

Back to Work

Thirty-six years ago we (your mom and I) rented an apartment in Providence and lived together for the first time. We weren't married yet, and we didn't have any furniture or any money so I started building furniture with some rudimentary hand tools. I built a platform bed and two small dressers for night stands (they're in the basement right now). I built a "wardrobe" or closet and put it in our apartment living room because we had no closet space.

The tiny kitchen had no counter space and no storage, so I built a work station (below). It has a top shelf for cookbooks, and attached under the shelf there are hooks to use for hanging up cooking utensils. Below that is a hard rock maple "butcher block" counter top that I built by gluing together 2" x 2" pieces of hard rock maple. It has a dowel on one end for hanging dish towels and below the counter top is a large utility drawer. Finally, below that, is a shelf for large pots and pans. This is a work station capable of a lot of work, and a tribute to the value of versatility.

The multitalented work station moved with us from our first apartment to our first house in Providence; but when we moved to a new house in Wakefield it was no longer needed in a modern, fully appointed kitchen, so it resided in the basement, holding miscellaneous junk in the workout area, collecting filth, and living the forgotten life. That is, until this week. I pulled it out, washed it with a solvent, sanded it down, cleaned it, and put on a new finish. I'm sending it to Boston, to start a new life (with Rachel), who has a tiny kitchen with no counter space or kitchen storage space.

Biding its time in the basement holding junk and collecting filth, patiently waiting in obscurity; thirty-six years later it's time to get back to work. (Six months later, Rachel asks, "Dad, do you know how to make a dining table?").

—Dad

