

HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN CUSTOM BOX FOR DVD/AVCHD/BLURAY SETS

Hello, and thank you for checking out this post. If you are here it is probably because you are interested in making a box set, but you aren't really sure how to do this, what tools to use, or even where to get started. Well have no fear, because in this thread I will be outlining and instructing you on how to go about actually doing this.

For this particular guide, I will be focusing on my own personal technique in box creation. Hopefully after this guide you will have the knowledge to make your own box and even some direction on how to customize the box to your liking.

I would also like to open this thread up to other box creators to share their thoughts and ideas on how to make this process easier and better than what I have been able to figure out on my own. So please feel free to chime in and add your personal methods so that we can better this part of the OTF Community.

So without further ado:

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Supplies:

1. A craft knife - there are several different kinds you can get that are out on the market. I personally use an Olfa SVR-1 (<http://www.olfa.com/stainless-steel-body-slide-mechanism-utility-knife-with-blade-snapper-%28svr-1%29/5018.html#start=36>) These are nice because you can snap off the end and have a nice sharp edge to cut with when the blade gets dull.
2. Super glue - I use Gorilla Glue Gel (<http://www.gorillatough.com/gorilla-super-glue-gel>). It dries fast and is permanent once it is applied. You can usually get this at any craft or home store.
3. A ruler - there is a lot of measuring and straight cutting for this project so this tool is going to be your best friend. I would suggest getting a ruler that is metal, or has a metal edge. I started out with a cheap plastic one, but I noticed that over time I was cutting into the plastic, which didn't give me straight cuts anymore.
4. Spray adhesive - I use Elmer's Craft Bond (<http://www.elmers.com/product/detail/E421>) but you can also use 3M spray adhesive or any other spray adhesive that has a permanent bond. I personally like the Elmer's because it isn't super aggressive for the first few minutes yet is still permanent once it has dried. Which is good because sometimes there is a bit of play when applying your art to the box.

5. Mounting Board - This will be what the core of your box will be made out of. I personally use black core conservation board, but you could use any mounting board or matte board. The most important thing about choosing your box material is to make sure that it is sturdy. The conservation board I use is about 1/16" or 2mm thick and holds up quite well. You might want to buy a few of these just in case you make a few too many mistakes as you make your box. (<https://www.dickblick.com/items/13016-2005/>)
6. Artwork for the box - this part is entirely up to you and the type of media you are going to be "boxing". I will eventually make available in the future my personal artwork for a 3 disc case Despecialized box set. But because there are so many different variations, it would be a lot of work to cover every combination of disc case. Please refer to the rest of the guide to see how to create your own template for your art.
7. Clear Spray Acrylic (optional) - I would suggest picking up a can of this from a hobby store. It's mainly made to "set" art, like charcoal drawings, sketches and pastels. But it works great on ink printed and laser printed art for boxes. Over time your box is going to get rubbed and bumped from taking it in and out of wherever you keep your movies. By spraying your box down with clear acrylic, it's going to be able to stand up to more abuse and last longer. You can also purchase an acrylic with UV protection, just in case your box is going to be sitting out where the sun might fade the artwork. I use Krylon brand UV gloss acrylic (<http://www.krylon.com/products/uvresistant-clear-coating/>).

Box Preparation:

Now that you have your supplies the first thing you are going to need to do is find out the dimensions of the box you are going to make. This is going to be dependent on the type of cases and how many cases you will be "boxing". Below are the dimensions for a single DVD/AVCHD/BluRay case. Most websites that have this information use millimeters instead of inches, so for this guide I will also be listing everything in millimeters. Plus millimeters is a bit more accurate than inches (all dimensions are taken from www.cd-info.com):

DVD/AVCHD:

Height: 190mm
Width: 135mm
Thickness: 14mm (Standard) / 7mm (Slimline)

BluRay:

Height: 171.5mm
Width: 135mm
Thickness: 13mm

Constructing Your Box:

(Note: For example purposes, I will be using pictures and dimensions based on my personal Complete Saga Box Set that I am working on. This box set uses 4 slimline DVD cases instead of regular DVD cases.)

Now that you have the dimensions for the case you will be “boxing”, we need to modify these numbers a bit so that there is some wiggle room for the cases to slide in and out when we piece our box together.

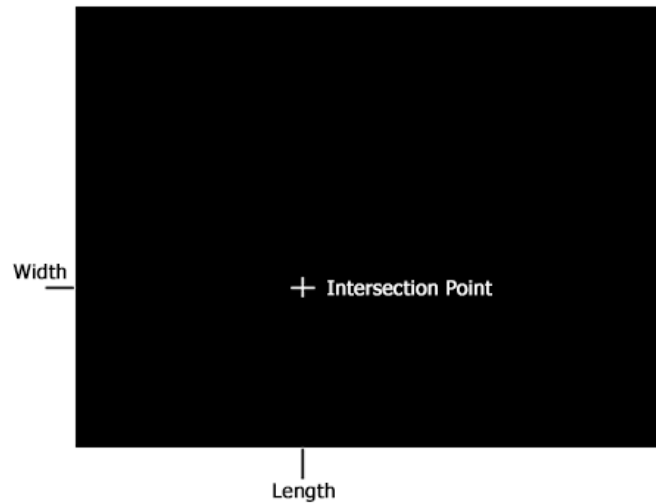
For the **HEIGHT** you will add 5mm. This will give you about 1mm of space at the top of your case and 2mm each for the top and bottom piece of the box (going on the assumption that the material you are using for your box is 2mm thick).

For the **WIDTH** you will only add 3mm to the measurement of your case. This will put the spines of your cases right to the edge of the box and make room for the spine piece of the box.

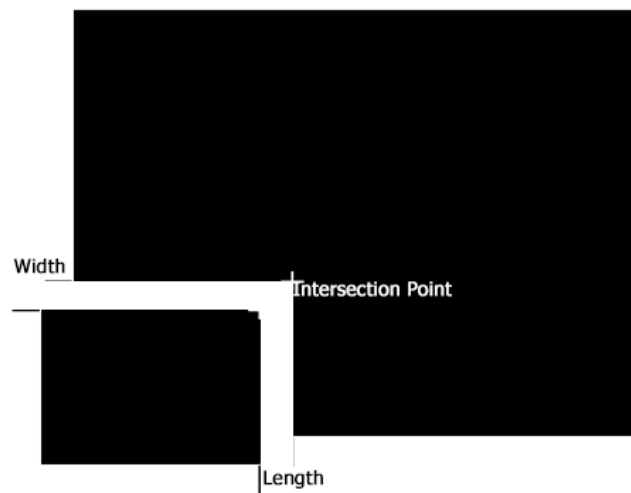
For the **DEPTH** you will need to decide on how many cases you will have in your box. Multiply this number by the depth of one case and, depending on how tight you want the cases to fit in your box add 1mm - 2mm (I usually go with 1mm but for some this may be too tight and may want a little more play in the box). This will give you some wiggle room on either side of your end cases in the box so they can slide out but still maintain a somewhat tight fit.

Once you are ready with all of your supplies, you are ready to start cutting out the pieces for your box.

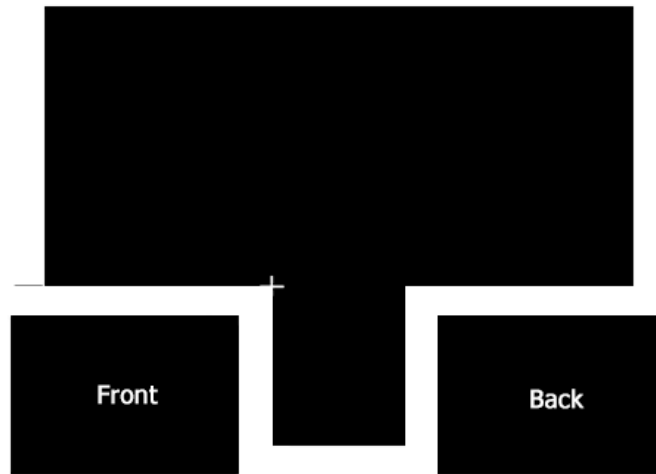
Start by measuring from the factory corner to the length of your case measurement plus the 5mm (In my case I measured 195mm), and make a mark. I usually mark my board with a small cut with my knife so that I know exactly where to start. From that mark, perpendicular from the factory edge, measure the width of your case measurement plus 3mm (or 138mm total) and mark your board. This mark will be in no-man’s-land, but it will assist you in making a straight cut. Finally, from the other end of the matte board, make a measurement of the width of your case measurement plus 3mm (138mm) again, and mark that as well. At this point you should have 3 marks: one on the edge of the board from the corner for the length, one on the perpendicular edge from the corner for the width, and one in the board that is your intersecting point for both length and width.



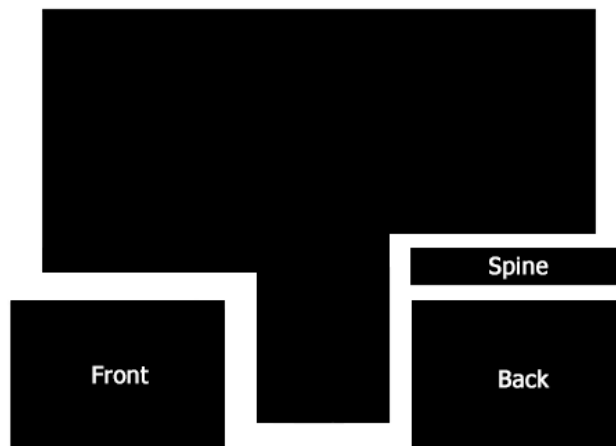
Now with a straight edge or your ruler carefully cut the width, from the edge mark to the intersection mark. Then do the same for the length and you will be left with either the front or the back of your box.



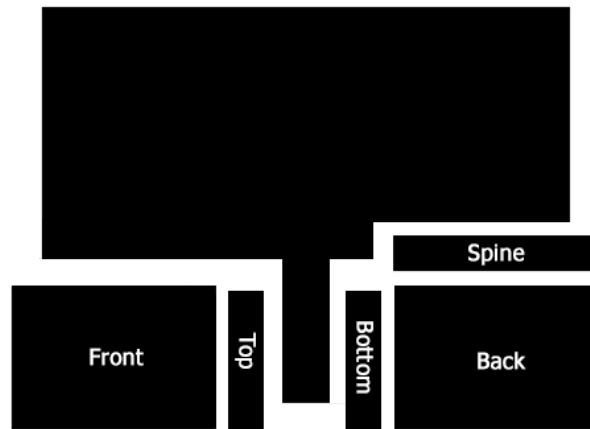
Once you are done you will have the first piece of your box. Set it aside and repeat these steps for your other side of the box. Once you have done this, both the front and the back pieces should be relatively the same.



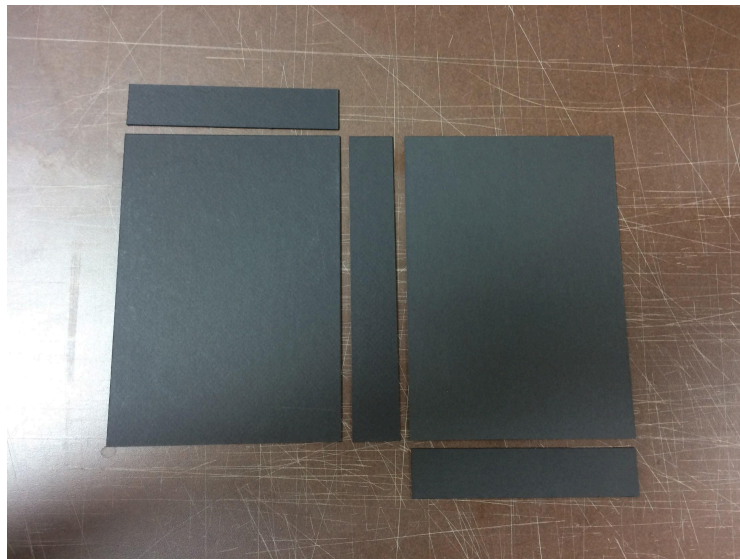
You are now ready to cut out the spine of the box. Use the same method for the spine that you did for the front and back of the box. The length should be the same as the length of your box front and back. The width will be the thickness of your case multiplied by the number of cases you are boxing plus 1mm - 2mm. (for me this number was 29mm; 7mm for the case thickness, multiplied by 4 cases, plus 1mm for wiggle room).



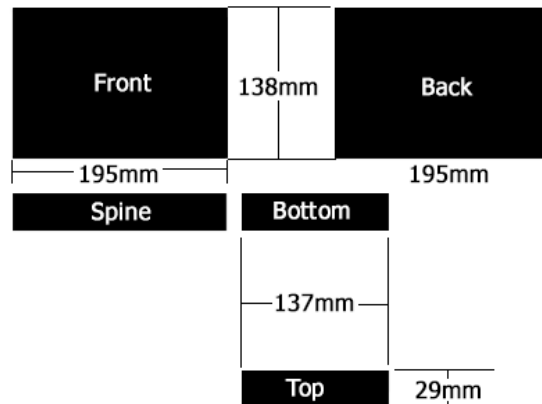
Finally, for the top and bottom pieces follow the same method. However, this time the length will be about 1mm shorter than the width of your box front/bottom (so for the example the length of the top/bottom pieces are about 137mm). The width of the front/bottom pieces will be the same width of the spine (29mm)



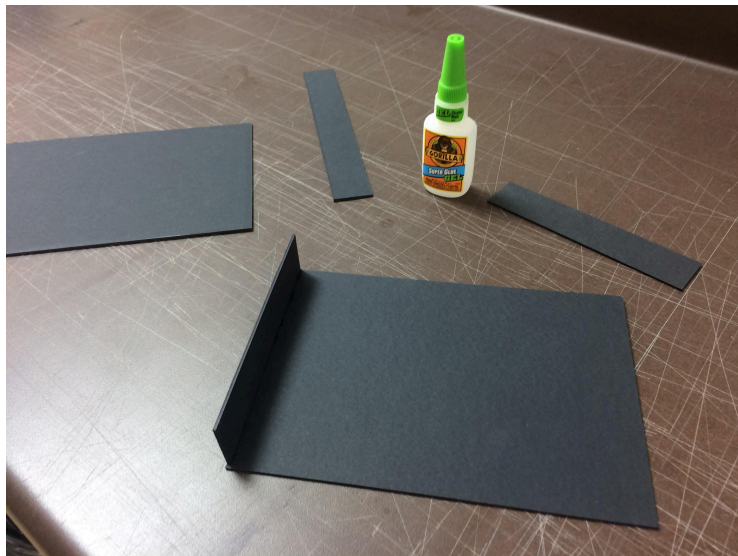
When you are finished it should look something like this:



Here is a diagram of the measurements I used for my “Complete Saga” box:



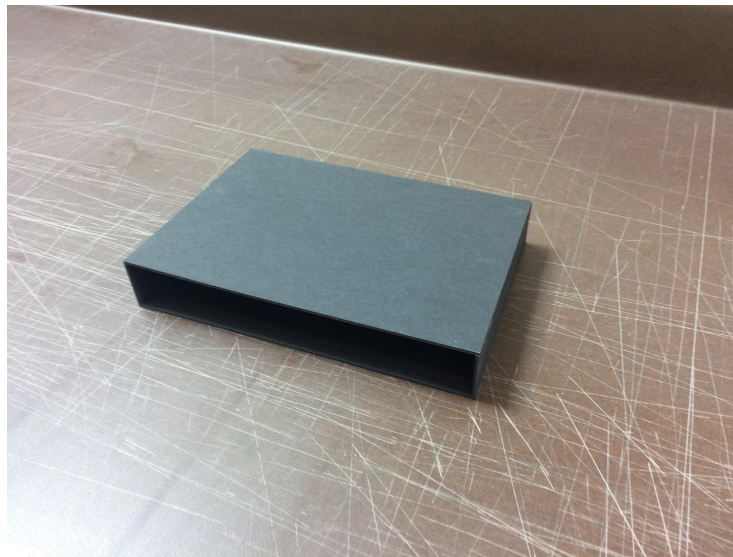
The last step is to superglue all of the pieces together. I usually glue the top/bottom first by dabbing a line of superglue down the edge of the piece, line it up to the edge of either the front or back piece and hold it there for about 10-20 seconds. You want to try and make it as straight as possible. You will also notice that there is a considerable gap. This is where the spine piece will fit in.



Follow this same process for the other top/bottom piece. However, make sure that you are lined up with the previously glued piece, otherwise your gap for the spine will be on the opposite side.

Next glue in the spine by following the same steps that you did for the top/bottom pieces. You will also need to put some glue on the edges of the top/bottom pieces that will come into contact with your spine piece.

Finally, place glue on the exposed edges of the spine, and top/bottom pieces. Then quickly, but carefully place the remaining front/back piece on top of the spine/top/bottom, being sure to line everything up as best as possible.



Once you have given it time to dry (I usually wait over night just to be sure) it's time to glue the artwork on.

Artwork

Once again, measuring is key to make sure everything fits and fits well. More than likely you will be creating your own artwork, so in this step I will go over the basics of how to setup your art in your image editor of choice.

To do this you are going to measure each of the surfaces you are going to wrap in art. The spine will have an extra inch on either side for wrapping. The top and bottom will have extra on all of the sides. All of the corners of the extra will also be cut at a 45° angle.

Again, for example purposes we will use the box I have been working on that contains 4 slimline cases. The back measures ___mm x ___mm. The sides will have an extra 1 inch.