



Scott Horsburgh
Designer and Maker of Fine Handcrafted Furniture

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Piece: Sideboard

Subject: Making the 'Spacer Frame'.

The Spacer Frame is a separate mitered frame that gets screwed to the top of the main carcass. The top of the sideboard then sits on top of the Spacer Frame and is attached by using 'Traditional Shrinkage Buttons (TSB's) which fix the top firmly to the carcass but still allow the wood to expand and contract across its grain with changes in humidity.

The Spacer Frame is just another detail. Most Makers would attach the top straight onto the main carcass. I have used the Spacer Frame as I like the detail and the slight shadow line it creates as the top is held off the main carcass by the height of the frame.

The frame is 15mm high and is inset 10mm from all external carcass edges.

The two photos below show what the frame looks like:





The frame is mitred in the corners and joined with a large domino at each corner. I have marked out the mitres with a sharp marking knife and then cut to within 0.5mm of that knife line on my docking saw. I have then used my Shooting Board with a mitre attachment to shoot to the knife line. Shooting the mitre ensure it is perfectly flat and true.

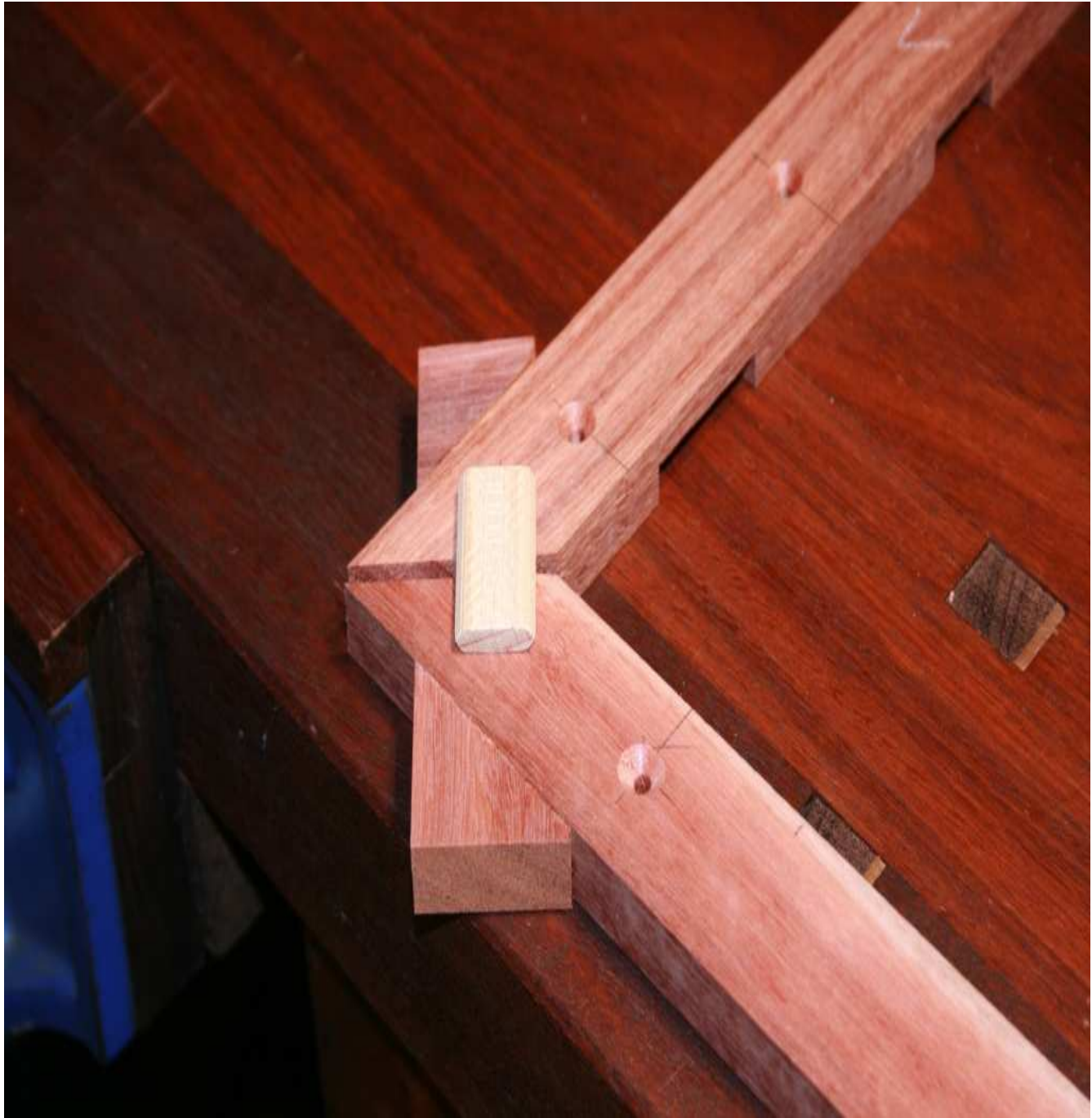






To help me when clamping the mitres together I have glued small right angled glue blocks to the long edges. These will enable me to put clamping pressure at 90 degrees to the joint and ensure a lovely, tight fit. When the frame is dry I will cut these off to within 0.5mm of the frame and then use my hand plane to remove the waste. The blocks will be gone and the frame is ready to go.







Before gluing up the frame I drilled all of the clearance holes for the screws to hold the frame to the main carcass. I also countersunk these holes to ensure the tops of the screws would not hold the top off the frame. You can also see that I have routed out square holes (routed out and then chiseled) for the TSB's. These square holes are the housings for the TSB's to slide into to fix the top to the frame.

Scotty Horsburgh
Yallingup Steading

