



Pallet Board Coffee Table Instructions Sheet



Below you will find a more detailed set of instructions than was found on the [Pallet Board Coffee Table post](#).

- **Determine the Dimensions:** Given the size of my hanging daybed and the fact that I wanted all 4 of us to be able to eat dinner on it, my coffee table has going to be on the bigger size. So I marked off the area with blue painter's tape...played around a bit given the dimensions of the pallet boards...and landed on a table measuring about 3'x4'. This gave me a sense of how many boards I'd need to pull from my pallets. In my case that was 11 boards. (*TIP: I like using odd numbers for projects like this so that I can find the center...and then just keep dividing sections in half.*)
- **Demo the Pallets & Prep the Boards:** Essentially you do whatever it takes to man-handle the boards off the pallets.
 - With my circular saw I made a straight cut just inside the pallet frame...perpendicular to and across all the pallet boards...on both sides. This gave me greater leverage to pull the boards from the center support without destroying them. (*TIP: Watch out for the errant nail or nail head where you wouldn't expect them...pallet boards are used and re-used, so there may be a hidden nail here and there.*)
 - I then used a hammer and crowbar to jimmy all the boards loose.
 - After choosing which boards were in the best condition, I used a wire brush to scrape off all the nastiness from the 11 boards needed to make the table top.
- **Cut the Pallet Boards:** Knowing the dimensions of the table, I then cut the boards to size on my miter saw. Because I had to dodge a few nails when cutting them off the pallet, neither side of the pallet boards was straight...so I ended up cutting both sides of each board.



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- **Treat the Pallet Boards:** Because I wanted my coffee table to last as long as possible, I put a single coat of polyurethane on all sides of the boards. Not wanting my pallet boards to look too slick, I used a satin finish to give the impression that the boards had just been pulled off the pallet. (*TIP: Don't do that again inside...polyurethane has some potent fumes!*)
- **Construct the Base:**
 - I started by cutting the 4x4's the height I wanted my coffee table to stand. Because our daybed hangs pretty high...that's about 18".
 - From there I cut the 2x4's that would make up the surround of the base:
 - I started with the 2 4' segments that would form the long side of the base.
 - Because I didn't want to worry about doing a 45° miter cut on my surround for the base...but I still wanted the base to be about 3' wide, when cutting the 2 short segments I needed to take into account the ends of the long sides of the base. To do that, I simply added 2 scrap pieces of 2x4 to the end of the 2x4 that would be one of the short sides...and measured 3' from there (hopefully that makes sense.) I then cut 2 pieces that length...approximately 32".
 - Using 3" deck screws I connected the 2 shorter 2x4 segments to 2 of the 4x4 legs...each, flush with the top of the legs and the side of the 4x4.
 - Then I attached the 2 4' segments (the long sides) to the parts of the base I had just put together...flush with the top of the legs and to the ends of the short 2x4s segments. Now I had my legs attached to the base/surround...measuring 3'x4'...and approximately 18' high. (*TIP: I actually did all of this with everything upside down so that I could use the floor to keep everything on the same plane.*)
 - Knowing that I needed to provide my pallet boards some support, I simply marked my last segment of 2x4 so that it would fit just inside the frame long ways...which would be perpendicular to the pallet boards on top. I cut them....screwed them into the frame/surround...turned the frame over and I was done!
- **Paint:**
 - Originally I had planned on painting the entire table red. But after seeing how great the wood looked, I thought it would be a shame to cover it up. Besides...painting the entire table red would have been more like an explosion than a pop.
 - With the polyurethane still drying on my pallet boards, I painted the entire base red...THREE times!
 - Yes...3 times. I realized with this project that red is a funny color...you can't really tell what it's going to look like by looking at the little sample. The first red looked too rusty "national park-ish" and the second red was too orange. I'm good with the third and final red...although it's still not exactly what I'm looking for, but I was DONE painting.



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- **Add the Table Top:**

- This was the easiest and most fun part of the project...I guess because it was the last step and I got to use some power tools again.
- All I did was lay the boards on top of the painted (and dried) base so that there was an even lip all around. Then I moved them around a bit to space them out evenly...generally, and to make up for some of the variation in the boards (some turned slightly one way and others the other way).
- The last thing I did was pull out my power nailer and using 1" staples nailed everything into place...machine gun style. Fun...and done!

I am very pleased with how it turned out...and am looking forward to spending more time in this space.

