Convertible Cab Made Out Of Wood

Glen King made a convertible cab for his Polaris UTV using 6 wooden panels that U-bolt to the rollover bars. "I can remove the entire cab in 20 min. or just take off pieces," he says.

Glen King can have as much cab as he wants on his UTV. His convertible cab is made from 6 wooden panels connected to the rollover bars of the Polaris Ranger.

"I use it for hunting in the mountains and around the home place, but at 67, I'm not interested in riding in the wind and rain," says King.

He was also not interested in paying the high price Polaris wanted for their cab. "I saw some aftermarket units that were real nice, but they cost almost as much as the machine itself," says King. "Plus, I can trailer my machine down the road at 70 mph with no problem. I've seen commercial cabs blow off on the road."

A retired cabinetmaker, King did a little woodworking to make his UTV cab. He cut out the panels to match the bends in the ROPS and the 5-ft., 7-in. width of the UTV. Most panels are made from 3/4-in. plywood. He started at the rear with a solid 20.5-in. wide panel, followed by an 8 1/2-in. wide panel with 3 holes cut into it.

"I cut the holes out with my jigsaw and covered them with plexiglass," says King. "I used some silicone caulk to seal them and screwed them in place."

The next panel was 15 in. wide. It was cut beveled at about a 5-degree angle where it would be slightly overlapped by the 32-in. wide roof panel. At the front the roof panel overlapped a 7-in. wide panel, also beveled at 5 degrees. This panel overlaps the 29-in. tall front window panel.

"The window panel has a top edge that matches the 5-ft., 7-in. width of the other panels, but comes in about 3 1/2 in. on each side where the windows start to better match the hood," explains King.

The front panel has two glass panes that are each 19 1/4 in. square. They are framed in on the plywood panel, much as King would have framed in a glass door on a cabinet. Each panel was framed in with dowel pegs, glued and clamped in place with a few screws for reinforcement.

"I attach the panels including the roof section, using U-bolts," explains King. "I can take the entire thing off in 20 min. or just take off pieces."

The glass pieces for the front window panel were the most expensive parts of the entire process. Much of the rest came from King's salvage supply.

"The glass cost me about $60," says King. "I built the whole thing for about $125, plus my time."

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Custom Built Yard Tractor Cab

Steve Cunningham built this cab for his Kubota yard tractor. Cab doors are removable for summer work.

Steve Cunningham is a retired optometrist whose home is at the end of a 1/4-mile long driveway reaching into 67 acres of New Hampshire woods. In the past 10 years he's cut trees for timber, sawed his own lumber, built the home they live in, made cabinets and custom flooring, built a pond and orchard, landscaped a huge rock wall, and built equipment for his tractor to make yard work easier.

"When we first bought the property I looked at tractors with cabs because I wanted protection while in the woods and also against the cold of winter," Steve says. "I wanted windows that opened, a door that I could take off and no air conditioning. Turns out I was dreaming because that doesn't exist in the marketplace."

So he bought a Kubota tractor and built a cab to his own specifications. The frame is made of metal tubing that's reinforced at the corners for strength. It bolts to the tractor chassis with rubber cushions that minimize vibration and cut down on noise. The roof, siding and window frames are made of exterior grade plywood with custom-matched Kubota orange paint. Plexiglass windows open on the sides. The windshield, rear window and door are removable.

The cab roof is at the height of and supported by the rollbar at the rear. It has a headliner of Naugahyde backed with foam to reduce noise. The doors are the full width of the sides of the cab. They mount like a boat rudder on gudgeons and pintels. They're easily removed by pulling a pin and then lifting the door up and out. Steve has two 55-watt halogen lights on the top, front and rear, yellow LED flashers on all 4 sides of the top, two ceiling-mounted LED cab lights, and a rear view camera with a dash-mounted screen. He heats the cab with a small catalytic propane heater. The window wipers are manually operated and he even has a marine horn on the cab.

"I probably didn't save any money by building my own cab," Steve says, "but I sure got what I wanted. "During the winter I'm protected from the snow and cold and in the summer I can strip it down and have just a roof canopy for protection in the woods."

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Harry Kuyper built this big cab for his little Deere X360 garden tractor.

Big Cab, Little Tractor

Harry Kuyper, Kewadin, Mich., recently sent FARM SHOW photos of the big cab he built for his little Deere X360 garden tractor.

He used bed frame angle iron to build the frame. "I built it 1/2 to 3/4 in. larger than the tractor's body because I didn't want the cab to scratch the tractor," says Kuyper. "I packed foam rubber strips into the gaps between the frame and body, which makes the cab almost airtight."

The cab has plexiglass windows. "The front window and upper side windows are double paned so they won't fog up," notes Kuyper.

He found a small catalytic heater like the ones used in ice fishing houses and mounted it in a corner of the cab, next to the steering wheel. "The catalytic heater will last more than one winter on a small tank of fuel. It keeps me toasty warm. In fact, if the sun comes out while I'm working it can get so warm that I have to take off my coat."

To make it easy to remove the cab for summer, he welded 2 small angle iron pieces onto the cab that extend out the back. The angle irons have holes in the end that pin onto a 2 by 4 wooden frame on the ground.

"I remove 5 mounting bolts and then use a boat trailer winch to tip the cab back onto the wood frame, which pulls the front of the cab up. I raise the cab just high enough to clear the steering wheel and seat," says Kuyper. "Then I drive the tractor out from under the cab."

Kuyper gave a photo of his cab-mounted tractor to a local Deere dealer. "He wanted to know if I would build the cab for other people, but I told him it would be too much work for the money I could get. However, it really works good for me."

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$300 Deere Gator Cab

"It's not as pretty as a store-bought cab, but it works and I saved a lot of money," says Robert John about the cab he built for his Deere 4 by 6 Gator.

"I priced a new cab for my Deere 4 by 6 Gator and they wanted almost $4,000, which I thought was way too much money," says Illinois handyman Robert John. "I built a cab myself for less than $300. It turned out real nice."

John started his project by building a wood frame that attaches to the roll cage. He used 1/2-in. plywood for the doors, window frames and rear panel. Each door bolts to the rear of the frame with box hinges. The doors close securely with spring-loaded latches. Each door has a sliding window made out of 1/8-in. Lexan plastic.

The windshield is supported by a center divider that mounts to the roll cage on top and to the Gator's hood at the base. The lower part of the windshield contains two 8-in. high sliding windows to let cool air in. The cab's roof is a commercial model made from heavy duty ABS plastic. John mounted a strobe safety light on it.

A small 8-in. fan that plugs into a cigarette lighter hangs from the cab's ceiling. A propane tank heater on the floor provides a small amount of heat inside the cab in cold weather. The cab also has homemade plywood cup holders.

"It's not as pretty as a store-bought cab, but it works and I saved a lot of money," says John. "I didn't draw up any plans but instead just figured it out as I went along. I didn't have to drill any holes in the Gator at all. I used 2 by 4's to build the cab's frame but ripped them down to a 3/4 by 1 1/2 size to make the frame, doubling it up in some places to make it stronger. I didn't use full 2 by 4's because there wasn't enough room and it would have looked too clunky."

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