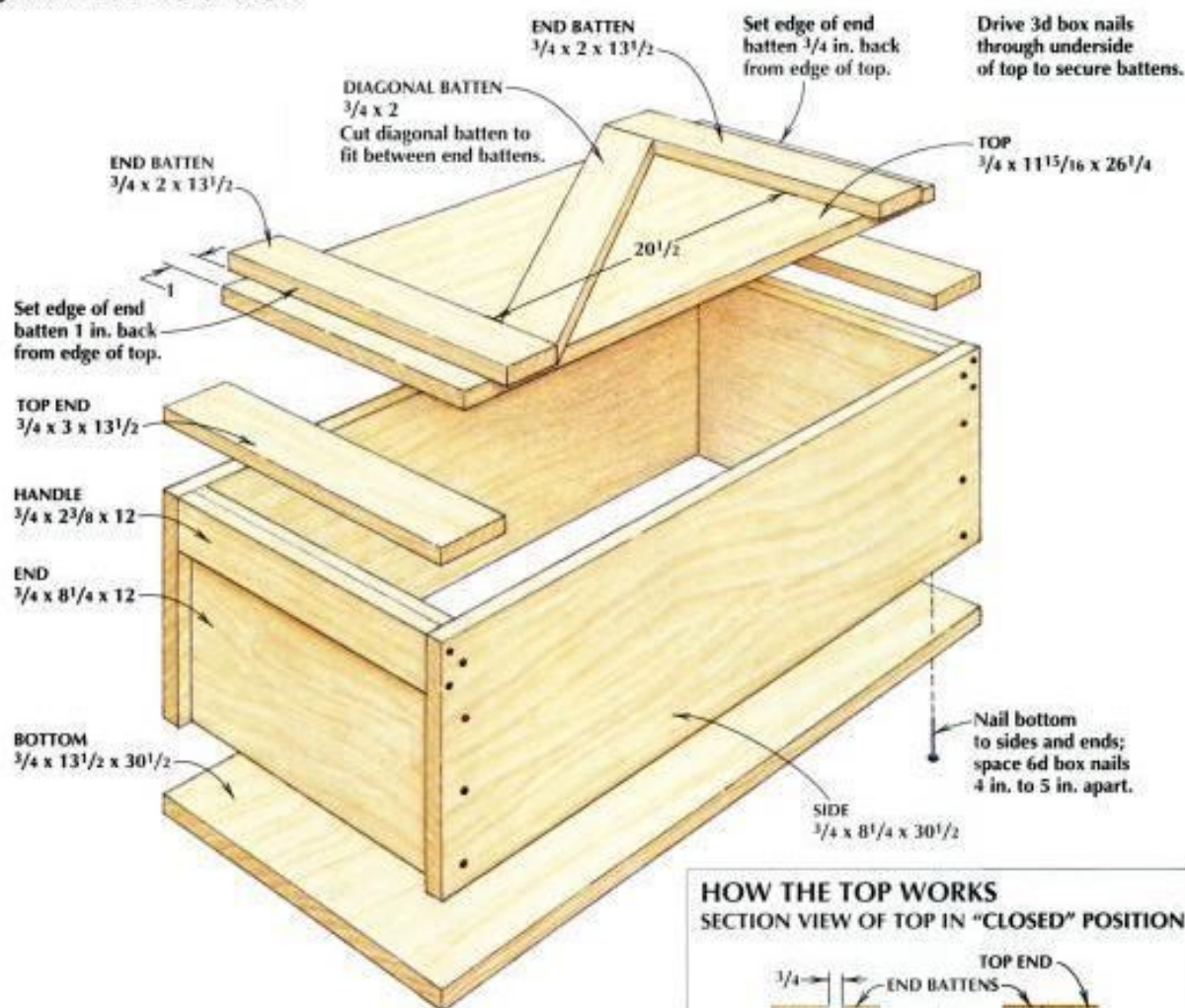


## JAPANESE TOOLBOX



As an apprentice, it was my job to carry the master's tools. Chisels, planes, saws, sharpening stones, marking gauges—these and other tools were carried in the *tategushi's* toolbox. Though the load was heavy, the proportions of the box and its built-in handles made it convenient to lift and carry on a shoulder, balanced with one hand.

When I traveled to Germany to give a presentation and workshop last fall, I met three young woodworkers who had toolboxes just like the one I used long ago. I decided it was time to recreate this traditional box. My new box, shown here, is a fairly close copy of the original. It is rectangular in shape and has a top that slides open and then lifts off. The large opening makes it easy to get tools in and out.

The simple butt joints and exposed nails in my toolbox make it different

from many Western-style toolboxes made with intricate joinery or filled with drawers and compartments. But while fancier toolboxes are designed for storing tools, mine is made for transporting them. Durability and portability are important in a box that has to travel. I also like the simple, functional design of the top. It's easy to open and close, and no hardware is necessary.

If you build a box like mine, feel free to change the dimensions to suit your needs. If you make it bigger, however, it may be difficult to carry on one shoulder.

White pine boards, yellow wood glue and box nails (3d and 6d) are all it takes to make this box. I joined the sides to the ends first, then attached the bottom to square up the assembly. The handles and top end pieces went on next.

I cut the top just  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. narrower than the width of the opening. To get the length of the top, add  $1\frac{3}{4}$  in. to the length of the opening. By locating the top's end battens as shown in the drawing, you'll create stops that allow the top to stay "locked" closed or slide open so that it can be lifted free. ▲



**TOSHIO ODATE**

is a noted sculptor and woodworker who lives in Connecticut and teaches at Pratt Institute.

---

## JAPANESE TOOLBOX

### END BATTEN 1/4x2 x 13/1

**Set edge of end batten 1/4 in. back from edge of top.**

**Drive 3d box nails through underside of top to secure battens.**

DIAGONAL BATTEN 3/4 x 2 Cut diagonal batten to fit between end battens

### END BATTEN 1/4x2x1312

1/4" 11 15/16 x 26/4

2011

**Set edge of end batten 1 in, back from edge of top.**

TOP END 3/4 x 3 x 131/2

HANDLE 1/4 x 23/8 x 12

END 1/4 x 8 1/4 x 12

BOTTOM 3/4" x 13 1/2 x 30/2

**Nail bottom to sides and ends; space 6d box nails 4 in. to 5 in. apart.**

SIDE

3/4 x 8 1/4 x 30 1/2

### HOW THE TOP WORKS SECTION VIEW OF TOP IN "CLOSED" POSITION

TOP END 1 - END BATTENS

1

**TOP**

**-HANDLE**

**-END**

As an apprentice, it was my job to carry the master's tools. Chisels, planes, saws, sharpening stones, marking gauges these and other tools were carried in the foregshis toolbox. Though the load was heavy, the proportions of the box and its built-in handles made it convenient to lift and carry on a shoulder, balanced with one hand.

When I traveled to Germany to give a presentation and workshop last fall, I met three young woodworkers who had toolboxes just like the one I used long ago. I decided it was time to recreate this traditional box. My new box, shown here, is a fairly close copy of the original. It is rectangular in shape and has a top that slides open and then lifts off. The large opening makes it easy to get tools in and out

The simple butt joints and exposed nails in my toolbox make it different

from many Western-style toolboxes made with intricate joinery or filled with drawers and compartments. But while fancier toolboxes are designed for storing tools, mine is made for transporting them. Durability and portability are important in a box that has to travel. I also like the simple, functional design of the top. It's easy to open and close, and no hardware is necessary.

If you build a box like mine, feel free to change the dimensions to suit your needs. If you make it bigger, however, it may be difficult to carry on one shoulder

**White pine boards, yellow wood glue and box nails (3d and 6d) are all it takes to make this box. I joined the sides to the ends first, then attached the bottom to square up the assembly. The handles and top end pieces went on next**

I cut the top just  $\frac{1}{16}$  in. narrower than the width of the opening. To get the length of the top, add  $\frac{15}{4}$  in. to the length of the opening. By locating the top's end bearings as shown in the drawing, you'll create stops that allow the top to stay "locked" closed or slide open so that it can be lifted free. A

*TOSHIO ODATE is noted sculptor and woodworker who lives in Connecticut and teaches at Pratt Institute*