



**SHOP
TESTED**



SMALL KEEPSAKE BOXES

BY: BRUCE KIEFFER

This is a great little gift that will please any recipient.

CONSTRUCTION DETAILS:

While making this project you'll be working with small pieces of wood. Use extra caution since your hands will be closer than usual to your machines. To make this box you will need a planer, bandsaw, drill press, and either a stationary belt sander, or a stationary disk sander. Shaping the pin is done by hand. It took me two times to get mine right, but the work is fast, so it was no big deal. And if you're wondering why there's a small hole in the bottom of the body, well it's there so you can insert something small through and push the bottom insert out of the body should the need arise.

I noticed my wife has many very small keepsake boxes. I sneaked a look inside and found a myriad of little treasures, and then an inspiration hit me! Maybe she'd like a nice handmade wooden one? She absolutely loves it, and I got lots of points! It's fairly easy to make,

and a great last minute gift project since it can be made in less than a day using scrap wood. Any pleasing combination of wood species will do. I made hers using walnut and cherry, and I added a leather covered bottom insert.

Keepsake Box Exploded View

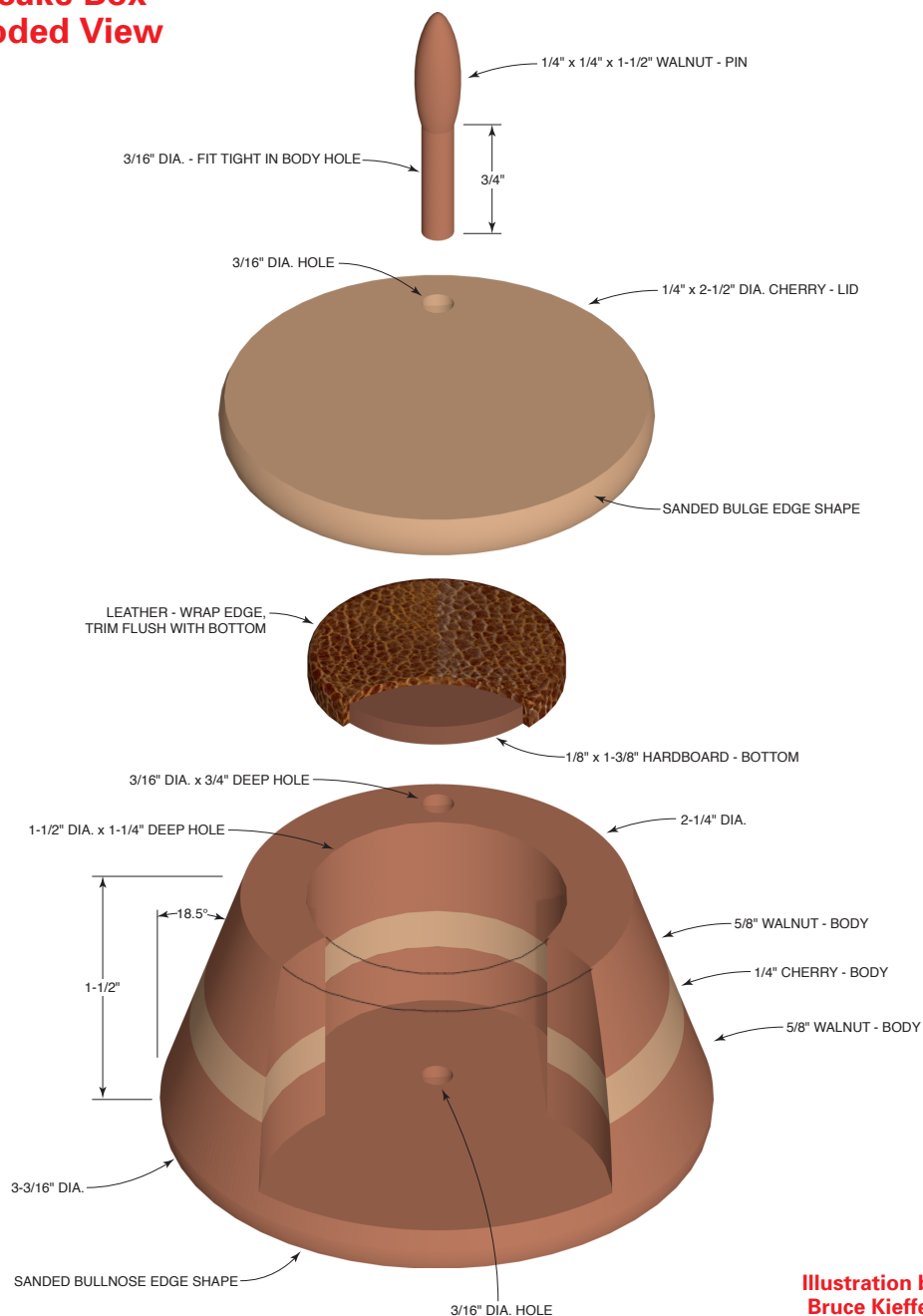
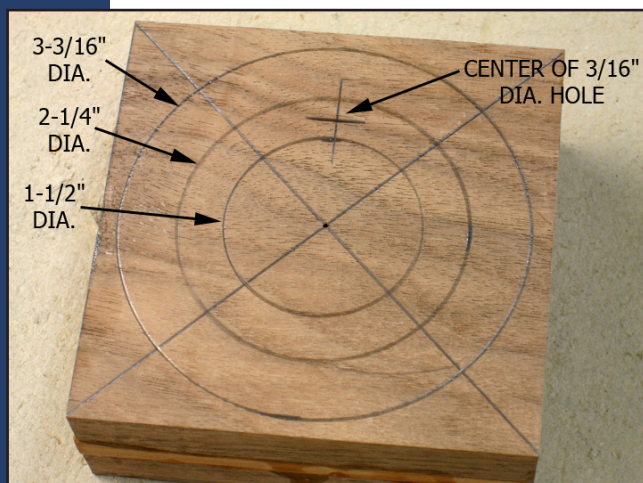


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Make the body. Join two 5/8" x 3-1/2" x 3-1/2" pieces of walnut and a center piece of 1/4" thick cherry together to create the body. I assembled the pieces with Titebond 3 wood glue, not because I needed waterproof joints, but because it leaves a darker glue line, which is important when gluing walnut. Titebond's Dark Wood Glue is a good choice too.



Layout the body. Draw diagonal lines to locate the center. Use a compass to layout the circles, and a square to mark the center of the 3/16" dia. hole for the pin.



Drill the body cavity. Clamp the body to your drill press table and tight against the drill press fence. Drill the 1-1/4" deep hole using a 1-1/2" dia. Forstner bit. Also drill the 3/16" dia. x 3/4" deep hole for the pin. Then being extra cautious, rough cut the cylinder shape on your bandsaw.



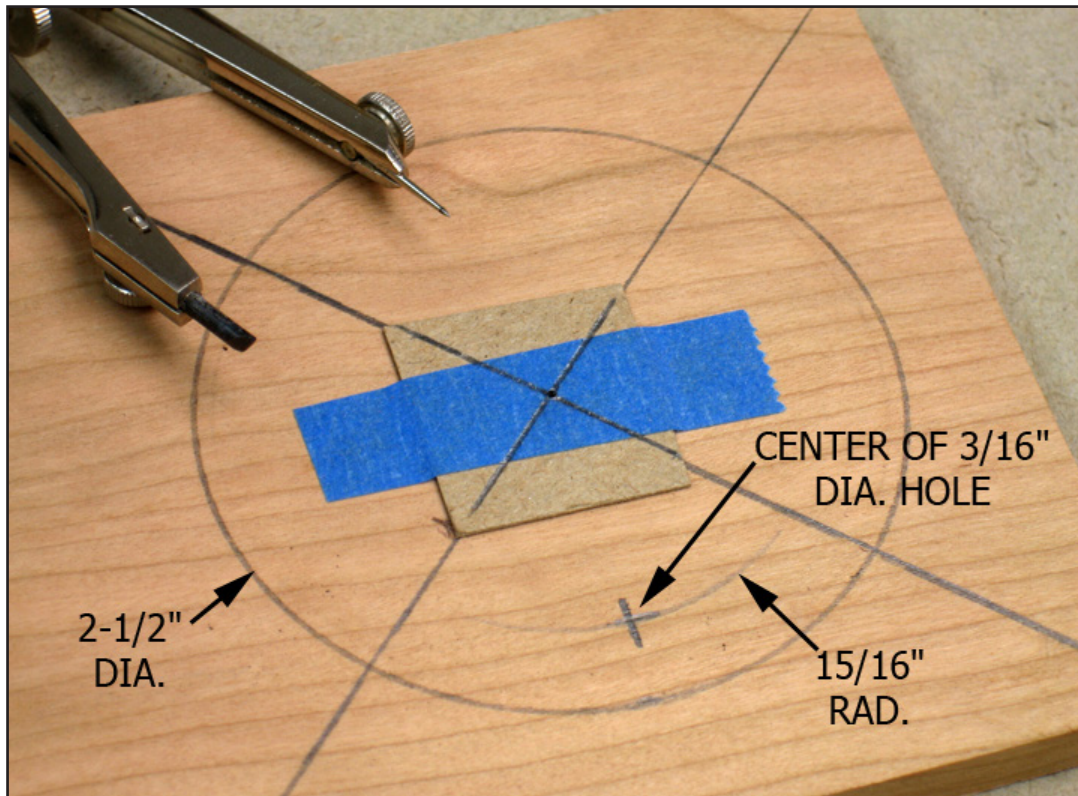
Rough sand the body's cylinder shape. Use your stationary sander and 80-grit sandpaper.



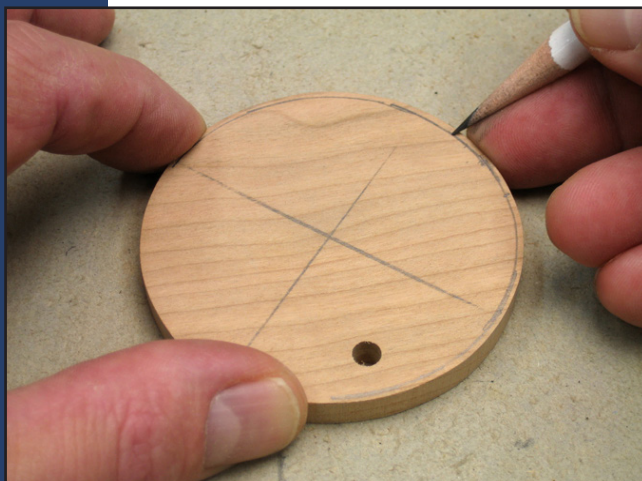
Sand the body's cone shape. Tilt your sander's table to 18-1/2°. Start sanding with 80 grit sandpaper, and end with 220 or 240-grit. When you're done an 1/8" tall flat spot will remain at the bottom of the body.



Finish sand the body. Use your hand sanding tools to refine the shape. Sand the bottom bull-nose edge shape, aggressively ease the cavity hole edge, slightly ease the top outside edge, and do your best to smooth the sidewalls of the cavity hole. I used sanding sponges for the final sanding. They did a great job smoothing the wood.



Layout the lid. Tape a small piece of cardboard over the center point so the compass's spike won't punch a hole in the lid. Then drill the hole for the pin, and cut and rough sand the shape.



Lay out the lid's bulge edge. Draw a rough sanding guideline 1/32" in from the lid's edge. Do this on both faces. Supporting your pencil with your finger like this creates a good enough mark.



Rough sand the lid's bulge edge shape. Tilt your sander's table to 20° and rough sand a top and bottom bevel. Sand up to the drawn guidelines. A flat spot will remain in the middle of the edge. Hand sand the finished rounded shape of the bulge edge.



Whittle the pin shape. Start with a 1/4" x 1/4" x 6" piece of walnut. Using a sharp wood carving knife, trim and shape an end round and larger than its hole in the body. You want to leave enough material so you can sand the round shape smooth, and so the pin fits tight in the body. Shape the top of the pin, trim the length, and finish sand the pin. Use a small round file to slightly enlarge the hole in the lid so it will turn freely on the pin.



Apply a finish. I finished the wood with two coats of Briwax. It's super fast and looks great. Make the bottom insert by using spray adhesive to adhere a piece of leather to a 1/8" x 1-3/8" dia. piece of hardboard. Trim the rolled over leather edge flush with the bottom of the hardboard. Now all that's left to do is gift-wrap!

SOURCES:

- Sanding Sponges & Titebond Glues
Woodworker's Hardware
<http://www.wwhardware.com>
(800) 383-0130
- Forstner Bits & Briwax
Rockler
<http://www.wwhardware.com>
(800) 279-4441

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