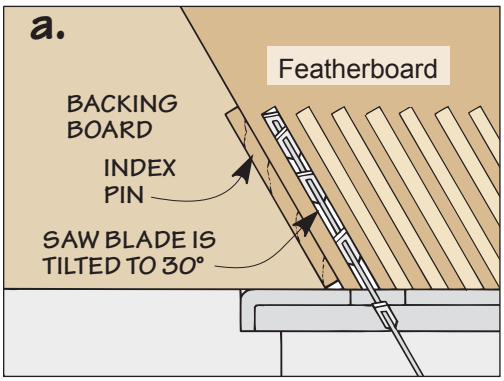
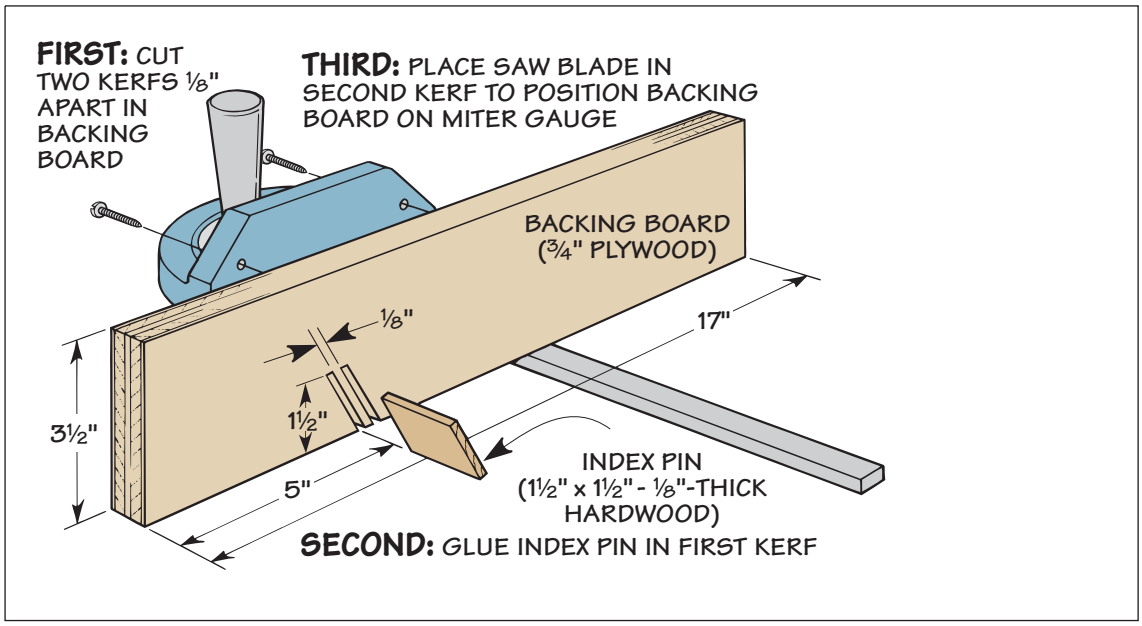
Indexing Jig for Making Featherboards

Featherboards are a great way to hold a workpiece firmly against a fence or table surface. But there's more to making a featherboard than just sawing kerfs in the end of a board. To get the fingers to flex properly, the spacing between the kerfs must be nearly perfect. To make the job easier, I built an indexing jig from just a few pieces of scrap wood in my shop.



The jig is nothing more than a long piece of plywood (backing board) with two saw kerfs spaced 1/8" apart. In one kerf I glued a hardwood "pin" that serves as a index. Leave the other kerf open.



To use the jig, start by setting your blade to a 30° angle and cut one end of your featherboard. Then position the jig on the table, lining up the open kerf with your saw blade. Next secure the jig to your miter gauge with clamps or screws.

Now position your featherboard against the jig, making sure it's pushed up snug against the index pin, see detail "a." Secure the featherboard to your jig with clamps and cut your first kerf.

Next unclamp the featherboard, and again, push it up snug against the index pin. Re-clamp and make another pass to cut your second kerf. Repeat this process to complete all the fingers on the featherboard.