



TABLE

lumber (Note: The Acrobat Reader lists 1" x 6", but the actual size should be
lumber
Combination square
square

Pencil

d drill

screws
galvanized bolts with nuts and washers
tightening the bolts

are

ndpaper

and Materials

ic table is a sizable project, so it's best to work outdoors. Make sure you have plenty of room, access to power outlets
& sawhorses handy.

quires using some power tools. Always wear safety glasses and ear protection when running them.

nd choice for outdoor furniture because its high oil content helps it outlast even many hardwoods when exposed to the
ar also has an attractive natural color and a distinctive grain that looks good even without stain (figure A).

o cut, so you can use a hand saw, but a circular saw will make the job go much faster. When using a circular saw, you
depth of the cut (figure B). The proper depth allows about 1/2" of the blade to extend below the bottom of the board
h prevents the blade from binding and overheating.



ieces

n building a picnic table are to cut and then assemble the pieces for the sides. A desirable height for a dining table is
se the legs of the table will be set at a 22-degree angle, they'll need to be longer than the table's height. At their longest
ill be 33", with both ends also cut at a 22-degree angle to make the tabletop parallel to the ground.

tion square (figure C) to measure and mark a 22-degree angle for making the first cut on the table legs. Once you've
angle, you can use an adjustable square to measure and mark the rest of the angled cuts. Use a circular saw to cut
ured angles (figure D).

ponents are the horizontal side braces. One set will support the tabletop and another the seats (figure E).

will be 26 1/2" in length--long enough to support five 2" by 6" boards butted together to form the top (figure F). Trim the top braces to prevent snagging when people sit down.

s are 2" by 4" boards cut the width of the tabletop (27 1/2") plus about a foot for each seat, for a total of 53".

the Ends

brace and seat brace, along with two of the angled legs, with the legs set in 5" from the end of the top brace and the 15 1/2" from the ground. Secure the components with 2 1/2" galvanized decking screws (figure G).

ility, strengthen the table with 1/4" galvanized bolts. At each joint, drill a hole completely through, using a 1/4" drill bit. Insert a 1/4" galvanized carriage bolt into the hole, and tap it in place with a hammer. Install a galvanized washer and nut on the bolt, and tighten with a wrench.

Assembled both ends, put together the top. The top and seats are all 60" long. Five boards form the tabletop; four form the seats. Lay out the 2" by 6" boards, selecting the best surfaces to form the top of the table. Mark and square off the rough ends of the boards with a circular saw (figure H), then cut each board to a length of 60".

Attach the tabletop and seat boards to the two ends. To make the job easier, use pipe clamps to hold the end assemblies perpendicular to the ground (figure I). With both ends held upright, place the first seat board (figure J), making sure that it's flush with the outside of each brace and with an overhang that is equal on both ends. Secure the seat boards to the seat support with 2" galvanized decking screws. Use two screws per board.

the Top

It's best to assemble the tabletop as a unit so that it's easier to position with the end pieces (figure K). Place the boards with the grain running down. If you plan to finish the table, you may prefer to position the boards with no gaps between them, particularly if you're using a well-dried and stable wood. If you'll leave the table unfinished or are using another wood, such as pine, it's advisable to leave 1/2" gaps between boards.

Before attaching the top pieces, position two 26"-long 2" by 6" braces to provide additional stability for the top boards. Before attaching the top pieces, make certain the top is square, using a carpenter's square. Place the braces about 12" from the ends. (If you're using a wood that's prone to warping, consider adding a third brace centered between the other two.) Position the braces, and attach them to the top boards with 2" galvanized decking screws.

After attaching the braces, flip the top over, and position it on the end pieces. Attach the top to the end pieces with galvanized

The table may be wobbly even after you attach the top and end pieces. To stabilize it, attach diagonal braces from the middle of the top to the underside of the table. Measure the distance (figure L), and cut a 45-degree angle on each end of the braces. (On a 60" table, the braces will be 23 1/2" long.) Attach the diagonal brace to the seat brace and the underside of the table with galvanized



Finishing

Sander with medium-grit sandpaper to smooth out rough spots and bring out the wood's grain. Keep the belt sander flat on the wood (see M), and sand in the direction of the grain, always maintaining a firm grip on the sander. Remove any scars or marks in the wood with a palm sander.

Protecting the table: its color would quickly be bleached out by sun exposure. Instead, use a spar varnish -- a tough finish specifically for wood that's exposed to the elements. Apply spar varnish with a natural- or synthetic-bristle brush, working it into the wood. After applying the varnish, hold the brush at a 45-degree angle, and pull it slowly across the wood to break up any clumps. Let the varnish dry overnight, then apply a second coat.

A table made this way will hold up well under strenuous use and will last for years.

