

Yet Another Gun Cart

Gateslinger #33751

Intro

This gun cart plan is based upon looking at a bunch of other people's ideas and building something with the resources I had at hand. I wanted a 4-gun cart that was easily dissembled so to fit in the trunk of my car that looked nice and was fairly functional. I built a box & lid with inside dimensions of 10 ¾" deep by 16 ½" wide x 11" tall- big enough for me to hold ammo & a small soft-sided cooler. It's 44" tall, 25" wide at the wheels, and 30" in length. The cavity for the long arms is 7 ½" deep x 14 ¾" wide x 11 tall. The outside box dimensions are 21 ¼" long x 18" wide x 12" tall. I've taken pictures of various items, as usually a picture is worth more than a thousand words of my typed explanation. Pardon the mess of what I call part of my garage the "shop".





The Cart, in two pieces

The Gory Details

There are a few things I'd do different, and I'll make note of those in the text at times. I built this in a few days with a fairly complete array of woodshop tools: drill press, table saw, jointer, sliding compound miter saw, belt/disk sander, spindle sander. I had a ton (literally) of cabinet-grade $\frac{3}{4}$ " solid oak at my disposal (thanks dad!), so that's what I used to build my cart.

Cut out the box sides. I used a $\frac{3}{4}$ " wide dado blade set to $\frac{1}{2}$ " depth to make the rabbet cuts up the middle and along the bottom edge of the sides. Cut the front and back pieces using the same dado setting. The dimensions of the top lid section extend about $\frac{1}{8}$ " over the front and sides to make it easier to lift up. Cut the $12\frac{1}{2}$ " lid piece 2" down from the top edge to create the hinge joint.

The upright section to hold the long guns was $7\frac{1}{8}$ " wide because that was the widest board sections I could find that I could cut down to 36" in length. I had to use $1\frac{1}{8}$ " wide, $11\frac{1}{4}$ " long shims inside the box where the upright placed in to make it fit snug. (Make due with what ya got, right?) If you have access to wide, long boards, change the upright side pieces from $7\frac{1}{8}$ " to $8\frac{1}{4}$ " in width at the base and then you won't need the shims. I made a taper cut starting at $10\frac{1}{2}$ " inches from the bottom up to the top to angle the front-edge of the upright sections. I rounded both the front and back edges with a router from the $10\frac{1}{2}$ " mark at the bottom to the top of the upright. Once the upright section is built, sanded and finished, I drilled $2\frac{1}{2}$ " holes on the bottom through the box for two $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 2" carriage bolts into the bottom of the upright assembly. I used two $\frac{1}{2}$ " wingnuts with two $\frac{1}{2}$ " flat washer to secure the upright assembly to the box. At some point, I'm going to epoxy the carriage bolts into the upright section so I don't lose them. Now where did those carriage bolts go....



In the picture above you can see my 1 1/8" wide shims that I installed to make the upright section fit snug. If I had wider boards that were 36" long, I wouldn't have required them.

The upright sections used 2 horizontal braces, each 3" x 14 3/4" in size. Position one of them 11" from the bottom and the other 3 3/4" from the top.

I used a 4-gun barrel rest cutout. Some may want a 5-gun barrel rest in 1 double-barrel or 2 double-barrel size. I made the cart wide enough to hold 5 guns, so I included a couple of 5-gun barrel rest patterns in the drawing. I used 1 1/4" cutouts for the single-barrel rifle size. That size seemed to work well for my Marlin 1894, my Winchester 1897 pump 12 guage, and even for my fairly large barrel Sharps in 45-70. The double-barrel cutout size was 2 1/4" and that fit well for my Baikal 12 gauge double barrel. The barrel rest and upper horizontal brace were screwed in from the outside upright pieces. Be sure to countersink these so the handle pieces rest flat against the outside of the upright pieces.



For the handle risers, I cut two 4" x 12" pieces and then used a French curve from 3" in to give a rounded effect. Make the end size 2 1/2" wide. I rounded the outer edges of the handle risers with a router to give them a smoother look and feel. I used 1 1/2" wood dowel for the handlebar which can be easily obtained at Home Depot or Lowes. The handler risers were big enough, so I positioned the upper horizontal brace and barrel rest screws to be hidden by the handle risers. Again, be sure to countersink those screws. Screw the handle risers onto the upright sides from the inside.



Rabbet the axle cover $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide, $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep at the center for the axle to fit in. I made the axle cover $\frac{1}{4}$ " longer than the box so that it would stick out from the box about $\frac{1}{8}$ " on either side so the wheels would hit against it rather than the box. I bought 16" steel-spoked, solid-tire wheels with $\frac{1}{2}$ " hubs from Northern Tool (www.northerntool.com), part #145124. I purchased a $\frac{1}{2}$ " piece of tubular steel (sold in 36" lengths) from Home Depot. Fit the axle and wheels first before drilling $\frac{1}{8}$ " holes on each end of the axle for the $\frac{1}{2}$ " hitch pin clips (also purchased at Home Depot). My axle worked out to be 25" long with the holes at about $\frac{3}{16}$ " from the end. I positioned the axle cover $3\frac{1}{4}$ " up from the bottom of the box. This gave me $3\frac{1}{2}$ " of clearance which magically (with a bit of measuring) worked out the height of a standard 2x4. Note the flat nylon washer. I used one on each end of the axle cover so that the wheels wouldn't wear into the wood.



The bottom skids are 5" lengths of 2x4. I coated them (along with the whole box) with a waterproof outdoor spar varnish finish. I used 2x4 metal stud hangers to attach the skids to the bottom of the box. I also used 2x4 metal protectors along the bottom so the skids won't wear out over time. I purchased the steel stud hangers and protectors at Home Depot.



To put all of this together, I used standard wood glue on the joints and black drywall screws of 1 1/8" and 1 5/8" length. Pre-drill the screw holes with a 1/8" bit and countersink the holes for the screw heads. I put screw holes about 3/8" from the edge spaced 2" apart on the box bottom. The front and back have 3 screws per side for a total of 6 on the front and 6 on the back. I sanded the wood down to 220 grit and finished the oak using a colonial oak gell stain with two coats of Minwax spar urethane finish.

For the finishing touches, I bought a cedar chest lock from Rockler Woodworking and Hardware supply store (www.rockler.com), part #28233 for the lid assembly. It's a surface-mount style lock that requires a single 9/16" hole to be drilled (no mortising). The directions weren't that great on mounting it, so measure the install before you drill the hole. The brass hinges I purchased at Lowes looked nice but had **REALLY CHEAP** screws which

sheared off when screwing them into the 2" wide stationary piece. Fortunately, I was able to find other brass screws that were much beefier and still fit in the holes I had already pre-drilled. One could use piano hinge as well, and I think I'd do that the next time I build another cart. I used black felt (cut to $\frac{3}{4}$ " width) to line the gun barrel rest area. I also made a removable pad at the bottom for the gunstock butts using a piece of $\frac{1}{8}$ " hardboard, $\frac{1}{2}$ " foam and a chunk of the felt. The felt attached to the hardboard with a staple gun. Last, I screwed in 4 small eye hooks on the back brace with 10" bungee cord to keep the barrels into the rest.





In this picture above you can see the brass hinges I purchased and the felt pad at the bottom. The picture below shows the small eye hook screws I use to secure the barrels with bungee cord.



Disassembled, it fit with lots of room to spare in the trunk of my Honda Accord.



That's about it. It's worked well for me so far. If nothing else, the plans will give you an idea of what you want in a gun cart.

