

Canted Wall Box

Adapted from a 19th-century example, this wall-hung shelf is perfect for displaying your treasures.

Adapted from an 1840s piece, this canted wall box is scaled up from the one you'll find in John A. & Joyce C. Nelson's "The Big Book of Weekend Woodworking" (Lark). Making it just a wee bit bigger allowed me to make use of 1/2" x 6" poplar (which is actually only 5 1/2" wide) without having to make any rip cuts.

Cut Your Pieces

First, cut the two sides to length with your miter saw, then draw the side pattern on one piece. Clamp the side pieces together, then clamp them flat to your workbench so the offcut area is overhanging the edge. (To help control the two pieces from slipping, you could use carpet tape to help keep them together.) With a jigsaw, carefully cut to the pattern, leaving your lines intact. (If you need instruction on proper jigsaw use or any other step to construct this project, visit

ICanDoThatExtras.com and download the free manual.)

Unclamp the sides from your workbench, but not from one another. Clamp them cut-edge up in your Workmate then use a rasp, file and sandpaper to refine and smooth the curve, then set them aside.

Now cut the back to length and lay it flat on your bench. Lay out the arcs using the pattern to the right, or mark them out with a compass. Each arc is a half circle; the top radius is 2 3/4", the side radii are 2". Cut with a jigsaw then refine and smooth the arcs.

While you can certainly cut the shelves and bottom to depth according to the cut list, it's beneficial to first cut them a little oversized (the shelves should for now extend past the front of the piece), then do a dry fit of your pieces as shown in the picture at left, and carefully mark the final size. That way, you'll get a custom fit; your shelf edges will match with the front edge of your box. You'll need to do this for the top shelf anyway because you must mark the angle on the front edge to match the side curves. Cut the angle with a jigsaw, then refine the cut as necessary. Use a file to clean up your saw marks. You could, however, forgo the jigsaw altogether for this cut, and instead use a rasp or block plane to establish the angle, then refine it with your file and sandpaper.

Dry Fit Your Assembly

Now that all the pieces are cut and shaped, do your final sanding prior to assembly. Then dry fit the pieces together as shown, with the back flat on your workbench. Glue isn't necessary for this project because it's small and nails will provide sufficient hold, but you can use glue if you wish. Clamp across the



Fit before nailing. Dry fit your pieces before cutting the shelves and bottom to final size. Notice that the sides overlay the bottom and back, and that the back sits on top of the bottom piece.



Male tchotchkes. This 19th-century primitive wall box is a perfect place to display some of your treasures ... or a hang it by a door for use as a handy receptacle for mail, keys and other small items.

sides at the bottom and at each shelf, snug-
ging the bottom and shelves into place. Be
careful not to move the pieces as you tighten
the clamps, especially the bottom. It's crucial
that the bottom piece be situated properly, as
it determines the fit of the back piece.

Using a $\frac{1}{16}$ " standard twist bit, drill pilot
holes for 4d nails through the sides and into
the back. Be very careful to keep your drill
steady; $\frac{1}{2}$ " stock has little forgiveness for
sloppy drilling. Now drive your nails through
the sides. Then, drill pilot holes through the

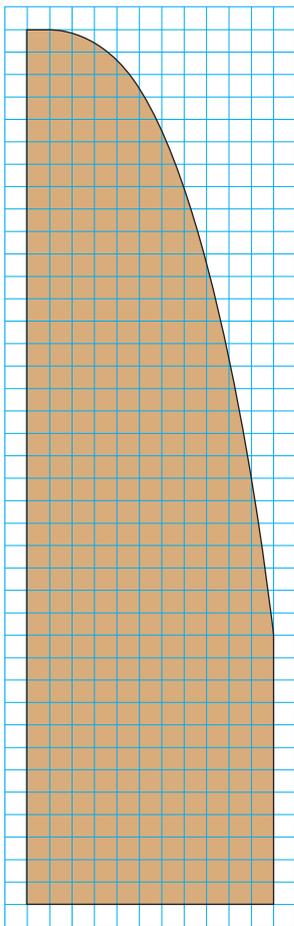
sides and into the bottom, and through the
bottom into the back, and drive your nails.

Before attaching the shelves, make sure
they're exactly where you want them. If they've
moved, simply unclamp the workpiece and
resituate the shelves. With the back, bottom
and sides already nailed in place, you needn't
worry about reclamping; you can simply hold
the shelf in place with one hand as you drill
your pilots through the sides then drive the
nails. Once that's done, for added strength you
may also wish to drill pilots and drive nails

through the back into the shelves.

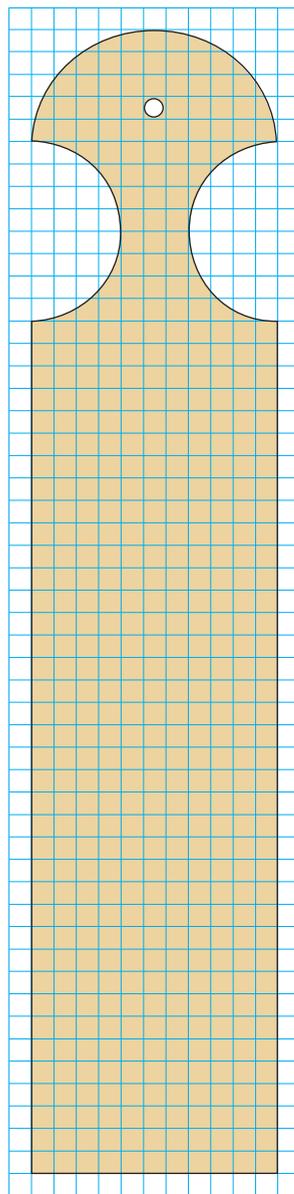
Now, drill a hanging hole centered $1\frac{3}{4}$ "
down from the top edge (I used a $\frac{1}{4}$ " bit),
then prime and paint the wall box the color
of your choice. **PW**

*Comments or a question? Contact Megan at 513-531-
2690 x1348 or megan.fitzpatrick@fwpubs.com.*



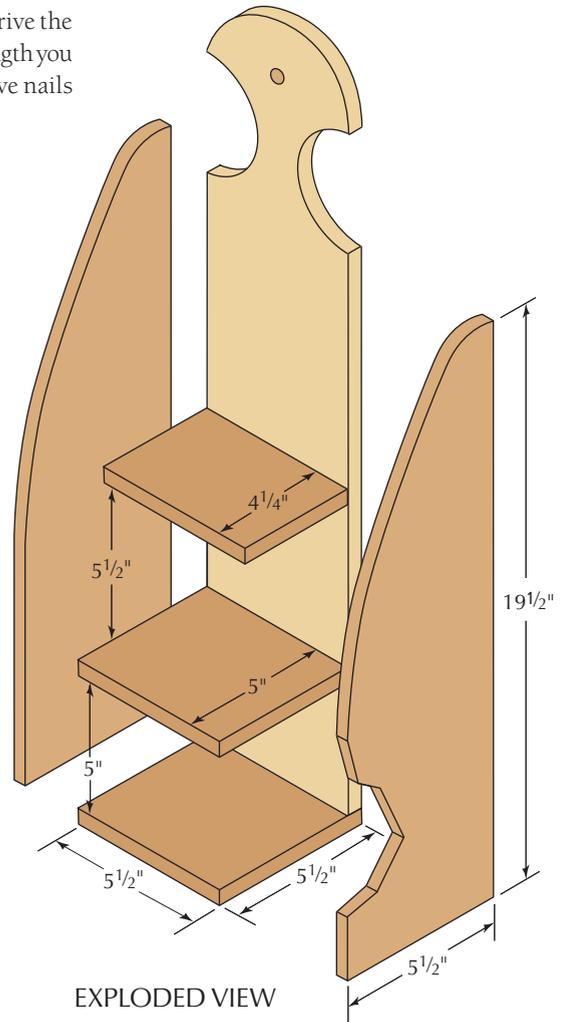
1 Square = $\frac{1}{2}$ "

SIDE PATTERN



1 Square = $\frac{1}{2}$ "

BACK PATTERN



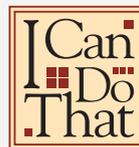
EXPLODED VIEW

Canted Wall Box

NO.	ITEM	DIMENSIONS (INCHES)			MATERIAL
		T	W	L	
❑ 1	Back	$\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$	$25\frac{1}{2}$	Poplar
❑ 2	Sides	$\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$	$19\frac{1}{2}$	Poplar
❑ 1	Bottom	$\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$	Poplar
❑ 1	Middle shelf	$\frac{1}{2}$	5	$5\frac{1}{2}$	Poplar
❑ 1	Top shelf	$\frac{1}{2}$	$4\frac{1}{4}$	$5\frac{1}{2}$	Poplar

About This Column

Our "I Can Do That" column features projects that can be completed by any woodworker with a modest (but decent) kit of tools in less than two days of shop time, and using raw materials that are available at any home center. We offer a free online manual in PDF format that explains all the tools and shows you how to perform the basic operations in a step-by-step format. You'll learn to rip with a jigsaw, crosscut with a miter saw and drill straight with the help of our manual.



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