



Hang man. To help arrange and hang the boxes on the wall, Chaffin uses a backless box. The box makes it easier to lay out the 3-D shelves and install the French cleats that they mount to.

3-D Shelves

Clever mounting method makes it a cinch to stack and arrange these simple boxes

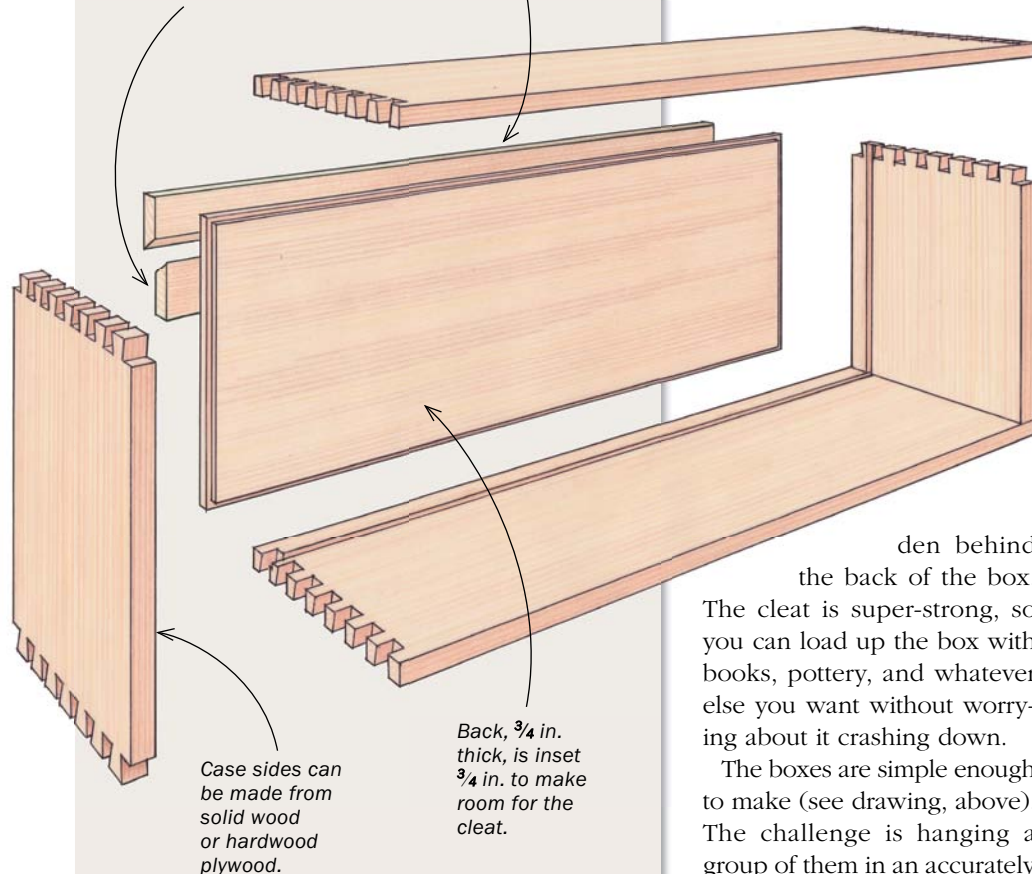
BY DAN CHAFFIN

WALL OF STORAGE

Individually, these boxes are simple and understated, but arranged geometrically on the wall, they become as striking as they are useful.

Lower cleat mounts to wall. It is slightly shorter than cleat on box, to allow for side-to-side adjustments after box is hung.

Top cleat mounts to back.



I first made these simple wall-hung display boxes for my home. Since then, I have made a lot of them for clients, who like the boxes because they can be grouped in geometric patterns to create beautiful, modern, and highly functional storage. Each box hangs on a French cleat, hid-

den behind the back of the box. you put the box on the wall, you no longer have access to the cleat to make adjustments.

Fortunately, I have a creative business and shop partner, Matt Frederick. He had the idea to use a “mounting box” to hang the wall cleat. This mounting box is a 3-D template sized to match the outside dimensions of the actual box, but it’s half as deep and has no back—just a cleat that mates to the wall cleat. This backless design allows me to hang the wall cleat with a single screw, set the mounting box on it, locate and level the box precisely, and then drive in the remaining screws that hold the wall cleat in place.

The mounting box is very easy to make (see drawing, p. 68). It’s just butt joints and screws. The cleat is attached with screws driven in through the box sides. I’ll show you how to use it to arrange the display boxes in any pattern.

Installation is easy

After making the mounting box and the wall cleat, you can hang the box. First, figure out where you want it on the wall and mark for the top edge of the wall cleat. To hang an array of boxes, you’ll need to plan more to figure out the spacing

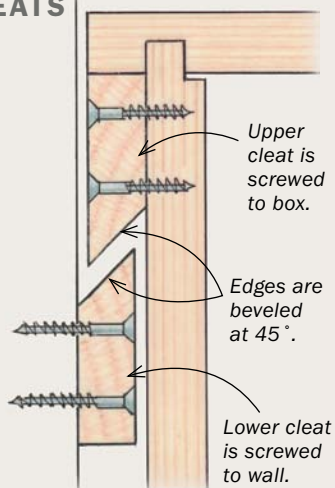


Enliven Any Room



BEVELED CLEATS ANCHOR THE SHELVES

The French cleat is a great way to hang the boxes because it's strong and easy to make. All you need are two strips of $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. hardwood or plywood with a mating beveled edge.



Attach the cleat to the back. For better support, make it long enough to just fit between the box sides, and then press it firmly against the box top (above). Secure the cleat to the back with two rows of screws (right).



Hassle-free hanging

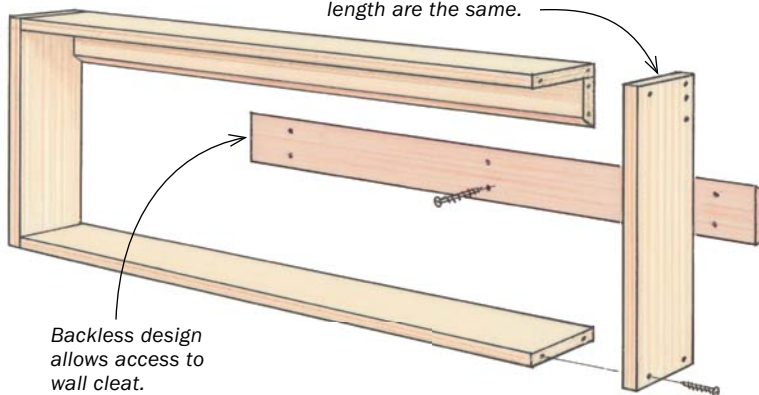
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Attach the wall cleat first, using just one screw in the center (1). Hang the mounting box on the wall cleat (2). Level the box and drive the rest of the screws into the cleat (3). If possible, drive into studs; otherwise, use wall anchors. When hanging multiple rows of boxes, it's easiest to start at the bottom.



MOUNTING BOX IS THE SECRET

Mounting box, made from $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. plywood and assembled with screws, is half as deep as wall box, but its height and length are the same.



between the boxes. After you have determined that space, hang a box in the lowest row first, and then work your way up the rows.

Align the top edge of the wall cleat with a pencil mark on the wall and attach it with a single screw in the center. Set the mounting box on the wall cleat and place a level on top of it. Adjust the box until it is level, then drive in the remaining screws to anchor the cleat to the wall. Remove the mounting box and put the display box in place. You're done.

There are two ways to locate the remaining boxes after you've hung the first. For big

distances, such as the spaces between boxes on the horizontal rows of this pattern, measure from a hung box to the mounting box. Hold the second box's wall cleat against the wall, set the mounting box on it, and then have a friend measure between them. For small distances, like the spaces between the rows, I use a spacer. I place it on top of a box in the lower row and set the mounting box on top of it. The cleat on the mounting box will show you where to put the wall cleat. □

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IT'S EASY TO ARRANGE MULTIPLE BOXES, TOO

The mounting box stands in for the real thing. Because it's the same height and length as the wall boxes, you can get a good sense of how the two boxes will look together (left). When hanging more than a box or two, spacing is critical. Chaffin's mounting box allows him to stack boxes within 1 in. of the ceiling with even spacing around them (below).

