

Basketry Storage Mount Building Guide #4: Drawers and a Drop-Front Box

This guide will take you through the steps necessary to create a storage mount using archival supplies for flat basketry plaques or mats. This type of storage mount is best for basketry taking up a large amount of horizontal shelf or drawer space that would be turned into vertical space by using a box with internal drawers. The drop-front technique allows for the drawers to slide out easily, and is a technique that is useful in many types of mounts.

Construction Time Estimate: 1 hour – 1 hour, 30 minutes

Archival Supplies and Tools You Will Need:

- | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| - Corrugated Board | - Twill Tape | - Hot Glue | - T-Square | - Pencil, Sharpie |
| - Ethafoam Planks | - Ethafoam Knife | - Glue Gun(s) | - Ruler | - Buffered Tissue |
| - Volara | - Box Cutter | - Awl | - Bone Folder | - Photo Sleeve |

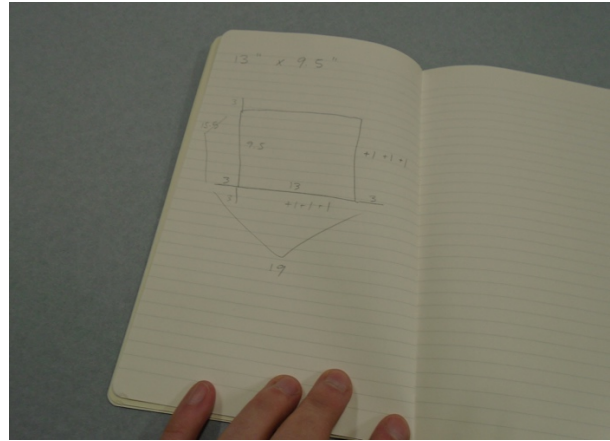
What You Are Making:



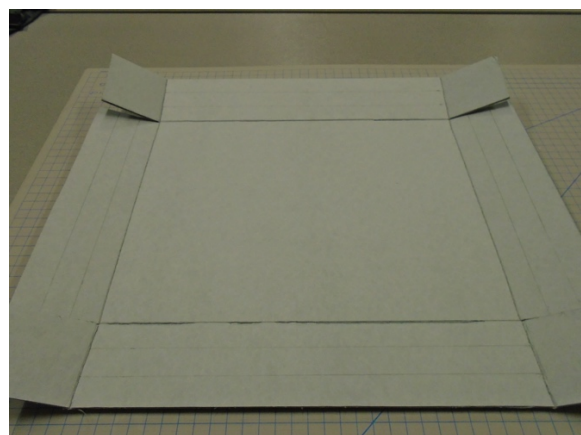
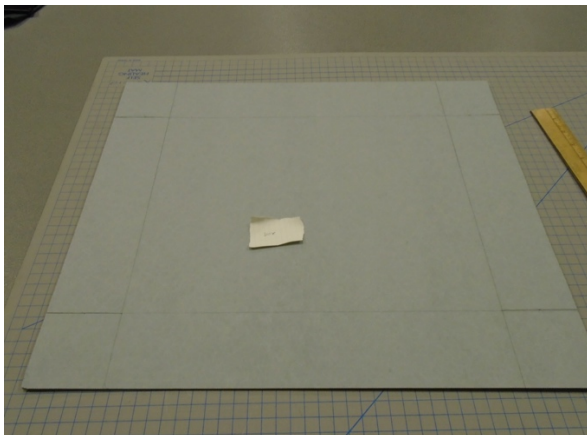
Step 1: Clear a large, flat workspace that will allow you to see the baskets as you work but will also allow plenty of space for construction without affecting the safety of the baskets.

Step 2: Assess the baskets. Check for any weak points that may need extra careful handling. Check for any evidence of pest activity that may need mitigation. This is also the best time to get measurements and jot them down on scrap paper. Measure the diameter (or length and width if an oval or rectangle) of the largest of the baskets you will be putting in the drawers. This is the measurement that will serve as the basis for the size of the box.

Step 3: In this case we are making a box for three basketry mats, meaning we will need two movable drawers in addition to the bottom of the box serving as a platform for the third basket. Making note of your measurements, sketch out your box on scrap paper first. In this case, the walls of the box will need to be quite high. Although each basketry mat is very thin, I am allocating 1 inch per basket for a total of three inches for the wall. This will account for the space of the basket as well as the space for the drawer and sliders.

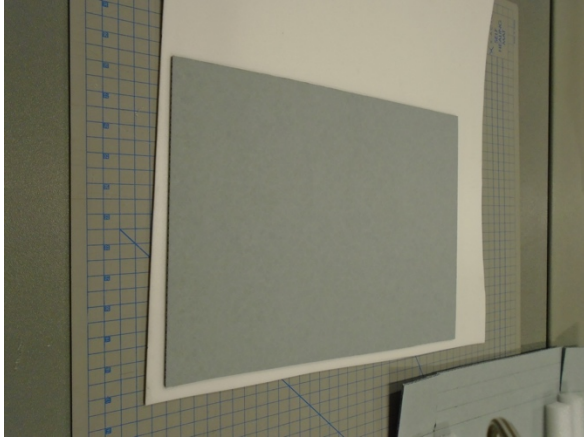


Step 4: Using your sketch, a ruler, and a T-square, draw out your box on a large piece of archival corrugated board. Make lines along all four of the walls 1 inch apart to mark out the spacing of the drawers. Cut out with a box cutter. To begin your box, use the bone folder and a straight edge, score the lines that form the base and walls of your box. Using your box cutter cut a line to form tabs on only the two smaller sides of your four sides (see image below).



Step 5: Measure the interior length and width of your box once again. Use those measurements along with your ruler and T-square to mark out two additional squares of corrugated board of the same size. These will become your drawers.

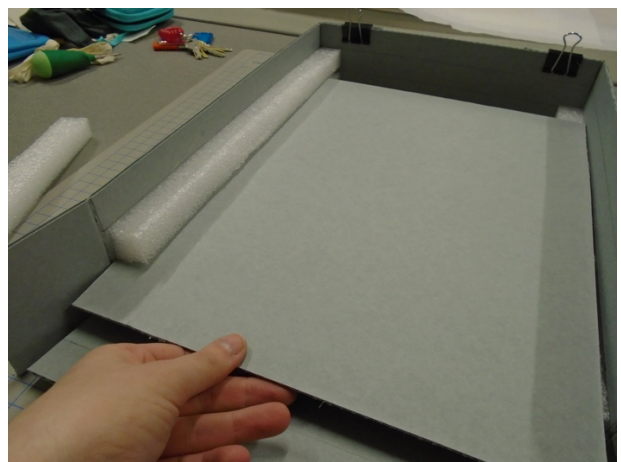
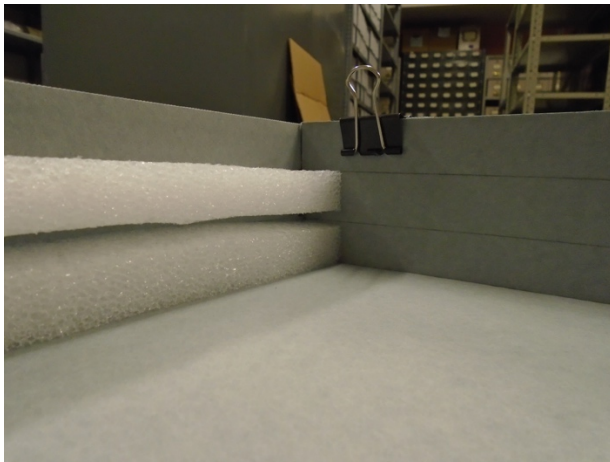
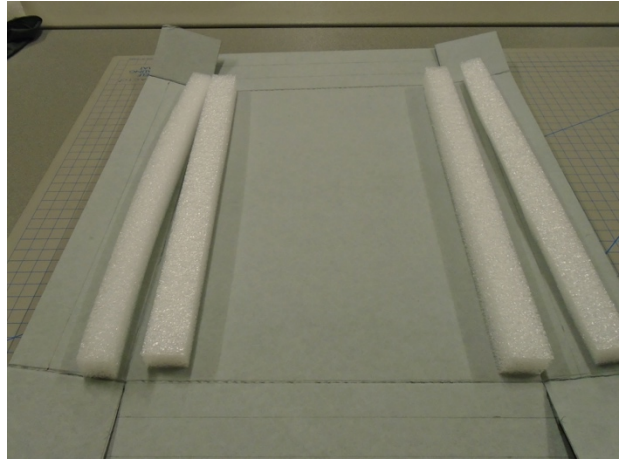
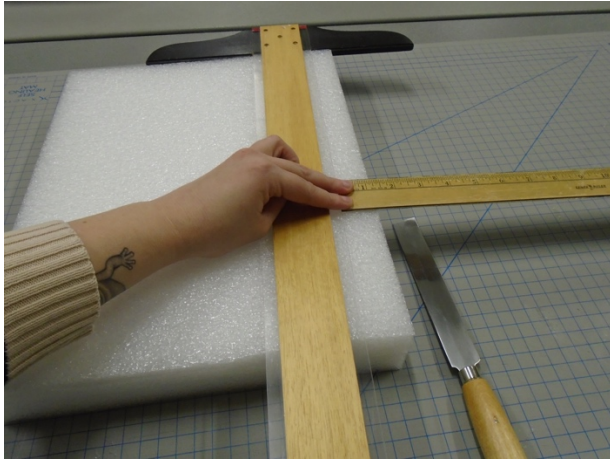
Step 6: Use your new drawers as a template to cut three pieces of Volara (closed-cell polyethylene foam) down to the same size. The Volara will serve as a smooth, cushioned surface and will help absorb vibration.



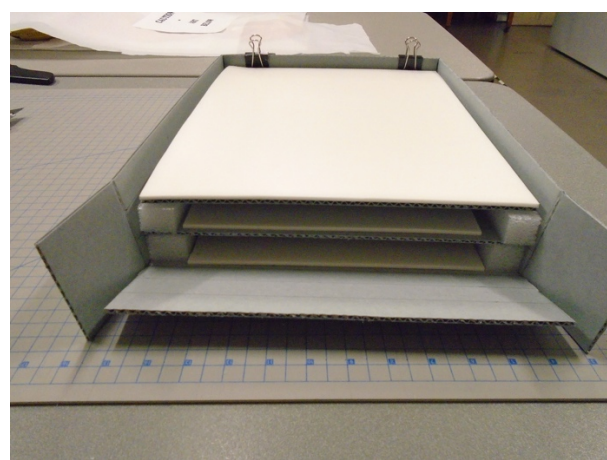
Step 7: To make your lid, take the same measurements for your box's interior and add $1/8''$ on each side to account for the thickness of your board. Then add 1-2'' on each side for the walls of the lid. Using your ruler and T-square, draw the lid onto another piece of corrugated board and cut out with your box cutter. Repeat the same process as your box by using the bone folder and a straight edge to score the lines that form the base and walls of your lid. Using your box cutter cut a line to form tabs on only the two smaller sides of your four sides. Using the high-melt hot glue, glue the four tabs to the outside of your shorter walls. Binder clips are great for holding tabs in place while the glue dries. Set aside your lid until the end.



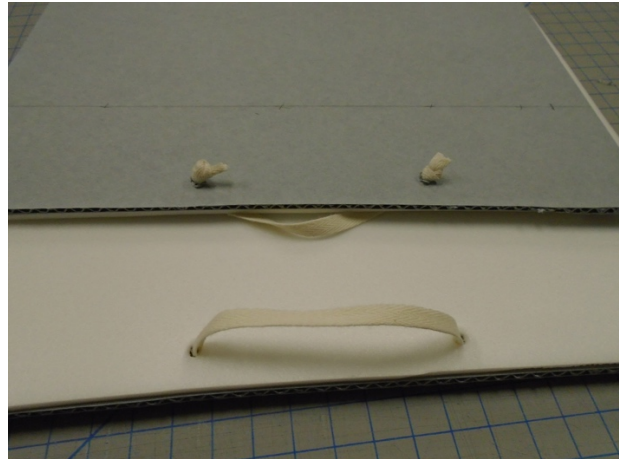
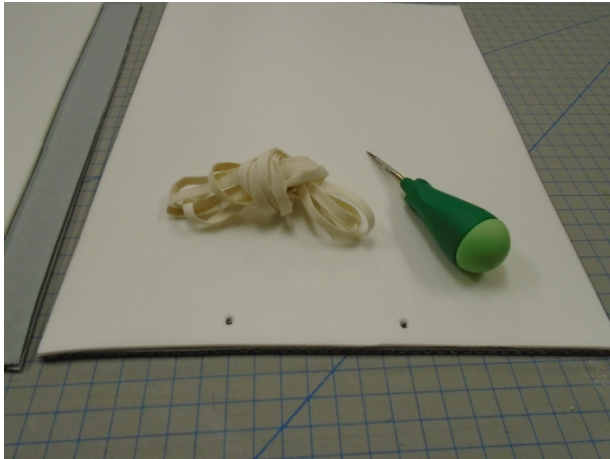
Step 8: Returning to your box, you will now build "sliders" along the walls that you can slide your drawers into. Using a plank of Ethafoam and your Ethafoam knife, cut 4 strips that are the length of your box, by 1'' wide, by $7/8''$ tall. This will allow you to account for your $1/8''$ thick drawer. Position the strips of Ethafoam so that one rests along the base of the box, then there is a $1/8''$ space for the drawer, and then the other strip is placed along the wall with a $1/8''$ space at the top for the final drawer (see images below for guidance).



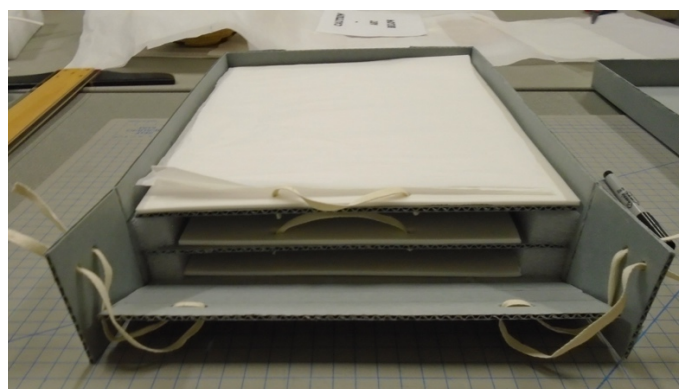
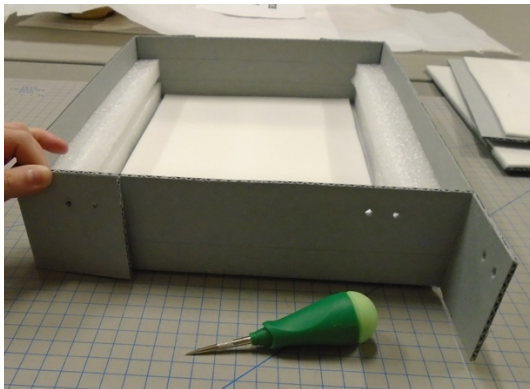
Step 9: Returning to the Volara you previously cut to line the drawers, trim two of the three pieces down one inch on each length side to account for the added space of the sliders. The third piece does not need to be trimmed as the sliders do not affect the top drawer. Glue down the Volara and slide the drawers into the sliders. Make sure everything fits nice and snug.



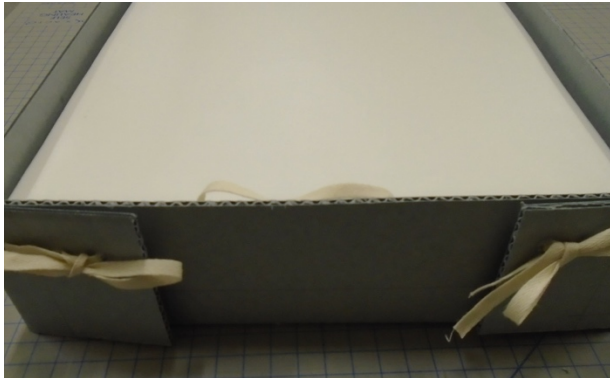
Step 10: Using an awl, punch two holes at the center of the front end of each drawer, spaced a few inches apart. Thread the twill tape through the holes and tie knots on the bottom side of the drawer. This will create loop pulls to help slide the drawers out.



Step 11: Now it is time to create the drop-front of your drop-front box. Using the awl, punch two holes about an inch apart through both the wall and the tab on each side of the front of your box (see images below for guidance). Thread more twill tape through these holes, starting by threading one end through each of the holes at the back of the wall (the interior of the box) and then through the back of the tab so that your ends are on the exterior of the box. Do this on both sides and tie your ends into a bow to close the box. To drop the front, simply untie your bows and let it fall down.



Step 12: A crucial step in a storage mount with many moving parts such as this one is to label your mount and provide instructions for the handler on the mount itself. This can be done in sharpie on the exterior (or anywhere that will not come in contact with the objects). In this case I warned the handler of the drop front and pointed out the bows that need to be undone in order to open the box. I also wrote the numbers on the outside of the box so it would not need to be opened to check the tags (see images below).



Step 13: As a final measure of precaution, add Mylar photo sleeves with images of the objects inside the box to the exterior and make sure they are labelled with the appropriate catalog numbers. This will prevent unnecessary handling in order to view the contents of the box. Now the handler will just have to glance at the mount to know what is inside.



Step 14: As a final option, with very flat and thin basketry mats such as these, you may consider lining your drawers with buffered tissue (remembered to use buffered materials with basketry). This can help you to lift the baskets out of the drawer with more ease and will prevent excess handling of the edges. Finally, place the basketry mats inside the mount you have just completed!