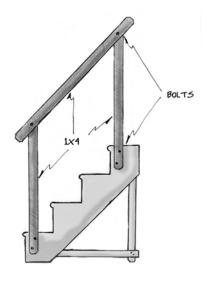
How Do You Make ...

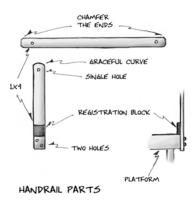
BACKSTAGE HANDRAILS

Here is an easy way to make traditional-style handrails for escape stairs and other elevated structures. The uprights and the actual rails (notice that the horizontal part is called a rail) are both made from 1×4 stock, something that is commonly found in most shops. This particular style is designed to be removable and reusable. That is convenient if the scenery must be struck and reassembled, and/or if you would like a stock of parts to use with different shows.



THIS HANDRAIL CAN BE EASILY REMOVED

It is important to ease the corners of the 1×4 to prevent splintering. The ends have also been chamfered to make them easier to use and to improve their appearance. Bolts are used to attach the stiles to platforming and stairs, but you can also use drywall screws for the same purpose. If the stairs are to be struck and reassembled frequently, it makes much more sense to use bolts, but if there will be only one setup, it might be easier just to screw the parts on. Be aware that screws do not hold nearly as well as the bolts. If you have any doubts about the soundness of the structure, use the bolts.





Note that two bolts are used to secure the stile to the steps or platform. This will keep the uprights rigidly plumb. A block of wood is also attached to the upright stile to keep it rigid, and that makes it easy to make it just the right height as well. At the same time, only one bolt is used in the top of the stile. That will allow the rail to be attached at an angle. If you are striking the show with the intention of putting it back up, you can leave the stiles and rail bolted together in one piece. Take out the bottom bolts, and fold up the rest of the handrail into one convenient unit.