

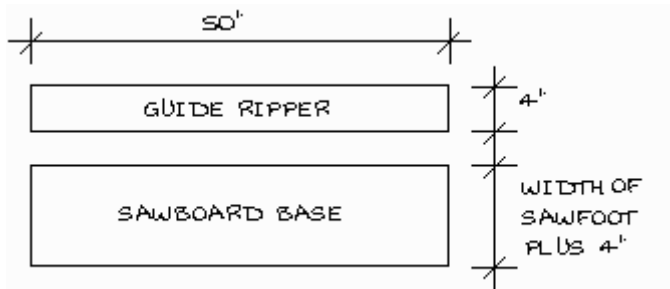
# The Sawboard

By R. Allan Phillips

The sawboard can be made out of just about any kind of 1/4" or 3/8" material like plywood, masonite, flake board, or whatever.

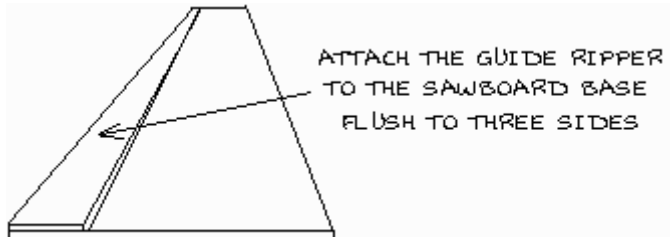
The sawboard only has two components, we'll call them the *guide ripper*, and the *sawboard base*.

The guide ripper should be 4" wide or a little more. The sawboard base should be *the entire width* of the saw foot base of your circular saw, plus the four inches for the guide ripper. Both the guide ripper and the sawboard base should be about 50 inches long or enough to lap over the width of a 4 by 8 sheet of material.

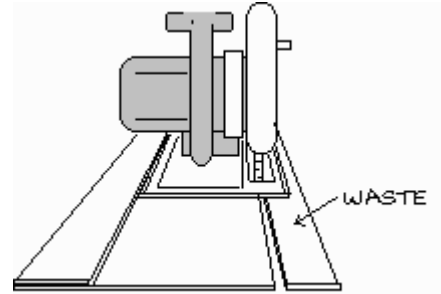


All you have to do is **attach the guide ripper to the sawboard base at one long edge flush to three sides**. You can use whatever fastening system that suits your fancy but I recommend using yellow carpenters glue and clamping until dry. If you glue, keep an eye on the edge alignment as you clamp for any floating out of alignment. Also have a damp rag handy to catch those gushes and oozes (this could be real important for the accuracy of the saw board).

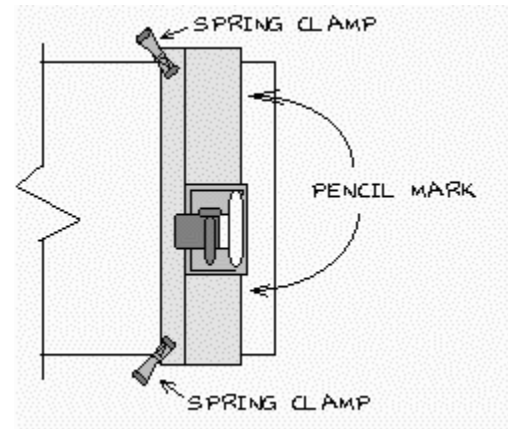
If you decide to nail or screw, either one will work just fine, but just be careful to set and countersink everything and be sure that there are no points poking through otherwise it will defeat one of the great features of the sawboard we will discuss later.



After you have finished fastening the components together and all of the fasteners are set or flush and the glue is dried **there is only one more thing to do and you are done!** All you have to do now is to take your circular saw and set the depth of cut a little deeper than the thickness of the sawboard base. Position your saw so that the motor side of its table (or foot) is against the edge of the guide ripper and the saw foot itself is resting on the open side of the saw board base. Then slowly and carefully make your cut making sure that you stay tight against the edge of the guide ripper until the excess material of the sawboard base is cut off.



**To use your sawboard** just measure your material to be cut and make your pencil mark as usual. Lay your sawboard on the "keeper side" (vs. the cut off side) of your pencil line on the material to be cut with the single thickness long edge of the sawboard right on the pencil line. **Carefully clamp each end of the sawboard to your work with spring clamps** positioning them at a 45 degree angle to the sawboard (make sure that you're still right on the line when your done). Now, set your saw to the appropriate depth and run it down the board as you did before with the saw foot against the guide ripper, and **PRESTO!**, you have a straight as an arrow, dead-on accurate cut you can be proud of!



You can make up more sawboards with customized lengths for any number of other applications. **I highly recommend making up an 8 foot saw board for making rip cuts on 4 by 8 material. With both a 4 foot and an 8 foot sawboard you'll have everything you need to start cutting panels out of 4 by 8 sheets for making cabinet carcasses.**

I first learned of this system from a couple of wise old carpenters who used it to cut off the bottom of interior doors to clear newly installed carpet. The beauty of the sawboard in this application is that when there is a need to cut the bottom off of a beautifully finished and expensive door, the saw never touches the door and there is no risk of scratches. The sawboard also controls the nasty fraying of wood fibers and veneers when cutting across the grain.

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