

# Build a Smaller Porch Bed Swing: Plans and Video How-To

 wooditsreal.com/2018/04/04/smaller-porch-bed-swing/

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## Relaxing Times Ahead: 25% Smaller Than Our Original Plan

Bigger isn't always better. At the request from many Wood. It's Real. fans, we have re-designed our popular [Porch Bed Swing](#), this time it's 25% smaller.

Imagine this: laying down on a porch bed swing in the warm breeze, head propped on a pillow, a glass of sweet tea forming cold droplets of condensation on your hand. That sounds pretty darn nice way to relax, right? Take a few hours on a weekend to make this thing..it'll be worth it, promise.

The length of time it takes you to build this project depends on how skilled you are. We figure for someone with intermediate skills, this build should take around 6 or so hours. However, we've received word from at least one novice builder that said she tackled this swing as her first ever building project.

There are lots of steps here, and you'll be thrilled how it will all come together. We'd also like to point out that when you go to hang your amazing new porch bed swing, please make sure you consult an expert if you're unsure that your structure can handle the weight.

Once you've made this project, [let us know how it went](#). We'd love to see it and brag on you, OK?

## It's Porch Bed Swing Building Time

As you get started, here's a handy video that takes you through all the steps to make your porch bed swing. Please keep in mind that this video shows the [bigger bed](#), but it should still be helpful to watch.

We recommend getting the following supplies:

### MATERIALS



## Lumber

- (6) 5/4" x 6" x 8' Decking Boards or (3) 5/4" x 6" x 12' Decking Boards (if you can get the longer piece in your car)
- (6) 1" x 6"x 8' Pressure Treated SYP
- 1/4" x 48" x 96" Plywood

## Other

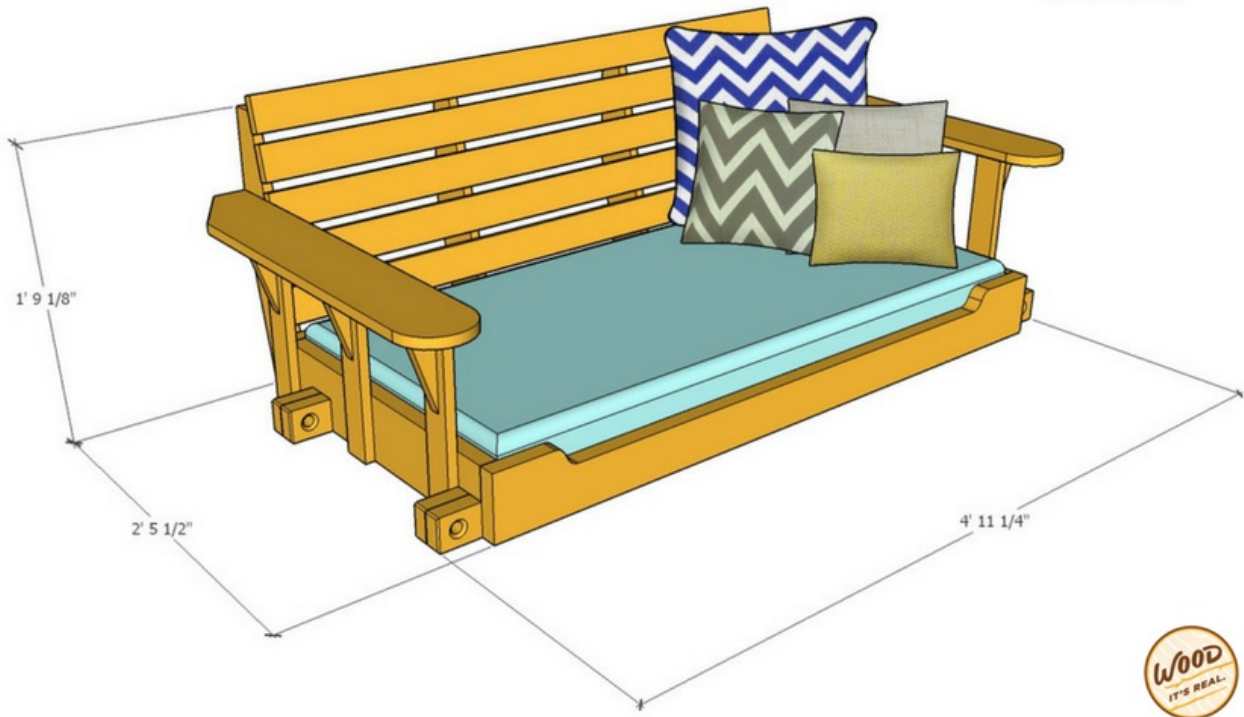
- Exterior Grade Wood Glue
- 2" Wood Deck Screws (100+)
- Appropriate Bit for Deck Screws
- Combination Countersink Bit
- 3/8" Step/Pocket Hole Drill Bit
- 18-gauge, 1.5" Finishing Nails or 1.5" Staples • 7/8" Forstner Drill Bit
- Chamfer Router Bit
- Heavy Ropes or Heavy Chains
- Foam Pad (24" x 50")

## TOOLS

- Pencil, Measuring Tape
- Old Paint Brush
- 4-6 Bar Clamps (at least 5" long)
- Pocket Hole Jig
- Straight Edge / Carpenter Square
- Wood File
- Table Saw
- Miter Saw
- Jig Saw
- Electric Drill / Driver
- Nail Gun / Staple Gun
- Radial Sander / Sanding Block
- Router
- Electric Knife, optional (for cutting foam)
- Safety Glasses / Ear Protection
- Dust Mask / Work Gloves

## OVERALL DIMENSIONS OF THE 25% SMALLER PORCH BED SWING

Mattress is 24" x 50"



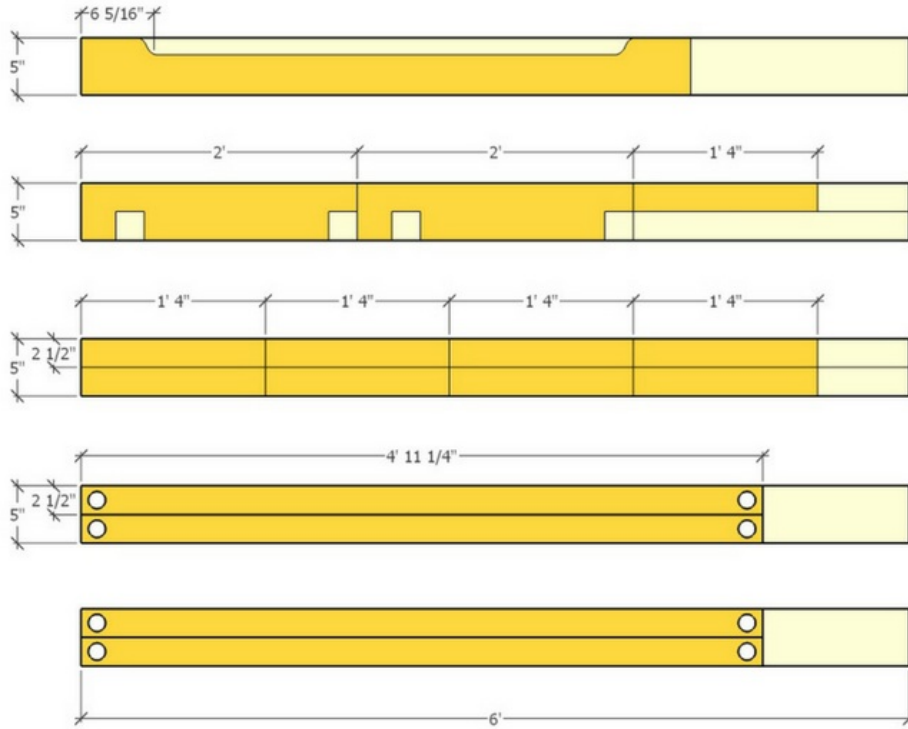
## CUT LIST

Without further ado, here we go with the cut list. First thing's first, you'll need to **square the edges** of your deck boards by running them through a table saw taking off just the curved edges. See the [how-to video](#) to see what we mean. And because you're squaring the edges of a 5/4" x 6" deck board, the actual dimensions (that you see in the cut list below) are 5/4" x 5".

With your deck boards prepped, follow these cuts for your DIY porch bed swing:

Bed Frame and Sub Structure

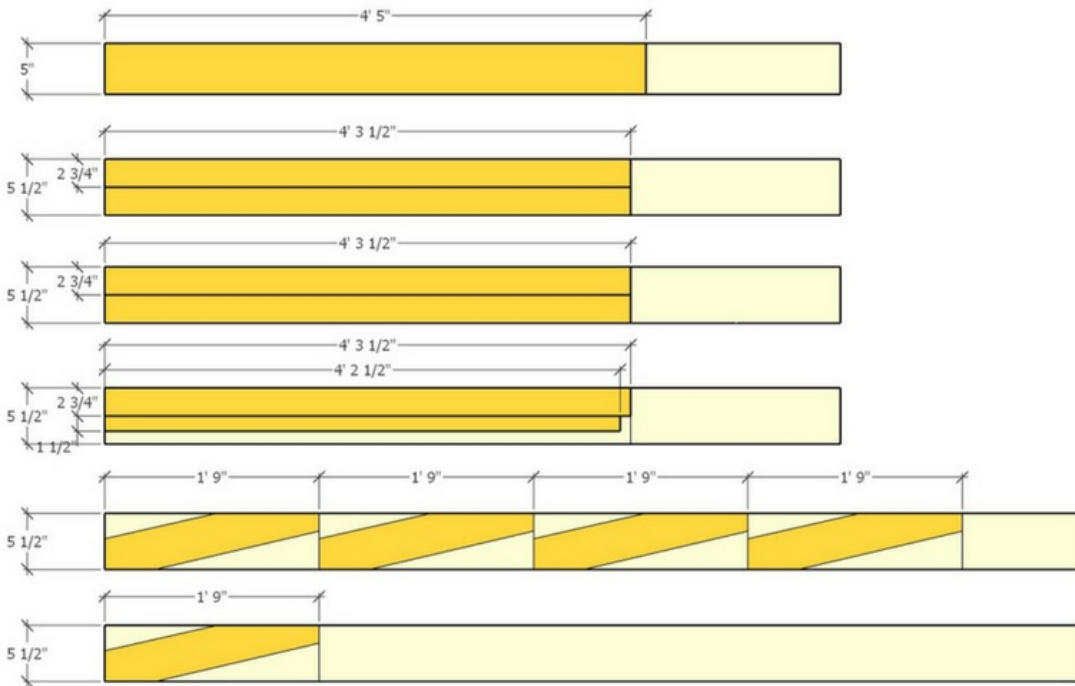
(5) 5/4" x 5" x 6'



Back Assembly and Slats

- (1) 5/4" x 5" x 6"
- (3) 1" x 6" x 6'
- (2) 1" x 6" x 8'

\*\*\*Note: Actual dimensions are 3/4" x 5 1/2"... these are typically referred to as 1x6 at lumber stores

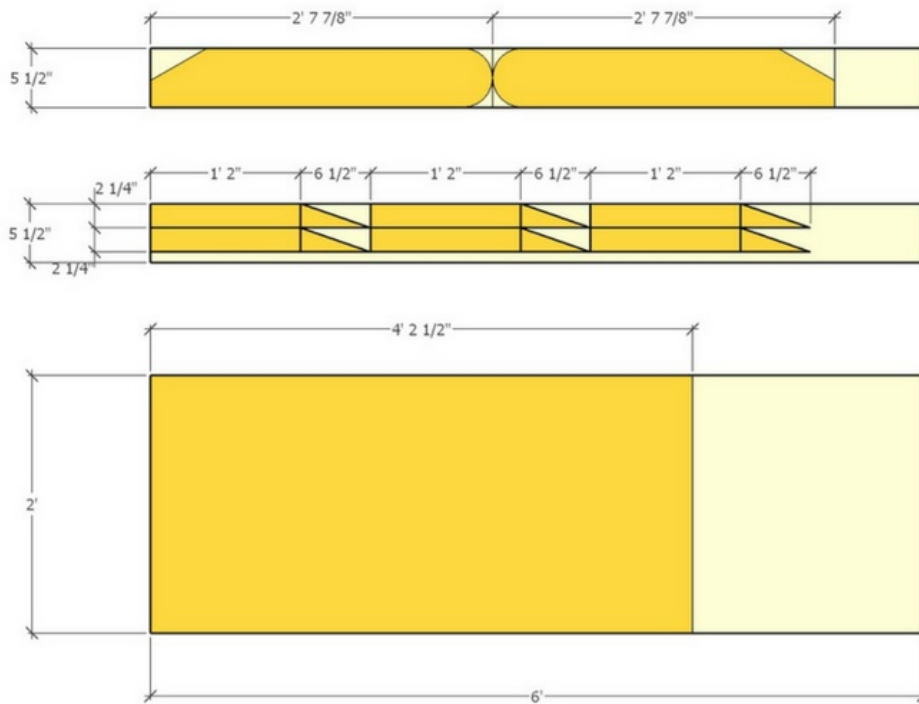


Arm Assemblies and Mattress Support

\*\*\*Note: Actual dimensions are 3/4" x 5 1/2"... this is referred to as 1x6 at lumber stores

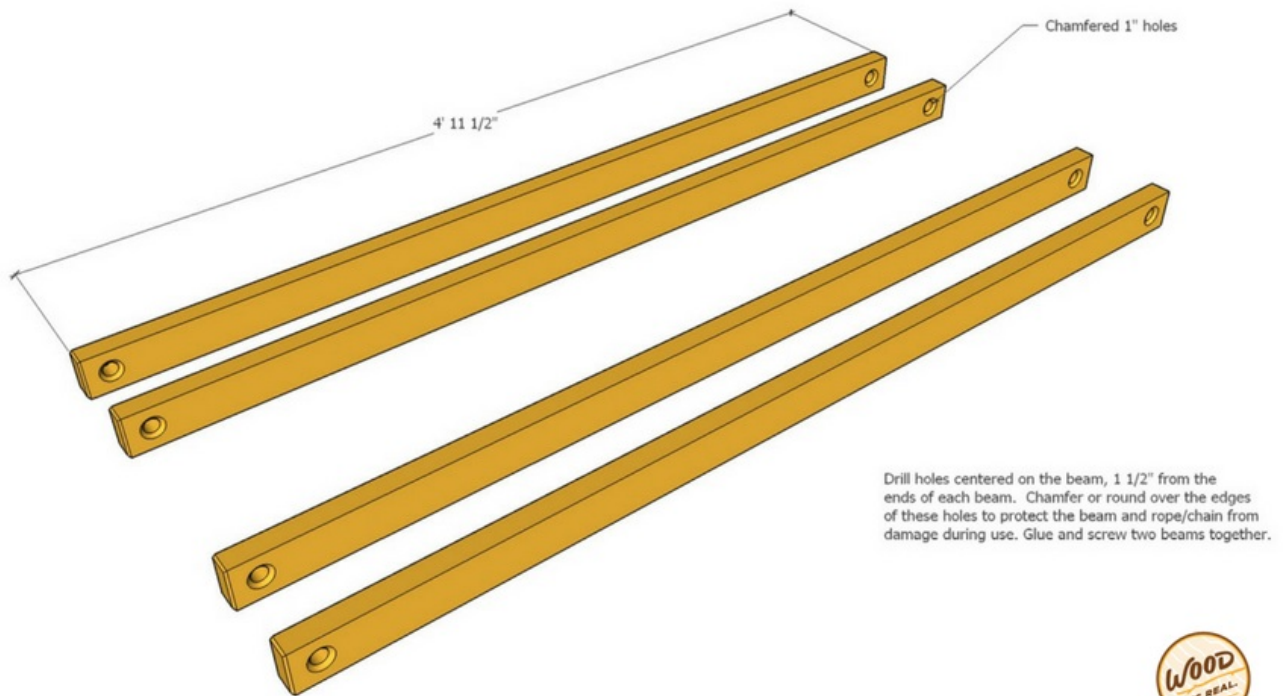
(2) 1" x 6" x 6'

(1) 1/4" x 2' x 8' sheet of plywood



And now, to the fun part: putting your porch bed swing together.

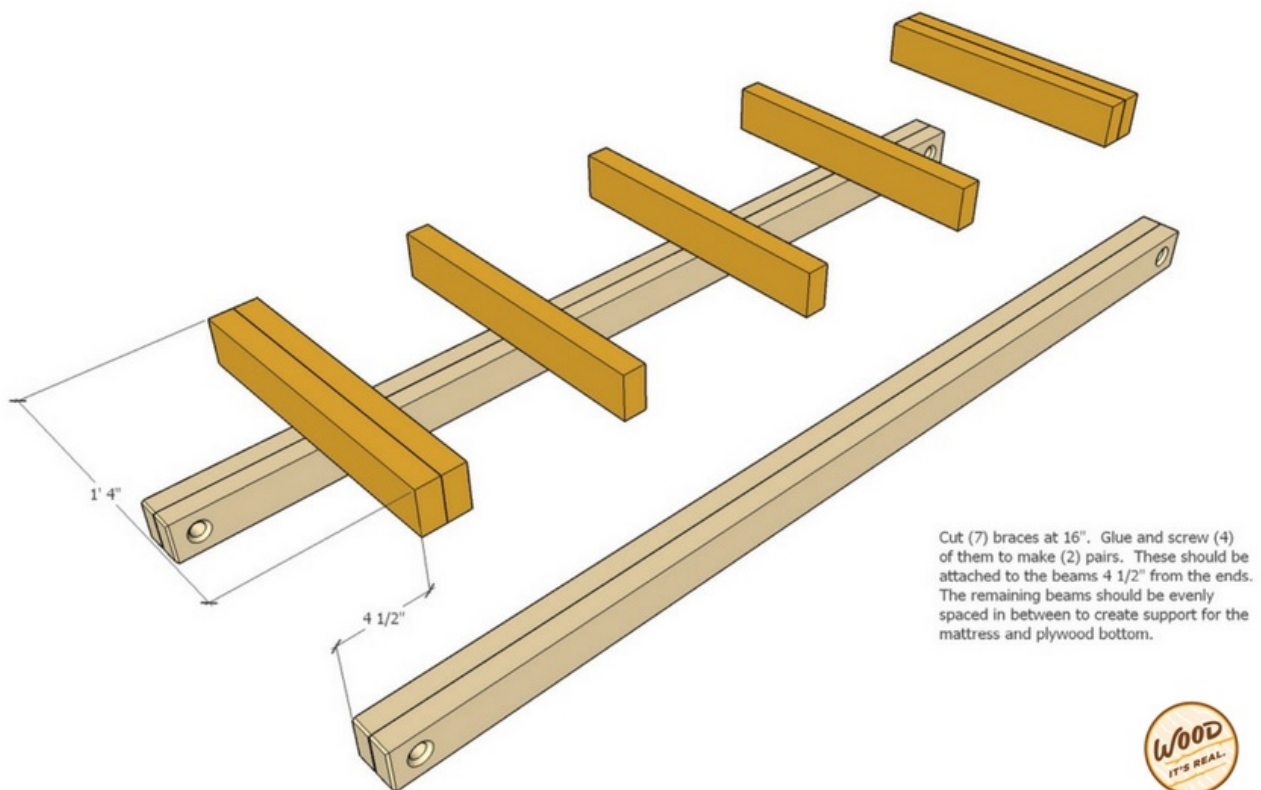
### Step 1: Build the Braces



1. Begin by squaring off the edges of a standard 8' x 5/4" deck board.

2. Once both shoulders have been removed, rip the lumber down the center leaving you with two lengths measuring 2 1/2" wide.
3. Use the two lengths to make a beam: Spread a uniform layer of exterior grade wood glue along the entire length of the wood, then align the boards facing the grain patterns against itself.
4. Clamp the length of the beam. Then use screws every six or seven inches to secure. If necessary, you can use a clamp along the width of the beam to align the edges.
5. Once you've installed screws along the length of the beam, wipe off any excess glue and set the beam aside to cure.
6. Once the glue is set up, cut each beam to 59 1/2".
7. Then cut two more sections at 16" These will be the cross braces near each end.

## Step 2: Assemble the Support Structure



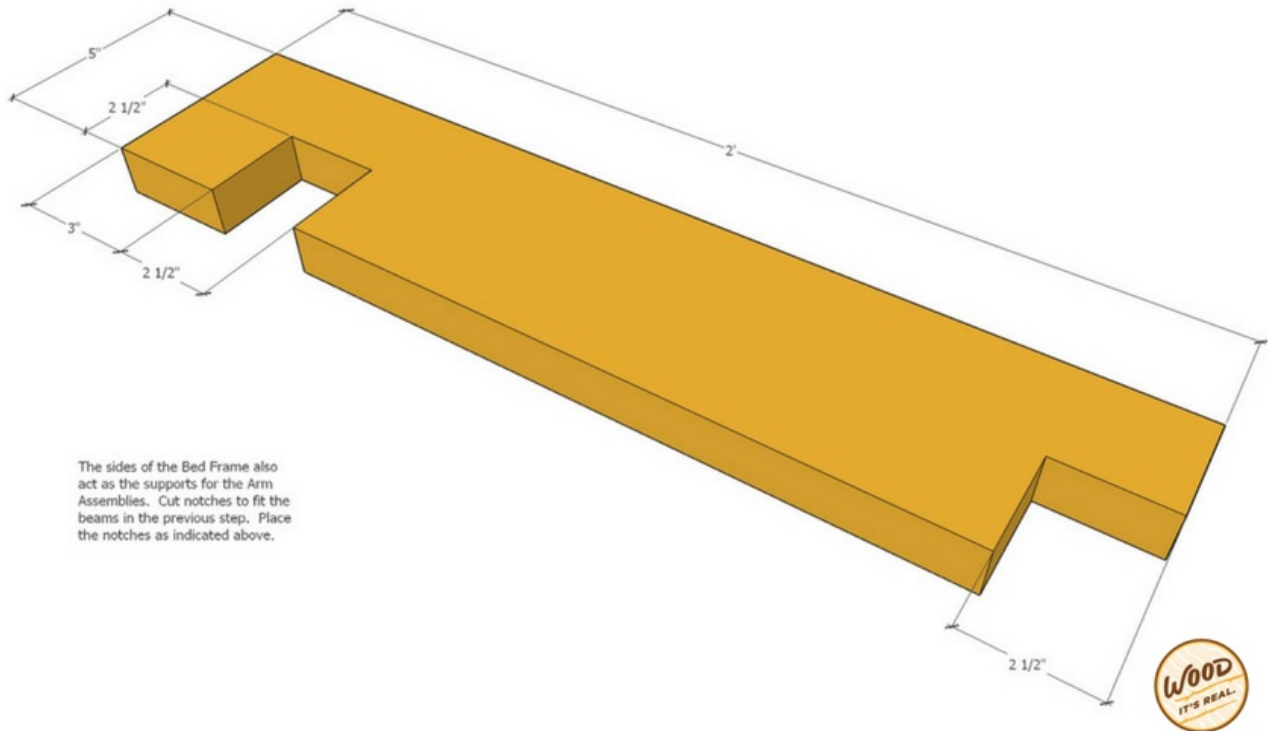
1. Measure back from the end of each long beam 4 1/2" and mark the location for the cross braces.
2. Use clamps to hold the braces in place while you drill pilot holes and install screws through the beam.
3. Next, square off and rip a 5' length of 5/4" deck board, and cut three more support braces for the support frame.

## Step 3: Support Braces & Rope Holes

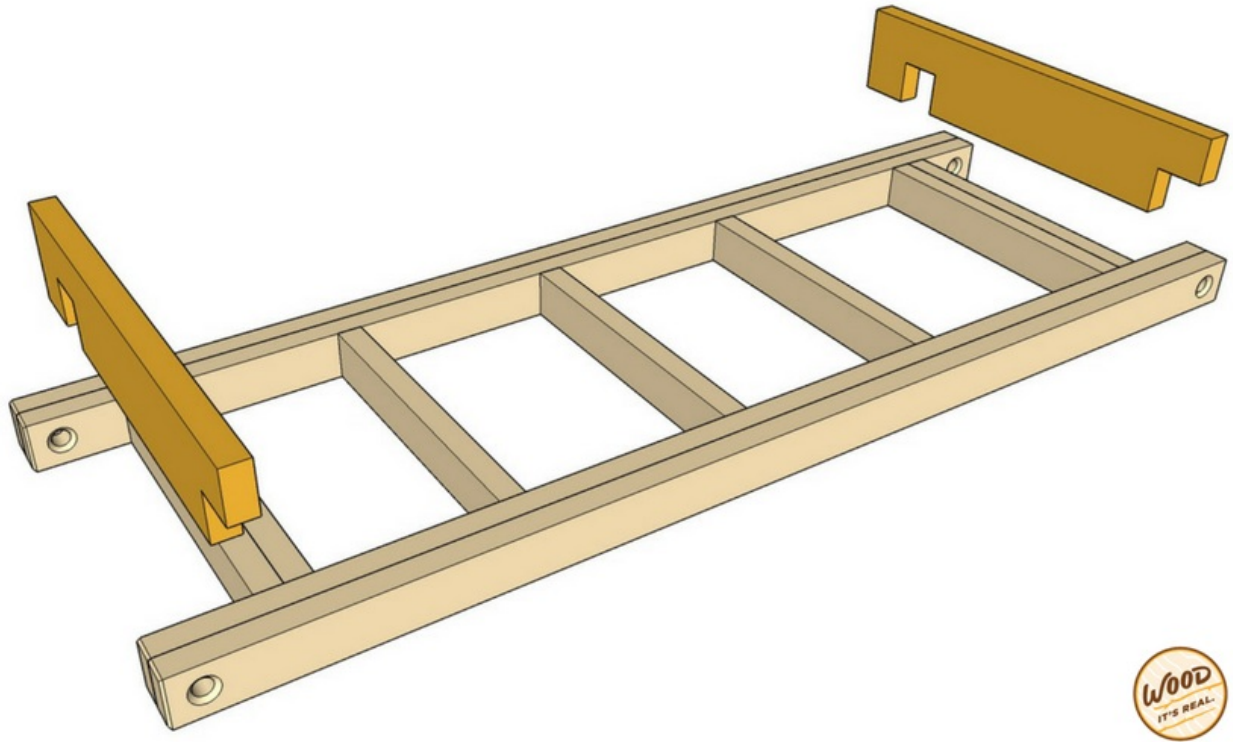
1. Use a pocket hole jig for the simplest way to secure the bracing. If you don't have a pocket hole jig, use toenail screws at the end of the braces.
2. Distribute the braces evenly across the frame, about every foot or so.

3. Measure out 3" from the last cross brace and center mark the location for the rope hole.
4. Use a 7/8" forester bit and drill completely through the frame.
5. Lightly chamfer the hole to prevent fraying of the rope.
6. You can also chamfer the ends of the beam if you like.
7. Lightly sand any rough edges.

#### Step 4: Cut and Attach the Frame Ends





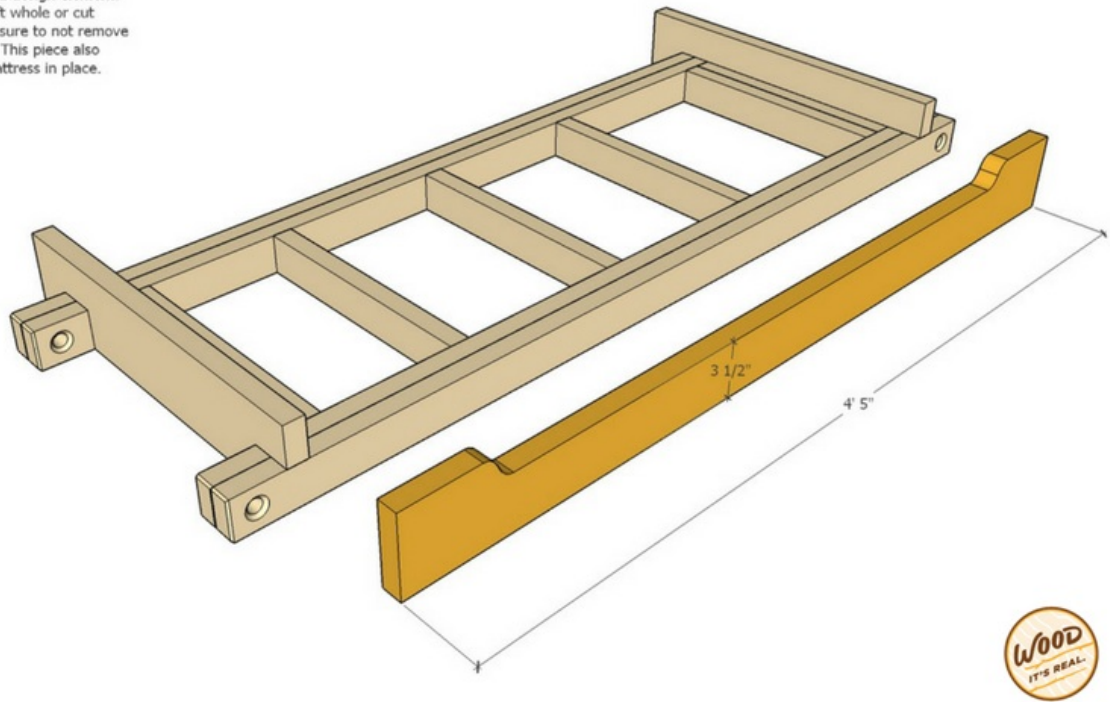


1. Be sure to choose pressure treated Southern Yellow Pine with a nice grain pattern for the frame. This is the part you'll see.
2. Square another 5/4" deck board and cut down to (2) two 24" lengths for each end.
3. Measure and mark the center of both the support structure and each frame end as indicated above.
4. Align these marks, and clamp the pieces together temporarily.
5. Use a straight edge to mark the location of both sides of the beams, measure and mark the depth of the beams as well.
6. Use a jig saw to cut along the lines, being careful not to cut away too much material at first.
7. Slide the frame ends over the beams and check for proper fit.
8. File or sand away any obstructions.
9. Once the frame fits snugly in place, clamp and use screws to secure it to the support structure on both ends.

#### **Step 5: Cut and Attach the Front Frame**



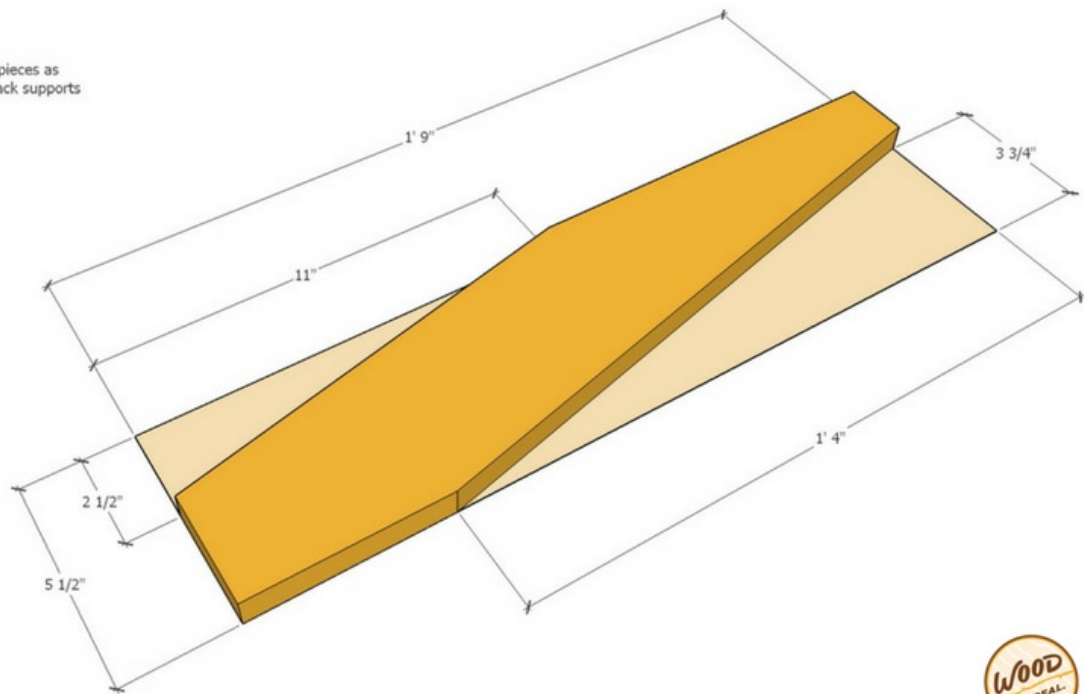
This piece of the Bed Frame has a section removed as a design element. The piece can be left whole or cut similarly. If cut, be sure to not remove too much material. This piece also helps to hold the mattress in place.



1. Measure and cut two more lengths of prepared 5/4" deck board for the front and back of the frame.
2. To make a curve on the front board, measure down from the top edge an inch and a half. Measure in and mark from the end 7".
3. Use a bottle or something similar to mark the first curve centered on this mark.
4. Then shift the pattern over and draw a second circle.
5. Use a jigsaw to cut the pattern and then sand it smooth.
6. Glue and screw the board into the front of the frame.

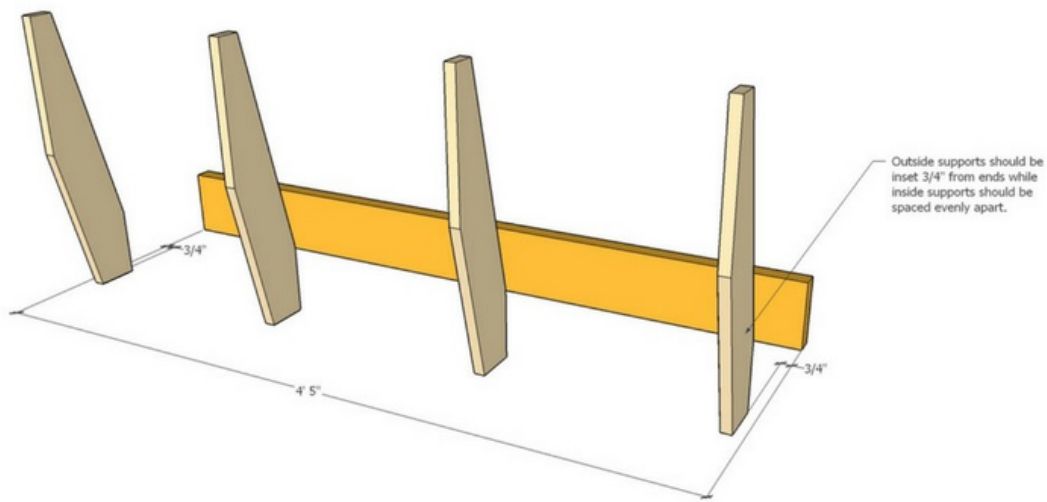
### Step 6: Cut the Back Rest Supports

Measure and cut (4) pieces as shown for the seat back supports



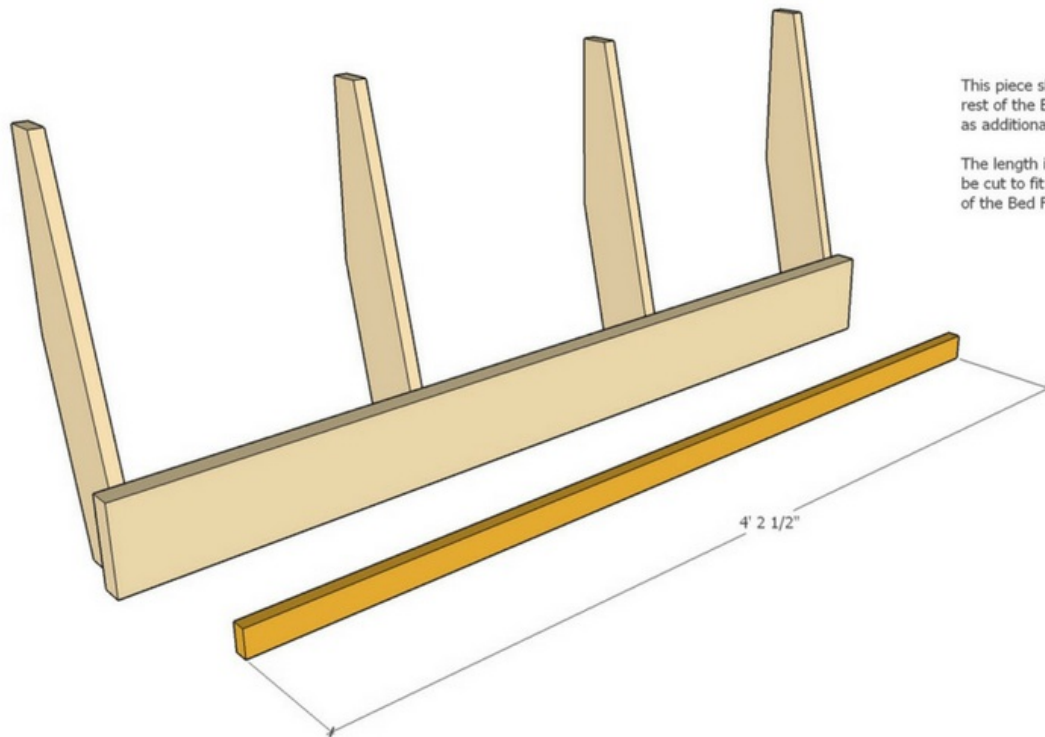
1. Start with a 21" 1×6 Southern Yellow Pine board and mark the measurements from the drawing above. The cuts you'll be making are parallel.
2. Once you've drawn out the pattern on the boards, it's time to cut. To make it easier to make the cuts, attach a scrap of wood aligned with one of the marks.
3. Run the assembly through the table saw to cut the first edge, then remove the scrap of wood, and run the pattern through to cut the second line.
4. Use this pattern to create 3 exact copies by attaching it to blanks.
5. Then use a guided router bit to cut the rest of the backrest supports.
6. Once you have all of the backrest supports made, set them aside, and turn your attention to the rear piece of the frame.

### Step 7: Install Back Supports



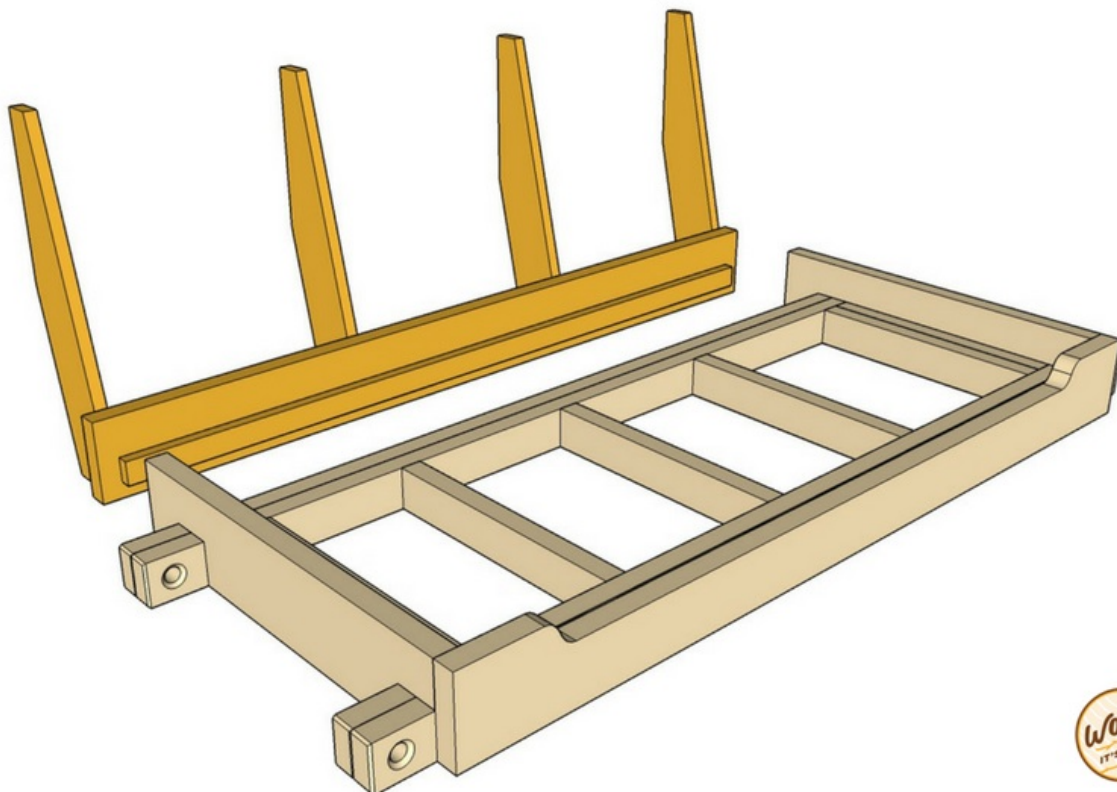
1. Measure in from the edge 3/4" and drill a pilot hole for the screws.
2. Then draw a line 3/4" from the end to align the first backrest support.
3. Clamp the support in place and drill pilot holes from the inside of the frame into the support.
4. Attach the support with glue and screws, moving the clamp as necessary.
5. Repeat this process at the opposite end of the frame, and space the other 2 supports evenly across the rear of the frame.

### **Step 8: Install Ledger Strip Across Back Frame**



1. Attach a ledger strip (1"x 2") across the length of the back, aligning it with the top of the frame.

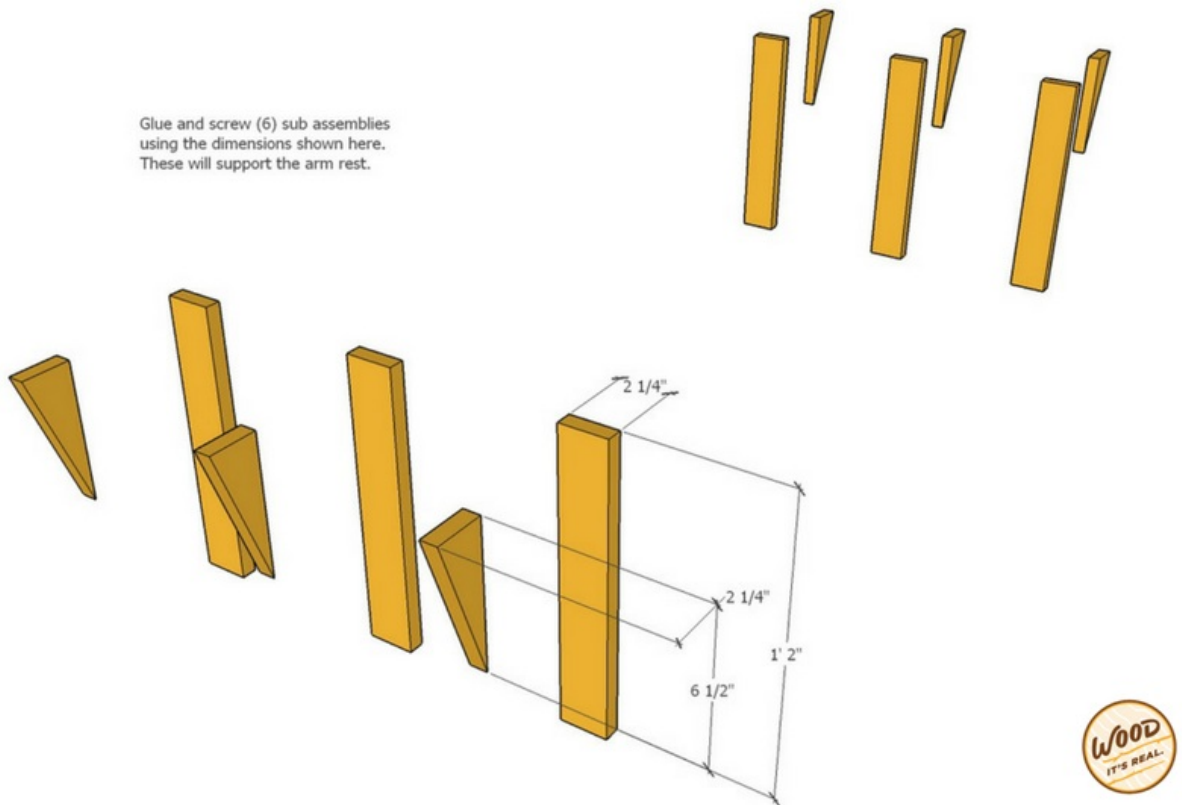
### Step 11: Attach Back Assembly to Frame



1. Attach the entire assembly to the rear of the front, being careful to align the corners

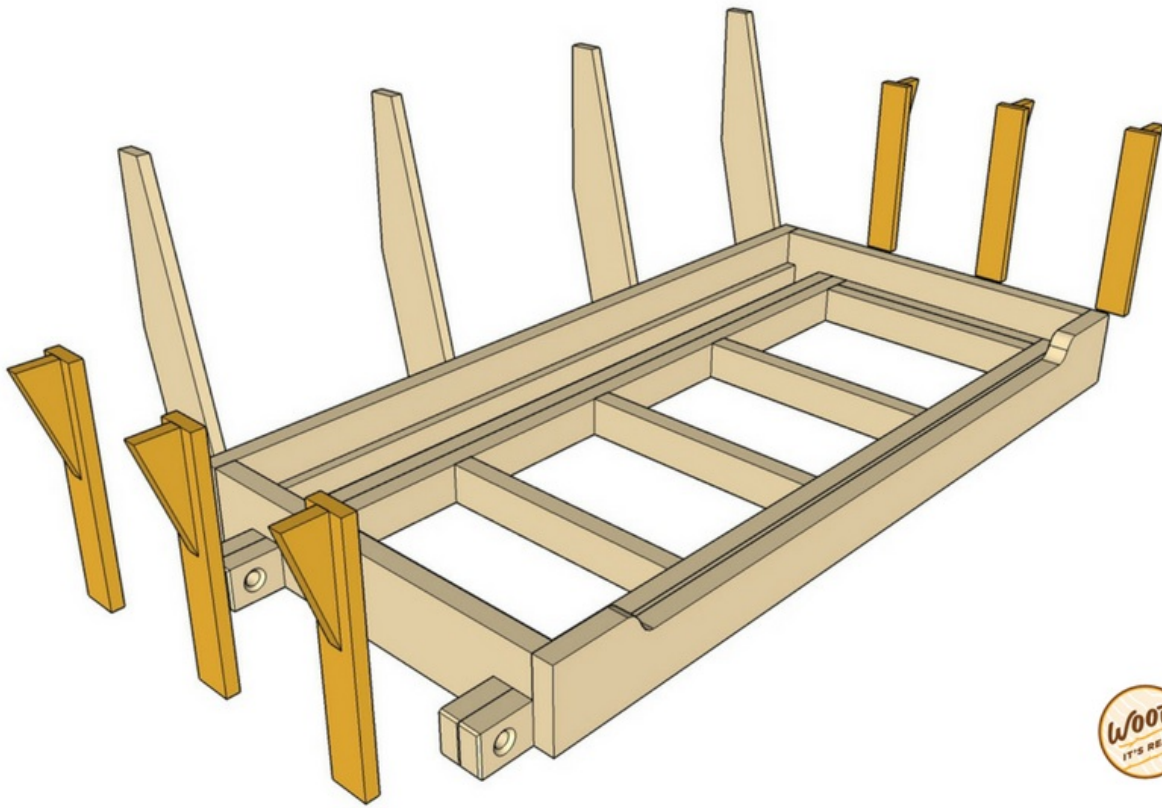
install screws in both ends.

## Step 12: Assemble Arm Rest Supports



1. Rip 14" lengths of 1"x 6" board down the middle.
2. The triangle is created by drawing a diagonal line along a 6 1/2" length of the same width.
3. Cut the triangles and sand the edges smooth.
4. Use glue and fasteners to combine the two elements into the arm support, aligning the top of the triangle to the top of the support.

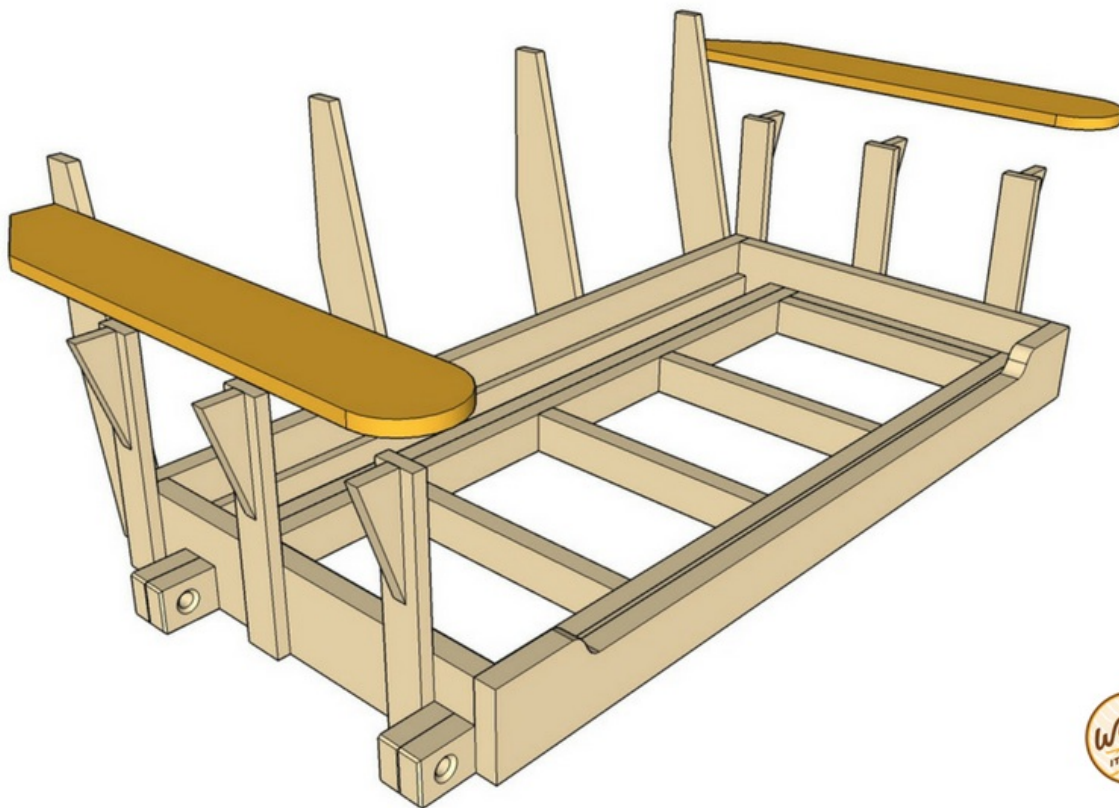
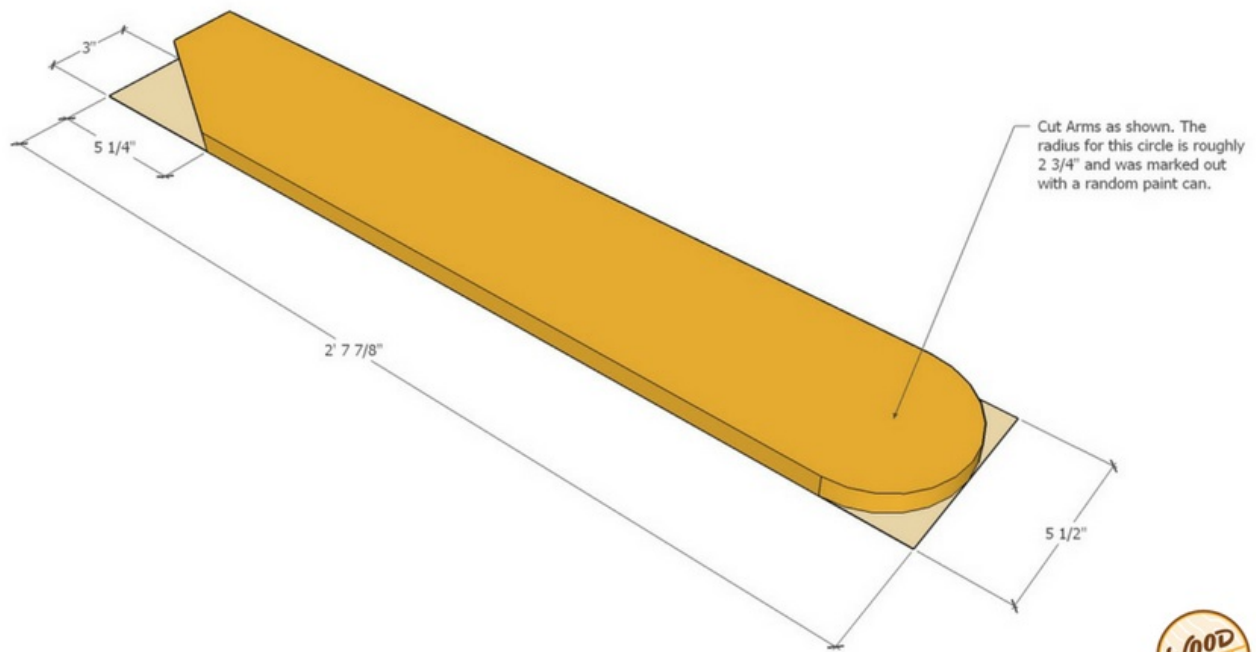
## Step 13: Attach Arm Rest Supports



1. Use glue and screws to attach the arm supports across the widths of the ends. Align the two outer supports with the edges of the frame, and space the inner supports equidistant.
2. Be sure to align the tops of the supports so that the arm fits snugly.

#### **Step 14: Cut and Attach Arm Rests**

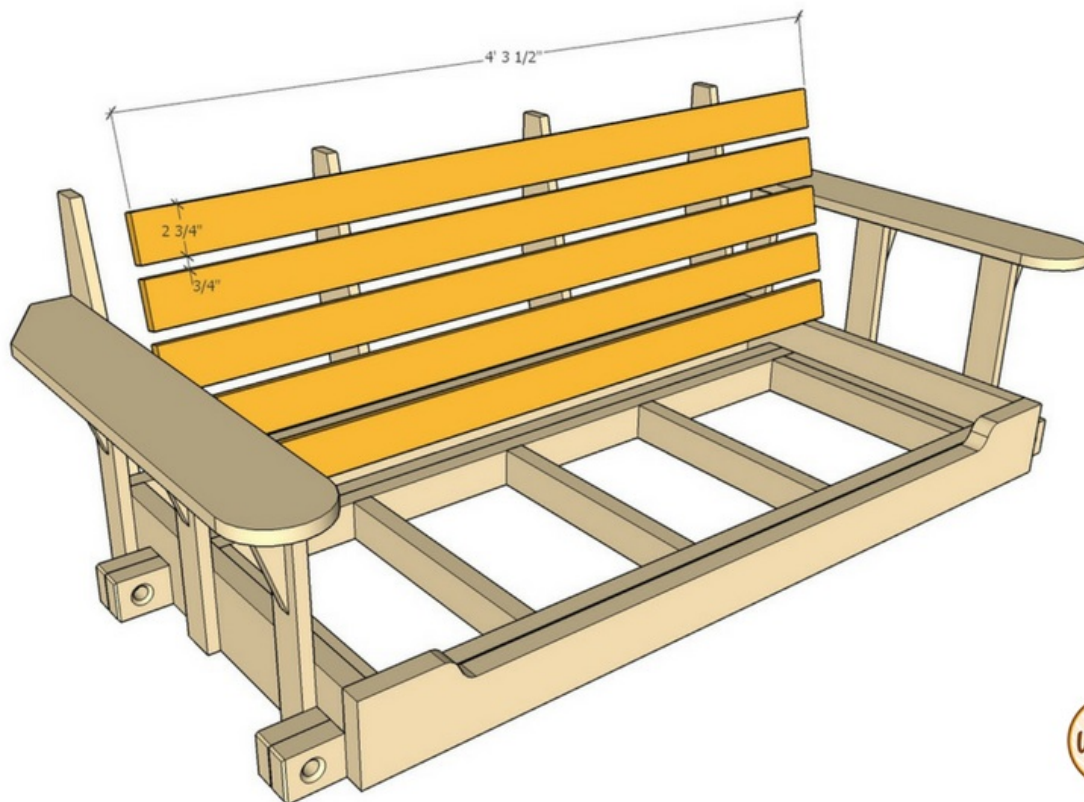




1. The arms are simply a length of 1"x 6" Southern Yellow Pine cut to 32".
2. At the forward end, use a paint can or something similar to draw the curve. Use a jigsaw to cut the curve and sand it smooth.
3. At the rear of the arm, measure out from the inside 3" and forward along the outer edge 5 1/4" and then draw a line to make a diagonal and cut along the line.

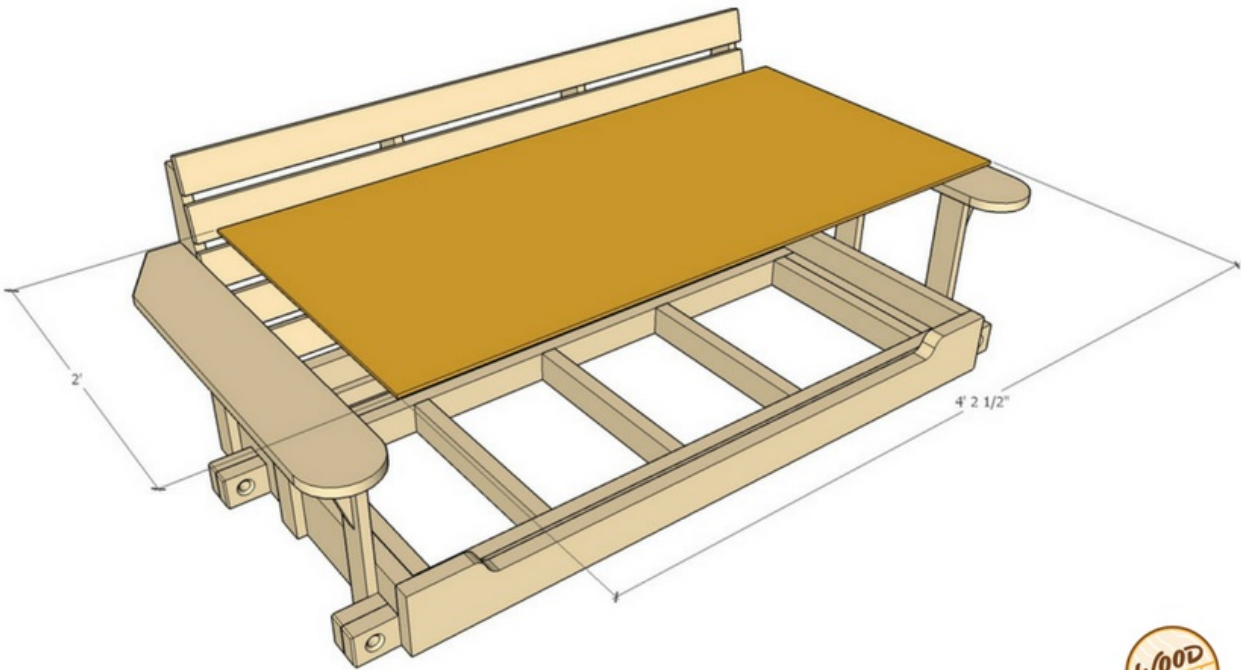
4. Align the rear edge of the arm along the back of the back support.
5. Use a block of 1" material to space the inside edge of the arm for the supports.
6. Clamp it in place and attach using screws and glue. Fasteners can be installed along the top. However, if you want to hide yours, install them through the arm supports, but be careful as this has the potential to split the wood.
7. Once the arm is attached you can ease the edges with a chamfer bit to give it a smoother feel.

### Step 15: Cut and Attach the Back Slats

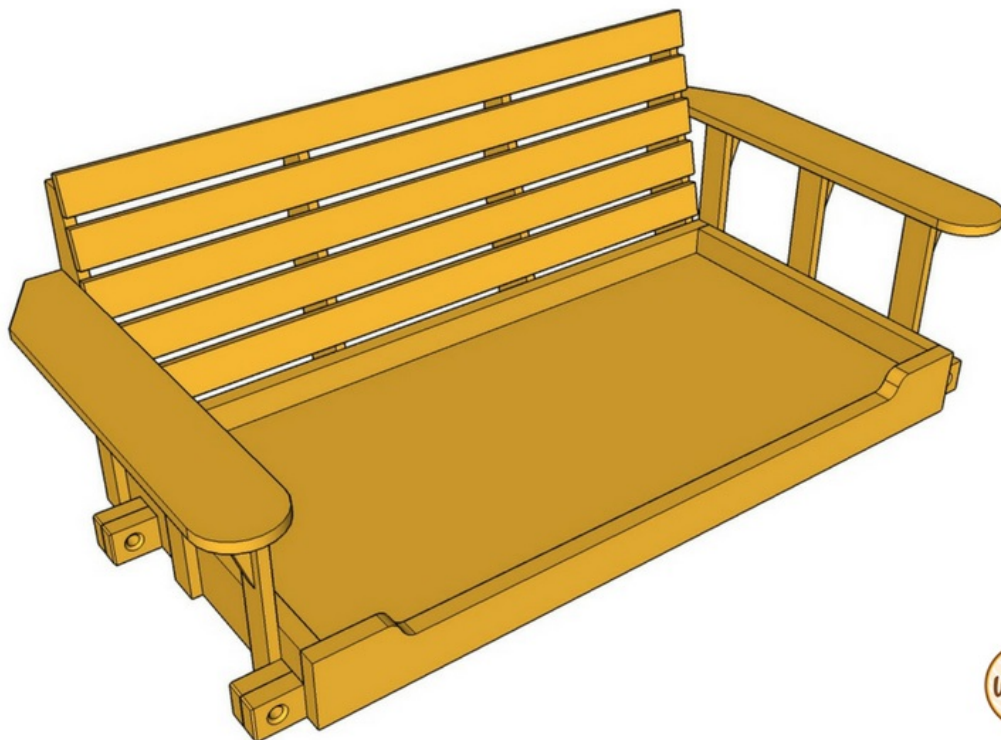


1. For the back slats, rip another 1" x 6" board in half and soften the edges with a router bit.
2. Tack them on to the supports with a scrap of 3/4" lumber that will act as a spacer at each connection point.
3. Use glue and finish nails or staples along each back support.
4. The slats should fit between the end supports.
5. If you need to splice one together, use bevel cuts in the ends and join them directly over one of the supports. Use glue where you join the bevels and it will become almost invisible.

### Step 16: Cut and Attach the Porch Bed Swing Bottom



1. Clean any sawdust or debris from the support system and the frame.
2. Then spread an even layer of glue over the entire support framework, and install a sheet of 1/4" plywood cut to fit.



3. Staple or nail the bottom in place starting in the center and working towards the edges. Install the fasteners every few inches.

**Step 17: Cut and Install Foam Mattress, Cut Rope Holes, Hang the Porch Bed Swing...  
and then RELAX**



1. Now for the most expensive single piece of this project: the foam mattress pad. Get a good one so you can really enjoy your hard work.
2. You'll need to drill a couple of holes in the arms for your rope or chain to pass through using the 7/8" forstner bit. Chamfer the edges to prevent splinters or rope abrasion.
3. Choose rope or chain to hang the swing. Pay attention to the weight limits of either.
4. Hang the swing only from framing members on the porch that are designed to accept several hundred pounds of downward force. If you're unsure, check with an architect or a structural engineer before you hang the bed swing.