

Pyramid Trellis Takes Gardening to New Heights

With this 7-foot trellis, your vining plants will have nowhere to go but up.



MARY LEE and Allen Millikin have built several trellises since their retirement, but this design was their first, and it's still the one they prize most.

"We admired a trellis like this at my cousin's house, then saw one just like it in a magazine," recalls Mary Lee of Ruther Glen, Virginia. "It was selling for \$79 in the magazine, but our cost was around \$20—quite a difference—and much more rewarding since we built it ourselves!"

"One year we planted several mandevillas at its base. Since the trellis is 7 feet tall, we were able to see the top of it, with those beautiful blooms, while sitting in our easy chairs inside the house."

We recommend building this trellis with pressure-treated wood for two reasons: It's long-lasting for outdoor projects, and it won't need a coat of stain. Pressure-treated lumber does have high moisture content, though, so it's important to let it dry thoroughly before you begin building.

Ready to improve the view from *your* easy chair? Then read on!

from each board. From these, cut four pieces 60 inches long and eight pieces 36 inches long. Cut two 45° angles on one end of each to make a decorative peak.

4. Measure and mark positions of the four spacers on the legs. To do this, lay all four legs together, with sides touching and tops and bottoms aligned. Measure and mark as shown in the illustration below right. Work from the bottom up. Set aside two of the legs.

5. Lay the other two legs on your workbench, with their sides touching. Keep the legs together at the tops (a heavy-duty rubber band around the tops will help) while spreading them apart at the bottom. Center the longest spacer at the lowest mark on the legs, the second-longest spacer at the second mark, and so on.

Fasten the spacers using 2-1/2-inch screws (drill pilot holes first). Start at the bottom and work your way up. As you screw the spacer to one leg, clamp the other down or nail a board behind it on your bench so you have something to push against. When positioning these screws, leave room for the screws you'll use to attach adjacent spacers (see illustration above right). Assemble the other set of legs the same way.

6. Stand the two sets of legs upright on a level floor, with the tops touching. Spread the bottom legs to make room for the spacers that hold the two sets together. Hold the tops together temporarily by wrapping with duct tape.

Drill a pilot hole and fasten the longest spacer between

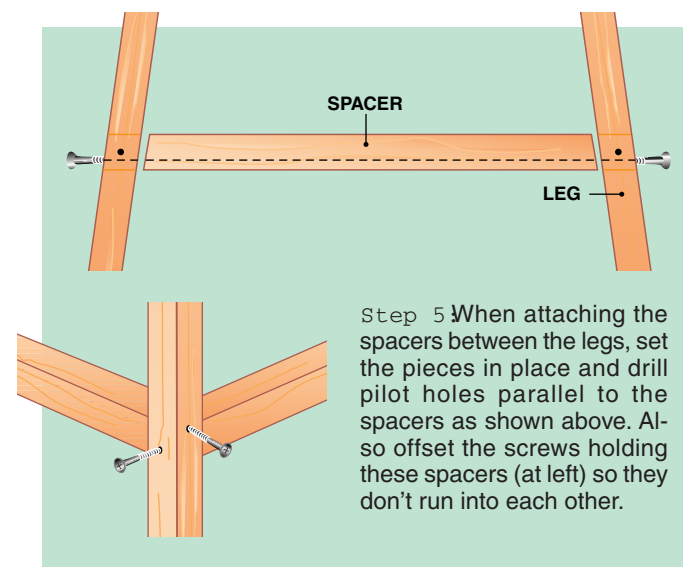
Here's What You'll Need

Note: Use pressure-treated lumber.

- Six 8-foot 2 x 2's
- Two 6-foot 5/4-inch x 6-inch deck boards
- One 6-inch 2-inch x 6-inch board

- One 3/16-inch x 2-1/2-inch dowel screw
- 3-1/2-inch, 2-1/2-inch, 2-inch and 1-5/8-inch galvanized deck screws
- One decorative finial

Recommended Tools



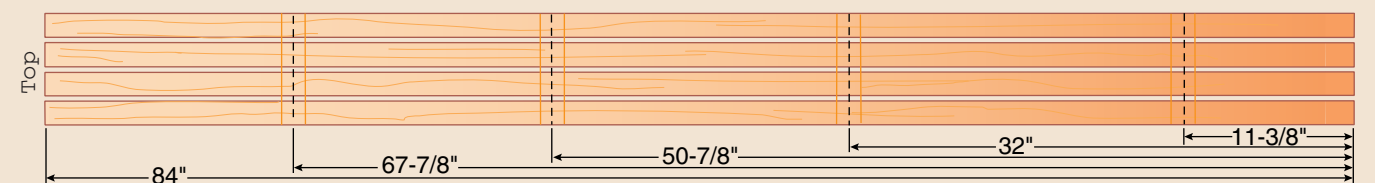
Step 5 When attaching the spacers between the legs, set the pieces in place and drill pilot holes parallel to the spacers as shown above. Also offset the screws holding these spacers (at left) so they don't run into each other.

the sets with a 2-1/2-inch screw to one side. (Take care not to hit the screw on the adjacent side.) Next, attach the *shortest* spacer on the same side. Fasten the second and third spacers last. Attach spacers on the opposite side in the same order.

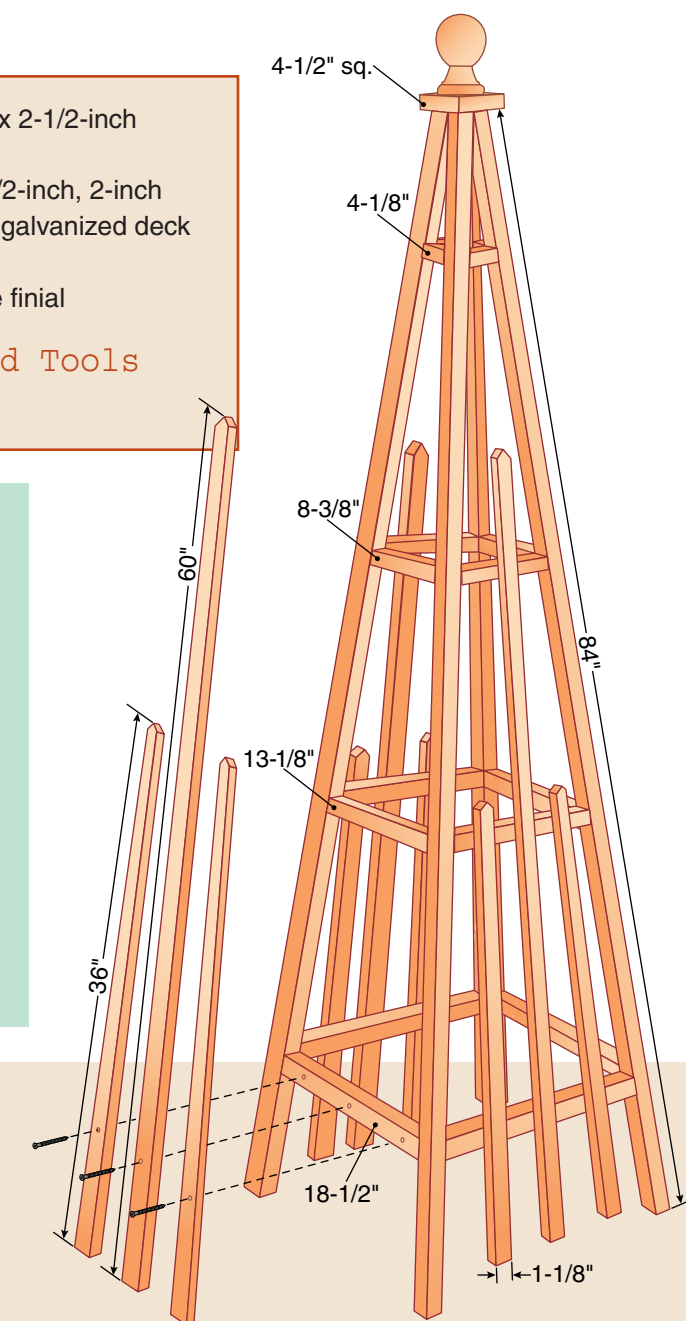
7. Make a 4-1/2-inch-square finial platform from a 2-inch x 6-inch scrap of pressure-treated lumber. (You can find these pieces in the scrap bin at most building centers for a small fee.) Rip the piece to 4-1/2 inches first, then cut a piece 4-1/2 inches long from the board.

8. Find the center point of the platform by drawing lines that connect the opposite corners with a straight edge. Mark the center where the lines intersect with an awl. Pre-drill a hole for the 3/16-inch dowel screw (also called a double-ended wood screw) in the spot you've marked. Sand the platform for a rounded appearance.

9. Attach the platform to the legs. Pre-drill holes on the platform for 3-1/2-inch screws. Angle the holes so they run parallel to the legs. Screw the platform into the top ends of the legs.



Step 4 Lay legs together and mark. These are the centers where the spacers will attach.



Attach a dowel screw for the finial in the center of the platform, then thread a decorative finial onto the screw.

10. Center the longest vertical "spear" on each side and attach to the spacers with 1-5/8-inch deck screws. Center short spears between the legs and the long spears, then fasten to the spacers with deck screws. The bottom of each spear should be about 1 inch off the ground. This will ensure that the trellis rests on the legs instead of the spears.

If you plan to use the trellis in a windy spot, you may want to anchor it. Drive two pipes into the ground, then attach the trellis to them with cable ties or hose clamps.

Remove the duct tape and get something growing!

Onward and Upward!

1. From four 2 x 2's, cut four 84-inch-long legs. Cut at 90°.

2. Cut horizontal spacers from the remaining 2 x 2's. All these pieces should be cut at 6°, with the angles opposing. Cut four pieces each to these lengths (length given is for the widest side of the piece): 18-1/2 inches; 13-1/8 inches; 8-3/8 inches; and 4-1/8 inches.

3. Rip just enough wood from the two 6-foot 5/4-inch x 6-inch deck boards to eliminate both rounded edges. Then rip the boards 1-1/8 inch wide—you'll get four pieces