

A Portable Trestle Table

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This table design is based on illustration of period trestle tables such as that seen in the Luttrell Psalter c. 1340. I desired a more period look and function than that of the typical plywood projects seen in most SCA publications, yet still wanted a table that could collapse down and be portable.

This was achieved by substituting modern folding saw-horse legs instead of a fixed trestle. It fits easily in a truck or trailer and can be assembled under poor lighting conditions.

This design requires a lot of hardware, but a minimal quantity of tooling. Specifically, you need a power drill with screw driver attachment, drill bits and a skill saw. The wood on the materials list is broken into cut sizes to aid in scrounging, especially the 2"x4"s, which are easy enough to scrap in sizes less than 36 inches.

Cost for this table was less than \$35.

(Note: To avoid unsightly screw heads, all screwing is done on the underside of the table, although I imagine you could substitute glued-in wood pegs as a more period construction technique.)

Step 1

Lay the 1"x6" boards side by side on a flat surface. Lay one of the 1"x2"s across one end of the 1"x6"s and use 1 1/4" wood screws to attach the 1"x2"s to the 1"x6"s. Use three screws for each plank—one centered and the other two 1" from the edge. Repeat for the other edge and in the center. Trim the other edge if necessary. (Detail A)

Step 2

Next mark a line 18" from the ends of the table and place the 30"- 2"x4"s centered on these lines. Place the four 33"- 2"x2"s on either side of the 2"x4"s and screw down using the 2" wood screws. Then screw in the four 2"x2" plugs at the edge and in between the 2"x2" braces. Check the 30"-2"x4"s for fit and trim if necessary. (Detail A)

Step 3

While the 2"x4" cross pieces are inserted between the 2"x2"s, mark a line across the face of the 2"x4". (An angled cut back from the edge of the table) To mark the line, measure from each end of the 2"x4" back 4 3/4" along the bottom edge. Cut off the resulting triangular piece. (Detail B)

Step 4

Attach the 26" - 2"x4"s to the saw-horse brackets using 1 1/4" wood screws. (When purchasing the brackets, I recommend buying the heaviest duty ones you can find. The cheaper ones tend to bend out of shape with repeated use/abuse, misaligning the bolt holes.) You also will probably need to enlarge the nail holes in the brackets for the bolt/wing nut—by drilling.

Place the 2"x4" cross piece in the pair of saw horse brackets, with the bracket just inside of the triangular cut, and fold closed. Using a small bit, drill a pilot hole from the side of the bracket through the cross piece and through the bracket hole on the other side. You will probably miss on the first try, hence the use of a small bit. Now drill a full size hole from the opposite side, and insert the bolt and tighten with the wing nut. With the cross pieces in place and the brackets closed, scribe a line across the bottom of the 2"x4" legs and cut off the excess, so that the table will lay evenly on a level surface.

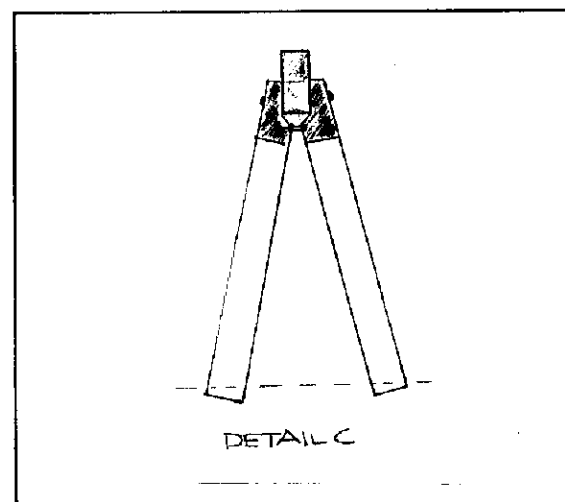
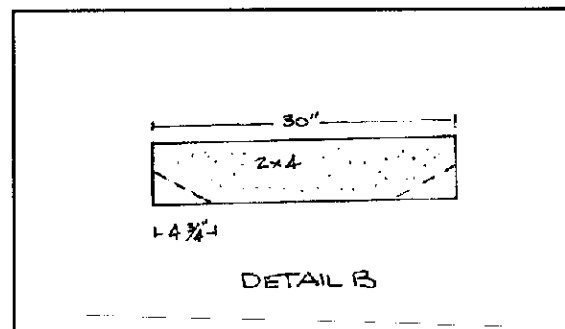
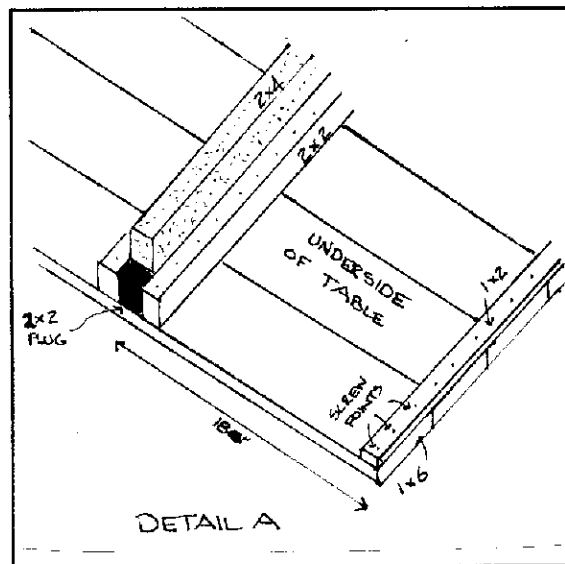
Put it all together

Lay the table on its side; line up the completed saw horses and place the table top on the trestles. It is held in place only by friction. Sand any rough edges and paint or stain if desired.

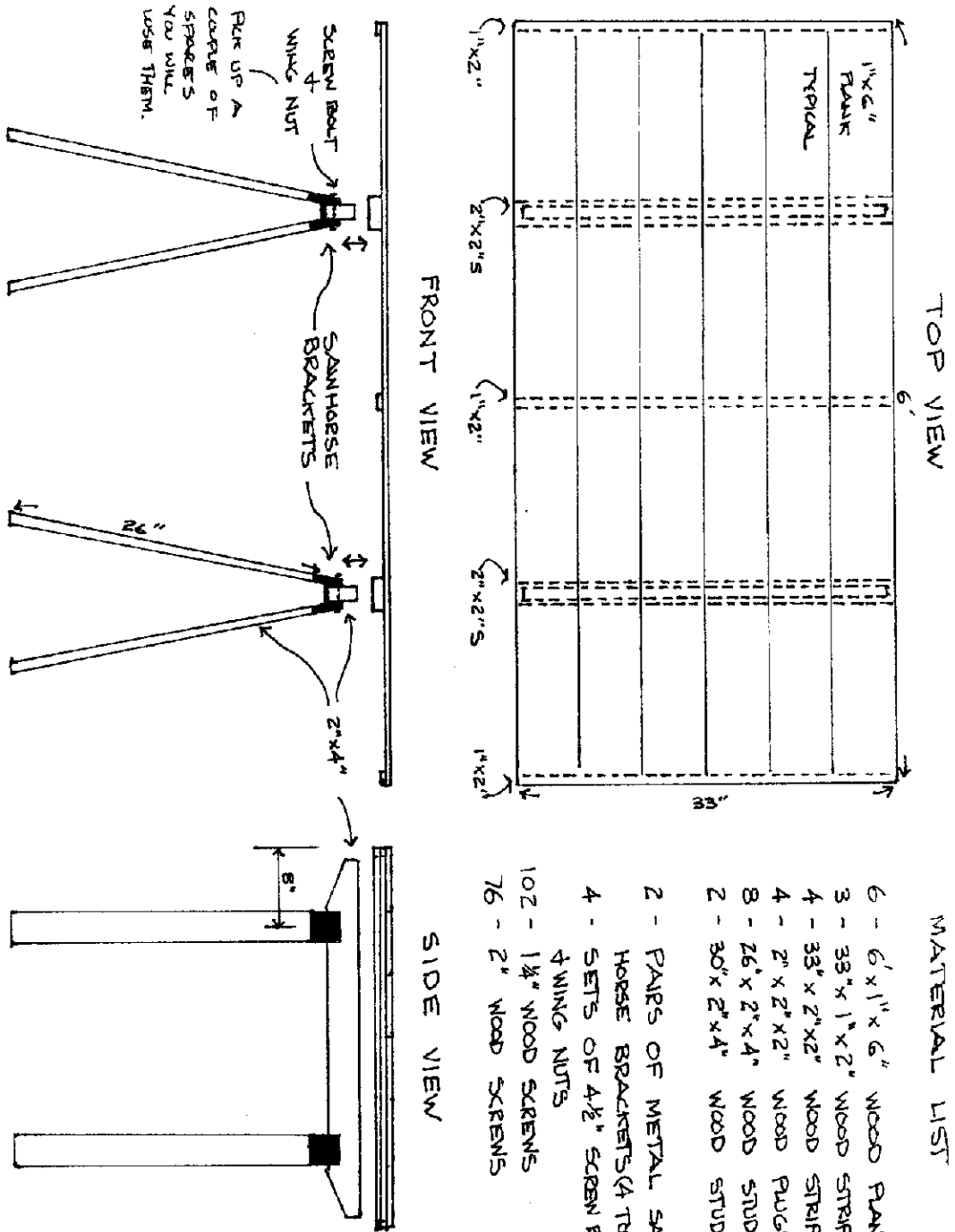
Some other options

Longer legs (i.e. 30") may be constructed for a table of working height rather than eating. A dish rack or drying table may be constructed of spaced 1"x2"s rather than solid 1"x6"s.

Details:



Plans (portable trestle table)



MATERIAL LIST

- 6 - 6' x 1" x 6" WOOD PLANKS
- 3 - 33" x 1" x 2" WOOD STRIPS
- 4 - 33" x 2" x 2" WOOD STRIPS
- 4 - 2" x 2" x 2" WOOD PLUGS
- 8 - 26" x 2" x 4" WOOD STUDS
- 2 - 30" x 2" x 4" WOOD STUDS
- 2 - PAIRS OF METAL SAN-HORSE BRACKETS (4 TOTAL)
- 4 - SETS OF 4 1/2" SCREW BOLTS + WING NUTS
- 102 - 1 1/4" WOOD SCREWS
- 76 - 2" WOOD SCREWS