

Keepsake Hand Mirror

Here's a project
she'll treasure forever

Sure to bring a smile from someone special, this graceful hand mirror will be a dressing-table treasure for years to come. A delicate-looking rose inlay enhances our mirror's classic beauty.

A few notes before you begin:

• Before you make the mirror frame, buy a 4×6" oval mirror glass. (See the Buying Guide for the source of the one we used.) Then, verify that the size and shape of the mirror fits inside the line denoting the rabbet on the Mirror Full-Size Pattern in the WOOD PATTERNS® insert. Adjust the mirror, mirror insert, and routing template patterns as necessary.

• Make the inlaid rose design for the back by following the procedures in the article beginning on page 58. Before you build the band mirror, complete the marquetry, and cut the insert to the shape shown by the Mirror Insert Full-Size Pattern. If you don't care to do the marquetry project, you can cut figured stock to shape for the back.

Rout a rabbeted oval to start

1 Photocopy the Mirror and Routing Template Full-Size Patterns in the WOOD PATTERNS insert. Adhere the mirror pattern to a ½×6×13" piece of walnut and the template pattern to a ¼×6×13" piece of tempered hardboard or void-free plywood.

2 Drill a ⅛" blade start hole inside the oval opening on each piece. Scrollsaw the openings, staying slightly inside the line on both pieces.

3 Sand to the line on the template only. (We used a drum sander.) Make

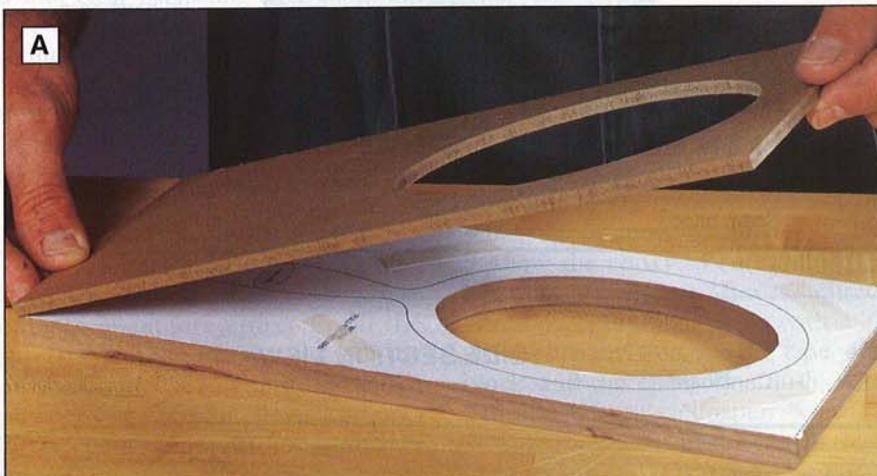
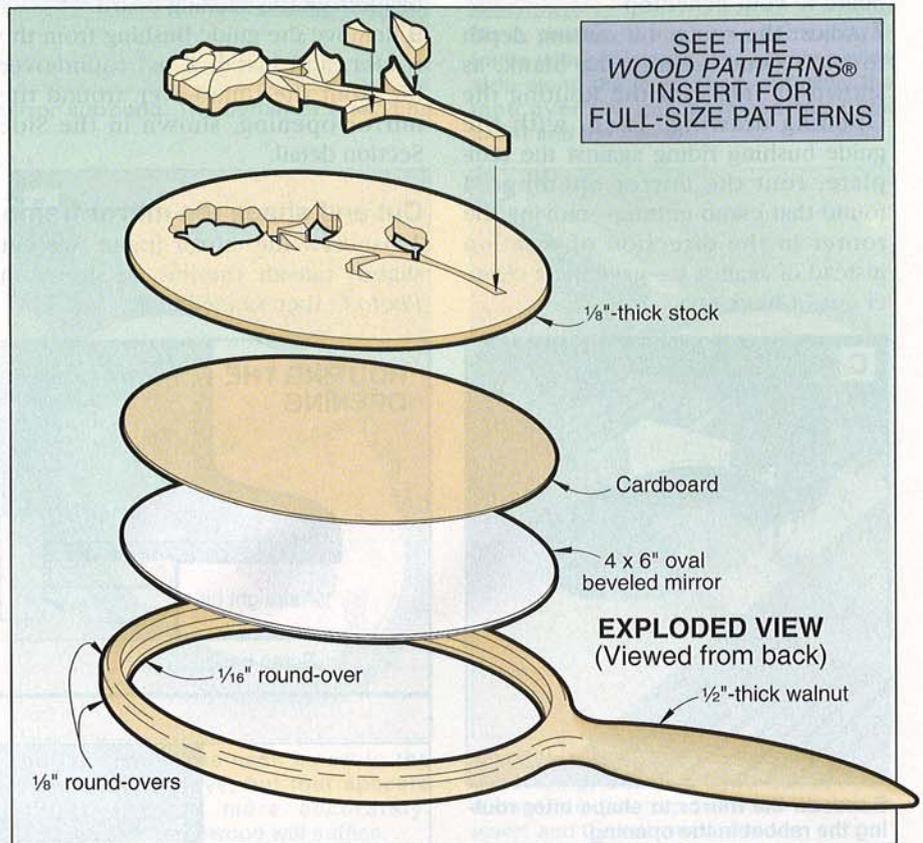
sure you get the edge smooth—your router's guide bushing will ride against it. Remove the pattern from the template.

4 Position the template on the patterned side of the walnut mirror blank. Align the ends and edges to center the template over the cutout

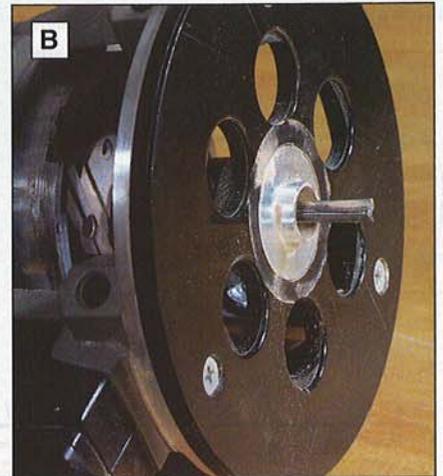
opening in the blank, as shown in *Photo A*. Hold the template in place with double-faced tape.

5 Install a ⅝" guide bushing and a ½" straight bit in your router. The guide bushing needs to have a short nose, as shown in *Photo B*. (Project builder

Continued



The hardboard template guides the router when forming the rabbet for the beveled mirror glass.



Shorten the nose of the router guide bushing to work with a thin template.

Keepsake Hand Mirror

Chuck Hedlund cut the bushing shown to $\frac{3}{16}$ " long. "The shortened nose makes the bushing more versatile—you can use it with thick or thin templates just as well," he says.)

6 With double-faced tape, attach the blank to a larger piece of scrapwood, and clamp the scrapwood backing board to your benchtop.

7 Adjust the router bit cutting depth to $\frac{9}{16}$ " to cut $\frac{5}{16}$ " into the blank, as shown in *Step 1* of the Routing the Opening drawing. Then, with the guide bushing riding against the template, rout the mirror opening. "I found that climb cutting—moving the router in the direction of rotation instead of against it—gave me a cleaner cut," Chuck says.

8 Switch to a $\frac{1}{4}$ " straight router bit. Set the cutting depth a little greater than $\frac{3}{4}$ ", just deep enough to cut slightly into the scrapwood beneath the blank, as shown in *Step 2* of the drawing. Rout the opening, climb cutting again for a clean edge. Remove the template from the blank, and the blank from the backing board.

9 Remove the guide bushing from the router, and install a $\frac{1}{16}$ " round-over bit. Rout the round-over around the mirror opening, shown in the Side Section detail.

2 Rout a $\frac{1}{8}$ " round-over around the edge on both faces. (We did this with a table-mounted router.)

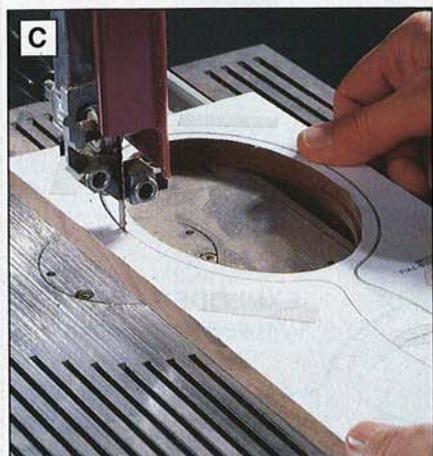
3 Sand the handle to shape, referring to the Side Section View drawing. Form the cross-section shown by block-sanding with 100-grit sandpaper. Sand with the corner of the block to narrow the handle just below the mirror head, as shown in *Photo D*. Blend the contours together for a smooth, flowing shape. Finish-sand with 150- and 220-grit sandpaper and a sanding block.

Cut and shape the mirror frame

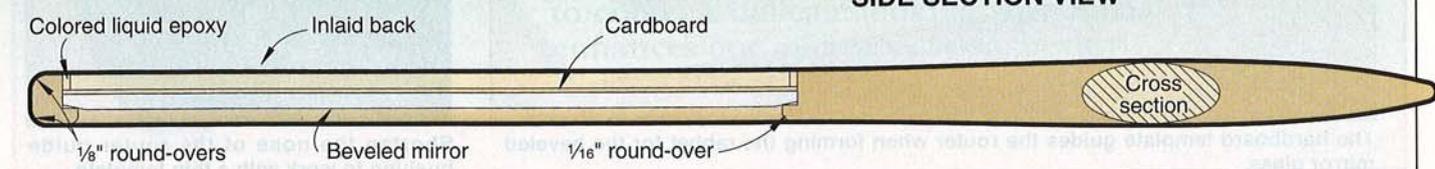
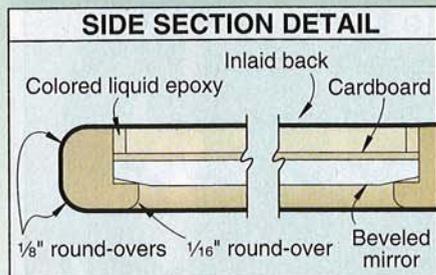
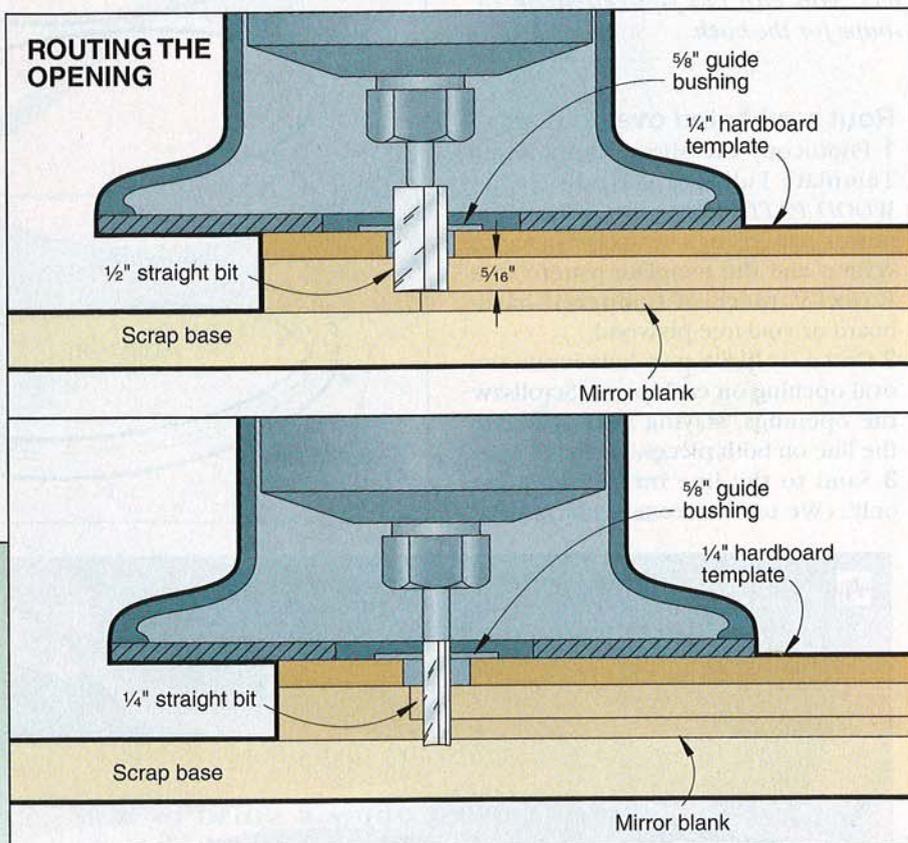
1 Bandsaw the mirror frame. We cut slightly outside the line, as shown in *Photo C*, then sanded to it.

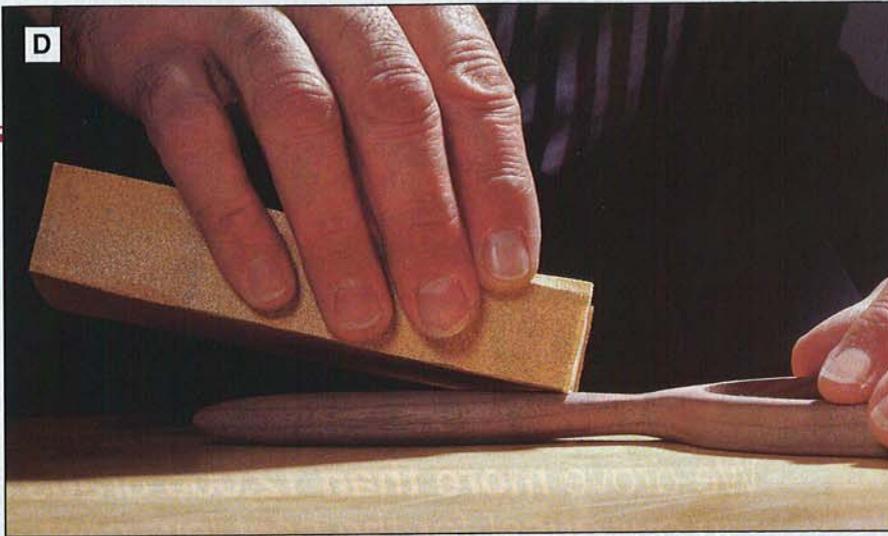
Add the inlaid back panel

1 Cut a piece of light cardboard (the side of a file folder would work fine) to the shape of your mirror glass.



Bandsaw the mirror to shape after routing the rabbet in the opening.





D Sand a hollow where the handle joins the mirror surround. The corner of a sanding block does the job.

2 Place the mirror in the opening. Glue it into place with a small bead of silicone adhesive. Take care not to get silicone on the edge of the rabbet between the back of the mirror and the back of the frame—epoxy needs to bond to this area to hold the inlaid insert in place.

3 After the silicone cures, spray the back of the mirror with spray adhesive, and press the cardboard oval onto it.

4 Lay the inlaid panel in place. Cut four 1/8"-thick spacers, and place them around the panel to center it in the opening, as shown in *Photo E*. (You can adjust the thickness of the spacers, if necessary, to center the inlaid panel.) Remove the panel, apply spray adhesive to the back of it, and reposition the panel and spacers. Press down the panel to adhere it to the cardboard, and remove the spacers.

5 Run clear packaging tape along the face of the panel, approximately centering the tape over the gap between the panel and the mirror frame. With a sharp knife, cut the tape away where it covers the gap, as shown in *Photo F*.

Set off the inlay with a stripe

1 Lay the mirror on a level surface. Then, in a plastic sandwich bag, mix enough 30-minute epoxy to fill the gap between the inlaid panel and the mirror frame. Add some black dye powder (we used Rit all-purpose dye) to the epoxy, and mix it in thoroughly for uniform color. (You need only add enough dye to color the epoxy—it won't take much.)

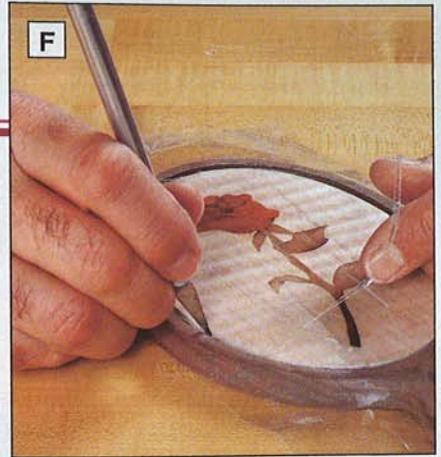


E You can center the back insert in the mirror frame by eye, but four spacers will do the job more accurately. Cardboard or scrapwood will suffice.

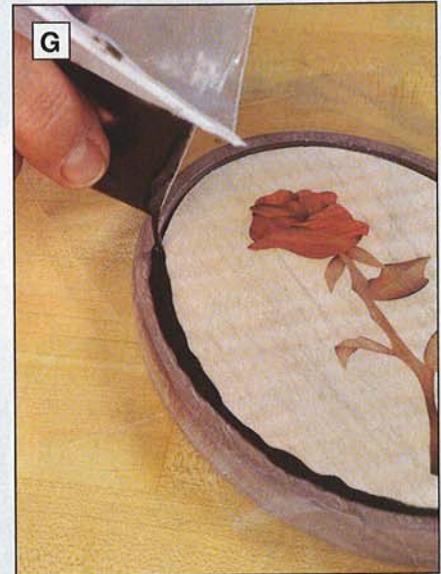
2 Snip one corner off the bag to make about a 1/8" opening. Press the epoxy to the cut corner, and squeeze it into the gap, as shown in *Photo G*. Move the bag along the gap at a moderate, steady pace to allow the epoxy to flow out in the groove. Let the fill stand slightly above the surface.

3 Allow the epoxy to cure fully. (We left ours overnight.) After it's cured, sand down any high spots with 150-grit sandpaper. Remove the tape, and block-sand the epoxy line flush, with 220- and 320-grit sandpaper.

4 Mask the mirror glass with packaging tape or masking tape, and spray semigloss lacquer on both sides of the frame. (We applied several coats,



F Mask the back insert and the mirror frame with packaging tape. Apply a wide strip along the joint. Then, cut away the tape over the gap between the back insert and the frame.



G Borrowing a technique from cake-decorating, squeeze dyed epoxy from a bag into the gap between the back insert and the mirror frame.

sanding with 320-grit sandpaper between coats.)

After the final coat dries, polish the finish. (We did this with a white Scotch-brite pad.) Finally, apply a coat of paste wax, and buff it before unmasking the mirror. 🌟

Buying Guide

Mirror glass. Bevel-edge oval mirror glass, 4×6", Item no. 17T06, call for current price and shipping charges, Woodcraft, 800/225-1153.

Project Design: Roy King; James R. Downing
Photographs: Hetherington Photography
Illustrations: Roxanne LeMoine; Lorna Johnson