

- Suggested story concept

- Researched and wrote story and edited instructions and diagrams

Sift & Simple

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You're ready to harvest the black gold that's been cooking in your compost heap, but – mixed up with it – there's still the odd cabbage heart, carrot and watermelon rind that haven't broken down yet. Inexpensive and easy-to-build, this sifter spans most wheelbarrows so you can set it on top, shovel in the compost, then shake it to winnow out the not-ready-for-prime-time bits while the lovely, crumbly compost piles up underneath.

YOU NEED:

2 pine 1x4*, each 4 ft long

2 pine 1x2*, each 4 ft long

Piece of ¼-in grid hardware cloth, 27¾ x 20¼ in

.60 m ½-in diameter nylon rope

22 No. eight 2½-in flathead wood screws

Eight ¾-in common nails

Drill, ⅝-in bit for predrilling and ¾-in spade bit

Saw, screwdriver to fit wood screws, hammer and carpenter's square

Fine-grit sandpaper and tack cloth

Acrylic varnish or latex primer and paint, and brush or small roller

**Nominal sizes; actual dimensions will be somewhat smaller.*

CUT LIST:

1x4s

2 pieces A, each 28 in long

2 pieces B, each 19 in long

1x2s

2 pieces AA, each 28 in long

2 pieces BB, each 19 in long

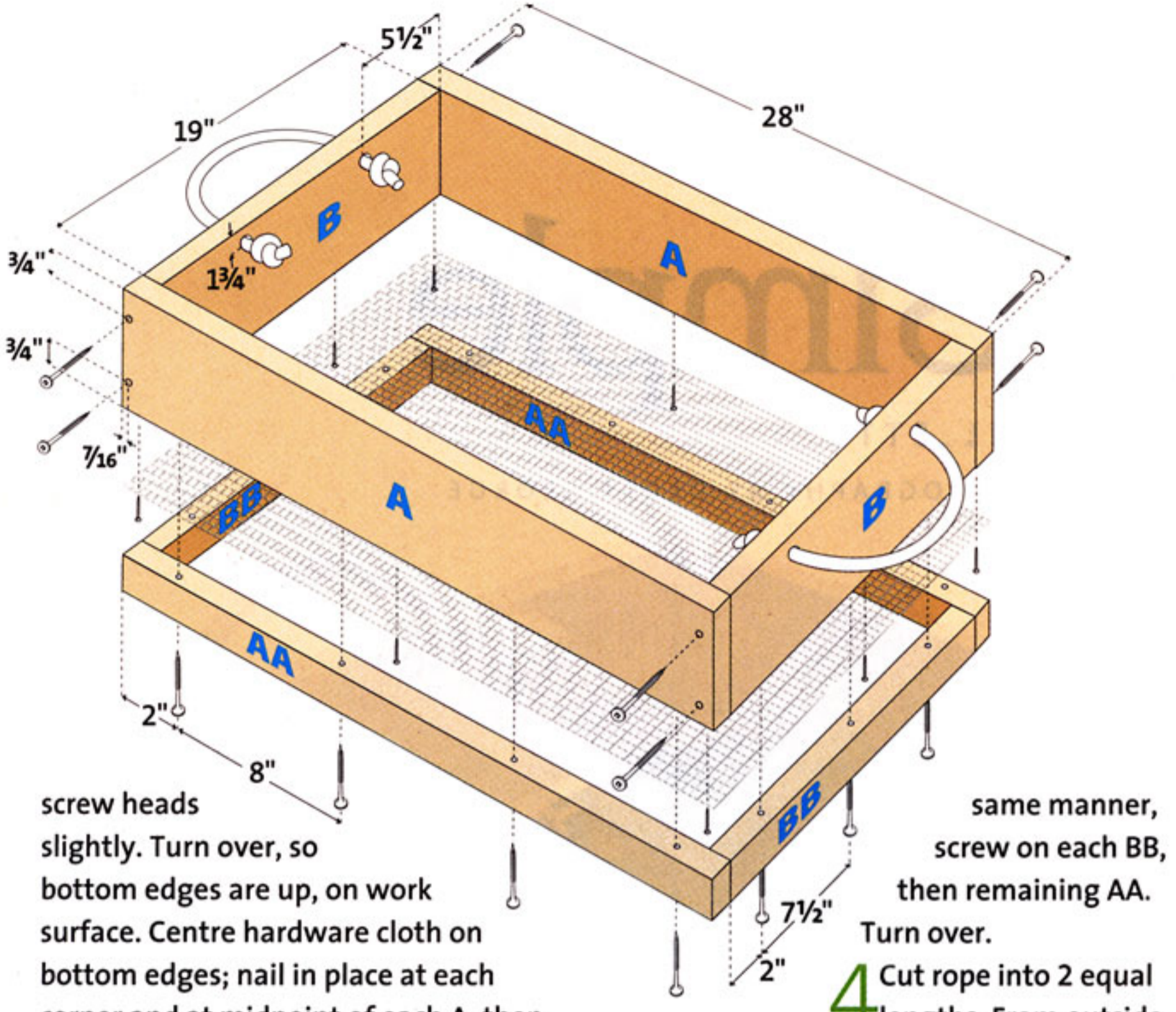
TO MAKE:

NOTE: Referring to diagram (page 302), drill and assemble as shown.

- 1 Predrill holes in pieces A, AA and BB. Change to spade bit; drill each piece B.
- 2 Between side pieces A, screw each end piece B in place to make sieve top, using carpenter's square to ensure corners are perpendicular and pressing firmly on screwdriver to countersink

SOME DIRT ON COMPOST –

- Recycle eggshells, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable scraps, and garden and yard waste and you'll cut the number of garbage bags at the curb (by about half) and the amount of methane (a greenhouse gas) produced at landfills.
- When it's sweet-smelling, dark and crumbly, the compost is "cooked."
- Tie up a shovelful in some cloth to make a giant tea bag, steep that in water for several days (a ratio of 1:5 compost:water is about right), then treat your plants to the nutritious brew.
- Dig in compost to add long-lasting nutrients, boost the organic content, improve the texture, porosity and moisture retention, slow erosion and attract beneficial microorganisms and earthworms. Or top-dress with it.
- Visit the Composting Council of Canada at www.compost.org and celebrate International Composting Awareness Week (May 7 to 13).



screw heads slightly. Turn over, so bottom edges are up, on work surface. Centre hardware cloth on bottom edges; nail in place at each corner and at midpoint of each A, then approx 1 in (either way) from midpoint of each B, ensuring cloth is secure and taut.

3 With outside edges flush, screw 1 AA in place along 1 bottom edge, covering cut ends of hardware cloth; in

same manner, screw on each BB, then remaining AA. Turn over.

4 Cut rope into 2 equal lengths. From outside, thread ends of 1 length through holes at 1 end of sieve; tie overhand knot in each rope end to secure. Repeat at other end.

5 Lightly sand wood, then wipe with tack cloth. Seal with varnish; let dry. ●