



Mag Ruffman's

Anything I Can Do

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CHEST DO IT!

The old fashioned Hope Chest updated for the modern girl - light enough to carry from relationship to relationship, but still packs a whack of silk.



For today's rambunctious woman, building a hope chest, blanket box or tickle trunk is a great way to learn basic box construction.

Materials:

- Lumber (see cut list)
- 30" piano hinge (cut a longer hinge to length using a hacksaw if you can't find a 30" pre-cut hinge)
- 12" piece of steel chain
- 58 - 1/4" hardwood plugs (or size that fits the countersink bit you're using)
- About 3' of heavy nylon rope for handles
- Food-grade beeswax polish for non-toxic finish
- 1 1/2" wood-screws
- 1" wood-screws
- Small 3/4" brass wood-screws to attach piano hinge
- Two 3/4" steel screws to attach chain

Tools

- Saw
- Countersink bit
- Drill
- Jigs cut from plywood or cardboard 2"x 3/4" and 2"x 1 1/2"
- Hammer
- Knife
- Lighter or matches
- Clamps
- Sandpaper and/or electric sander

Cut List:

- **Bottom:** 1"x 6" cedar decking - 3 pieces 28 ½" long - Make sure the cedar decking you buy is the typical milled dimension of 1" by 5 ½" - otherwise the rest of your cut list must be adjusted to fit the bottom dimension, because your bottom will be too big or too small. Nobody's ever satisfied with their bottom.
- **Sides:** 1"x 8" pine - 4 pieces 16 ½" long
- **Front and back:** 1"x 8" pine - 4 pieces 30" long
- **Corner posts:** 2"x2" pine - 4 pieces 13 ½" long
- **Lid:** 1"x 10" pine - 2 pieces 31" long
- **Lid strapping:** 1" x 2" pine - 2 pieces 14" long



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Steps:



Three one inch thick cedar decking boards make the bottom of the chest.



Measure the width of the bottom boards and cut a side board to fit.



Cut the length of the side boards to match the width of the three bottom ones.

Lay out the bottom boards and measure across the width of your three boards to make sure that it adds up to 16 ½". If it doesn't, **STOP BEFORE YOU CUT** the rest of your lumber. You've got to cut the side pieces to match the exact dimensions of the bottom, so account for this in the rest of your cuts!



Attach the sides to the corner posts allowing room for the bottom boards.



Put the bad side of the board to the inside.



Tip - Reload your palm sander with several layers of paper

Build one of the short ends by laying two 16 ½" 1x8 pine boards on top of two of the corner posts.





Make a jig to help locate the screws evenly.



Use a counter sink bit to allow the head of the screw to set deep enough for a plug.



Use the jig to locate the position of the screw for drilling.



Drill the hole deep enough to allow for the wooden plug to go in.



Attach the sides, front and back to the corner post with screws.



Build the sides first then attach the front and back.

Using a countersink bit, pre-drill for the screws, boring a 3/8" deep countersink channel so that the screw's head will sink deep into the hole. Use a jig to help you space the screws evenly. Build the other end in the same manner.



Make a new jig for the front so that the screws go into the corner posts.



Attach the piano hinge to the box first.



The overhang on the lid should be even on the front and sides.

Balancing the ends using idle body parts, pre-drill and countersink the long facing boards, attaching them to the corner posts at both ends. Use the larger jig to space the screws accurately in the corner post. Now you have the basic box. Slip the box over the three bottom boards. Attach the bottom boards to the box using six pre-drilled, countersunk screws on each end of the trunk 1/2" up from the bottom.





Make a jig to help hold the lid while attaching the hinge.



Use the jig to help hold up the lid while attaching the hinge.



The finished piano hinge.

Build the lid by laying out the two 1x10 boards and clamping them together. Lay the 1x2 pieces across two large boards and center them, then sink four 1" screws in each piece of strapping. Bingo, you are lid-enabled.

Set the lid aside and drill two 1/2" holes in each end of the trunk to hold the rope handles. Tie knots on the inside of the trunk to secure the handles in place, and cauterize them using a lighter so they won't fray and undo themselves.

Attach the 30 inch piano hinge to the box along the back rim. Then use a jig or a pile of books to support the lid while attaching the hinge to the lid.



Use wooden plugs to cover the screw heads.



The attached lid with restraining chain.



Choose a chain that is strong enough for the weight of the lid.



Use a food grade wax like bees wax to insure the finish is non toxic.

Hammer in the plugs to cover the screw heads. Take your length of steel chain and screw one end to the inside of the trunk, the other end to the lid of the trunk. Sand and finish the chest's exterior surface with beeswax polish.

Load it up with dainties and be on your chest behaviour.

