

Tissue Box Bin

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A friend mentioned that he was looking for an organizer bin for his desk drawer. I suggested that he use the tissue box he had just tossed out, but he rejected the idea: he said he'd tried that, but the box was too flimsy, and would simply fall apart once the top was cut off.



He's right about this much: today's tissue boxes are very thin card stock, and the box ends are only spot-glued; if you simply cut off the tops of the boxes, they won't be strong enough to serve as organizing bins, and very likely will go to pieces.

But he's mistaken about whether these pretty boxes can be transformed into workable drawer bins: they can, and in a way that makes them sturdy enough to function as dividers in a desk drawer.

The process is super simple: start by removing the plastic from the top opening of your empty box. It should easily pull free.



Rather than cutting off the box top as my friend did, use scissors or a craft knife to make diagonal cuts into all four corners of the top, as shown by the dashed lines in the photo.



The resulting "flaps" can then be folded inward and glued down, to strengthen the sides and top edges of the new bin.





Gluing these flaps to the inside of the box will make a much stronger edge. Here I am using tacky glue to adhere them, and burnishing them with my bone folder.



The glued edges will hold the box together, while at the same time strengthening the side walls and top edge.



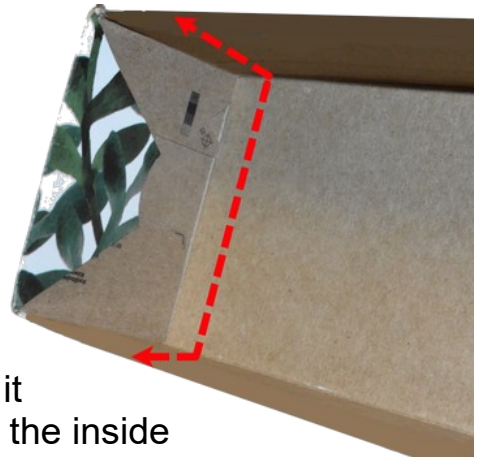
The resulting bin is sufficiently strong for the purpose my friend wanted it for, but if need be it can be made even sturdier for more general use by adding a liner cut from scrap cardboard. The liner, made from

cereal box or other waste card stock, is cut to size and glued to the inside of the box prior to the flaps being folded down.

To make the liner, I measure the inside of the box: crosswise down one side, across the bottom, and up the other side, then lengthwise from end to end. Using these measurements, I cut a section of cereal box card to the exact fit, and score fold lines to match the box.



After dry-fitting the liner to ensure it fits, I'll glue it securely to the inside of the box, taking care to spread glue right to the edges.



Though for visual clarity it's shown printed side up in the photo, I'll glue it to the inside of the box with printed side down, so the plain side shows. (I don't line the ends of the box, as they are already double thickness).

With the liner glued in place, I finish the box/bin just as I did for the unlined version, folding the flaps to the inside, over the liner. With the plain side up, the liner is barely visible in the finished bin.



To the eye, the lined box looks pretty much the same as the unlined one, but the double layer of cardboard makes it stronger so it can serve for more general purposes.

I don't know about you, but I always have lots of odds and ends to contain in the craft loft; tissue boxes are often quite attractive, so they don't need to be painted or covered with decorative paper to make them pretty.

It takes only a couple of moments to transform a pretty tissue box into an unlined bin, and only a few minutes longer to make the lined one.

I transform pretty much all of my tissue boxes into bins, which I use to segment desk drawers and larger storage containers, and as organizing aids for storing button parts and ornaments, and even as partitions in my sock drawer.



In addition to making useful drawer organizers, cardboard bins like these are handy for corralling glue sticks, paints, button parts, thread spools, project pieces, Christmas baubles, etc, all around the craft loft. They are easy to make, attractive, and pretty much free. What could be better?