Simple lever cheese press:

Supplies:

- (8') 1" x 3" lumber. Fir is ok, but hardwood is better
- (2') 1" x 6" board
- (4) 3 ½" x ¼" bolts
- (4) ¼" nuts
- (12) ¼" fender washers (the large ones)
- (4) 2" angle brackets with mounting screws
- (2) 2" stainless steel wood screws

Directions:

Cut lumber into the following lengths: (2) 20", (2) 18", (1) 14", (1) 2.75" (to make a square). Sand edges. Stain/varnish/finish wood as you like and allow to cure completely.

Tape the two 18" lengths together and drill 5/16" holes at 1", 5", 9", and 17", centered across the pieces. It is very important that these holes line up at the end. These are the outer arms of the press.

Remove tape and tape one of these pieces to one of the 20" pieces so the holes at 1" and 5" will make holes at 1" and 5" on the 20" piece. Drill (2) 5/16" holes in the 20" piece using the 1" and 5" holes in the 18" piece as guides. This is the central arm of the press.

Drill 5/16" holes in the other 20" piece at 1", 3", 5", and 7", centered across the piece. This is the upright for the press.

Drill one 5/16" hole 1 ½" from the end of the other 20" piece. This is the pressing rod.

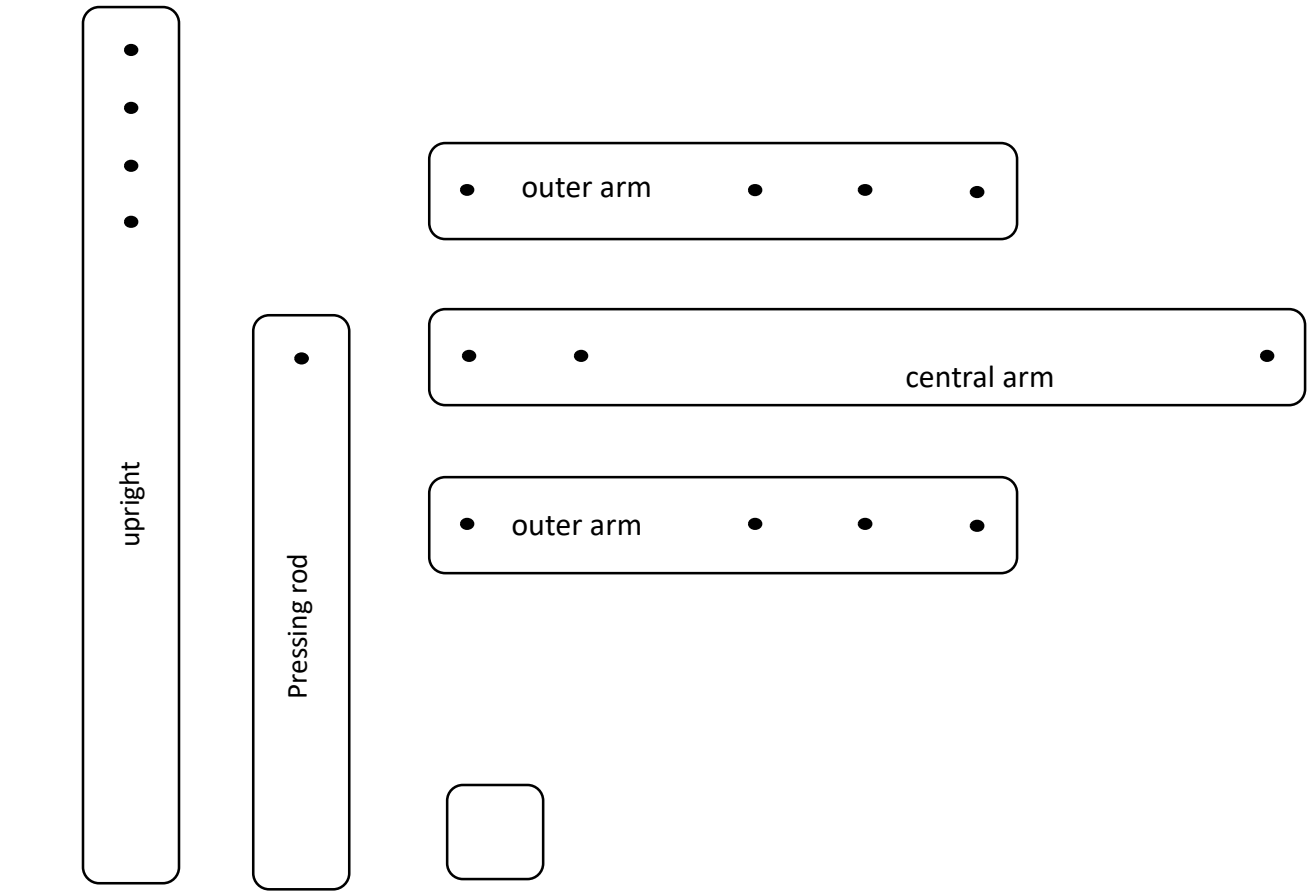
Cut the corners off the square piece to make and octagon, or round it completely into a circle (optional). Tape this piece to the end of the pressing rod opposite the drilled hole and drill 2 pilot holes for the stainless steel wood screws. Attach the square/octagon/circle to the end of the pressing rod.

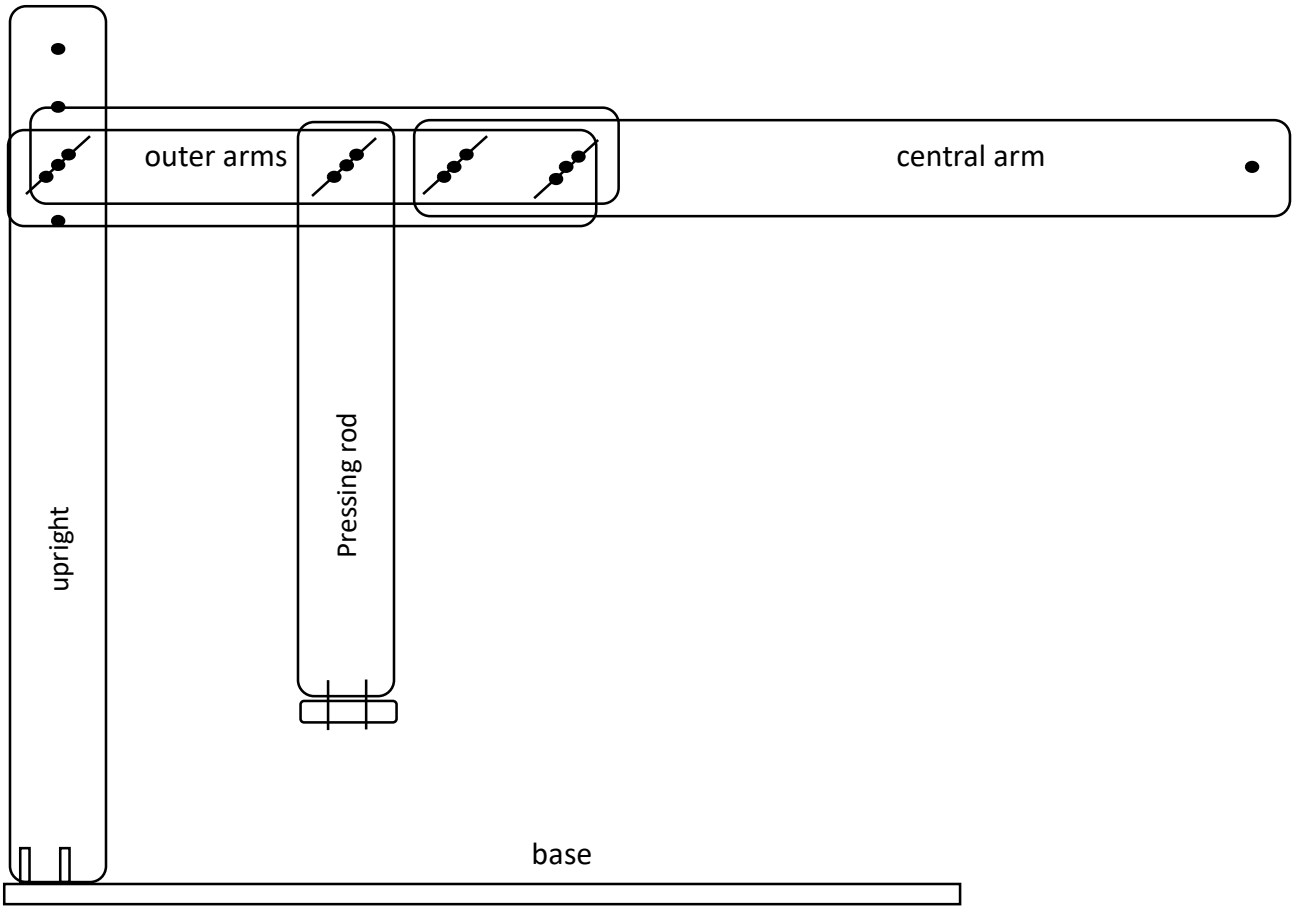
Drill pilot holes for the brackets at the end of the upright opposite the above drilled holes and the base so the brackets will attach the upright to one end of the base. Use (2) brackets on each side of the upright, offset a little so opposite screws won't interfere with each other. Attach upright to the base.

Use nuts, bolts, and washers to attach the outer arms to the central arm using the holes at 1" and 5" as follows: bolt head, washer, outer arm, washer, central arm, washer, outer arm, washer, nut. These nuts should be good and tight.

Slide the pressing rod between the outer arms at the 9" holes and attach with nuts, bolts, and washers as follows: bolt head, washer, outer arm, pressing rod, outer arm, washer, nut. This nut should be snug but don't over-tighten and pinch the pressing rod – it should be able to swing freely.

Slide the ends of the outer arms around the upright and attach at the upright's 5" hole: bolt head, washer, outer arm, upright, outer arm, washer, nut. This nut should be finger-tight. This hole works well for my setup, but you might want to move the attachment point up or down a position depending on how you have everything else set up.


upright
Pressing rod
outer arm
central arm
outer arm


outer arms
central arm
upright
Pressing rod
base