

INSTALLING BUTT HINGES

Neatly installed butt hinges make an enormous difference in the look of a box or cabinet. Slow, careful work and a systematic approach is all it takes. Here's how to do it.

Lay out the mortises on the back edge of the box where shown in **Figure 1**, aligning each hinge pin centerline with the rear edge of the box. Lightly knife along the short ends of a hinge, then deepen the lines by guiding the knife against a small square. Set a marking gauge equal to the distance between the centerpoint of the hinge barrel and outside edge of one leaf, then scribe the long edge of each mortise.

Install a $\frac{1}{4}$ " straight router bit in your handheld router and adjust it to project just a hair shy of the hinge pin centerpoint. Set a router edge guide to cut to the rear of the mortise. Rout the mortises to within $\frac{1}{16}$ " or so from your end scribe lines as shown in the photo at right. Afterward, slice away at the remaining waste with a razor-sharp chisel, inserting it in the knife line for each final cut.

Clamp the box lid over the folded hinges and use a sharp knife to nick the lid at the ends of each hinge. Align a square with each nick and extend a deep knife line across the lid edge to scribe the ends of the hinge mortises. Use the previously set marking gauge to scribe the long edge, then rout and chisel out the mortise.



CLAMP A SHORT BOARD to the box wall to support the base of the router. Use an edge guide to rout the long rear wall of the mortise.