

# Raising the Rack

<jensoriginalsewbroiderydsgns.yolasite.com>

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For several years now, we've hung our Christmas stockings on this metal stand, which I think was originally a quilt or towel rack. It's sturdy, and it holds quite a few stockings, but it's really too short for the purpose. The stockings on

the lower rung drag on the floor, and those on the top overlap and obscure the ones on the bottom.

Each year when I take the rack out of storage, I've intended to do



something about it, but during the run-up to Christmas there never seems to be any extra time, and once everything has been taken down again

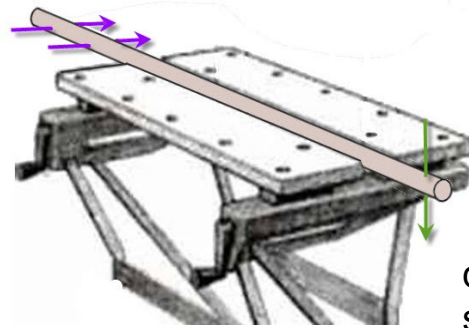
and put away, the rack slips off my project list. Well, not this year. I finally decided to take the whole thing apart and remedy the problem by replacing the metal uprights with two 48" dowels of the same diameter (1").

Santa obligingly brought me the dowels for Christmas, and after the festivities were done for this year, I set to work.

I dismantled the rack, removing the four bolts from the side posts. Then I measured and marked on each dowel the position of the holes I'd need: two for the leg bolts, and one for the top crossbar.

The next step was to drill through each dowel to make holes to receive the bolts. The holes for the leg support bolts (represented by the purple arrow on the diagram) needed to be drilled at right angles to the ones for the top crossbar (shown in green), so I had to rotate the dowel 90 degrees and re-clamp after drilling the first two holes.

To help keep the dowel steady while I drilled, I clamped it in my Workmate. I don't have

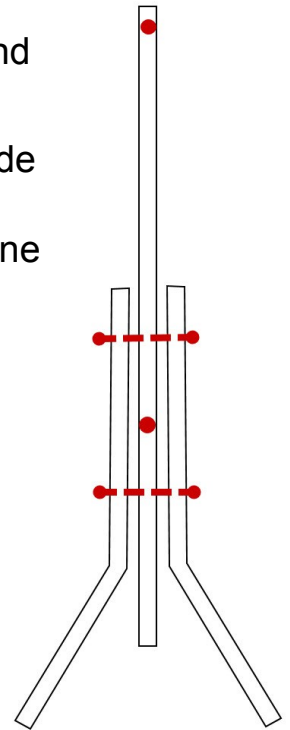


a drill press to help keep the drill perpendicular, so I drilled the

holes by hand, keeping the drill as close to vertical as I could manage.

After I drilled the holes for the leg supports and the ones for the top crossbar, I reassembled the rack. Then I measured and marked the position of the second crossbar, drilled the final set of holes with the rack still assembled, and bolted the second bar in place.

The distance between the crossbars, and from the first bar to the floor, is now 28.5 inches – plenty of clearance for the stockings on both levels. Even the Yip-Yips have lots of room, and they don't overlap!





All that remains is to paint the new uprights. I had originally thought to use gold paint, but have since realized that it might be difficult to get a good colour match to the rest of the rack components. My plan now is to go with either a wood stain or a dark green paint.

I was a little concerned that the extra height might tend to destabilize the rack, but it's still sturdy, and the stockings are all clearly visible.

I use Christmas-themed shower curtain hooks to attach the stockings to the rack; they'll hang even when full, and they're easy to remove when tucking into Santa's bounty.



Given that we don't have a fireplace, this rack is a reasonable alternative for displaying the stockings. It even manages to look quite festive when it's all decked out with Christmas lights. Now I can't wait to set it up again next year!