Premium Plan

In this plan you’ll find:

- Step-by-step construction instruction.
- A complete bill of materials.
- Construction drawings and related photos.
- Tips to help you complete the project and become a better woodworker.

Wall-hung Jewelry Cabinet

These plans are best viewed with Adobe Reader installed on your computer. If you want to get a free copy, visit: http://adobe.com/reader.
I can justify my “collection” of hoarded leftovers because I’ve found that with a little extra work, my lowly scrap wood can be transformed into some pretty cool projects.

When a friend approached me to build a hanging jewelry box he designed for his wife, I knew just where to find the wood. Three offcuts of 8/4 walnut with knots, splits, cracks and some stunning figure were perfect for this jewelry box. The 8/4 stock would require resawing, and the gaping holes around the bark inclusions would need to be filled with an epoxy, but I knew the end result would be worth the extra effort.

Come along and I’ll show you how I use gnarly stock in my projects. In this story I’ll talk about how I resaw thick stock, fill cracks and voids with dyed epoxy, mount butt hinges and add the end grain pegs for a little Greene & Greene flair.

Let’s Get Started
If your wood is in the rough, joint and plane your stock first. Then take a close look at the wood and mark out your cuts (see top left photo, page 4). You have to practice a little triage with wood casualties like these. I use chalk to plan my cuts. If I change my mind, the chalk is easy to erase. Reserve the most spectacular grain for the door panel. Straight-grain sections are best for door frames where you want maximum stability. Take
your time choosing the material and planning your strategy; this is an important step.

Now prepare your stock for resawing. For this project, I planned to resaw my 1 3/4" material in half. This would give me plenty of room to joint and plane the stock to a final 3/4" thickness. Set a marking gauge to approximately half the thickness of the stock and mark the cutline. Often, I will also run the gauge on the opposite face of the board. This usually produces two closely spaced lines down the middle of the board to form a perfect little “road” for my band saw blade to travel along.

With wide stock such as this, I use a simple single-point fence for resawing (see bottom photo, page 4). Whatever you do, don’t just walk up to your band saw and have at it. Take the time to set your saw up for the operation at hand. Start with the right blade. I always keep a sharp, 3- to 4-tooth per inch skip tooth resaw blade for cuts like this. Mount the new blade, set the guides carefully, then make sure your table is perpendicular to the blade. Clamp down the fence using your marked wood as a guide. Now, go ahead and make your cuts.

After resawing, I always give the wood a rest. Every board has some built-in stress. We’ve all experienced this on the table saw when the offcut bends away from the board as it’s cut loose. Set the freshly resawn boards on scrap stickers, giving the wood a day or two to move before you joint and plane it to final thickness. This is an important step that allows the newly liberated wood to distort before you proceed.
The board I planned to use for the door panel had some bark inclusions. I dug out any loose bark, then stabilized the remaining bark with CA glue (see bottom photos, page 2). Stabilized wood is less prone to tearout or fuzzing when milled.

Once the wood was shored up, I jointed and planed it flat and square (see photo, below). Even though my panel stock would eventually be 5/8", I surfaced it to 3/4" because it still had to be book-matched and glued up into a single panel before surfacing to the final thickness.

Now it was time for some fun. I always love this part: playing around with book-matched panels in search of the perfect combination. This time it was something of a "no-brainer" (see photos, opening page). Once I had my book-match figured out, I could glue and clamp the panel together. When the glue dried, it was time to deal with those bark inclusions as well as some cracks and splits in the wood. Epoxy does wonders in cases like this — it fills and stabilizes the voids and cracks. Dyed black, the epoxy actually dresses up the panel’s appearance, giving it a more elegant and less rugged look.

Mix the dye and filler with the epoxy in a sufficient amount, and use a stiff brush to push it down into cracks and crevices. Let the epoxy set overnight, then sand and plane the panel to final thickness.
Jewelry Cabinet Hard-to-Find Hardware

The following supplies are available from Woodworker’s Journal.

- Antique Brass Knob 1 1/4” (1) #20027
- Pressure Sensitive Felt (5 sheets req.) #22814
- Miniature Shaker Pegs (1) #21964
- Brass Shelf Supports (1) #30692
- Polished Brass Ball Tip Hinges (1) #26484
- Solid Brass Chain Carousel (2) #40885
- 3/8” Rare Earth Magnets (1) #32907
- Black Ring Bars (2) #35248

To purchase products online, visit www.woodworkersjournal.com and click on the "WWJ Store" tab. Or, to order by phone, call 800-610-0883 and mention code WJ1152.

MATERIAL LIST

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Woodworker’s Journal
Assembling the Case, Door Frame

With the door panel behind me, I cut my case parts to size and machined tongue-and-rabbet joints on the router table to attach the top and bottom to the sides. Take your parts to the table saw and rip 1 1/4" strips off of their front edges to use for the door assembly later on. Mark the parts accordingly to keep their orientation and grain direction clear. Follow the Drawings to bore shelf-pin holes in the case sides and door frame.

My cabinet’s rabbeted back panel is made of 1/2" plywood, covered with felt. This explains why the case groove width (see drawing) is slightly oversized.

Apply self-stick felt to the panel’s “show” face. I decided to pre-finish the insides of the cabinet box before assembling it with glue (see photo above). Trying to apply finish right up to the felt is a chore to avoid. Glue the back panel securely into the grooves in the case pieces so you can drive screws through it later to hang the cabinet from a stud.

Next, glue up those 1 1/4” strips (from pieces 1 and 2) to create the rear framework for the door. Remember to keep these frame parts oriented to visually match up with their corresponding members in the case.

Mortised butt hinges often give people fits — especially in a project like this where the door is actually part of the box and has to line up perfectly. Here’s how I tackle the hinge hardware: Locate the hinge leaf on the front edge of the case and align it with a square. Scribe the ends of the hinge. I like to use a marking knife because it cuts the wood cleanly and leaves a groove to align my chisel. Now, mark the width of the mortise with a marking gauge (see left photo, below.) Chuck a 1/4" straight cutter in a trim router and set the bit depth slightly less than half the thickness of the closed hinge. Rout out the waste, stopping shy of the knife lines (see center photo, below).

Clean up these mortises with a sharp chisel, and attach the hinges to the case. At this point, you can set the door’s rear frame on the case and knife the hinge locations onto it (see bottom right photo).

Making the Door

It’s time to build a cabinet door to accompany that hinged frame. Cut the rails and stiles to size, according to the Material List dimensions on page 31. I planned to assemble my door with mini-biscuits but float the panel in a 1/4”-wide, 1/4”-deep groove cut around the inside edges of the rails and stiles. Set up these groove cuts at your router table, and mill them now. Follow the Drawings carefully to note where these grooves need to stop so they aren’t visible on the assembled door.

With the panel grooves milled, you can create a full-sized “cloud lift” paper template of the top rail profile (see Drawings). Cut out your template and trace its profile onto the rail. Head to the band saw to rough-shape it, then clean up the profiles and refine those gentle curves with files and sandpaper.

Cut the door panel to final size, and return to the router table to mill the 1/2”-wide rabbet around its front edges, which will leave you a 1/4” reveal. Now you can cover the back with felt, as you did with the back panel. Be sure the resulting tongue is slightly undersized so the addition of the felt back makes for a snug fit in the door frame grooves. Stick the felt to the back of the door panel, and assemble the door with biscuits and glue.

I cheated a bit when hanging my door to guarantee an even overhang on its rear frame. I used a pin nailer to tack the door...
to the frame, then fixed the two permanently with countersunk wood screws driven through the frame’s inside edges (see center photos, right).

**Outfitting the Case**
With the door mounted, the cabinet is almost complete. Now it’s time to build and fit the adjustable shelves and ring holder trays (see Drawings for details, but you can personalize this as you wish). The edging on the shelves creates a lip to keep bracelets from rolling off on the front side. On the back edge they create a hook on the underside to capture the shelf pins. The ring trays hang on angled ledges attached to the cabinet sides. The extra-wide back edge creates a lip to hold the trays onto the ledges. Drill holes into the case top for the two brass necklace carousels, and fix them in place with a drop of epoxy or CA glue. Bore shallow holes into the back face of the door panel for short Shaker pegs to hang necklaces and longer jewelry. Finally, add a small mirror with a mitered frame if you so choose (see Drawings).

**Finishing Up**
It’s now time to add the four square cherry peg details on the door’s face. Mark and drill 1/4” holes about 1/3” deep on the frame. Use a square to outline the peg shapes. My “back pocket” trick for making square holes is to cut them using a hollow-chisel mortising bit with the drill removed and tapping it gently with a wooden mallet.

Rip a 1/4” x 1/4” cherry blank on the table saw. Cut the blank into short lengths and pound them into their holes with a drop of wood glue. Trim off the excess, I sanded my pegs using a cardboard shield to remove saw marks and create a slightly rounded top. After sanding all of the surfaces to 220-grit, I topcoated the project with Waterlox satin finish before screwing a brass door knob in place and applying felt dots to cushion the door when it closes.

See what you can do with a few pieces of interesting scrap wood?

Dave Munkittrick is a cabinetmaker and furniture builder who works out of an old pig barn in Wisconsin.