

Cafe Table - Mike Hardy

I started from knowing I wanted the top 24" diameter, the length of each side at the base to be 24", and the height around 36". I started with the two main legs of the base, and sized everything else to fit. Whatever size you build, start with those parts and it will work.

All of the leg parts are 2.5" wide.

All of the leg joinery is biscuit joints.

The angles are all complimentary, so you only have to use one setup to cut all of the angles. For me, it was 6.3 degrees. My miter slide does tenths of a degree, so it worked. If the angle is slightly different, the top of the base will be a different width and the top stretchers will be different lengths, but it isn't that critical. Just plan your cuts and you won't have to change the miter slide at all.

Main Legs:

The long sides are 36". At the bottom they are 24" wide, and 16" at the top.

The lower stretcher is 18" long, and 4" inches from the bottom of the leg.

The upper stretcher is 11.75" long and set about 5/8" down from the top. Honestly, I think I did the lower stretcher then cut the upper to fit.

Folding Leg:

I used the main legs to size the folding leg.

The side legs are about 20". Don't make this too snug to the stretchers of the main legs. Because of the tilt of the base when open, the bottom of the folding leg is not parallel to the bottom stretcher of the main legs when folded, so there has to be some clearance. It isn't much, just be sure that you allow for that.

The base is 20", which I found by taping the two main legs together, setting the bottoms 24" apart, and measuring the distance at the top of the lower stretcher. NOTE: Be sure to make this a little wide to start to allow for the saw kerf when you cut it apart and the closed width of your hinge.

The stretchers on the folding leg are flush with the sides of the leg. Once again, I set the lower stretcher, then cut the upper stretcher to fit.

BEFORE SPLITTING THE LOWER LEG - I went ahead and mortised in all of the hinges first (except for the ones in the folding leg and the top), then assembled the base. I removed the folding leg, cut it in half. Make sure you keep it square - mine just fit on my crosscut sled. I reattached the leg (with tape), checked how much I needed to take off to make that side 24" at the bottom of the main legs, and trimmed each half to fit. Make sure you allow for the width of the hinge. I don't think I had to trim mine very much.

After installing the hinges in the folding leg, build a box that closes over the lower stretcher of the folding leg to keep it locked in place when open. I used two short screws for the pivot. I also had to cut a slot to slide over the barrel of the hinge.

Top:

I made mine 24". I hinged it to the top of one main leg (it flips up), and added a stop where the other main leg was when open.

I finished it with a couple of coats of shellac.