

Enrichment Mobile

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Description

Here we have a really fun project that I've just completed, a hanging enrichment mobile! This relatively simple enrichment device will be great for not only felines and agile carnivores but I can also see this being a hit with our antlered animals as well! This enrichment mobile is simply build out of 4"x4" posts that are secured in a cross configuration and hung from a high point, then there's 5 lengths of fire hose hanging down for the animal to fight and play with. It's up to you what you want to hang from this mobile but I chose to leave it bare as a test run! We also use a carpentry joint

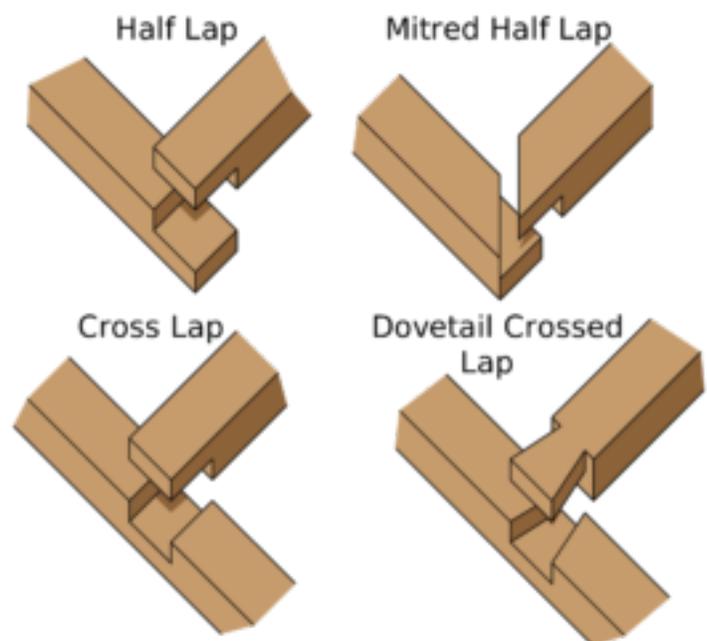
called a Lap Joint in this project which can be very useful in providing a very strong joint for many carpentry projects.

Building Materials

- 1, 8 foot 4"x4" post
- Fire hose
- Eye Bolt with nut and washer
- Steel Cable and cable clamps
- Screws
- Drill and Drill bits
- Circular Saw
- Hammer
- Knife
- Tape measure

Building Steps

1. First you are going to start by cutting your post in half leaving you with 2, 4" posts.
2. We are now going to start making what's called a "Cross Lap Joint" Which is basically cutting half way through 2 pieces of wood and putting them together to form a strong joint. I've attached a diagram here with a few variations of this joint that you can try in the future.



3. To Start you want to line up your posts side by side and measure the width of these posts (4"x4" are usually about 3 and a half inches wide). Then in the centre of the post draw a line on each post on either side of this measurement. It will help if you have a way of securing these posts together so they don't move while you are cutting. You then want to set your blade height of your circular saw to half the width of the post and begin cutting all of the wood in between your two lines out. You won't be able to make it clear, instead you should aim to cut enough so the wood pieces are thin enough for you to break off after your done cutting.



4. Once your pieces look like the pieces in the picture above, you can then begin to knock all of the excess wood out of the joint using a hammer, and then carefully with a knife or a chisel clear out all the remaining strips of wood at the bottom until the piece is clear and clean.

5. Once the joint is clear you can then put the pieces together by slotting the joints together and securing with screws on either side.



6. Once the joint is secure and not moving, you can then drill a hole large enough for an eye bolt to fit through and secure that with a washer and a bolt.

7. You can now secure steel cable to the eye bolt with the cable clamps at the height that you desire for the area this will be placed. This completes the frame of the enrichment mobile!
8. You are now ready to secure your fire hose to the mobile. This can be done easily with screws by wrapping the hose around the 4"x4" posts and screwing them in place with about 8 screws per length of hose. I cut my hose to about 7 feet in length.

Tips/ Comments

This was a really fun and unique enrichment mobile that will be perfect to allow those agile carnivores and ungulates lots of play. It's also nice because you can easily change what you are hanging from the mobile and change the fire hose out for various toys and substrates.

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