



Grow UP!

This garden arbour makes a great focal point and supports your upwardly mobile climbers

PRODUCED BY PAUL LEWIS

Unlike most weak-kneed, store-bought types, our cedar arbour has a strong, solid stance, thanks to its substantial timbers. To build it, you'll need a circular saw, jigsaw and drill (if you don't have a circular saw, you can make the straight cuts with a sharp-bladed handsaw).

ARCH

The sweeping curve of the graceful arch requires just one cut. After you've cut a 2 x 6 board to the correct length, lay out the curve

with a drawing bow (a skinny, flexible piece of wood, such as narrow moulding). Here's how: Measure 10" in from the ends of the 2 x 6 board and drive two finishing nails into its face, close to the bottom edge. Mark the centre point of the board 1½" down from the top edge.

Position the drawing bow against the finishing nails and push the centre up to meet the centre mark on the board. The bow will flex to form a near-perfect curve. When you're happy with its shape, run a



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: the curve of the elegant arch is achieved with just one cut; a side detail; nicely framed, the inexpensive store-bought lattice looks custom-made.

pencil along the edge of the bow to mark the curve. Next, use a compass to mark the circular cuts on the ends of the arch, then use a jigsaw to make the three cuts to form the arch. To complete the arch, attach the large, curved waste piece to the top of the 2 x 6 with 2½"-long deck screws. (To prevent wood from splitting, first drill a ⅛" hole.)

POSTS

Start the corner posts by cutting each of the 4 x 4s to 7' lengths. Next, measure and mark the notch at the top of each post that will receive the arch pieces. To cut the notch, make six saw cuts about 1" apart and 1⅝" deep. Knock out the waste pieces with a hammer and clean up the notch with a chisel, wood plane or rasp. Repeat with the remaining three posts.

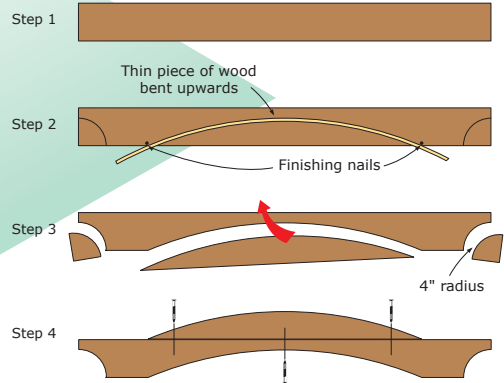
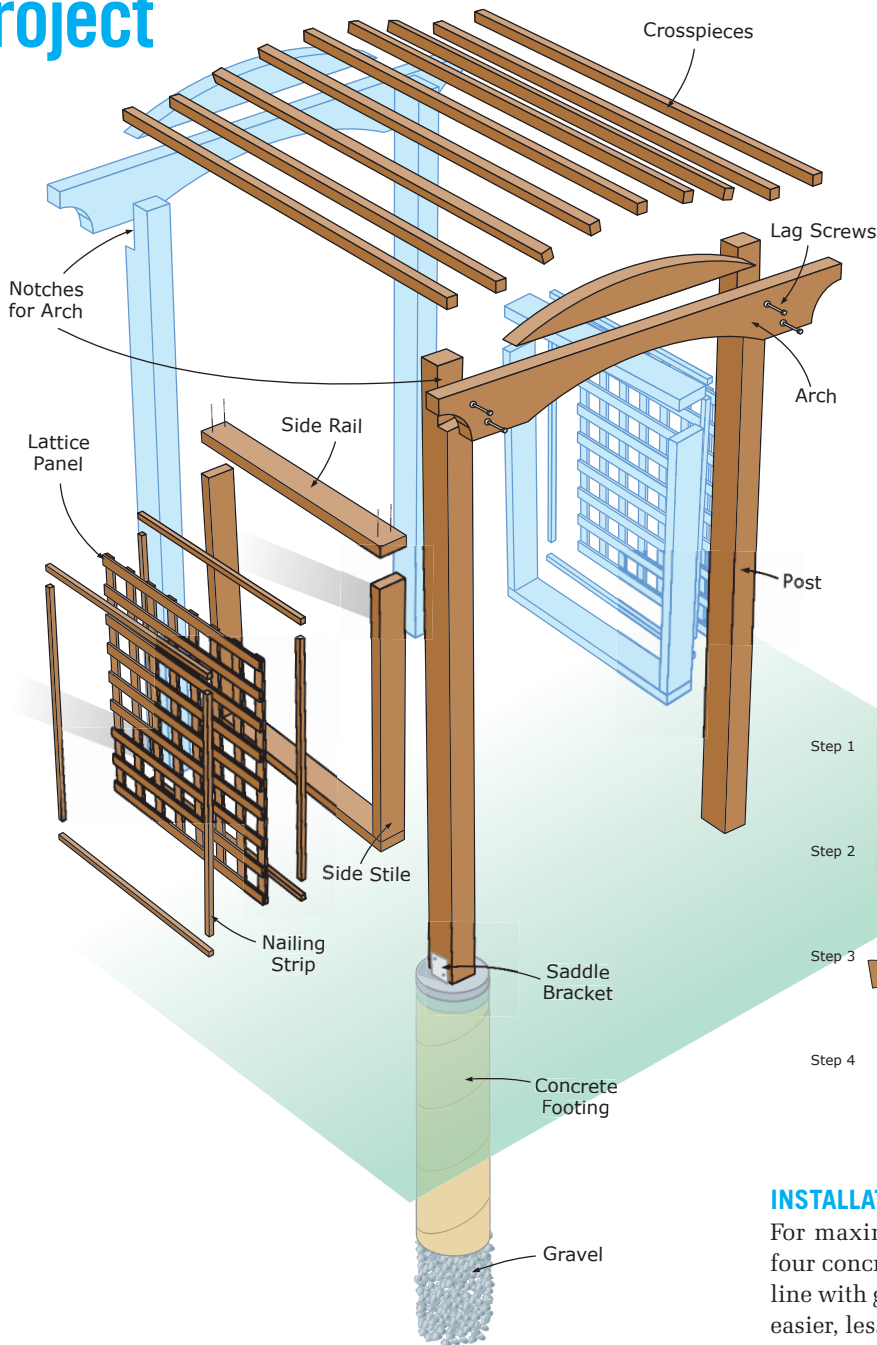
SIDE PANELS

Cut the 2 x 3 rails and stiles to length. Attach them together as shown in the drawing (page 30). Apply a bead of construction adhesive at each joint, then drive 2½"-long deck screws to make each connection. Once frames are complete, cut the nailing strips to length and install them on the inside face of the frame, using galvanized finishing nails spaced every 8". Use a small scrap of wood as a gauge to ensure even spacing between the strip and the edge of the 2 x 3s. Next, measure and mark the lattice panels, and cut to size with a circular saw. Install panels into the frames against the retaining strips and secure in place with more nails. Finally, attach the remaining nailing strip to the other side of the lattice panels.

ASSEMBLY

Lay two posts face up and parallel to each other on a flat surface. Position one arch piece into the notches on top of the posts and mark the location of the holes for the lag screws. Using a spade bit, first drill ⅝"-diameter countersink holes (to allow the head of the lag screw to sit flush with the surface), then drill ¼"-diameter pilot holes. Insert the stainless-steel lag screws and washers and drive them in with a socket or crescent wrench. Repeat this process for the back arch and post assembly.

Next, lay one of the assemblies face down on the ground and position a side frame onto the corner post; attach with six 2½" deck screws. Repeat for the other side panel, then lift the second arch and post assembly onto the top of the sides. Attach the frames to this with more screws driven in from the inside of the frame. Next, stand the arbour upright. Cut the cross-pieces to length and attach them to the top of the arches with a single screw in each end. Finally, fill screw holes with silicone caulking to prevent water from seeping in and damaging the wood.



INSTALLATION

For maximum sturdiness, secure the arbour to four concrete footings that extend below the frost line with galvanized metal saddle brackets. For an easier, less permanent option, excavate about 12" of soil under each post, then fill the holes with coarse gravel for drainage. (This method is more susceptible to frost heave; adjust if necessary by adding or removing some gravel each spring.)

FINISH

Before applying any finish, prepare the surface of the cedar by thoroughly sanding with a 60-grit abrasive on a random orbit sander. For a formal look, apply two coats of white, opaque, oil-based stain. If you prefer the natural look of cedar, apply a few coats of semi-transparent, oil-based stain. Or simply let the untreated cedar weather to a beautiful, silver-grey patina. ■

—Paul Lewis designs and builds furniture from his home near Bradford, Ontario. See more of Paul's work at www.pushstick.com.

materials

PART	SIZE	QTY.
(all cedar)		
Posts	3½" x 3½" x 84"	4
Arch	1½" x 5½" x 60"	2
Crosspieces	1½" x 1½" x 48"	9
Side stiles	1½" x 2½" x 36"	4
Side rails	1½" x 2½" x 34"	4
Lattice panels	¾" x 30½" x 35½"	2
Nailing strips	¾" x ¾" x 50'*	1

*cut to length as required