

How to Build a Fly Off Ramp*

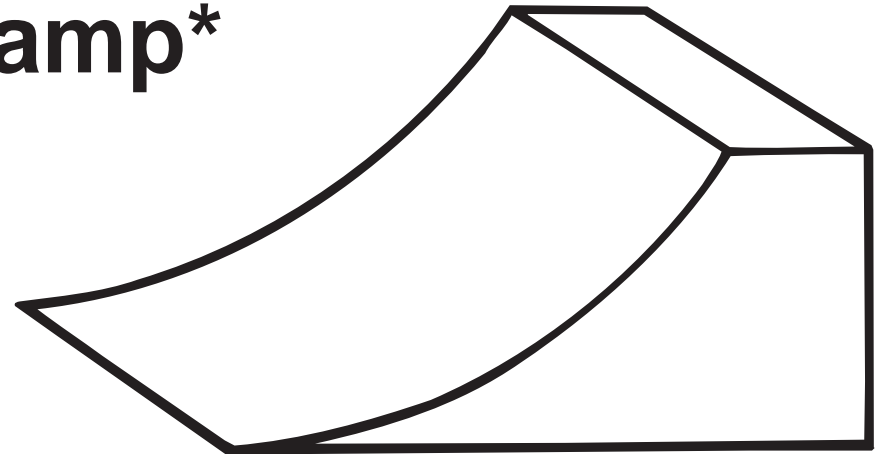
(*also known as a jump ramp, launch ramp, or kicker)

Let's face it, there are few simpler pleasures than flying through the air on a skateboard...
And there are fewer simpler pieces of skateable architecture to build than a fly-off ramp...

So what are you waiting for? It's time to learn to fly!

Now, a ramp is a simple thing to build.
All you really need is a sheet of wood that's not too bendy and something to prop it up on.
Check these photos to see how even the most sketchy pieces of wood can be turned into a hazardous fun box using the creative power of your mind.

(we would like to take this opportunity to say,
before switching on any power tools, switch on your brain)



243 SUPPORT

MATERIALS:

Wood - You'll need 11mm thick ply for the transition formers (the sides of the ramp), a sheet of 9mm ply for the riding surface, and some solid timbers 80mm x 50mm thick. Get some ring annular nails (the ones with ridges to grip the wood) and some wood glue.

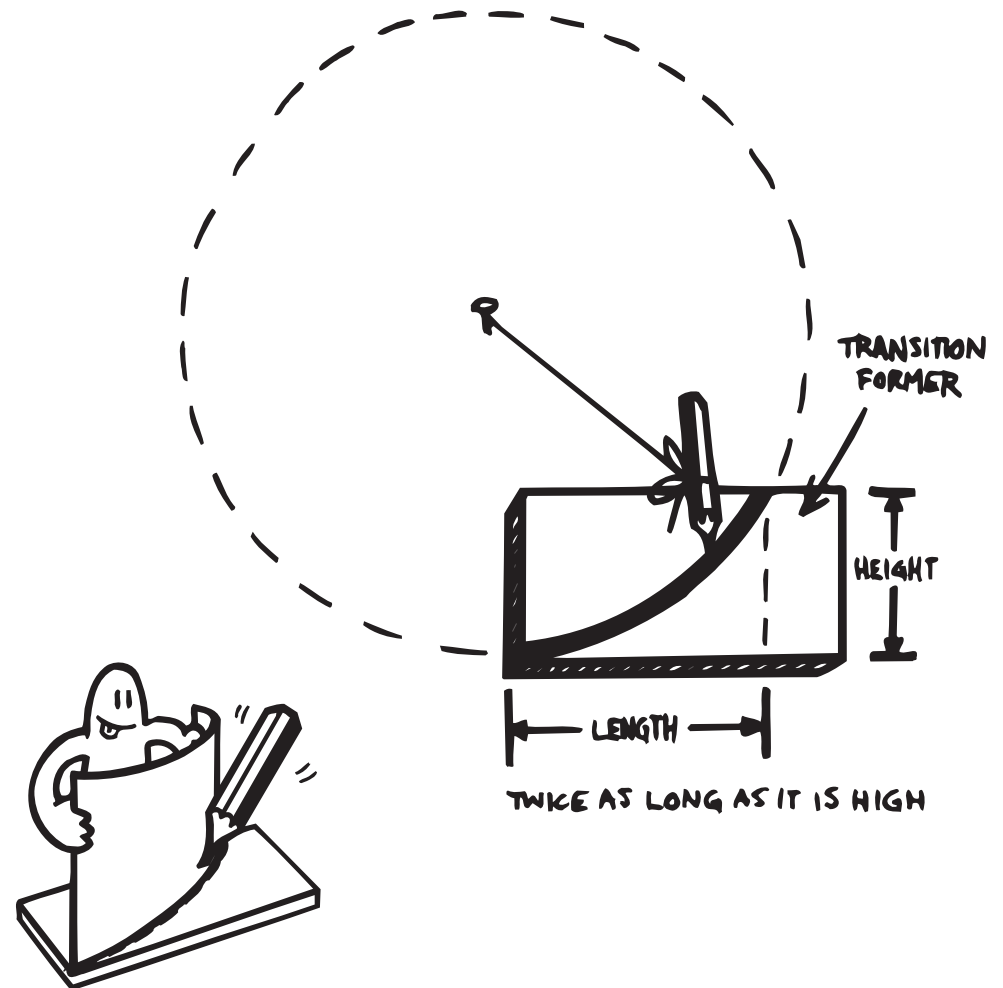
GETTING STARTED:

The main problem people have when they build ramps is that they don't take the time to work out what they're doing before they start. So read these instructions to the end before you break out the power tools, and you'll end up with a ramp that's far more enjoyable to skate.

The size of your ramp is dictated by the size of the sheet of ply you acquire for the surface. The rule of thumb for a jump ramp is to make it about twice as long as it is high, with a transition that provides a progressive lift as you launch up it.

Lay the sheets of ply that you're going to make the transition formers out of on the ground. Now, using either a nail, string and pencil compass (see diagram), or by holding the surface ply bent in a curve, draw the shape of your transition. Cut this piece out, then draw around it to make the other side of your ramp. Cut this out.

You now have both sides of your ramp.

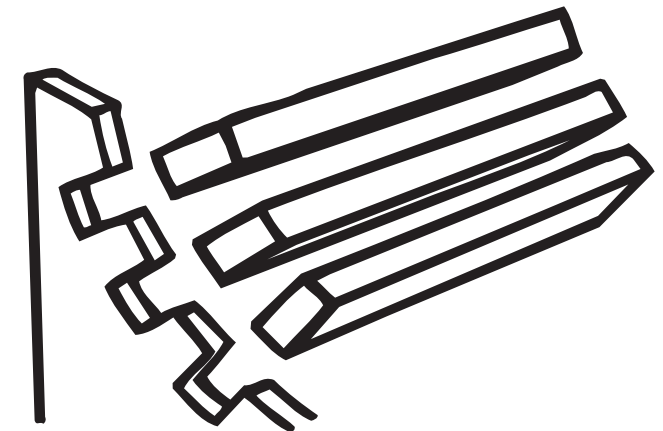
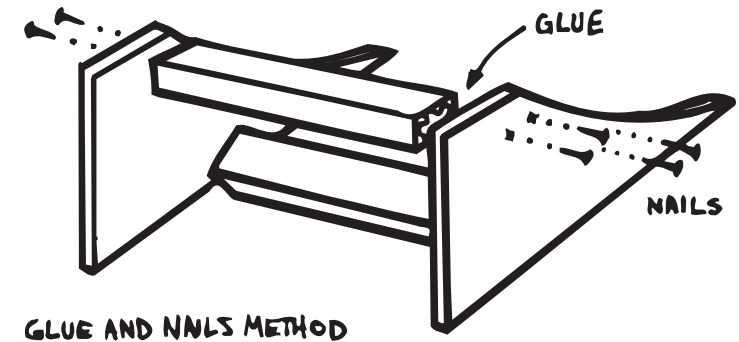


TRANSITION SUPPORTS:

Glue and nails method: Get your timbers and cut them 22mm (depending on the thickness of your transition formers) shorter than the width of your surface ply. Now glue and nail the timbers between the transition formers, flush with the curved edge (where your surface ply will be attached).

Notch method: If you want your ramp to last a while, it's worth taking the extra time to build a stronger ramp using this method. Hold the end of one of your timbers on the side of the transition former and draw around it to mark out where the timbers will lie. Now cut out your notches. Use this as a template to mark out the other transition former, and cut the notches in this one to. You want to get as snug a fit as possible, and whack a bit of wood glue in to hold them in place.

Whichever method you use, remember that the widest edge of the timbers should be at right angles to the skating surface to stop them breaking if you land heavy on the surface of the ramp.



FRAME BRACING:

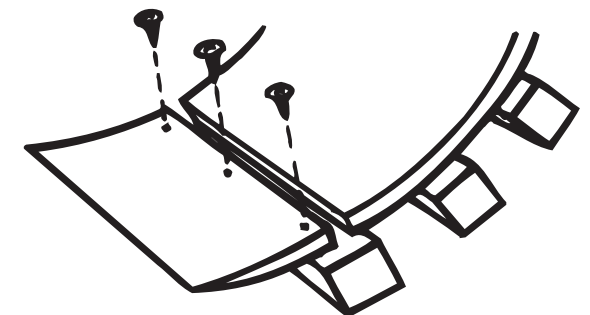
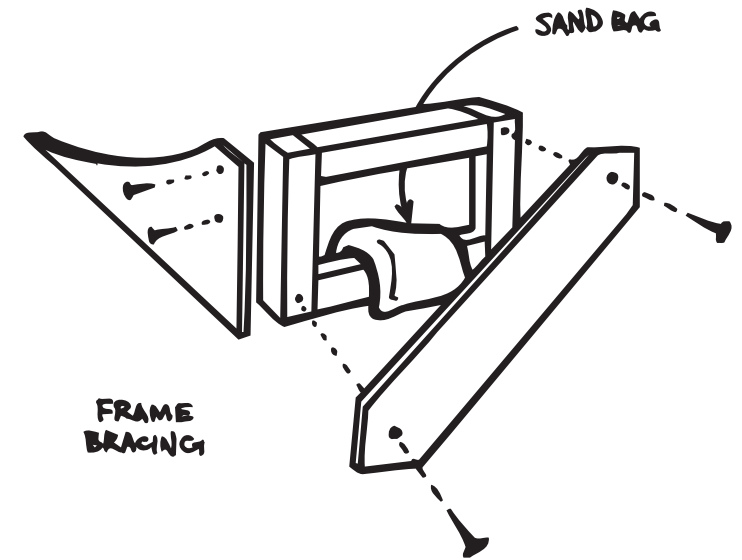
Any sturdy piece of timber will do for this. You need to cut four pieces to make a frame for the back of the ramp. When you're sure all the pieces fit, whack it in with a load of glue. Using a piece of string, measure diagonally from corner to corner to make sure it's square, then bang it together with nails. Take another piece of wood (an old floor board will do) and nail it on diagonally across the back. This should hold it all straight. You hope...


SURFACE:

All you need to do now is attach your sheet of 9mm surface ply. If you've built your ramp with the notch method so that it lasts, then we recommend using screws to attach the surface so that you can replace it when it gets trashed. Otherwise, just attach it with glue and nails. Make sure you give the nails a firm whack with a hammer so they're a bit below the surface of the ramp. Whichever method you're using, it's worth leaving a section of the ramp uncovered. This way you can screw on a replaceable "hit section". Taper the bottom edge of the hit section with sand paper (or grip tape) to ease the journey from street to ramp. Remember to make the join on a transition support timber so that it doesn't flap around.

That's it, you've built a jump ramp! Build two, and you can jump from one to the other, or face them towards each other and you've got a mini ramp. Continue the curve of the transition upwards and you can build a vert ramp. Build four facing each other, and bowl out the corners to make a bowl, or four backed up to each other with a square surface on the top and you've built a pyramid ramp.

The possibilities are endless.




NOT TO SCALE -
DO NOT SCALE
THIS DRAWING.

