



Overall dimensions: 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" w x 4" d x 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" h

# Recipe Card Box

Keep the cook happy with this handsome container.

By Marlen Kemmet

Handed down from generation to generation, cherished recipes are a mainstay in many kitchens. Protect those family heirlooms with this attractive, splined-cornered box. I sized mine for the newer and larger 4x6" recipe cards, but you can easily downsize the box for the smaller 3x5" cards. Alternatively, use the construction process and resize the project to make any number of decorative boxes. Finally, note that the kerf in the handle is used to hold a recipe card. It is angled for better viewing.

## Start with the box

**1** Using flat milled stock, plane or resaw a 30"-long piece of 3/4" maple or sycamore to 3/8" thick. Then rip and crosscut the piece to 5 1/2" wide by at least 26" long for the front/back (A) and ends (B) blank.

**2** Fit your tablesaw with a 1/4"-wide dado set. Referring to **Figures 1** and **2**, cut a pair of 1/4" wide by 3/16" deep grooves 3/16" in from the blank's top and bottom edges on the inside face, reserving the good or showiest face for the outside of the box.

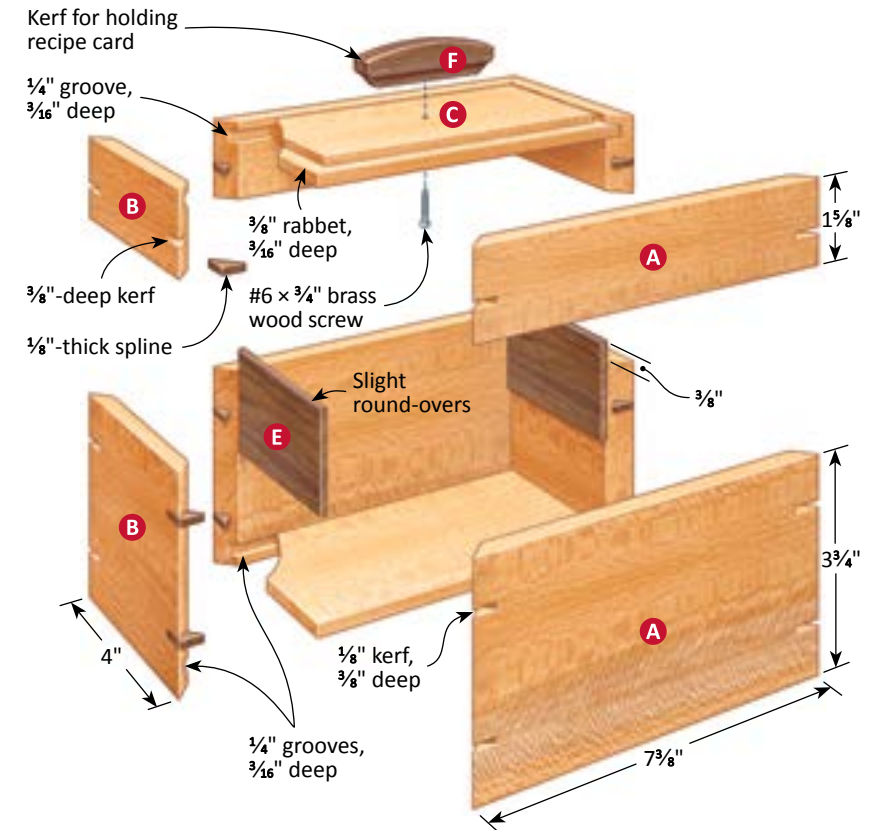


**A** Wrap tape around the mitered corners to clamp the box parts snugly together.

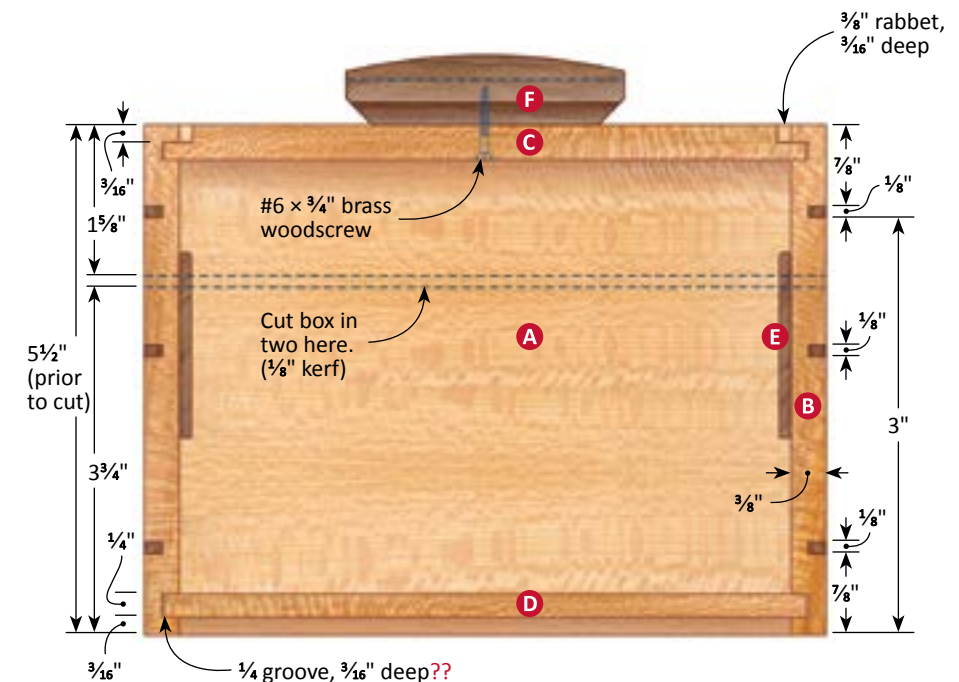
**3** Refit your saw with a standard saw blade. Attach an auxiliary fence to the miter gauge and place it in the tablesaw slot from which the blade angles away. (For example, for a blade that angles to the left, place the miter gauge in the right-hand slot.) Adjust the fence at 90° to the blade. Now, adjust the blade's bevel angle at 45°. Clamp a stop to the fence and make test cuts on four pieces of scrap at one end. Adjust the stop for the length of ends (B) referring to the **Cut List** and miter-cut the opposite ends. Do the same for other two pieces, adjusting the stop to the length of front/back (A). Form a box with the scrap pieces, taping the corners together. Check for square and a tight fit at the corners. Adjust the saw settings if needed. Now, repeat the process to miter-cut the ends (B) and then the box front and back (A).

**4** Cut the top (C) and bottom (D) to the **Cut List** size. The top and bottom are dimensioned across the width to have 1/16" free play within the mating grooves to allow for seasonal expansion. (You can dry-fit the box to check these dimensions.)  
**5** Cut 3/8" rabbets 3/16" deep along the top edges and ends of the top (C). Dry-fit the box parts as shown in **Figure 1** to verify the fit, again, checking for square, tight corners. Glue and clamp the pieces together. To allow the top to expand and contract without splitting the mitered corners, I glued just the center ends of the top in the mating grooves. Since clamps can be a bit unruly to use on such small mitered projects, employ painter's tape or packing tape at each corner to hold the box together (**Photo A**). After the glue dries, peel off the tape.

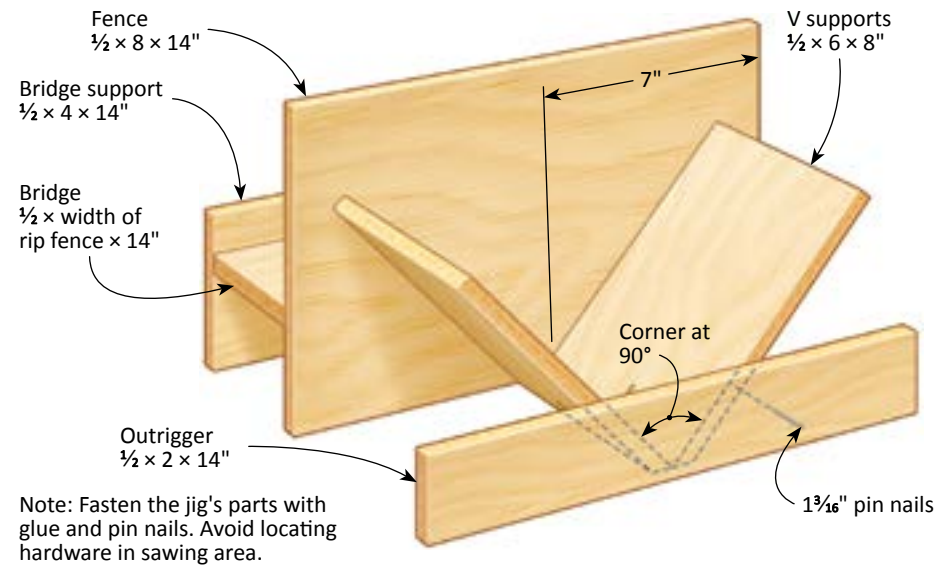
**Figure 1: Recipe Box Exploded View**



**Figure 2: Front Section View**



**Figure 3: Box Splining Jig**



**6** Construct the box splining jig in **Figure 3**.

**7** Using the box splining jig on your tablesaw, cut three  $\frac{1}{8}$ " kerfs  $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep in each corner of the box where shown in **Figure 2** and as shown in **Photo B**. Use the same tablesaw rip fence position for cutting the top and bottom kerfs. Note: Be careful not to cut the kerfs too deep and risk cutting through the mitered corners into the inside of the box. (Consider using an alternate flat top (AFT) blade for clean, square kerfs.)

**8** Rip a  $\frac{1}{8}$ " strip from an available piece of walnut or other contrasting hardwood scrap.

From this stock, cut 16 splines to  $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide by  $\frac{1}{2}$ " long. Glue a spline into each kerf. With a damp cloth, remove any excess glue on the surrounding wood. Save the four remaining splines to use as spacers when parting the lid from the box later.

**9** Cut the protruding ends of each spline as shown in **Photo C**. Sand the splines flush with the box sides.

**10** To separate the box lid from the box, position the saw fence  $3\frac{3}{4}$ " from the inside face of the blade. (The cut should be



With the fence adjusted, use the box splining jig to make the first spline cuts in all four corners before moving to the next set of cuts.



Cut the protruding spline ends flush with a fine-tooth flush-cut handsaw.



To ensure accuracy and safety, tape spacers in the kerfs as you make the final two cuts around the perimeter of the box.



With the lid lift clamped firmly as shown, angle a stiff fine-toothed saw such as a backsaw to cut the card-holding kerf.

centered between the middle and top splines.) Set the blade  $\frac{1}{2}$ " above the saw table, cut two adjacent faces of the box. Next, tape  $\frac{1}{8}$ "-thick spacers in the kerfs for stability, and then cut the final two sides of the box (**Photo D**).

**11** Cut the lid guides (E) to fit against the inside face of each end piece (B). Sand a slight round-over along the top edge of each guide to ease slipping on the lid. Glue and clamp the guides in place to the ends of the base where shown in **Figure 1**. After the glue dries, check the fit of the lid onto the base. If the fit is too tight, carefully sand the guides for more clearance.

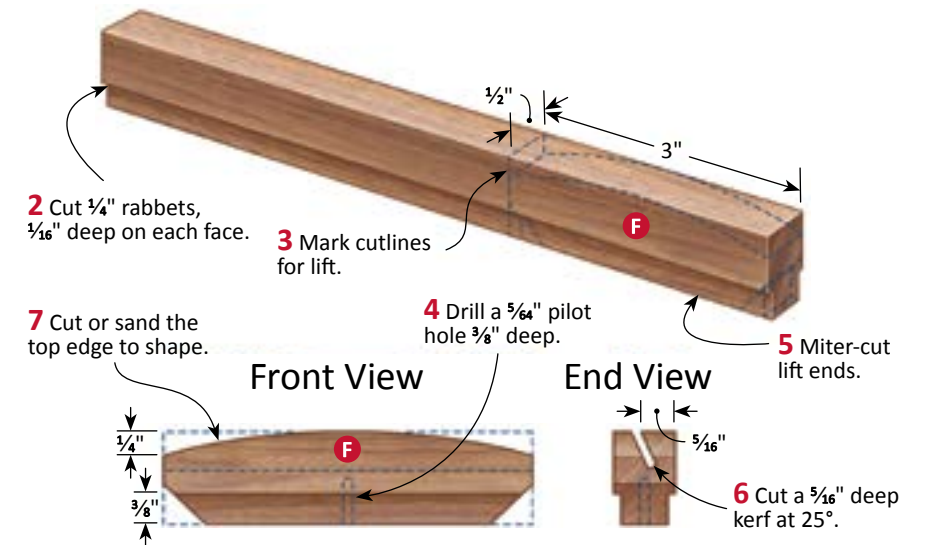
**12** Mark the center of the top (C) and drill a  $\frac{5}{64}$ " shank hole through it. Countersink the bottom of the hole on the bottom face of the top.

### Add the Lid Lift

**1** Form the lid lift (F) by cutting a piece of  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-thick walnut to  $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide by 8" long. The extra length makes it easier and safer to make the cuts in the next steps.

**Figure 4: Lid Lift Detail and Cutting Sequence**

**1** Cut blank to  $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{3}{4} \times 8$ ".



**2** Cut  $\frac{1}{4}$ " rabbets,  $\frac{1}{16}$ " deep on each face.

**3** Mark cutlines for lift.

**7** Cut or sand the top edge to shape.

**4** Drill a  $\frac{5}{64}$ " pilot hole  $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep.

**5** Miter-cut lift ends.

**2** Cut  $\frac{1}{4}$ " rabbets  $\frac{1}{16}$ " deep at the tablesaw riding the top edge of the blank against the fence.

**3** Lay out the cutlines on the blank for the lift.

**4** Drill a  $\frac{5}{64}$ " pilot hole  $\frac{3}{8}$ " deep centered in the bottom of the marked lift.

**5** Crosscut the lift to 3" long, and then miter the bottom ends of the lift at 45°.

**6** Using a dovetail or other fine-toothed saw, cut a  $\frac{5}{16}$ "-deep recipe card kerf at a 25° angle (**Photo E**).

**7** Carefully cut or sand to shape the top curved edge of the lift. This may be done using a bandsaw or disc sander. Use a handscrew to safely keep your fingers out of harm's way. Attach the lift to the top (C) with a #6  $\times \frac{3}{4}$ " flathead wood screw and a drop of glue.

**8** Finish-sand the base and lid and apply the finish. (I applied two coats of aerosol stain lacquer.) n

### Recipe Box Cut List

	Part	Thickness	Width	Length	Qty.	Mat'l
A*	Front and Back	$\frac{3}{8}$ "	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	7 $\frac{3}{8}$ "	2	QSS
B*	Ends	$\frac{3}{8}$ "	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	4"	2	QSS
C	Top	$\frac{3}{8}$ "	3 $\frac{9}{16}$ "	7"	1	QSS
D	Bottom	$\frac{1}{4}$ "	3 $\frac{9}{16}$ "	7"	1	QSS
E	Lid Guides	$\frac{1}{8}$ "	2"	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	2	W
F*	Lift	$\frac{1}{2}$ "	$\frac{3}{4}$ "	3"	1	W

\*Indicates parts that are initially cut oversized. See instructions.

**Materials:** QSS=Quartersawn sycamore (or use figured maple), W=walnut

### Convenience-PLUS BUYING GUIDE

<input type="checkbox"/> 1.	Crown 187W Gent Back Saw 8"	#11R31	\$30.50
<input type="checkbox"/> 2.	Shinwa Japanese "Kugihiki" Flush Cutting Hand Saw	#12F24	\$35.99

Above items are available at Woodcraft stores, [woodcraft.com](http://woodcraft.com) or by calling (800) 225-1153. Prices subject to change without notice.