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## House Numbers

*Here's a quick and easy way to add face-lift to the outside of your house: Replace those old house numbers from the hardware store with this great-looking project. The numbered tiles are readily available at most building supply stores. To give our project some pizzazz, we added a border of 1" square tiles to the design.*



### **Special Tools and Techniques**

- Small mastic trowel
- Rubber-surfaced grout trowel
- Mitering

### **Materials and Supplies**

- 9 linear feet of 1 x 4 pine
- 1 piece of  $\frac{3}{4}$ -thick plywood, 22' x 26"
- 9 linear feet of  $\frac{3}{4}$ -wide decorative molding
- 2 pieces of  $\frac{3}{4}$  x  $\frac{3}{4}$  scrap wood, 22" long
- 2 pieces of  $\frac{3}{4}$  x  $\frac{3}{4}$  scrap wood, 26" long
- House-number tiles
- 1" x 1" border tiles (optional)

- Small containers of tile grout, mastic, and sealer

## **Hardware**

- Approximately 20 #6 x 1-1/4” flathead wood screws
- Approximately 30 wire brads

## **Cutting List**

Code	Description	Qty.	Material	Dimensions
A	Base	1	3/4 plywood	Cut to fit
B	Side	2	1 x 4 pine	Cut to fit
C	Top/Bottom	2	1 x 4 pine	Cut to fit

## **Notes on Materials:**

Purchase exterior-grade plywood for the base (A), and if you plan to place your finished project outdoors, be sure to use exterior-grade wood components and galvanized hardware. Also be sure to use paint, grout, and sealer that are rated for exterior use.

Because of the number of digits in house numbers varies, so will the total number of tiles and the amount of wood you need. This project must be personalized for each residence. The materials specified here will be sufficient for a tile design that measures 20” x 24”, or less. If your design is larger, just add to the wood materials specified. If you decide to include the border tiles, buy a few extra in case you break any of them.

Most tiles sold at building-supply stores are now “self spacing.” They come with small projections on their edges so that when you lay them out, the grout lines between the tiles will be even. We suggest that you spend some time at the tile supplier laying out the numbered tiles—and the border tiles if you decide to use them—to make certain that you like the design and that it completes a rectangle. The exact size doesn’t matter; all of the wood pieces can be adjusted to fit.

## **Cutting the Plywood**

1. In order to determine the precise size of your project, you’ll need to lay out your design on the 3/4”-thick plywood. Place the tiles on the plywood exactly as you want them to look in the finished project, making certain that they’re spaced correctly and that the sides of the tile rectangle are absolutely straight. If your tiles aren’t self-spacing, don’t forget to leave gaps for the grout.
2. Place a 3/4 x 3/4 piece of scrap wood along each of the four sides of the tile design. The scrap wood will align the tiles and will add a 3/4 width on all four sides. Use a framing

square to make certain that the outer edges of the four scrap pieces are exactly square with one another.

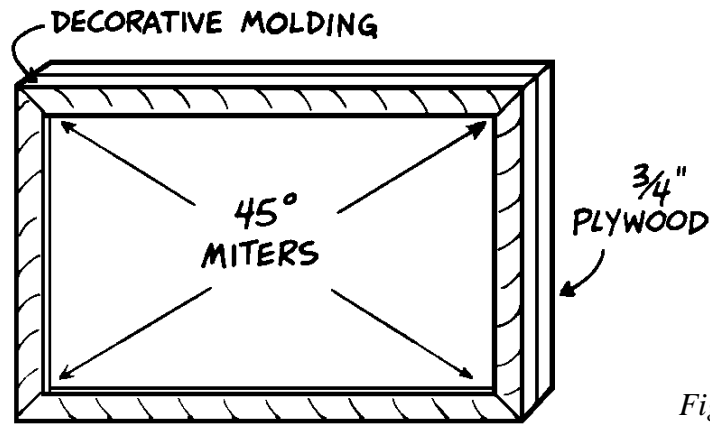


Figure 1

3. Use a pencil to mark the outer perimeter of the scrap wood onto the plywood. To form the plywood base (A) of the project, carefully cut out the marked rectangle.
4. Cut four pieces of  $\frac{3}{4}$ -wide decorative molding to fit exactly around the perimeter of the upper face of the base (A), mitering the corners of the molding as shown in *Figure 1*. Check to see that the tiled design will fit exactly inside the decorative molding that you have cut—now is the time to make any necessary adjustments.
5. Glue the mitered decorative molding to the upper face of the base (A) and secure it with small wire brads. Use a tack tamer to insert the brads and recess them into the molding with a nail set.

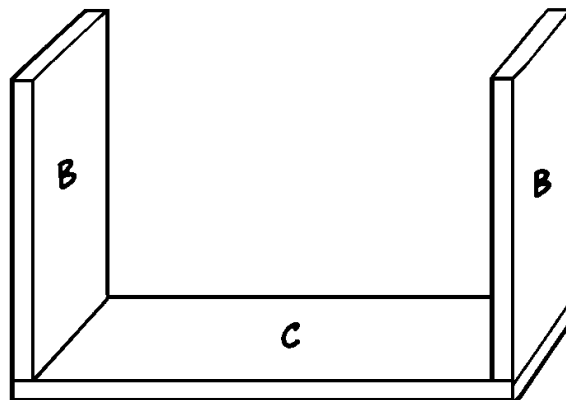
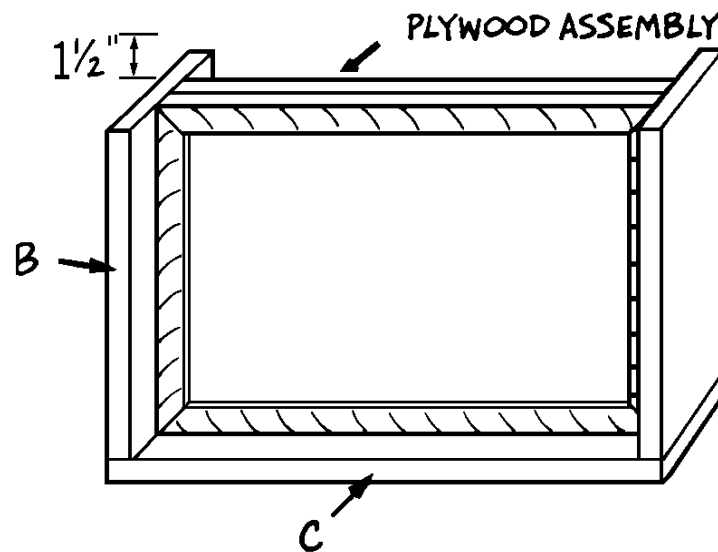


Figure 2

6. Measure the length and width of the base (A). Cut two sides (B) from 1 x 4 pine to the exact width of the rectangle.

7. Add 1-1/2" to the length of the rectangle and cut two top/bottom pieces (C) from 1 x 4 pine to that measurement.
8. Place the two sides (B) on one top/bottom piece (C), as shown in *Figure 2*. Make certain that the assembly is perfectly square. Glue the pieces together and insert two 1-1/4" screws through the top/bottom piece (C) and into the side (B) at each joint.
9. Fit the plywood assembly into the two sides (B) and top/bottom piece (C), as shown in *Figure 3*, adjusting the plywood so that it is inset 1-1/4" from the back edges of the sides and top/bottom piece.



*Figure 3*

10. Glue the remaining top/bottom piece (C) to the two sides (B) and secure it in place with two 1-1/4" screws at each joint.
11. To hold the plywood assembly in place, insert three 1-1/4" screws through each side (B) and each top/bottom piece (C) into the edges of the plywood.

### ***Finishing the Wood Frame***

1. Fill any holes and cracks, or crevices with wood filler.
2. Sand the project thoroughly.
3. Paint the wood frame the color of your choice. Do not paint the plywood face that will receive the tiles.

## ***Adding the Tiles***

1. Following the manufacturer's directions carefully, use a small trowel to spread an even coat of tile mastic over the surface of the plywood base. Take care not to get the mastic on any of the painted decorative molding.
2. Place the tiles on the mastic one at a time, making sure that they are absolutely straight. Do not slide them, or the mastic will be forced up onto the sides of the tiles. Let the mastic dry overnight.
3. Mix the tile grout according to the manufacturer's directions (or use pre-mixed grout).
4. Use a rubber-surfaced grout trowel, spread the grout over the tiles with arc-like motions. Hold the trowel at an angle so that it forces the grout evenly into the spaces between the tiles.
5. When the grout begins to set up, use a damp rag to wipe the excess from the tiles and the joints. Don't let the grout dry completely before doing this, or it will be very difficult to remove. Use as little water as possible during this process so that you don't thin the grout that remains. Let the grout dry overnight.
6. Wipe the remaining film from the tiles with a damp rag.
7. Apply grout sealer, following the manufacturer's directions. (These directions often recommend that you wait several days before applying the sealer to the project.)