

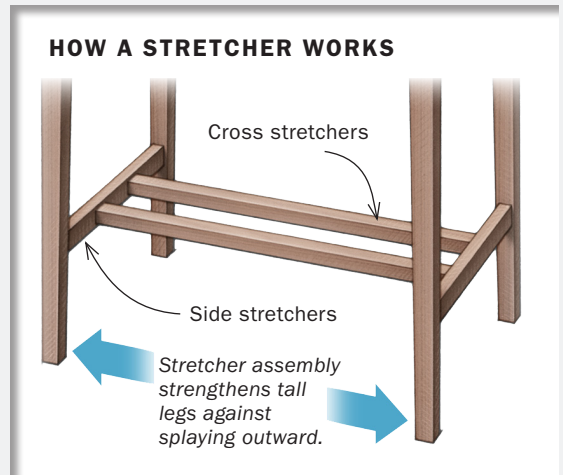
Stretchers Add Strength



Tall cabinet stands
need help down below

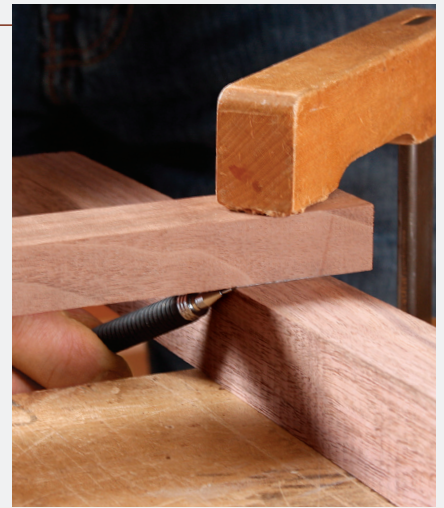
BY TIM COLEMAN

In *FWW* #236, I illustrated my techniques for maximizing mortise-and-tenon joinery in narrow legs. Two cabinets featured there incorporate a stretcher assembly that adds visual interest to the lower part of the stand and balances the composition. But it also serves a vital structural purpose. The tall, slender legs are vulnerable to forces at the bottom, but the stretcher system keeps the legs from moving and compromising the joinery above.



LAYOUT

Lay out the angled shoulders. The legs on the Star Cabinet (above) are tapered on the inside, which means the shoulders of the side stretcher tenons will be angled. To get it right the first time, dry-assemble the base side and clamp an oversize stretcher in its location. Use a bevel gauge (right) to find the miter-gauge angle for the tablesaw cuts, and mark the tenon shoulder in place (far right).



SEQUENCE OF ASSEMBLY

Glue the stretchers first. To reduce the number of parts you have to fiddle with during the base glue-up, it's best to glue together the stretcher assembly first (right). While the glue dries, assemble the front and rear legs and aprons. Once the glue dries on both assemblies, glue the stretcher assembly in place when you add the short side aprons (far right).

