

Tip #63 Build a Lawn/Patio Planter Box

Building your own planter or container is gratifying because you can custom fit it to appropriate dimensions to meet your needs, plus you save over half the price of retail.

We designed a planter box slightly more challenging than some. Our planter utilizes compound miter cuts, and if you've never worked with these interesting and versatile angles, here's a relatively simple project to get you started.

Our design measurements are based around a standard Rubbermaid kitchen trash can (to be used as a liner for indoor/outdoor use). However, based on your needs and climate, you may want to change the measurements or not worry about an indoor/outdoor planter. In many cases, be sure to provide adequate drainage for any plant as a totally sealed planting pot (as distinguished from planter) will eventually cause plant roots to rot and die.

As with our outdoor furniture projects, any weather resistant wood such as cedar, redwood, oak, teak, or even pressure-treated lumber will work well. For This planter, we used western red cedar.

1. Cut the sides (A) to size according to the List of Materials.

2. Set the table tilt at 44-3/4-degrees and the miter gauge at 85-degrees. Cut the miter joints with this setup to produce the compound miter required.

3. Cut the top (B) according to the List of Materials.

4. Set the miter gauge at 45-

degrees and cut the miters for the top (B).

5. Next, use a dado set at 7/8" and cut the dado in the bottom side of the top (B).

6. Using a square for accuracy, assemble, glue, and nail (or screw or dowel) part (B) to for the top.

7. Using clamp(s), square, glue and nails, (screws or dowels), assemble parts (A) to for the sides of the planter.

8. Insert the bottom (C) into the assembled sides and push (C) to the bottom of the sides. Nail, (screw or dowel) in place.

9. If you are making your planter box water-tight, caulk all inside joints with clear silicone sealer. However, we recommend that for outdoor use only planters, drill four holes in the bottom of the planter for adequate drainage.

10. The top may be nailed and glued in position. However, if plant container is to be removed for maintenance, the top can be left loose or not attached firmly.

Outdoor woods need no additional finishing beyond sanding. But, if you want to apply a finish, use finishes that are made specifically for outdoor use. Oil-based primer is necessary before painting; and spar varnish or an exterior polyurethane are suitable natural finishes. The finish we used was C.W.F. (Clear Wood Finish).

Note: This planter and the outdoor table (Tip #62) can both be built out of one 1" x 12" x 14" rough hewn cedar board.



