

Orchard Rack

Years ago, people stored “keeper” crops such as apples, winter squash, onions and potatoes on rustic wooden racks just like this one. The drawers are slatted to ensure good air circulation and they slide out for easy access. For best results, the rack should be located in a cool, dark cellar or outbuilding. It’s good for drying herbs, too.

Assembly Instructions

Tools Needed: Phillips screwdriver or drill.

Lay all parts of the Harvest Rack on a hard and level surface. Refer to the list below to identify the parts as you unpack the box.

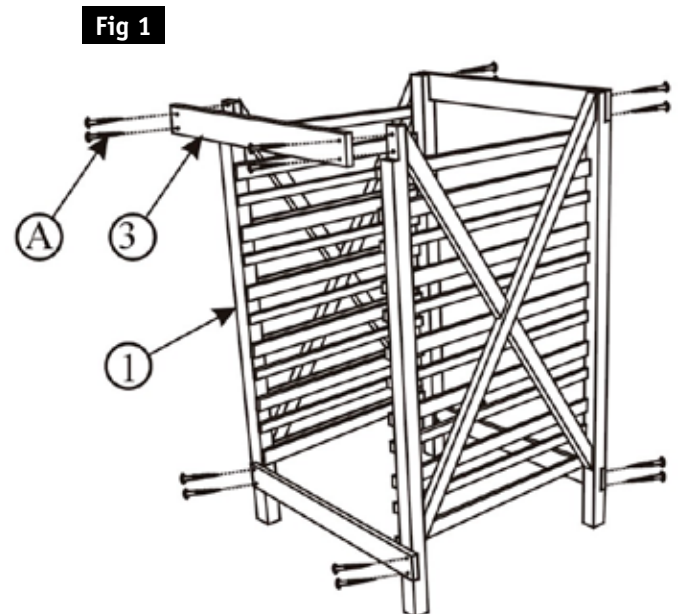
- **Assembly Tip:** You may cut open the shipping box and use it as a cushioned work surface to protect the wood during assembly. We recommend a second person to help during assembly.

Step 1. Position the Sides (Part 1) upright with the legs on the ground. Attach the Bracing Slats (Part 3) to the top and bottom of each Side as shown in Figure 1. Place the screws through the predrilled holes. Do not fully tighten. Be sure the top Bracing Slats are flush with the top of the Sides.

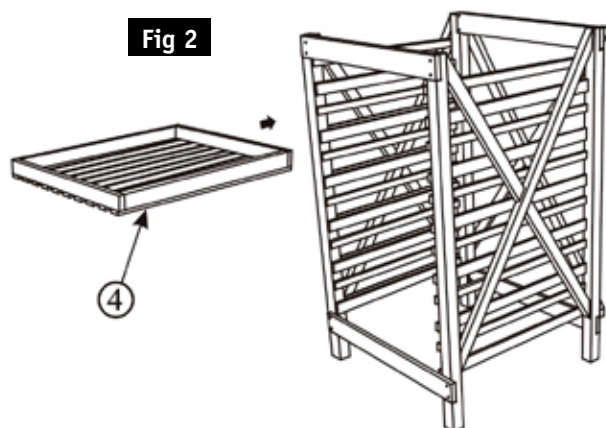
Step 2. Slide a drawer into each compartment



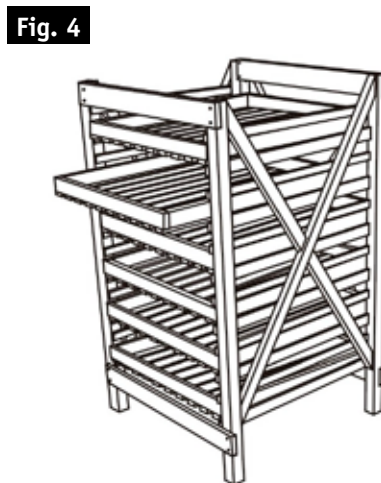
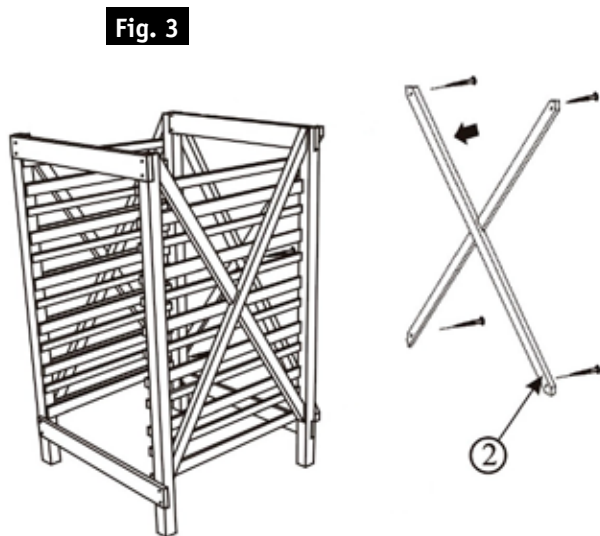
Parts List	
<p>①</p> <p>Sides (2 pcs)</p>	<p>②</p> <p>Crossbars (2 pcs)</p>
<p>③</p> <p>Bracing Slats (4 pcs)</p>	<p>④</p> <p>Shelves (6 pcs)</p>
<p>Ⓐ</p> <p>Screws (20 pcs) (1 extra)</p>	



(Fig. 2).
This will help to square up the Rack and keep it stable for the next step.



Step 3. Adjust the entire Rack to make sure it's square. Connect the two Crossbars (Part 2) to form an "X." Attach the end of each Crossbar to the upper and lower corners at the back of the Rack (Figure 3). Fully tighten all screws on the Crossbars and the Rack. **Caution: Do not overtighten the screws. Over tightening the screws may cause the wood to split.** The assembly is now finished (Figure 4).



Storage Tips

Today's average home is typically too warm for extended storage of fruits and vegetables. However, an unheated basement or outbuilding that is well ventilated, dark, and stays above freezing and below 65 degrees in winter, can provide good storage conditions for many fruits and vegetables.

Different types of fruit and vegetables require different levels of temperature and humidity for proper storage. Some fruits, including tomatoes, give off ethylene gas, which speeds the aging process of other stored foods and will make some vegetables, such as carrots, bitter. For best results, do not store fruits with vegetables.

Harvest Time: Timing of harvest and preparing fruits and vegetables for storage is very important. Mike and Nancy Bubel, authors of *Root Cellaring: Natural Cold Storage of Fruits and Vegetables*, say that it is good to leave root vegetables in the ground as long as you possibly can to be harvested when storage temperatures are more likely to remain constantly cool.

Harvest fruits or vegetables when they are neither too ripe, or under ripe. Place fruits or vegetables in a single layer on each shelf, preferably not touching one another. Fruits may be wrapped individually with paper towels or a food-grade tissue paper. See the chart below for conditions required for storing some of the most common garden vegetables and fruits.

Darkness: Keep the storage area dark. Light deteriorates some storage vegetables and encourages sprouting in potatoes. Be sure to use a shade to keep out both light and heat coming through any windows in your storage area.

Herbs: To dry herbs, line each shelf with food-grade paper. Paper grocery bags work great when cut open to a single layer. Do not harvest herbs when wet. Place individual stalks and branches (or just the leaves) in a single layer on each shelf. Keep the Rack in a dry location and out of direct sunlight. Check the herbs and turn them over every 2 or 3 days to encourage uniform dryness and shape. When dry, place the herbs in an airtight container for longer term storage and use.

For more Information:

Root Cellaring: Natural Cold Storage of Fruits and Vegetables by Mike and Nancy Bubel (Storey Publishing, 1991, 1979).

Schrock, Denny. *Vegetable Harvest and Storage*. Department of Horticulture at University of Missouri Extension, 1998. <<http://extension.Missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=g6226>>

Cool and Moist Storage:

- 40 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit
- 85 to 90 percent relative humidity

Best for cucumber, watermelon, eggplant (50 to 60 degrees F), green beans, sweet peppers (45 to 55 degrees F), ripe tomatoes.

Cold and Moist Storage:

- 32 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit
- 80 to 90 percent relative humidity

Best for tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower (short term), apples, grapes, pears, quince, grapefruit.

Cold and Very Moist Storage:

- 32 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit
- 90 to 95 percent relative humidity

Best for beets, carrots, celery, turnips, winter radishes, broccoli (short term), hardy greens such as kale and collards; leeks.

Cool and Dry Storage:

- 32 to 50 degrees Fahrenheit
- 60 to 70 percent relative humidity

Best for garlic, onions.

Warm and Dry Storage:

- 50 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit
- 60 to 70 percent relative humidity

Best for pumpkins, winter squash, dry hot peppers, sweet potatoes, green tomatoes.

Approximate Storage Times:

Beets (4-5 months)	Pumpkins (5-6 months)
Broccoli (1-2 weeks)	Radishes (2-3 months)
Cabbage (3-4 months)	Squash (4-6 months)
Cauliflower (2-4 weeks)	Turnips (4-6 months)
Eggplant (1-2 weeks)	Tomatoes (1-2 months)
Potatoes (4-6 months)	