

BED WOOD DIMENSIONS - CUTTING YOUR OWN BED WOOD

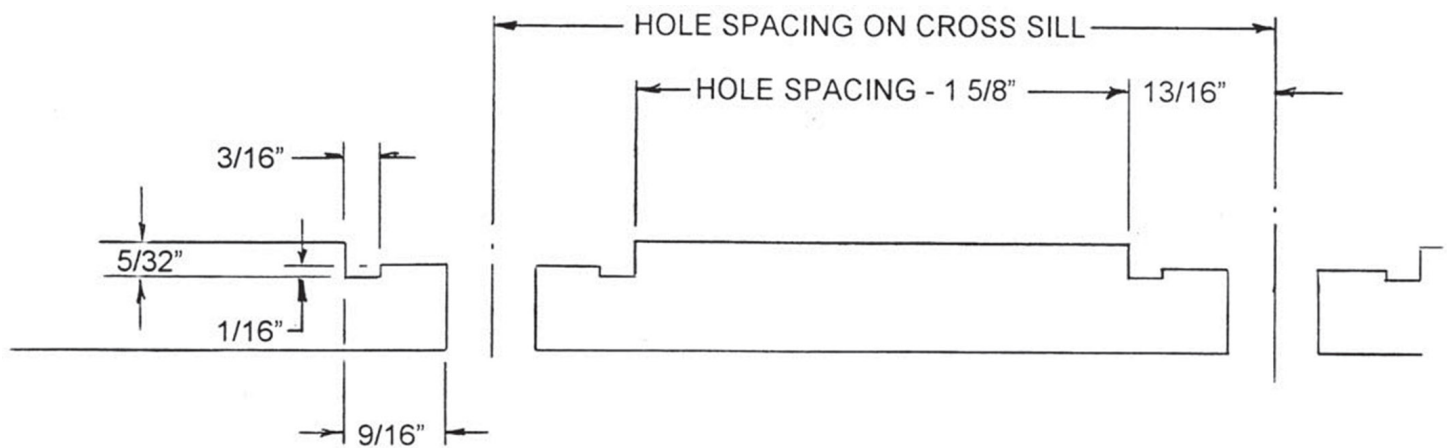
Customers may wish to cut their own bed wood to be installed with MAR-K bed strips. The wood board thickness, groove dimensions, width, and length must all be correct in order that the bed strips and wood fit properly. Use the following information to design and cut bed wood boards to exactly fit any stock or custom bed floor.

THICKNESS: MAR-K Oak bed wood is $\frac{25}{32}$ " thick, sanded on both sides. Bed strips may be installed with any thickness boards, as long as the grooves are cut correctly and the bed strip bolt length is adjusted according to board thickness.

GROOVE DIMENSIONS: The drawing below shows the groove dimensions needed to properly fit MAR-K bed strips that are 1-1/2" wide. When installed, there will be about 1/2" gap between the adjacent boards. For most trucks the two outer boards have grooves only on their inboard edges, and the boards in the center area of the bed are grooved on both edges.

WIDTH: The board width is critical and is the most difficult dimension to get correct. All boards may not be the same width on a given bed floor but they are usually laid out in a symmetrical pattern. The width of the ungrooved, raised area of the board that fits between bed strips is the critical width dimension. It must be held accurately and the cuts must be straight and parallel. Calculate the board width as follows and do not cut any boards until all dimensions have been checked and verified:

1. Measure the side to side distance from the center of each bed strip to the center of the next bed strip as they are installed in the bed floor. The most accurate method is to measure the hole spacing on one of the metal structural parts such as a cross sill or rear sill. Be sure to identify and measure only the holes that are for mounting the bed strips. Measure and record the exact center to center hole spacing between the bed strips for each board location. You may find it convenient to record these dimensions on the MAR-K bed wood data sheet that is printed in the paper catalog, or located on our website at https://www.mar-k.com/PDFs/CustomForms/Bed_Wood.pdf.



2. Calculate the board width dimension for each board using the drawing as a guide. The raised part of each board between its grooves is equal to 1-5/8" less than the bed strip center to center spacing. This allows for 1/16" on each side of the 1-1/2" bed strip for expansion of the board due to environmental changes. Be sure to get this dimension correct

3. Allow 1 5/8" for each bed strip and add up the total width of the wood floor as you have calculated the dimensions above. Be sure that this total wood floor width is 1/8" less than the inside width between bed sides. The 1/8" allows the edge boards to be 1/16" away from the bed sides so the boards may expand and shift as needed over time. This is the time to make any adjustments in dimensions to obtain proper fit.

Note that if you plan to use a protective coating that tends to build up a significant thickness, it will build up more in the groove. The board width should be a little narrower in this case to allow the boards to expand as needed, perhaps allowing 1/8" on each side instead of 1/16" to account for the added coating film thickness.

LENGTH: This is a front to back length measurement of the area where the boards will be installed in the assembled bed. The most accurate measurement is usually along one side near the bed side where there will be minimal distortion of the sheet metal parts. Measure the distance between the front bed panel and the rear sill in the area where the rear end of the boards will be installed. Make the boards 1/8" shorter than that measurement to allow for expansion of the wood and for build up of the varnish or other protective coating. The boards will be installed with 1/16" gap at each end of the board. Cut the boards to final length only after all other dimensions have been cut. Be careful to cut the boards exactly square when cutting to length.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

After cutting the boards and before applying the protective finish, be sure to assemble the boards with bed strips into the bed of the truck. Check for any interference and incorrect dimensions and make corrections so the proper clearances and fit may be obtained. Bed wood boards must have room as specified to expand and contract with changes in the climate. The gaps between the edges of the boards should be about 1/2" and each gap should be centered over the respective bed strip attaching holes in the rear sill, cross sills, and front panel if applicable. This is the time to locate and drill bed-to-frame mounting holes and angle strip mounting holes so that the protective finish can be applied to the inside of all bolt holes.

Some beds require additional cutting or grooving, depending on the application. GM wide bed trucks, for example, have short boards ahead of and behind the wheel "tubs" and the adjacent full length boards have a cutout area to fit around the wheel opening. Many Dodge and Ford stepside beds have a cut out area around the rear wheels. Ford stepside beds may require the outer board to be grooved slightly to fit under the bedside flange. Panel trucks usually require the outer edge board to be cut to match the shape of the curved side panels. In these cases the old bed wood should be used as a guide to make the shape of these cuts.