



Thank You!

You have successfully downloaded your document from Workbenchmagazine.com. Below are some tips for Trouble-Free Printing

- 1)** Clear printer memory. If you are unable to print this document, turn off your printer for at least 15 seconds and try again.

- 2)** Print two or three pages at a time. If clearing the printer memory didn't help, try printing only two or three pages at one time, rather than sending the entire file

- 3)** If a document is required to be at an accurate scale set the page scaling option to "none" in your printer settings.

- 4)** Get advanced printer help. Visit Adobe Support for instructions in troubleshooting common printer problems.

<http://www.adobe.com/support/techdocs/316508.html>

SIMPLE TIPS FOR

Cutting Sheet Goods

The biggest challenge when working with heavy sheet goods like plywood and MDF is cutting them. These tips and tricks make it easy.

Materials such as MDF, particleboard, and plywood — commonly known as “sheet goods” because they’re produced in large 4-ft. x 8-ft. sheets — have become the materials of choice for building cabinets and built-ins. (The storage lockers on page 42, for example, are built using MDF and plywood.) Sheet goods make sense because they allow you to create large panels that are flat and stable, and they greatly simplify project joinery and assembly.

For all their advantages, though, sheet goods have a big drawback. Their large size makes the sheets heavy and awkward to handle: A sheet of $\frac{3}{4}$ "-thick MDF weighs about 100 pounds. So moving sheets around and cutting them up can be challenging.

But you can get great results without a table saw or a fancy workshop, and without having to heft the sheets around. All you need are a circular saw, a saw guide, a jig saw, and a few measuring and marking tools, along with these simple tricks and tips.



CREATE A CUTTING BOARD

Rather than cutting sheets on sawhorses, simply lay a sheet of 2"-thick foam insulation on the ground, and then lay the sheet to be cut onto the foam. The foam supports the sheet and the cutoff as you make your cuts (*Photo, right*). Set the saw so the blade cuts about $\frac{1}{4}$ " into the foam. You can reuse the foam many times.

USE AN EDGE GUIDE

The easiest way to keep a circular saw tracking straight is to use an edge guide (*Photo, right*). We bought this one, made by Swanson Tool Company, at Lowe's for less than \$20. It has two 50"-long sections and comes with clamps. You can use each section alone when cutting across a sheet, or join them to cut a sheet lengthwise.



TAG TEAM CURVES

If you need to make a cut that starts straight and then curves (such as when shaping the sides of the storage lockers), use both a circular saw and jig saw. First, make the straight cut with the circular saw, stopping the saw before the curve (*Photo, far left*). Let the saw stop, and then lift it off the sheet. Now lower the jig saw blade into the cut, and complete the curved portion (*Photo, near left*).

GET THE CORRECT GEAR

Along with a straightedge, you'll need several simple tools to ensure precise layouts and smooth cuts in sheet goods. A tape measure, framing square, compass, and a pencil handle the layout. To make sure the cut is smooth, use a blade made for cutting sheet goods. The 40-tooth carbide-tipped blade shown hereworks great, yet sells for less than \$20.

