



Making a Sledge

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Jim Ruen

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As I said in my last blog entry, my sledge, as you can see, was a “make do.”

Regardless of which approach you take, the basics are the same. You need a set of runners, a platform or bed and a tow chain or rope.

The size of the components and the materials used depend on what you plan to transport, what you will be pulling it with and how solid you want it to be.

The runners, like a pair of skis should have a turned up tip so they will create less friction and not dig into the ground as the sledge is pulled.

Yes, I know mine didn't have this. I had extra power, not time.

The size of the runner depends on the load to be pulled. I have made simple sledges to be pulled by hand out of 2x4s laid on edge. This sledge used a pair of 4x4s recycled from a retaining wall.

The bed can be attached directly to the runners for a very simple approach or it can be raised on blocks if the sledge is going to be pulled over rough ground, rocks and stumps. Remember the bed is a key structural component. It will maintain the spread between the runners as well as carry the load.

If the bed is to be attached directly to the runners, use lag bolts or heavy spikes. If the bed is placed on blocks, toenail the blocks in place on the runner, tack the bed in place on the blocks and then drill a hole through all three components.

Insert a round-headed bolt from the bottom of the runner through the block and the bed and secure with a washer and a locknut or two regular nuts.

Although my bed lay direct on the runners, I added 2x4-inch rails to the sides and front of the platform.

They reinforced the sledge and created a base for the sides I was going to add. If you are shooting for true craftsmanship, drive a hardwood dowel slightly larger than your drill bit through the hole instead of using a bolt.

Either way, it is now time to take a break and think.

Next week, I will finish suggestions for making a sledge.

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