

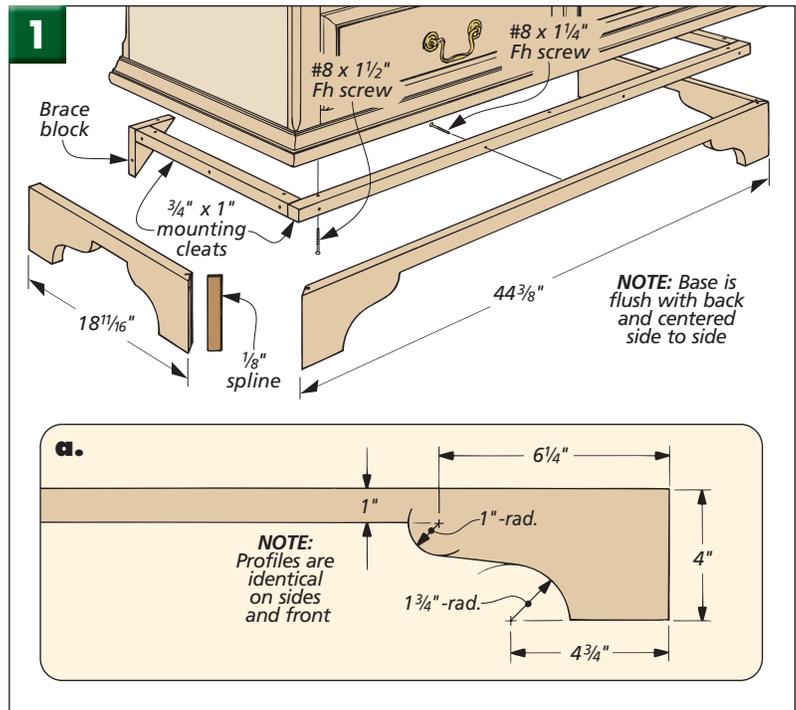


Optional Base

The bracket feet that I put on the blanket chest are really distinctive, but this simpler, "ogee" base makes a great alternative. It's just a mitered frame that's set in $\frac{5}{16}$ " from the edges of the bullnose base frame. (The ogee base should line up with the base molding above.)

After the pieces are mitered, I cut kerfs and splines that will reinforce the joint. Then the profile shown in Fig. 1a can be cut and smoothed. This isn't hard, but work carefully so you end up with clean, smooth lines.

Before attaching the frame, you'll need to add some mounting cleats to the front and sides of the base frame. And two triangular brace blocks reinforce the base frame at the back. **W**



Mortising Chest Hinges

There's no big secret to mortising butt hinges. I've found that all it takes is a little know-how and a dose of patience. And like any job, I like to use any shortcuts that are available.

LAYOUT. For the blanket chest in issue No. 145, I started with the case. The first step here is to lay out the mortise. Once you've marked the position of the hinge, just set it in place and score around it with a sharp utility knife, as in Fig. 1. The sharp cuts are easy to see and will give you a head start when it's time to clean out the mortise. (Remember that the barrel of the hinge should sit proud of the case, as shown in Fig. 2a.)

ROUTER SHORTCUT. Now you could start chopping out the mortise with a sharp chisel, but I like to use a small

hand-held router with a straight bit to rough out the mortise. (I used a $\frac{3}{8}$ "-dia. bit.) This method gives you a smooth bottom and a consistent depth and just makes the job a little easier.

But there are a couple simple tricks to this method. First you need to set the router bit to cut to the right depth. Fig. 2a. shows what you're after here — the same depth mortise in the lid and the case. I just measured the thickness of the hinge barrel and then split the difference, subtracting a little ($\frac{1}{32}$ ") so I'd end up with clearance between the lid and the case.

Next, to safely use a router on the narrow edge of the case, you'll need a little help. As you can see in Fig. 2, I used a 2x4 block clamped flush with the top edge of the case to give the

router base more surface to ride on. (A rabbet in the block just provides clearance to start the cut.)

Once you're set up, just take it slow. First test the depth of the cut, and when you're satisfied, sneak up close to the scored lines with the bit.

CLEAN-UP. After you've roughed out the mortise, a sharp chisel will complete the job. Just deepen the scored lines you made earlier with the utility knife and then carefully pare away the waste, as shown in Fig. 3.

LID MORTISES. Now the case mortises can be used to locate the mortises in the lid. But this time, you won't need the support block. And finally, try to make sure the pilot holes for the screws are centered so they don't move the hinges in the mortises. **W**

