

Desktop Organizer Build Dimensions

November 2024

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Project Introduction

This project might be a little more difficult than some of my other hardwood builds, partly because of the thin nature of the pieces used but mostly because it requires some power tools the average homeowner or novice woodworker might not own. As we walk through the build and the specifications, I'll offer suggestions on how you might be able to use regular store-bought wood products to make something similar though the finished project will be thicker and bulkier when sitting on the desktop. In the end I chose to re-saw $\frac{3}{4}$ inch Red Oak planks down to thicknesses a little less than $\frac{3}{8}$ inch.



Wood Options

While I always prefer to use hardwood and in this case Red Oak, softer woods like Poplar or Cedar can work too, though you take some risk with stability and rigidity when using soft woods at thinner dimensions. While my daughter specifically asked me for a desk and then this organizer to match (In Oak), she also selected the stain color in Gray to fit her home décor. I think this organizer would look great without stain using any other hardwood like Walnut or Maple.

I wound up re-sawing standard $\frac{3}{4}$ inch home center lumber in half and losing a little thickness from the bandsaw kerf, I still got pieces that finished out at $\frac{5}{16}$ inch thick. If you don't have the ability or the tools to split your lumber to these thinner dimensions, you could also use $\frac{1}{2}$ inch store bought material for this project. Please note however that your final cut dimensions will need to adjust up to accommodate the thicker material. For example: My base box outer dimension is 12 inches wide. Finished out with my $\frac{5}{16}$ inch thick planks, the inner paper holder section is still $11 \frac{1}{2}$ inch wide which holds standard letter paper at 11 inches. Using thicker lumber will reduce the inner open dimensions for holding paper and you'll have to cut your planks longer to make sure you have the inner box dimensions you need.

U.S. Letter versus European A4 paper

While this project was designed for my daughter here in the U.S. to accommodate $8 \frac{1}{2}$ X 11 inch paper, A4 paper can work as well provided you expand the box by an additional inch or 25mm. The dimensions listed below represent my finished project for standard North American letter sized paper.

SAFETY +

Be careful. Read and follow all usage and safety instructions on every power tool you use. Wear all recommended safety equipment (ear, eye and dust protection) during cutting, assembly and sanding activities. If you're not comfortable performing some of the cut activities, please ask another woodworker for assistance. Woodworkers like helping out other woodworkers... Wood shop happiness comes from finishing a project with all your fingers and toes, eyes and lungs intact.

Desktop Organizer

Finished Dimensions



- Back Panel: 12" wide X 10" tall
- Large Divider: 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide X 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ " tall
- Small Divider: 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide X 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " tall
- Pen Holder: 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " X 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ " X 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
- Base Platform: 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide X 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep
- Bottom: 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide X 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep
- Drawer Opening: 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ " X 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide



Dado Cutting & Finished Widths:
My Dado cuts for the rabbet joints were set to a 1/8" depth. For your project, finished board thickness and depth of your dado cut may require small adjustments in finished component dimensions in order for all pieces to fit tightly. Micro trim cuts and some sanding may be required.

- Diagonal Taper: 40 degrees
- Charging Cord Port: $\frac{1}{2}$ " diameter
- Side Panel: 10" tall X 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide

Desktop Organizer

Finished Dimensions



Famous Actor Zoom Call: NOT Included

Drawer Face: 2 1/2" X 12"



Drawer Back & Front: 11 3/8" X 1 7/8"

Drawer Sides: 6 1/8" X 1 7/8"

Floating Bottom: 6" X 11 1/4"
Dado cut in at 1/16" deep all 4 panels
Using 1/16" thick material for the bottom

Joint Reinforcement

You'll see in the video that I chose to miter all my corners from the main organizer structure to the drawer. While the glued rabbit joints would help to hold the structure together, I also chose to use 1/8" dowels on the mitered joints for the main structure. For the drawer box, I cut in 1/16" hardwood splines to stiffen up the box.

The Wrap

This was a great little project especially because it was something I could build and then gift to my daughter. Hopefully you find an opportunity to do the same for a member of your own family. Take care!