Magazine Boxes

These simple boxes provide a convenient and stately way to store magazines. Plus, they don't take much time or material to build.

It seems like magazines pile up faster than I can read them. And once I've read them, I can never find a convenient place to put them.

That's why I like these magazine storage boxes. They keep your magazines organized, and they look handsome on a shelf or bookcase.

GLUE UP PANELS. I began building the boxes by gluing up panels from ¼"-thick stock. Each box requires three 12" x 10" panels. I built a simple clamping jig to hold the panels flat. (For more on building this jig, go to WoodsmithSpecials.com.)

Once the glue dries, you can cut the panels to length. (They'll be cut to width later.) Cut the two side panels to a length of 9¾". Then, cut the third panel into two 4½"-long pieces for the front and back.

BOX JOINTS. The sides and ends of the box are joined with box joints. While they may look difficult, they're actually easy to make using the simple jig shown on page 46.

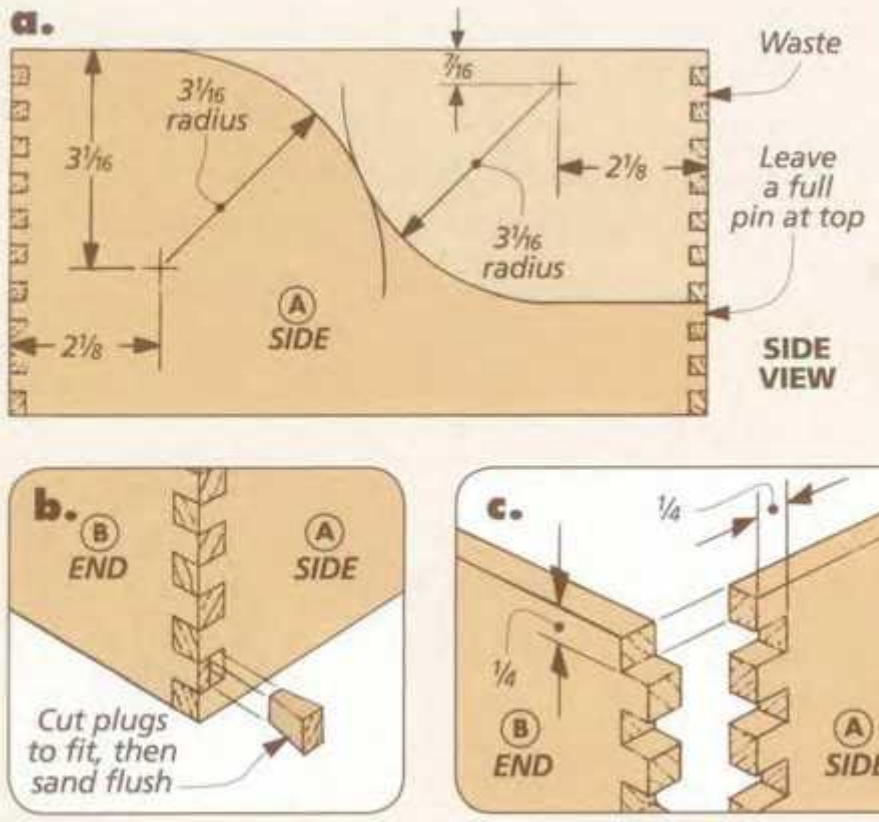
Woodsmith GO ONLINE EXTRAS — For more on building a jig to help you glue up thin panels, go to our website: WoodsmithSpecials.com

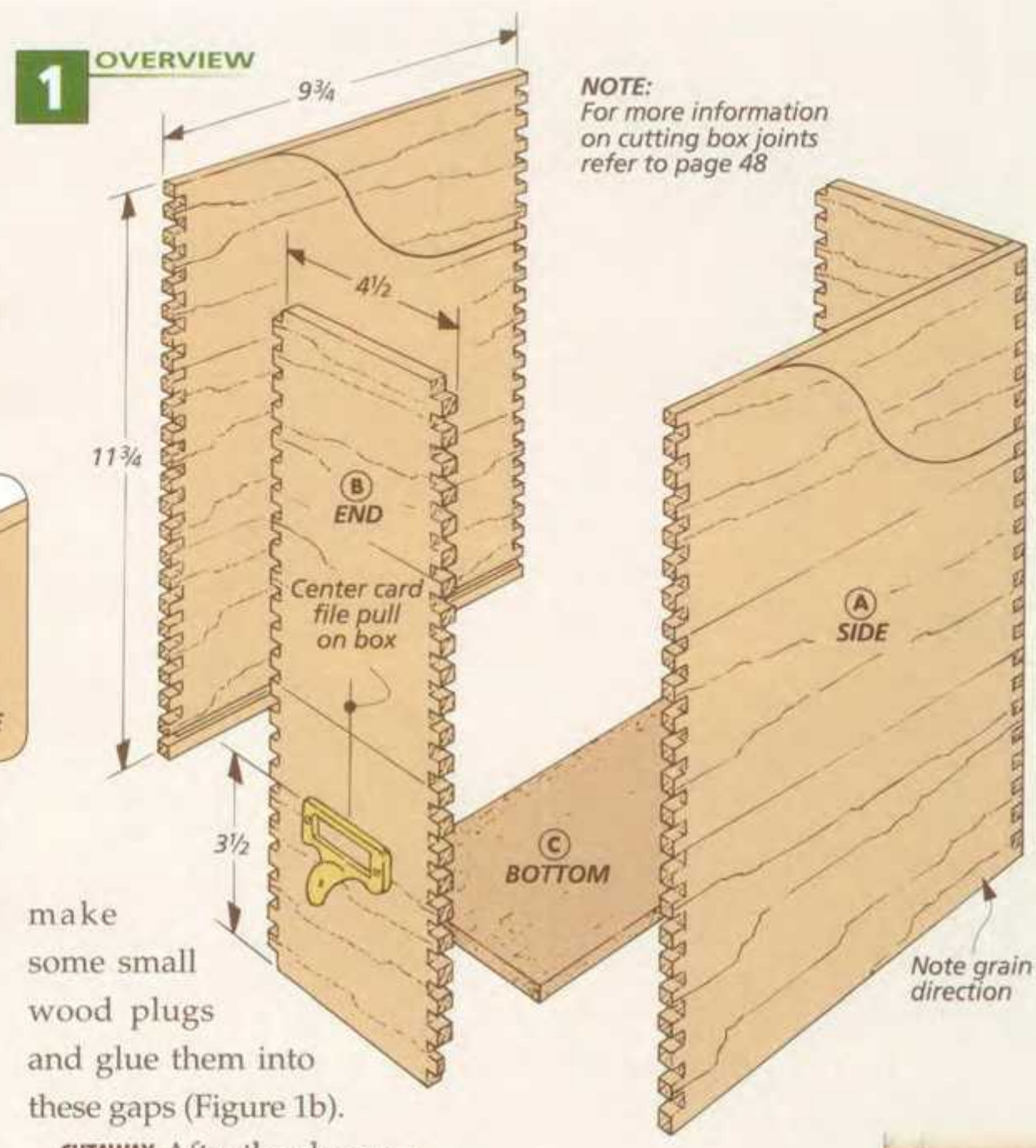
When you're cutting a long series of box joints, it's important to set up the jig as accurately as possible. Even if you're off by just a fraction of an inch, that error can really add up when you multiply it by the number of pins you're cutting. So much so, that the pins and slots might not even fit together when it comes time to assemble the project.

To prevent this, I tested my setup by cutting box joints on a couple of 12"-long scrap pieces. Then I made sure they fit together smoothly.

BOTTOM. After cutting the box joints, the pieces can be cut to finished width. I cut mine 11¾" wide, but the exact dimension isn't critical. What you want to end up with is a full pin at the top and bottom of each side piece, and a full slot at the top and bottom of each end piece (Figure 1c on the opposite page).

The next step is to cut a ⅛"-deep groove on the inside face of all four pieces. The width of this groove is sized to hold a ¼" hardboard bottom, as you can see in the margin drawing on the opposite page.





NOTE:
For more information on cutting box joints refer to page 48

To determine the width and length of the bottom, dry assemble the box and measure the opening, including the depths of the grooves. Now subtract 1/16" from each dimension to allow for clearance. Then cut the bottom piece to size.

ASSEMBLY

To make it easier to get magazines in and out, the back corner of the box is cut away. But if you do this before assembling the box, it's difficult to position a clamp across the top of the box. So I glued and clamped up the box before starting on the cutaway.

And even though this is a small project, the box joints can make assembling it a bit tricky. To give myself a little more time, I used white glue, which doesn't set up as fast as yellow glue.

I also used a lot of clamps to help pull the box joints together, as shown in Figure 2. You may need to reposition some of the clamps as you're assembling the box to apply pressure where you need it.

One more thing. Since the grooves for the bottom are visible on the sides of the box, you'll need to make some small wood plugs and glue them into these gaps (Figure 1b).

CUTAWAY. After the glue was dry and the pins were sanded flush, I laid out a gentle double-curve on one side of the box, as in Figure 1a. (I used a compass to draw the arcs.)

To get a smooth cut on the straight section of the cutaway, I used a table saw (Figure 3). Then I completed the cut using a band saw, as shown in Figure 4.

After cutting the curve, sand it smooth with a drum sander. Then round over all the outside edges with a 1/8" roundover bit and a router.

ADDING A PULL. After wiping on an oil finish, I added a brass card file pull to make the box easier to pull off a shelf. Note: The 1/2" screws that come with the pull are too long. You'll need to purchase 1/4" brass screws to use as replacements (see margin drawing).