

# Sewing Machine Cabinet Conversion to Light Table

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When I got it a couple of years ago, his vintage Kenmore cabinet was in rough shape.



Not only was it pretty beaten up, but someone had made a botched attempt to modify it for a different machine.



Since I couldn't install any of my machines in it and didn't need it as a desk, I decided to repurpose the cabinet, making it into a light table as a gift for a photographer friend.

I first removed the oak boards and sewing machine lift mechanism, leaving a large open hole, then added four support strips around edge of the opening to hold the plexiglass insert that would become the surface of the light table. Then I used a chemical stripper to remove the finish from the whole thing .



Once the cabinet had been given a new coat of urethane finish, I installed three light fixtures and a standard switch into the recess.

I chose household light fixtures so my friend would readily be able find replacement bulbs when necessary, and positioned the lights so that the surface would be illuminated without shadows.

For a modest cost, a local glass shop cut a piece of translucent plexiglass to the exact size I needed.





Now my friend can easily work on sorting his negatives and slides, and the poor old cabinet has been kept from the landfill. (Note the built-in storage tray that will come in handy in its new life as a photographer's light table.)

The cabinet looks a whole lot better now, and when not in use, the delicate light table surface is protected by the fold-over desktop. Plus, with the lid closed it can serve as a writing desk.



This was a really fun project, and very satisfying since I got to turn something worn out into something practical and attractive. In fact, I've been keeping my eyes peeled for another suitable cabinet so I can make a light table for myself.