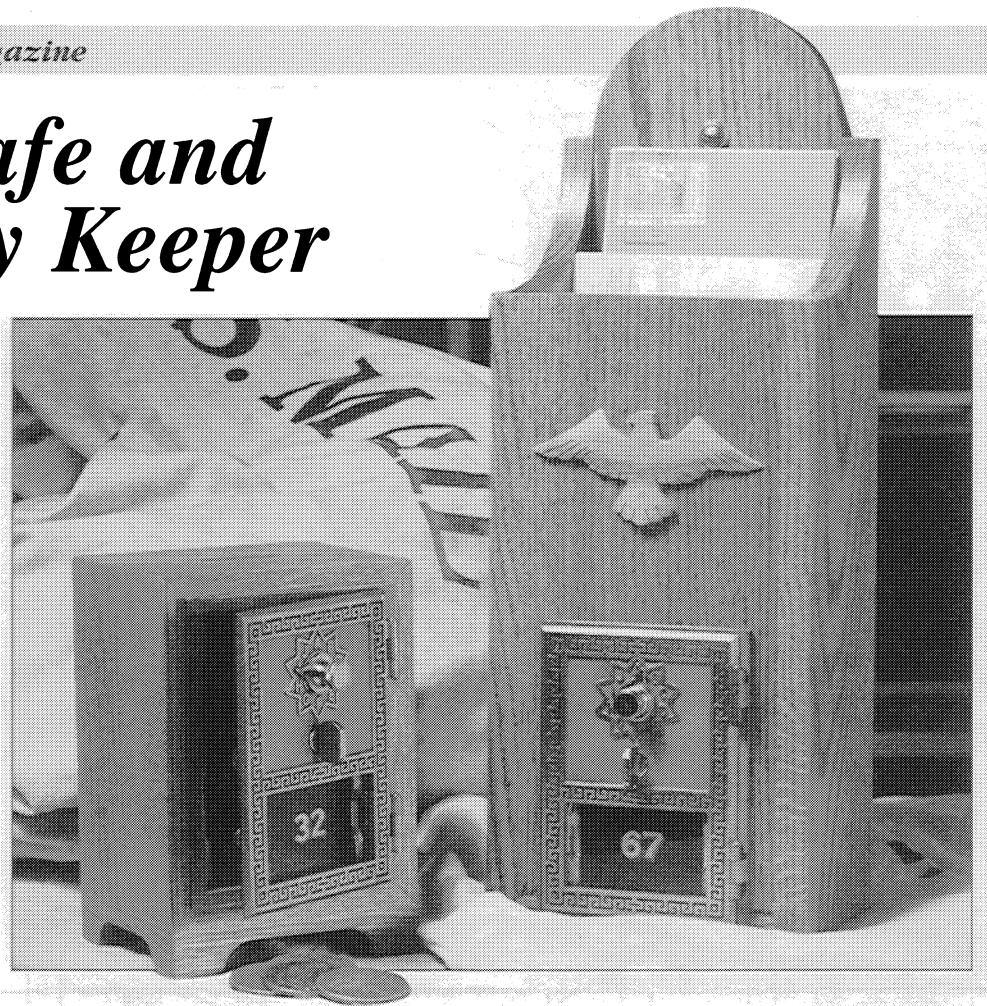


# The Mini Safe and Bill Box/Key Keeper

*Refurbished post office lockbox doors add just the right amount of nostalgia to these handsomely useful projects. On the following pages, we'll show you how to build the safe and letter box.*



## MINI SAFE

**Kids will love saving for tomorrow in an oak safe highlighting one of yesteryear's treasures—a genuine brass lockbox door. The restored brass door—salvaged from one of America's post offices—comes complete with a working combination.**

### First, make a basic box

**1** Cut a piece of ½"-thick oak to 4" wide by 24" long. Cut or rout a ¼" groove ¼" deep and ¼" from one edge of the oak strip.

**2** Tilt your tablesaw blade 45° from center. Using a miter gauge fitted with a fence, miter-cut the

sides (A) and top and bottom (B) to length from the 24"-long strip.

**3** Using the dimensions on the drawing, mark the slot on the top face of the top piece (B). Drill a ¼" hole at each end of the slot. Using a ⅜" bit, drill out the waste material between the two ¼" holes. Then, chisel the slot to shape, or cut it to shape with a scroll saw.

**4** Cut the box back (C) to size from ¼" oak or lauan plywood.

**5** Glue and clamp the box assembly together. (We used masking tape to hold the mitered joints together, and then pulled the joints tight with a band clamp.)

### Add a base

**1** Cut a piece of ½"-thick oak to

¾" wide by 24" long. Miter-cut the base pieces (D, E) to length from the strip. Mark the opening on the four pieces to form the feet where shown on the drawing *at right*.

**2** Cut the base pieces to shape. (We cut ours on a band saw fitted with a ⅛" blade.) Sand the rounded corners smooth with a 1"-diameter drum sander.

### Putting it all together

**1** Glue and clamp the base pieces to the bottom of the box.

**2** Position the door and drill ⅜"-deep holes in sides (A). The holes will be slightly angled.

**3** Sand the assembly smooth. Stain and finish as desired. Screw the door in place. Then, empty your pocket change into the bank.

### Bill of Materials

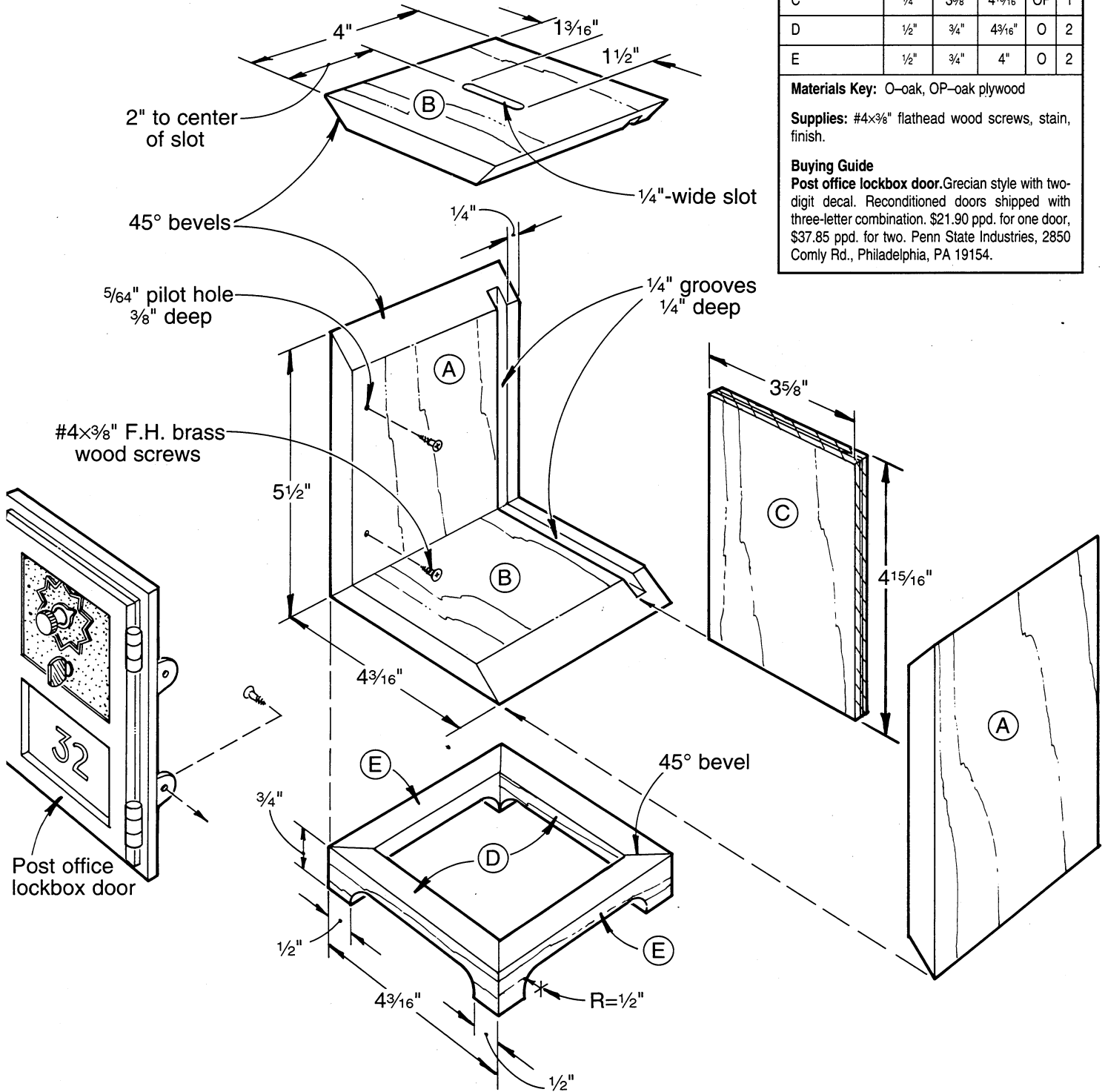
Part	Finished Size			Mat.	Qty.
	T	W	L		
A	1/2"	4"	5 1/2"	O	2
B	1/2"	4"	4 3/16"	O	2
C	1/4"	3 5/8"	4 15/16"	OP	1
D	1/2"	3/4"	4 3/16"	O	2
E	1/2"	3/4"	4"	O	2

**Materials Key:** O—oak, OP—oak plywood

**Supplies:** #4×3/8" flathead wood screws, stain, finish.

#### Buying Guide

**Post office lockbox door.** Grecian style with two-digit decal. Reconditioned doors shipped with three-letter combination. \$21.90 ppd. for one door, \$37.85 ppd. for two. Penn State Industries, 2850 Comly Rd., Philadelphia, PA 19154.



# BILL BOX/KEY KEEPER

Staying organized in this day and age isn't easy. But with this project, you'll at least know the whereabouts of those ever-present bills, and be able to keep track of otherwise-elusive car keys that always seem to wander off.

## Cut and assemble the letter box

**1** Rip and crosscut the back (A), front (B), two sides (C), shelf (D), and bottom (E) to the sizes listed in the Bill of Materials.

**2** Mark and cut, a  $2\frac{1}{4}$ " radius on the top of the back piece. Rout a  $\frac{3}{8}$ " round-over on the top back edge of the front piece.

**3** Using a try square, mark the door-opening location on the front piece, and cut it to shape. Check the fit of the door in the opening.

**4** Using double-faced tape, fasten the two side pieces (C) together, face to face with the edges flush. Mark a  $2\frac{3}{4}$ " radius on one piece where dimensioned on the drawing, and cut and sand both pieces to shape. Remove the tape.

**5** Mark the location, and cut a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " rabbet  $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep along the bottom edge of the back (A). Using the dimensions on the drawing, mark the locations and cut a  $\frac{1}{2}$ " dado  $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep in the front and back pieces. Check the fit of the shelf and bottom in the dados and rabbet.

**6** Mark the location and drill pilot holes for the two cup hooks and two mounting holes for attaching the box to the wall after assembly.

**7** With the bottom edges of the sides and back flush, glue and clamp them together. (We

positioned the shelf and bottom in place to hold the assembly square.) Glue and clamp the shelf, bottom, and front to the assembly.

**8** Transfer the eagle pattern below to  $\frac{1}{4}$ " oak stock, and cut it to shape. (We planed down a piece of  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-stock for the  $\frac{1}{4}$ "-thick eagle.)

## Now, mount the door and add the finish

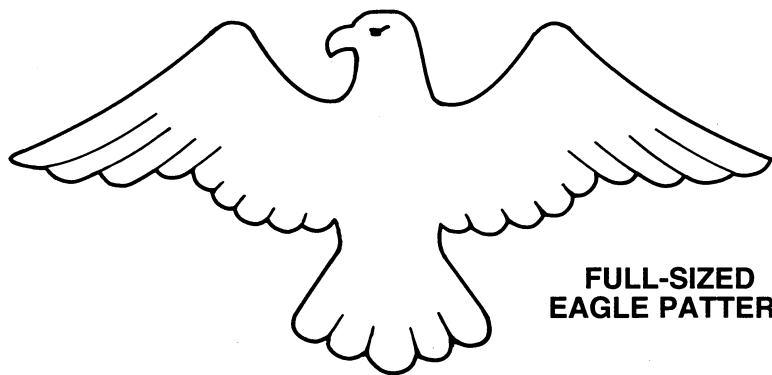
**1** Sand the box smooth. Hold the bronze door in place, and drill the angled pilot holes in the sides in the front piece. Remove the door.

**2** Stain and finish the box. Mount the door and hang the box, centering it over a stud if possible.

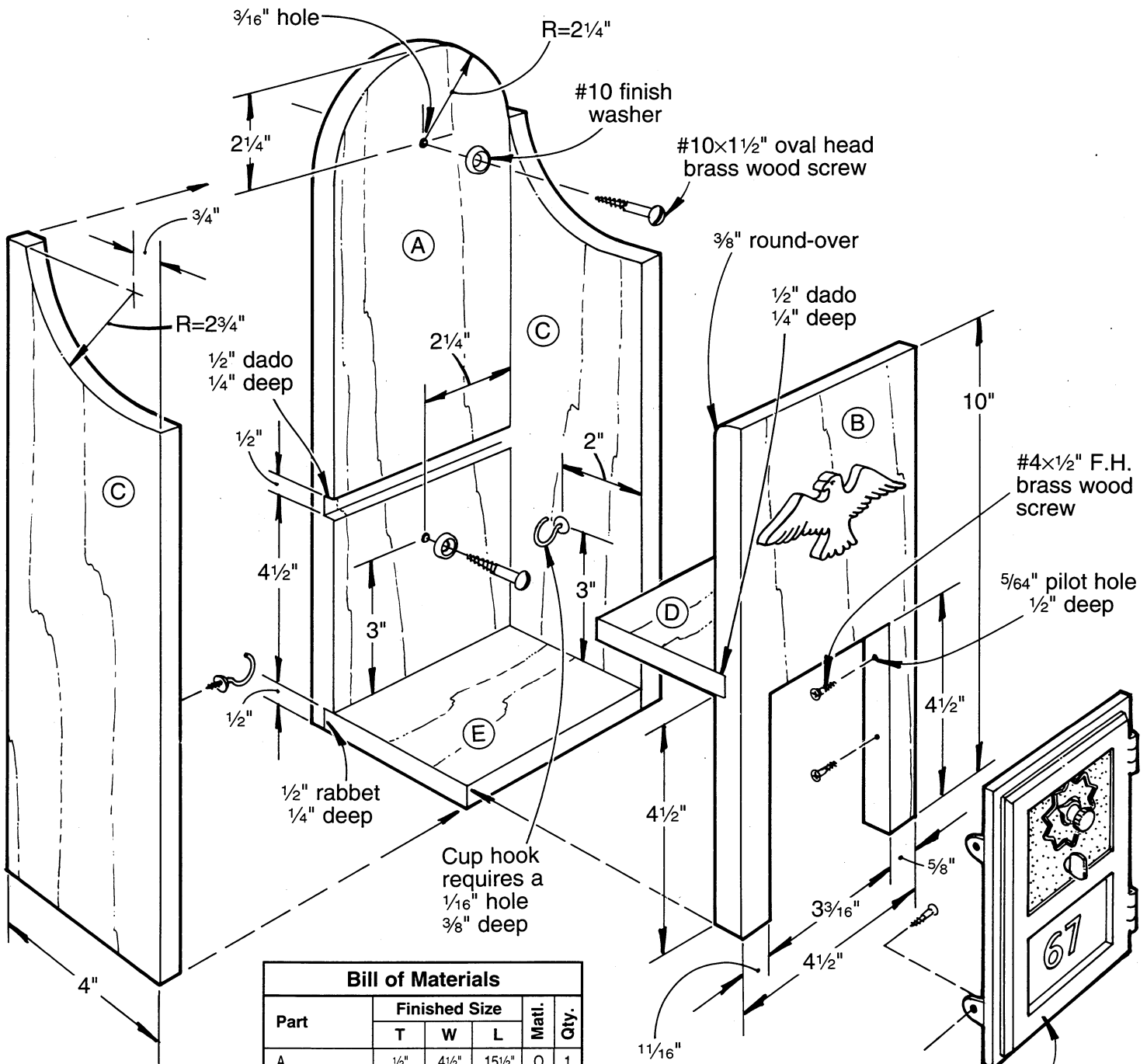
*Note: If you don't want to use the combination each time you open the door, remove the lock mechanism from the back of the door. Then, remount the dial.* ♣



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FULL-SIZED  
EAGLE PATTERN



**Bill of Materials**

Part	Finished Size			Matl.	Qty.
	T	W	L		
A	1/2"	4 1/2"	15 1/2"	O	1
B	3/4"	4 1/2"	10"	O	1
C	1/2"	4"	13 1/4"	O	2
D	1/2"	3 1/4"	4 1/2"	O	1
E	1/2"	3 3/4"	4 1/2"	O	1

**Material Key:** O—oak, OP—oak plywood

**Supplies:** stain, finish, 2—7/8" cup hooks (Stanley catalog no. 8481-7/8), #4x1/2" flathead wood screws, 2—#10x1 1/2" oval head brass wood screws and brass finish washers.

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