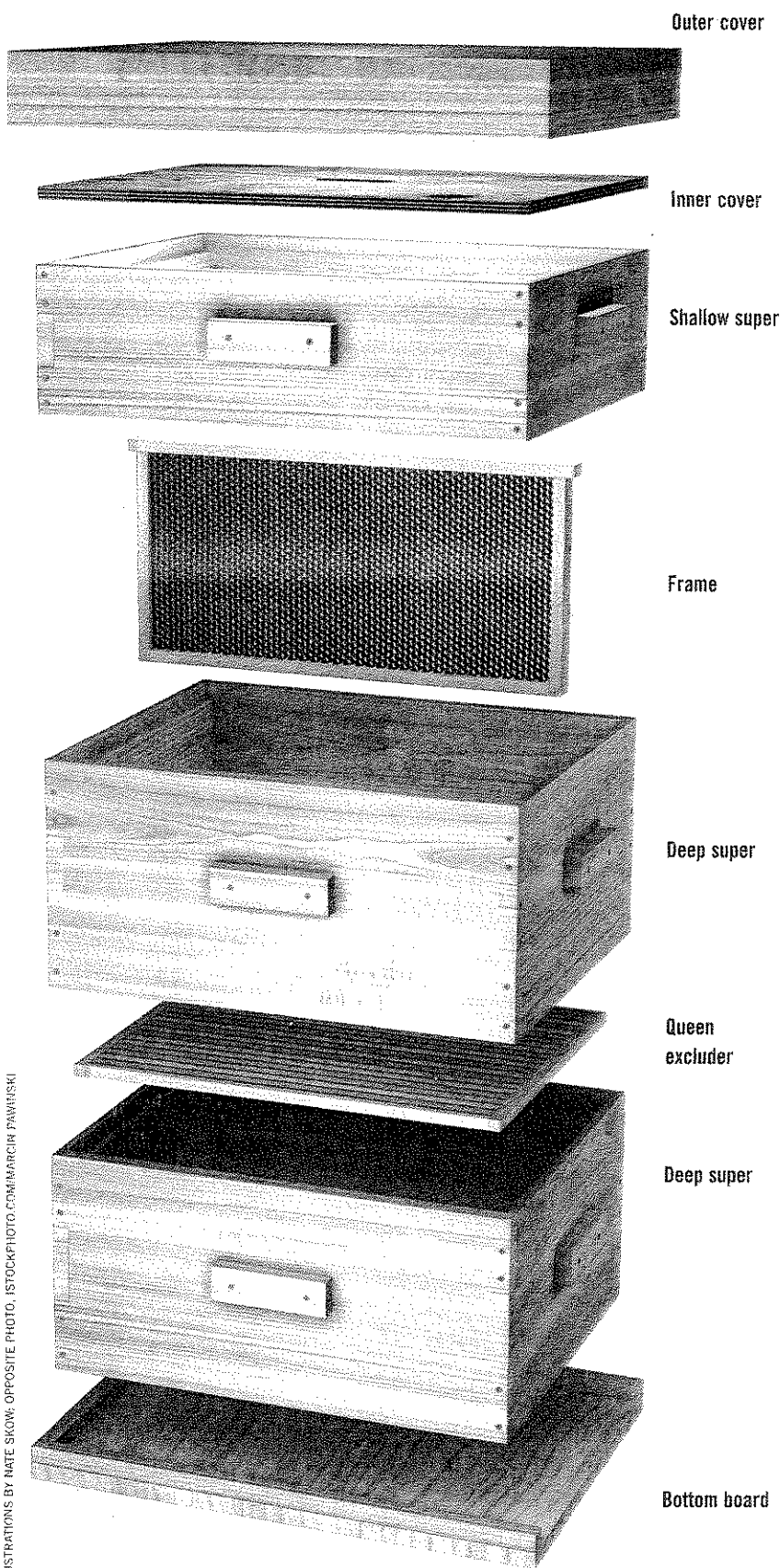


Create your own bee condo and save money in the process.

By KEITH RAWLINSON

Keeping bees is a good, sure way to put some extra money in your pocket, pollinate your crops, and stock your pantry with honey. While you can purchase all the equipment you'll need to begin keeping bees, hands-on folks may prefer to build their own hives. Not only will this save you some cash, it'll also give you an understanding of the inner workings of the place your bees will call home. (See diagrams of the supers and covers, and bottom board, at right.)

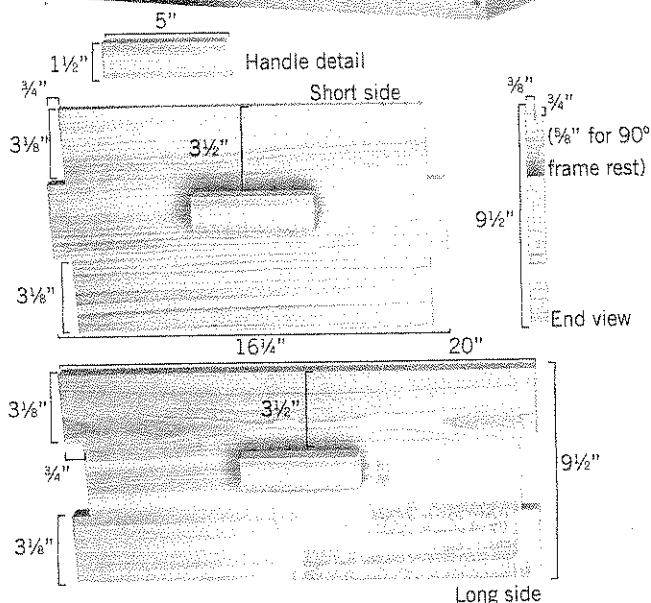
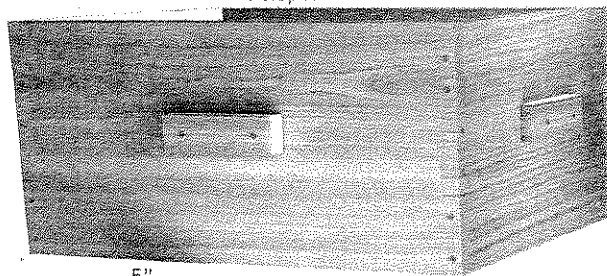
- All items within this set of plans are built with $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch boards and plywood. The type of wood is really not all that important, so I generally use the cheapest I can find, as long as the wood is solid and without cracks.
- It is extremely important to make sure all eight corners of each super are matched up before driving any nails. After glue is applied and the joints are slipped together, match up each corner, one by one, and drive in the nail closest to the matched corner to hold it in place while you nail the remainder of the joint. This is especially necessary if working with slightly warped or cupped boards. Straight boards are generally no problem.
- When nailing the top corners of the supers, be sure to place the corner nail down low enough so that it does not go into the rabbet joint instead of the wood itself.
- Remember, it is always a good idea to use plenty of waterproof wood glue when assembling beekeeping equipment. It's better to use too much rather than too little; you can always wipe off the excess, so be generous!
- The deep and shallow supers are put together with what I call a "tab joint"



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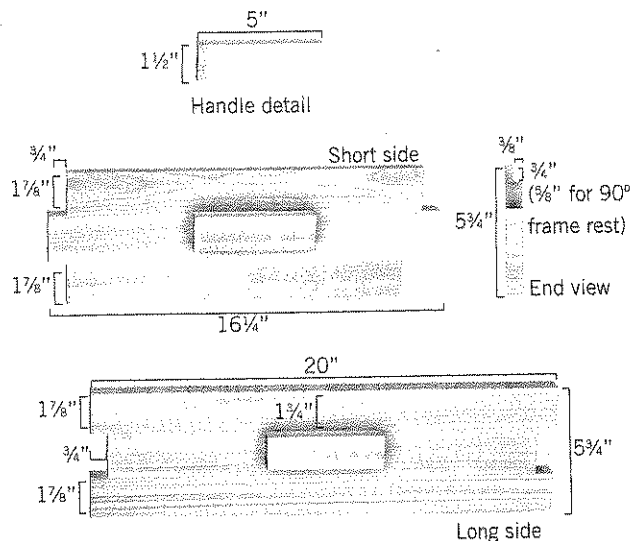
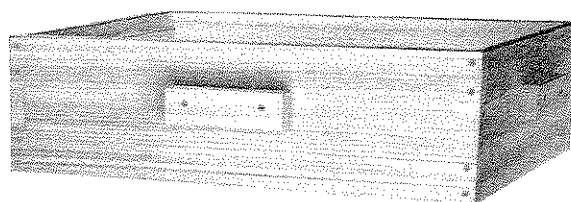
Deep super

Perspective view

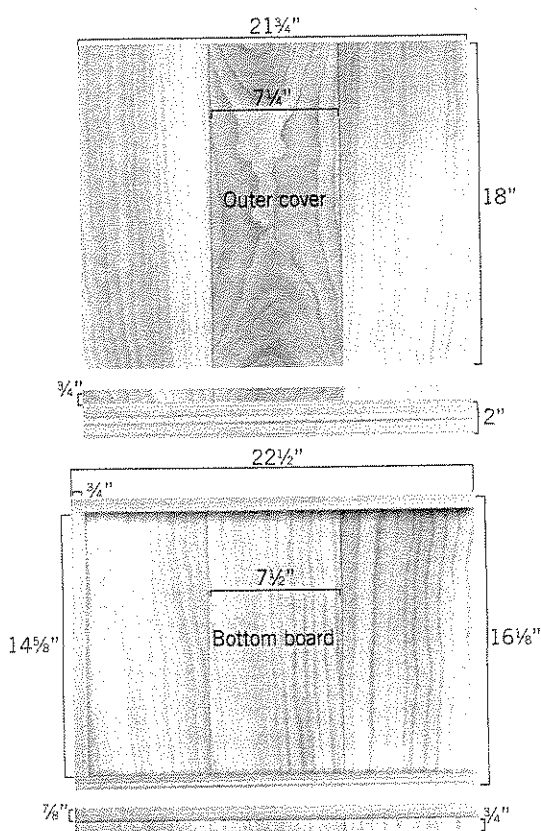


Shallow super

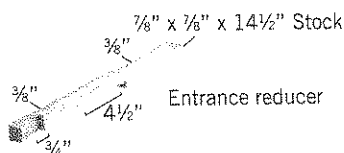
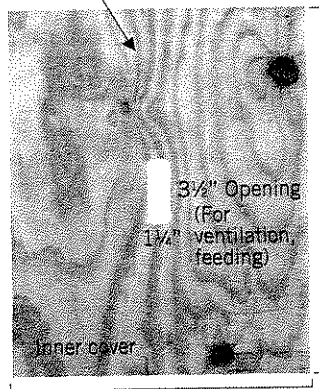
Perspective view



Covers and Bottom Board



1/2" Plywood



Fold thin aluminum or galvanized metal over top of outer cover and 1 inch down sides for weatherproofing. All material is 3/4" pine, except inner cover, which is 1/2" plywood. Assemble bottom board with nails only, no glue.

All material is 3/4" pine. Glue all joints and nail as shown in perspective. Pre-drill all nail holes to prevent splitting. Make four handles, one for each side. Assemble with waterproof wood glue and 4D 1 1/2" box nails. Install kick-up frame rests in rabbets of both short sides if using 3/4" rabbet. Otherwise, use 90-degree rests.

(really a modified box joint). It's nearly as strong as the finger joints used on commercially made equipment, but is much easier to make and requires no special tools.

- It may appear at first glance that some of the dimensions are not called out in the plans. However, any that are not directly marked can be calculated from those that are.
- Paint the equipment with exterior latex paint. White is the most common since a light-colored hive tends to stay cooler during summer. Spend the extra money and get a high-quality paint. It'll pay you back in longevity of the equipment. Apply at least two coats, preferably three or four.
- You can shield the outer cover with some sort of sheet metal if you wish, but with adequate paint, the extra covering becomes optional.

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