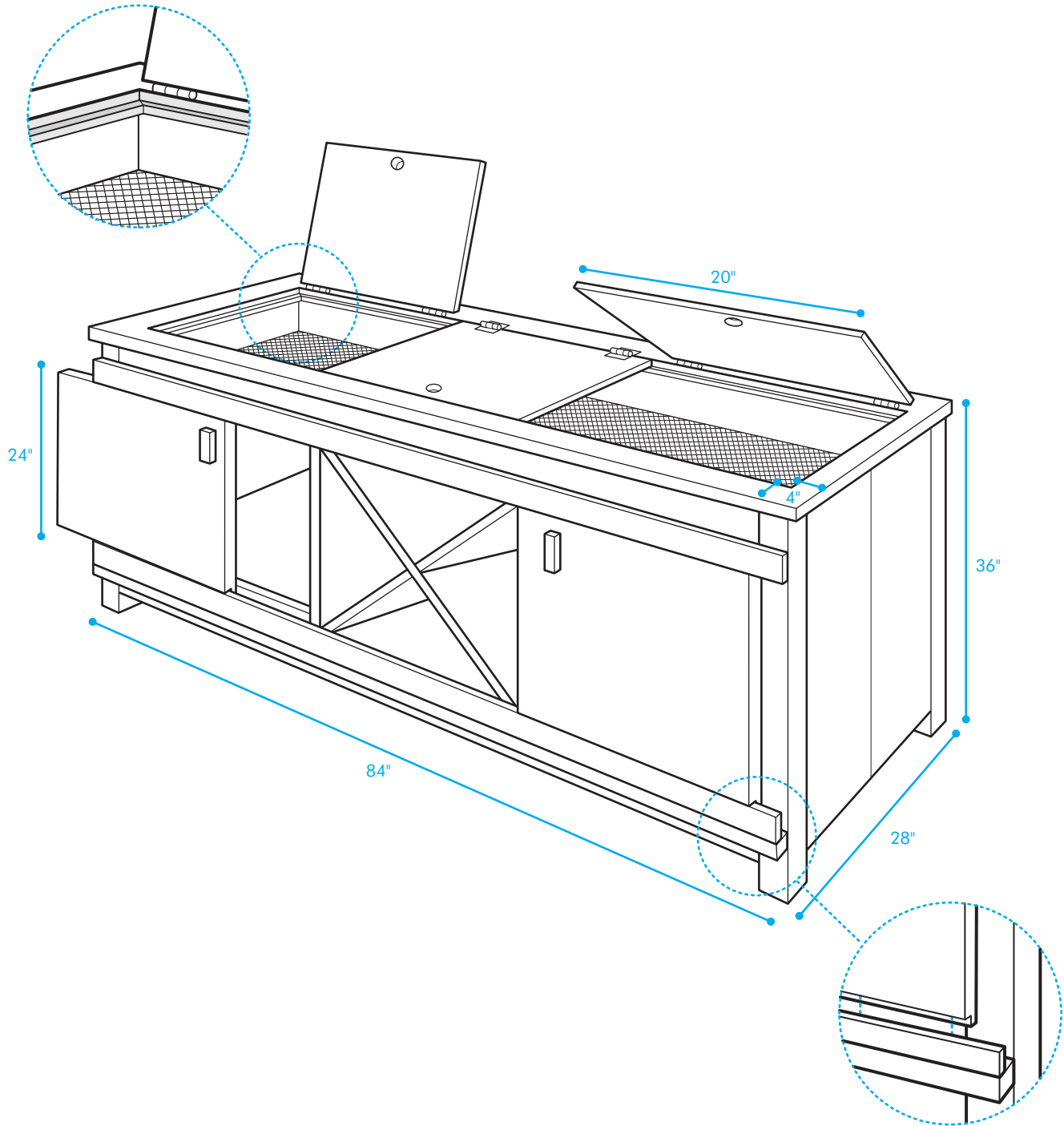


TEMPLATE



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Potting Bench

This outdoor storage unit calls for a skilled carpenter. Here is some useful information to relay to the professional (or handy friend) you've enlisted.

Wood

Chris McGrath, of Pine Harbor Wood Products, in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, constructed this bench using 3/4-inch-thick reclaimed pine barn board. If you have access to this type of wood, this is an excellent way to recycle building material. Otherwise, use 3/4-inch-thick Western red cedar, available at most lumberyards. It holds up well outdoors and acquires an attractive, weathered patina in a short time.

Screws, nails, and glue

To prevent corrosion, use all-weather screws and nails.

In addition, you may want to use waterproof urethane glue on all wood-to-wood connections. This will provide a good bond between pieces and help defend against water damage.

Wire mesh

The hardware mesh lining the top storage space should be screwed down using small washers. In such tight places, an electric drill is easier to use than a hammer.

Sliding doors

To make the rails for the sliding doors (see illustration inset, below right), you'll need two 1-by-2-inch boards and two 1-by-3-inch boards, all 7 feet long. The 1-by-2-inch boards will run parallel along the top and bottom edges of the doors, serving as the track. To keep the doors on the track, screw the 1-by-3-inch boards to the face of the 1-by-2-inch boards. On the lower track, attach the 1-by-3-inch board to the top of the 1-by-2-inch board, lining it up with outer edge; on the upper track, attach the 1-by-3-inch board on the bottom of the 1-by-2-inch board, lining it up with outer edge. Keep in mind that you'll want the doors to be 1/4 inch narrower than the upper and lower tracks so that they can move freely even when dirt or excess moisture is present. If you want the doors to sit flush with the track guards, as shown, create notches along the bottom and top edges of the doors.

Legs

To elevate the bench off the ground, you'll need eight 3-inch squares. The bottoms of the posts should be covered with metal cleats made of copper or lead to prevent water from seeping up into the grain.

X-shaped storage space

The square wine-rack-style compartment was made by intersecting two 3/4-by-3/4-inch strips of wood, either by a lap joint or with a screw at the middle of both pieces.