



Building Basics

Several building jigs have been covered in this column. This month we'll look at a jig to help surveyors, plus another way to do buttresses, which were covered in the June newsletter.

Simple and Cheap Surveyor Jig

I recently started carrying along three scraps from a ramp build when I do surveys: a short 2x6, a short 5/4 deck board, and a small piece of plywood. The longest one in this picture is about 15 inches, so these are scraps that can be found at the end of many ramp builds.



The reason I carry these scraps is to better determine the right threshold ramp solution, particularly in cases where a door will have to clear the completed transition ramp. I have had the experience of using a measuring tape to check door clearance, and then on build day finding an unexpected clearance issue. These boards give me a way to quickly evaluate options with readily available lumber thicknesses, either individually or in combination.

This can be done by laying the deck board or 2x6 down first, then placing the plywood scrap on top to determine which board or combination most closely matches the threshold height while still allowing the door to swing freely. The small pieces are easily carried and can be moved to different positions on an existing porch or deck if there is concern about the clearance varying across the door swing.



There is nothing fancy about these jigs, but they can provide a quick “go/no-go” check on which lumber to use for the proposed threshold ramp design.

Buttress Follow-up

In June, this column covered buttresses that support the handrail for the last module of the ramp when it finally reaches the ground. As pointed out then, there are many ways of implementing the same basic design. I saw yet another one when building with our Washington County (Brenham) team, which is led by Butch Meier. They use the basic buttress design discussed at the conference, but only use it on the last upright as shown in the picture to the right:



As stated in the June column, this design allows for a lot of flexibility in how it is implemented. I know the final product with the above implementation provided for a very solid handrail when completed. I continue to be impressed with the dedication and ingenuity of our teams across the state to find the best solutions for our clients and the build teams that do the installation. Kudos to all of you!

Do you have other tips or suggestions to share?

A lot of very good ideas are being developed by ramp builders across the state. Please send any questions, comments or potential ramp construction topics to texasramps.roy@gmail.com to help others build ramps better, stronger and faster.