

Garden Bench - Grant

Matheke

The simple cedar benches that are located throughout the Georgeson Botanical Garden seem to fit well in northern garden environments. These benches are relatively easy to construct using the following plans. The benches can be made of either cedar or redwood depending on your preference. A backless bench can be built simply by omitting the back and back supports and cutting the two seat supports to 18".

These benches can be mounted permanently by building a buried post. The bench can be removed from the post by removing three carriage bolts. The bench can also be mounted on a horizontal support brace for use on a deck or level garden area. For greater resistance to decay the legs and post or horizontal support brace should be made from *soil contact* treated lumber.

1. Cut five pieces of 2" x 6" to 72"(6') for seats and backs. Cut a 2" chamfer at a 45° angle on the corners of one long edge of four boards (Fig. 2). Bevel the edges of all seat and back boards 45°, 3/8" deep, with a router, jointer or plane (Fig. 2).

2. Cut four legs, two seat supports, and two back supports to length. Shape the seat and back supports using the dimensions shown in Figure 3. Drill, glue and bolt the back support to the seat



Figure 1. The benches fit perfectly in the Georgeson Botanical Garden.

support using 3/8" x 3 1/2" carriage bolts. Drill, glue and bolt the two legs to the seat support using 3/8" x 5" carriage bolts. Templates for the shaping and drilling required in this step are available for rental at the Georgeson Botanical Garden for a nominal fee.

3. Glue and screw the seat boards to the seat support. Glue and screw the seat backs to the back supports. The finished bench will be more attractive if screw holes are predrilled 1/2" deep with 3/8" wood drill. After fastening, the holes can then be filled with 3/8" cedar plugs cut with a plug cutter from scrap cedar.

4. The post base can be constructed by glueing and screwing a 59 inch 2" x 6" between two 48 inch 2" x 6"s. The 11" extension between the two outer boards can then be inserted in place between the two boards that make up each of the legs and fastened with three 3/8" x 5" carriage bolts. If you wish to have a portable bench, glue and bolt the 22" horizontal support brace between the two leg boards as shown in Figure 3.

5. Finish the bench with a clear or natural tone penetrating stain. Addition of a mildicide to the stain will help to preserve the wood.

Table 1. Materials list for garden bench.

Seat and Back:

5 pieces 2" x 6" x 72"

Base:

4 2" x 6" x 16 1/2" legs

2 2" x 6" x 23" seat support

2 2" x 6" x 23" back support

Foundation:

buried posts

4 2" x 6" x 48"

2 2" x 6" x 59"

or

horizontal support brace (portable)

2 2" x 6" x 22"

Hardware:

12 3/8" x 5" galvanized carriage bolts, nuts and washers

6 3/8" x 3 1/2" galvanized carriage bolts, nuts and washers

20 3" galvanized screws

(20 3" galvanized screws for buried posts)

waterproof wood glue

penetrating stain

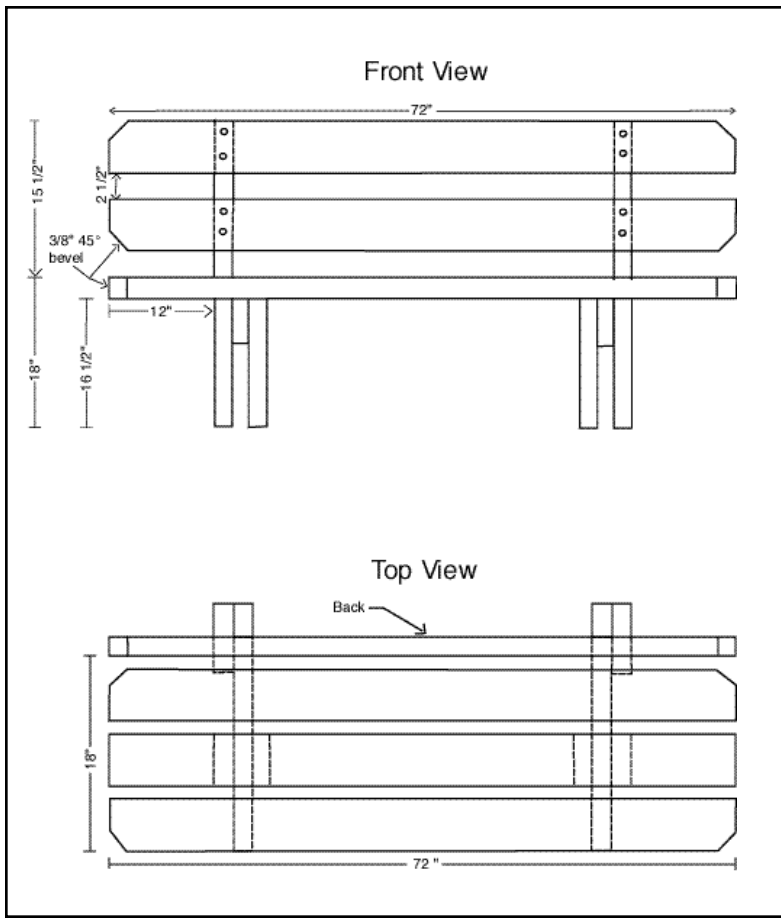
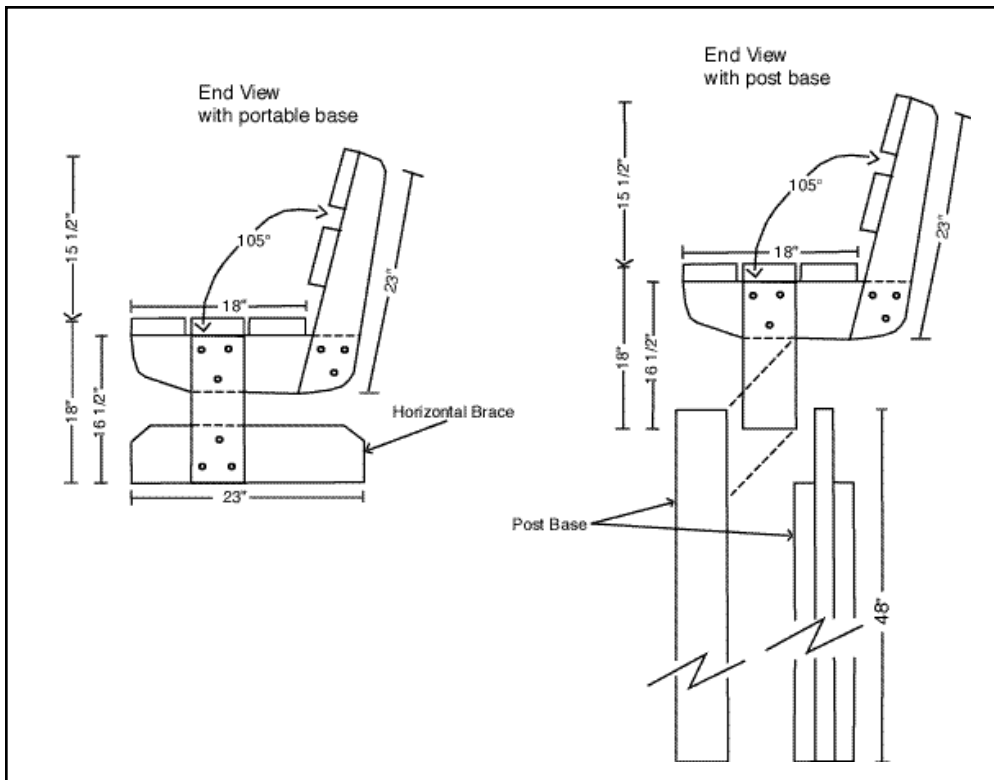


Figure 2. (left) shows the bench seat and top.

Figure 3. (below) shows the edge view of the bench with either a horizontal brace bottom or a post bottom support.



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