

Flag Case

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The Guild is seeking to identify veterans for whom we might make a flag case to store the flag that was draped over their casket and later folded for the family to take. As recipient families are identified, we will be looking to have individuals volunteer to make a flag case.

The basic plan for a flag case is three sides with a piece of glass set against a trim piece in the front (so the glass can be replaced if broken) and a plywood back that is set into a rabbet. Below is one example from Jim Milam.

Tools

- Table saw (with jig or guide for cutting 22.5 degree angle)
- Plane (optional)
- Sanders – Disc, belt, and hand sanding
- Sandpaper

Material

- A good quality dark hardwood will be most appropriate. Walnut, Mahogany, and Maple are good options.
- Glass and glazier's points

Instructions

Flag cases can be made of 3 pieces of wood with rabbets cut to house case back, and separate rabbets to house flag and capture the glass; Or make the case from 6 pieces of wood (3 case sides and 3 pieces of molding as indicated below). If you choose to make the moldings separately, you have a second decision to make; to hide or to accent the joints between case and molding. The instructions below are geared towards the 6-piece approach.

Final case thickness dimensions are expected to be based on a specific flag for which a case is being made.

Case Sides

1. Mill stock for 3 sides slightly wider & thicker and 3" (or more) longer than required.
2. Cut rabbet in bottom inside edge to house plywood back.
3. Cut $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ miters. (This sequence is critical).
4. Cut 45° miters (This sequence is critical).
5. Sand or hand plane outside being sure to remove any tear out.
6. Glue sides together.

Top Moldings

7. Mill stock for applied top molding slightly wider & thicker and 3" (or more) longer than required.
8. Cut $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ miters.
9. Cut 45° miters.
10. Route desired profile on top, inside edge. This sequence is critical. Cutting $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ miters after profile is formed results in blowout on back side.
11. Route chamfer on outside bottom edge of molding and outside top edge of sides to accent glued-up joint.

Lessons Learned From Past Mistakes

12. Cutting lengths extra-long leaves room to sneak up on exact length and correct mis-cuts.
13. Cut all $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ miters with same saw/sled setup.
14. Focus on $22\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ miters then move to 45° miters.
15. Miters & molding profiles are easily messed up, by cutting on wrong end, wrong orientation, wrong side or wrong edge. To minimize these mistakes, mark all 3 pieces with chalk.

16. Stable stock is essential. Warpage, twist & bowed stock will frustrate your effort to close the 3 miters.
17. Although all veterans' flags are the same size (5' x 9'-6"), they are not necessarily the same size when folded. The flag should fill the case – leaving no room to slide about. You may have to consider slight dimensional changes in case dimensions to accommodate a specific flag, or re-fold the flag to fit the case.
18. Install $\frac{1}{8}$ " glass with glazing points or small glue blocks.
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 2' x 4' plywood back \$7.50 (enough for 4 cases)
 - $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 18 x 24" glass \$9.28 (enough for 2 cases)
 - Wood $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 4" x 6' (Walnut, Mahogany or Maple are good choices)
19. The flag case in the attached photos measures 26" on the long side x 18½ " on the short side and is made of $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick stock.