

# Creating a removable wall to the #92017 Craftsman Cabin

by Fran Casselman

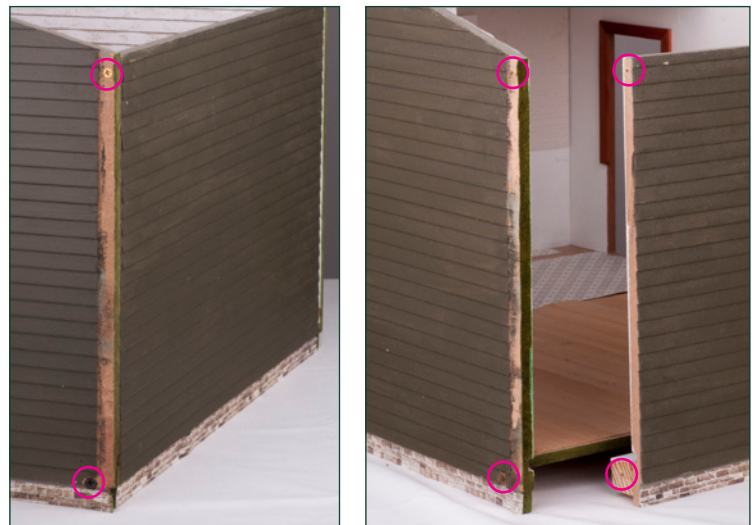
## Items used:

- #92017 Craftsman Cabin
- Drill, with assorted drill bits
- Screwdriver, or driver bit for drill
- 2 - 3/4" Sq. x 15 3/4" L dowel (check length needed before cutting)
- 2 - drywall screws, 1 1/4" length
- 2 - flathead brass wood screws, size #4 x 3/4" (or 7/8")
- Masking tape
- Clamps
- Pencil



A number of small, lightweight power tools are available that work well for a miniaturist's needs, as well as most household chores. Shop at home centers or hardware stores for a cordless "power screwdriver" or "drill/driver" with a rechargeable battery and available drill and screwdriver bits. **\*General rule for using a drill:** When the bit is being moved into or out of the material you are drilling, it should always be spinning. Especially when withdrawing the bit, keep the drill spinning until it is clear of the material. If you try to withdraw the bit when it is still or stopped you are likely to break the bit. You do not have to switch a drill into reverse to withdraw when drilling.

**A note about using screws with MDF:** You must predrill holes for screws, and the drill bit size should be very close to the screw size. (In wood, you would typically use a bit somewhat smaller so the screws will provide better grip, but MDF will split.) Use flathead screws, and countersink the heads (drill a shallow recess with the tip of a large bit) so the surface remains flat when the screws are installed. When drilling into the edge of an MDF panel start with a drill bit two or three sizes smaller than the final size. Work slowly, and pull the bit out frequently to clean away the dust\*. Repeat with the larger bits, and make the hole deeper than it needs to be so any remaining dust has a place to go. (Be careful not to breathe in the dust.)



## Creating a removable wall

The left end wall of the Craftsman Cabin has no windows and can be made removable with this method. When it is open, a 15 3/4" length of 3/4" square dowel (available at home centers) is placed just below the floor to replace the wall. Screws drilled into the ends of the dowel through the front and back walls hold the structure together.

For stability when the wall is in place, a similar length of square dowel is glued to the removable wall, just below the groove for the floor. That way, the wall can be installed or removed as desired. Simply remove the screws and dowel, put the wall in place, and reinstall the screws into the dowel that is attached to

the wall. When the wall is in place, there are also two small screws near the top corners of the wall to keep it secure. The corner trim is held on with a removable adhesive such as double-stick tape, repositionable glue or Tacky Wax.

I used 1 1/4" drywall screws to fasten the walls to the dowel at the foundation and #4 x 3/4" (or longer if you can find them) flathead brass screws through the upper wall, into the edge of the adjoining wall. Do not drive the screws in too tightly, only enough to be flush with the surface. This system will not stand up to really rough handling, but is sturdy enough for changing out occasionally.

See reverse for Step-by-Step instructions

### Step-by-Step on creating a removable wall:

- Work on the wall panels prior to assembly or, while in dry fit, remove the left end wall and use masking tape across the opening to keep the kit stable
- On the outside surface of the front and back walls, draw a vertical line  $\frac{3}{8}$ " away from the edge (to allow for the thickness of the end wall)
- From that line, draw a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " square positioned just under the groove for the floor at the lower back edge
- Mark the center of the square and drill through the wall as described above. The bit size should be appropriate for the screws you will use. (Drilling through an MDF panel does not require quite as much caution as drilling into an edge, but should still be done carefully.)
- Use a large bit to create a countersink for the screw head. Carefully drill into the panel just enough to fit the screw head.
- Reassemble the kit (except for the end wall) if you were working on flat panels, and install the floor.
- Check the length of both square dowels and cut to fit (if not already cut). Slightly too short is OK.
- Clamp the dowel in place below the floor and between the front and back walls. (Use masking tape if you do not have clamps.)



You can pre-drill into the ends of the dowel although you do not have to, as the wood is soft and easy to work with. However, it will want to twist as you drive the first screw in so you may need an extra hand to hold it in position if you do not have clamps.

- Install the screws. If you are using a power driver, stop a little short of fully seated and finish both with a manual screwdriver after you install the second screw.

You now have a stable structure with an open wall. The roof will still sit properly so you can leave it open and still have the finished appearance from another angle.

For the option of a wall that can be removed and replaced as needed, there are a few more steps.

- Mark a centerline at the floor groove of the removed wall, and the center of the remaining  $\frac{3}{4}$ " square dowel. Matching center to center, glue the dowel to the wall just below the floor groove.
- While the glue dries, drill through the front and back walls, at least  $\frac{1}{2}$ " down from the top of the wall and centered within the  $\frac{3}{8}$ " line you drew earlier. Check the drill bit size as you are using smaller screws than before. Create a countersink for the small screws.
- Remove the screws holding the front and back walls together and replace that dowel with the wall-and-dowel assembly. Make sure everything is flush and square and tape the wall corners. Install the screws as before.
- Use a pencil to mark through the new holes in the front and back walls onto the edge of the side wall panel.
- Remove the screws at the base and take the wall panel out again (make sure your pencil marked the edge).
- Slowly and carefully, as described above, drill into the edge of the wall panel. If you have clamps, try putting one at the area you will be drilling. Even with a great deal of care, the wall panel may split but it will still hold when reassembled as long as the hole is not too big.
- Reassemble with screws at the top and bottom of the wall for a secure, solid structure.