

Slider Boxes from Greeting Cards

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As little kids, my sister and I coveted those slider-style matchboxes that were so perfect for stowing little treasures. At our house, the folks used mostly book matches, so the boxes were hard for us to come by, and were all the more prized when we did get our hands on one.

Maybe that's why these little containers still fascinate me, and judging by the number of sites selling cute little matchbox blanks, I'm not alone.



It's a quirk of mine that I don't like to buy things I can make for myself, even if they take a bit of effort. The handmade results are often prettier, the quality is generally better, and the process itself is satisfying. Plus, I'm recycling!

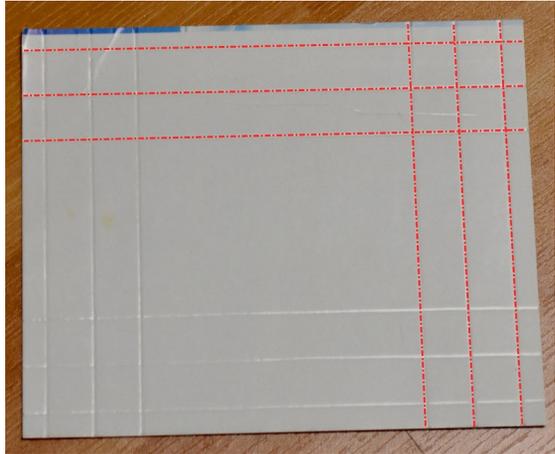


It won't surprise you to hear that I save all our greeting cards.

They're too nice to throw out, and I love to find creative ways to recycle them. Turns out they're perfect for making those nifty little slider boxes that I like so much!

A card back is perfect to make the box tray, while the front makes the sleeve. I generally cut the card back to about 4.25" x 5.5". This size makes a half inch deep finished box that is roughly 1.75" x 3". You can make your boxes to other dimensions but boxes that are too much larger will require much sturdier cardboard.

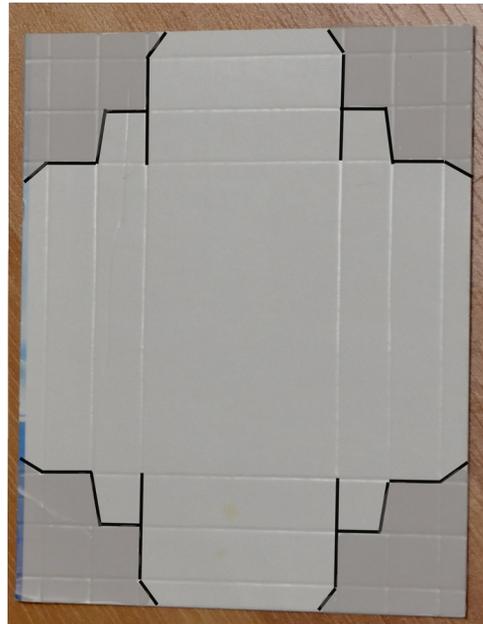
I typically score my cardstock at 1/4" , 3/4", and 1 1/2" on all edges. These days I use a scoreboard, which simplifies the task somewhat, but until relatively recently I used a ruler and stylus.



This scored card back is slightly larger than the trim size I normally use, so will make a little bit bigger box. Before cutting anything, I pre-fold along all the scored lines and burnish lightly with a bone folder.

Once the folds have been burnished, I cut along the fold lines as indicated by the black lines on the sample, and remove the shaded bits.

The 1/4" fold around the edge makes a flange on the inside of the box that helps strengthen its structure.



I spread glue first on the inside folds of the long side, then fold them toward the inside of the box tray and burnish so they are well stuck down.

Holding the long sides vertical with the tabs toward the inside, I dry-fold the end flaps of the box to the inside, ensuring that they enclose the tabs and hold the box together.



Once I'm sure the end flaps fit as they should, I open them again and spread them with glue, then carefully re-fold each one over the tabs.

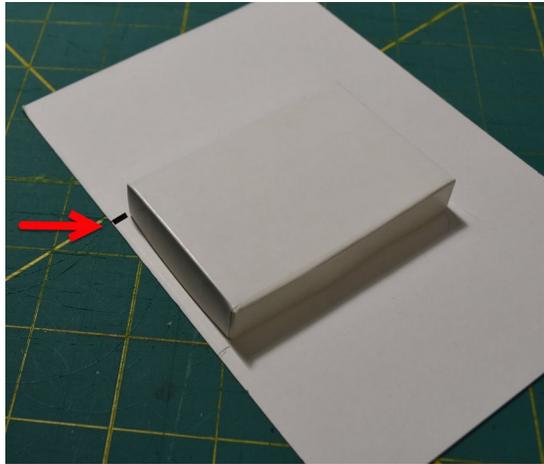
As I do this, I'm taking care to keep the ends of the box square – otherwise the slider won't function properly.

I like to cut an additional rectangle of cardstock sized to fit to the inside bottom of the box tray. I glue this in place on the inside of the box, where it not only covers any writing still showing there, but also further strengthens the box structure.



Once the box tray is complete, I make the sleeve from the front of the card, positioning the folds to take best advantage of the design on the card front.

With the card front face down, I align the box tray with the edge of the card, making a placement mark where I want the first fold to be. I remove the tray, then using my ruler and stylus, or my scoreboard, I make a score line



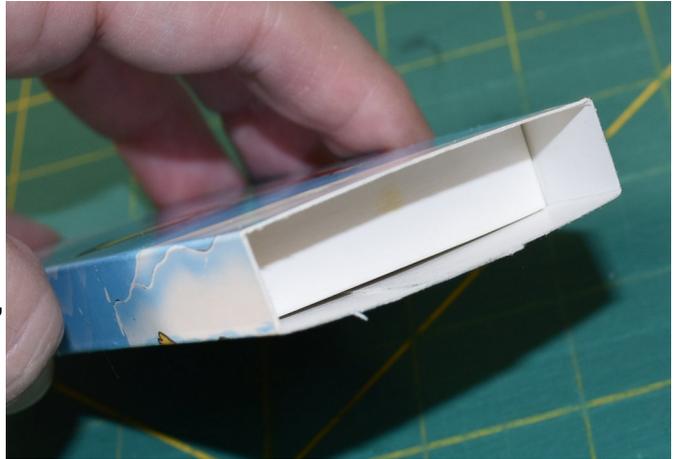
perpendicular to the edge of the card. I pre-fold the line to aid me in positioning the remaining score lines.

To mark the second score line, I line up the box tray against the first fold, then carefully mark the position of the second fold. It should be snug against the box but not too tight for the box to slide comfortably. Then I score, fold, and burnish as before.



I mark and fold the next two lines in the same manner so that the sleeve wraps comfortably around the box tray. The side of the sleeve is just a hair deeper than the 1/2" depth of the box tray. Once they're marked, I score these lines, fold, and burnish.

To finish, I wrap the folded sleeve around the box tray and trim the back overlap if necessary. Once I've ensured that the fit is snug but not too tight, I spread glue on the underlap and press the overlap down.



The sleeve is much too long at this point, but I'll trim later.

Once the glue has grabbed, I remove the tray and flatten the sleeve so I can burnish the glued edge with my bone folder.



While the sleeve is flat, I trim the length so that it is about 1/8" longer than the box tray, and then slip the tray back inside.



Three boxes of varying sizes, all made from greeting cards. Because the walls of the boxes are doubled and reinforced with glue, and there's an extra lining piece, the boxes are quite sturdy and will withstand the push-pull of the tray sliding in and out.



I've made dozens of these little slider boxes in various sizes. It takes a bit of practice to get the sleeve the perfect size but once you get the hang of it, you'll be able to make adorable and pretty gift containers that are sure to be a hit.