

Thanks for downloading my poker table plans. This is a great DIY project that you can complete this weekend. The result is an amazingly beautiful poker table that will be the star at your next poker tournament.

Materials List

The poker table cloth, foam, vinyl and cupholders can all be purchased via the links at my website.

<http://www.ezpokertables.com/materials-list-octagon-poker-table/>

You will also need to make a trip to the hardware store. That list is on my site as well as below.

- 1 4'x4' sheet of 1/4" Pine – cheaper plywood can be substituted, but I would stay away from MDF.
- 1 4'x4' sheet of 1/2" Birch – this will be the visible wood on the table, so make sure it's nice. I like birch because it stains nicely and has a soft look.
- Sandpaper – fine and rough grade. I used an electric sander and was so glad that I did.
- 3M Super 77 Multipurpose Adhesive
- Miniwax wood finish – I used cherry stain
- Miniwax fast drying polyurethane
- 8 clamps that can hold together 2 pieces of plywood (roughly 3/4" thick) – these aren't necessary but make things a heck of a lot easier.
- Elmer's wood glue.
- Banquet Table Legs – these are sold by the pair and are in a flat white box. They have them at Home Depot for sure.
- 2 paintbrushes for the stain and the poly. I spent a little extra on the poly brush.
- 1 yardstick – found in the paint dept. of Home Depot
- 12 Finishing nails – 1/2"
- 12, 3/4" wood screws
- 12, 1 3/4" wood screws
- 12, 1 1/4" wood screws

Tools Required

- Power Drill, although a couple of screwdrivers would work too
- Electric Sander, although sandpaper will work.
- Jigsaw – a router can also be used, but I find the jigsaw works perfectly and is more common around the everyday home.
- Tape measurer
- Razorblade
- Staple Gun

Making the Cuts

The table will be built using 2 sheets of plywood.

Sheet #1 – ½” Pine for the foamed rail and base.

Sheet #2 – ½” Birch for the rail lip, racetrack, and playing surface.

Sheet #1

The first step is to draw your cuts on sheet #1. This sheet will be used for the 4” padded rail and the table base. If you were able to find a 4’x4’ of pine plywood then you’re good to go. If you had to purchase an 8’x4’ piece of pine, now is the time to cut the sheet in half so that you have two 4’x4’ pieces. You can save the other half of this sheet for another table if you would like.



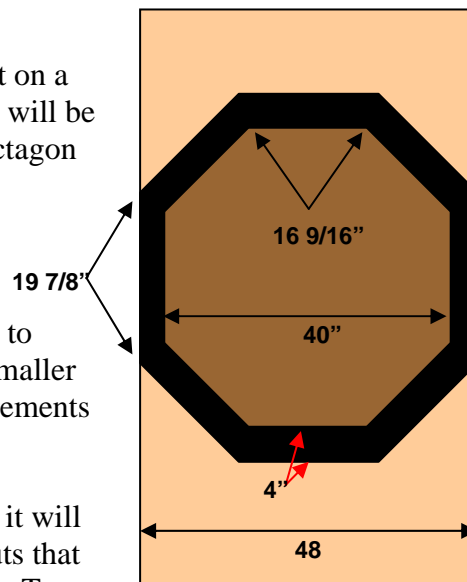
For this particular table I am going to use the largest octagonal dimensions available for a 4’x4’ piece of plywood. However, if you would like to make a smaller table for some reason you can always refer the [OCTAGON LAYOUT CALCULATOR](#). This site is a great resource that you should at least look at once before continuing.

The next step is to draw the outer lines of the 4” rail onto the plywood. The quickest way to do this is to refer to the OLC (octagon layout calculator). Of the 8 sides of the rail, 4 of them are already cut for you by virtue of size of the wood.

The diagram to the right represents Sheet #1 (but on a full piece of plywood). The black 4” wide piece will be used for the padded rail and the inner (brown) octagon will be used for the base of the table.

All of the measurements used here are based on using the entire 48” width of the plywood. You may use the Octagon calculator if you want to make a smaller table. If you choose to make a smaller octagon table, be sure to adjust all future measurements accordingly!

This is a good piece of wood to cut first because it will get you used to using the jigsaw. None of the cuts that you make will be visible on the finished product. To make the inside cut you will need to drill a small starter hole for you jigsaw to slide into.



You should end up with this when you are done cutting sheet #1. **Make sure to make distinguishable marks on the different pieces so that you know how to put them back together**



Sheet #2

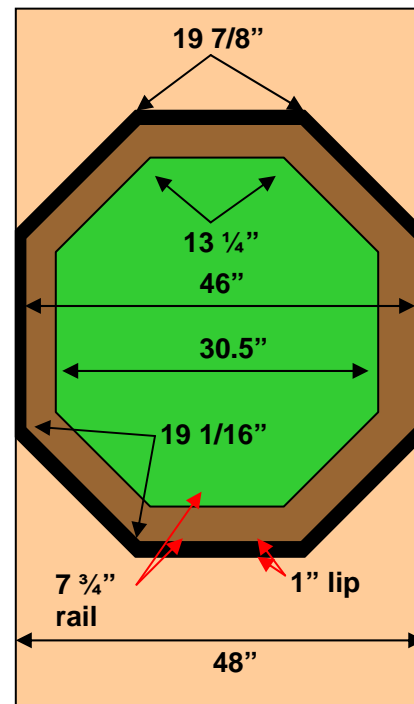
Sheet # 2 is the 1/2" sheet of birch. This is the piece that **will be visible** so be sure to draw your lines on the side of the table you **will not** be seeing!!!! You will use the basic same techniques as you did with sheet #1 above.

The 1" outer ring (shown in black in the diagram below) will be secured to the bottom of the rail ring from sheet #1. This is called the rail lip. We will cover the attachment step later.

The darker brown octagon will be the wood used for the playing surface. It is important that you make nice looking cuts when cutting this piece because they will be visible.

The green octagon will be used for the playing surface and will be covered with foam and material. This cut needs to be precise.

Make your cuts so that the playing surface top is on the bottom side when being cut. I find that you are less likely to see splinters and screw ups this way.





The difference between this sheet of wood and the last one is that you will need to use some skill to start your inner cuts if you are using your jigsaw blade. I used a very small drill bit and worked it back and forth until I had a cut wide enough to get my jigsaw into. **DO NOT** simply try to make the initial entry point with the jigsaw. You will quickly find out that it won't work and have to make another trip to the hardware store to get another piece of wood. **MAKE SURE YOU ARE MARKING HOW THE PIECES WILL LINE UP LATER OR IT WILL NOT BE FUN.**



These three pieces are what you should end up with when you are done with sheet #2. **NOTE:** The 4x4 SQUARE piece (in the back) is what you STARTED with, and the three octagons are what you will have after the cuts are made.

BUILDING THE RAIL

The first step is that you will need to glue the 1" rail lip from sheet #2 to the 4" rail from sheet #1. The pieces should match up correctly, but there is the possibility of a few small differences as they came from different pieces of wood. Sand any discrepancies down so they match up well. The rail is covered with foam and vinyl and will not be visible, so it does not have to be PERFECT, just pretty close.

Use the wood glue to attach the lip to the rail, → and while it dries, clamp the two together. This helps keep the two together when you move it around to do other steps.

You will need to let this sit overnight, so move on to another part of the table when you are done with this step. Page 16 is a would be a good place to go next.

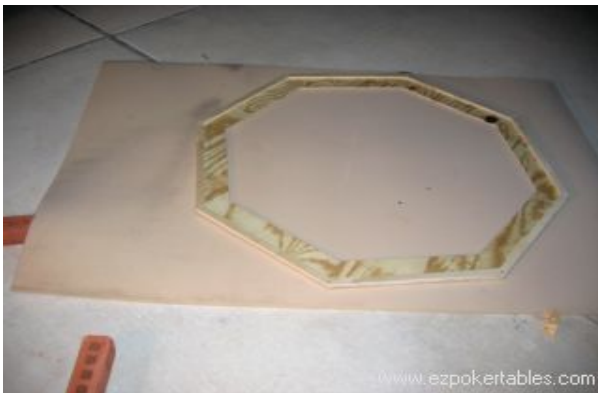


In the morning use some finishing nails or $\frac{3}{4}$ " screws around the rail to secure it even more. I usually use about a dozen or so, putting one nail or screw in each corner, and some on the straight-aways. It's up to you how many you are comfortable using- just be sure it's secure! Then remove the clamps, and move on.....

Next, flip the rail over where the larger piece is on top. We are going to be attaching the foam for the rail. For this step I usually just use bricks to support the rail, because you will be spraying adhesive and may not want to get it on your sawhorse. You also may want to do this outside, as the adhesive can give you a headache!



Be sure to coat the wood very well, and don't be afraid to spray the foam as you place it on the wood! Unroll the foam onto the rail, making sure it is well attached. Unsure? **USE MORE ADHESIVE.**



Flip the foam and rail over once it is secure. Do not worry if the rail is centered on the foam, just make sure all of the rail is covered by the foam.



Now we will cut the extra foam from the center, and the outside of the wooden rail. Leave about 1.5" of foam around the inside and outside of the wood. Try to cut as even as possible on every side! The rail will end up lumpy if you are not careful! The excess foam can be discarded. You will end up with a foam covered wooden rail, ready to be wrapped in the next step.

Covering the Rail

This is arguably the *toughest part* of building a poker table. I would suggest using two people on this step. It will make it much easier and your rail will turn out much smoother.

The first step is to lay your foamed rail upside-down onto the back side of the whisper vinyl. The vinyl is 54" wide and will not need to be cut on the outer edges. However, the length may need to be trimmed up so that it is easier to work with. Again, the lip is facing up!



Begin to work your way around the rail with a staple gun. I always start with a straight-away and then work myself around the corners of the octagon. **Make sure you are stapling the vinyl to the top of the rail lip rather than wrapping it all the way around the lip. Note in the picture where the staples are going..... -->**



USE A TON OF STAPLES! I literally left less than a 1/4" between staples. I'm making it look very easy in the pictures, but you need to really pull the vinyl tight to have a nice smooth rail. This is the part that can easily be botched for a beginner because they don't spend the time to make sure it is tight. Flip the rail over every so often to make sure that you are looking good. The lip will eventually have to fit back over the racetrack.

Keep stapling away! All the way around the outside part of the rail. Again, you cannot use too many staples in this step, or the next one!



Once you have finished stapling the outside, go ahead and cut away the excess vinyl, FROM THE OUTSIDE ONLY!

On the inside, start in the middle of the rail, and cut 8 triangles, cutting like you are cutting a pie. Each cut should go from the middle TOWARDS a corner of the rail. Get within 2.5" of the foam that you attached to the wood and cut a small "V" in the vinyl at each corner. See the picture to the right here.-->



You will understand the reasons for these cuts now, as we are starting on the hardest part of this table!

The inside is best done with two people, it can take a long time!



Grab one of the “pie” triangles you have cut and begin pulling it tight, **TIGHT** and stapling it to the inside of the rail. **The photo here shows an example of where to staple.** Note the inner row of staples are on the 4” rail, not the lip as we did before, The outside is stapled to the rail LIP, and the inside to the rail itself.

You will need to work your way around the inside of the rail with your stapler. *Make sure you are stapling to the rail itself.* If you weren’t pulling the vinyl **tight** before you should start now. It’s not too late to make this rail the envy of all of your friends. Flip the rail over every couple of feet to check your progress. You can always undo the last foot or so if necessary. We are looking for clean lines and no wrinkles. **PULL HARD!!**

At each corner use the smaller “V” cuts to really pull the vinyl tight. You **don’t want** wrinkles!! The corners get progressively harder as you get around the table. Keep pulling **tight!!**

Cut away the large chunks of extra vinyl, you *can* do this as you go along, but be careful and check that your rail is nice and seamless before you do! Remember, if you need to re-do a part you need the extra vinyl to help you pull tight!!



Again, trim off *all* of the excess vinyl, almost all the way to the staples. Large extra lumps, folds, and ridges need to be eliminated or corrected now.

Admire your new rail. You’ve worked hard. It’s time to boast to friends or spouse.



Remember – SMOOTH is the key to a sharp looking rail! Your corners will not be as sharp as the corners on the wood. You want a nice, uniform rail with no seams!!

It's all downhill from here!!!! The worst part is DONE! Now we move onto staining your racetrack.

Staining the Racetrack



If you are going to build the poker table as a weekend project I would definitely stain the racetrack on **the first day/night**. The Minwax stain suggests allowing at least 8 hours to dry.

First, you should sand down the birch racetrack until the surface is silky smooth. The sheets that I usually buy are pretty darn good and don't require much sanding.

Next, you will want to **clean up your shop or garage**. Get rid of all that sawdust from earlier. If you don't have a clean workspace, you'll likely wake up to messy stain.

Use a paintbrush to apply the stain. Feel free to be very liberal with the stain, but make sure that you are applying it **WITH** the grain of the wood. Continue to go with the grain even on the turns. Always keep a wet edge and work your way around the entire surface. Be conscious of any area that may have a pool of stain sitting on it. We are looking for a very even coat. I used the Minwax/Poly Pecan color stain on this table and it looks great. After about 5 minutes take a towel and wipe up any excess.

After the staining is complete let the racetrack sit overnight. I only used two coats and was very happy with the color.





The next morning, if you would like to add another coat, use a very light sandpaper to go over the surface of the stained racetrack and then re-apply another coat of poly/stain. Use very fine sandpaper and use 1 or 2 VERY LIGHT strokes over the entire surface.

Again, with polyurethane make sure that you work area is free from dust before you begin.

There are a TON of options when designing your racetrack. We have had customers put cards, poker chips, actual dollar bills, coins and many other things into the track using different grades of polyurethane . Use your imagination!!

Covering the Playing Surface



The next process can be a messy one, so I suggest doing it in the yard. Lay the playing surface on the ground. This is the smallest of the octagons cut from the birch sheet of wood. **Make sure that you lay it down with the correct side up because this piece will have to fit back together with the racetrack.** Line up the 1/4" foam so that it will completely cover the playing surface.

Next, use the 3M adhesive to adhere the two pieces. I attached about 1 foot at a time. Do not be shy with the adhesive. You don't want these pieces to come apart later. Coat both the wood, and the foam to ensure a good attachment.



Once the glue has dried (about 10 minutes), take a razor blade and cut off the excess foam. It is important that you make a smooth cut that is flush with the wood. **Do not leave any excess, you have to fit piece this back into the racetrack!!**

I chose to do the next step indoors to protect the suited speed cloth. Lay the playing surface on top of the suited speed cloth, foam side down. Much like you did for the padded rail, you will want to pull the cloth tight and staple it to the underside surface. Pull the cloth **TIGHT** and decrease bunching!!



I begin to staple on one of the straight-aways and work your way around. Flip the board over occasionally to make sure that there are no wrinkles and that the pattern on the cloth is lined up properly. ***Make sure that you are pulling the cloth very tight as you staple around the edges.*** The last thing you want is a wrinkle or loose area on your playing surface. Once you are done you should have a beautiful playing surface where you will hopefully make a fortune.☺





Once you have the cloth stapled tightly all the way around, cut all of the extra cloth off around the entire piece of wood. Cut almost all the way to the staples, you will want this to lay flat on the table later on.

You should end up with a piece that looks like this in the picture to the right →

Do your best to keep the cloth clean and free from splinters and extra staples, a snag can eventually cause a rip or tear to form!



So set this aside in a safe place for now, we will come back to it later.

Installing the Cup Holders

Now you are going to need a DRY racetrack for this step, so it's best done on the last day.

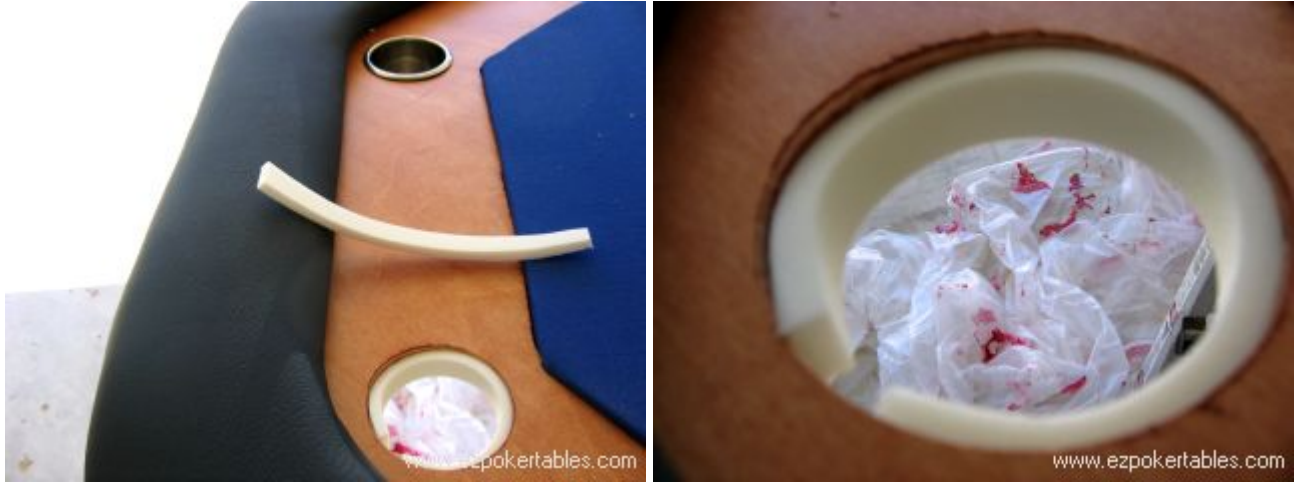
Begin by attaching the base and racetrack together using $\frac{3}{4}$ " screws. Use about 8-10 and work your way around the table as shown in the picture to the right. Make sure that you apply some weight to both pieces when screwing them together so that there are no gaps.



Next, figure out where you want your cup holders, and use a 3" hole cutter or jigsaw to tackle this task to drill holes through the racetrack AND the base. See picture to the right. You will want to lay the wrapped rail on the table before making the cuts so that you know exactly where you want the cup holders.



Here we see the **hole saw** coming through the bottom.



The lip of the cup holders that I purchase are just over 3" in diameter, but the base is about 2.75" in diameter. If you were to use a 3" hole saw to cut the holes, the cupholders don't fit snugly in the holes, so you have to adapt and add some excess foam into the inside of the holes (as shown above). If you are going to use a jigsaw for the holes, you will want to start with a smaller hole and work your way bigger. You won't be able to recover if you cut the hole too big.. Better safe than sorry!



Attaching the Playing Surface

Now, you will attach the playing surface to the base. Just drop it right in the middle of your racetrack (see photo last page).

Use two people for this step. One person should make sure that the surface doesn't move (pop up) while the other person drills in 8-10 3/4" screws in the base. Remember that the base is 1/2" thick and the playing surface is 1/2" thick (not including the foam surface). You do not want the screws to come through the foam!! I've seen it happen, so work slowly.



Attaching the Rail

Next, you will want to attach the padded foam rail. These pieces should fit together according to your marks that you made on them earlier. If necessary, use a long screwdriver as a lever to make the two pieces fit together snugly. Lay the rail on top of the table using the marks that you made earlier so that they will line up accordingly. If there is not a good fit, you need to sand the edges down on both pieces so that the rail sits flush on top of the table. Then, flip the entire table over and drill 8-10, 3/4" screws around the edge of the table so that the rail is secure. Again, you will need to apply weight to the table while drilling so that the screw make it into both pieces of wood and there are no gaps.

Attaching the Table Legs

Now it's time to attach the table legs. The table should remain flipped over from the previous step. Screw in the base of the legs with the screws that came in the table leg box. You can see the placement of my legs in the picture to the right



Test out the new legs by turning the table over and standing it up. You should have a sturdy base to build that table upon. There are **thousands** of options for table legs, but because I wanted to store the table when not in use, I went with the folding legs. Get creative if you are going to use your table as a piece of everyday use furniture.

Note that the picture to the right is from another table I have built previously (oval)



