



POWWOW DRUM FRAMES

The directions here are for a drum made 12 inches deep and 24 inches in diameter. It is from a drum made by Manni Boyd, a drum maker from the Menominee Nation.

Two circles are cut from 3/4 inch thick plywood, with the desired outside diameter. An inside hole is cut out leaving a wood hoop of about 3 inches thick. See Figure 1. These serve as inside fasteners for the drum. We'll refer to them as the hoops.

Staves are cut from 3/4" pine or other suitable wood. The staves are each 12 inches long and trimmed width of 3 inches. The lowest cost way is to use 1" x 4" number 2 pine and cut the pieces out of the best 12" parts. Trim out any loose or broken knots. Once they are all cut to 12" lengths, set up a table saw with fence and blade angle so to trim the edges at an angle. This angle will vary by size of hoops but a 10 degree angle appears to be proper for a 24 inch diameter drum. Several test cuts will help you adjust this angle. See Figure 2.

About 25 staves will be necessary for a 24 inch drum. The last stave placed in the rim may need to be cut at a custom width in order to finish the rim, so wait and see. Five or six 1" x 4" x 8 foot boards will be needed if they are pretty good regarding knots and other flaws.

To put the rim together, you will need carpenter's cement, 8 penny finishing nails, four pieces of scrap wood 12" long, and a hammer. A nail set would also be a good idea to counter sink the nails slightly.

Take the two inside hoops and tack the 4 12" scrap pieces in the four directions around the outside diameter. Tack them in place so that the hoops are 2 inches below each of the ends of the staves. It will be easier to remove these scrap pieces if you leave a little nail sticking up. See Figure 3.

Now you are ready to nail on the staves. Run a ribbon of carpenter's glue on a quarter of each hoop. Nail the staves in place, one at a time in the first quarter, with two nails as in Figure 4. When you get to the scrap holding piece of wood, remove it and continue gluing and nailing on the staves.

When you get to the quarter, remove the last pieces of scrap holders and loosely lay the staves in place. Observe if you will need to trim out several of the last staves so they will fit snugly, or if you will have to cut one more slightly smaller or larger to take up the space. Finish gluing and nailing.

When the rim is complete, bevel the edge of both sides of the rim with a wood rasp, and finish with sand paper.

The rim can be left natural in color or painted or stained. But it would be good if you finished it off with a coat or two of clear varnish or something similar.

Let it dry well before stretching on the raw hide heads.

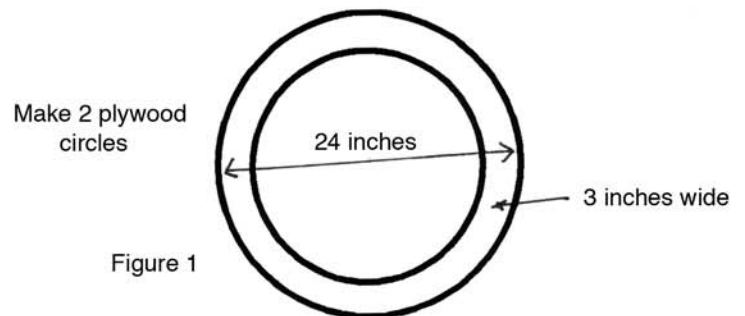


Figure 1

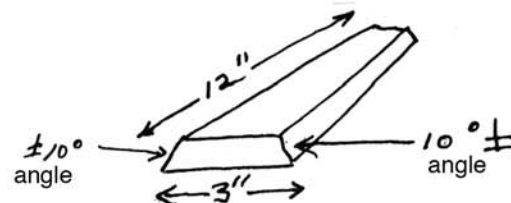


Figure 2

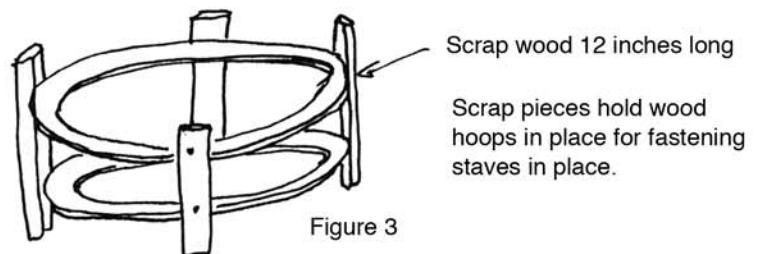


Figure 3

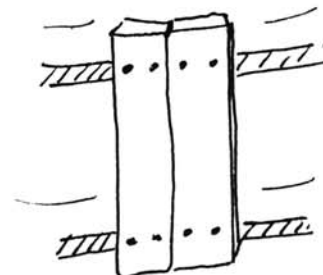


Figure 4