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A Hall Mirror for Beginners

In this plan you will be getting:

- Step by Step construction instruction.
- A complete bill of materials.
- Exploded view and elevation drawings.
- How-to photos with instructive captions.
- Tips to help you complete the project and become a better woodworker.

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This beautiful hall mirror proves that "simple" doesn't have to mean "without style."

A Hall Mirror for Beginners

Projects don't have to start from dozens of parts to form beautiful objects in the end. This hall mirror, made from four sticks of mahogany, a piece of mirror glass and a few wooden retainers proves the point. The mirror would make a handsome accent in any decor and is easy to tackle if you are a beginning woodworker with modest tools.

The author used lap-jointed corners secured with copper nails and set off by decorative copper diamonds, materials he had on hand.

"MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL ..."

This mirror differs from the usual run because the glass is actually mounted on the surface of the frame instead of being set in a groove or rabbet. This means you don't have to miter the corners of the frame at 45°—often a sore trial for the novice woodworker.

Instead, the glass is held in place by small, L-shaped wooden retainers fastened to the sides with brass screws. As a result, this is a great project for beginners…it looks good and can be completed in a weekend with simple hand tools.

Choosing the Shape and Size

The first step in this project is to decide where it's going to end up. Measure your space and then determine the overall size of your mirror. (If you'd prefer not to make a custom size, follow the *Material List* dimensions on page 60 to build the mirror shown here.) A square frame is one possibility, but if you go for a rectangular frame, we suggest making the width about two thirds of the length.

We also strongly suggest using 1/4" plate glass, not the thinner variety, because it's dead flat and thus a more faithful reflector. Have the glass cut to size and all four edges polished smooth. To prevent moisture from being absorbed and marring the reflective surface, be sure to carefully seal all four edges with clear nail polish or lacquer.

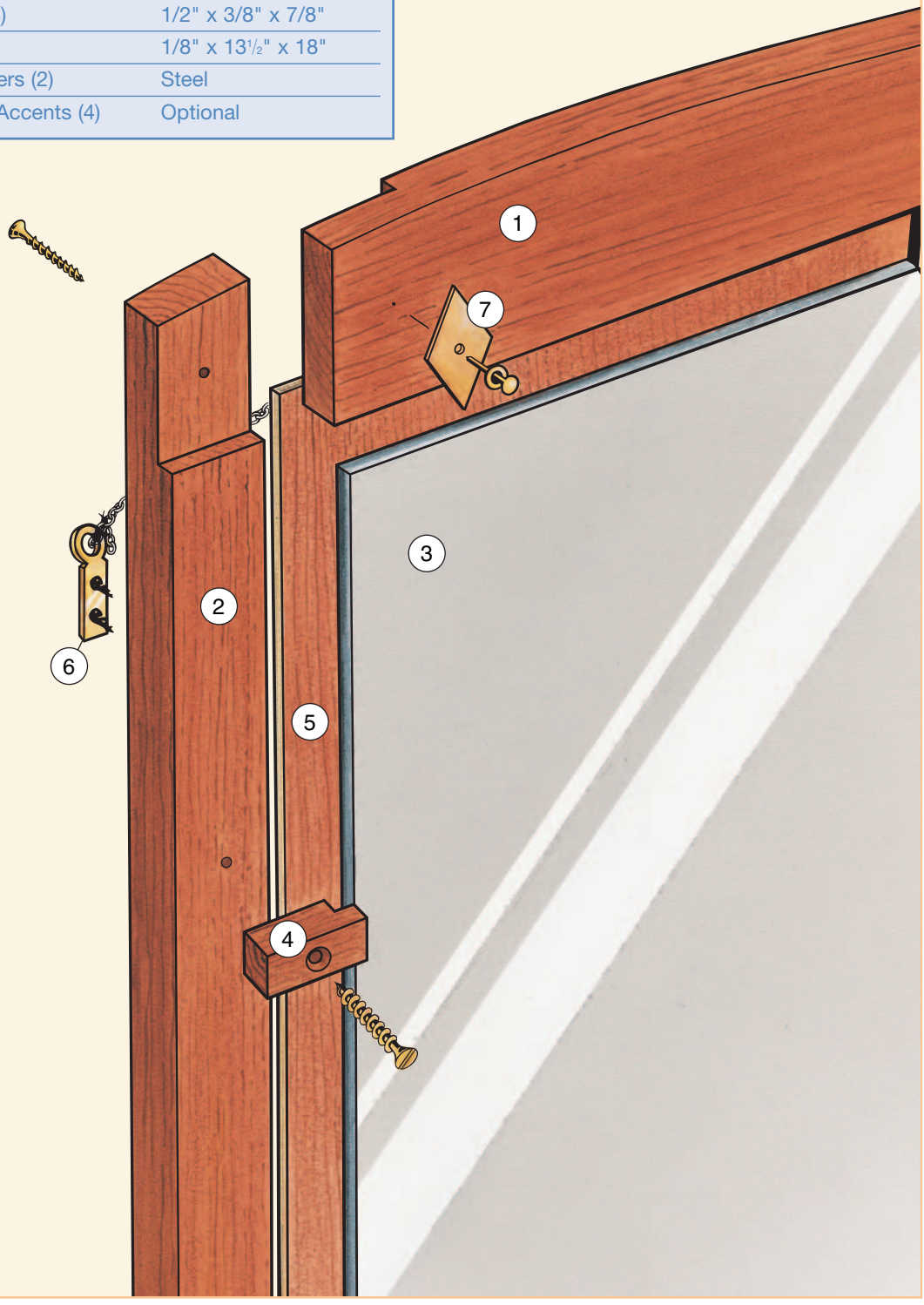
The frame shown here is made of 3/4" mahogany salvaged from an old boat. Darker woods like mahogany or walnut seem to define the glass better.

Cut the four lap joints on the stiles and rails (pieces

Mirror Exploded View

MATERIAL LIST – *Mirror*

		T x W x L
1	Rails (2)	3/4" x 2½" x 14"
2	Stiles (2)	3/4" x 1½" x 19⅜"
3	Mirror (1)	1/4" Cut to fit
4	Retainers (4)	1/2" x 3/8" x 7/8"
5	Back (1)	1/8" x 13½" x 18"
6	Strap Hangers (2)	Steel
7	Decorative Accents (4)	Optional



1 and 2) as shown in the *Technical Drawings* (see pages 62 and 63), making a 1/4" offset to match the thickness of the glass (piece 3). If you're a new woodworker without a full shop, you can cut these joints by hand, but if you have access to a shop, these lap joints are readily cut on a table saw.

Fastening the Corners

Fasten the four corners with rivets—copper nails peened over saucer-shaped copper washers—and cut the decorative diamonds out of a copper sheet metal: these are nautical supplies our author had handy. You could come up with a different motif or simply glue the lap joints with Titebond® glue or another yellow glue equivalent and countersink a small screw from the back. Shape the gentle curve of the rails after you've joined the frame. Next, form the retainers (pieces 4) out of the same wood as the frame, using a fine-cutting hand saw.

It's not strictly necessary to put a back (piece 5) on this frame, but it makes for a more finished job and protects the back of the reflecting surface from being accidentally scratched. If you do this, use 1/8" plywood and countersunk 1/2"-long, #6 brass screws so they won't mar the wall.

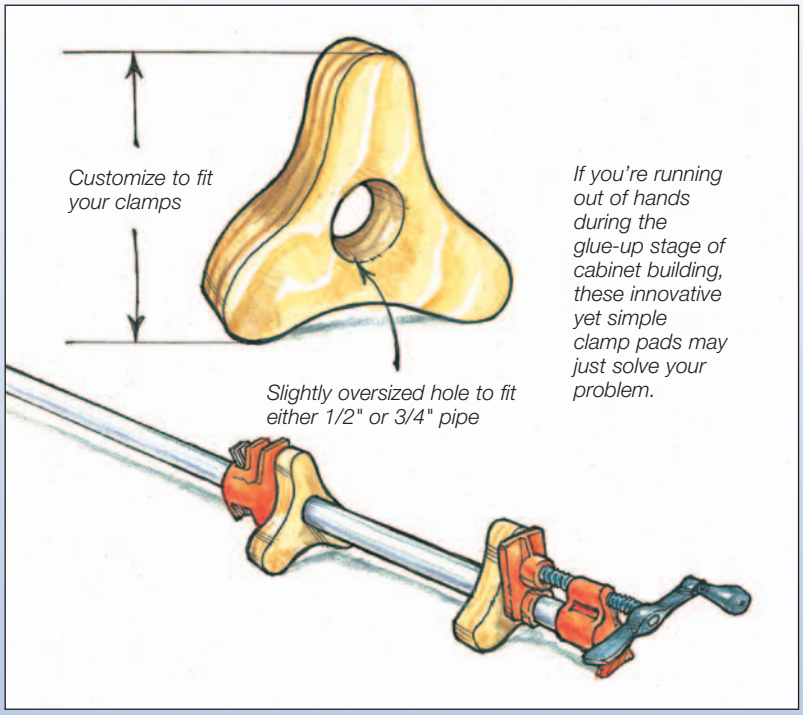
Finishing Up

Topcoat the project with your favorite clear finish. Finally, having come this far, be sure to use quality strap hangers (pieces 6), available at hardware stores, to properly support the weight of the mirror.

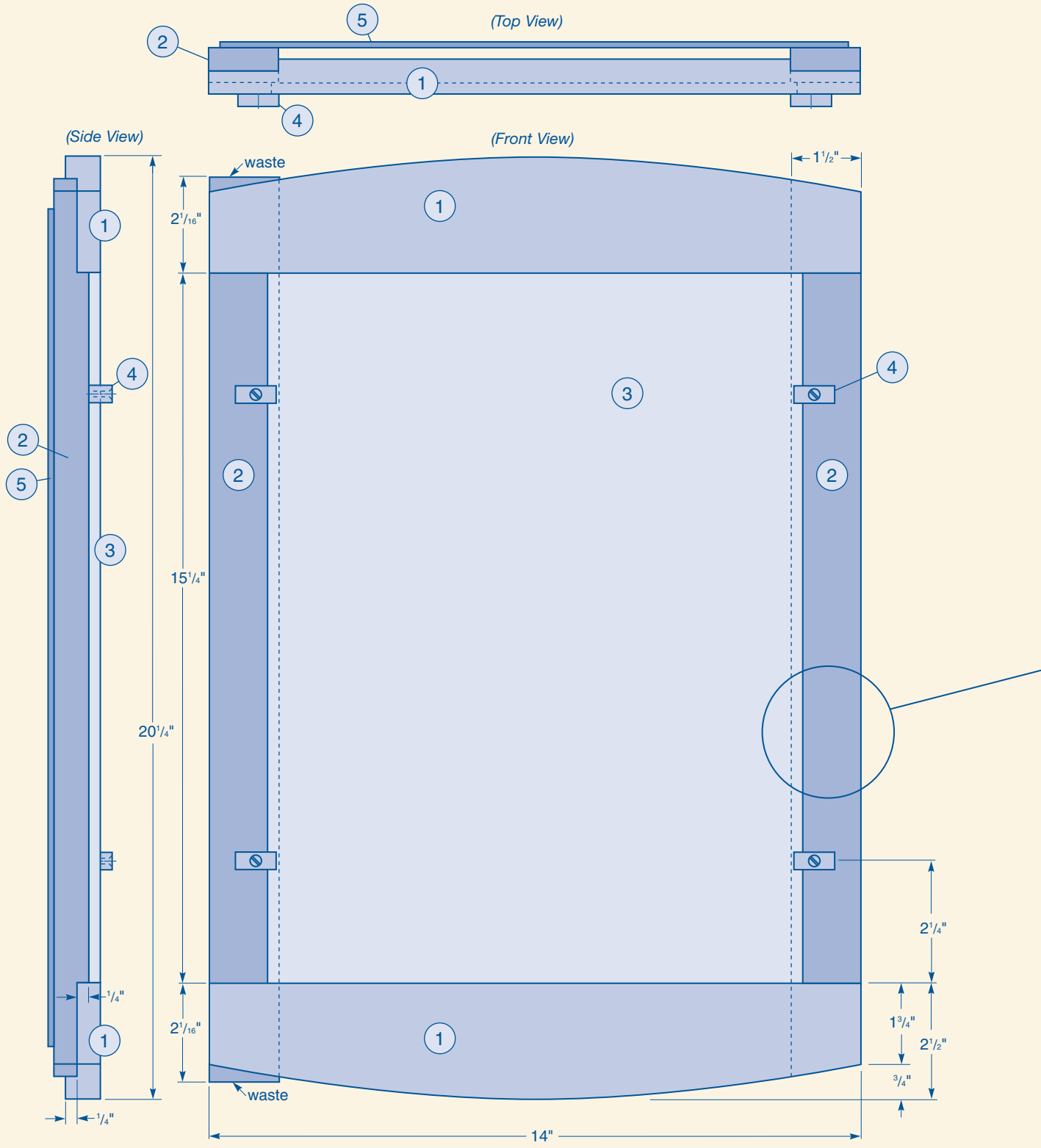
QuickTip

Innovative Clamp Pads

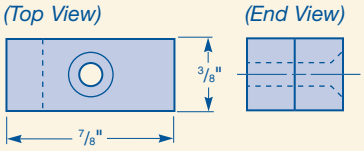
Positioning a pad between the jaw of a bar clamp and the assembly you're building can be tricky. Trying to keep the clamps in position—especially when you're at the other end of a large cabinet—can be downright frustrating. These three-spoke pads solve both problems at once. Two of the three spokes become the stand's legs (they even allow for uneven surfaces), while the third spoke automatically centers itself as a hands-free pad between the metal of the clamp jaw and the workpiece being glued up.



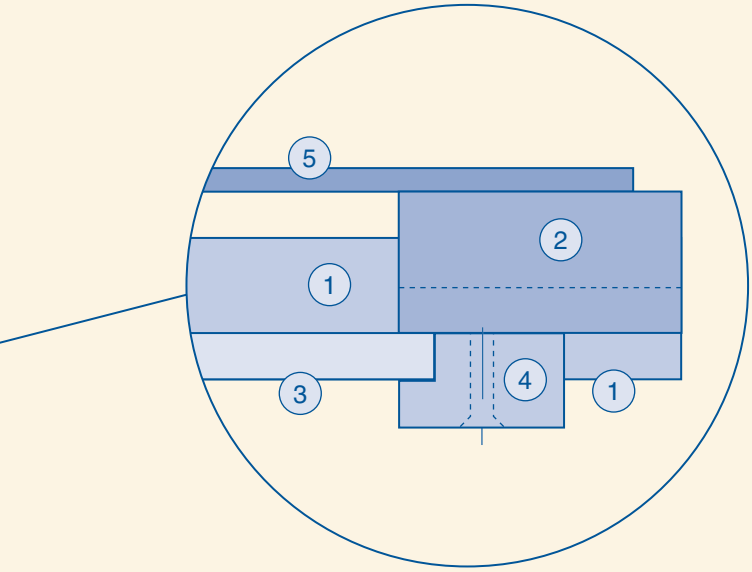
Technical Drawings

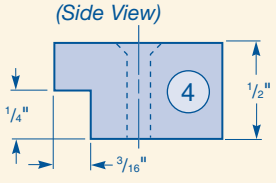


Retainer
Full Size

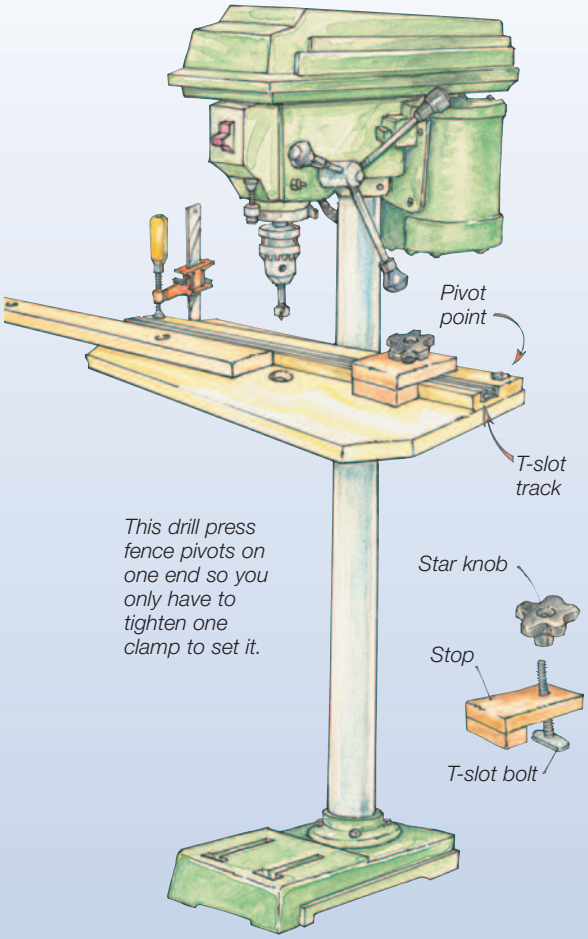


Frame Assembly
Section View





QuickTip



T-slot for Instant Stops

A pivot-style fence mounted on your drill press is faster and easier to adjust than ones that rely on C-clamps. For stops, use T-slot hardware: bolt heads ride in the track that is incorporated in the fence. Attach stops to the bolts with star knobs. They are infinitely adjustable and easily removed.