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Classic Project

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.

Early American Doll Bed



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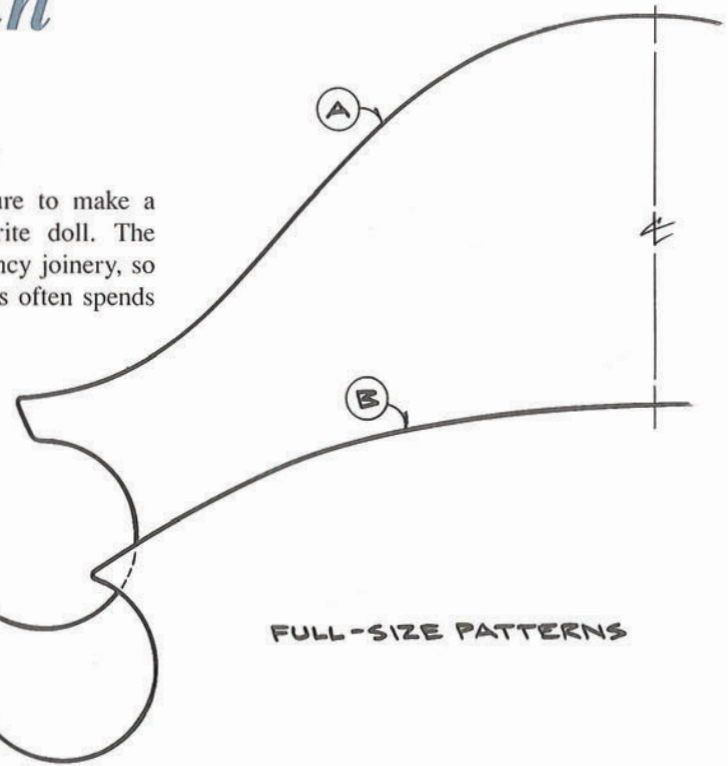
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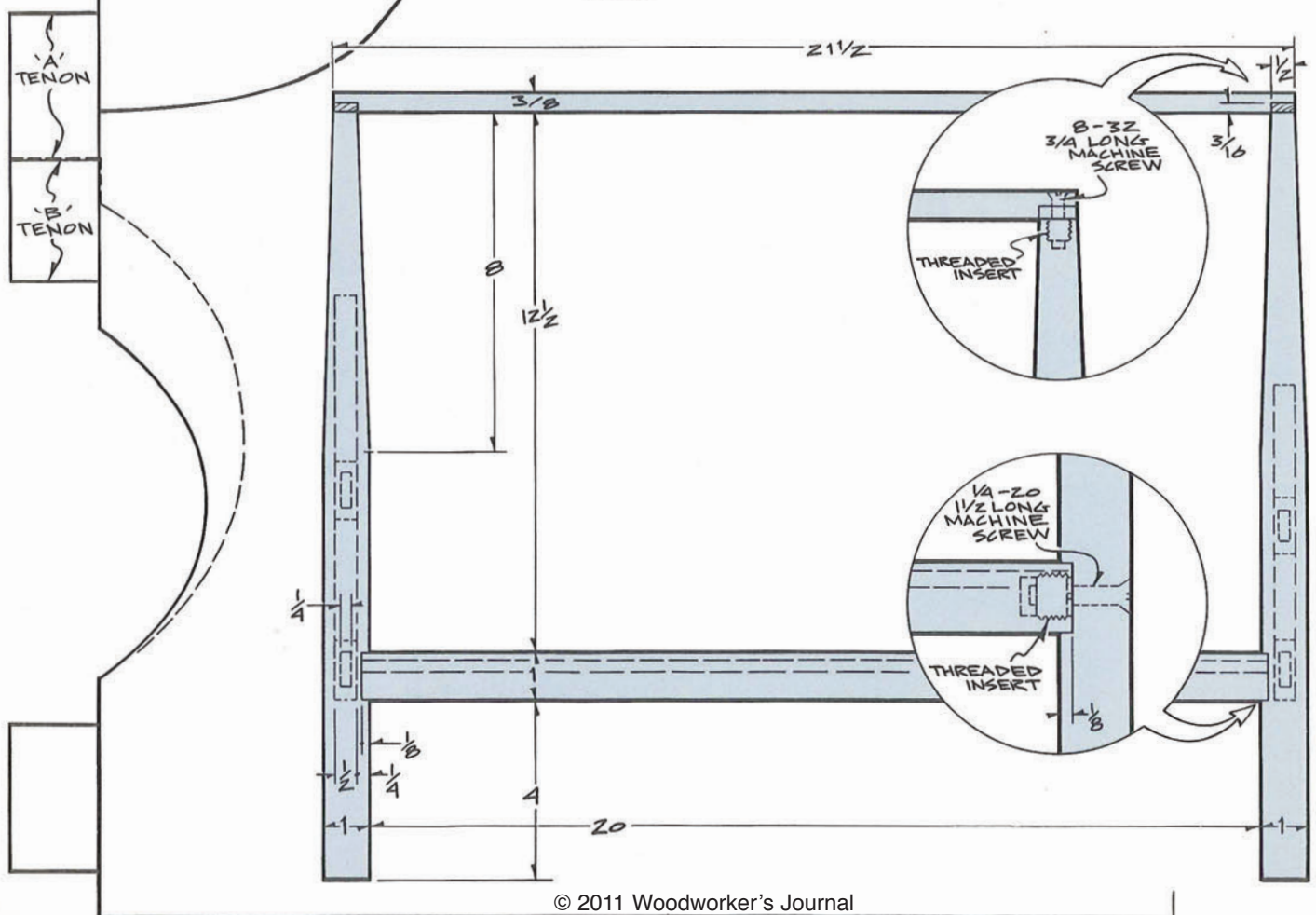
Early American Doll Bed

This charming project, made from pine, is sure to make a memorable gift for any child with a favorite doll. The construction is quite strong, yet there is no fancy joinery, so it's a perfect weekend project. Since a project like this often spends time stored in an attic or basement, we thought it was a good idea to make it easy to disassemble—hence the use of threaded inserts and flathead machine screws.

The tester frame, with valance attached, adds much to the appearance of the doll bed, but we think the tester serves an even more important



FULL-SIZE PATTERNS





If you don't have a thickness planer, and can't get $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick stock locally, try checking with a nearby lumberyard or mill-work shop, as they often will plane stock for a nominal charge. Or, of course, you can do it just like the old-time cabinet-makers did—with a sharp hand plane.

Once stock for the headboard and footboard has been thickness planed, cut the parts to the length and width dimensions shown in the Bill of Materials. The tenons on each end can be cut following the three step procedure shown in Fig. 1. First, use the table saw and dado head, along with the miter gauge, to cut a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide by $\frac{1}{2}$ in. long tenon the full width of each part (Step 1). Next, using the full-sized patterns we've provided, transfer the curved profiles to the parts, then cut them out with a band saw (Step 2). Now, use a dovetail saw to establish the shoulders and cut the tenons to width (Step 3).

Cut Stock for the Posts and Rails

purpose. Without the tester frame, the posts present four rather sharp points that could injure a child who might accidentally fall on them. With the tester frame in place, the risk of injury is lessened. So, for safety's sake, be sure to securely attach the tester frame, even if you don't plan on adding the valance. Most well-stocked hardware stores will carry threaded inserts and machine screws. The material we use for the valance is called ruffled eyelet, and it's sold in various patterns in fabric stores.

The four posts (C) and the two rails (D) are made from five-quarter stock (which will measure about $1\frac{1}{8}$ in. thick). Rip the stock to 1 in. square before cutting the posts to a length of $17\frac{1}{2}$ in. and the rails to a length of $20\frac{1}{4}$ in.

Make the Posts

Note that each post has a $\frac{1}{8}$ in. deep by 1 in. wide notch to accept the rails. Mark the location of each notch, then use the table saw with a dado head to cut them out. Use the rails to check for a good fit.

Also, bore the $\frac{5}{16}$ in. diameter through holes for the rail flathead machine screws (I). You'll want these holes to be square, so use the drill press or a doweling jig when you bore them. Also, make sure the holes are centered in the notch. If they are not centered, the rails may not line up with the post notch at assembly time.

Layout and mark the mortises in the posts for the headboard and footboard tenons. Once marked, use a sharp chisel to chop them out.

Mark the centerline location of the post threaded insert (J) on the top end of each post, then bore a $\frac{1}{4}$ in. diameter by $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Make the Headboard and Footboard

Begin the project by making the headboard (A) and footboard (B). Rather than edge-glue several narrow boards to get the width needed for these parts, we used 1 by 10 nominal stock (which measures $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick by $9\frac{1}{4}$ in. wide) and thickness planed it to $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick.

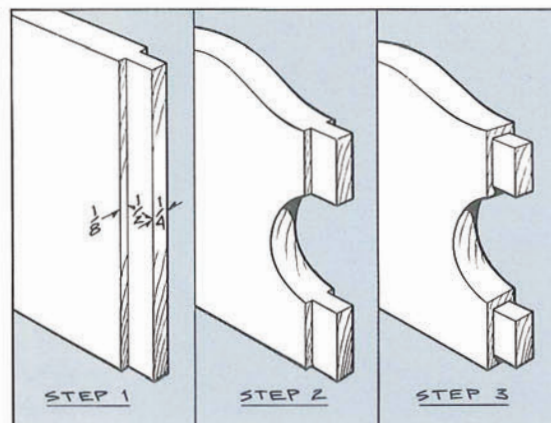


FIG. 1

long hole to accept each one. Thread the inserts in place, then remove each one and set them aside for now. The inserts will be threaded back in after the posts have been tapered.

Now, cut the tapers on each post. If you have one, a table saw tapering jig will come in handy here. If not, lay out and mark the tapers on each leg, then hand plane the stock to the marked lines. With the tapering completed, the post threaded inserts can be once again threaded in place.

Make the Rails

Use the table saw and dado head, along with the rip fence, to cut the 1/4 in. by 1/4 in. groove along the inside edge of each rail. As shown in the exploded view, the groove is located 1/8 in. from the top edge.

Mark the centerline location of the rail threaded insert (H) on the end of each rail. Bore a 3/8 diameter by 5/8 in. long hole to accept each one. It's important for the insert holes to be square, so we used a doweling jig as a guide for the drill bit. Once the holes are drilled, the inserts can be threaded in place.

Test assemble the rails to the posts using the rail flathead machine screws and check for a snug fit in the post notches.

Assemble the Headboard, Footboard and Posts

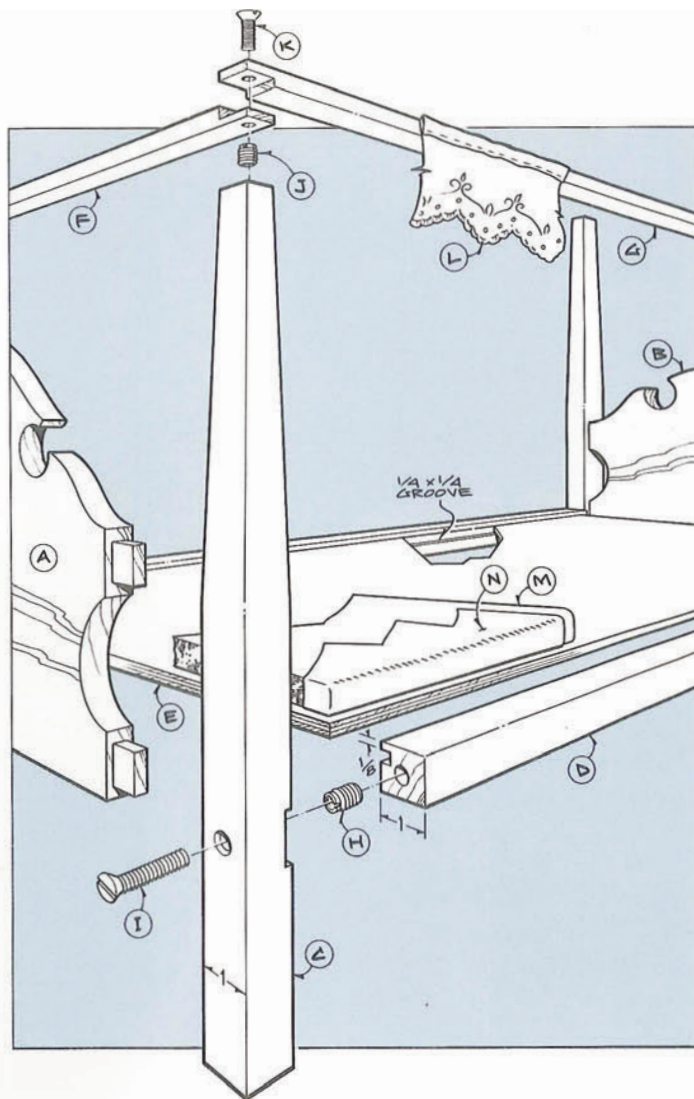
Remove the machine screws from the posts, then final sand the headboard, footboard and posts, finishing with 220-grit sandpaper. Take special care to smooth the band sawn edges of the headboard and footboard. Add a thin coat of glue to the mortises and tenons, then assemble and clamp. Set aside to dry.

Add the Rails and Bottom

Cut the bottom (E) to size and check for a good fit in the rail grooves. Final sand the bottom and rails, again finishing with 220-grit. Use glue to join the bottom to the rails, then before the glue sets, assemble the bottom/rail assembly to the posts using the rail machine screws.

Make the Tester Frame

You'll need about six feet of 3/8 in. by 1/2 in. stock to make the



two tester frame ends (F) and the two tester frame sides (G). It's best to take measurements from the assembled bed in order to get the actual length dimensions. Once cut to length, use the table saw and dado head to cut the 3/16 in. by 1/2 in. half-lap joints on each end of the tester parts.

Bore a 3/16 in. diameter hole in each half-lap for the four post machine screws (K). Final sand the tester frame parts, then assemble to the posts using the screws.

Finishing Up

For a finish, we applied two coats of Minwax Special Walnut. When dry, we added two coats of water-based polyurethane. Although the water-based polyurethane costs somewhat more, we like it because it dries faster, doesn't require much sanding between coats, and easily cleans up with water. Next, use a sharp scissors to cut the foam mattress (M) to length and width. Wrap the mattress with the cover (N) and stitch the underside to secure it in place. We used bedsheets material for the cover, but most any thin fabric will do. Now, to complete the project, add the valance (L) to the tester frame, using a few brass tacks to secure it in place.



Bill of Materials (all dimensions actual)			
Part	Description	Size	No. Req'd.
Bed			
A	Headboard	1/2 x 9 x 13*	1
B	Footboard	1/2 x 7 x 13*	1
C	Post	1 x 1 x 17 1/2	4
D	Rail	1 x 1 x 20 1/4	2
E	Bottom	1/4 x 12 1/2 x 20 1/4	1
F	Tester Frame End	3/8 x 1/2 x 13 1/2	2
G	Tester Frame Side	3/8 x 1/2 x 21 1/2	2
Hardware			
H	Rail Threaded Insert	1/4-20	4
I	Rail Screw	1/4-20 x 1 1/2 long	4
J	Post Threaded Insert	8 - 32	4
K	Post Screw	8 - 32 x 3/4 long	4
Software			
L	Valance	3 in. wide	6 ft.
M	Mattress	3/4 x 12 x 20 1/4	1
N	Mattress Cover	30 x 24	1
* Length includes tenons			

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