



# Puzzle table

Once you've read this article it should all fall neatly into place...

Several weeks ago, a friend of mine, knowing my obsession with all things wood, said: 'I have a puzzle table I think you'd like.' As a child growing up we were constantly doing jigsaw puzzles and it generally involved taking over the kitchen table for several days and having to eat in the living room. So, I was expecting a table that could in some way be used to hold a puzzle or even store a puzzle. 'Are you interested in seeing it?' she asked. 'Yes, why not?'

Several days later I was presented with a wine box containing pieces of very old, well-loved pine wood. Once the pieces were unpacked it was clear to see that these were five parts of a

table – the puzzle was in putting it together. I just had to make one.

In this short article I am going to diverge from my usual in-depth project and simply give you some clues and diagrams to create your very own puzzle table.

I only had the table for a couple of days so I quickly made a template using 6mm MDF.

I used two pieces of construction lumber 304mm x 32mm x 2438mm

Some of the curious aspects of the design were the semi-circle 'scooped' areas at the foot of each tenon – I surmised this was to allow the two top sections to seat firmly and create a closer fit. When I made the first

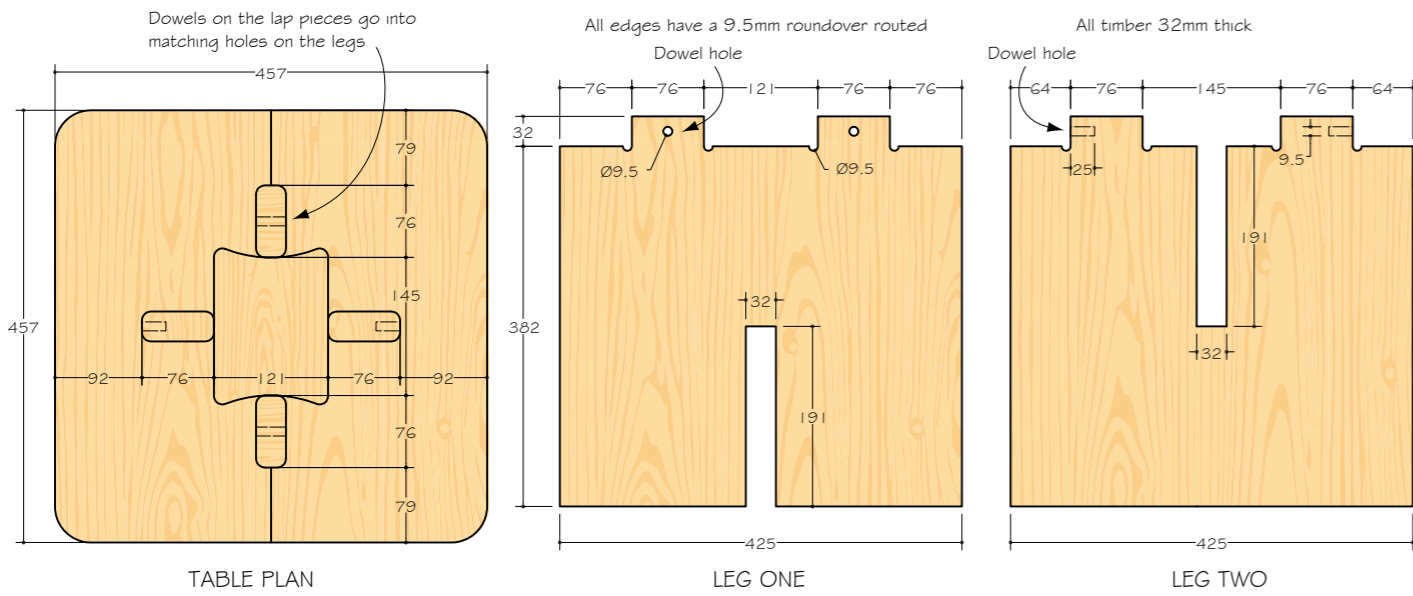
prototype, I did not include these and found that they were indeed essential.

Care needs to be taken when placing the pins so that they align in the correct location. Of course, you could make this puzzle table doubly hard by having them in slightly different locations.

The lap joint – make sure that this is just slightly wider than the thickness of the wood.

This is a fun project and can be adapted in a variety of ways. Experiment with the leg design.

It would be so easy to adapt this to a larger scale and make a stowable dining table for a small flat or tiny house – the possibilities are endless. ►



**1** First the pine boards were run down to 32mm final thickness.



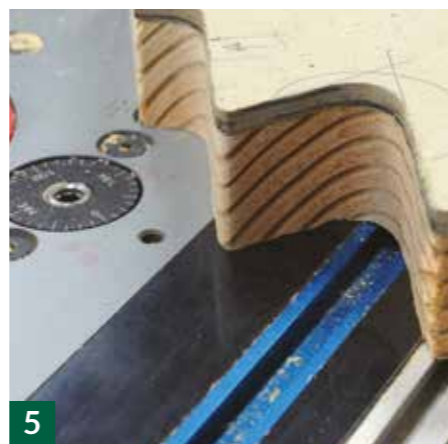
**2** The glued-up boards for the legs – the top is in two halves.



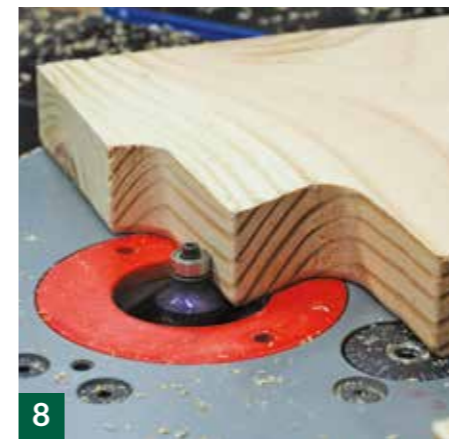
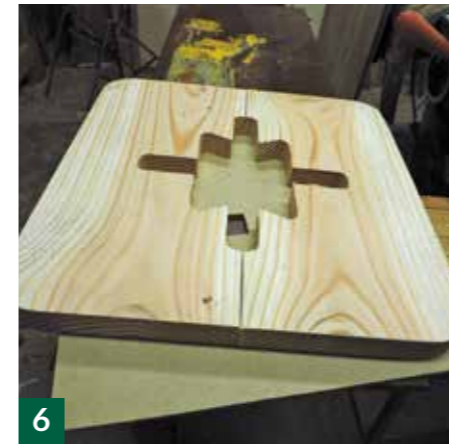
**3** The shape of the two puzzle table-top halves marked out.



**4** The table-top halves were cut out on the bandsaw template routed.



**5** The finished edge with distinctive grain evident ready to round over.



**6** How the top will look – the cut-out will accept the cross-leg pieces.

**7** The template for the centrepiece of the puzzle, which will need to be a good fit.

**8** Using a roundover cutter to soften the edges and make it easier to assemble.

**9** The workshop dog thinks it is all a bit of a puzzle...

**10** The legs are halved over each other, then the whole assembly can be checked.

**11** Dowels are glued into the opposite halves of the top.

**12** The dowels are received in holes drilled in the cross-leg.

**13** Note the scoop out at the foot of the tenon, which helps it all fit together easily.

**14** The finished table now ready to be separated and give someone a chance to put it back together again. ■

