

# Paneled mailbox post

Create an elegant box holder with classic proportions or choose one of the ready-to-install options By JENNIFER STIMPSON

A sturdy wood mailbox post decorated with paneled sides and a cornice top is a far cry from the syrup cans and cigar boxes Americans set by the roadside to get the first rural deliveries—or worse, the sad metal pipes used today to support a single dented and rusting box. Standing tall like a sentry, a paneled post lends an air of authority and sophistication to any stop on the mail carrier's route.

Assembling one from basic lumber and trim takes half a day and basic carpentry skills. Or you can pick up a ready-made post and get it in the ground in just a couple of hours. Either way, you're guaranteed to set an elegant tone with a classical-inspired design. Read on to learn how to apply molding to stock lumber for a custom-built post or to determine which ready-made one is best for your yard and budget. ■



## watch a video

See *TOH* landscape contractor Roger Cook install a post at [thisoldhouse.com/bonus](http://thisoldhouse.com/bonus)



## build it •

You can dress up a pressure-treated 4x4 post to create a capped and paneled profile

**1. Divide up the post.** Mark off 54 inches on a 6-foot pressure-treated 4x4. This upper portion of the post will be paneled; the remaining 1½ feet will be buried.

**2. Build out the base.** Measure 18 inches up from the mark and wrap this section with ¾-inch pressure-treated plywood.

**3. Panel the sides.** Cut ½-by-1½-inch lattice into paneling pieces. For the front and back, use full-width strips for the vertical pieces and double them up for the horizontal pieces. Trim the strips down to 1 inch for the side paneling so that it appears 1½ inches wide when butted against the front and back paneling. Cap the lower paneling using small crown molding topped with a 1x shelf. Sheathe the bottom of the post with baseboard. Use a 5x5 deck post cap at the top. Line inside the paneling with window bead.

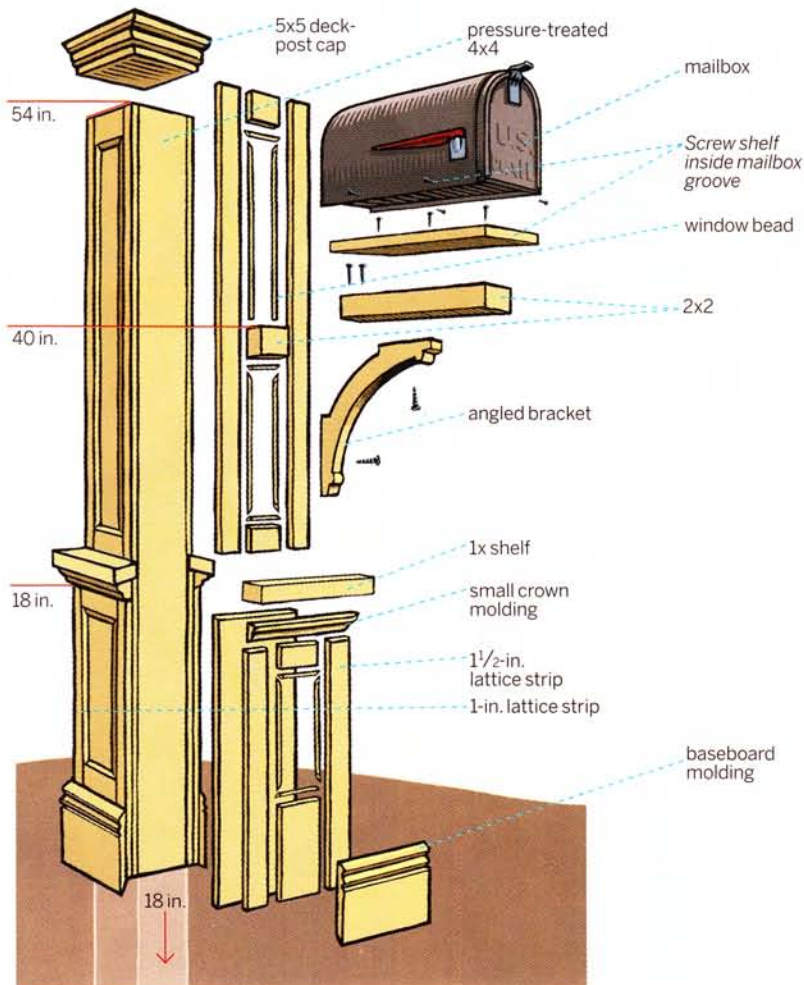
**4. Build the mailbox support.** Using a jigsaw, cut an angled bracket out of a 2x6 and top it with a 2x2 to make the bracket assembly. Install a 2x2 block 40 inches up from the bottom of the aboveground portion of the post. Rest the longer 2x2 on top of the block and screw it down. Screw the angled bracket to the post.

**5. Install the mailbox.** Attach a 1x shelf that fits into the underside of the mailbox onto the 2x2. Screw the mailbox to the shelf through the sides.

**Price:** \$90

**Time:** 5 hours

**Difficulty:** Easy to moderate.  
Requires some precision to make tight joints on the panels.



## • buy it

You can choose among decorative posts made of a variety of weather-resistant materials

### \$52 → the basic model

Vinyl post construction and a metal anchor keep the price low on this plain post. [acehardware.com](http://acehardware.com)



### \$120 → the mid-range model

Waterproof polyethylene shaft and details make this handsome Newport-style post nearly indestructible. [mayneposts.com](http://mayneposts.com)



### \$389 → the luxury model

Handmade mortise-and-tenon joints and decay-resistant cedar extend the life of this top-of-the-line post. [walpolewoodworkers.com](http://walpolewoodworkers.com)

