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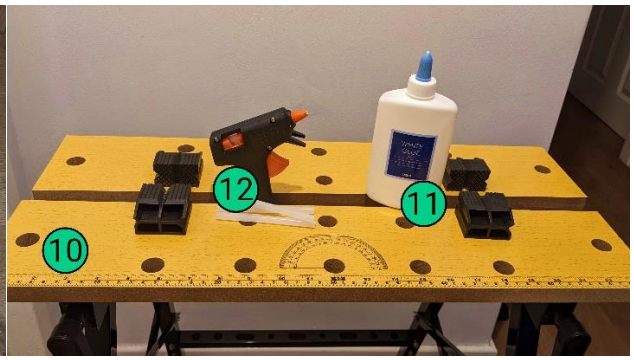
PET CONNECTION INTERNATIONAL

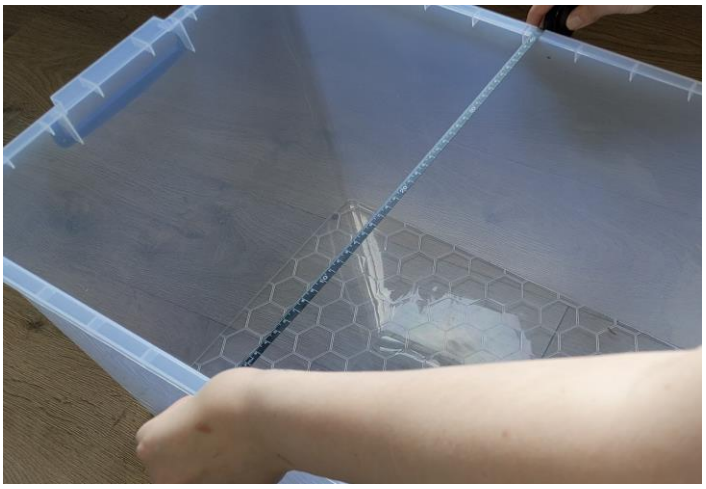
If you are under the age of 18, please find a responsible adult to help you, as the process of making the divider can be dangerous

YOU WILL NEED:



1. A tank/tub that you plan to use for the split tank
2. Gerbil-safe strip wood for the divider frame – I used oak, some other good options are beech, birch, aspen or poplar
3. Fine mesh (MUST be steel or another hard metal, gerbils can chew through aluminium and other soft metals) – I used 6mm to make sure they couldn't bite each other through it, but anything less than 1cm would work
4. Measuring tape
5. Pencil
6. Saw
7. Heavy duty staple gun & staples
8. Wire cutters
9. Thick gardening gloves to protect your hands while working with the wire (they also come in handy for the split tank process) - I used full leather gloves so my entire hands would be protected
10. Workbench (or somewhere to safely secure the wood)
11. PVA (Elmer's) glue
12. Hot glue gun & glue sticks
13. (optional) Pet-safe sealant such as Plastikote

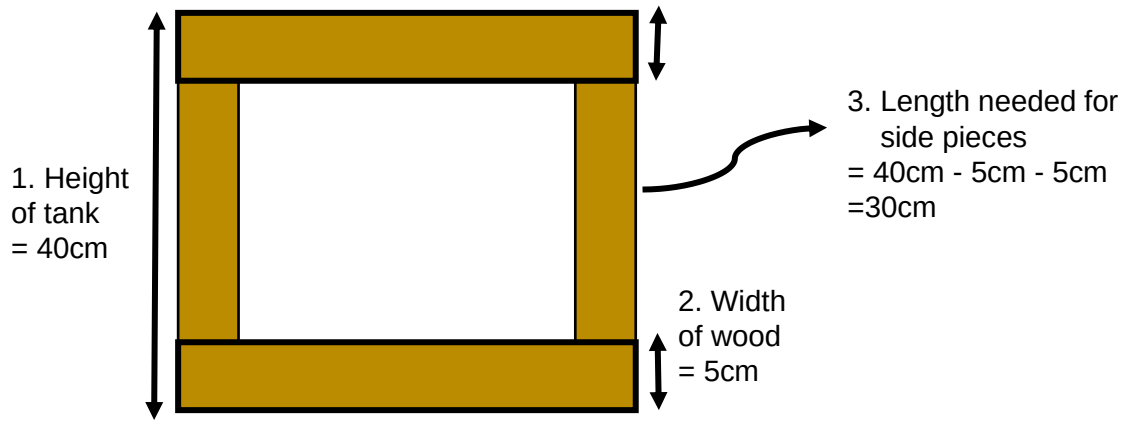
STEP 1



- First, you'll need to measure the internal lengths of your tank/tub
- You'll need the width (along the top) and the height
- If you're using a plastic tub, the bottom width will be smaller than the top, so you'll need to measure along both the top and bottom

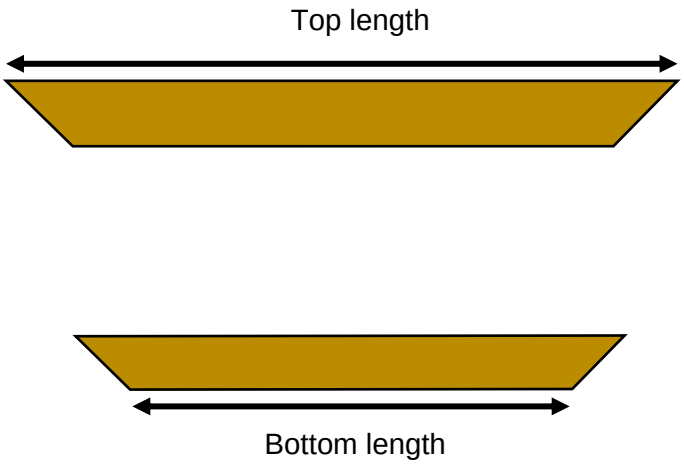
STEP 2

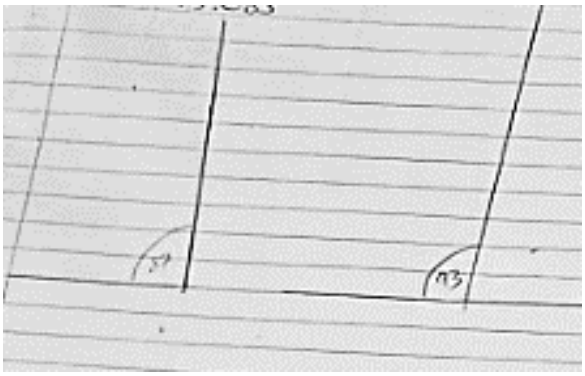
- Measure and mark the lengths you need for the top and bottom pieces
- For the side pieces the lengths will be your tank height minus 2x the width of your wood strips (see example below)
- You'll need 4 side pieces, 2 top pieces, and 2 bottom pieces in total



- If you're using a plastic tank, you'll need to angle the top and bottom pieces slightly, I used a 93°/87° angle for mine

- They should look like slight trapeziums (see below), with the angles facing inwards from your top length, and outwards from your bottom length





STEP 3

- Use a workbench to hold the wood strips securely while you saw them at the lines you marked

STEP 4

- Glue the side pieces to the bottom piece using alternating PVA and hot glue (the hot glue acts like a clamp to hold the pieces together while the PVA dries for a more secure bond) - press down for a few seconds for the hot glue to dry
- Then do the same to add the top piece (NOTE: if you are making this for a plastic tank then the top will not line up perfectly with the sides, just centre it on the side pieces)

STEP 5

- Once the hot glue has dried, add some heavy-duty staples to the front and back of each frame at the joins for extra security (put them on opposite sides of the join for front and back so the staples don't bump into each other i.e. in the above image I put one staple each on the outside of each join for this side, I then flipped it over and put the staples on the inside of the join)
- Repeat steps 4 & 5 for the second frame

STEP 6

- Lay the mesh over your frames and cut it to size
  (I recommend wearing your gloves for this)
- You'll want to leave about 1-2cm overlap to attach it to the frame

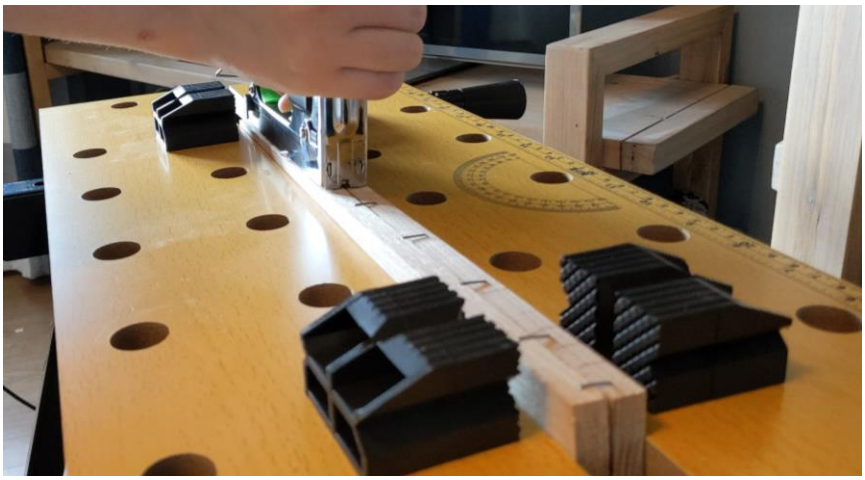
STEP 7

- Staple the mesh square to one of your frames, with a few centimetres gap between each staple

STEP 8

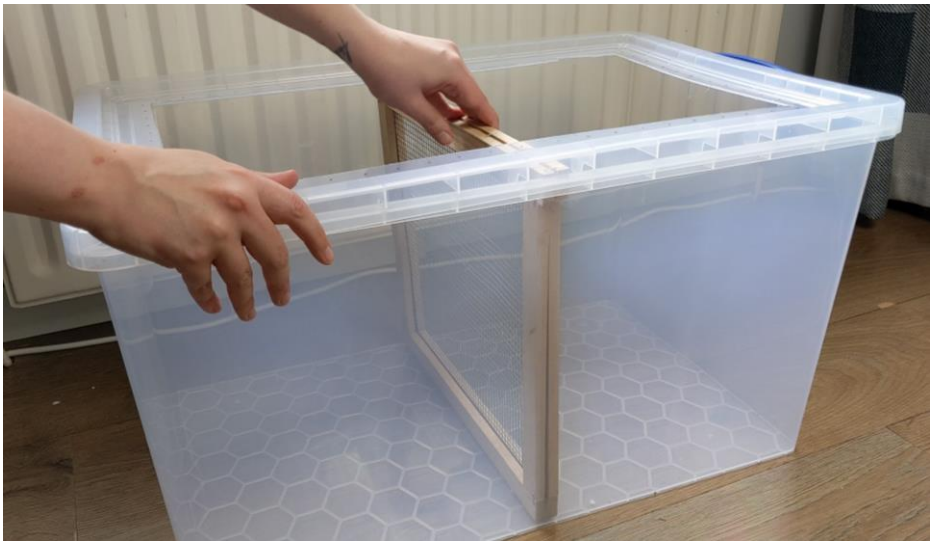
- Add lines of PVA glue to the frame around the mesh, leaving small gaps for hot glue (you don't need to leave too many gaps, hot glue dries very fast so you can only use a little at once)
- Then fill in the gaps with hot glue and attach the second frame, pressing down for a few seconds for the hot glue to dry

STEP 9



- For extra security once the glue has started drying, add heavy-duty staples along the edges of the divider, joining the panels together

STEP 10



- Once the divider has fully dried, check the fit in your tank, make sure it fits and isn't too loose, you may need to sand down the edges or add extra pieces of wood to make it fit securely
- I had to add feet to mine to stop it being knocked out at the bottom (I just used PVA glue to attach them)

STEP 11 (optional)

- If you want, you can leave the divider as it is, but it will likely get stained with pee. To prevent this, paint the divider with pet-safe sealant such as Plastikote. I use about 4 thin coats, allowing each to dry before adding another