

## Do It Yourself

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### Workbench: Getting Started

From "[Woodworking](#)"

episode DIW-205 -- [More Projects](#) »

Is your old workbench too small, unsturdy or lacking functionality? DIY Woodworking host Bruce Johnson found his to be too narrow, with a wobbly vise that needed replacing. He designs a larger workbench that includes a larger work area, a convenient bottom shelf and a new vise. He begins by selecting rock-hard maple and creating a mortise -and-tenon system that will strengthen and stabilize the legs and base.

This is an intermediate project that can be completed for \$250 to \$300. With high -quality materials, the workbench should last a lifetime.

**Note:** This workbench originally appeared in *Workbench Magazine*. Complete plans to build this workbench can be purchased at [www.workbenchplans.com](http://www.workbenchplans.com).

Materials:

Hard-rock maple, cut to desired length for legs  
Additional wood for tenons, cut to desired length  
Table saw with dado blade  
Woodworking glue  
Clamps

1. A mortise-and-tenon system (**figure A**) will stabilize the table by creating greater strength than glue alone. (The legs will be created by gluing together two pieces of wood that have had half of a mortise cut.)
2. Use a dado blade (**figure B**) -- with extra teeth in the middle -- to narrow the wood and create an opening. Cut mortises about 1/2" deep (**figure C**) at the top edge and about 6" from the bottom. Repeat for the opposing board.



A custom workbench is designed to accommodate many woodworking needs. This one has a shelf to store wood and tools; a secure vise and a sturdy top. The mortise-and-tenon system give the legs added stability and strength.



Figure A



3. To secure the pieces together, hammer a nail halfway into the board. Use pliers to snip the nailhead off and create a brad (**figure D**) that will work into the opposing side of the leg.
4. Apply a generous amount of woodworker's glue to the inner surface of one of the boards and use clamps to pull aligned sections together (**figure E**).
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 until you have created all legs. (Tip: A damp cloth can be kept nearby to remove any excess glue while assembling legs.)
6. Cut tenons to desired length, then use dado blade to narrow the tenons on both sides to fit the mortise (**figure F**). Repeat process to narrow tenons for all legs .

Figure B



Figure C



Figure D



Figure E



Figure F

### Sponsored Resource

> [Click here](#) to order your tools and materials for this project from **Woodcraft!**

### RESOURCES:

#### Workbench Vise

Model: Record 52 ED

Record Tools

Website: [recordtools.com](http://recordtools.com)

#### Setting Up Shop: The Practical Guide to Designing and Building Your Dream Shop

Model: 1561585556

Author: Sandor Nagyszalanczy

#### Making Workbenches : Planning, Building, Outfitting

Model: 0806905352

Author: Sam Allen

#### The Workbench Book

Model: 1561582700

Author: Scott Landis

## **The Small Wood Shop (The Best of Fine Woodworking)**

Model: 1561580619

Author: Helen Albert (Editor)

### **Workbench Magazine**

How-to magazine featuring a wide variety of woodworking projects.

Workbench Magazine

Website: [www.workbenchmagazine.com](http://www.workbenchmagazine.com)

- **ALSO IN THIS EPISODE:**

[Workbench: Getting Started](#)

[Workbench: Assembling the Legs and Base](#)

[Workbench: Top, Vise and Trim](#)

[Finishing the Workbench](#)