

Laundry Closet Storage Bench

Phase 1 of the closet makeover: painted white, 2x6 plank seat, laundry-basket bay and four cubbies

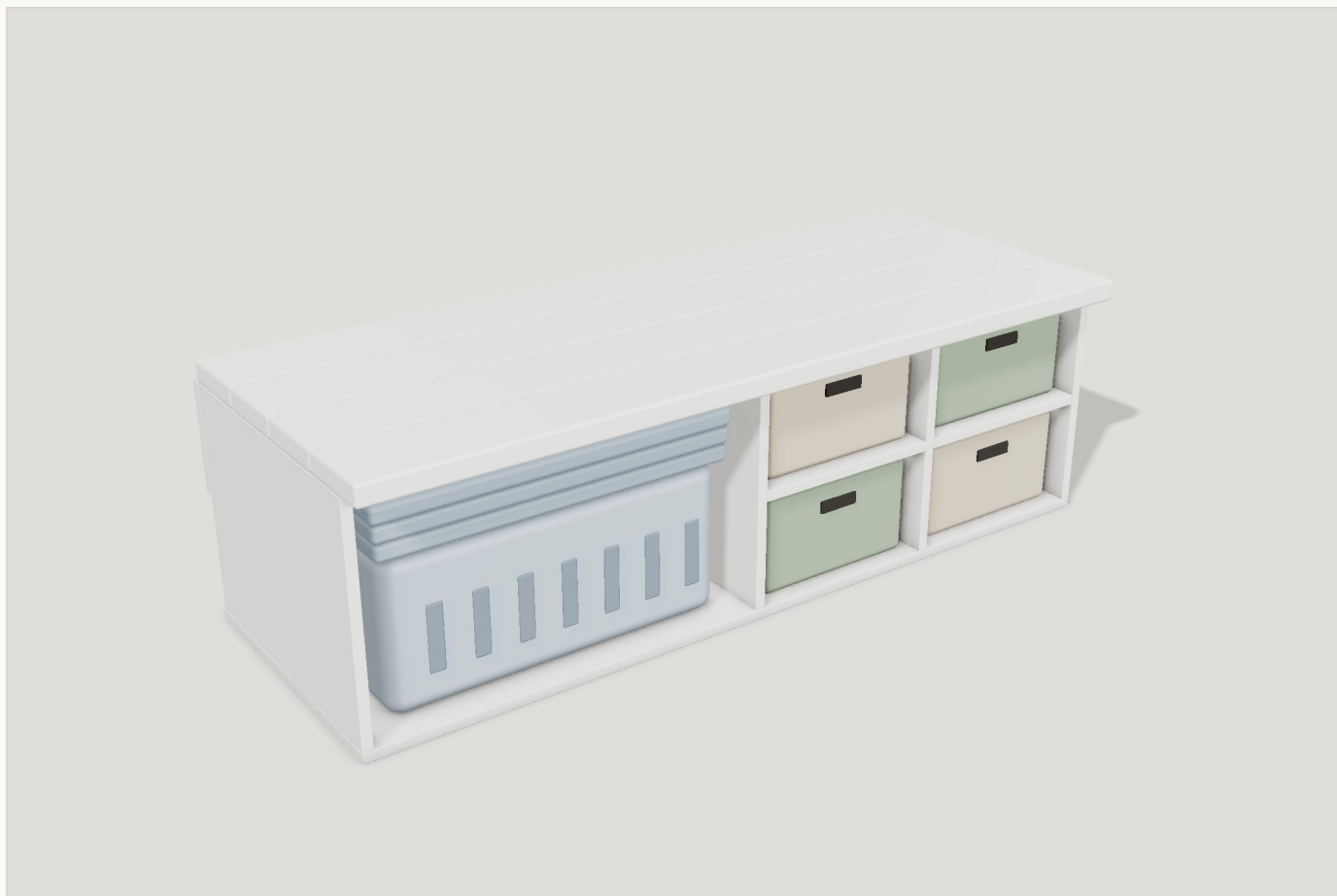


SIZE	FINISH	SEAT	MATERIAL
57 x 22-3/4 x 18 in	White semi-gloss	Four 2x6 planks	1 sheet 3/4" plywood

Built to fit the 57-3/4" closet (measured shoe moulding to shoe moulding) with about 3/8" of play per side. The left bay takes a standard laundry basket with two empties nested on top; the four cubbies on the right hold 12"-wide fabric bins or shoes. The seat is four 2x6 boards that overhang the front by 2".

Renders show the exact plan geometry; the basket, bins and room are illustrative. Plan generated with Sawhorse v1 (difficulty: moderate, score 29.3). The white finish, back rail, sheet layout, seat brackets and install steps were added on top of it.

The finished piece



What fits where

Basket bay (left)

27" wide x 15-3/4" tall x 20" deep inside - room for a standard basket with two empties nested in it.

Cubbies (right, x4)

13-1/2" wide x 7-1/2" tall x 20" deep. Fits 12" x 7" fabric bins, shoes, dryer sheets. Too short for detergent jugs.

Seat

18" high, 22" deep, four 2x6 planks. Stiff enough over the 27" bay with no extra support.

Kid-safe

No doors or lids to pinch fingers, rounded edges, and a back rail screwed into wall studs so it can't tip.

Shopping list & cut list

Item	Qty	Each	Subtotal
3/4" plywood sheet, 4' x 8' (paint grade)	1	\$58.00	\$58.00
2x6 x 10' (straight, dry; two 57" pieces each)	2	\$11.00	\$22.00
2" wood screws (case joints + back rail)	30	\$0.10	\$3.00
2-3/4" wood screws (seat into dividers + wall studs)	24	\$0.10	\$2.40
Slotted angle brackets (seat at the ends) *	8	\$1.25	\$10.00
Pan-head screws, 5/8" and 1", small box *	1	\$6.00	\$6.00
Wood glue (optional - bare-wood joints only)	1 bottle	\$6.00	\$6.00
Sandpaper, 120/220 multi-pack	1 pack	\$9.00	\$9.00
Iron-on edge banding, 3/4" (front plywood edges) *	1 roll	\$10.00	\$10.00
Wood filler (screw holes) *	1 tub	\$7.00	\$7.00
Primer, stain-blocking, quart *	1	\$18.00	\$18.00
White semi-gloss or satin enamel, gallon *	1	\$45.00	\$45.00
Estimated total			\$196.40

* = added to the Sawhorse list. Prices are rough estimates. Optional insurance: one extra 2x6 x 8' (~\$8) in case a board is bowed or a cut goes wrong. Sawhorse lists 2 plywood sheets and five 8' 2x6s because it always adds a spare.

Cut list

Bottom	x 1	57" x 20"	plywood
Sides + dividers	x 4	20" x 15-3/4"	plywood
Shelves	x 2	20" x 13-1/2"	plywood
Back rail	x 1	57" x 7-3/4"	plywood offcut
Seat boards	x 4	57" long	2x6

The one sheet: rip two 20" strips; the 7-3/4" leftover becomes the back rail

Side 15-3/4" x 20"	Side 15-3/4" x 20"	Bottom 57" x 20"		
Divider 15-3/4" x 20"	Divider 15-3/4" x 20"	Shelf	Shelf	
Back rail 57" x 7-3/4"				

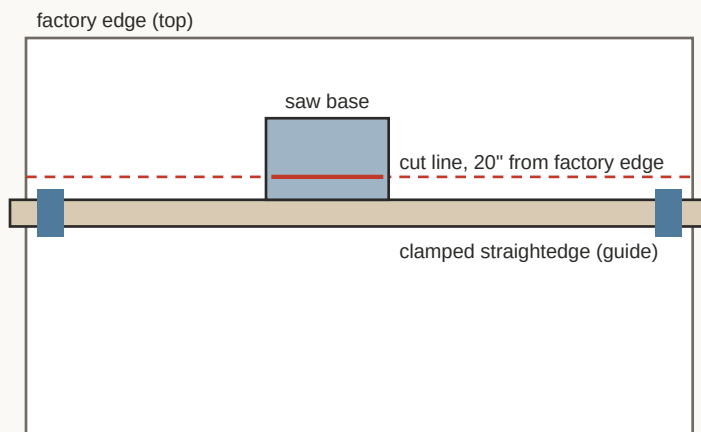
Everything comes from one sheet; the leftover 37" x 20" piece is for practice cuts. Sides and dividers sit at the same end of both strips so you can cut all four in two passes and they come out identical - see page 4.

Plan your sessions

#	Session	What	Time	Then wait
1	Shop + prime	Buy materials; prime the sheet and 2x6s (step 1)	2.5-3 hrs	Primer dry
2	Cut	Practice cuts, rips, crosscuts, 2x6s; check sizes (step 2)	2-3 hrs	-
3	Edges + first coat	Edge banding, round-overs, sanding, first white coat (step 3)	2.5-3.5 hrs	Overnight
4	Assemble	Box, shelves, seat, back rail (steps 4-7)	3-4 hrs	-
5	Fill + closet prep	Fill screw holes; pull trim, paint the wall behind (steps 8a, 9)	~1.5 hrs	Filler + wall dry
6	Final coat	Sand filler, final white coat (step 8b)	1-1.5 hrs	Cure 3-7 days
7	Install	Set it in, anchor to studs, caulk (step 10)	30-45 min	-

About 13-16 hours of hands-on time in total, spread over 7 sessions. Times assume a first project with a new circular saw - they shrink fast once you're comfortable. Closet prep (session 5) can happen any time; it's a good job for while paint or filler is drying.

Getting perfectly straight rips



Top view, not to scale. The guide clamps to the big part of the sheet, set back from the line by the offset.

Use the factory edges

Rip strip 1 at 20" from one long factory edge, then flip and rip strip 2 at 20" from the other long factory edge. Both good strips keep a perfect factory edge (put it at the front of each part); the leftover 7-3/4" middle strip becomes the back rail.

Measure the offset once

With the saw unplugged, measure from the edge of its base plate to the nearest blade tooth (turn the blade so a tooth points that way). That number, usually about 1-1/2", is how far the guide sits from every cut line. Write it on the saw.

Mark and check both ends

Mark 20" plus the offset at both ends of the sheet, clamp the guide on the marks, then measure again at both ends and the middle before you cut. Keep the blade on the waste side of the line.

Use a real straightedge

A store 2x4 or 1x4 is rarely straight. Use a clamp-on straightedge guide (about \$25-40, 8' long) or ask the store for a rip of a factory-edge plywood strip. Or have the store make the two rips and do the crosscuts at home.

Support and steady

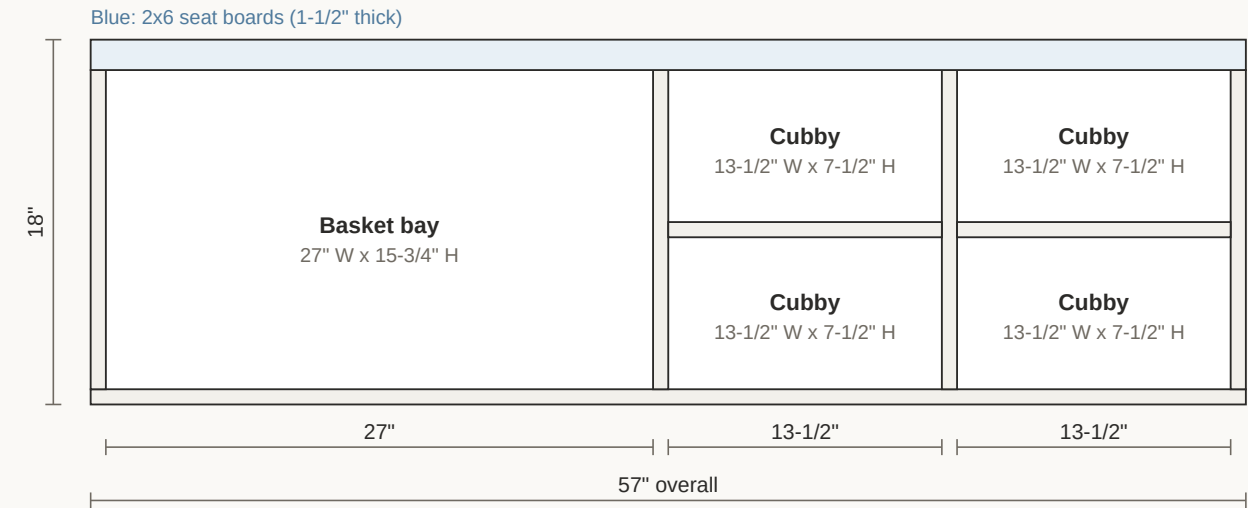
Cut on 2" foam board on the floor so nothing pinches or drops. Blade 1/4" below the wood, let it reach full speed, keep the base pressed to the guide, and push steadily without stopping mid-cut.

Gang-cut the matching parts

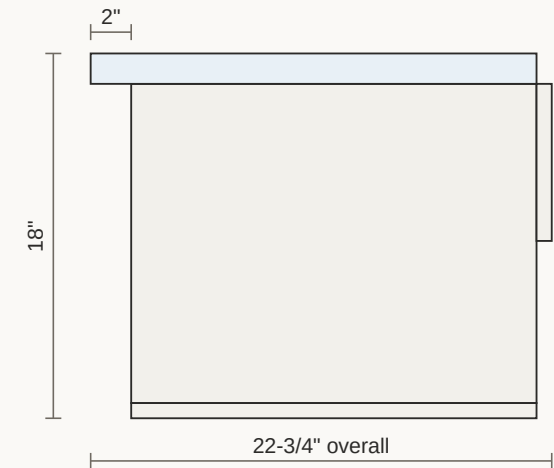
Lay strip 1 and strip 2 side by side with the ends lined up and clamp them. Crosscut both at 15-3/4" in one pass, then again for the second pair. All four sides and dividers come out exactly the same height.

Dimensions

FRONT VIEW



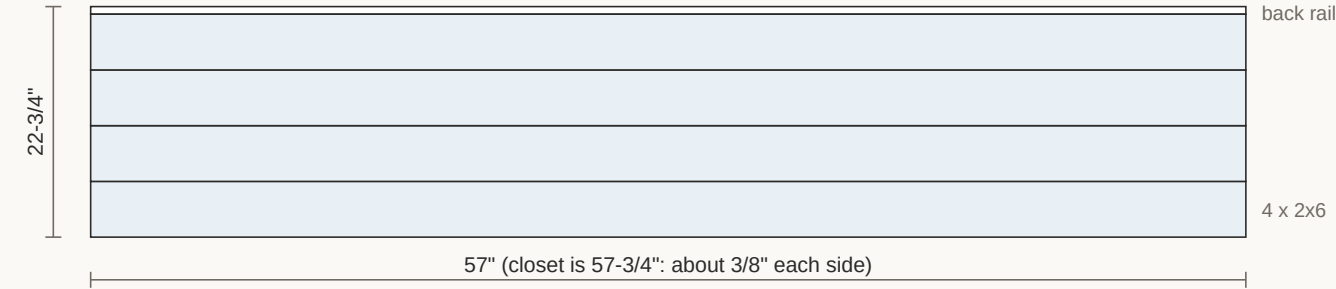
SIDE VIEW (front at left)



The seat is four 2x6s (5-1/2" each = 22"). The back board sits flush with the back of the case and the front board overhangs the front by 2".

Instead of a full back, a 57" x 7-3/4" rail screws across the back edges of the sides and dividers right under the seat. It squares the case, closes the back of the upper cubbies, and is what you screw into the wall studs. Below it the bench is open to the wall - paint that bit of wall white. Overall depth is 22-3/4", leaving about 4-1/2" of closet floor in front.

TOP VIEW (front at bottom)



Prep, cut & paint the parts

STEP 1 | ~1 hr + 2 hrs drying

Prime the sheet and the 2x6s

Lay the plywood sheet good-face-up on sawhorses or the garage floor and roll on stain-blocking primer; do both faces of the 2x6s too. Priming one big flat sheet is much faster than priming a dozen parts later, and the primer seals pine knots so they don't bleed yellow through the white.

STEP 2 | ~2-3 hrs (incl. practice cuts)

Cut every part, then check them

Follow the sheet layout on page 3 and the straight-cut tips on page 4: two 20" rips, then the crosscuts with the circular saw against a clamped straightedge, and the 7-3/4" leftover becomes the back rail. Cut the four 2x6s to 57" on the miter saw. Lay every part out and check it against the cut list - the four sides and dividers must be exactly the same height (15-3/4") or the seat won't sit flat. Sand or recut now, while it's easy.



Every part, exploded: bottom, 2 sides, 2 dividers, 2 shelves, back rail, 4 seat boards

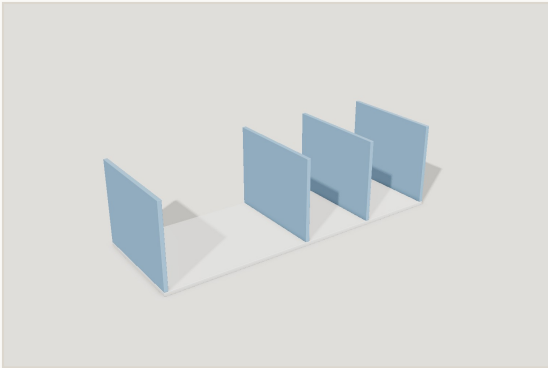
STEP 3 | ~2.5-3.5 hrs + dry overnight

Edges, then the first white coat

Iron edge banding onto the front edges of the sides, dividers, shelves and bottom (fresh-cut edges are bare wood, so it bonds well) and trim it with a utility knife. Round the front corners and the 2x6 ends with 120 grit, then 220. Roll the first coat of white on every face that will show.

Glue won't hold on paint or primer: either skip the glue and rely on the screws (plenty for this bench once it's anchored to the wall), or sand the primer off the strips where parts meet.

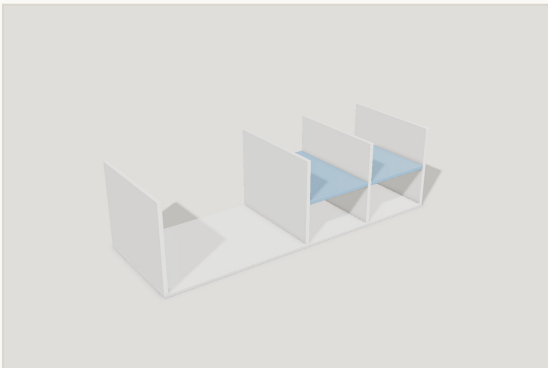
Assemble



STEP 4 | ~1-1.5 hrs

Build the box

Set the bottom good-face-up on a flat floor near the closet. Stand the sides and dividers on it and screw up through the bottom into each with 2" screws through pilot holes (8). Divider 1 sits 27" in from the left side (inside faces); divider 2 is 13-1/2" past that. Check each with a square.



STEP 5 | ~45 min

Install the shelves

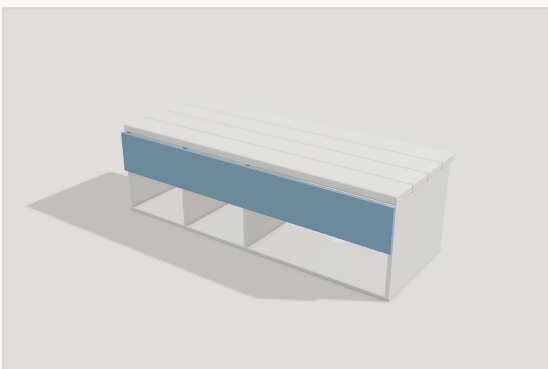
Mark 7-1/2" up on both sides of each cubby so the shelf sits level, then screw through the divider and side into the shelf ends (8). Easiest: put each shelf in as you stand up the divider beside it.



STEP 6 | ~1-1.5 hrs

Lay on the 2x6 seat

Lay the four boards tight together, back board flush with the back of the sides, front board overhanging 2". Pre-drill and drive two 2-3/4" screws down through each board into each divider (16). At the two ends, don't screw near the board ends - they split. Fix each board with a slotted angle bracket inside the bay instead (8).



STEP 7 | ~30 min

Attach the back rail (seen from behind)

Measure the front diagonals and nudge the case until they match - that's square. Screw the rail across the back edges of the sides and dividers, tight up under the seat, two 2" screws into each (8).

Finish & install

STEP 8 | ~1.5-2 hrs over 2 short sessions + 3-7 days cure

Fill and final coat

Fill the screw holes, sand them flush with 220, and touch up any scuffs from assembly. Then put the final white coat over everything that shows: foam roller on the flat parts, brush in the corners and the plank grooves. Let it cure a few days before heavy use - fresh paint sticks to baskets.

STEP 9 | ~1 hr + wall paint drying

Prep the closet

Pull the shoe moulding, quarter round and baseboard on the back and side walls where the bench sits, and paint the bit of wall behind it white (it shows below the back rail). Measure the width again at floor level and 18" up; you want at least 57-1/4" at both heights.

STEP 10 | ~30-45 min

Set it and anchor it

Slide the bench in against the wall. Find two or three studs and drive 2-3/4" screws through the back rail into them, so it can't tip if someone climbs it. Caulk or add a small trim strip to hide the side gaps.

Why 2x6 and not 1x6

Sawhorse checked a 1x6 seat: each board spanning the 27" basket bay would bend about 0.4" with someone sitting on it - over 3x the limit, likely to crack. A 2x6 is twice as thick and passes with no sag warning, so it also needs no stiffener and no glue-up.

Why a back rail instead of a full back

A full back panel needs its own 15-3/4" strip, which means a second sheet of plywood. The rail comes from the first sheet's offcut, still squares the case, and gives you something solid to screw into the studs.

Check before cutting

Every dimension here comes from the Sawhorse solid model. Measure your closet, your plywood (3/4" sheets are often 23/32") and your 2x6s (should be 1-1/2" x 5-1/2") before you cut, and adjust if your basket is bigger than about 24" x 17".