

Writing Table Project
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WRITING TABLE PROJECT by Kevin Kell

Start of the Project:
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Intro

For the last few weeks in our dark-sky observing site just outside of Yarker Ontario, we have been observing from our observing deck which at the moment consists of a 10'x5' wooden deck (pressure treated wood) just off the ground (about 6") with two piers, one functional, one not yet completed.

We bring out charts, logs, and other reference material, and have no place to set them down or use them. I brought the Observing Table out a few times, but it was large, heavy, bulky and I didn't want to leave it outside. So the thought processes started up and I thought .. TV tray. So we tried one of those and it was too small, too low to the ground and to unstable. SO then I thought.. why not a new top surface for leg set #5. Voila! And out of scrap parts as well!

Benefits

- # to provide a lightweight table surface to write on, lay charts out on, etc.
- # light and easy to setup and can leave outside without worry

Design

Since this was to fit on top of the existing legs, I measured the width of the inside of the old observing box and got 23 1/4" by 17 1/4"

Parts List

- x1 1"x2"x8' pine \$1 (ledge)
- x1 25x19" x1/4" plywood (top surface)
- and x12 #6x3/4" wood screws (top surface to ledge)
- carpenters glue, varathane

Supplies needed:

- tape measure, tsquare, drill, jigsaw, palm sanders
- #80, #240 sandpaper, clamp, counter sink drill bit, small 1/16", drill bit, paintbrush

The Assembly

1. Cut the 1/4" plywood to fit the inside measurements of 17 1/4" by 23 1/4" plus the wood ledge size of 3/4" on both sides. So this comes up to: $17.25+.75+.75=18.75$ " and $23.25+.75+.75=24.75$ "
2. Cut the two long 1x2" sides to 24.75" Align one side, put glue on the narrow surface, align the plywood edge on top and clamp. Secure with 3 screws.
3. Repeat for the opposite side
4. Measure the inside distance on the short side.. you should get around 17 1/4" Cut two more pieces of 1x2" to this size.
5. Align one side, put glue on the narrow surface, force into place and align the plywood edge on top and clamp. Secure with 3 screws.
6. Repeat for the last side.
7. wipe off excess glue, make sure the screws are counter-sunk
8. Sand down the sharp edges and corners with #80 coarse sandpaper
9. Sand down the top surface with #240 fine sandpaper and do the edges and corners as well.
10. varathane the entire assembly, let dry, repeat. Done!

After the Fact

You may want to place something on the top surface before varathaning, like a starchart, drawing, artwork, etc.

Total Time including two coats: about 2 hours.

Total cost: about nothing... all from existing pieces and spare parts.

<http://www.path.queensu.ca/~kell/>