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Free Rocking Horse Plans Oscar



Searching the internet (as you do) for free rocking horse plans proved to be unsatisfactory, so I decided to make my own design.

This simple rocking horse can be made from a single piece of project timber board 19mm (3/4 inch) thick by 280 wide (12 inch) by 3m long (12 feet). You will also need a piece of 19mm dowel about 200mm long for the handles.

Where I live, it is difficult to get timber of those dimensions without knots, so I opted for two lengths of 3m long 19x140 planks that have been finger jointed. I then butt joined two pieces 450 long to make a piece big enough for the head.



Tools.

For the eyes, you can use [wobble eyes](#) from your local craft or novelty store. Use ribbon about 10mm wide for the bridle.

There is really no need for expensive machinery such as table saws and thicknessers. This is a very short list of tools that I used.

- A [jigsaw](#) is probably the only essential power tool for this project.
- [Power drill](#), corded or battery powered.
- [Tenon saw](#), also known as a back saw. At least 3 [bar clamps](#) or F clamps with a capacity of at least 12"
- Woodworkers [chisel](#) 6mm (¼ ") wide to cut the groove for the mane.
- [Combination square](#), one of those tools I use all the time.

The following list of tools are useful but not essential:

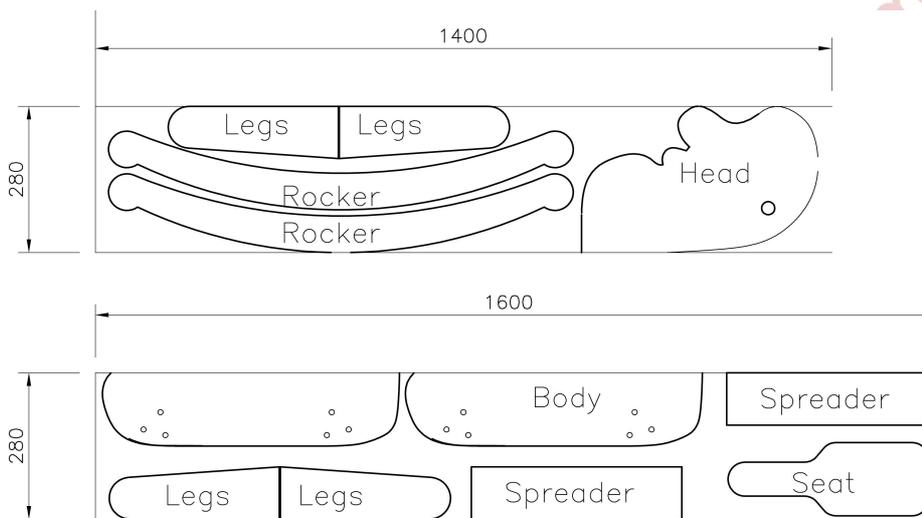
- [Router](#) mounted in a [router table](#).
- Flush trim [router bit](#).
- Slot cutting [router bit](#).
- [Compound bevel mitre saw](#).
- [Biscuit joiner](#) – for joining the pieces that make up the head.
- A good quality [table saw](#) is almost essential in any woodworkers workshop.
- [14" band saw](#).



Materials Cutting List

This rocking horse plan is designed to use project timber, which is 19mm or $\frac{3}{4}$ inch radiata pine board that is at least 280mm wide and 3m long.

You will also need a piece of 19mm dowel about 200mm long for the handles. It also happens to be the same dimensions as a broom handle, so good luck explaining to your better half how a shorter handle on the broom is so much better.



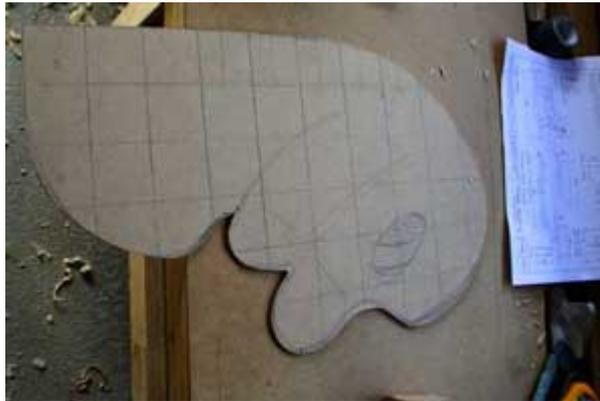


Step by Step Instructions.

Read through the instructions to make sure you understand what needs to be done. Use [this form](#) to contact me if you have any questions, and I will be happy to answer as soon as I can.

Before actually cutting anything, I prefer to make sure everything is going to fit on the stock that I have. This means measuring out the component parts starting with the largest pieces and making allowance for saw cuts.

Step 1.



To make the head, we need a piece that is at least 280mm (12 inches) wide for the large rocking horse, or at least 210mm (about 8.5 inches) wide for Oscar Junior.

If you cannot locate a board wide enough, simply butt join two or more pieces. An alternative is to use good quality plywood, or sandwich two pieces of 12mm MDF. Make sure you have enough material for the infill pieces as shown in [Step 10](#).

Even if you only want to make one rocking horse, it's a good idea to make templates of the parts. Copy the outline from the plan by drawing a 50mm (2 inch) grid onto a piece of 4mm MDF or similar, then carefully cut it out. Some people have used craft board, and I'm sure that stiff card from a stationery shop would also be suitable

An advantage in using MDF is that you can use the template as a guide for trimming the edges of the workpiece with a flush trim [straight cut bit](#) in your router mounted in a [router table](#). The way I did this was to temporarily attach the template to the workpiece using foam backed double sided tape.

The thing is that you don't want to make the attachment too permanent, but you also don't want it to come off while are working on it. I find that using small squares of tape at intervals of about 100mm or four inches. No doubt if you are an experienced woodworker you will have your own methods.



Step 2.

Mark and drill the hole for the handle using a forstner bit. The handle should be a snug fit, and you may want to use the optional reinforcing stars on either side of the head.

Step 3.

The two rockers are the longest parts, so I prefer to start with them. I made a template of one half of a rocker from a sheet of 4mm MDF board. Trace the outline on one half of the plank and flip it over to trace the other half. This will ensure the rockers will be as symmetrical as possible.

Again, using a flush trim [straight cut bit](#) in your router, you can use the template as a guide and trim around the edges of the rockers.

Step 4.

Next is the body. Cut two pieces to the size shown on the plan. I temporarily fixed the two pieces together with double sided tape when cutting the outline. It is best to round off the edges after the head and body has been assembled after the next few steps.

Step 5.

Making the legs and the wedges that splay the legs.



The wedges have a ratio of 100 to 15. To achieve this angle I use a carpenters square and measure 100mm on one edge and 15mm on the other and set the bevel to these marks. This also serves to form the angle on the feet.

If you have ever made a sawhorse, you will no doubt have developed your own technique. I made mine from 3/4" stock using a bandsaw, gluing a pair of them onto the top of each leg. Trim the top end of the wedges once the glue has set.

Step 6.

Prepare the parts that make the spreader bars.



Step 7.



Making the head.

Trace the outline of the head and cut it out using a jigsaw. To cut the groove for the mane, I drilled a series of holes as shown in the photo above.

Step 8.



Using a tenon saw and a 6mm wide chisel, I cleaned up the groove as shown in the photo above. Using a router and round over bit, round off the edges except where it is attached to the body.

Note that the photo shows the head and handles already attached to the body, which means that I did this step out of sequence. I suggest that you do this step before attaching the head to the body.



Step 9.



The photo above shows the head glued and clamped onto one half of the body.

Step 10.



I used the offcuts, which must be the same thickness as the head, (marked in red in the photo) to make spacers for the body. Glue the spacers in place, and then glue the remaining body side in place, making sure that the top side where the seat fits is level. Sand the edges flush once the glue has set.

Step 11.

Cut out the seat, sand the edges smooth and round off the edges with a round-over bit.

Step 12.

Once the glue has set for the body assembly, it is time to attach the legs to the body and the rocker assembly. This can be a tricky process, so this is how I did it.

First, I drilled a pilot hole at the centre of the top of the leg and where the legs are attached to the



body. Attach each leg with one screw each so that the leg is able to swivel. This is a temporary attachment at this stage.

Clamp the rockers so that they don't fall over or move too much, place the spreader bars across the rockers. Stand the rocking horse body with the legs temporarily attached, and move the spreader bars so that they match the angle of the feet. Now you have the opportunity to mark the the position of the spreader bars on the rockers and to mark the position feet on the spreader bars.

Step 13.

Fix the spreader bars to the rockers. Drill relief holes for the screws to help prevent the wood splitting so close to the edge.

Step 14.

Now you can fix the legs in position. Drill the pilot holes for the screws on the top of the legs. There is a total of three screws per leg. Removing one leg at a time, apply the glue to the top of the legs and fix in place with three screws.

Step 15.

Fixing the feet to the spreader bars. I felt that the joint between the feet and the rockers would need beefing up, so I fashioned a set of "hooves" from scraps to glue on either side, and painted them black.

Another way of reinforcing the joint is to buy u-bolts and cut them in half. This will result in what I like to call a J-bolt. Now you can bolt them to the inside of the legs with the nut underneath. Just make sure there are no sharp edges sticking out.

Step 16.

Prepare the rocking horse for painting by filling the screw holes and other imperfections with a good quality wood filler. Round-over all sharp edges, sand smooth with 220 grade sandpaper and apply a good quality undercoat. It would be a good idea to fill the gaps between the legs and the body to prevent little fingers getting stuck.

Finishing and painting.

Paint the horse first before attaching the mane and the tail.

The eyes for this rocking horse were painted on, but you may want to use some 1-1/2" [wobble eyes](#) from your local craft shop.

Likewise the bridle was painted, but it would be easier no doubt to glue a piece of ribbon or imitation leather about 10mm wide.



Making the mane.



To make the mane, I wrapped a ball of wool around a piece of cardboard about 75mm wide and about 400mm long. Cut the wool as shown in the photo.

Starting from the top of the head, apply a liberal amount of glue about an inch at a time. Take a few lengths of wool and insert them into the groove with the aid of a thin dowel. Apply more glue and wool as you work your way down the groove.

Another method was suggested by a reader – cut the cardboard to the shape of the head, wrap it in plastic clingwrap and use the shape to insert the wool into the groove and only cut the wool once the glue has set, then remove the cardboard.

For the tail, I simply drilled a 16mm hole about 50mm deep under the tail, cut some wool to length and glued in place.

Conclusion.

I certainly hope you and your family enjoy using this free rocking horse plan. Use [this form](#) to contact me if you would like to have a photo on the [gallery](#) page.

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