

The Simple Tea Box

Lumber

36" of nominal 1"x6" hardwood of either Red Oak or Maple, or other light-colored hardwood

12" of nominal 1"x6" hardwood of either Red Oak or Walnut

Optional: about 12" of hardwood dowels, in a contrasting color

Hardware & Finish Supplies

1" Trim Nails

80-, 100-, 150-, 220-grit sandpaper

Suggested Finishes: Beeswax, Butcher Block Oils, Danish Oil, Shellac & Paste Wax

Necessary Tools

Power Drill, Brad Point Bits for Doweling

Table Saw with Ripping, Crosscutting and Dado Blades

Miter Saw

Random Orbital Sander

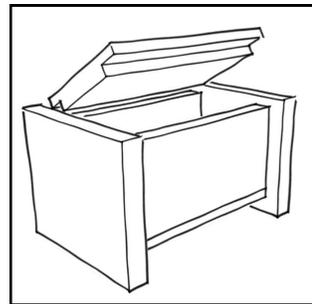
Sharp Japanese-style Saw

Block Plane

Estimated Time To Complete

2—3 Hours

This Simple Tea Box is designed to be simple to build, offer multiple options for finishing, and provide multiple tool-centric construction techniques. Dimensions for The Simple Tea Box are included in the instructions, but feel free to change the look to suit your own tastes. It's up to you – you don't own it unless you change it!



Remember, woodworking is an inherently dangerous activity. The plans here use two of the most dangerous tools in a woodshop. Please read and understand the manuals for all your power tools and follow safe shop practices at all times. Wear protective eyewear at all times and hearing protection when using power tools. The difference between a gorgeous project and a cut-off finger is an attentive woodworker.



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Milling the Lumber

Creating 4 Smooth, Square Faces in Rough Lumber

This section shows how to process rough lumber into usable stock for projects. The process, whether for a box or for a bench, remains the same for both power and hand tools. First, cut your stock to rough dimensions. Leave an extra two inches in length and about a quarter of an inch in width. Then create one flat face square to one flat edge. Rip to a final width. Lastly, plane to a final thickness.

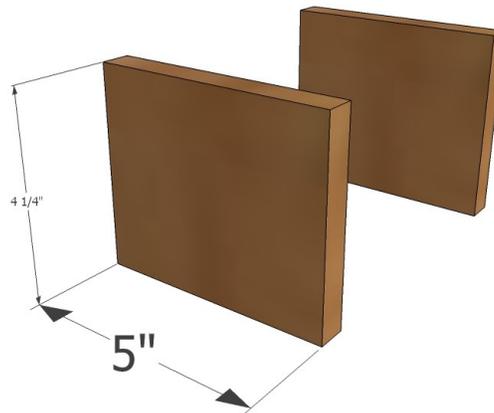
*Or, buy milled lumber from a home center or lumberyard and skip to **Step 4**.*

Step 1: Cut your stock into rough lengths — about 36” for the four interior faces and about 12” for the two large sides. If your lumber has been milled and ripped with a straight edge by the lumberyard, or you have bought surfaced lumber from a home center, you can use a table saw with a crosscut sled. If not, use a handsaw or circular saw for this first cut.

Step 2: If you are using rough lumber in this project, now use a hand plane or jointer to make one flat face. Then, with the flat face on the jointer fence, joint a square, flat edge.

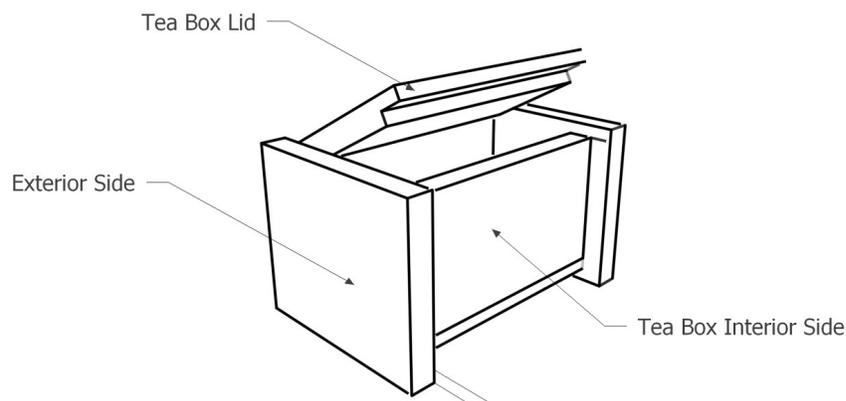
Step 3: Use hand planes or a power planer to plane the lumber to 3/4” thick. Keep the same orientation through each pass into the planer.

Step 4: Using a table saw or band saw to rip your 12" length of stock to 5" width . Remember to place your flat edge against the tool's rip fence and to use push sticks to move the stock through the blade. Clean up any marks with a block plane. This 1"x5"x12" length of stock will become your two exterior sides.



Step 5: Using a table saw or band saw to rip your 36" length of stock to 4" width. Remember to place your flat edge against the tool's rip fence and to use push sticks to move the stock through the blade. Clean up any marks with a block plane. This piece of stock will become the four interior faces of the Simple Tea Box.

At this point, you should have two work pieces of lumber 5/8" thick. One work piece should be 36" long and 3 7/8" thick, while the other work piece should be 12" long and 5" wide. Please refer to the diagram below to understand the use of "Interior" sides and "Exterior Sides" throughout the Assembly & Finish Sections.





Step 6: Use a table saw (with a combination or crosscut blade) or power miter saw to cut the 12” stock square using a miter gauge or crosscut sled. Do this by trimming a small amount, about a blade’s width, of stock from the work piece. Before squaring up your work piece, test and adjust your tool’s accuracy on scrap material.

Step 7: Use a table saw (with a combination or crosscut blade) or power miter saw to cut the 2 exterior sides 4 1/2” long. Use a stop block on a power miter saw or the rip fence with a stop block on a table saw to get perfect, repeatable results.

Step 8: Use a table saw (with a combination or crosscut blade) or power miter saw to cut the 36” stock square using a miter gauge or crosscut sled. Do this by trimming a small amount, about a blade’s width, of stock from the work piece. Before squaring up your work piece, test and adjust your tool’s accuracy on scrap material.

Step 9: Use a table saw (with a combination or crosscut blade) or power miter saw to cut the 4 interior sides 6” long. Use a stop block on a power miter saw or the rip fence with a stop block on a table saw to get perfect, repeatable results.

Step 10: Install a dado blade, set at 3/8” wide, in your table saw. You may need to install or make a different table insert in order to accommodate the thicker blade. Install a sacrificial board on the rip fence. Set the dado blade’s height to 3/8”. Place the sacrificial fence as close as possible to the dado blade. Run the a 4” wide interior side over the dado blade, creating a 3/8” wide, 3/8” high groove in the lid. Reverse your work piece and create a matching groove on the other side. Repeat the cutting process for the other 4” interior face.

Step 11: Move your fence 3/8” wider. Run the a 4” wide interior side over the dado blade, creating a 3/8” wide, 3/8” high groove in the lid. Reverse your work piece and create a matching groove on the other side. Repeat the cutting process for the other 4” interior face. You should now have two pieces with a 3/4” rabbet on each long side.

Step 12: Sand each work piece using a random-orbital sander. Begin at 80-grit, and move through the grits until you reach 320-grit. Make sure to pay special attention to the end grain of each exterior piece. Do not sand the end grain of the interior sides—the sharp edges will create a sharp, gap free joint in the next step. Use this time to sand a chamfer or round-over on all edges which will be exposed to your hand in the final project. Lastly, sand the end grain of the lid slightly, to cre-



ate a small amount of relief for when the interior sides will be attached to the exterior sides.

Step 13: Assemble the lid, bottom and sides as shown below. First, use blue painter's tape to clamp the interior assembly square. Use glue and small trim nails to attach the bottom to the sides. Be sure to create pilot holes in order to minimize the chance of splitting.

Step 14: Using a table saw with a zero-clearance insert, cut two guide strips 9/16" and 5/16" long. You can also carefully use a hand saw to rip a length of wood the same thickness.

Step 15: Use the strips to center the interior faces in the middle of the exterior faces. Make sure the lid is flush with the exterior sides. Use blue painter's tape to secure the assembly together.

Step 16: Use a combo square and center punch or awl to mark where you will drill pilot holes or dowels to complete your assembly. If you are nailing the sides together, drill pilot holes. If you decide to use dowels, use a sharp, brad point bit to drill out a hole.

Step 17: You should have one lid, an interior assembly and two exterior sides.

a) If you are nailing the sides together, place a small amount of glue onto the edges of the interior sub-assembly, then hammer in thin, 1" trim nails through the pilot holes to attach the sides.

b) To install a dowel joint, use a brad point bit as big as your dowel to drill 1" holes into the subassembly—going through the large sides and into the end-grain. Place a small amount of glue onto the dowel, then use a mallet to hammer the dowel into place. Cut the dowel off close to flush using a saw with a sharp, flexible blade. Use a sharp block plane or sanding block to bring the dowel flush. Repeat for each dowel.

Step 18: Repeat Step 17 to attach the other exterior sides.

Step 19: Finish the box as desired.

Thank you for checking out the Simple Tea Box Plan. If these plans interest you, please send an email of support to woodshopcowboy @ gmail.com. If you have any questions, email me also. Continue to support www.woodshopcowboy.com & like [WoodshopCowboy on Facebook](#) too.