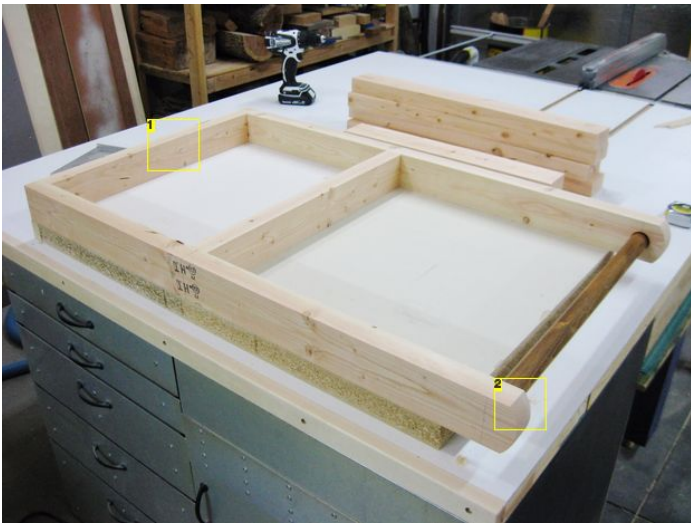
I can't speak highly enough of this set of fully adjustable tapered countersinking bits. I use them in almost every one of my wood projects. Definitely worth the investment!





#### Image Notes

1. These two main runner boards are 42 1/2 inches long.
2. Each leg is made from two boards. The main, inner board is 28 inches long, with the notches cut to match the cross pieces 6 inches up from the bottom. The outer pieces of the legs are cut to fit as needed.
3. All of the shorter cross braces are 22 inches long.
4. These longer braces are 35 1/2 inches long.



#### Image Notes

1. This board on mine was left off, as it will be the face of the drawer later on.
2. These ends were rounded off using a band saw, and then sanded smooth.

#### Image Notes

1. The top portion of the frame was built first, and then the top board was screwed to it from the top side.



#### Image Notes

1. If you're even slightly OCD, be sure to lay out precisely where you want your screws so they are evenly spaced and lined up relatively straight. Otherwise, your brain will hurt whenever you look at your cart!

### Step 5: Plug holes

I used pieces of a 3/8" dowel to plug all of the countersunk holes.

I put a bit of glue on the ends, tapped them into the holes with a mallet, and then used a small flush-cut saw to trim them off.

I plugged 90 holes like this . . . it takes a little time, but I think it looks a lot better than having screw heads showing everywhere.

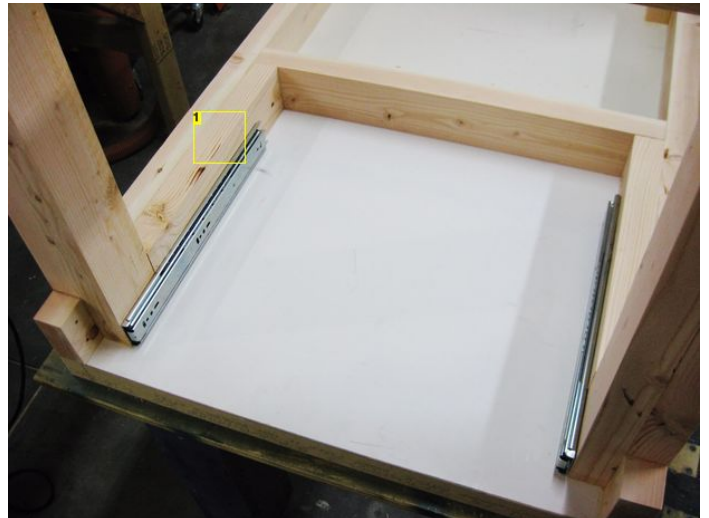


### Step 6: Build drawer

I built a simple drawer out of birch plywood and a piece of 1/4" MDF.

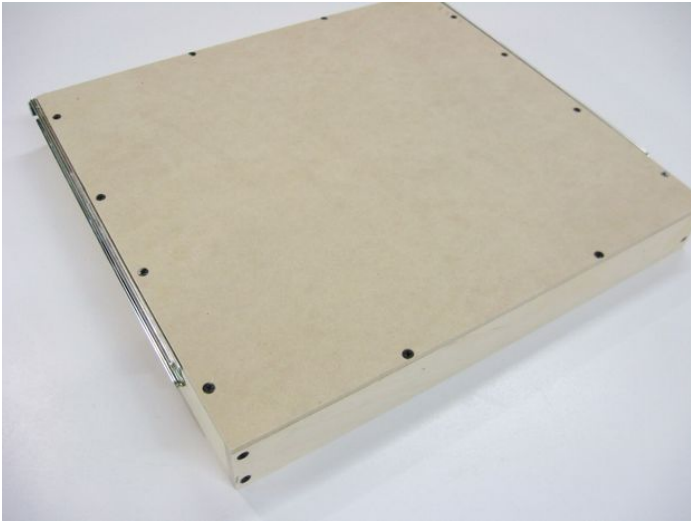
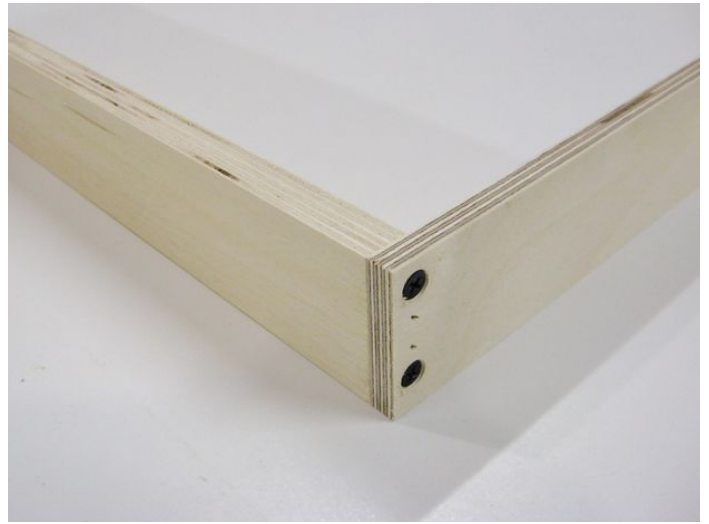
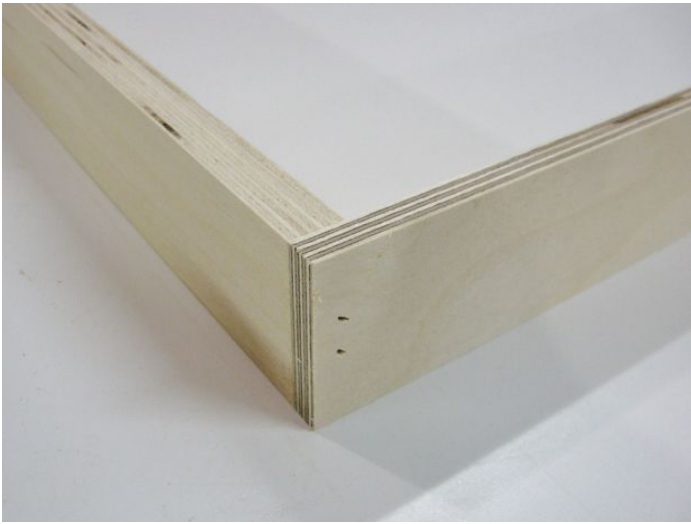
The frame was glued and tacked together with brads, and then fastened securely with 1 1/4" drywall screws fastened into countersunk holes. The bottom panel was simply glued and screwed in place.

Drawer guides were then installed on the drawer as well as the underside of the cart.



#### Image Notes

1. Additional boards were glued and screwed in place here to provides something for the guides to be mounted to.



### Step 7: Apply finish

Prior to finishing I sanded the frame section of the cart with 220 grit sandpaper.

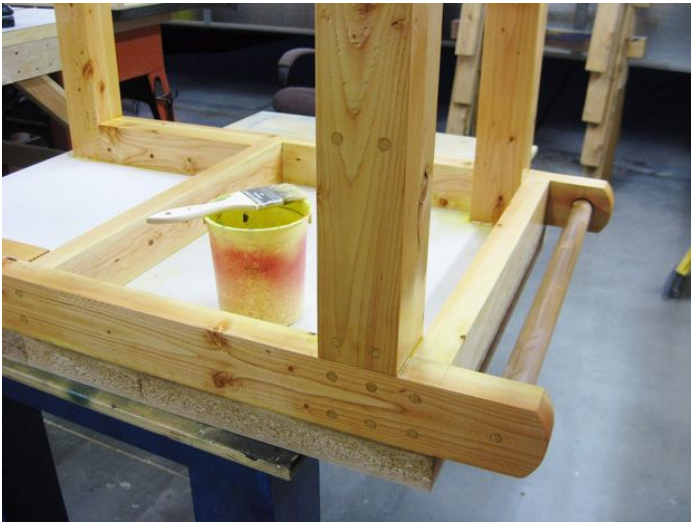
The frame of the cart was finished with boiled linseed oil. I brushed this on liberally, allowing plenty of time for it to soak in (especially on any end-grain areas), and then it was wiped down with a rag.

After about 24 hours, I applied three coats of spray-on lacquer, with a light sanding of 220 grit sandpaper between coats.

I used some scrap 3/4" pine as trim around the top board. This was fastened with glue and brads. After filling the holes with wood filler and sanding it smooth, the trim was coated with spray lacquer. The top was then painted white with a couple coats of brush-on primer.

The front face of the drawer was finished in the same manner as the frame, and was fastened to the drawer box with screws.





### Step 8: Add a shelf

I wasn't initially planning on adding a shelf, but decided it would be silly not to.

I added a brace across the middle with pocket screws, and two pieces of 1/4" MDF were cut as needed and screwed in place.





### Step 9: Add wheels and non-slip padding

Up until this point, I wasn't really sure what kind of wheels I was going to put on the cart.

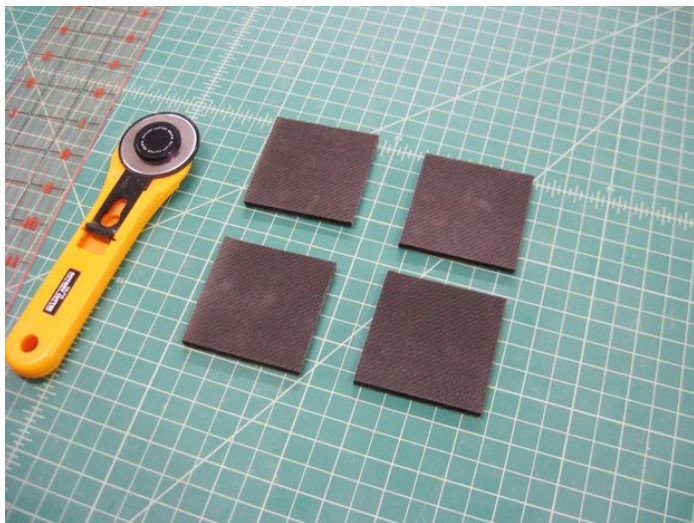
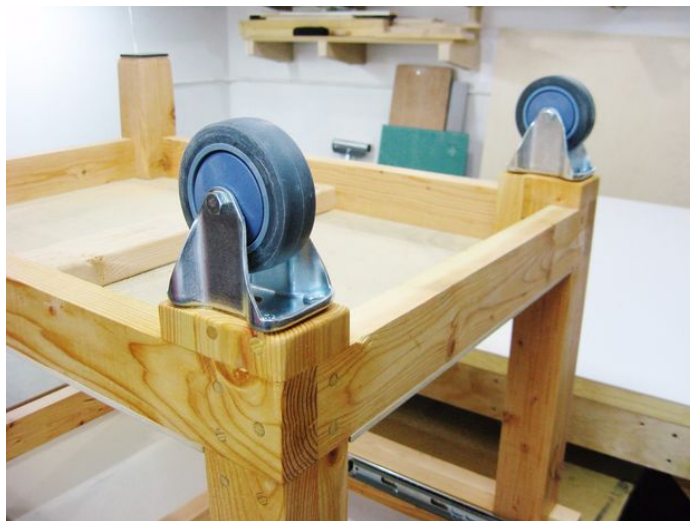
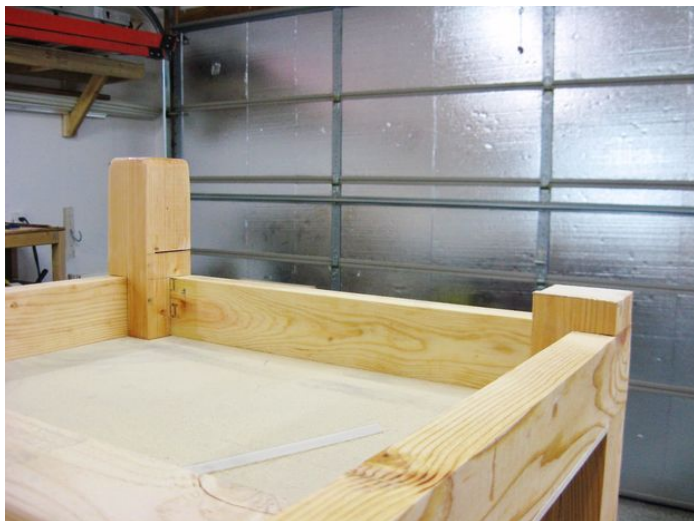
I hadn't been to the store yet, so I had just planned on adapting the frame to whatever I bought.

I ended up buying two heavy duty polyurethane casters with 3" wheels.

The leg bottoms opposite the handle side of the cart had to have about 5" trimmed off, and an extra support piece needed to be added. These areas were touched up with finish so they matched the rest of the cart.

The wheels were fastened with 2" lag screws into pre-drilled holes.

For the legs on the the handle side of the cart, I cut up an old computer mouse pad and glued pieces onto the bottoms of the legs with contact cement. They are super grippy and work great.



### Step 10: Attach tools!

My jointer and planer were then bolted in place to the top of the cart.

The bolts where the drawer was were a little too long and needed to be carefully ground off.



### Step 11: That's it!

If you make a cart like this, please leave a comment and a photo to show it off.

I'd love to see how yours turns out!

