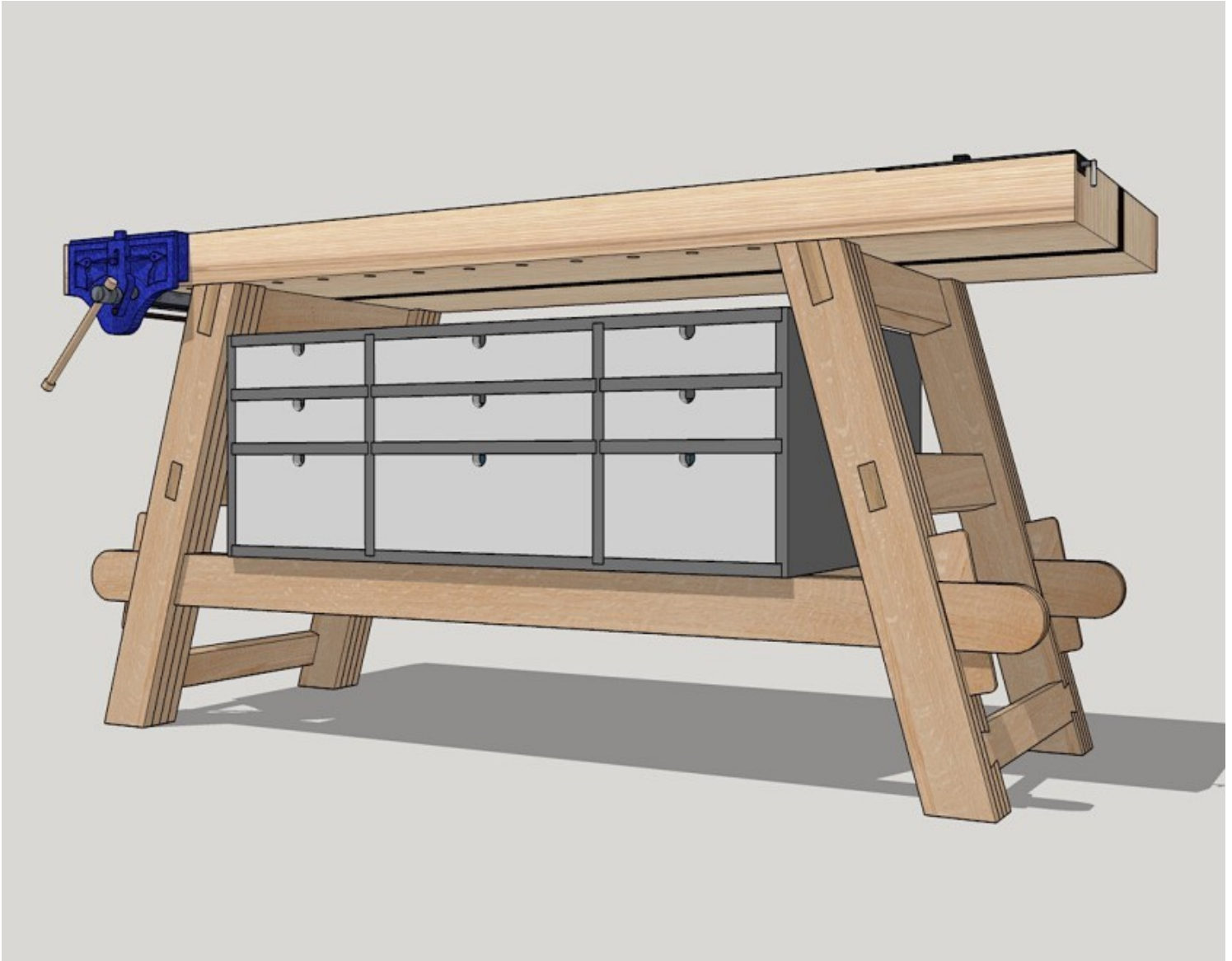


It's Really A Moroubian Workbench

written by [Jeff Branch](#)



Note the name in the post title: "Moroubian" used to describe my workbench design. This mash-up of Moravian and Roubo better describes my design; a Moravian base and a split-top Roubo top. But, I am going to continue to call it a Moravian workbench.

This morning, while scanning a Google image search of Moravian workbenches, I came across this image...

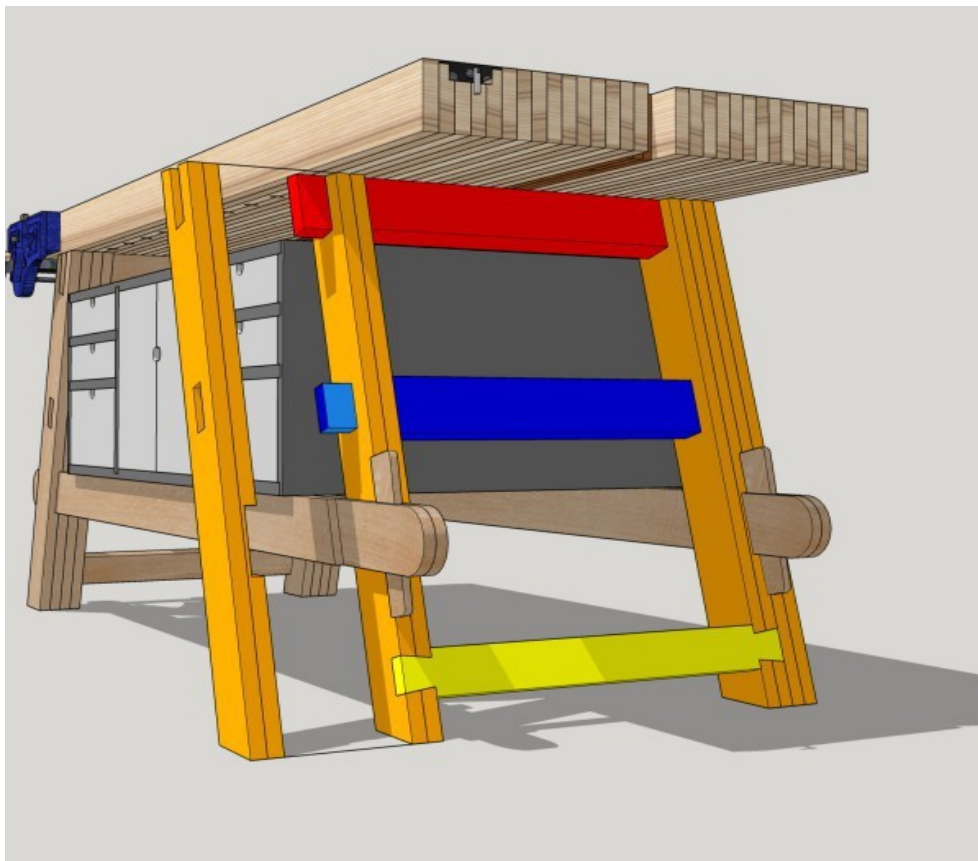


Adian McEvoy's Moroubou workbench.

Adian McEvoy's workbench is almost an exact copy of my design; except that I only recently finalized what I have been envisioning for the top; specifically the gap stop, or the piece which fills the gap in the bench top. So, while my original design predates the McEvoy's blog post showing off his Moroubou; the split top does not. There are a few features of my design

not found on the Moroubou: mine has a modern cabinet below the top and an inset vise, but the rest of the two designs are pretty much the same. Two woodworkers on opposite sides of the Earth with amazingly similar ideas. I was stunned upon seeing the photo. He calls his a Moroubou; I have been thinking about a unique name for mine: Moroubian. Sort of spooky when you think about it.

A similar thing has happened with my family room coffee table. I designed and built it many years ago and ultimately made a woodworking plan based on the design. Sometime later, I was scanning SketchUp's 3D warehouse and came across a coffee table design which is almost identical to what I created. And in this case, the other guy's SketchUp model predated mine. But, I had never seen it before. So, think you have an original design? Chances are that someone else is thinking just like you are.



One leg half pulled away.

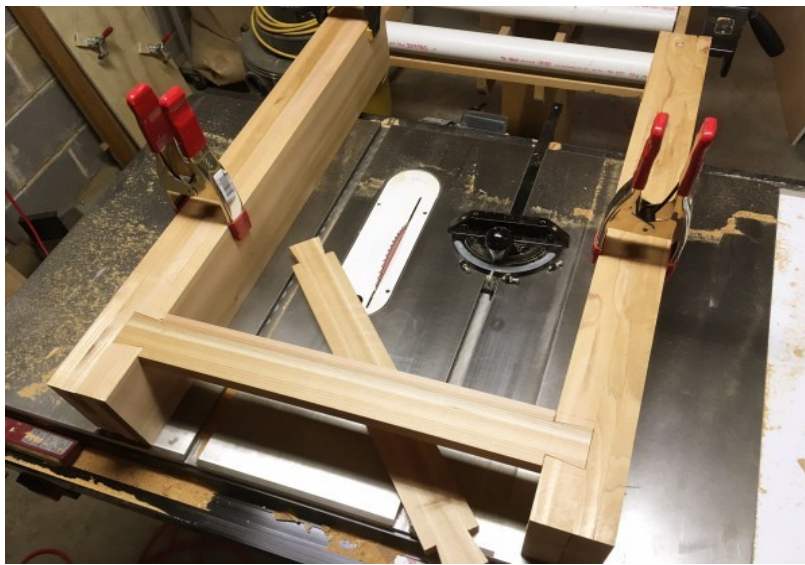
After doing some additional glue up of stock to create the upper and middle leg stretchers, I began thinking about cutting joinery for the legs. Using SketchUp to obtain dimensions for the joinery locations, the measurements ended up being some funky numbers because the bottom and top of each leg is angled. There are four different types of joinery in each leg – somewhat complicated to execute (see exploded view above). So the simple thing to do was to make a template. I isolated one leg and set up SketchUp to make a full-size template..



Leg template ready for use.

The first joint to form is the dovetailed stretcher shown in yellow above. I carefully laid out the dovetail location in the first leg and began cutting the socket using [the Chris Schwarz method](#). This was going really good until I realized I was cutting the dovetail on the face of the leg, not the end (but I got some good experience with this technique).

Ultimately I got the first two dovetail sockets cut and the fit worked, but it was a little sloppy; but only a little...



One base end with dovetail stretcher in place.



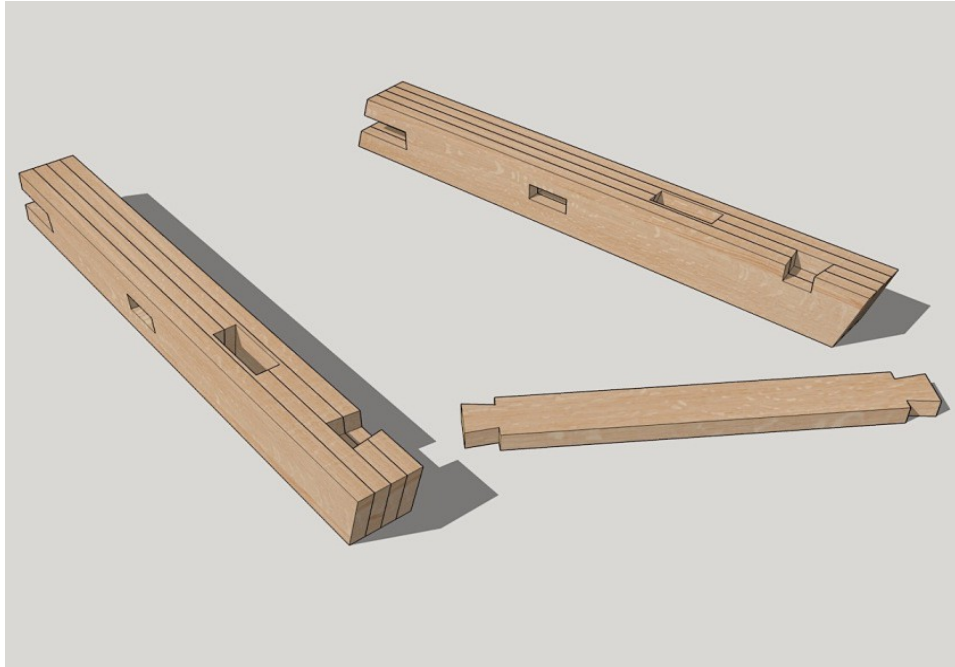
Close-up shows gaps.

Since this is going to be the workbench I use for the rest of my life, I am going to make another attempt at better dovetails. I'll remake the stretchers with a slightly larger dovetail and expand the socket of the legs you see in the photo. That is the plan for today, then I'll start on the joinery for the red and blue stretchers. Happy woodworking to you all.

Tip...

To repair sloppy DT's use thin veneer...

Moravian Workbench: Dovetail Stretchers Part 2



Completed dovetails.

The original dovetail sockets were enlarged to accommodate the larger dovetails.

The legs were trimmed to final width (3 3/4") and temporarily screwed together. The screw hole will be cut away later.



Nice beefy legs.



Currently.

So with the dovetail stretchers completed, time to move to joint number two: the front stretcher through mortise.

As you can see the mortises are a series of 16° angled dados.... Tan members

The blue and red members are best held w/ glue and cross pegs...

