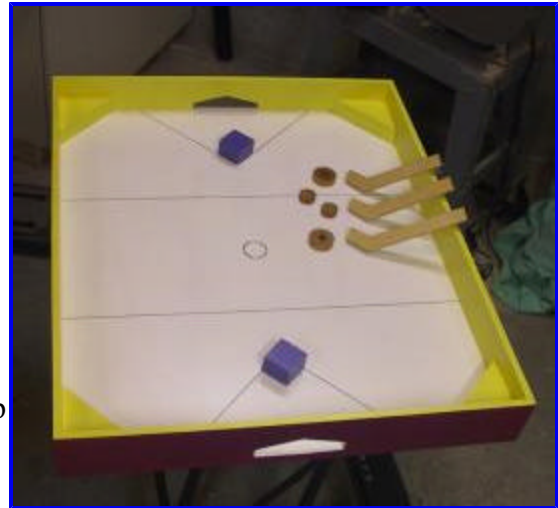


Table Hockey Game

The idea, and plans, for this project come from an article on page 72/73 of the *October 1996 American Woodworker* magazine. You can contact them about reprints or actual plans. I do not intend to plagiarize.

The idea is reasonably simple though, so I doubt that you need any plans. All this game is, is a shallow wooden box or tray, with some goalie holes cut in two ends. A few blocks are then glued down, to make the game more interesting and challenging. Give two kids a pair of sticks and a puck, make up some appropriate rules, and turn them loose.



You can make this any number of ways.

- The original in the magazine was made 37.5" long by 31.5" wide by 4.5" tall. I made mine 34.5" long by 28.5" wide by 4" tall, simply based on the available wood in my shop.
- The original in the magazine had a base made out of laminate coated plywood, with solid cherry sides, and wood blocks out of exotic scraps. I made mine out of 3/4" birch plywood for the base, 1/2" baltic birch plywood for the sides, and wood blocks out of random scraps - S.Y.P. actually.
- The original called for hockey sticks made out of half-inch plywood with hardwood veneered to the face. I just stuck with half-inch baltic birch plywood. I can easily remedy this in future, I want to see how the kids use it, and if the sticks last.
- The original called for a nice clear finish. Since I used plywood, I opted to paint it. We had fun there. My wife and I selected some of the brightest paint that we had available from other projects. I put down a semi-gloss white (kitchen + bath quality) for the "ice" surface, bright yellow for the inside side boards, cranberry-red for the outside, and purple for the goal blocks. The lines are just permanent black marker.

You could argue that the original was a beautiful piece of furniture, and I would probably agree with you. Go look it up for yourself in the magazine. However, my kids are approximately six, four, and two years of age and I can guarantee two things: One- If they like it they'll play with it a lot and it'll get beat up. Two- They're just kids. Who knows what they're going to like long term? This game could get used for a month and then stuffed in a corner forever. So, I opted to go with the simpler, cheaper, and quicker route of using plywood, whatever I had available in the shop.

That said, my wife and I think this game turned out very nice. We quite like the bright colours of paint.

Some notes on the finish: I put down a coat of white latex primer, followed by two coats of latex paint, then I drew the lines on the white surface, followed by two coats of water based flecto Varathane diamond finish. (exterior actually, it's what I had). Between each coat I did some **very** light sanding with 220 grit sandpaper. I repeat, **very** light sanding. After the final coat of varathane I went over it with a scotch pad (equivalent to

#0000 steel wool, but you don't use steel wool on a water-based finish) lubricated with a touch of water.

Some notes on dimensions:

- Overall: 34.5" long by 28.5" wide by 4" tall.
- Goal: 5.5" wide. 1" tall on the sides, 1.5" tall in center.
- Corner blocks: 4.5" square, cut on the diagonal, 1.5" thick.
- Goal blocks: 2" square by 1.5" thick centered 4.5" in front of each goal.
- "Blue" lines: Each line is 11" in from the ends. (In the magazine they had a large game, and their lines were 12" in from the ends.) Remember to put the lines on before you varathane, so they're protected by that finish.
- Hockey sticks: about 7" long, with a 135 degree angle, and a 2" long short end. Just make something that works.
- Pucks: Slice some dowels to 1/2" thickness. I cut a couple of different sizes, we'll see which works best. I also made extra, as I expect to lose some. (The larger pucks are sliced from an old rolling pin, that's why there are holes in them.)
- The sides are rabbeted to accept the base. The corners are mitered. The carcass is glued and nailed together. The corner blocks are screwed into place from below and also from each side. The goal blocks are glued down, and then screwed firmly into place from below

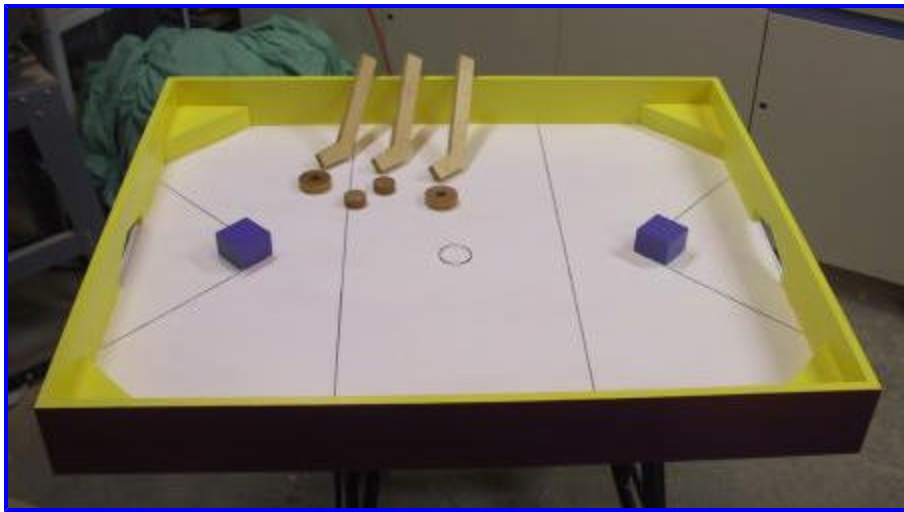
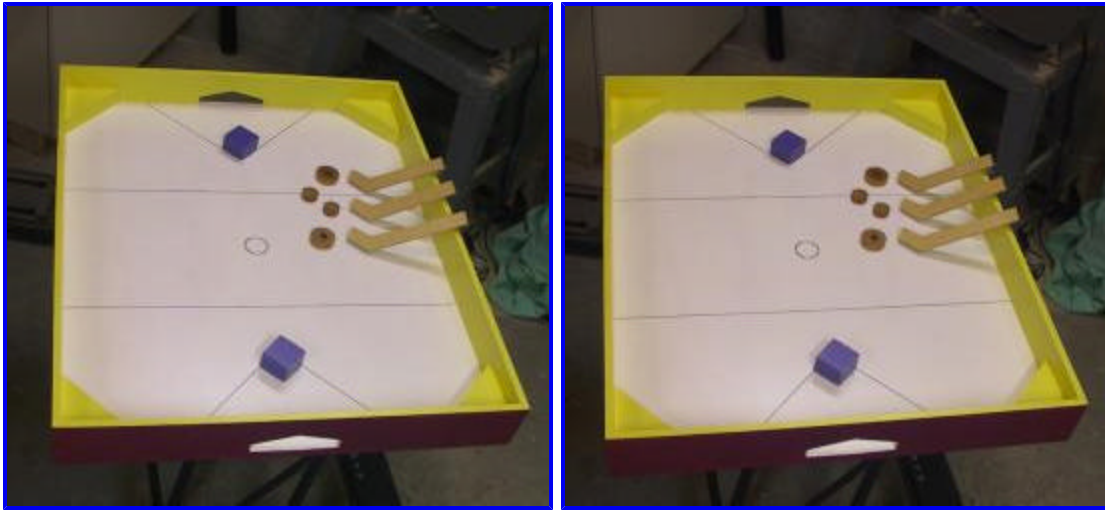
How to play? I expect the kids to make up some rules. The magazine suggests that the area between the two "blue" lines is a free area -- either player can hit the puck -- and the area between each blue line and the goal is a private area where only the defender can hit the puck. Whatever works for you. I expect that my kids will figure out a way that all three of them can play at once.

First Impressions: It was an instant hit with the kids. Even my wife and I have had a fun time playing a rousing game of hockey on this set.

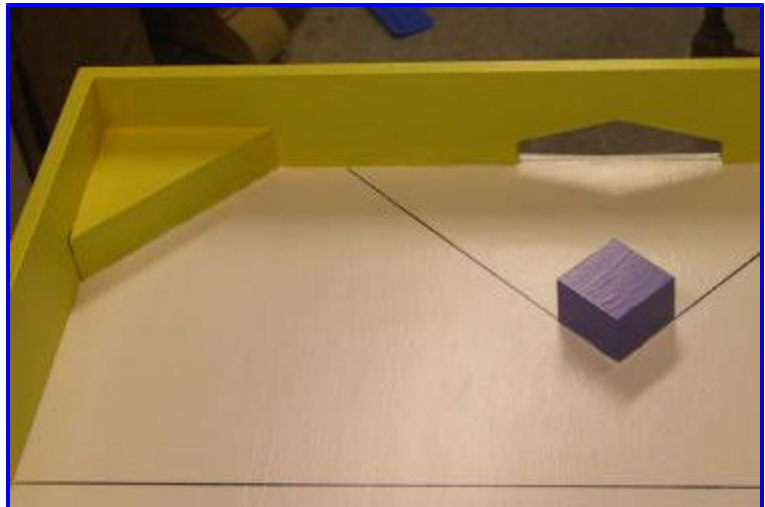
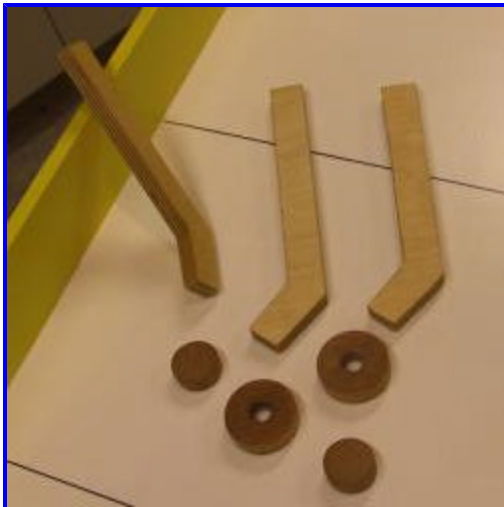
PLEASE PLAY SAFE! This is an active game. The players are knocking a (hard) wooden puck around and bashing their hockey sticks back and forth, swinging them here and there. Someone can very easily get hit by a stick or by a puck. We find that the puck regularly goes flying off of the game board after a hard shot. Please be careful. Parents, please consider the age and ability of your kids before deciding if this is an appropriate game for your family. My son drew blood within a half hour of unwrapping this game. It was just a blood blister from pinching his finger between his hockey stick and the "ice" surface. That was not a major problem of course, but I want to illustrate that accidents can happen.

Photo Gallery

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Close-Up Shots:



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