

Entryway Caddy



Makes and keeps wood beautiful.



Even with our reliance on electronic communication, some situations call for handwritten messages that aren't easy to overlook. This wall-hanging entryway caddy is designed for those occasions. It fulfills the needs of busy family members, delivering messages that won't vanish into the e-mail/texting ether and even providing a convenient place to hang your coat or hat.

Most of the materials — wood, hardware and finish — can be purchased at any home center. The red oak is sold in milled, standard dimensions. The inexpensive whiteboard is available at most office-supply stores. It has a 1/8-in. hardboard base, so it can easily be cut to size.

MATERIALS AND JOINERY

I used red oak for the caddy because it's readily available in pieces milled to thickness,

and it's durable and matches the woodwork in many homes. I kept the joinery uncomplicated by using dowels — all of the parts are simply butted against each other. If you prefer, you can use other types of simple joinery, such as pocket screws or small biscuits.

Only a few pieces of hardware are necessary. I purchased satin-finish chrome coat hooks at a home center; you can choose what you like from what's available in your area. You'll also need picture-hanging hardware (almost any type will work) and push points or brads to secure the whiteboard in the frame.

TIPS AND FINISHING

Refer to the cutting and shopping lists (p. 20) for materials and sizes, and see the photos for a step-by-step look at how to build the project. Here are a few additional tips to help you create a caddy you'll be proud to display:

- To consistently and accurately cut parts to length, use a stop block clamped the table saw fence (photo 1). First, measure from the outside of the block to the inside edge of the blade to set the length of the workpiece. Then move the block back (away from the blade and toward you) far enough so that the workpiece cannot simultaneously contact the blade and the stop block. (This prevents binding and potential kickback.)

- Cutting the rabbets in the rails (photo 3) is easy, but with a little extra effort, you can make stop cuts that will prevent the rabbets from showing when the project is assembled. Locate where the cuts need to start and stop; then mark the workpiece and transfer the marks to the saw fence and table. To make the cut, start by lowering the work onto the blade, matching the first marks; then stop the cut on the

second marks. You may need to use a sharp chisel to square the ends of the completed rabbets.

- Applying stain gives the wood a rich, warm tone, and varnish provides a highly protective film finish. I used a traditional Minwax cherry stain and a fast-drying semigloss polyurethane (see SOURCES ONLINE).

Once the finish has cured, install the whiteboard with push points or brads. Mount the caddy with sturdy picture-hanging hardware; then invite your family to write messages — or better yet, compliments on a job well done.



◆ Cut the rabbets in the backs of the rails and stiles with a table saw and a featherboard. Set the blade 1/4 in. high and the fence 1/4 in. from the outside edge of the blade. (Note: The blade guard has been removed for photo clarity.)



◆ Sand the assembled frame thoroughly before attaching the shelf. Progressively use 80-, 120- and 180-grit sandpaper. A random-orbit sander with dust collection is more efficient and less messy than sanding by hand.



◆ Use a table saw and miter gauge to cut parts to length. Clamp a stop block to the fence so the parts will be exactly the same length. It's important that the stop block be far enough behind the blade to prevent binding and kickback.



◆ Use a doweling jig to center the holes in the rails and stiles. A brad-point drill bit will bore the most precise holes. Not all jigs operate the same way, so be sure to follow the instructions that come with the tool.



◆ Once you have sanded the parts, bore pilot holes for the screws in the frame and shelf. Then attach the shelf to the frame with glue and four No. 6 x 1-1/2-in. screws driven through the back of the frame (see illustration).

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► Lay out the cutout section on the bottom rail with a combination square and a pencil. Clamp the workpiece to your workbench; then use a jigsaw and a fine-tooth blade to make the cut.

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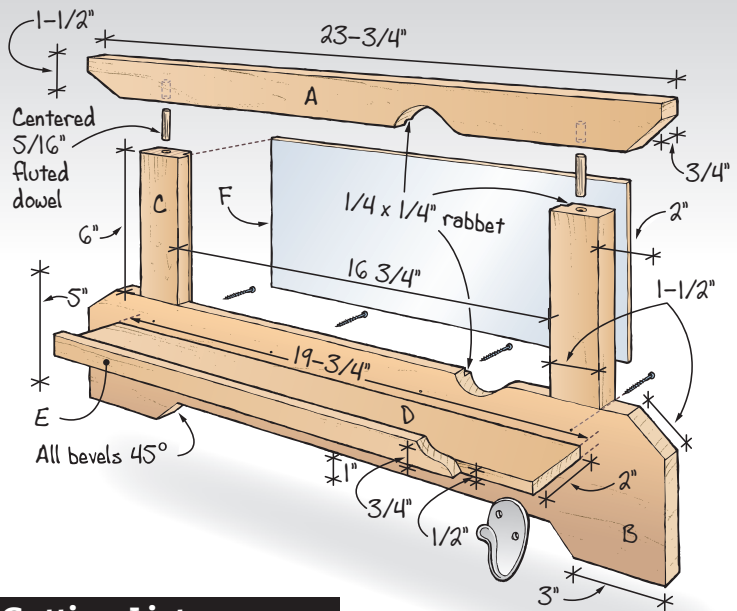
► Test fit the frame parts before joining them together. Also, confirm that the dowel holes are deep enough to accommodate the dowels with a little extra space. To prevent marring, use scrap blocks between the clamp jaws and workpieces.

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► Stain and then varnish the assembled project, following the manufacturer's instructions. We used a disposable foam brush to apply stain and a good-quality 1-1/2-in. bristle brush for the varnish. ■

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Cutting List

KEY	NO.	DESCRIPTION	SIZE
A	1	Top rail	3/4 x 1-1/2 x 23-3/4 in.
B	1	Bottom rail	3/4 x 5 x 23-3/4 in.
C	2	Stiles	3/4 x 1-1/2 x 6 in.
D	1	Shelf	1/2 x 2 x 19-3/4 in.
E	1	Shelf lip	1/2 x 3/4 x 19-3/4 in.
F	1	Whiteboard	1/8 x 6-3/8 x 17-1/4 in.

Shopping List

3/4 x 1-1/2 x 24-in. red oak boards (3)
3/4 x 6 x 24-in. red oak board (1, rip to 5 in. wide)
1/2 x 4 x 24-in. red oak board (1)
1/8-in.-thick whiteboard (1, size to fit opening)
5/16 x 1-1/2-in. fluted dowels (4)
Coat hooks (4)
Picture-hanging hardware
No. 6 x 1-1/2-in. wood screws (4)
Stain and varnish (see SOURCES ONLINE)
Push points or brads
Erasable marker

SOURCES ONLINE

For online information, go to www.HandymanClub.com and click on WEB EXTRAS.
Minwax (No. 235 cherry stain; fast-drying semigloss polyurethane)
www.minwax.com

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPHEN HUTCHINGS



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