



Farmhouse Trestle Table

Step By Step
Plans for
Building a
Trestle Style
Farmhouse
Table

SUMMARY

A farmhouse table built using pine with classic X Trestle style legs. It is a simple plan that allows creativity for different designs.

It is an extremely strong design that should last a long time, especially using solid wood that can be refinished time and again.

WEBSITE LINK

You can access the website post here: <https://industrydiy.com/projects/farmhouse-trestle-table-plans/>

The post and this PDF are meant to be used together. The website has more real images, and this PDF has more diagrams, and will be better to print (not image heavy).

Also, when printing this I recommend color because the different boards are color coded.

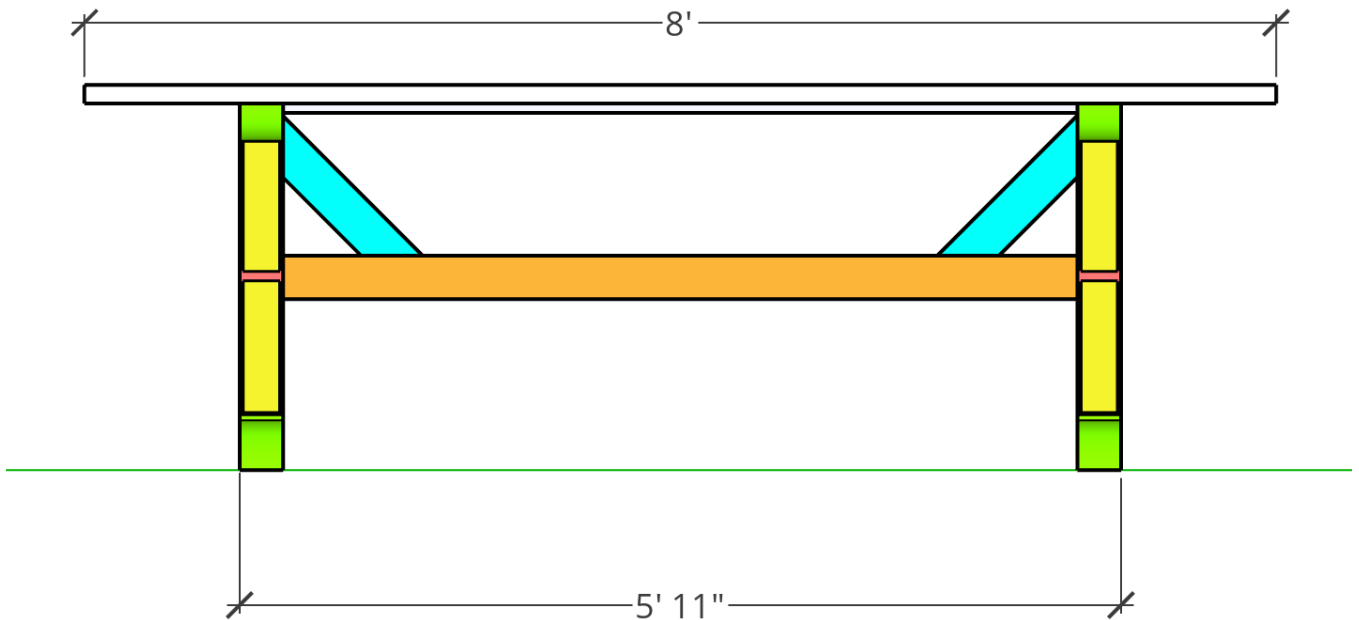
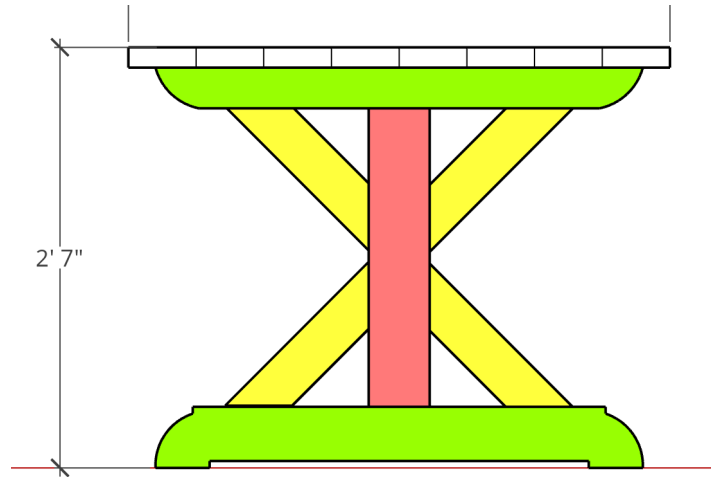
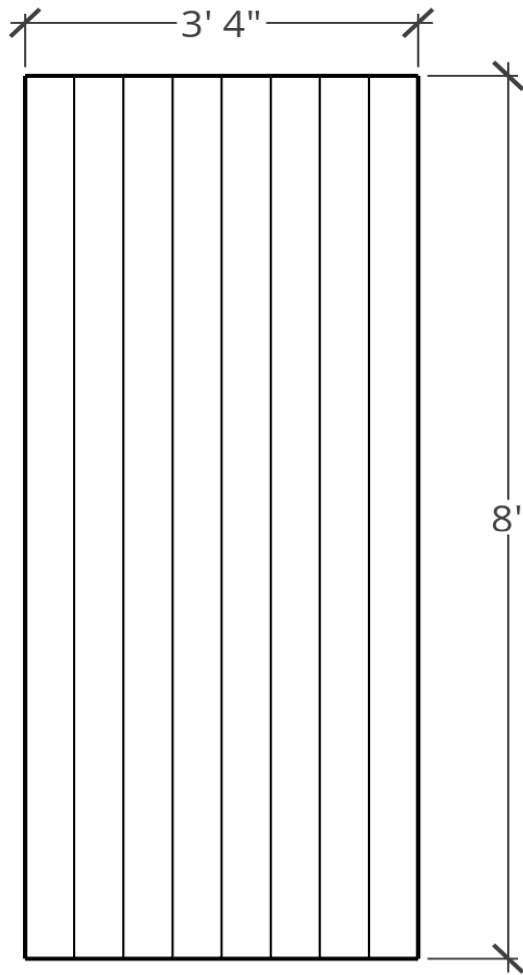
DIFFICULTY

MEDIUM

This project requires some intermediate woodworking skills and several different tools. Beginners may find it challenging, but not impossible.



DIMENSIONS



MATERIALS AND HARDWARE



- (12) 8' 2x4 Pine
- (8) 8' 2x6 Pine
- (2) 8' 1x6 Pine
- Wood Glue
- (4) Rubber Pads for table feet
- Biscuits or dominos for joinery (Optional)
- 1/2" Wood Dowels
- Stain (Gel Stain)
- Finish
- Tabletop Fasteners
- 3-1/2" Screws
- 1-1/4" Screws
- 2" Screws

TOOLS



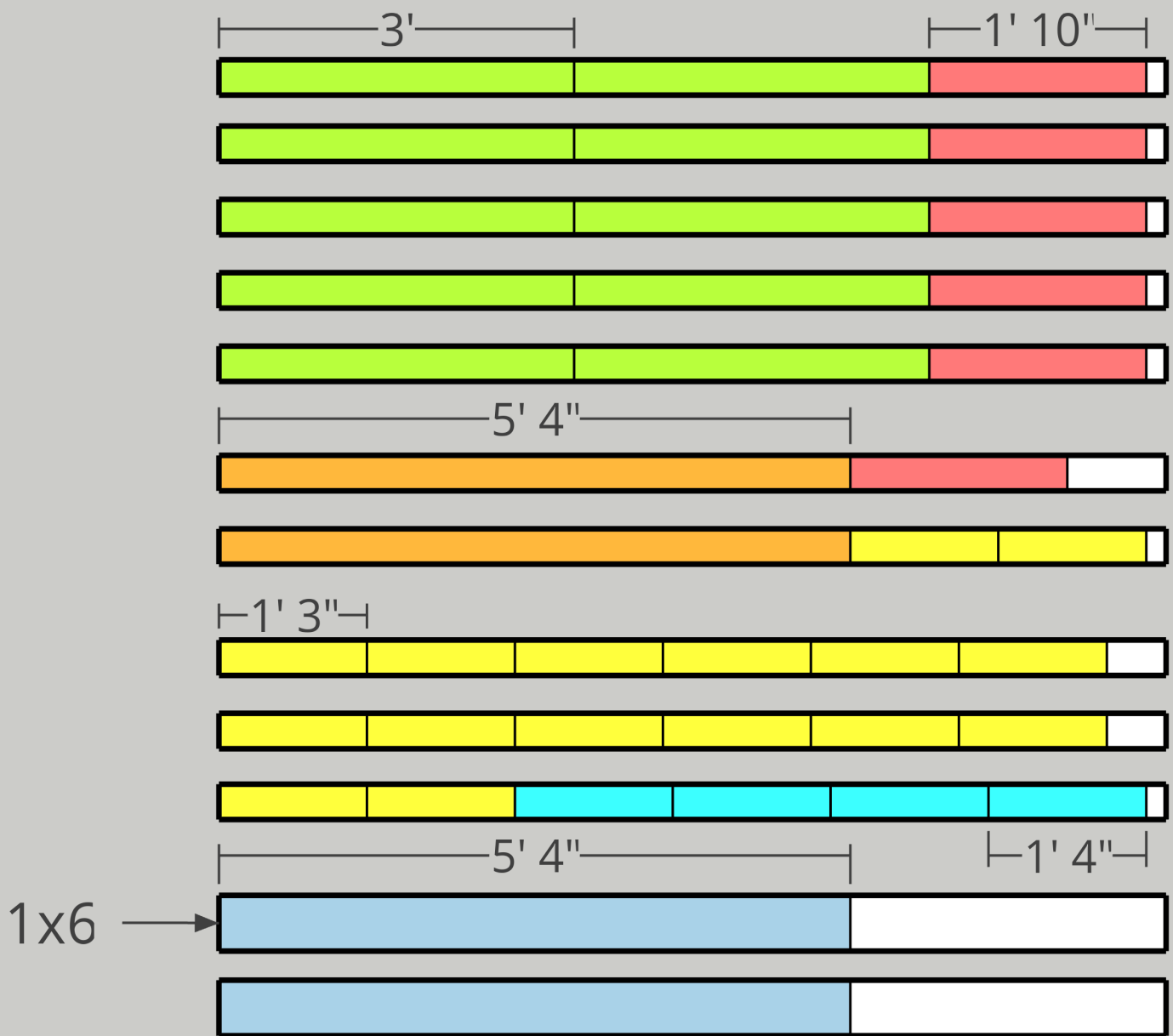
- Cordless Drill
- Random Orbital Sander
- Miter Saw
- Jig Saw/Band Saw/Coping Saw
- Kreg Jig
- Clamps (Various Sizes Needed)
4+ Clamps >48" for table top

Optional Tools (Advanced)

- Planer
- Joiner
- Biscuit Joiner/Domino Joiner
- Belt Sander
- Hand Plane

CUT DIAGRAM

This cut list is color coded with the assembly images later in this plan. The table top boards are not included because they won't be cut if you keep the length at 8' long.



STEP ONE: BOARD PREP

The first thing to do is cut each board to length. Use the Miter Saw for this step.

Use the cut diagram to see how to cut each board.

Milling the Boards

With 2x4s the edges of the board are normally rounded. This is something that I usually eliminate because I like square edges. Plus, when you leave the edges rounded it is somewhat obvious that it is a construction grade 2x4.

Easy: Glue up 2x4s with no milling

This means you leave the rounded edge on the 2x4s and glue them together as is. This is fine, and you can even flatten the boards later on.

Medium: Cut rounded edges off with table saw or track saw

You can get a good edge on the boards with a table saw. Simply cut a thin slice off of each side of the boards and you should have four good square edges.

Difficult: Mill boards square and flat

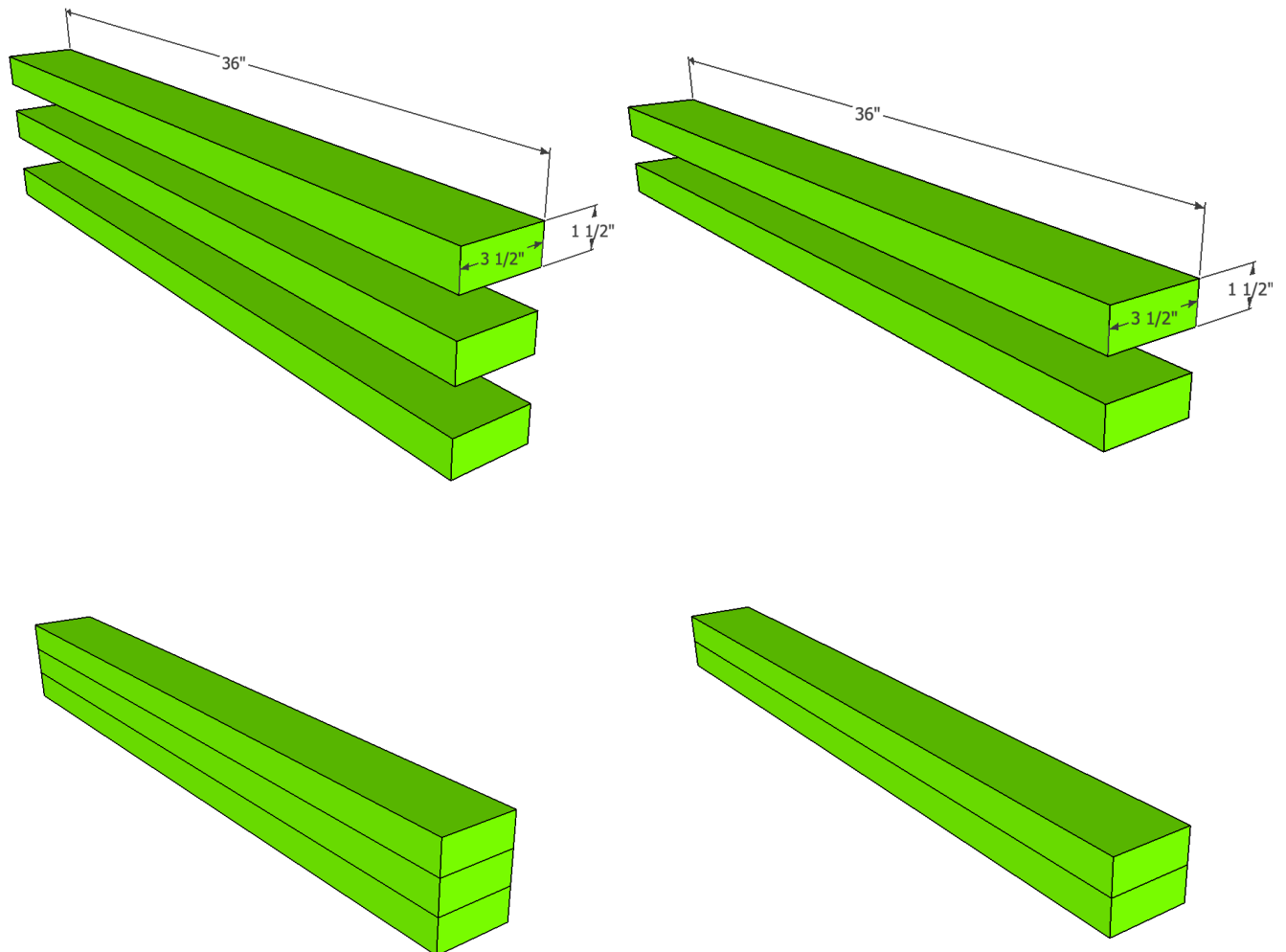
This step requires a joiner and a planer, and a table saw can be helpful as well. This process requires some previous skill and is beyond the scope of this plan.

STEP TWO: GLUE UP

This step is where we create thicker boards for the legs and stretcher. I do this by gluing the 2x4s together. You can possibly bypass this point by buying 4x4 boards and cutting them to the correct thickness.

Top and Bottom of Legs

There are 5 of these boards total for each leg (10 altogether). They should be 36" long. Glue these boards together for the top and bottom.

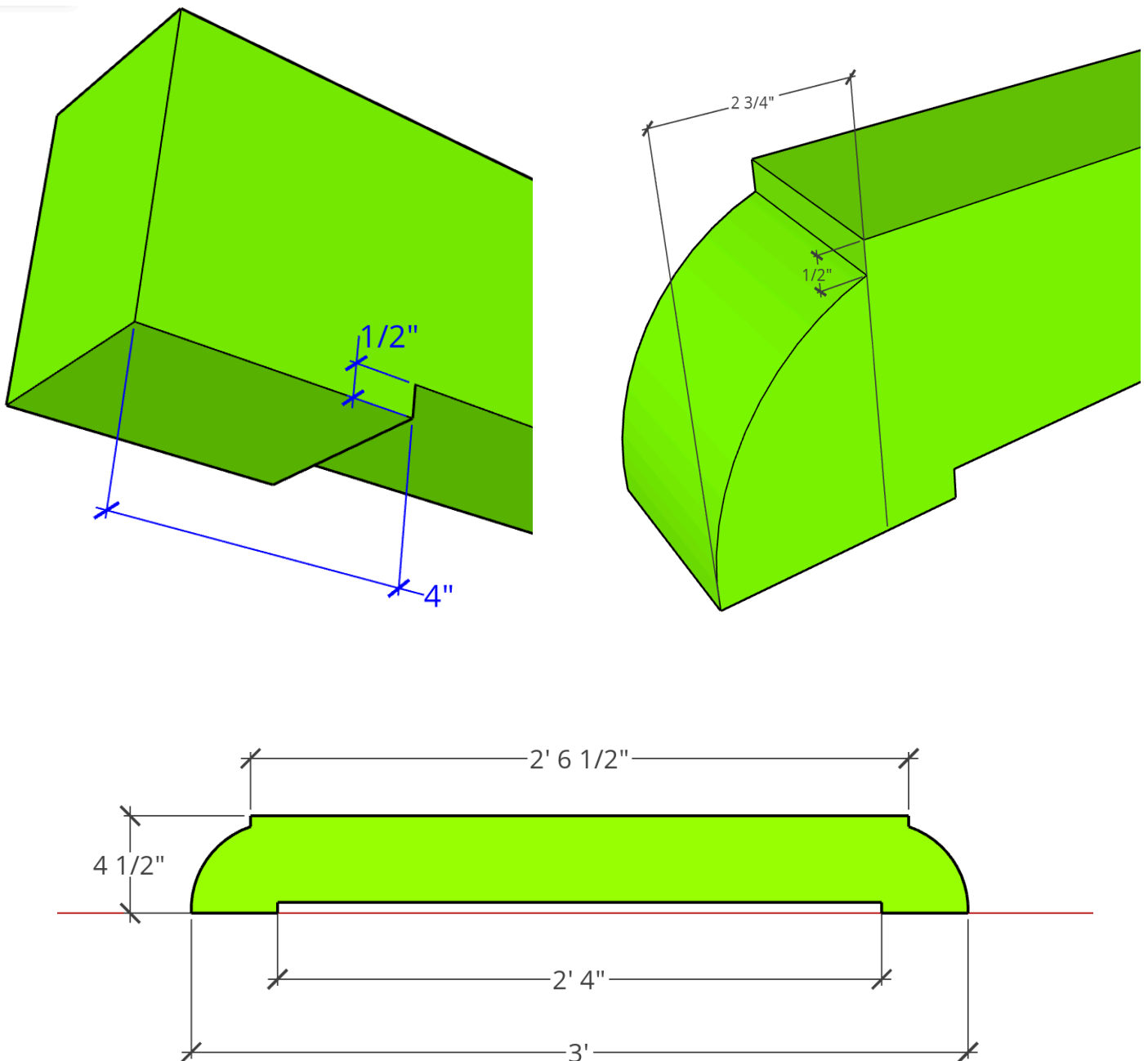


STEP TWO: GLUE UP (cont.)

Cut Decorative Edges on Top and Bottom

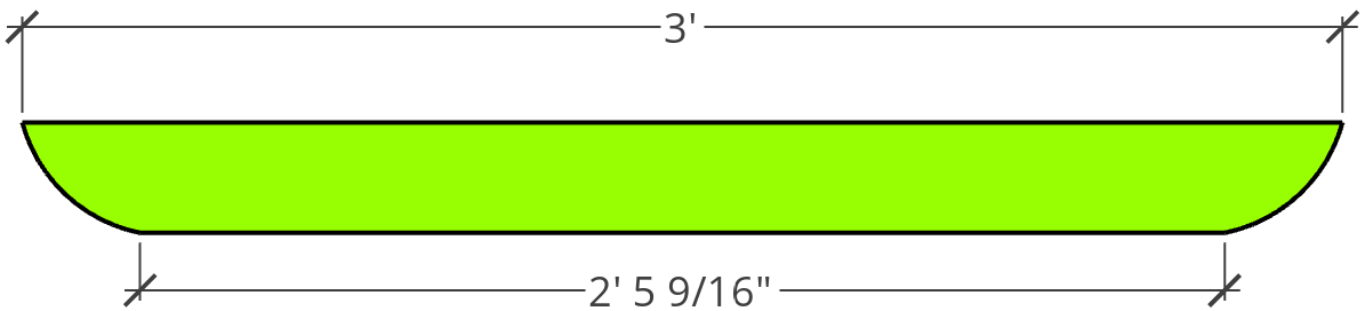
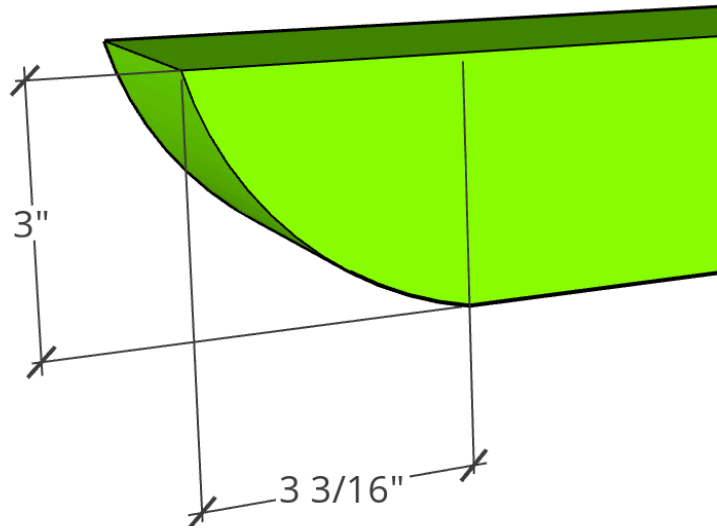
This step requires a bandsaw or some type of hand saw (like a coping saw). It is a decorative step meant to make the top and bottom of the legs more attractive.

To cut the feet, cut a notch across the bottom like in the image below, then cut the rounded edges:

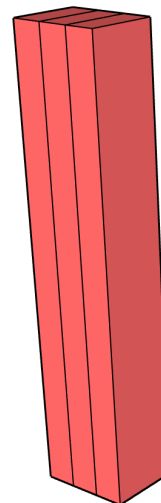
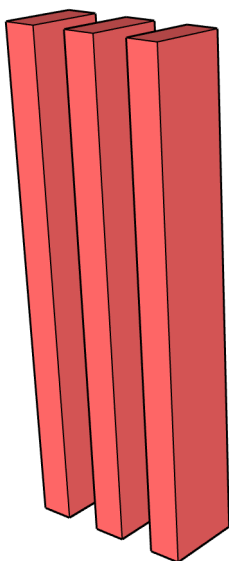


STEP TWO: GLUE UP (cont.)

For the Top:

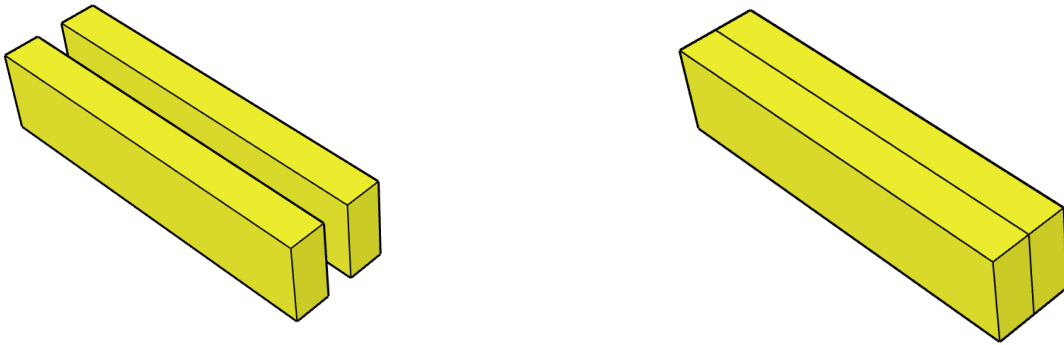


Glue Middle Post

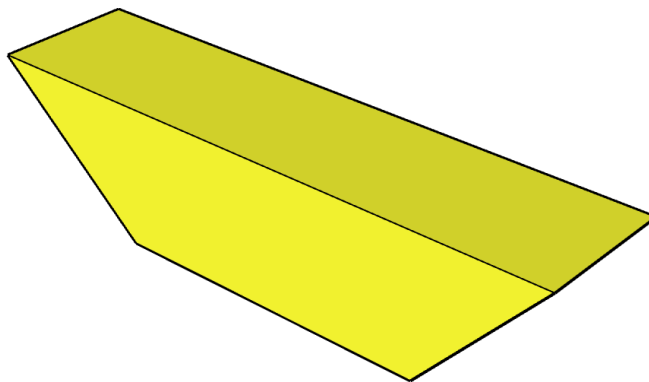
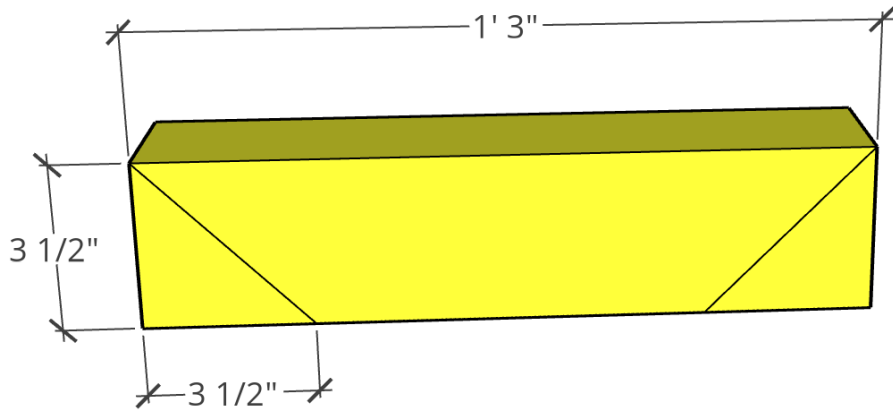


STEP TWO: GLUE UP (cont.)

Glue and Cut Trestle Supports

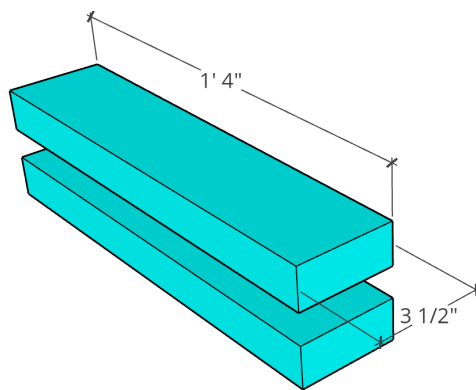
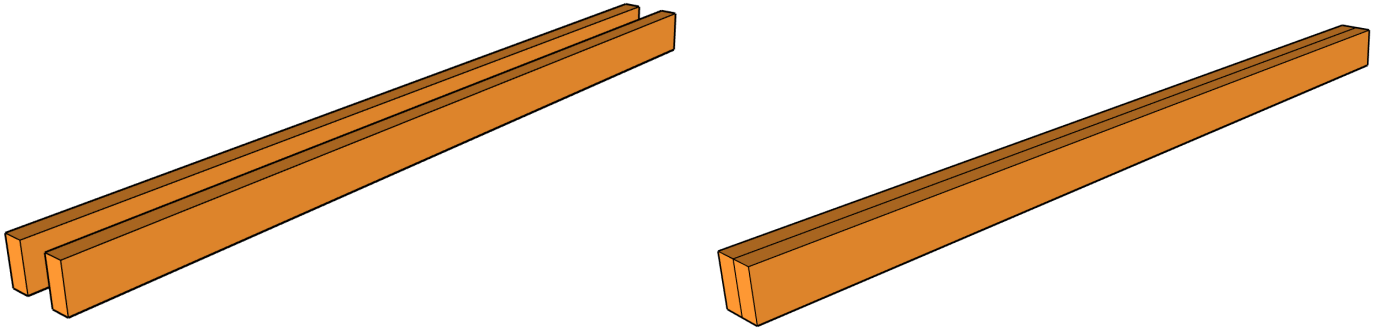


After these are dried, cut the ends at 45 degrees as shown in the pictures below:



STEP TWO: GLUE UP (cont.)

Glue Stretcher and Glue/Cut Stretcher Supports



Cut the stretcher supports at a 45 degree on both ends in the same way as the stretcher supports.

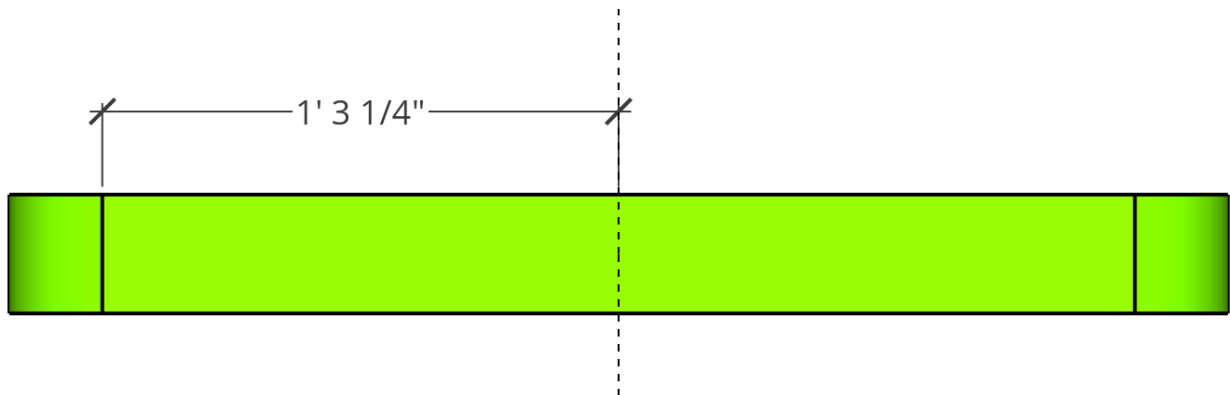
STEP THREE: ASSEMBLE TRESTLE LEGS

In this step you can choose to use your own method of building the trestle legs. You can use biscuits, dowels, dominos, or screws. In general, if it is glued well then it will be very strong. Sometimes you can use screws to help hold pieces together while the glue dries.

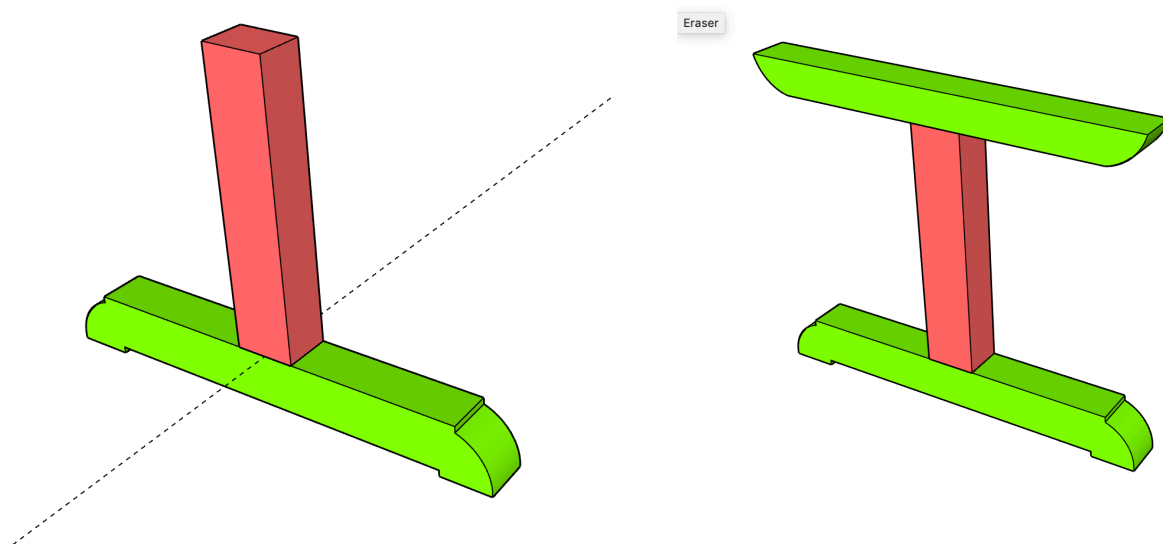
For this plan, I will simply show the assembly process, and you can choose to use any method of attaching the pieces you want. (My plan on IndustryDIY.com shows images of me using biscuits)

First, find the center of the top and bottom pieces of the legs.

Top:

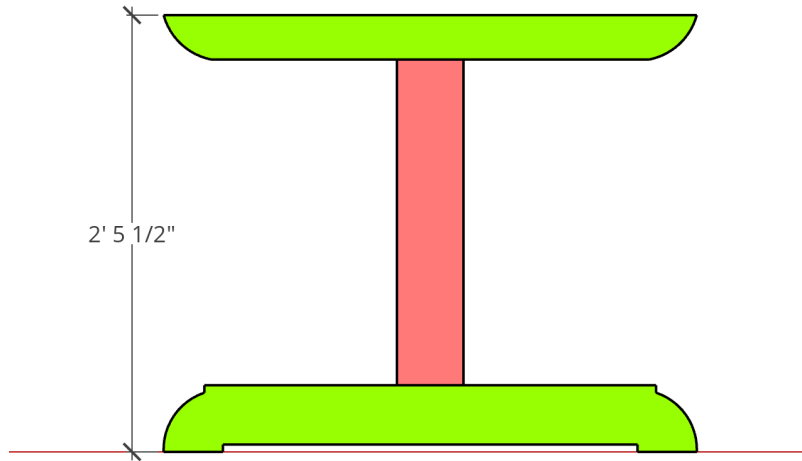


Then, align the center of the middle post with the center of the top and bottom pieces.

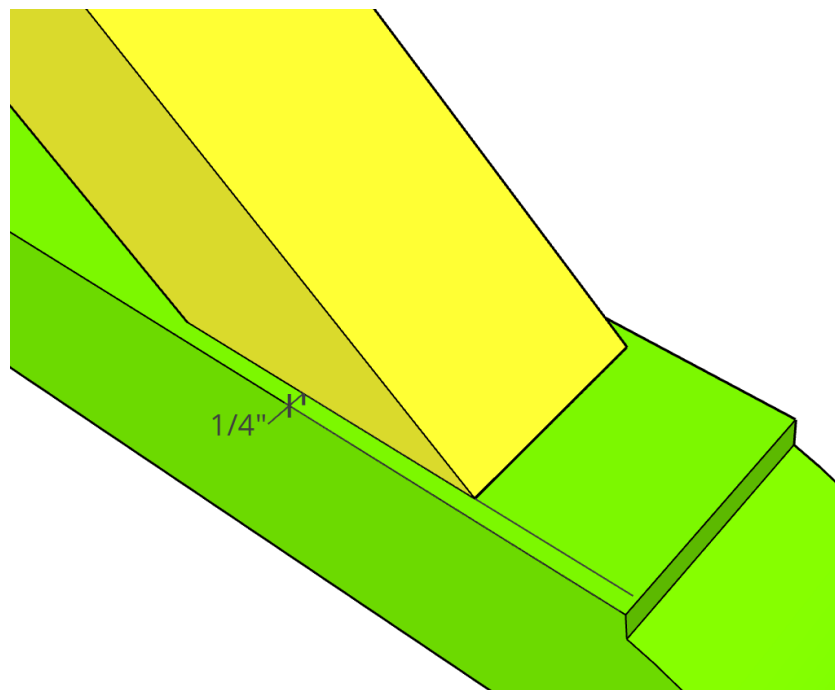


STEP THREE: ASSEMBLE TRESTLE LEGS

Be sure to measure the distance from the top to the bottom of the leg on the left side and the right side when clamping. They should be equal. If they are off then you should be able to adjust the clamps until they match up. Let these dry completely before you release the clamps.



After this dries, it is time to glue/attach the trestle supports. The supports will be slightly thinner than rest of the leg, so it important to factor this offset into any joinery that you do. In the image below, it shows 1/4" offset, but this may vary depending on your boards.

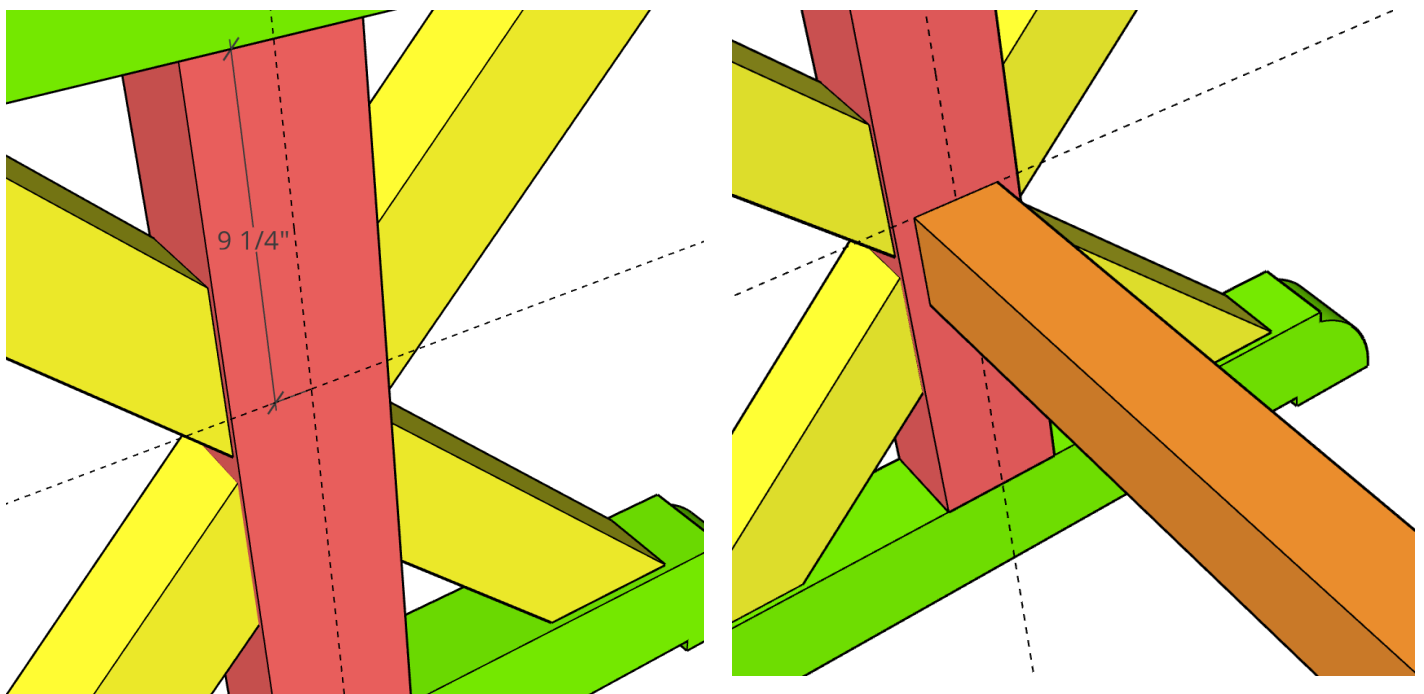


STEP FOUR: ATTACH STRETCHER

Glue or screw these trestle supports together. You can use biscuits, dominos, or drill screw holes and fill them with dowels. I'm leaving this part up to you because it depends on your tool capability and skill level. I simply used biscuits and glue and then clamped it together until it dried.

Mark Stretcher Location

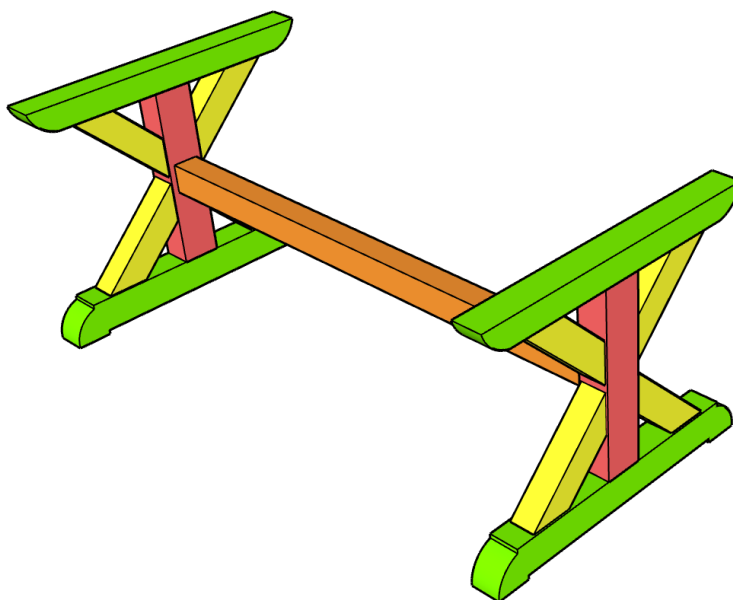
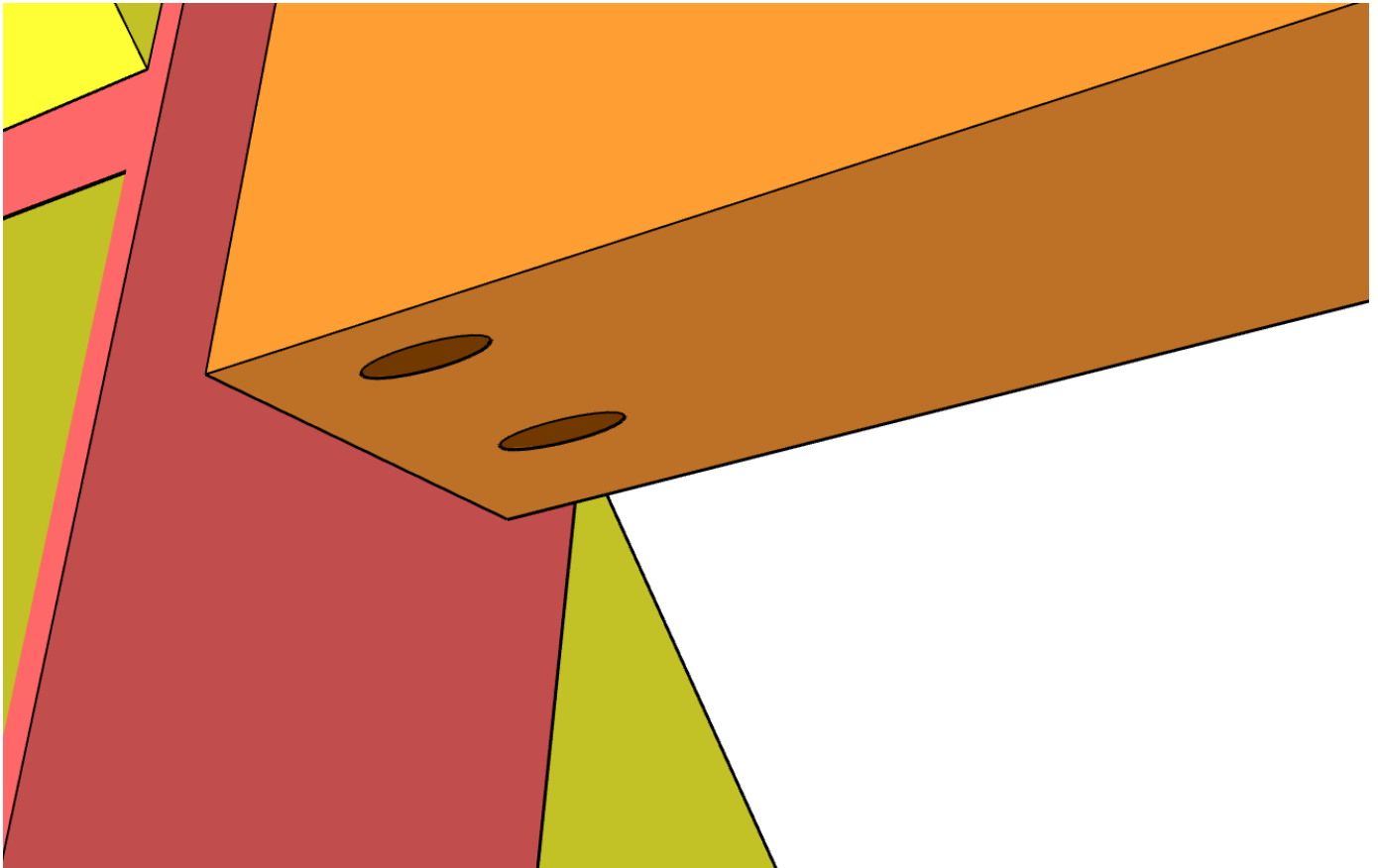
I found that marking the top of the stretcher location was the easiest. It is the center of the "X" on the trestle then offset half the height of the stretcher.



I used two pocket holes in the bottom of the stretcher to attach it. You can use any method here as well, such as driving screws from the other side of the middle post. For more advanced woodworkers, it is a good opportunity for some type of mortise and tenon.

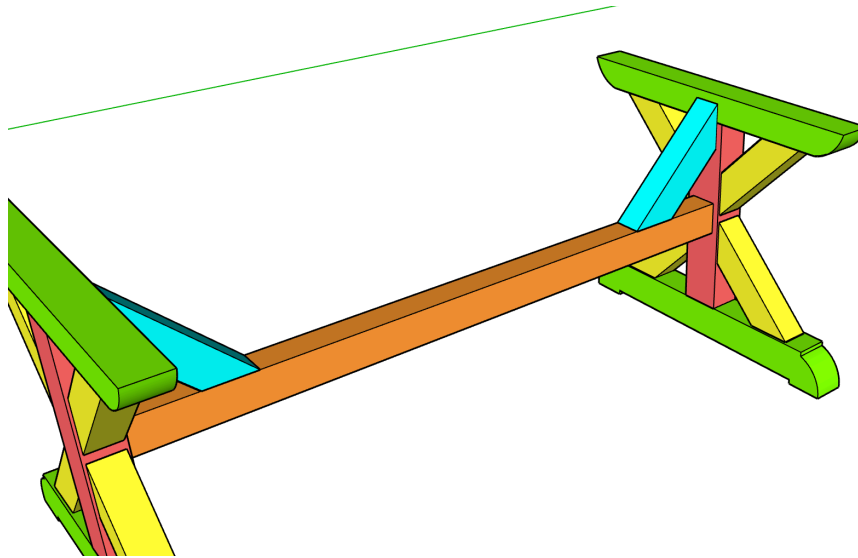
STEP FOUR: ATTACH STRETCHER

Pocket Hole Location and Attach Stretcher



STEP FOUR: ATTACH STRETCHER

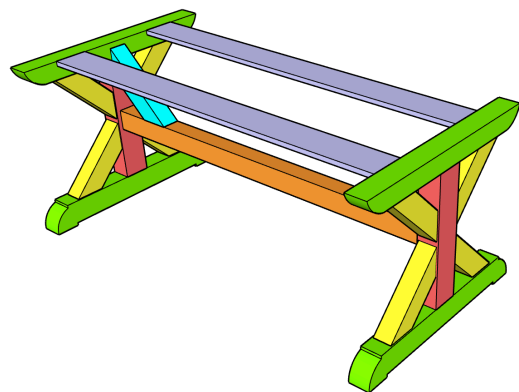
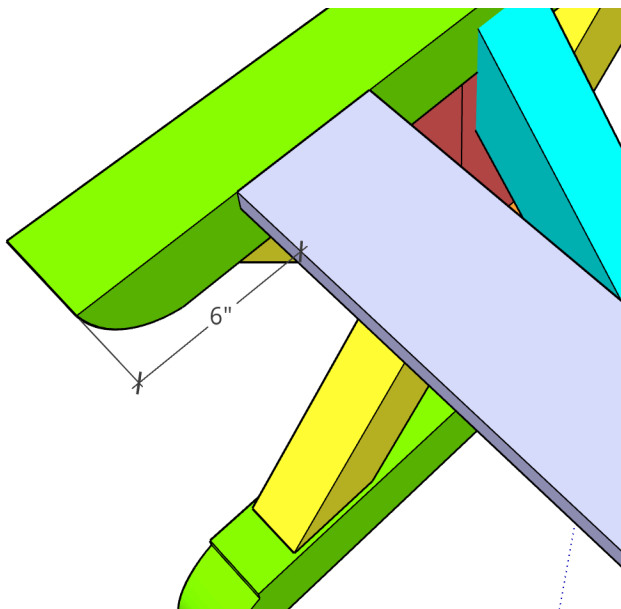
Attach Stretcher Supports



For these I used screws through the top of the supports. This part will rarely be seen, so I wasn't worried too much about covering it up.

Attach Top Stretchers

I offset these inside by 6" and attached using pocket hole screws in the top.



STEP FIVE AND SIX: CUT FASTENER SLOTS, SAND, AND STAIN

Cut Table Top Fastener Slots

If you have a biscuit cutter it works well for cutting a slot in the top of the trestle leg. You can also use a router.

I cut these along the outside of the top piece of the trestle leg.



Fill Holes, Sand, And Stain Bottom

At this point it is best to fill and holes with wood putty, sand the trestle legs down, and stain them. It is easier to do all of this before you attach the table top.

We will build the table top in the next steps.

STEP SEVEN: ASSEMBLE TABLE TOP

Now on to the 2x6s I am using for the table top.

One of the most important things here is to pick straight and true boards at the lumber yard. If you have some real twisted or cupped boards, it will be really hard to get a flat table top. There are ways to flatten these out, but over 8 feet it is going to be pretty difficult.

One thing you can do is to run the boards through the jointer or planer to get a good surface.

If you don't have either of those machines then don't worry, they aren't vital to your table.

It is important to have a good straight edge to glue the boards together. One way to get a straight edge is to cut a straight edge on the table saw. I plan to make a tutorial covering this, but for the time being I recommend a solution along the lines of this.

Align Boards and Cut Biscuits/Dominos

Once you get each board looking halfway decent, line them up and try to match up the edges and boards so that they look pleasing to the eye.

To prevent cupping on the table top it is best to alternate the grain direction of each board.

I like to cut biscuits to help keep the top flush. Now, this isn't a foolproof solution, but when you are gluing up such a large table it can be helpful because the glue is drying quickly.

Cut the biscuits for each board and do a dry fit to make sure it all fits and looks nice.

STEP SEVEN: ASSEMBLE TABLE TOP

With a dry fit you are looking to see how well everything lines up, and to make sure that once you add glue that you will not have trouble putting it together.

We are almost ready to glue it together, but there are a couple things we can do first to make the entire table glue up easier.

Glue Boards Together in Sections

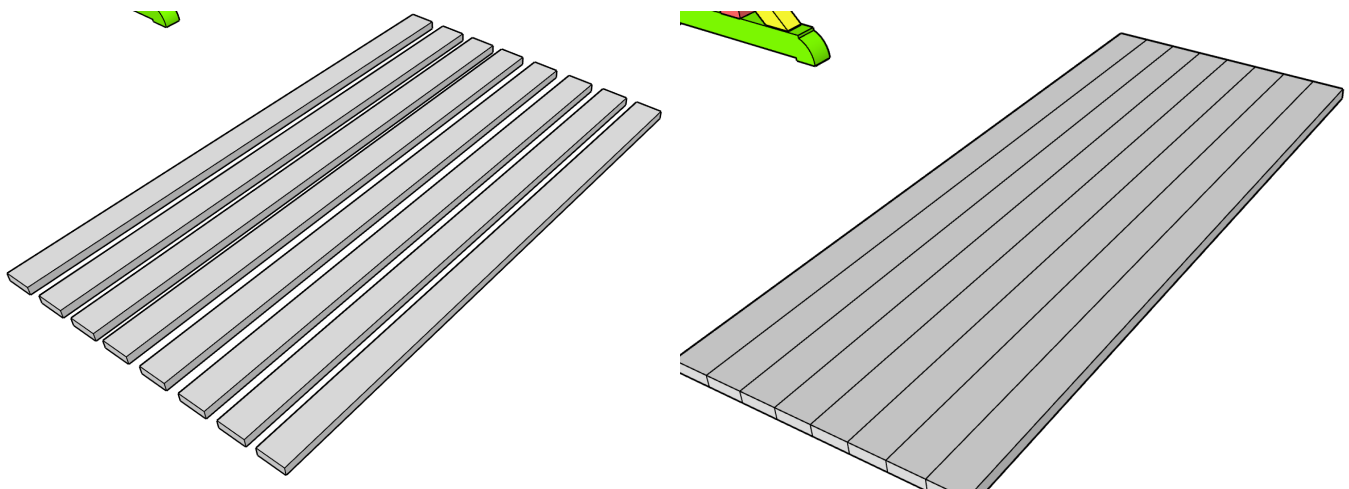
I did this when I glued up the table. It seemed to be easier to glue up pairs of boards, which made 4 pairs that I glued up together once they had dried.

If you have a planer >10" wide you can even run these paired boards through the planer so that you get a completely flat surface.

Clamping Cauls

No matter how flat you have made the surface for this big table, I would always use some clamping cauls, at least 2 for one on each end.

Clamping cauls help keep the table flat when you apply pressure with the clamps that tighten the boards together.



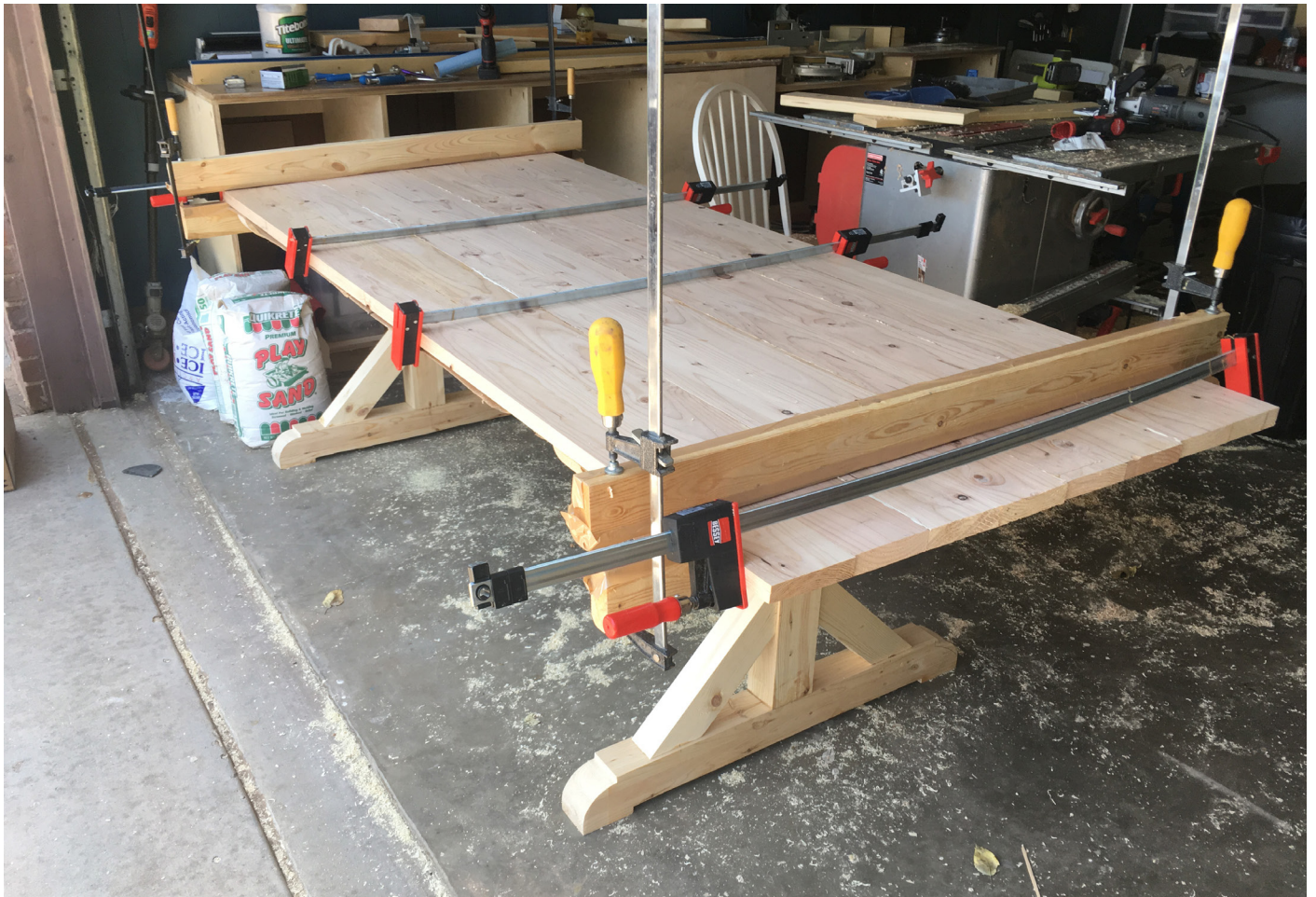
STEP SEVEN: ASSEMBLE TABLE TOP

Glue Table Top Together

I made sure to set out my clamps and prepare them for glueing the top together. Once you start spreading glue the clock will start ticking. It can be a little stressful, but as long as you are prepared then the glue drying too quickly will not be a problem.

You can use whatever kind of clamps you like, just make sure they are wide enough to clamp the entire table. The more clamps the better, but I only used 4 because they are somewhat expensive at 50".

Now spread wood glue along the edges of the boards and on the biscuits, and squeeze it all down together.



STEP EIGHT: FILLING HOLES, SANDING, AND FLATTENING TABLE TOP

Fill Holes in Pine Table Top

If you have high quality wood (hardwood or wood without knots), then you may not need to fill any holes in your table top. The 2x6s that I used had plenty of knots and small cracks.

It is not always vital to get these holes filled, but since there was a chance that this top could be used for writing, I didn't want there to be big holes for obvious reasons.

For this process I used some CA Glue (Cyanoacrylate Glue, or super glue) from Starbond to fill in the gaps and produce a smooth surface.

Flatten Table Top

If you have done a really fine job milling your boards and glueing the table top up, then this part should be short and sweet or maybe not even necessary.

Also, you of course have the choice of how flat to make your top. If this is not particularly important, then you can just take a random orbital sander and smooth down the seams and any glue residue and call it good.

For a flatter table, you either need to use a belt sander or a hand plane to lower high spots.

I wanted to use a hand plane for this table, but it was going to be more work than necessary. A belt sander is less physical work and it works fast.

The best way to run the belt sander is to use a straight edge across the top of the table and find the high spots. Mark these areas with a pencil so you can tell where to sand.

STEP EIGHT: FILLING HOLES, SANDING, AND FLATTENING TABLE TOP

With a 80-150 grit you can take off a lot of material with a belt sander, so be sure to keep the machine moving so you don't sand down one spot.

Work your way up to 220 grit, sanding the entire table. Make sure to sand out any deep grooves that may have been made with a coarser grit, because these will show up later when you stain and finish the top.

After you get the top flat enough for your liking, it is time to run a random orbital sander over the top. This generally takes out any grooves or scratches that the belt sander may have made.

Work from 150-220 grit sandpaper with the random orbital sander. I don't recommend going any finer than that because the finish and stain will not take as well.

The top should now be ready to stain and seal.



STEP NINE: STAIN AND FINISH TABLE TOP

Stain

You can use any stain of your choice, but with pine I chose to go with a gel stain. I have read where gel stains tend to work better with pine because they don't blotch as easily.

You can use a wood conditioner (as detailed in this post), but this is supposed to not be necessary with a gel stain.

I found that for the most part this is true, although some blotching still occurs no matter what with pine.

For the gel stain I simply rubbed it on with a cotton cloth and made sure I got full coverage.

Finish

For the finish I used 5 coats of General Finishes Satin wipe on urethane. Sand lightly with 220 grit in between coats (I did one coat per day – finishing can be a slow and tedious process).

Before the last coat I sanded with 300 grit, and then wet sanded (meaning I sanded while I was putting the last coat of finish on) with an even finer grit.

Lastly, be sure to lightly sand down any rough spots or dust particles, then buff the top out with some type of wax. It should be very smooth at this point.

STEP TEN: ATTACH TABLE TOP AND FINISHING TOUCHES

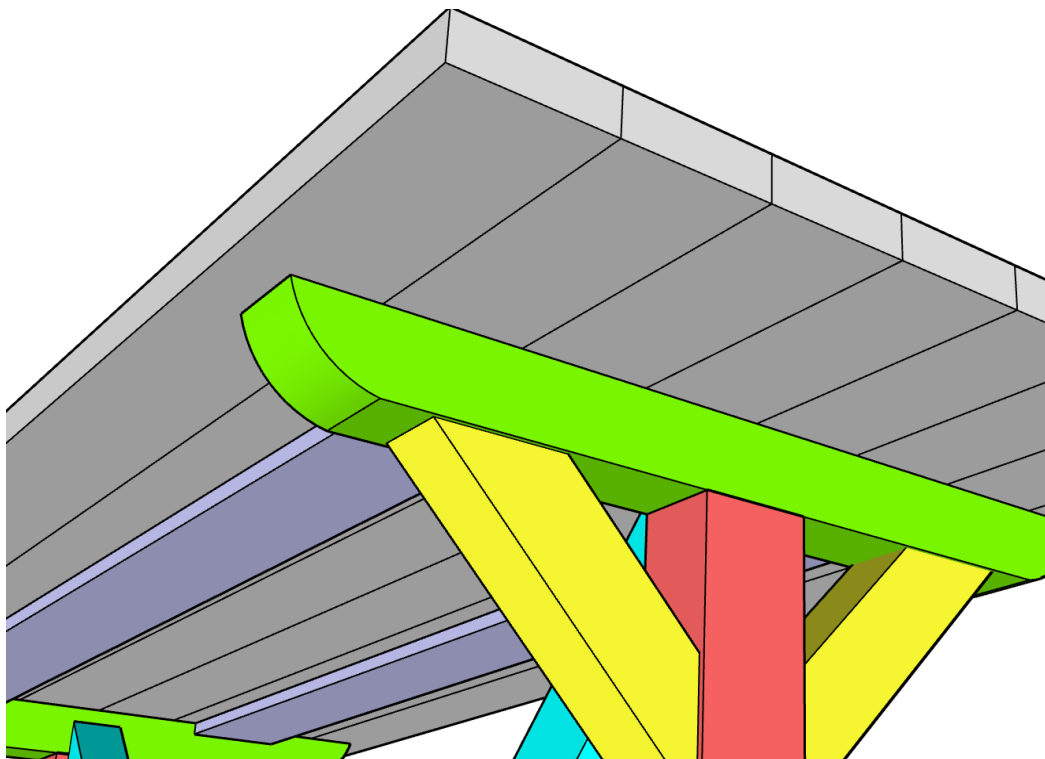
To attach the table top, you need to center it on the legs. There are various ways of doing this; the key is to get it centered and then start attaching the table top fasteners.

Use the slots that we cut in step 5 to slide the fasteners into.

I used 4 on each leg, and it seems to be attached well.

One other thing I did was put some rubber pads on the bottom of each foot on the legs. This is simply to protect not only the floor, but also the feet on the legs. It should keep it from sliding around as well, but I don't expect that to be a problem anyway.

At this point I simply made sure to clean everything off and shine it up a little with some wax. It is pretty much finished now, just waiting to be moved into its place of use.



STEP TEN: ATTACH TABLE TOP AND FINISHING TOUCHES



I hope you have enjoyed these plans, and if you have any questions about them, don't hesitate to send me a message at: ty@industrydiy.com

Also, check back with the post on the website, it has a few extra real pictures of my build (they aren't on here because I didn't want the print to be image heavy).

You can access it here: <https://industrydiy.com/projects/farmhouse-trestle-table-plans/>

Happy building!