

Making a Simple 2-Board Chair

By Matthew Fonner (SKA Mathaeus Blades)

At Pennsic 25 only a few vendors had these chairs, but at Pennsic 26 they were available in abundance just about anywhere you looked. The prices at War ranged from \$35 up to \$100 per chair (based on lumber used, design on the back, etc.). Now you can make one of these chairs for yourself for just the cost of the lumber and about an hour of your time (having made a few, I can cut the basic chair out in 15 minutes).

Materials

You will need one board, 2" x 12" 6-feet long. When you buy the board, most lumber stores will make 1 or 2 cuts for you for free, so have them cut the board into the 2 parts you need. Have the cut made at 30" (2 feet 6 inches). I have this done for me, and both pieces fit into the trunk of my Honda Civic, rather than tying a 6' board to the roof.

Tools

You will need just two tools to cut the chair:

Power drill with a 3/8" bit

Sabre saw (Jigsaw)

If you have a circular saw, you can use it to HELP make the long cuts on the paddle...see that section for information.

If you have a router with a 1/4" or 3/8" round-over bit you can run this over the edges of the seat part and the sides and top of the back for a neater looking finished product.

For finishing the chair, sandpaper (or palm sander if you have one), stain, and sealer (if the chair is going to be outside, you will want to sand it to keep dew and rain from affecting the wood). Minwax makes a stain/sealer liquid that you wipe on with a cloth or sponge that dries quickly, and comes in many different colors/shades.

Procedure

NOTE: The dimensions I have here are for 'true' lumber, the lumber you buy at places like Home Depot and Hechingers are planed to a smaller size (usually 1/4" or so smaller) for the thickness and width of the board. When drawing your cutting lines on the lumber, find the centerline of the board and measure out from that for the paddle and the slot. Also, be sure to cut the slot just a little taller than the board's thickness (as you measured it). See the figures on the second page for dimensions before beginning.

- 1) If you did not have your board cut at the lumber-shop, mark a line at 30" (2'-6") from one end of the board and cross-cut it to get the 2 pieces you will use. (You can use the circular saw for this..it is easier).
- 2) Measure the actual width of your board from side to side (see note above) and lightly mark the centerline on both pieces.
- 3) For the seat, mark a line 12" in from one end. This will make the area where you will sit. Now on the other side of the seat line, measure out 3" on each side of the centerline at several places. Connect the marks you just made to make the lines you will cut.
- 4) Cut along the lines you marked out in step 3, up to your seat-line. Now cut in from the edges along the seat line to finish cutting out the paddle. * You can use the circular saw to make the long cuts, but be sure to watch what you are doing and only cut the top up to your marked lines and then finish the cuts out with the jigsaw.

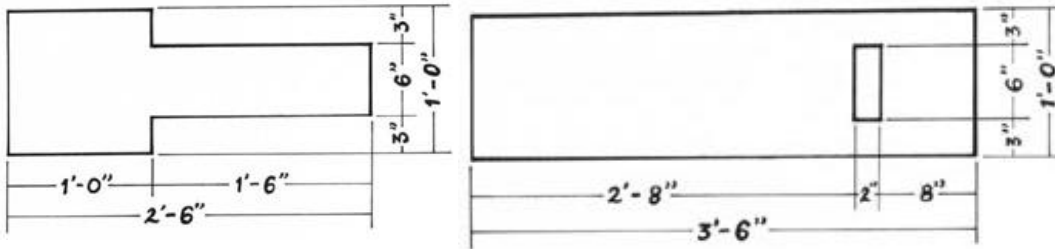
PROCEDURE, CONTINUED

- 5) For the back, draw a line 8" up from the bottom edge (this line will become the bottom of the slot). Now, from that line, measure up the thickness of your board (see note above) and draw another line. This will be the height of the slot that the paddle will go through.
- 6) From the centerline, measure out 3" to each side and finish drawing out the rectangle for the slot.
- 7) Using the drill, drill 4 holes inside the corners of the rectangle (place the drill so that the bit just touches both side-lines at the corners. This will leave a bit of the corner, but you will cut that out.).
- 8) Use the sabre saw to cut along the lines between the holes (be sure to cut all the way to the corners), and the rectangle will drop out. Check the fit of the paddle, and enlarge the slot a little bit at a time until the paddle fits through easily.
- 9) If you want to, you can round off the front corners of the seat and the top of the back. You can also route the edges round (but not the arm of the paddle or the bottom of the back).

Before finishing, you can cut a design into the back or wait until the finish is dry and then paint or woodburn a design into the back.

For finishing, sand until smooth then follow the directions for the finish you have selected.

Now, slide the paddle's "handle" through the slot and you have your 2-Board Chair!



The plans and this procedure are ©1998 by Matthew Fonner.

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