

Simply Woodworking

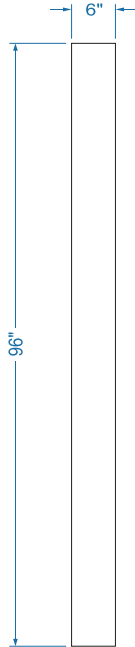
By jacques@bois-exotique.com

I often have to explain to clients how to calculate wood requirements for a project. Granted, there are software programs to do this for you, but they tend to be complicated, notwithstanding the learning curve to master the program.

This is a very simple, foolproof way of doing it, and can be done either with a computer or with good old fashion pencil and paper.

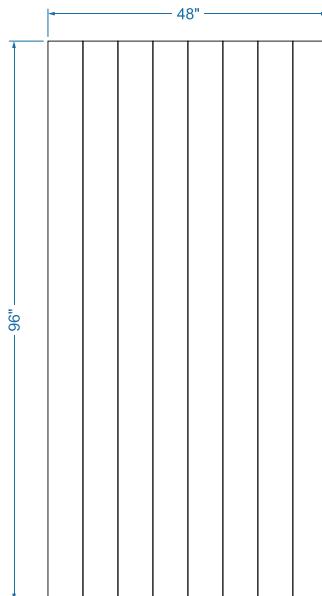
STEP # 1:

Draw a rectangle to represent a plank of wood, the length being 96" and the width of 6" as follows:



STEP # 2:

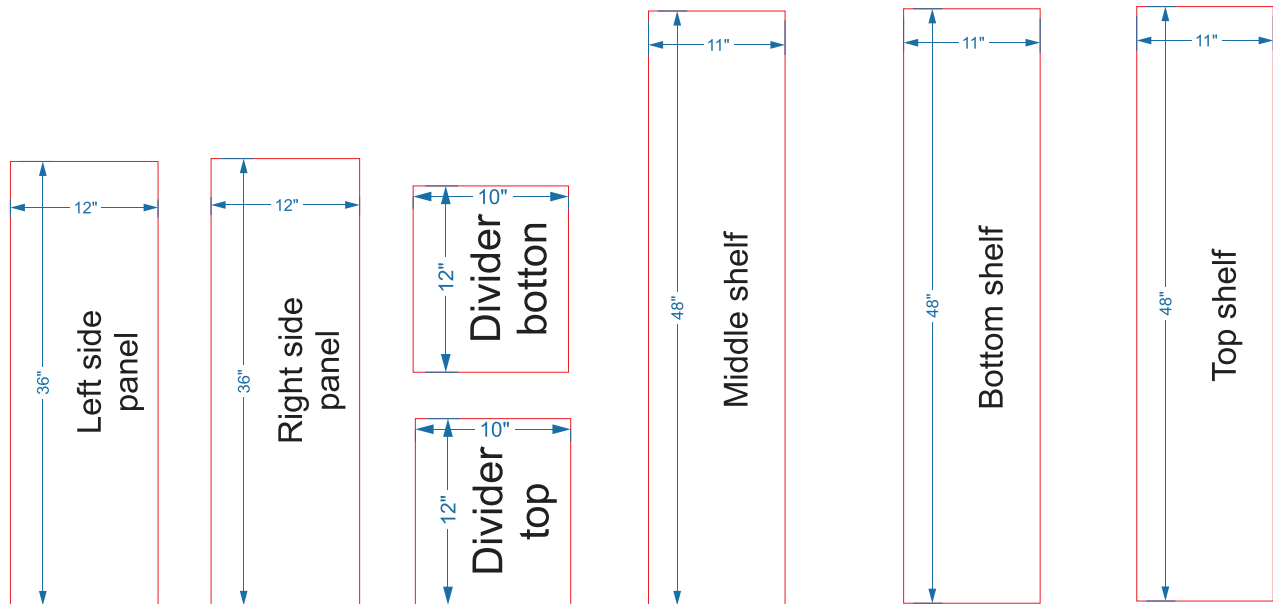
Draw 7 more rectangles to represent 8 planks of wood glued together as follows:



STEP # 3:

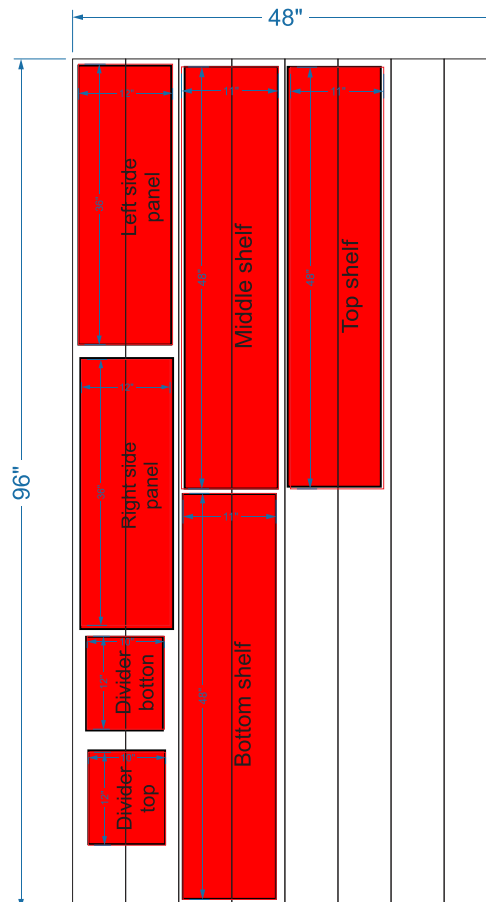
Draw (IN RED PENCIL) rectangles to represent the finished (in this example we are making a 3 shelf bookshelf with dividers on each shelf) parts follows:

**** it is important to keep the same scale throughout your drawings, for instance 1:8, where 1" on paper (or computer) equals 8" in real life.**



STEP # 4:

Draw/drag your red pieces over the black pieces as follows:



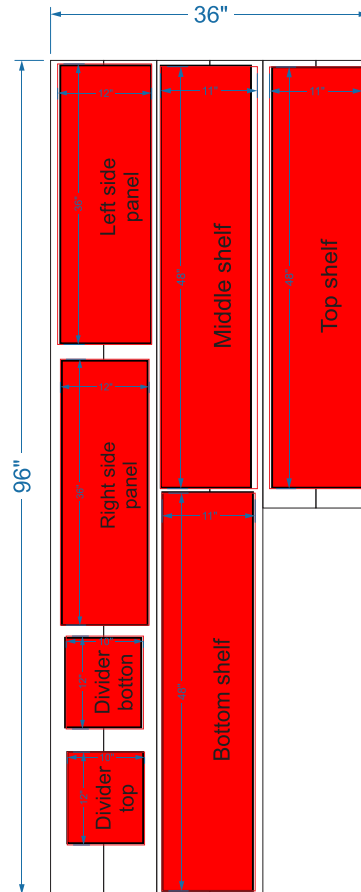
STEP #5:

Once the red parts (finished pieces) are placed over the black parts (planks), the planks which have no red parts over them are removed.

In this exercise, the 5th plank is split in half length and placed next to the top half in order to not have too much waste. So, the final tally for this project is 5 planks of 6" x 96".

But what if the planks are wider than 6" and are assorted widths?

We know that we need a total of 30" by 96" (5 planks of 6" wide), so when selecting our planks, we try to choose planks whose total width will minimum 30" total. It should be noted that it is generally accepted that there is a waste of 15 to 20% due to cuts, etc., therefore it is prudent to add 15% to the 30", which equals a of approximately 36" total width of wood.



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