

# Home Storage

made simple



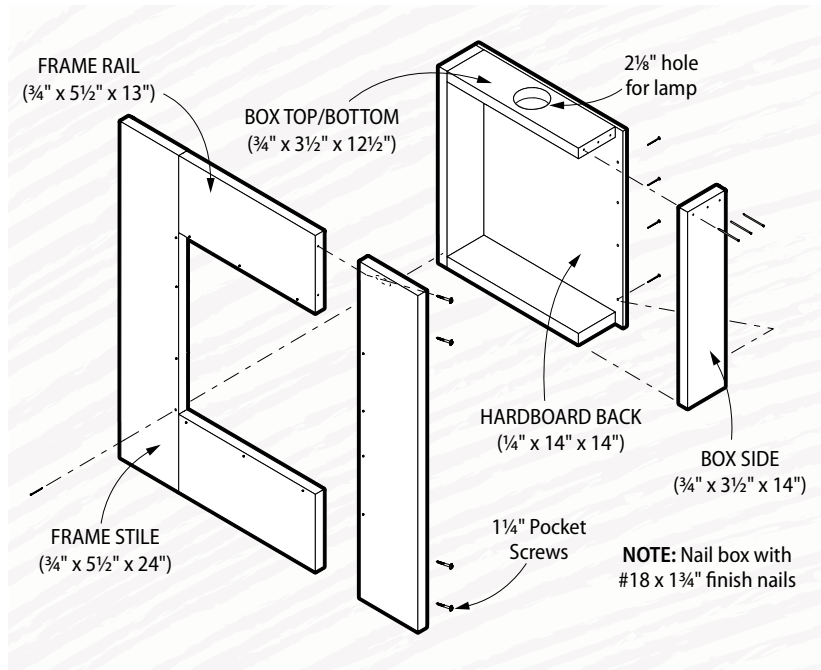
## Recessed **Wall Niche**

On the following pages you'll find step-by-step instructions, photos, and illustrations that you can use to create these wall niches. For more information about this project, see *Home Storage Made Simple*.



## build the wall niches

- The wall niche gets built from a few basic materials: 1x4 and 1x6 boards, ¼" hardboard, pocket screws, finish nails, wood glue, and construction adhesive. You'll also need a circular saw or miter saw, a drill, a hammer, plus a level, a keyhole saw, and a stud finder.
- If you really want to speed up the process, you can rent an air-powered finish nailer. It's a handy tool, but not mandatory at all. A hammer and nails work just fine. If you're using a hammer and nails, be sure to drill pilot holes for your nails to prevent splitting the wood.
- Get started by cutting the boards and hardboard to size according to the illustration at right.
- To make the frame, use a tool called a pocket-hole jig (*Resources, page 3*) to drill three angled holes where each rail will connect to a stile. Apply glue to the end of the rail, align the pieces, and attach them with 1¼" pocket screws (*photo 1*).
- Now you can start building the box. If you plan to add puck lights, start by drilling a centered hole in the top piece with a 2½" hole saw.



- Then apply wood glue to the ends of the top and bottom pieces, butt them against the side pieces, and drive in finish nails to connect them (*photo 2*).
- Next, attach the hardboard back using 1" finish nails.
- Finally, center the frame over the

box to create a consistent reveal around the inside edges, and nail it in place (*photo 3*).

- Repeat this process to make all three niches.
- It's a lot easier to paint your niches before they're installed in the wall, so go ahead and do that now.

## how it's made



1



2



3

## install the niches

- There are some important things to keep in mind before you start cutting holes in your wall to hold the niches.
- First, you'll need to determine the exact locations of the studs, so you can install the niches to fit snugly in between them.
- Second, your walls hide lots of wires and pipes that you definitely don't want to accidentally cut.
- The surest way to locate studs and avoid hitting anything else is to use a good-quality stud finder. Choose a model that precisely indicates the edges of studs and sounds a warning if it detects pipes or wiring. This type is designed to work with thick plaster walls as well as drywall.
- To explore an area, run the stud finder across the wall according to the manufacturer's directions. If it warns you of hidden hazards, try an adjacent stud bay.
- Be sure to run the finder both horizontally and vertically over the area that you are considering.
- When you've found a safe area, use the finder to locate the inside

edges of the studs that will surround the niches (*photo 1*).

- Next, use a level to extend those lines vertically. The lines should end up parallel and 14½" apart.
- Now you'll want to determine where to locate the niches inside of these marks. How close the niches are to each other, and how close they are to the floor and ceiling, is a matter of personal preference.
- You can make 24" square templates out of paper to try out different positions. Just tape them on the wall in various ways until you're happy with the look, and then mark the locations of the squares.
- With the three squares penciled on the wall, it's time to create the recesses between the studs.
- To do that, use a keyhole saw to cut through the drywall along the lines (*photo 2*). Remove the drywall squares and any insulation inside the recesses.
- If you're adding lights, you'll need to run some electrical wire and a switch. Call an electrician if you're not comfortable with wiring work. The wiring will need

a separate "pigtail" (a bundle of short wires off the main wires) for each light. Flush-mount the lights, so they won't interfere with items displayed inside the niches.

- Now apply construction adhesive to the back of one frame, and slide that niche into the center recess, making sure the hole for the light is at the top. Check to make sure it's level; feed the light wire through the hole and into the box; and then press the frame to the wall. Repeat the process with the top and bottom niches. Here, you'll also want to use the level to ensure that they line up with the middle one (*photo 3*).

## Resources

### Available in home centers:

- 1x6 and 1x4 Poplar Boards
- ¼" Hardboard
- 1¼" Pocket Screws
- 1¾" Finish Nails
- 1" Finish Nails
- Construction Adhesive

### Available at Lowes.com:

- Kreg Pocket Hole Jig #255535

## how it's made



1



2



3