

PantoProject — Walnut bench doubles as a dog crate

Don Murray creates wooden wonders with ingenious setups on the PantoRouter™

Don Murray has been building things his whole life, from welding to framing to his current career as a general contractor in Redding, California. Maybe that's why he can make his PantoRouter do so many amazing things.

Murray took up woodworking about 10 years ago, and was soon milling all his own lumber from the log, using a Woodmizer bandsaw mill. He's just that kind of guy.

He says he loves woodworking better than anything else because he can stay home and build things just for himself. This walnut bench with a built-in dog crate is one example. Murray is the PantoRouter's biggest fan, because it lets him build whatever he can imagine.

A bench fit for a dog

Murray used plastic dog crates for years, to keep his dogs from going outside at night and encountering local mountain lions. But he always hated the look of the crate sitting in the entryway of the house. When his wife asked him to build a bench for that same entryway, Murray realized he could kill two birds with one project.

He knew his design would include a lot of slats, but he also knew the PantoRouter could knock out endless mortises and tenons in no time. To space all those slats evenly, Murray created a series of ingenious jigs for the PantoRouter.

He created other smart jigs for the beautiful wood latches that close the doors, as well as the long wooden hinge at the back of the seat. These days, Murray likes to avoid metal fasteners in his work, and the PantoRouter let's him do that. "With the PantoRouter there's always another way," Murray says. "It's the greatest invention in years."



Ingenious work. Murray's unique piece of furniture includes wooden hinges and latches, all made on the PantoRouter



Mission accomplished. Murray's entryway looks nicer now with the walnut dog bench in it rather than a big plastic dog crate. It also serves as a place to sit and put on shoes.



Smart spacers. The bench includes many rows of mortises, for dozens of slats and also for the hinge knuckles that go in the edge of the seat. To space these rows evenly, Murray used a variety of spacers like these, which replace one of the tabs at the front of the PantoRouter table and fit into the last mortise he cut.



Safe work on small parts. To create the long hinge near the back of the seat, Murray made a pile of hinge knuckles on the PantoRouter. He did as much work as he could on the ends of longer workpieces, before chopping off the small, precise parts he needed. Last, he rounded the ends on the router table by holding the tenon in a mortised piece to control the small workpieces safely.

Anatomy of a wood hinge.

The PantoRouter let Murray cut the knuckles separately and then join them precisely to the edges of the seat slab. This is much easier than cutting them directly into the edges of the seat and the grain is going the right direction for maximum strength and durability.

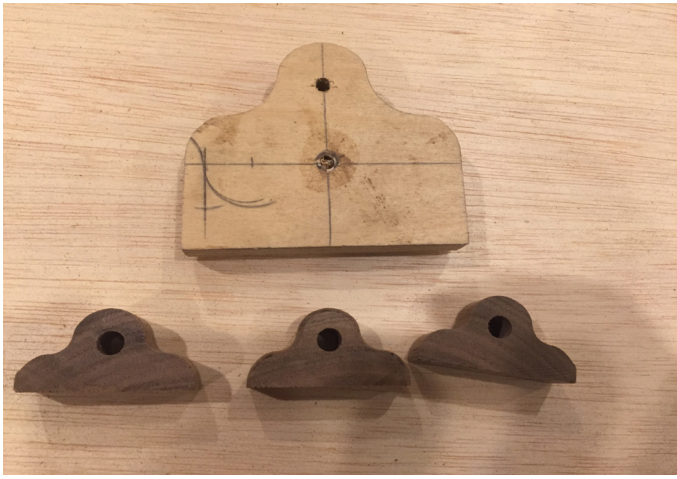




Metal-free hinge. A long hardwood dowel joins the pieces to create a strong and attractive integral piano hinge.



Holes first. On this project and many others, Murray relies on the PantoRouter for boring extremely precise holes and mortises. This is done by indexing the hole placement using the center hole in the templates. Once the first one is setup and stops are set, dozens more can be created in just a few minutes. Don's usual method is to bore the holes first, while the parts are square, and then shape them afterward.



Clever templates. To consistently shape all the the parts for the latches, Murray created a variety of double-size templates for the PantoRouter's 2:1 milling mechanism. The templates are centered on the PantoRouter's template holder and the parts are centered on the table.



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