



Woodsmith **PLANS**

TOP-NOTCH SANDING TOTE



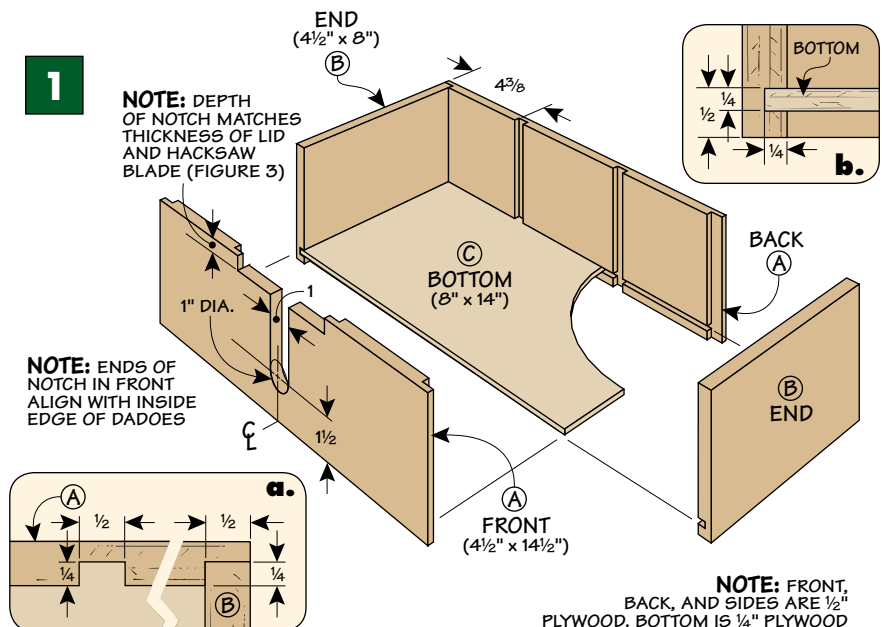
TOP-NOTCH SANDING TOTE

Keep all your sanding supplies within easy reach with this handy tote.



Sanding is an important step in any project. It's not only your last opportunity to bevel joints and smooth surfaces, but also it prepares the project for a finish. While it's not my favorite task, it's a little more enjoyable when I have all my supplies organized and close at hand. That's why I built this handy tote. Besides holding rolls of sandpaper and accessories, there's a lidded compartment with a built-in cutter.

SIZING THE TOTE. The tote is sized for rolls of pressure-sensitive adhesive sandpaper (up to 3³/₄" diameter). To allow for the sandpaper rolls and the joinery, I cut the parts to the sizes shown in Figures 1 and 2.



Some basic joinery is the next order of business. A pair of rabbets and dadoes in the front and back are what you'll need here to hold the ends and dividers. They're sized to match the thickness of the plywood I used for the tote, as detailed in Figures 1 and 1a.

There's a little more work left to complete the front. First, to provide easy access to the center compartment, I cut a long, centered slot across the width of the front, as shown in Figure 1. And to allow the lid to rest flush with the top edge, there's a shallow notch. The ends of the notch align with the inside edge of each dado. And the depth matches the thickness of the lid plus a short section of hacksaw blade.

You're just about ready to assemble the basic case. But first, you'll need to cut a groove near the bottom edge of all of the pieces for the $\frac{1}{4}$ " plywood bottom (Figure 1b). After sizing the bottom, go ahead and assemble the tote.

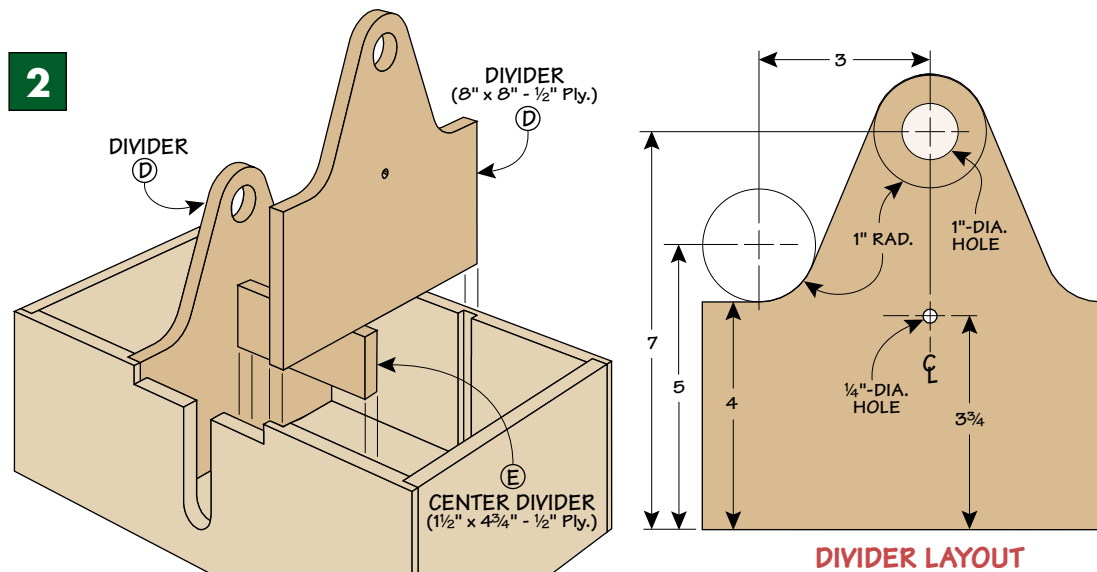
MAKING COMPARTMENTS. Creating separate compartments in the tote is taken care of by the pair of dividers you cut to size earlier (Figure 2). They fit between the front and back of the tote. But they're taller than the rest of the tote to provide clearance for the handle you'll add later.

Before shaping the dividers, you'll want to drill two pairs of holes. One pair of holes is for the handle. The other pair accepts two short dowels that act as pivot pins for the lid. To ensure the mating holes lined up, I stacked the dividers together and drilled the holes at my drill press.

Shaping the dividers comes next. To do this, you'll need to lay out the curved shape along the top. A band saw (or jig saw) makes quick work of cutting the dividers to shape. After sanding the edges smooth, they're ready to install.

To corral the sandpaper in the cutting bin, I cut a center divider to size and glued it between the dividers, centered from front to back, as detailed in Figures 2 and 3b.

ADDING THE LID. As I mentioned earlier, the lid fits in the notch cut in the front. For clearance, the width of the

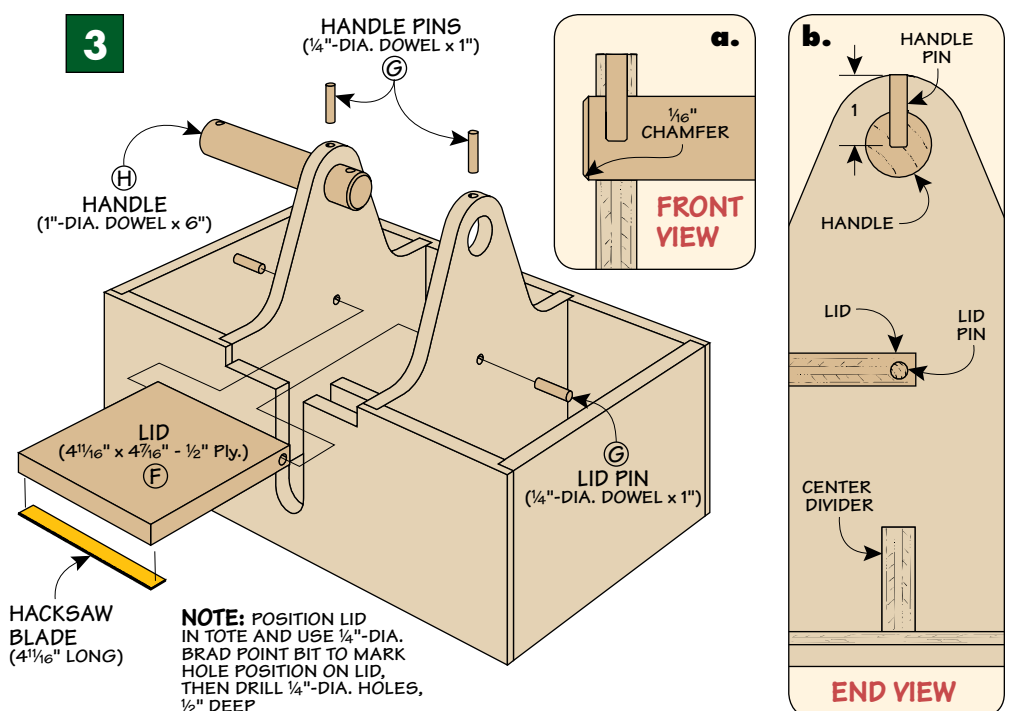


lid is $\frac{1}{16}$ " less than the width of the notch. And it's sized in length so it's flush with the front of the tote once it's pinned in place. Then to trim the sandpaper to size during use, I attached a section of hacksaw blade to the bottom front edge with epoxy, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Installing the lid requires drilling holes near the back edge for a couple of short dowels, as you can see in Figure 3. To ensure that the lid pivots smoothly, add a dab of glue to the holes in the lid only and then tap the pins into place.

THE HANDLE. One thing that defines a tote is an exposed, integral handle. The one for this tote is sized to extend past the outside faces of the dividers. To prevent it from turning or sliding out of the holes, it's pinned in place (Figure 3). I eased the ends by routing a chamfer (Figure 3a).

After applying a finish and letting it dry, you can gather up your sanding supplies and store them in their new home. With a convenient way to transport everything right where you need it, sanding will certainly be less of a chore.



NOTE: POSITION LID IN TOTE AND USE $\frac{1}{4}$ "-DIA. BRAD POINT BIT TO MARK HOLE POSITION ON LID, THEN DRILL $\frac{1}{4}$ "-DIA. HOLES, $\frac{1}{2}$ " DEEP