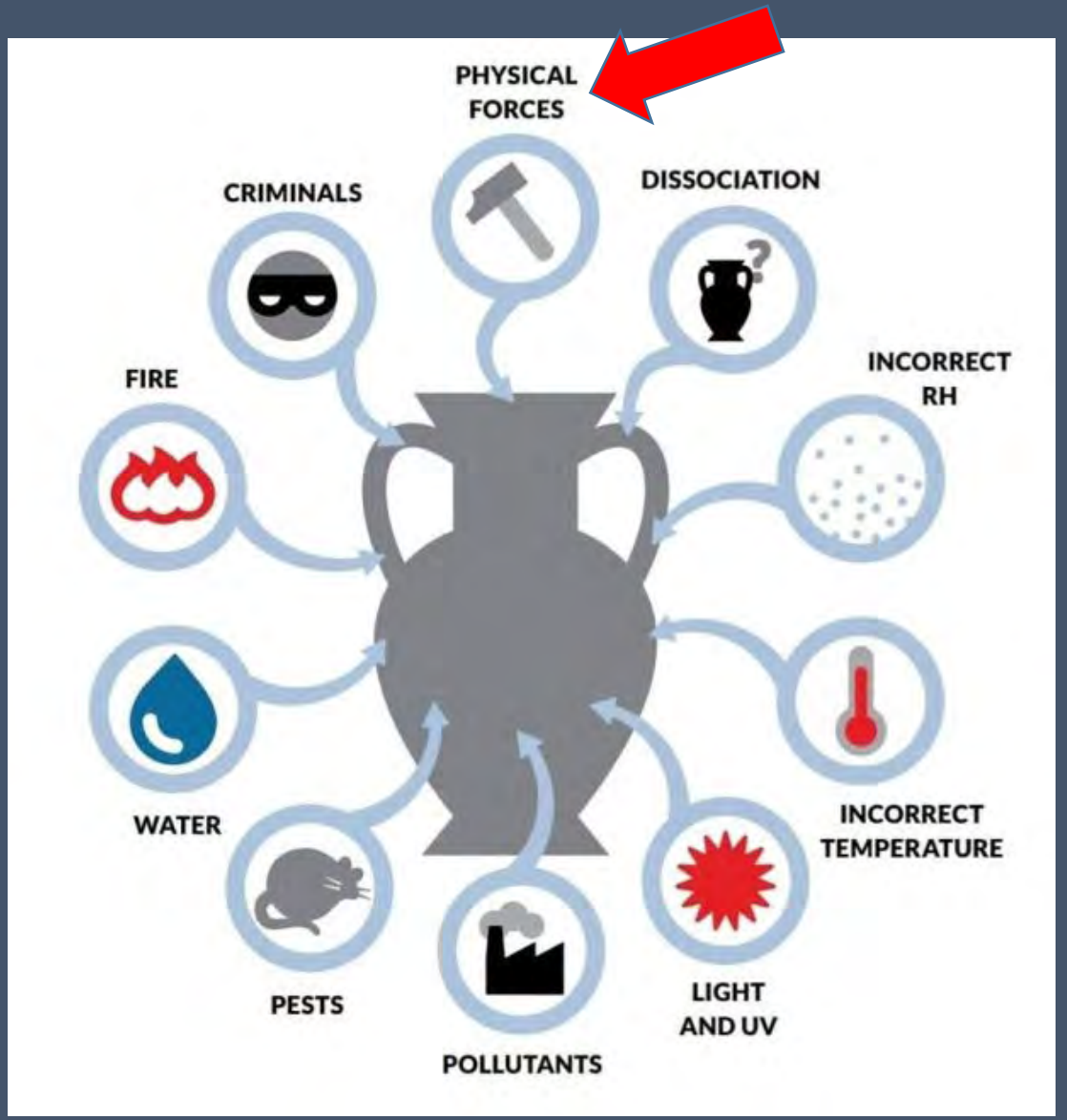
Rehousing Basics

Southeast Kansas Museum Alliance General Meeting

Prepared by Angela Watts, Spencer Museum of Art

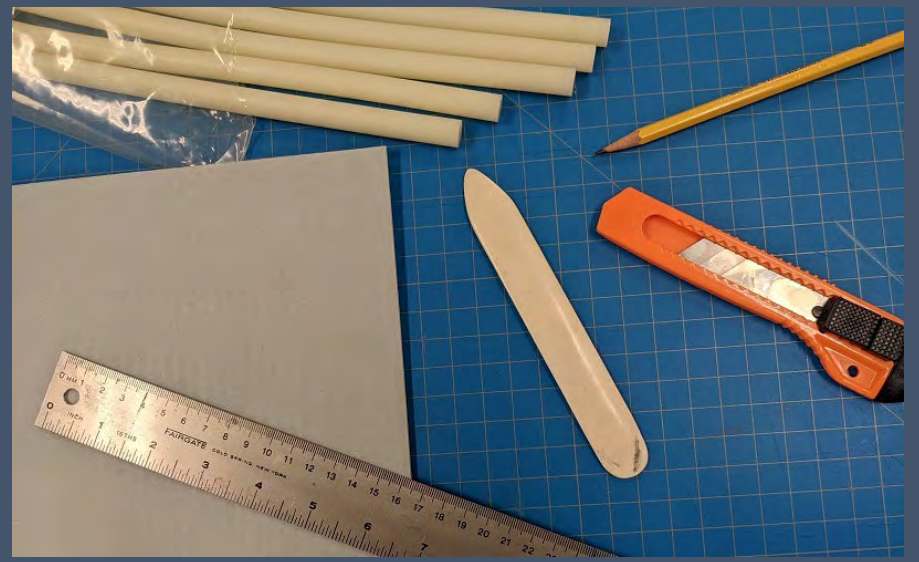
What do we mean when we talk about rehousing?

- Stabilizing objects by using internal and external supports
- Ten Agents of Deterioration
  - Rehousing helps reduce the impact of physical forces like gravity, vibration, and pressure
  - Helps minimize the impact of other agents of deterioration as well



Essential Tools and Supplies

- Cutting mat, measuring tape and straight edge, utility knife, glue gun and glue sticks, bone folder, sewing supplies
- Unbuffered tissue
- Corrugated board
  - B-flute is thicker, E-flute is thinner
- Polyester fiberfill
- 2” and/or 3” cotton stockinette tubing
- Ethafoam
  - Sheet ethafoam for lining boxes and shelves
  - 2” and/or 4” plank ethafoam for pot rings and custom supports
- Twill tape
- Unbleached muslin
- Tyvek



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Vendors and Additional Resources

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Tissue as internal support

- Inexpensive and easy option
- Provides support and helps objects retain their shape

Tissue as internal support

- Tissue “snakes” can be used to pad out folds to prevent creasing in textiles

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Stockinette pads and bolsters

- Stockinette is versatile and works for lightweight support under 3D objects
- Stockinette bolsters are good for folds in heavier textiles to prevent creasing

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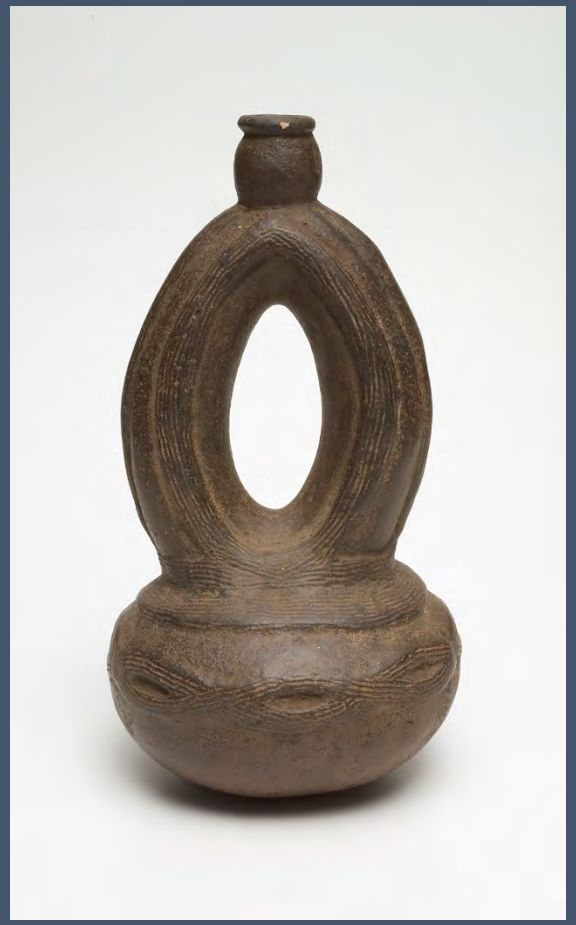
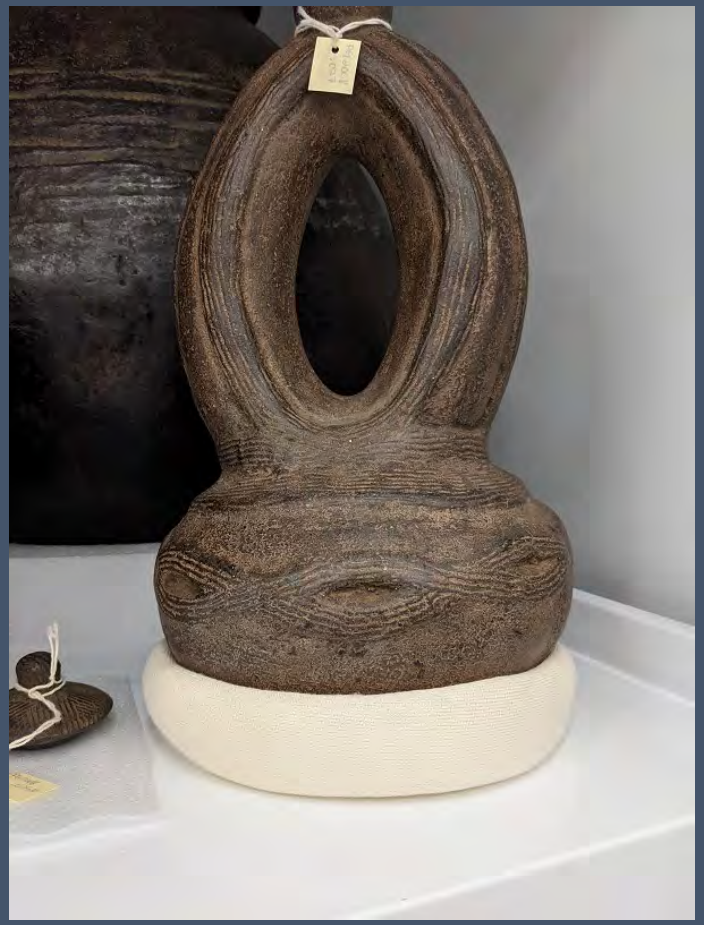
Stockinette pot rings





- Easy and inexpensive to make
- Good for objects that are lighter weight and mostly stable but need added protection from vibration or tipping

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Stockinette padded hangers

- Use wide hangers that will more evenly distribute the weight of the garment
- 3” stockinette and fiberfill can be used to make an easy and inexpensive padded hanger
- Should only be used for garments that are very structurally sound and not too heavy

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Polybead pillows and “snakes”

- Versatile option – can be made into any shape or size and “snakes” can be adjusted as needed
- Can be made from Tyvek or repurposed t-shirt material
- Polybeads are readily available through craft suppliers
- Not just for storage, but also for stabilizing objects in transport

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Polybead pillows and “snakes”

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Ethafoam pot rings

- Sturdier support than stockinette or polybead options
- Good for objects that are especially heavy, have a rounded base, or otherwise less stable
- Lining the ethafoam with Tyvek reduces abrasion

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Handling trays

- Minimizes handling of fragile objects
- Can be customized to provide external supports
- Good for objects that are stored in sealed cabinets and where visibility is a priority

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Divided trays

- Good for keeping sets of objects together
- Good for housing multiple small items to save space and time

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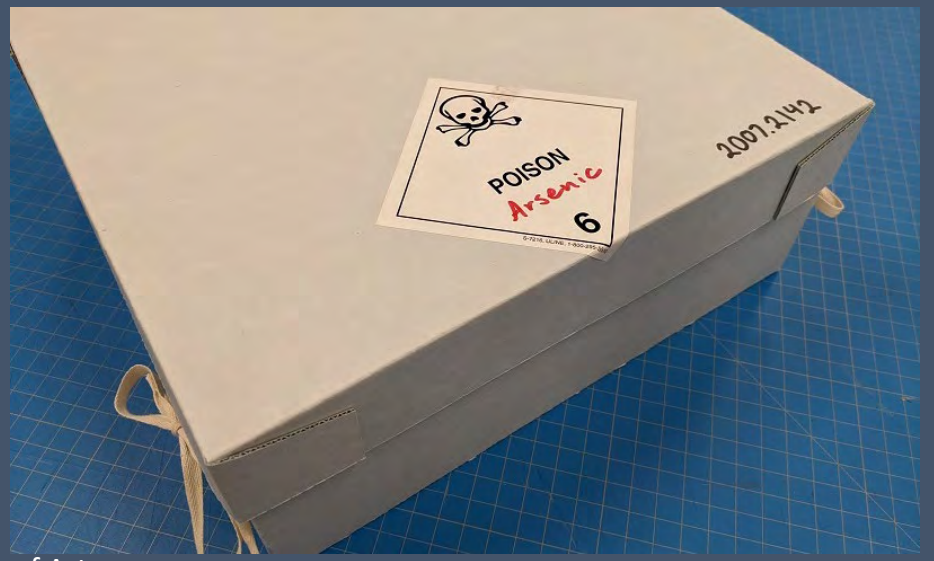
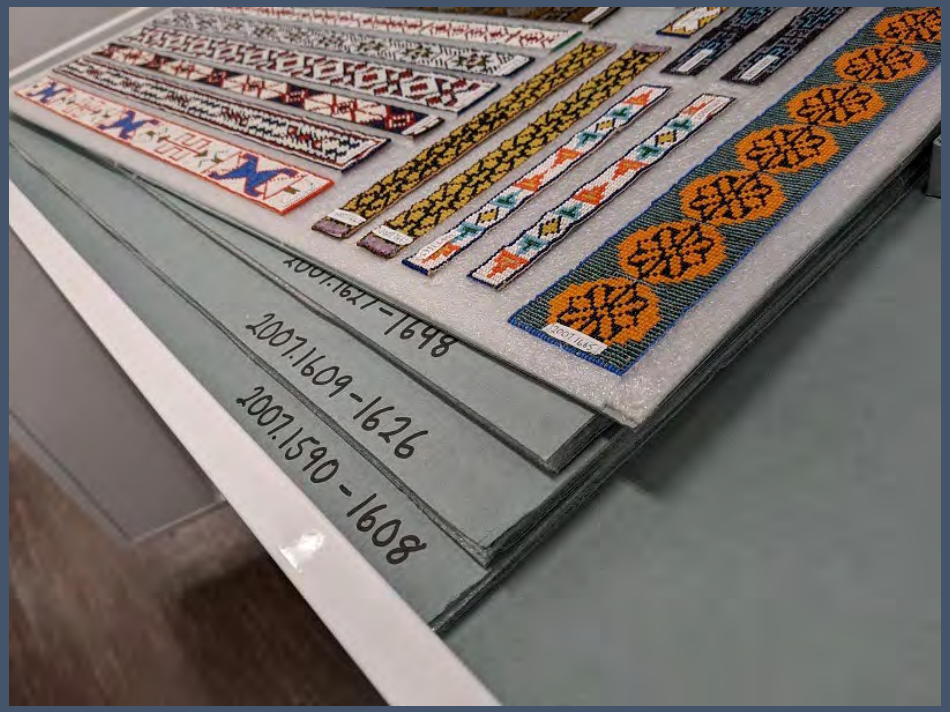
Custom boxes with lids

- Best option for open shelving situations
  - Standard sized boxes can also be purchased ready made
- Helps protect objects from light, dust, pests
- Also allows for stacking to maximize space
- Can protect handlers from exposure to hazardous materials



Custom supports and other solutions

- The same basic supplies can be used to create a variety of solutions based on the needs of the objects and the resources available
  - Minimize pressure points
  - Maximize space
  - Be creative!



Custom supports and other solutions

- Plank ethafoam can be carved to the shape of the object to prevent movement inside a box/tray, alleviate pressure points, or provide more substantial support for the internal structure of the object
- Ethafoam supports should be covered with Tyvek to reduce abrasion on object surfaces

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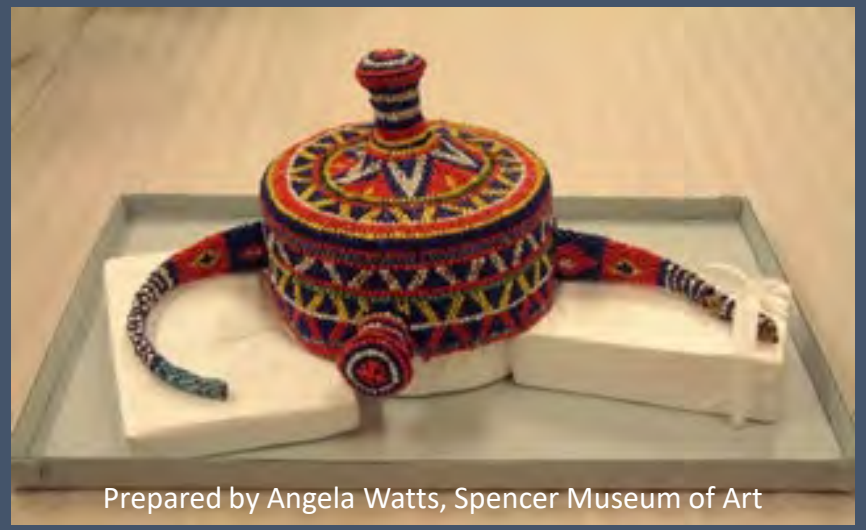
Custom supports and other solutions



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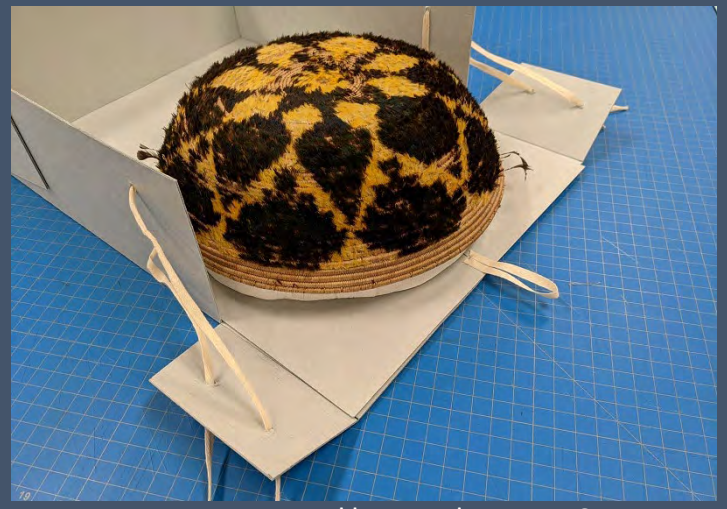
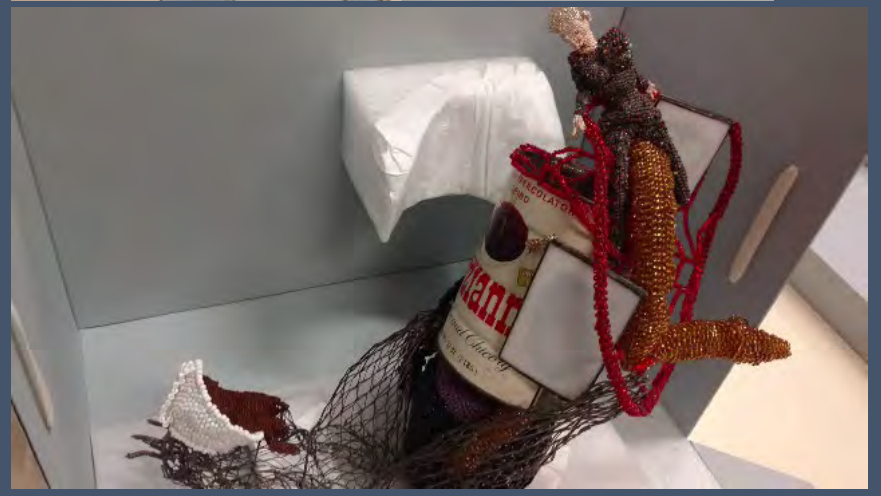
Custom supports and other solutions

- Drop-front boxes allow for easier access to objects and reduce handling





Custom supports and other solutions

- For smaller objects, a layer of thin ethafoam can be used to hold them in place
- Ethafoam melts easily with hot glue, but it's also possible to secure two layers of sheet ethafoam together by tacking them down with a few stitches using a needle and thread

Step-by-step guides and helpful tips

Tissue “snakes”

- Crumple the tissue to create volume and make the “snake” more dense to support the weight of the object
- Use a new sheet of tissue or the end of the crumpled sheet to wrap the outside with a smooth surface

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How to build a box or tray

- Start with measurements of your object
  - Make sure you measure at the widest, longest, and tallest points
  - Leave room on the sides for handling
  - Make sure you also know if there are limitations in your storage space (ie the depth of your shelves and drawers)
- When cutting your blueboard, make sure to add in both sides to your dimensions
  - Example: for a finished box that measures 4” x 6” with 2” sides, you need to cut a piece that measures 8” x 10”
- Watch your fingers!

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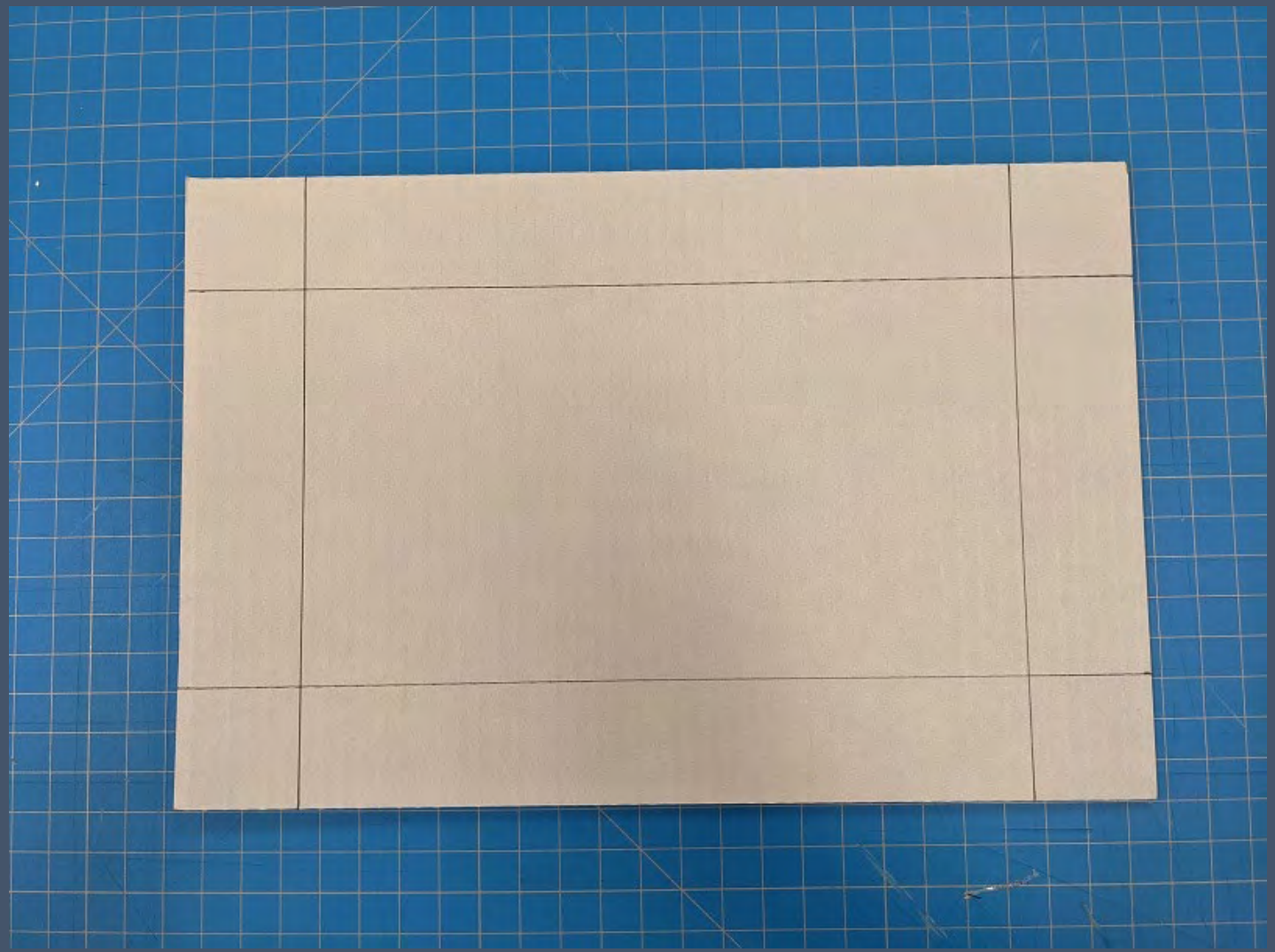
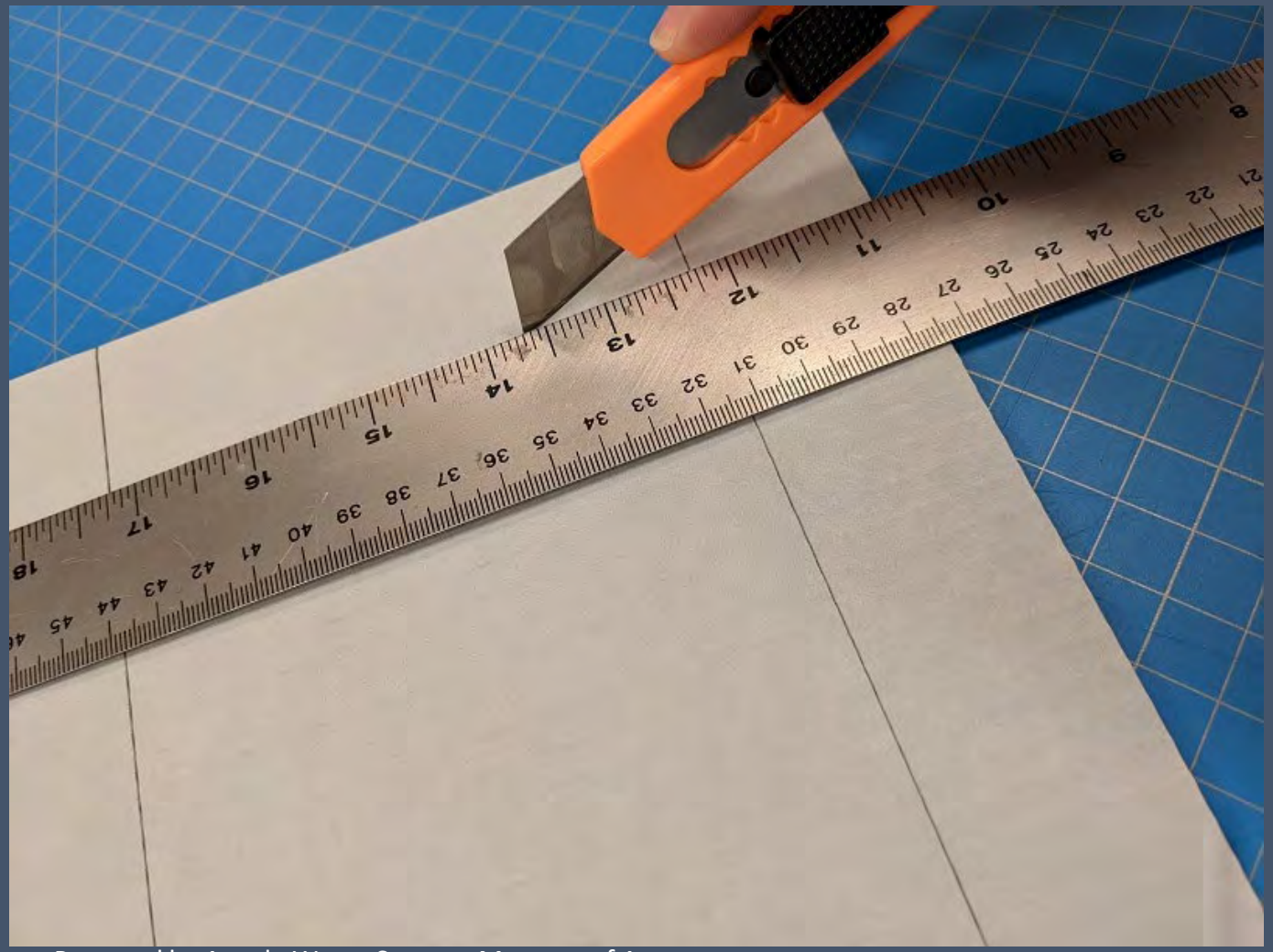
How to build a box or tray

- Mark where your fold lines will be



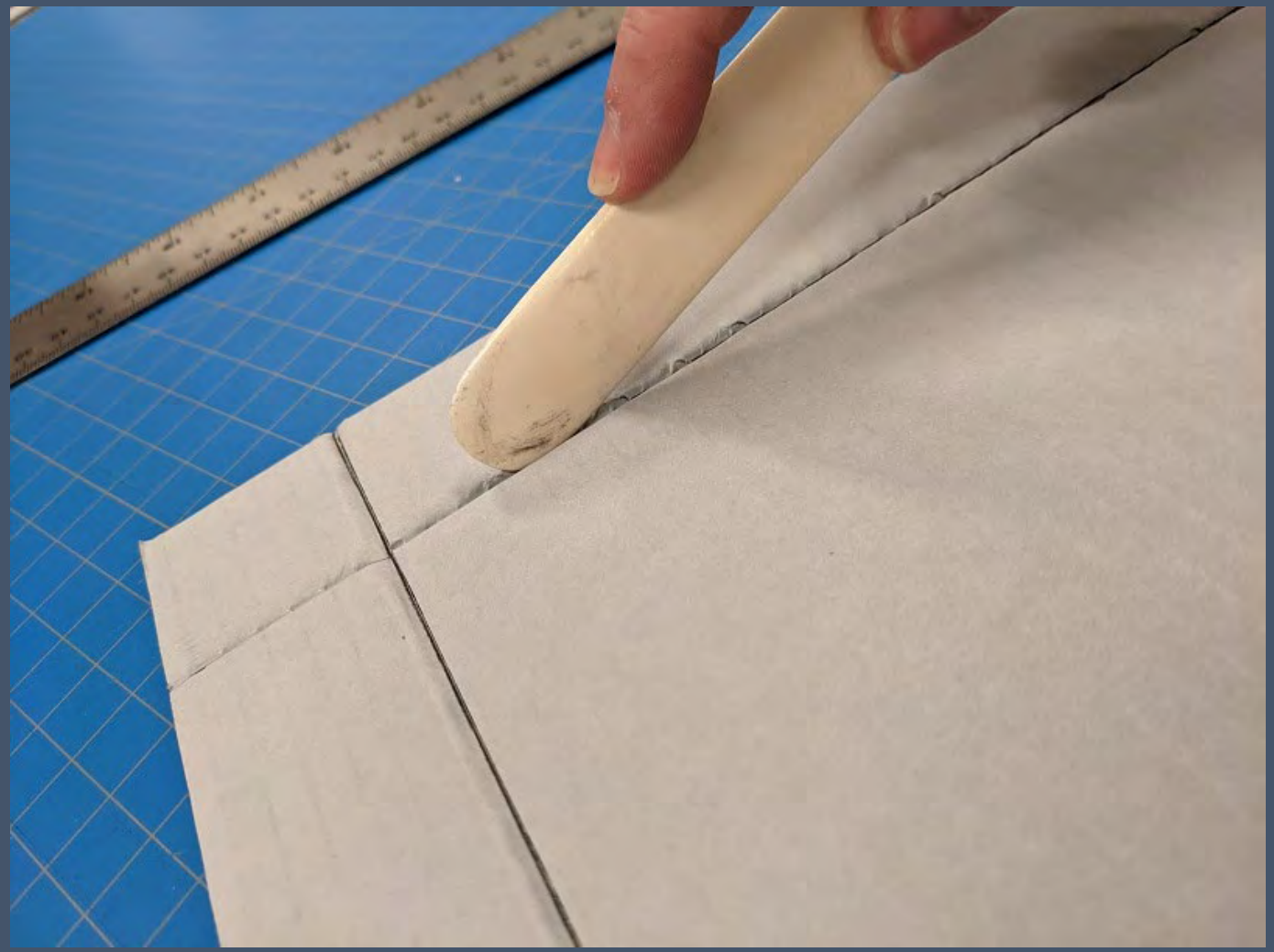
How to build a box or tray

- Lightly score the blueboard along your fold lines



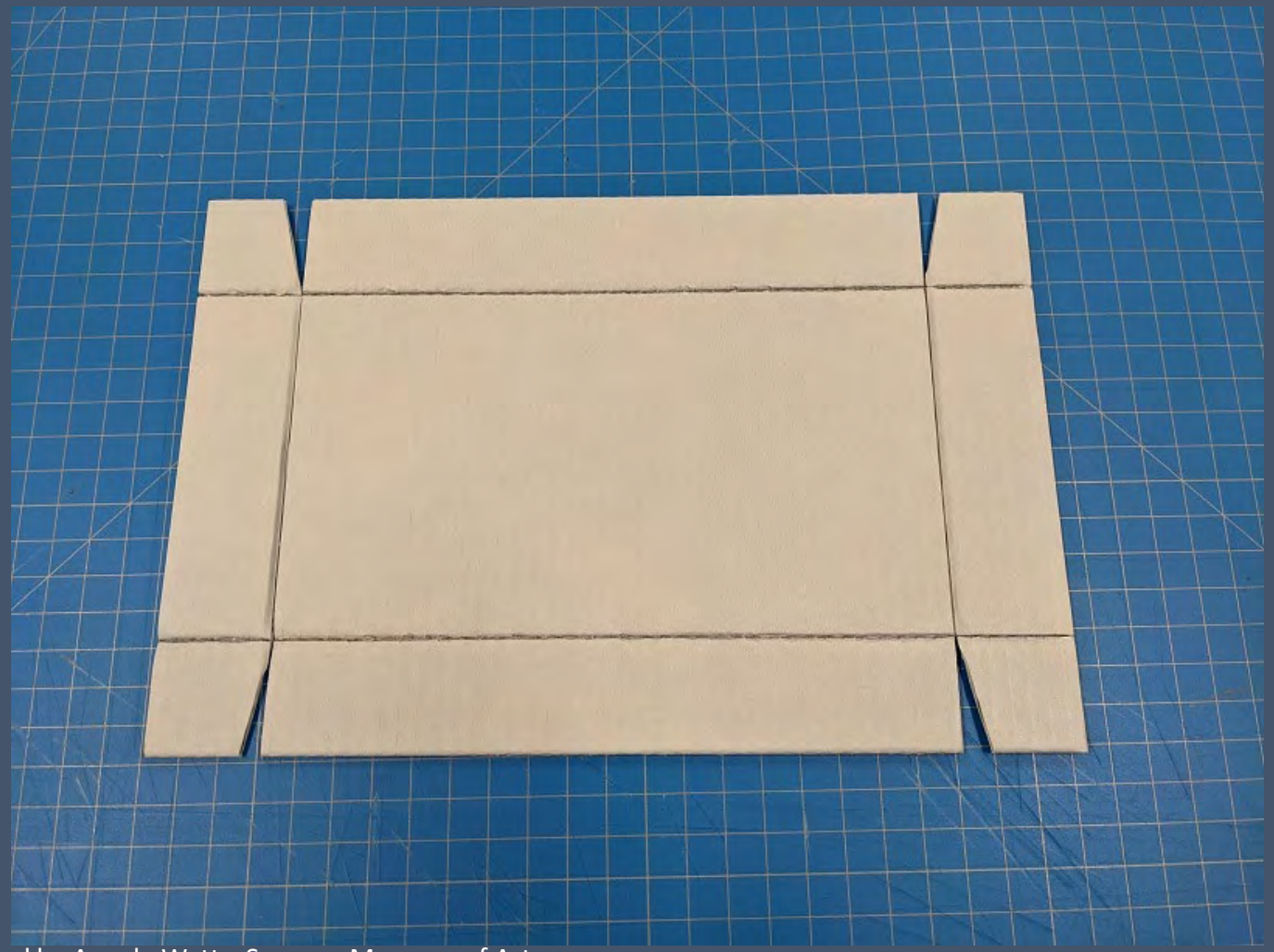
How to build a box or tray

- Use the bone folder to crease the scored lines, making it easier to fold up the sides



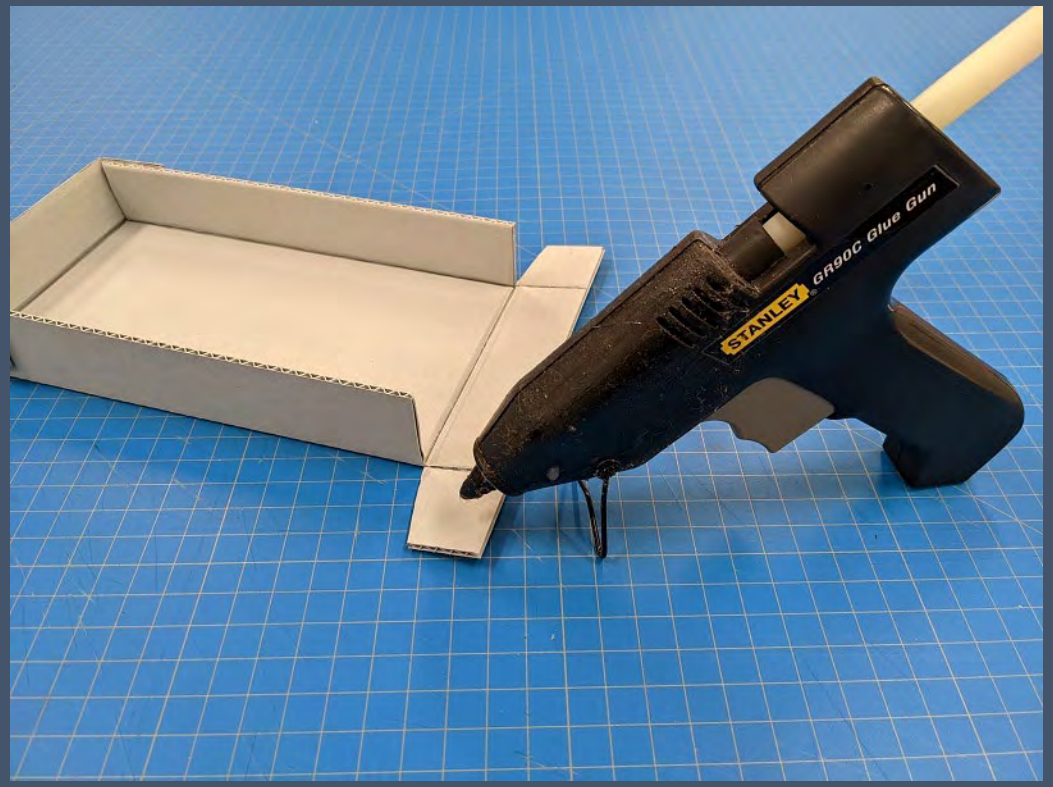
How to build a box or tray

- Decide which side you want to glue the tabs on and cut one side of the corner
- Adding a small notch to the cut can help prevent the bottom from catching on the shelf, but isn’t necessary

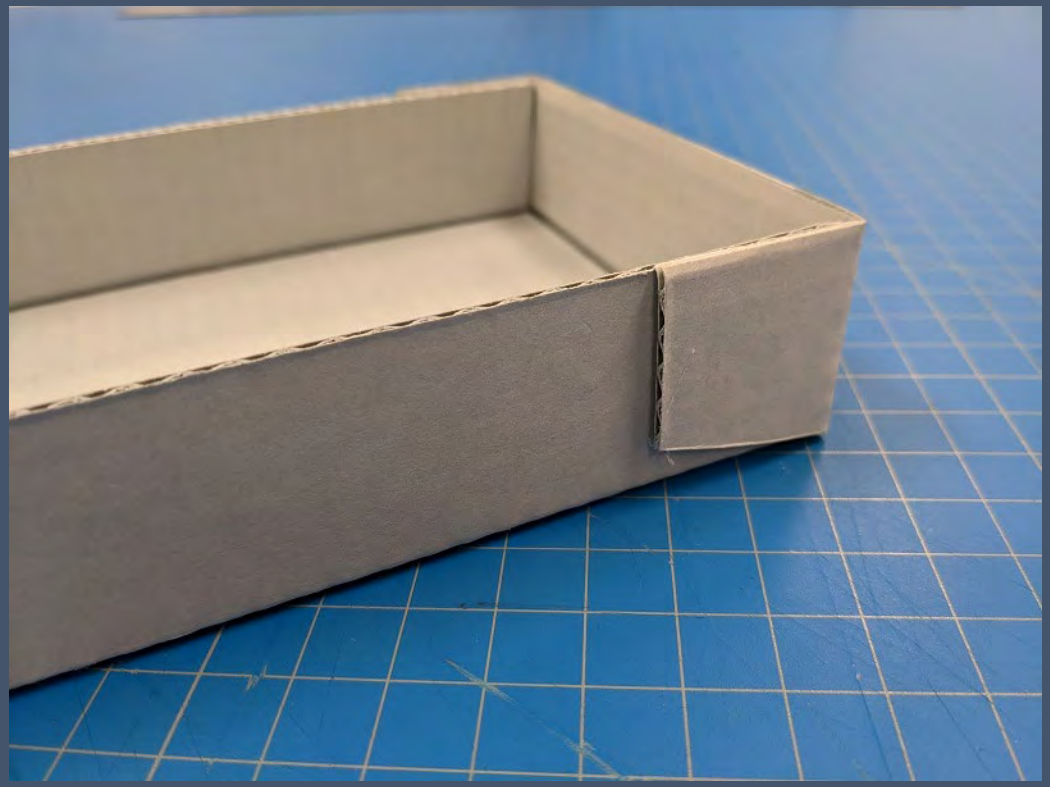


How to build a box or tray

- Leave the box flat on the work surface and glue the tabs in place



- The tabs will add to the exterior size, so if your box has to fit into a specific space, that might be a factor to consider



How to make a lid

- Re-measure the exterior dimensions of the box instead of using the original dimensions
- Because the tabs push in the sides of the lid, add extra space to the side where the tabs will be
  - Add ½” for B-flute
  - Add ¼” for E-flute

How to make a lid

- After marking the fold lines, it is a good idea to double check that it will fit by placing the box within the lines
- Assemble the lid the same way as the bottom of the box

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Making a drop front box

- When assembling the box, leave one side unglued, punch holes through the tabs and sides, and use twill tape to tie it shut
- It's also sometimes helpful to put the interior mount onto a separate tray that slides out

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Making stockinette pot rings or bolsters

- Sew one end closed and stuff with polyester fiberfill to the size needed
- When cutting stockinette remember that it will shorten, so cut a piece longer than the final required length
- For pot rings, tuck in the end and sew shut with a running stitch

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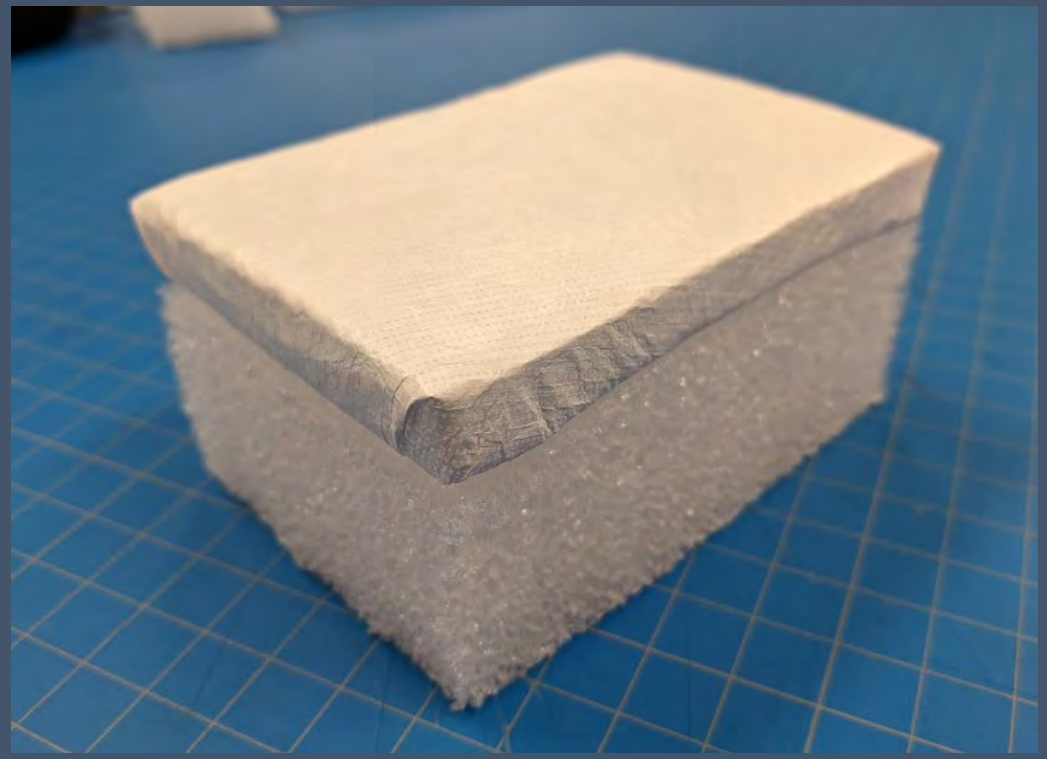
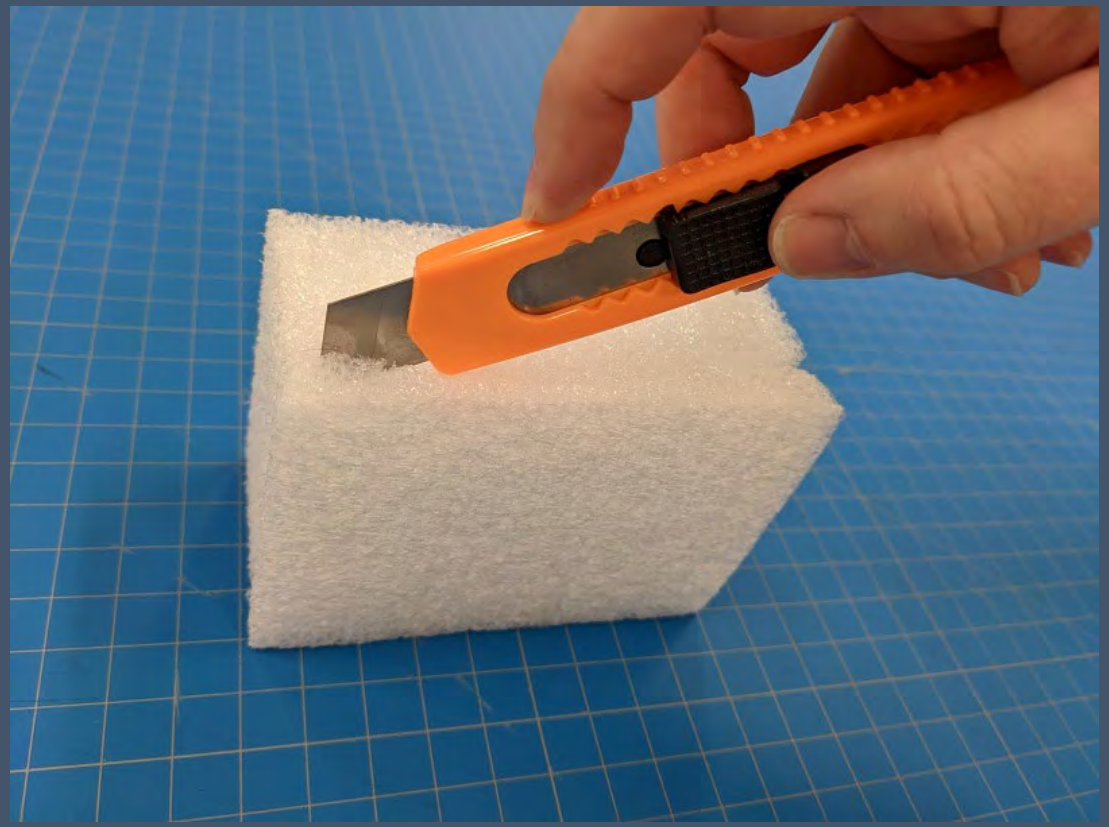
Building ethafoam supports



- To minimize abrasion from the rough surface of the ethafoam, cover it with Tyvek

Building ethafoam supports



- Tyvek melts easily, so using hot glue can be difficult
- Cut a channel in the foam parallel to the surface you want to cover with Tyvek (approx. ½” but can vary)

Building ethafoam supports

- Using the bone folder, press the Tyvek into the channel you cut into the ethafoam – this will hold it in place

Building ethafoam pot rings

- For ethafoam pot rings, measure the approximate diameter of the object 2” up from the bottom
- Mark the center of the ethafoam by crossing your ruler from corner to corner
- Measure out from the center and mark out the desired diameter

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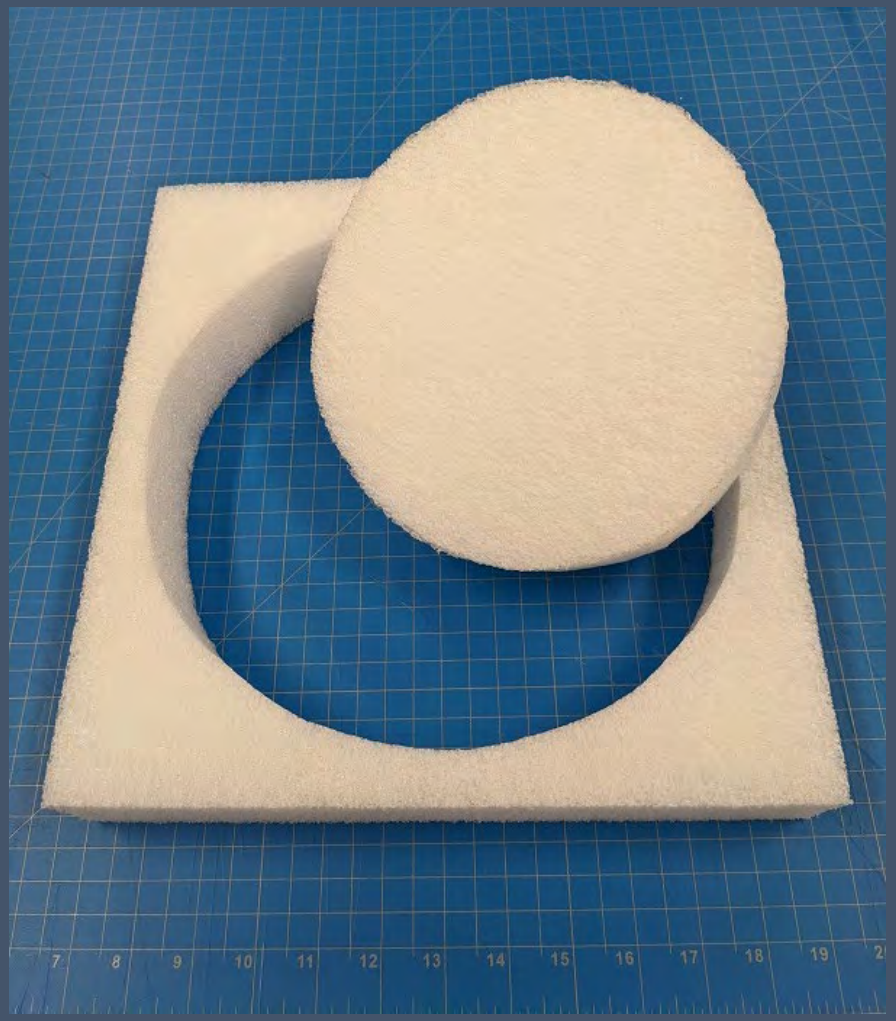
Building ethafoam pot rings



- Start by cutting a circle slightly smaller than your final desired size and trim it down to fit

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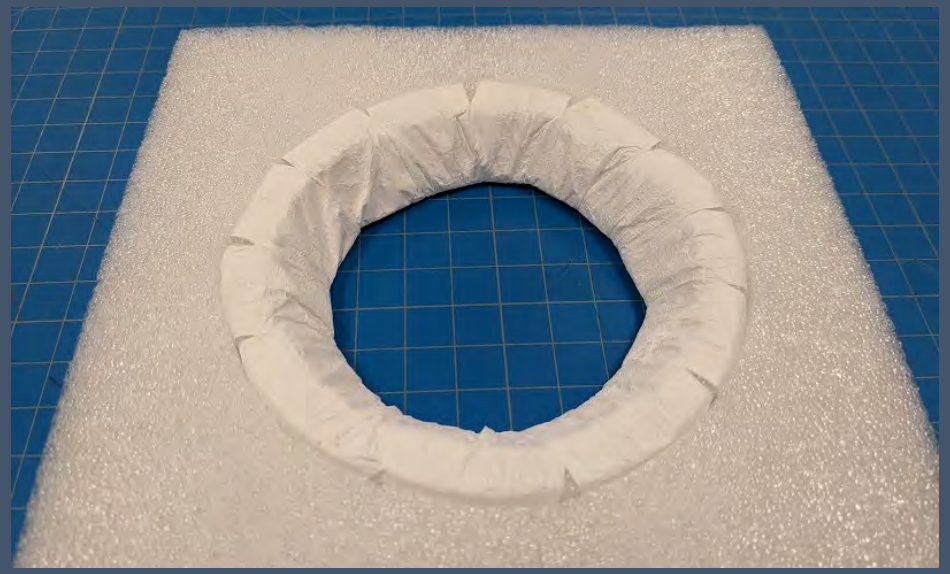
Building ethafoam pot rings

- For pot rings and other curved surfaces, it's helpful to use multiple short strips of Tyvek and to cut the Tyvek into "tabs" to help it lie flatter or "pleat" on the curved surface



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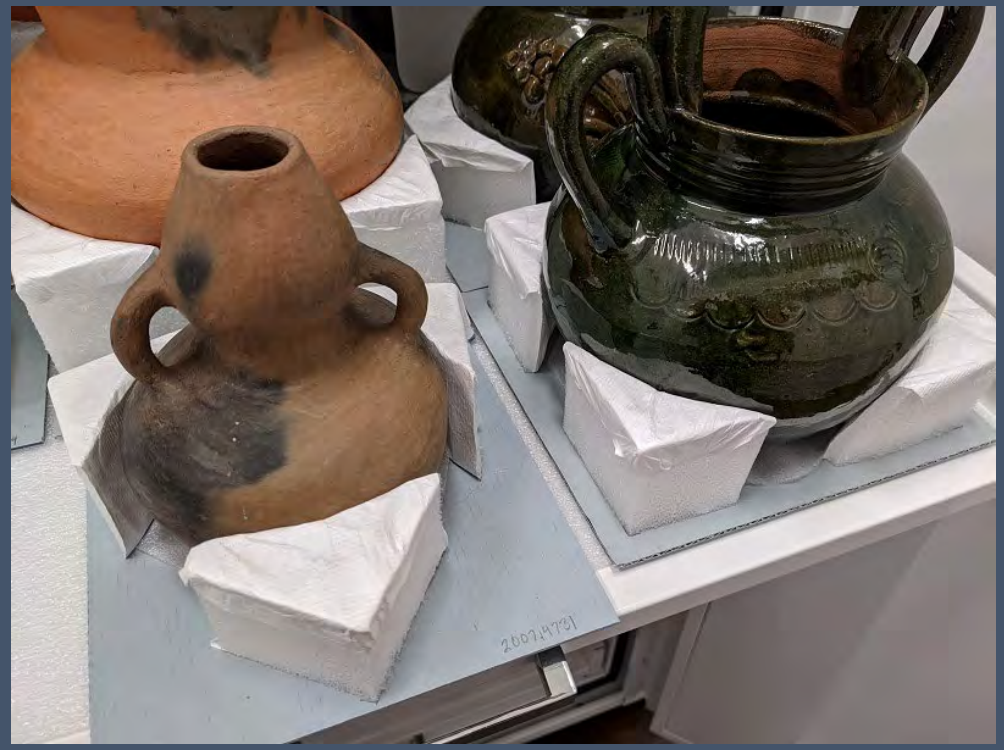
Tips for reducing ethafoam waste

- The circles cut out of the center of a plank for a large pot ring can be used to make smaller and smaller pot rings



- Scraps of plank ethafoam can be used to make small exterior supports

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Questions?

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