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Furniture Space Savers Boxes and Boards

Michigan State University

Cooperative Extension Service

Home and Family Series

Maragaret Boschetti, Extension Specialist in Home Furnishings

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Furniture Space Savers

BOXES and BOARDS

Extension Bulletin E-661

HOME AND FAMILY SERIES

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE • MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

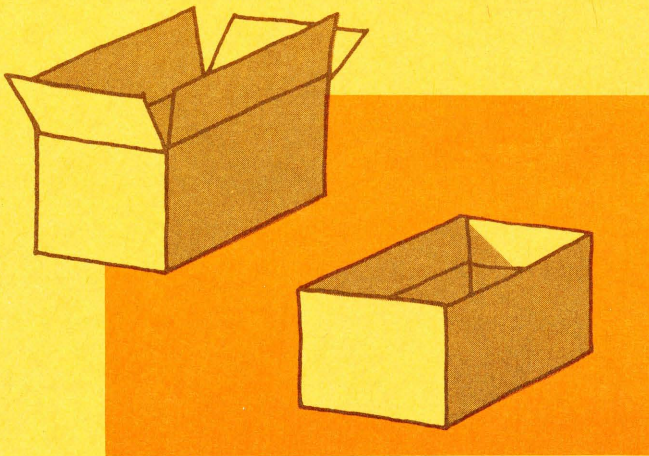
By MARGARET BOSCHETTI, Extension Specialist in Home Furnishings

Keeping your home reasonably in order makes for more pleasant surroundings. A storage unit can be very helpful. It is a piece of furniture that every family can use:

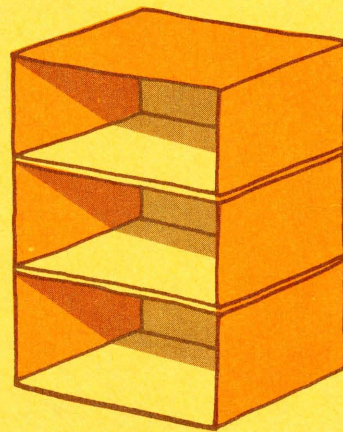
- to keep their home in order.
- to keep things handy and easy to find.
- to keep things from dirt and damage.
- to keep more space for living.

Sturdy, clean, cardboard boxes, and smooth, flat boards can be put together in many ways to make one or more storage furniture units.

You can easily find cardboard boxes for little or no cost. Appliance boxes (vacuum cleaner, mixers, etc.) are strong and large. So are boxes from hardware stores and liquor stores. Apple boxes have lift-off lids and hand-holes cut into the ends for easy lifting.

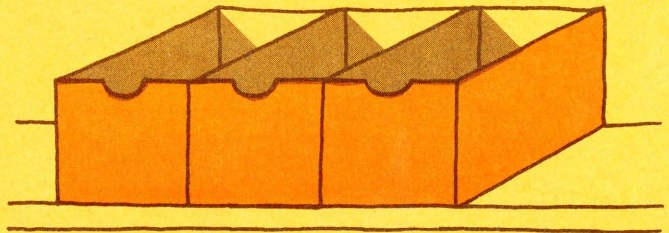


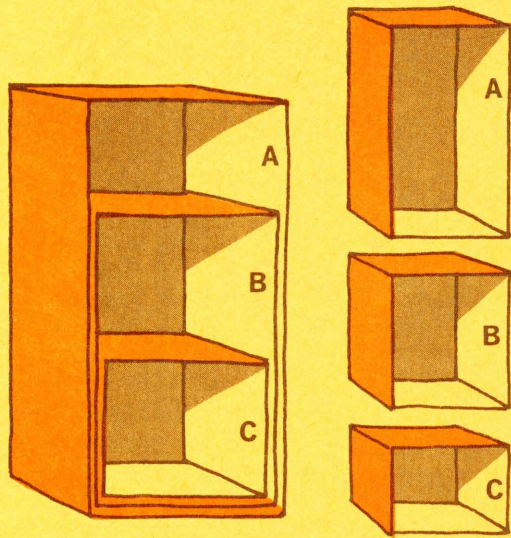
Boxes that will be used without a cover should have the top flaps turned inside and glued down for extra strength.



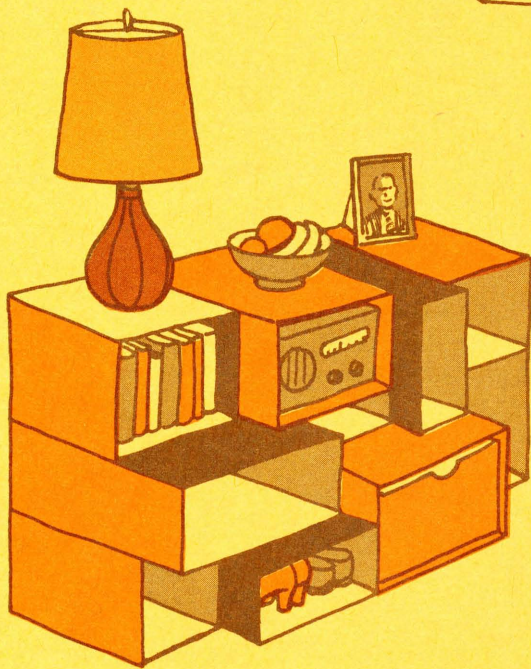
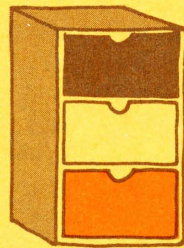
Three boxes — same size and shape — stacked one on top of another, make a simple furniture unit to hold lightweight things.

Three boxes — same size and shape — placed side-by-side on a shelf make a unit to keep small but bulky things. A curved edge on one end of each box makes a hand-hold for easy moving of boxes on and off shelf.

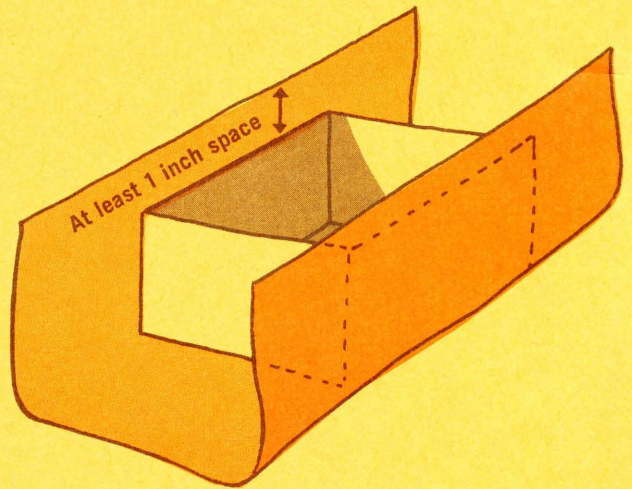




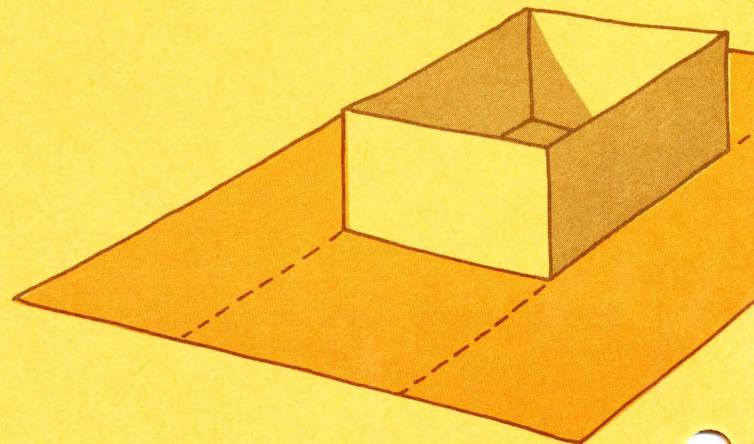
Three boxes of different lengths, placed one inside the other make a simple chest for storing clothes. Drawers can be made from boxes that fit into the spaces.



Many boxes of different sizes and shapes can be stacked on top of each other to make a larger storage unit. Thin plywood boards placed between the boxes make them strong enough to hold books and heavy items. Glue or clothes pins will hold the boxes together securely.



1. You will need a piece of paper large enough to cover the bottom and four sides of the storage box with at least a one-inch lap-over on the top edges. Place paper on a flat surface wrong side up. Put the box in the middle of the paper and pull up all four edges to be sure the paper is large enough. Draw a line around the box. Spread glue on the bottom of the box. (Use white glue, rubber cement, wall paper paste or homemade flour-water paste. Self-adhesive paper does not need glue.) Set box in place marked on paper. Press firmly to smooth out air bubbles.



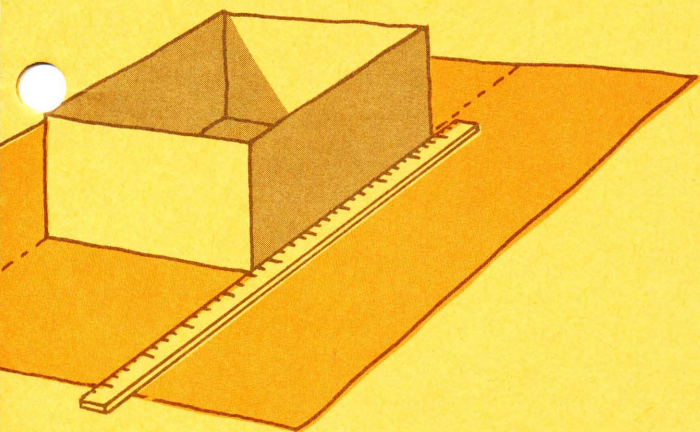
COVERING A BOX

Storage units made from cardboard boxes can be made attractive. Just paint or cover them with colorful paper.

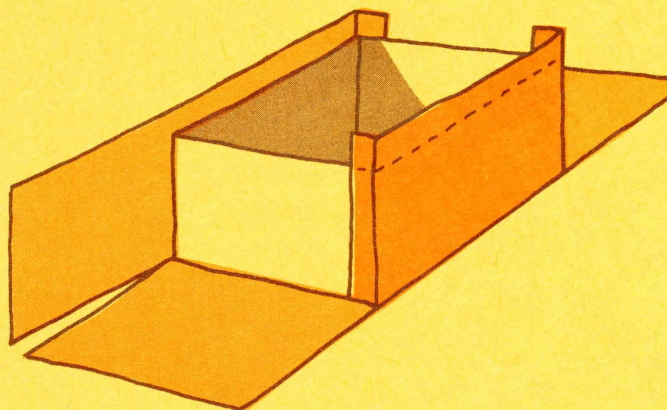
Enamel paints — high-gloss or semi-gloss — do not soil easily and can take several cleanings.

You can make paper coverings from remnants of wallpaper, giftwrapping paper that you have saved, newspapers, or colorful scraps cut from magazines. Paper coverings will be easier to clean, and will last longer, if you give them a coat of lacquer or plastic spray.

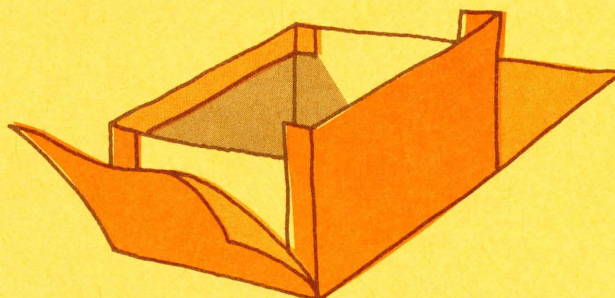
2. Lay a ruler or yardstick next to the long side of the box. Draw a line from each corner of the box to the edge of the paper. Repeat for the other long side.



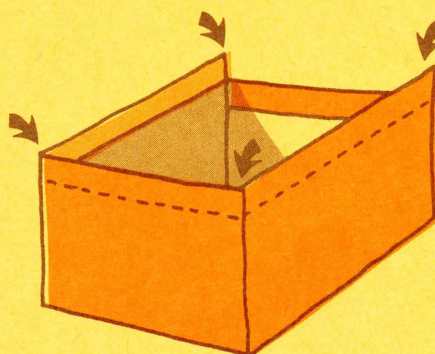
3. Cut along pencil lines to corner of box. This forms the end panels.



4. Spread glue on one long side of box and pull covering paper up over it. Smooth out bubbles by rubbing from bottom to top. The paper will extend beyond the box corners. Trim paper extension so that a two-inch flap remains on each end. Spread glue on the flaps and smooth them into place. Do other long side in the same way.



5. Spread glue on box ends and smooth the end panels up over the box ends.



6. Clip corners on flaps sticking above the box. Spread glue on flaps and smooth them down inside the box.

BOARDS

Boards of $\frac{3}{4}$ inch exterior plywood are not likely to warp easily. They are strong enough to hold heavy items such as a television, lamp, books, dishes, etc.

Plywood boards protected by a **finish** will wear longer. Some good finishes are:

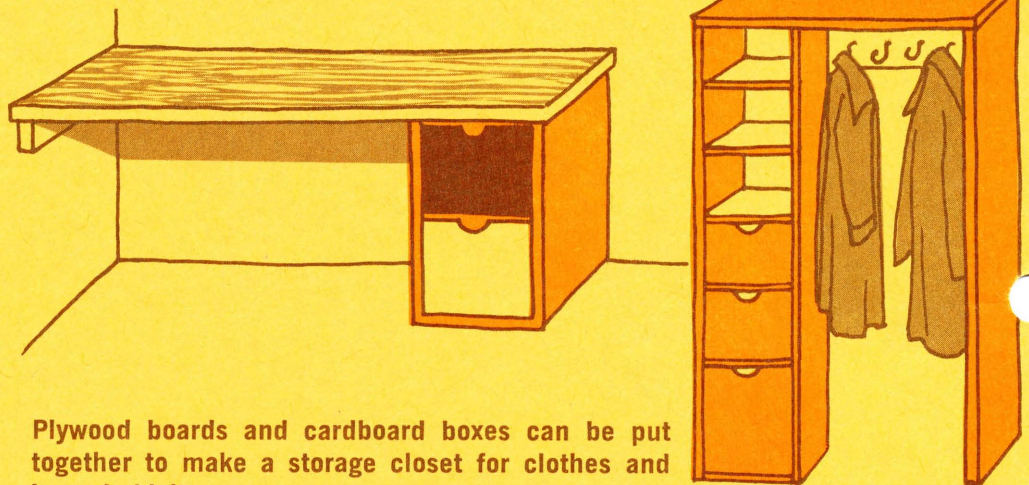
- **Paint:** Apply wood sealer first, then paint. A high-gloss, semi-gloss, or satin enamel paint gives a durable finish that is easy to keep clean.
- **Stain:** Oil stains are easy to put on and will give plywood a rich wood-tone color. After staining, the wood should be sealed. A penetrating oil sealer will stain and seal wood at the same time.
- **Wax:** Paste wax is a good final finish after painting or staining wood. Or, it may be used as the only finish after the wood has been sealed. Paste wax will not change the natural color of plywood.

A paint, hardware, or variety store can tell you more about these finishing materials and how to use them correctly and safely.

Boards held up by bricks or concrete blocks make a free-standing piece of furniture to use as a bookshelf, end-table, or many-purpose storage.



A wide board or flush door (without panels) placed over a chest or stack of sturdy boxes, makes a working surface for eating, studying, or sewing.



Plywood boards and cardboard boxes can be put together to make a storage closet for clothes and household items.

A board held up by large angle-irons screwed (not nailed) to the wall makes a desk, dresser, or an eating surface.

