

CAD Benefits

You can pretty well guarantee that at some point during your project, you'll have to either make one or more parts that would be difficult to draw out, or several of the same part that would take a while to draw out repeatedly. This is where CAD software can be handy. Now I admit that up front there will be a learning curve to get comfortable with the CAD software, but I think the benefits outweigh the up-front learning curve. Plus it's a skill you can learn that you can use in other projects. Standard 2D cad is all you need to get started - and I'll give you a link to a great software that's FREE! SolidEdge 2D Free However any CAD program that lets you draw the shapes, relations and accurately dimension them will do just fine. Note that I'm using a 3D modeling package in this article.

Step 1: Draw your part in the CAD software. Note that with the 3D cad packages you can rotate the part to see it from all angles.

Step 2: Create/print your 2D CAD drawing.

Step 3: Glue the CAD templates onto your workpiece. For this I use a 3M brand aerosol contact adhesive.

Step 4: Cut/Drill/Bend as the part requires. If you have multiple identical parts to finish, you can fasten them together for final finish. The end product here is 4 completely identical parts. Simply peel off the template and wash off the adhesive with acetone or laquer thinner.