

B.Y.O. Stupid-Simple Slat Crib

Build a fully-functional, no-frills crib over the course of a few weekends. No woodworking experience required. Lessons learned, practical advice, and hand-holding for the first-time builder. Fully illustrated, with real pictures.

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	3
What You'll Need	4
Tools.....	4
Materials	5
Crib Nomenclature.....	8
Bill of Materials / Cuts.....	9
Make the Cuts	11
Bevel/Edge the Rails and Slats	12
Drill the Slats for Dowel-Pinning	13
Drill the Rails for Dowel-Pinning	14
Assemble the Sides	16
Wood Filler in any Slat Gaps	18
Sand it All	18
Attach the Posts to the Short Sides	20
Make your Tetris "L's"	21
Measure Your Doors	22
Complete the Main Structure with Rail-to-Post Glue Joints.....	23
Tap 'N' Screw the Posts to the Rails.....	25
Cut, Hand-Fit, and Attach the Rocker Panels.....	27
Install the Mattress Support System.....	28

Foreword

It was around Thanksgiving of 2012 when my wife and I found out that we were expecting our firstborn child. Once the initial shock wore off, a persistent desire grew into an obsession – “I will design and build a crib.” I got the distinct impression that this would be received as a huge, romantic gesture among those that knew me, and my name would go down in history as the manliest, most capable man amongst the fathers in our friend group. Prior woodworking experience be damned – “How hard could it be?”

What resulted was a project that consumed many weekends of my 2012 Winter and 2013 Spring, and threatened to expose me as the overzealous, overconfident father-to-be that I truly was. I did manage to complete the crib in time for Paul Thomas McHenry to be born (barely), and I still get my ego stroked every time someone compliments my build – but I really want to be clear about a few things before we get started.

If you're here because you think it'll be cheaper to build a crib than to buy one, write the purchase of this set of instructions off as a loss and go shop on Craigslist. I can't tell you how many cheap (\$20), functional, and perfectly suitable cribs I saw in my travels the moment my crib was complete. This project is going to cost about as much as a perfectly new crib from a department store, especially if you don't already have a few tools in your shop. But we'll get to that. Bottom line – if you're here to save massive amounts of money, this is where we part ways.

If you have an aversion to getting sweaty, covered in sawdust, or otherwise dirty, you've picked the wrong project to get started on. I completely underestimated the 'elbow grease factor involved here. If you have a power sander, that's fine, but if not, you're going to be scraping sawdust out from underneath your fingernails for weeks to come.

If you're here because you think that this is going to be easy, you're kind of right, and kind of wrong. I'm putting this set of plans out there because knowing what I know now, I probably could have saved a lot of time and trouble. Those insights I'll be demarking in a clever way, **bold and underlined text**. But there is still a lot of work involved, and you're best off assuming that this project is going to require all of your wits, all of your mental stamina, all of your patience. Just like fatherhood, I'm finding out. But! You can totally do this, and I'm going to walk you through it.

If you're searching for plans for a crib that converts into a bed, or has cup-holders, or makes you coffee, you've chosen the wrong set. It's not a special design. It doesn't do tricks, it doesn't convert into a bed, it doesn't do anything more or less than the same thing that wooden cribs have done for as long as wooden cribs have been around. I wasn't ever in the market for a crib like that so I didn't build one. I wanted something simple, timeless, and, most important of all, **easy to build. ←SERIOUSLY.**

Before I got started, I had mental images of myself in the basement, wearing a wife-beater, listening to Led Zeppelin, creating by hand the bed that my son would eventually sleep in. It was such a badass daydream. But it was only a daydream. Before I knew it, I was up to my ankles in sawdust, frustrated, screwing up, and cursing. By the grace of God, I was able to complete the project and only I know the places where little mistakes are forever hidden by paint and glueings. But let me tell you, the first time I saw my son asleep in the crib that I'd built for him with my own two hands – it was all worth it.

This isn't a project that anyone's going to thank you for (yet), but there is an undeniable satisfaction that comes from knowing that you built the bed that your child now occupies. I wish you the best of luck in this project, and I hope that the satisfaction that I experience each time I put my son to bed is a feeling that you come to know.

Warmest Regards,

Mike McHenry