

Step #1: Measure, Mark and Cut

Rule #1: Measure twice, cut once! There's nothing worse than cutting a \$40 piece of oak plywood and then realizing you have ruined it by cutting in to the wrong dimensions!

Rule #2: Take your time! The better these cuts are done the less time you will spend sanding, and it will also affect the final results of your table.

Rule #3: Sand, sand and sand some more. If you don't like to sand wood, don't bother attempting a project like this!

Rule #4: Every section cut should be pencil marked on both pieces to be able to align the two sections up again when assembling the final construction.



Two sheets of 3/4" plywood were used to construct this table. One sheet of standard pine plywood (about \$20) and one sheet of sanded Oak (about \$40) - both cut to 4'x4' and purchased at The Home Depot. To get the right measurements the [Octagon Layout Calculator](http://www.members.cox.net/ultimate_poker_table_top/Octagon%20Layout%20Calculator.html) was used.

www.members.cox.net/ultimate_poker_table_top/Octagon%20Layout%20Calculator.html.

Lines were drawn in pencil on both sheets of wood cutting them into the same dimensions.

Step #1: Measure, Mark and Cut (continued)



This is the sheet of oak cut into the initial octagon. This sheet will become three parts of the table: racetrack, rim of the padded rail and playing surface.

Step #1: Measure, Mark and Cut (continued)



Cut a 1-1/2" rail off of the oak sheet to be used as the lip of the padded rail. Be sure to mark the two pieces - this will make it much easier to attach the two sections later.

Step #1: Measure, Mark and Cut (continued)



This is the sheet of standard pine plywood, cut into the initial octagon and then has a 4" rail cut from the outside edge. The 1 1/2" rail from the image above will be attached to the 4" piece and be used to construct the padded rail. The center section that remains will be used as the base of the table.

Step #1: Measure, Mark and Cut (continued)



This is the oak piece again. First it was cut into the initial octagon and then a 1-1/2" rim was cut off to be used for the padded rail. In this picture another outside cut is made to create the racetrack, leaving what will be the playing surface in the middle. The racetrack for this table was cut to be 8". Half will be covered by the padded rail, and the other 4 inches will be finished as the visible racetrack. Be sure to mark the two pieces - this will make it much easier to attach the two sections later.

Step #1: Measure, Mark and Cut (continued)



Here are all the cuts in one image. On the left is the pine sheet of plywood. It is cut into the initial octagon and then a 4" rail is cut from the outside edge (the rail can be seen behind the center section). The 4" rail will be used in the construction of the padded rail and the center section will be the bottom layer or base of the finished table.

On the right side are the three sections of the oak sheet. First cut into the initial octagon, and then (starting from the back) is the 1-1/2" rail cut from the outermost portion of the initial octagon. The middle section pictured will be used for the racetrack and the small octagon in the front will become the playing surface.

Reminder: Be sure to mark all the pieces you cut - this will make it much easier to attach the two sections later.

Step #2: Building the Rail

Constructing the padded rail is easier than most people think, but doing it properly is extremely important to the final appearance of your table. Some of the keys to doing this right are:

1. Take your time.
2. Pull the vinyl really tight.
3. Use once piece of foam, rather than fitting sections of foam together.



The first step in constructing the padded rail is to attach the 1-1/2" outer rim cut from the sheet of oak to the 4" rail cut from the sheet of pine. These sections can be glued together with wood glue, and/or screed together with sheetrock screws.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



Close up of the two attached sections. While these cuts come from two different sheets of plywood align them up as best as possible.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



Place the attached sections on top of the sheet of 1" high density foam as pictured, and mark where it should be cut to fit the rail. Scissors will usually do the job cutting the foam, but many builders recommend using an electric carving knife. Cut the foam to wrap around three sides of the rail, but not onto the side facing up in the photograph. The inside of the lip, and the facing portion of the rail will need to fit back together with the racetrack, so you don't want any foam and the minimal amount of vinyl to cover that area. Use spray adhesive to help secure the foam to the rail and give it few minutes to dry.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



Lay the attached foam and rail piece on top of the sheet of vinyl. Outline and cut just as was done in preparing the sheet of foam. Begin wrapping the rail by stapling the outer portion to the top of the lip of the rail. Pull the vinyl as tight as possible.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



A close up on the outer section being wrapped. While pulling tight, be sure to observe how consistent each section is. This is critical in creating a smooth looking rail. Take your time, and work through all the wrinkles and ripples and it will pay off later!

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



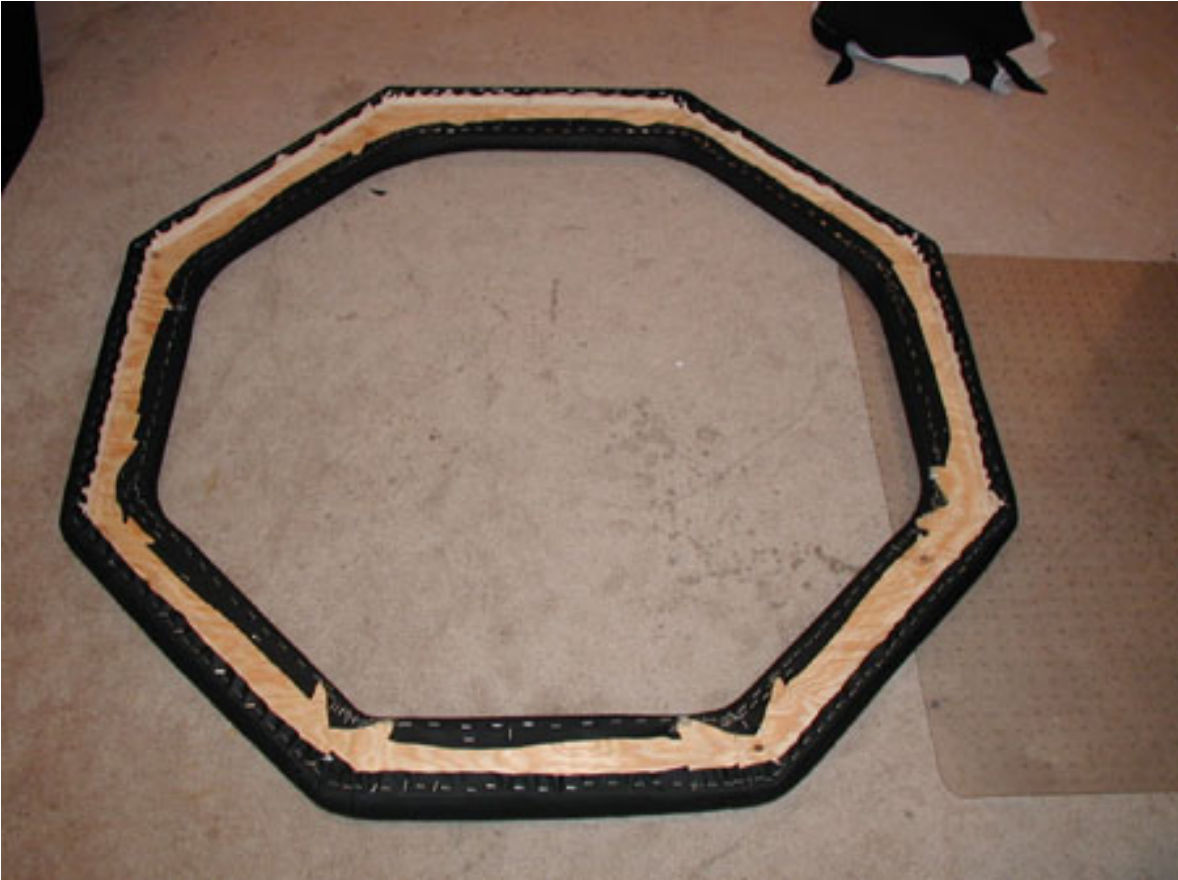
Carefully slice the inside sections as pictured to help wrap the corner sections without creating wrinkles.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



Begin wrapping the inside section of the padded rail. Pull tight, and be liberal in the use of staples. It is important that the vinyl is well secured.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



Trim all the excess vinyl you possibly can. As mentioned earlier any vinyl that overlaps the inside of the rail will make it more difficult to fit the rail onto the racetrack later during the final assembly of the table.

Step #2: Building the Rail (continued)



Spend as much time as possible creating the rail as possible. It is one of the most visible part of the table and a smooth rail is part of what separates a great looking table from a more amateurish looking table. If you have to pull staples where you see gaps, wrinkles, or uneven section, do so - you'll be happy you did.

Step #3: Covering the Playing Surface

Creating the playing surface is one of the easier parts of building a poker table. Select the right foam surface and cloth according to your preference.



Lay the center insert section (the inner most section of the oak sheet of plywood) on top of the 1/4" high density closed cell foam and trace the outline. Cut to fit the very top of the playing surface but not to wrap around the edges at all. Any excess may make fitting the playing surface into the racetrack more difficult. Use spray on adhesive to help secure the foam to the wood.

Step #3: Covering the Playing Surface (continued)



After the adhesive has had a few minutes to dry place the foam topped wood insert on top of the cloth being used to cover the playing surface. Cut to fit.

Step #3: Covering the Playing Surface (continued)



Pull the cloth tight, and staple. Be sure to watch for any creases or wrinkles and do your best to work those out. The playing surface can sometimes be difficult to fit back inside the racetrack so you want the minimal amount of cloth with no seams, creases or wrinkles on the sides of the insert.

Step #3: Covering the Playing Surface (continued)



The finished playing surface - looks pretty good!

Step #4: Finishing the Racetrack

Much like the padded rail the racetrack is a very visible and key element to the table. Take your time when doing the finish work on the race track. You'll be happy that you did.

A minor mistake was made when creating the table below. The holes for the drink holders should have been cut before the stain and clear coat was applied. Luckily it didn't cause a problem, but to be safe do all the cutting and sanding prior to finishing.



Two coats of Red Oak stain were applied to this table. Be sure to brush with the grain, not against it. The same should be done when applying the clear gloss coats, or finish of your preference.

Step #4: Finishing the Racetrack (continued)



On this table 8 coats of clear coat were applied. The finish was lightly sanded between each coat using fine grain sand paper. The final coats were sanded with steel wool.

Step #4: Finishing the Racetrack (continued)



The holes for the cup holders were done with a 2/23/4" hole saw that attaches to a drill.

Step #5: Final Assembly

Almost done! Hopefully you took a lot of time sanding all of the sections of wood, were careful when wrapping the padded rail and playing surface and remembered to mark each section to make it easier to assemble the finished product...



The base of the table (middle section of the sheet of plywood) is attached to the racetrack. Installing the folding table legs (\$16.99 at The Home Depot) is simple. Space them out and screw them t the base of the table.

Step #5: Final Assembly (continued)



After the legs are installed, turn the table over and fit the padded rail to the racetrack. Drop the center insert playing surface in and secure with screws, some builders use t-nuts for the playing surface to make removing it easier.

Step #5: Final Assembly (continued)



Drop in the cup holders. Braided cord was used on this table as an accent to the playing surface, and it helps to cover up any gaps between the felt and the racetrack. The cord can be secured to the playing surface with fabric glue.

Materials and Tools Lists

Below are lists of the materials and tools used in construction of the Octagon Poker Table. Several of the materials were purchased in quantities that would supply this table and the next project (a 48" Round Poker table).

Materials Used
1 - 8'x4' sheet of sanded pine plywood - \$20 The Home Depot (enough for 2 tables)
1 - 8'x4' sheet of sanded oak plywood - \$44 The Home Depot (enough for 2 tables)
2 yards of black Whisper vinyl - \$25
1 sheet 50lb 1" thick high density foam - \$22 (enough for 2 tables)
2 Yards of 1/4" closed cell foam (enough for 2 tables)
2 Yards Casino Suited cloth - \$35 (enough for 2 tables)
8 Stainless steel cup holders - \$35
1 Can Clear Gloss polyurethane The Home Depot
1 Can Red Oak Stain The Home Depot
Staples and 1 1/4" Sheetrock screws - The Home Depot
Spray adhesive and Wood glue
Sandpaper - various grains
3 Yards bask Braided Cord - \$2.50 Joann's Fabric
1 Bottle of Fabric adhesive - \$5
Folding banquet table legs - \$17 The Home Depot

Tools Used
Scrolling Jig Saw and blades
Power Drill
2 3/4" Hole saw
Palm Sander
Staple Gun
Scissors
Pencil and felt marker
Stain Brush
Foam brush for clear coat
Metal Yardstick
Tape measure

