

# Casket Kit Assembly Instructions

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## CASKET KIT CONTENTS

5 Lids – 27 ½" L x 16" W

4 Floors – 25 ½" L x 16" W

1 Floor – 25 ½" L x 13 ¾" W

2 Sides – 79 ½" L x 16" W

2 Ends – 25 ½" L x 16" W

24 Ribs – 15 ¼" L x 1"  
(square)

1 Bag Screws – 1-1/2" Square

## THINGS YOU WILL NEED

Tape measure

Drill or power screwdriver

Wood glue (i.e. Elmer's)

Woodworking clamps  
(optional)

*"Use a power screwdriver or drill with a #2 square drive bit to drive the screws. Do not over-tighten the screws. If you can, adjust the torque down so you do not turn the screws after the head seats against the wood surface. See p. 4 for more about hi-lo metal screws."*

## Before You Begin

Gather a few helping hands from friends and family. For many, the shared time to assemble a casket for a loved one is a healthy part of the healing experience.

Assembly of this casket kit will take about an hour. Take a few moments before you begin to get familiar with the parts, the assembly steps, and gather a few tools. Review all assembly steps before proceeding with step 1.

It is best to work on a flat, level surface. If you don't have a large table or workshop, the floor will do. Clear some room where you will have a



nice level surface to work and plenty of space.

fix it and everything will look great.

Lastly, mistakes happen. If you install a rib in the wrong place, don't panic or get frustrated. The glue has a working time of 5 to 10 minutes, so take a few moments to

**Additional photos and detailed instructions available at**  
[CasketBuilderSupply.com/kit](http://CasketBuilderSupply.com/kit)

## About Rib Style Joinery

This casket kit uses simple wooden ribs for structural integrity and easy assembly. These ribs also allow you to conceal the screw fasteners internally providing a clean, finished look from the outside of the casket. Carefully position the ribs to make it easy to precisely align the panels during assembly. The rib

joints get their strength from two sources: glue surface and screws. We use Elmer's wood glue to provide a superior bond between the ribs and the boards. You need not use very much glue—if the glue squeezes out of the joint then use a little less glue in the next joint. When you secure with screws and glue, position the screws in the center

of the rib. The screws provide a tight fit while the glue bonds without requiring clamps.

For a metal-free casket, the screws can be removed after the glue sets (2-4 hours). Consider reinforcing all panel joints with wooden dowels or Miller dowels.

Identify each panel. There are 2 long sides, 2 ends, 5 lid pieces, and 5 floor pieces for a total of 9 edge glued panels and 5 pieces of plywood.

Panel	Len.	Width
Ends	25 ½	16
Sides	79 ½	16
Floor	78	25 ½
Lid	80	27 ½

**Table 1 – Panel Specifications (inches)**

## 1) Attach Ribs to Panels

Start with the End panels (short sides) that measure 25 ½ by 16 inches. Place one rib on each 16-inch side. These vertical ribs secure the corners where the long and short sides meet. Align the ribs flush with the top edge of the End panel—this will be the top edge of the casket. The bottom edge will have a ¾ inch gap to fit the floor.

Next, use a straight edge to place a rib along the

bottom edge of the End panel. This rib will secure the floor. Place the rib precisely 3/8 inches from the bottom edge. This will align the floor such that it is 1/8 inch proud. This ensures that while the casket is moved and displayed, the outside lower edge is protected.

Attach three ribs precisely 3/8 inches from the bottom edge of each of the long sides—these ribs will secure the floor.



▲ Align screws in the center of the ribs. **DO NOT** over-tighten the screws!

◀ Place floor ribs precisely 3/8 from the bottom edge of the side and end panels.

## 2) Attach End Panels to Side Panels

Start with one long Side panel and lay flat on your level work surface. Attach a short End panel to the long Side panel. Be sure

the floor ribs are on the bottom edge of both panels. Repeat for the remaining short End panel. Next lay the

remaining long Side panel on the work surface. Position the other three sides on top of the remaining long Side panel and attach with glue and screws. Align the sides for a nice flush outside corner.

This completes the 4 sides of the box.



◀ Align the corners and attach the End and Side with glue and screws. Corner ribs should be flush with the top edge of the casket box.



*“This kit contains about 100 screws with self-tapping hi-lo threads specifically designed for superior holding strength in softwood. It is important that you not overtighten and strip the wood. If you do, back out the screw and move it over ¼ inch. If using a drill, step down the torque setting. The head of the screw should just dent into the wood surface.”*



### 3) Attach the Floor

Place the 4 sides of the casket upside down and lay a bead of glue on all 8 ribs that will secure the floor. Place the 5 plywood floor pieces on the casket box while still upside down and secure with at least 3 screws in each rib.

On the inside of the casket, use 4 ribs, glue and screws to join the 5 floor panels together down the middle of the casket.

Cover this center joining rib with a mattress or a blanket later.



▲ Lay a bead of glue on each of the 8 ribs that will secure the floor.

◀ Flip the casket over to install the floor panels.

Don't forget to order handles!

*“The more glue, the longer the setting time. If the glue squeezes out of the joint, then you have just a bit too much.”*

*DO NOT wipe away the glue while wet. Let glue dry and pick it off later. Otherwise you force glue into the wood grain and it will not take a finish.”*

### 4) Attach Ribs to the Casket Lids

There are eight ribs for each the casket lid. The ribs serve two purposes. First, the ribs help keep the lid in position when placed on the casket box. Second, the ribs will help

prevent the casket lid from warping under the influence of humidity and temperature changes in your environment. *(Photo is not representative of the 5-piece oversized lid.)*

It is **very important not to use glue** to secure the ribs to the lid. Use screws only. If building a metal-free casket, then use glue and dowels to join the ribs to the casket, but do not use glue between the rib and the lid panel.

Position the ribs to join the 5 panels into 1 full piece or 2 halves (3 & 2 for a 60/40 style lid). Place 1 rib on each end to keep the lid in place on the box. Make sure all ribs are placed no less than 1-1/8 inches from the outside edges.



*“Do not use glue between the ribs and the lid panel—secure with 3 screws only to allow the lid panel to expand and contract without warping.”*

*"We offer a wide variety of casket handle styles including wood, metal, and cotton rope handles."*



## 5) Install Casket Handles



When it comes to casket handles, there are many options to choose from. Shown above is a typical casket "bale" style handle made in Chicago, Illinois from stamped steel and

then powder coated black. We offer this handle in several colors. We also have wooden handles, and swing bar style handles in many colors compatible with either

metal or wooden dowel bar stock. Consider placing enough handles on the casket so that 3 people can carry the casket on each side. Adding handles to each end of the casket makes it easier for two people to move and carry the empty casket. End handles also make it easier to get the casket into and out of a hearse.

Avoid using furniture handles or drawer pulls as they are generally not designed to support the weight needed for a casket handle.

## About Hi-Lo Metal Screws

This kit uses about 100 metal screws with a square drive head for a #2 Square drive bit. These screws have self-tapping hi-lo threads designed to

provide superior pull-out strength, are easier to drive than conventional screws, and reduce splitting and cracking of the wood. Do not over-

tighten these screws. You can stop driving the screw when the washer head makes contact with the wood surface.

## Finishing Touches

This casket kit is natural, unfinished pine. You can sand and finish this material with any number of finishes from Casket Builder Supply or your local home improvement store. We encourage you to decorate your casket in any way you choose.

Some of our favorite wood finishes that are

very easy to work with include Rubio Monocoat, Real Milk Paint, and Pure Tung Oil. These finishes are non-toxic and safe for in-home use with family and friends.

We also leave the method of casket closing entirely up to you. You can use nails, wood screws, or dowel pegs.



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