

The Tapered Garden Planter Box

Indoor or outdoor — large or small — this Planter Box can be modified to fit a wide range of applications

As Springtime moves in on us, wooden garden Planters and Containers quickly become some of the most sought-after items on many “want lists”. Some folks use them indoors to bring a more “outdoorsy” feel to the home...while others prefer to position them around driveways, walkways, decks and patios.

This design is slightly more challenging than many because it uses compound miter cuts to create a tall, tapered look that’s unique and unlike most Planter Boxes you’ll find at retail. Our design measurements were based around a standard-sized, plastic kitchen trash can, which would serve as a leak-proof liner so the Planter could be used both indoors and outdoors. Here are four options for building these Planter Boxes:

- 1:** Find plastic kitchen or bathroom trash cans to serve as liners and build your Planter Boxes to accommodate the liners.
- 2:** Forget all about plastic liners altogether and recommend their use strictly as outdoor Planters with no liners.
- 3:** Alter the measurements and offer a variety of different sized Planters...perhaps even rectangular models.
- 4:** Make square tops from solid pieces of wood with round cut-outs to accept drop-in clay pot inserts of different sizes.

No matter what you choose to do, remember that it’s always important to make adequate provisions for drainage so plant roots won’t rot and cause the plants to die. Also, if you’re proposing their use outdoors, be sure to use weather-resistant woods such as Western red cedar, white cedar, cypress, redwood, etc. in their construction. Also, use waterproof glue (such as Franklin Titebond II) and stainless steel, aluminum or galvanized hardware for assembly, on all Planter Boxes designed for outdoor use.

Our Planter Box was designed to have relative straight sides...tapered just 5 degrees off vertical (85 degree sides). If you’d rather make 4-sided Planters with slightly more taper, here are three additional choices:

- 10 degrees off vertical** (80 degree sides) —
Table Tilt: 44-1/4 degrees — Miter Gauge: 80-1/4 degrees
 - 15 degrees off vertical** (75 degree sides) —
Table Tilt: 43-1/4 degrees — Miter Gauge: 75-1/2 degrees
 - 20 degrees off vertical** (70 degree sides) —
Table Tilt: 41-3/4 degrees — Miter Gauge 71-1/4 degrees
- Let’s get started.

Step 1: Cut the sides (A) to size, according to the Bill of Materials.

Step 2: Set the tilt of your saw table to 44-3/4 degrees and your Miter Gauge to 85 degrees and cut the compound miters along the vertical edges of the Planter sides (A).

Step 3: Cut the top pieces (B) according to the Bill of Materials.

Step 4: Re-set your table tilt to “0” and your Miter Gauge to 45 degrees and cut the corner miters in the four top pieces (B).

Step 5: Next, using a Dado Blade set to make a 7/8" wide x 3/8" to 1/2" deep cut, form a rabbet around the inside edges of the four top pieces (B), as shown in the drawing. This dado will allow the assembled top to slip down over the sides.

Step 6: Using a square to ensure accuracy, assemble, glue and nail (or screw) the four top pieces (B) to create the top.

Step 7: Re-set your table tilt to 5 degrees (for our example 5 degree off vertical Planter Box) and cut the tapered bottom (C) to size, according to the Bill of Materials.

Step 8: Assemble the four sides (A), using clamps, glue and nails or screws. Be sure to check for squareness before setting aside to dry.

Step 9: Drop the bottom (C) into the assembled sides and glue into position. Use nails or screws to add strength.

If you're planning to make your Planter Boxes watertight for indoor use, caulk all inside joints with clear silicone sealant. However, for outdoor use, we recommend that a series of four or more small holes be drilled in the bottom for drainage and covered with a small piece of plastic window screen, stapled over the holes.

The top can be glued and nailed into position...or left loose. If you're using outdoor woods, Planter Boxes designed for outdoor use need no additional finishing and will weather nicely over time. On the other hand, stained Planters can be more attractive and potentially bring a higher price. If you're planning to stain your Planters, be sure to use a stain that's made specifically for use outdoors.

Suggested retail price: \$25 to \$30 each for this size — \$40 to \$50 a pair

Bill of Materials

(dimensions in inches)

A Sides (4) 3/4 x 11-1/2 x 16-1/4

B Top (4) 3/4 x 2 x 14

C Bottom 3/4 x 7-3/4 x 7-3/4

Miscellaneous

8d galvanized finish nails, aluminum nails or stainless steel screws

Plastic window screen

