THE CrossFit JOURNAL

# The Silence of the WODs

Dealing with angry neighbors complaining about the noise? Ahmik Jones shows you how to build a lifting platform that'll keep athletes and neighbors happy.

**By Ahmik Jones** CrossFit SoCal **September 2010**

*All images: Courtesy of Ahmik Jones/CrossFit SoCal*

We had a problem that has unfortunately been very common among affiliates. Despite the fact that we had brought our new landlord and neighbor over twice to observe workouts prior to signing our lease—and we had dropped heavy weights from overhead right in front of him—and despite his assurances that similar sounds would not be a problem next to his accounting office, we had been threatened with legal action if we did not stop dropping weights during business hours within a few months of moving into our new space.





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After some heated discussion, we offered to cut the slab between our spaces in the hopes of stopping the transmission of the sound. Our landlord was not willing to try this, and we later learned that this method has failed to solve the problem with other affiliates.

Our landlord suggested that we somehow pad the whole floor in order to eliminate the vibrations, which unfortunately would have been prohibitively expensive. Therefore, we started researching sound-damping platforms in hopes of stopping the vibrations at the source. We found plans here. However, it looked like some of the design was overkill, and we wanted an 8 x 8-foot platform so there would be room for a squat rack or stand. Because I needed to build several, I had to have an efficient design. I consulted my brother-in-law, an architect, and he agreed. He recommended some places that the design could be changed, and I made some changes of my own.

I drew up some plans and built a prototype, experimenting with various types of padding. The addition of 3.5 inches of carpet padding stopped the sound and vibration completely. However, the plates sank into the padding, causing the screws holding the horse-stall mats in place to bend and break. It was also annoying to lift off of this surface because you could not adequately control the starting position. We tried mixes of carpet and carpet padding. While this improved the situation, it was still far from ideal. We tried floating a piece of plywood on top of the carpet padding to distribute the load, much like the stiff top layer of a rock-climbing crash pad. This worked beautifully until the first time someone dropped 400 lb. on the platform from shoulder height and shattered the floating plywood.

***With a few modifications, a standard Oly platform can ensure your neighbors don't threaten you with violence after listening to 1RM clean and jerks all day.***





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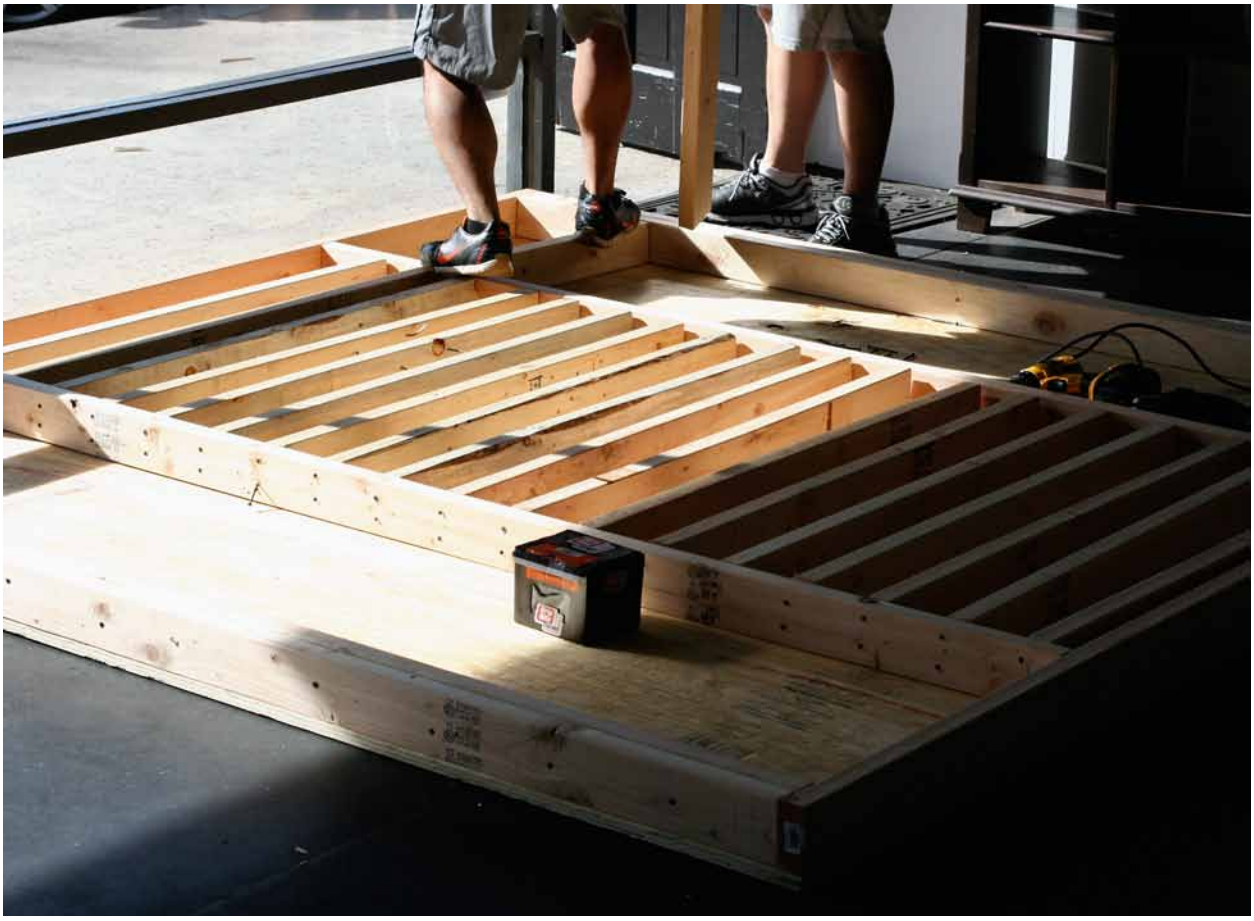
After several iterations, the final design includes a center piece that's 3 inches narrower to better distribute the forces onto the padded area, two pieces of plywood sandwiched together over the carpet padding below the horse-stall mats, and horse-stall mats attached only on three sides, with the center edge left free to move when the weights are dropped.

The final design has been serving us well for six months of heavy use. With the double sheet of plywood distributing the weight, lifting on the platforms is nearly the same as lifting on a standard weightlifting platform or the ground. The platforms are also very effective. You cannot feel the vibration of 155 lb. dropped from overhead from even a few feet away. Deadlift vibrations are also eliminated, and we have not received a single noise complaint since we installed the platforms.

If you have the hardware store cut the plywood for you, the only tools required are a circular saw, a power drill and a utility knife to cut the horse-stall mat. If you are good with a circular saw, you can cut the plywood yourself.

I recommend drilling pilot holes when framing the 2x4 studs to avoid splitting them. I also recommend framing in the inner part of each double 2x4 and attaching the cross pieces before attaching the outer pieces. Use the bottom pieces of plywood as a guide for putting together the 2x4s, then flip the whole platform, attach the bottom plywood pieces, flip it over again and add the padding and top pieces.



***By putting carpet in the side channels of the platform below plywood and matting, you can eliminate vibrations when heavy barbells are dropped from overhead.***





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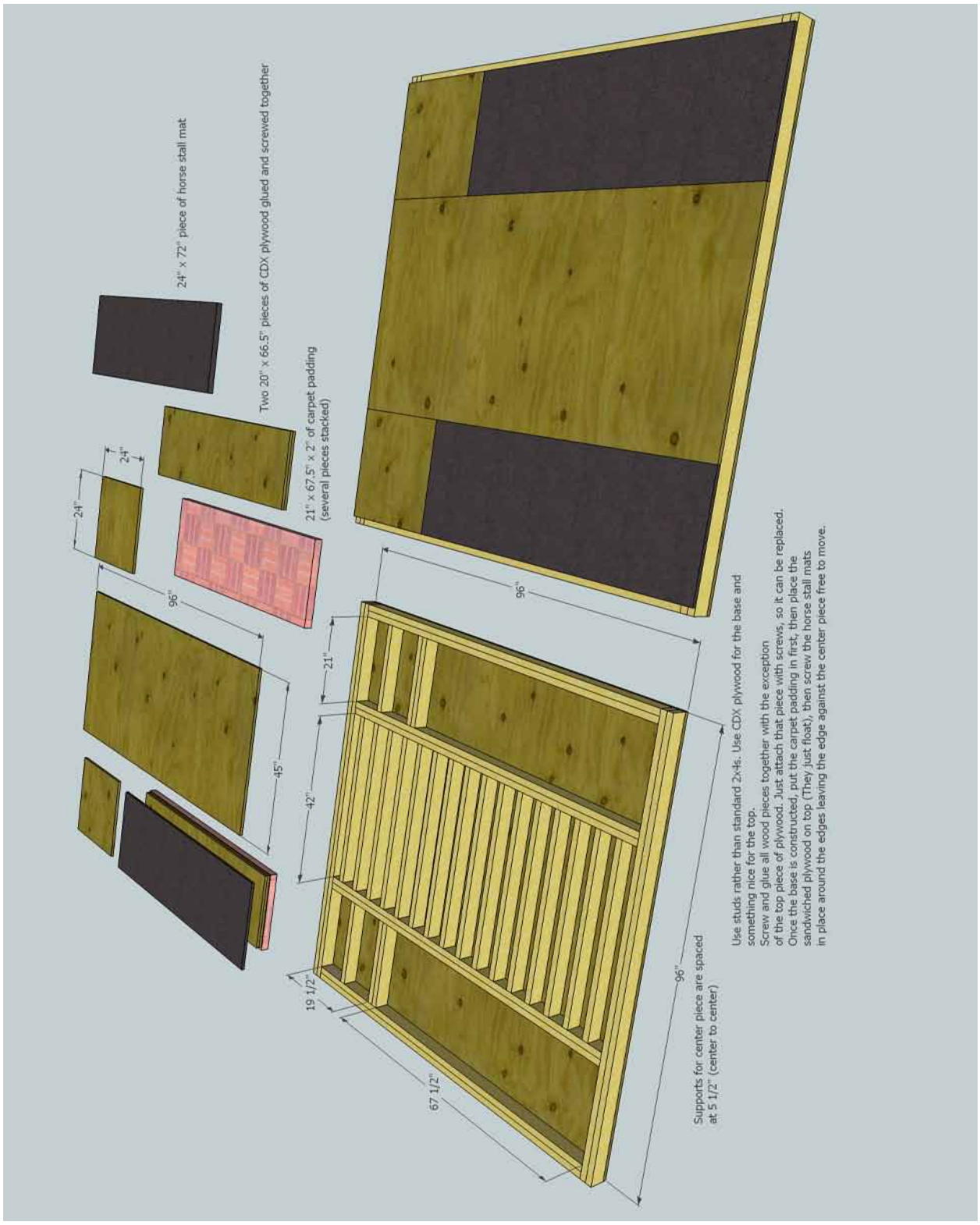






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### Each Platform Requires:

4 sheets of CDX plywood, two cut into 66.5" x 20" pieces ($30 each)

1 sheet of sanded or hardwood plywood for the top piece with 3" cut off one long edge ($40)

2 pieces of 24" x 24" sanded plywood ($10 each)

22 - 8' 2 x 4 studs ($2-$3 each)

1 bottle of wood glue ($5-$10)

1 large box of 2.5" coarse-threaded drywall screws ($20)

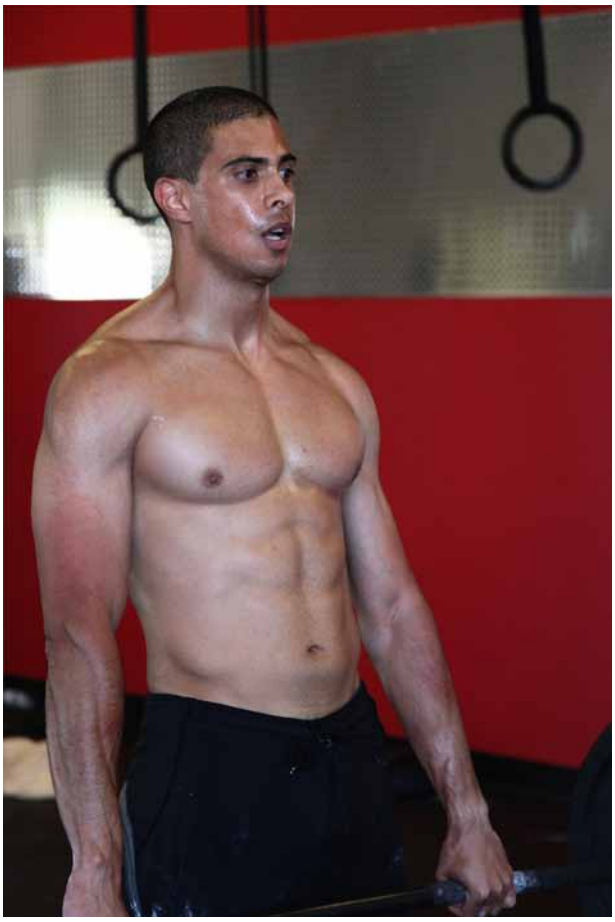
1 small box of 1.25" coarse-threaded drywall screws for screwing the 2 pieces of floating plywood together ($10 approx.)

1/2 roll of carpet padding ($30, or $60 for the whole roll)

1 horse stall mat, cut in half lengthwise ($50)

Total: $350-$380 each.

✦



### About the Author

*Dr. Ahmik Jones has been CrossFitting and training others for six years. He is currently in his final year of radiology residency and is one of the owners of CrossFit SoCal. He also works with Rogue Fitness and has been a CrossFit equipment enthusiast for years.*





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