

# Make a collapsable table for concerts in the park!

by **Marsh** on June 8, 2009

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Author: Marsh [People Who REALLY Build Things](#)

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## Intro: Make a collapsable table for concerts in the park!

We saw this table, currently offered by Crate & Barrel, at concert in the park. We couldn't resist cloning it.

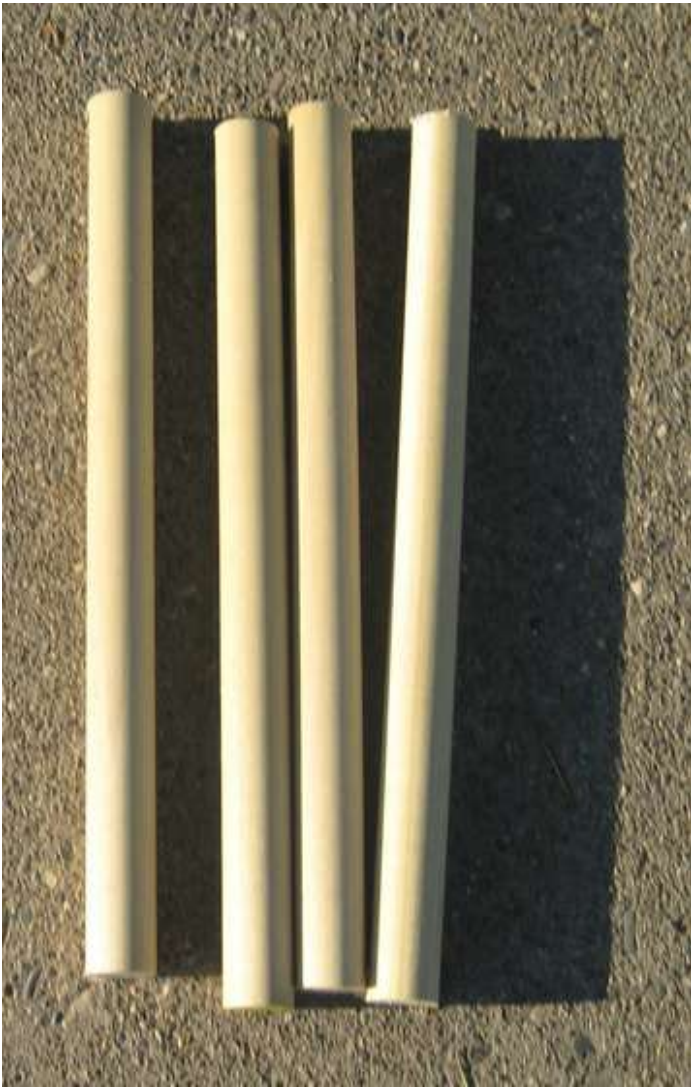


### Step 1: Bill of materials

- 1 ea. 48" x 7/8" wooden dowel
- 3 ea. 2" x 1/4" x 8' hardwood lattice
- 1 ea. 1" x 1/4" x 8' hardwood lattice
- 4 ea. 1/4-20 x 1" Carriage bolts
- 4 ea. 1/4-20 brass threaded insert nuts
- 4' x 1" nylon web belt
- 1/4" staples

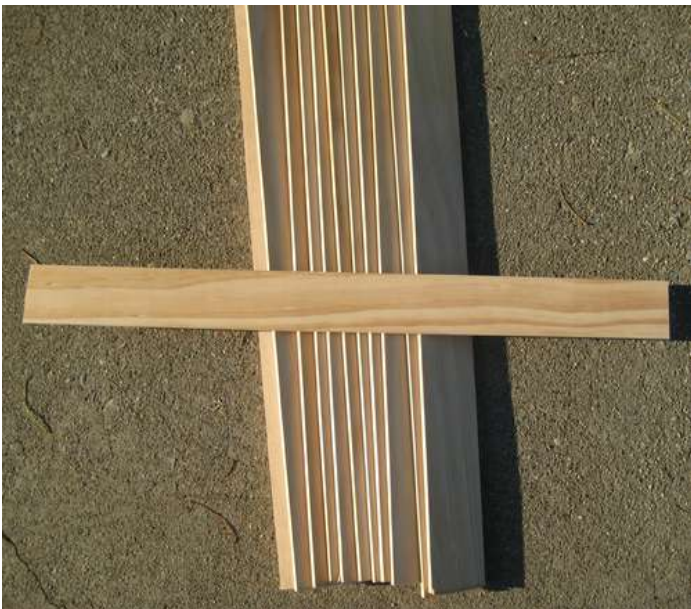
### Step 2: Cut the dowel

Begin by cutting the dowel into four equal length pieces. Notice that I didn't say 12" pieces. This is because I have not seen a 48" dowel that was actually 48" long in recent years.



**Step 3: Cut the lattice**

Cut the 2" lattice into 24" pieces. You'll need ten of them. I suggest trimming the whole stack to make sure they are all of equal length. Be very careful doing this. I used a chop saw and clamped the whole stack to the fence to keep it from shifting. You'll need two 24" pieces of the 1" lattice too.



#### Step 4: Sand the ends

Sand the ends of the dowels and planks.



#### Step 5: Burn the nylon belt

Cut two 24" pieces of nylon web belt and burn the ends with a lighter to keep it from fraying. This is a handy tip when working with nylon cloth too.





### Step 6: Line up the planks

Line up the planks using a scrap of the lattice as a spacer to make sure they are spaced evenly. If one side is nicer than the other, place the nicer side down at this point because we are looking at the bottom.



### Step 7: Staple the belt to the planks

Make sure the staples are shorter than the thickness of the wood and staple. My stapler isn't very strong so I had to assist it a little...with a hammer. Also pay attention to the surface you are working on because when I tapped the staples with the hammer it marred the other side a little.



### Step 8: Continue installing planks

Continue installing planks making sure to move your spacers and keep the web belting pulled snug.



### Step 9: Drill some holes

Lay the 1" planks across the table top and drill 1/4" holes in the corners. These 1" planks are spreaders to keep the nylon web belting taut. Enlarge the holes in the tabletop to receive the square head of the carriage bolts.



**Step 10: Install the spreaders**

The table top should look something like this.





### Step 11: Make the legs

Using a straight edge and a scribe, mark one end of each dowel in the center. Clamp the dowel into a vise and drill a 5/16" hole 1" deep into the end. Note the cardboard wrapped around the wood to protect it from the vise jaws.

**DO NOT HOLD THE WOOD IN YOUR HAND WHILE DRILLING!**

I suspect there may be a jig for this, but I didn't have one so my holes may not have been perfectly centered.







### Step 12: Install the threaded inserts

These brass threaded inserts are very delicate and difficult to install squarely. A couple of mine broke, but the inside thread was still good so I didn't have to make new ones. I suspect there's a special tool for this too.



### Step 13: Put it all together

From here, just screw the legs onto the carriage bolts and filp it over.  
When you take it apart it rolls up into a handy little bundle.  
You can apply a finish if you like. I often use olive oil or brown Kiwi Brand wax shoe polish.







## Related Instructables



**Portable Water resistant LED Picnic Blanket with hard center serving surface!**  
by pointcloud



**Camp Table for Backpacking** by hpstoutharrow



**Picnic table with detached benches** by arcandor



**Additional feet for Picnic tables** by Gareth0123



**Beach Chair Side Table (Photos)** by tony33770



**Gazpacho** by I Am An Evil Taco

## Comments

46 comments

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**robertblacksmith** says:

cool idea. a friend gave me the roll up top to a camp table he broke the legs on. i'm half way done!! lol

Oct 10, 2010. 4:03 PM [REPLY](#)



**magpie21** says:

I've been wanting to get one of those collapsable camping tables to use when I'm out with my telescope. Instead of buying one, I'll just modify the dimensions a little on this one.

May 21, 2010. 2:03 PM [REPLY](#)



**static** says:

Nice project. Scrounge up some fancy turned or tapered legs, and you maybe permitted to make camp in the upscale, uppity section of the park. :)

Jun 13, 2009. 11:20 PM [REPLY](#)



**oakspoor** says:

Stair balusters can be picked up at Lowe's or HD for a reasonable price;

[http://www.lowes.com/pd\\_118-746-CH5016\\_0\\_?productId=3050091&Ntt=baluster&Ntk=i\\_products&pl=1&currentURL=/pl\\_\\_0\\_s?Ntk=i\\_products&rpp=30&No=90&Ntt=baluster&identifier=](http://www.lowes.com/pd_118-746-CH5016_0_?productId=3050091&Ntt=baluster&Ntk=i_products&pl=1&currentURL=/pl__0_s?Ntk=i_products&rpp=30&No=90&Ntt=baluster&identifier=)

These can be trimmed to length and stained to make a very snooty leg.

May 20, 2010. 8:00 PM [REPLY](#)



**YesterdaysFish** says:

I loved this Instructable and decided to build a table of my own. I made a couple of changes to the original design. Instead of using metal hardware, I turned the legs into "bolts" using a wood threader and made nuts to keep them in place. Each leg has two nuts, one below the table's surface and bottom bar and another above it. The table is pretty stable and can be leveled at each corner, making it pretty adjustable.

Instead of using plain nylon strapping, I used some inexpensive car tie-downs. The strap's buckle hangs about 1/2" off the edge of the table. The rest of the strap is left long at the opposite edge. Doing it this way, lets me roll up the table's surface, legs and bottom bars into a secure, self contained package.

For good measure, I also added some rubber tips to prevent the dowels from picking up moisture or dirt.

Thanks for the inspiration, Marsh. My wife and I love this thing!

Oct 16, 2009. 6:33 AM [REPLY](#)



**yoyology** says:

That is gorgeous! Love the threaded wood.

May 20, 2010. 8:07 AM [REPLY](#)





**PAWZ** says:

May 20, 2010. 2:40 AM [REPLY](#)

Only yesterday I saw this aluminium one advertised to be on sale soon in Lidl, £29.99, and thought it was a great idea, and today I see yours!  
[www.lidl.co.uk/cps/rde/xchg/lidl\\_uk/hs.xsl/index\\_10993.htm](http://www.lidl.co.uk/cps/rde/xchg/lidl_uk/hs.xsl/index_10993.htm)  
It wont be there long so I'll add the pics too.

As I read this I cant help notice that next to me is a dismantled shelving unit, that has been lying in wait for me to make use of, and is already made up of lattice planks, perfect for this job, which means I'm already half done :-D Hooray!  
Great instructable :-)



**jlwaf123** says:

Aug 30, 2009. 4:30 PM [REPLY](#)

Looking for hardwood lattice? I just bought 1/4" poplar at Home Depot and then treated with exterior grade poly spray.



**Ricardo Furioso** says:

Aug 3, 2009. 12:51 PM [REPLY](#)

Can you please say where you found the hardwood lattice? Everything else seems pretty straightforward. Thanks for a nice Instructable.



**Marsh** says:

Aug 3, 2009. 7:13 PM [REPLY](#)

And cheaper.



**Marsh** says:

Aug 3, 2009. 6:03 PM [REPLY](#)

I got it at Lowe's and it was kinda' pricey. Later, we ran a workshop where we ripped down Kiln Dried Doug Fir for the lattice. Those were actually quite a bit stronger.



**kidproquo** says:

Aug 2, 2009. 8:37 PM [REPLY](#)

You should really use mineral oil. Olive oil will rot and stink. The mineral oil is also edible so you don't have to worry about eating off of the table.



**rveinot** says:

Jul 28, 2009. 10:54 AM [REPLY](#)

If you use a metal cross dowel instead of the brass insert, they are a whole lot easier to put in. Just be sure to epoxy the cross dowel in place to stay put, or maybe wrap the leg with a piece of the nylon strap to hold it in the cross hole. Cross dowels are slightly strong, too.



**browncar** says:

Jul 22, 2009. 2:42 AM [REPLY](#)

Love the project .These brass fittings are great. Where did you find them ? Are they easily available?



**Marsh** says:

Jul 22, 2009. 4:40 AM [REPLY](#)

They were at Lowes. I've since found aluminum units at Home Depot that are less expensive and screw in with an allen wrench for easier alignment.



**bettbee** says:

Jul 18, 2009. 4:00 PM [REPLY](#)


Wow. This is a DAMN fine instructable! Your table looks every bit as nice as the one on Crate and Barrel's website and I plan to make several for plein art work. Thanks!





**twinbrook** says:


Jul 9, 2009. 3:51 PM [REPLY](#)


you could actually use slats off of pallets for your lattice pieces.


 **jlwaf123** says: Jun 20, 2009. 10:19 AM [REPLY](#)  
Great project! Thanks very much. To make mine more like the Crate & Barrel original I used hanger bolts in the legs (easier to install than threaded inserts) and connector bolts on the top (using epoxy). The other advantage is there's no loose hardware (carriage bolts) to keep track of. I also put rubber feet on the bottom of the legs.


 **spaetzlemeister** says: Jun 13, 2009. 1:23 PM [REPLY](#)  
Great Idea, I need a couple of these for camping in a couple weeks!! THANKS

 **nolte919** says: Jun 12, 2009. 10:08 AM [REPLY](#)  
Crossdowels could possibly be used to attach the legs. I've never used them but I've heard they're really strong and might be easier than your threaded inserts.  
I might have to make a table like this for camping.


 **agg** says: Jun 11, 2009. 9:38 PM [REPLY](#)  
Put the proper size nut onto one carriage bolt, and run it up to about 1/2" up from the bottom end. Screw the bolt into a threaded insert until the nut bottoms out on the top of the insert. Using the appropriate wrench on the nut, this is your tool for installing the insert. I do this all of the time except that I use hex head bolts so that I can use a box end wrench.


 **srilyk** says: Jun 11, 2009. 1:16 PM [REPLY](#)  
An easy way to add strength to this (and you could do it with your existing one) is add two slats at 90 degrees to the two long support slats, so the edge is supporting the weight. If you wanted them removable you could probably hinge them and just have a few pins to keep it sturdy. I'm really looking forward to getting into a house so I can start building all these fun things!


 **Marsh** says: Jun 11, 2009. 4:45 PM [REPLY](#)  
Don't let the lack of a house keep you from small projects like this. All the wood could have been cut in the lumber isle at home depot with their miter box and saw. Also, I'm diggin' the hinged leg idea some folks have proposed which would eliminate the need for a vice.

 **bmorse14** says: Jun 11, 2009. 4:27 PM [REPLY](#)  
An easier way to thread these in is to nut and a bolt with the same thread size as the inside of the insert. Thread the nut onto the bolt first, then thread the bolt into the insert so it does not stick out the bottom. Tighten the nut up to the insert, now you can turn the bolt and it will drive the insert. If the nut slips, use two nuts jammed together up against the insert.

 **schmoopie** says: Jun 11, 2009. 1:44 PM [REPLY](#)  
Definately a must do!


 **jwpq49** says: Jun 11, 2009. 1:18 PM [REPLY](#)  
What great instructions. I think I'll have to build one this weekend. I think it'll be perfect for all those times I'm at the beach, park, camping, etc and wish i had a table... Thanks!

 **bluetonesblue** says: Jun 11, 2009. 12:22 PM [REPLY](#)  
I have seen these tables before & thought they were a great idea. Seeing how easy they are to construct, I think I've found my 1st "Constructable-Instructable". Thanx!!

 **Scubabubba** says: Jun 10, 2009. 8:14 AM [REPLY](#)  
The easiest way I've figured out to install those inserts is to use the appropriate size hex-head bolt, like so: 1) put a nut on the bolt and run the nut up close to the head. 2) run the bolt/nut combo into the insert until the bolt is just shy of protruding from the back side of the insert 3) snug up the nut on the face of the insert. Hand-tight is all you need. This locks everything down. 4) use the protruding hex head to run the insert into the wood. 5) put a wrench on the nut and another on the bolt and back the nut off the insert 6) remove the bolt/nut combo from the insert. If the nut spins when you try to install the insert, you might try a star lock washer between the nut & the insert.

 **RichardBronosky** says: Jun 11, 2009. 11:11 AM [REPLY](#)  
Beat me to it. You are exactly correct. They shouldn't even put the slit in those things. They don't put self destruct buttons on other hardware, why do it to these? ;-)

 **Marsh** says: Jun 10, 2009. 4:43 PM [REPLY](#)  
Thanks for the tip. I like the deep socket idea.

 **Scubabubba** says: Jun 10, 2009. 8:25 AM [REPLY](#)  
If you've got a deep socket, you can use that to grab both the bolt head & nut at the same time and you won't have to fool with tightening it or using the star washer. Don't try it with just a bolt, if it jams it'll pull the insert out when you try to back it out.



**Scubabubba** says:

I forgot to say what a great project that is! I've got a bunch of recycled futon slats that I'm going to try it with.

Jun 10, 2009. 8:21 AM [REPLY](#)



**magnoliasouth** says:

Hot dog!!!! This is, for me, THE BEST tutorial in instructables history! I love, love, LOVE this idea! To top it all off, we're getting ready to take a long road trip and this is so cool that we could actually do this. I wonder if we could install hinges for the dowels and then fold the whole thing up, using a velcro fastener as dbm58 suggested. There are SO many possibilities!

Jun 11, 2009. 10:09 AM [REPLY](#)



**i8nite** says:

The problem with this site is you see so much you'd like to try, this one is going into my MUST do file. I attend a local artwalk 5 or 6x a yr and the card tables I use are bulky and not actually light so this could be the perfect answer! Using a slightly stronger piece of wood as the supports shouldnt add that much weight...see the ideas are already churning!

Jun 11, 2009. 9:33 AM [REPLY](#)



**cybele0** says:

What an awesome idea, and what a perfect gift for those summer gift occasions. I could totally see making a carrier out of recycled denim or something. Very nice indeed.

Jun 11, 2009. 8:13 AM [REPLY](#)



**sueL2** says:

Brilliant. A separate carry strap is better than leaving long pieces attached and trailing. Too conducive to accidents

Jun 11, 2009. 8:09 AM [REPLY](#)



**dbm58** says:

What if you made the nylon strap long enough, you could use it to wrap, bundle the table up including the legs. Maybe even put velcro on the end of the strap.

Jun 11, 2009. 4:50 AM [REPLY](#)



**falecf4** says:

You could even make this completely self contained where the legs fold in and the whole thing rolls up. Plus if you did the strapping right it could hold it all together and be a handle!

Jun 10, 2009. 4:55 PM [REPLY](#)



**omnibot** says:

Cool! I was just thinking about how to do something like this for our engagement-party. Thanks

Jun 10, 2009. 10:15 AM [REPLY](#)



**ReCreate** says:

It looks Pretty Weak, How Much Weight can you Put on it until it goes Unstable?

Jun 9, 2009. 12:22 PM [REPLY](#)



**Marsh** says:

It's only good for a few bottles of wine, some glasses and a plate of snacks. Sitting on it or falling on it would definitely break it. But it only weighs about 2 pounds. It could be built much stronger, but the weight would suffer and we tote in to the park on our tandem bike.

Jun 9, 2009. 5:17 PM [REPLY](#)



**ReCreate** says:

Oh,OK Thanks!

Jun 9, 2009. 5:38 PM [REPLY](#)



**valamas** says:

Excellent! I need to make one of these to save space at home for when we have a BBQ. Since it will be for home, I will not use the belt but instead will use the side supporting struts and screw them in permanently. For extra strength, I will use thicker, square legs. The whole unit will collapse down and can hide behind a door.

Jun 9, 2009. 4:50 PM [REPLY](#)



**dpringle** says:

This is a very well-described project. Nice piece. I may have to build this one!

Jun 9, 2009. 12:45 PM [REPLY](#)



**theRIAA** says:

great idea. I saw my friend had something like this for camping too.

Jun 9, 2009. 12:29 PM [REPLY](#)



**bumpus** says:

What an awesome idea! Excellent instructable!

Jun 9, 2009. 10:15 AM [REPLY](#)