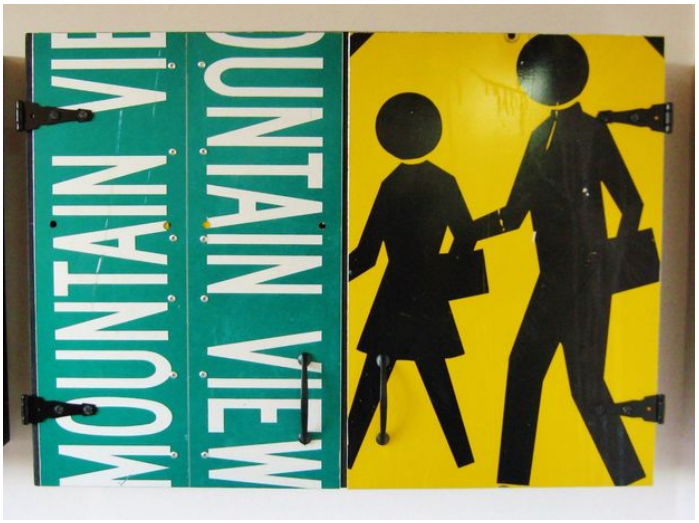
Easy Workshop Cabinets

Intro: Easy workshop cabinets

These are three small storage cabinets you can build for a workshop

The cabinet cases are made from 3/4" plywood and the doors are made from some old road signs that I had.

Don't be fooled by the funky cabinet doors, though; the heart of this project are the simple cabinet cases, which are very easy to build. The doors themselves can be made from just about anything you want.



Step 1: Design and cut list

I had been reorganizing and changing the layout of my entire workshop, and in the process I wanted to add some cabinets to hold all of my small supplies like bottles of glue, boxes of screws, and so on.

My goal was to come up with some low-profile cabinets that didn't stick out too far into my open space, but that were big enough to hold a lot of stuff while making efficient use of purchased materials.

After some thought, I settled on cabinet cases that are approximately 32 inches wide, 24 inches tall, and 10 inches deep, with one middle shelf. The three cabinets required one full sheet of plywood, plus a little more that I was able to pull from my scrap pile.

See photo and diagram for cut layout.

I made all of the long cuts on my table saw, and the cross cuts with a sled on my table saw. With some careful marking and cutting this could be done with a circular saw.

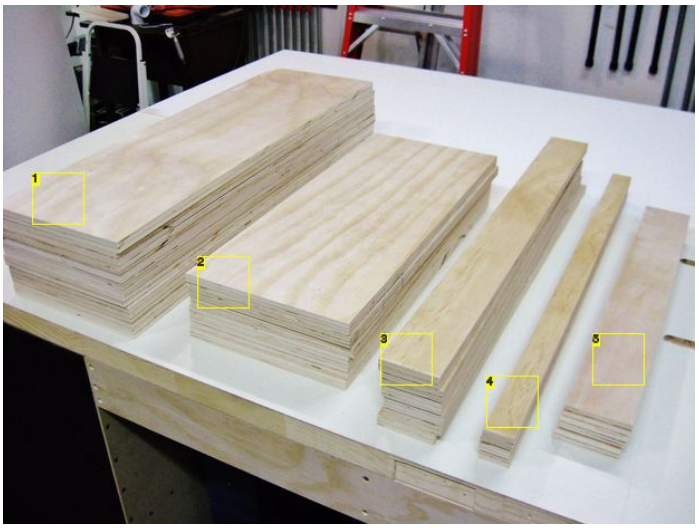


Image Notes
1. Top, middle shelf, and bottom pieces.
2. Side pieces.
3. Top and bottom supports. These work together to keep the cabinet square.
4. Middle shelf back supports.
5. Front vertical support braces.

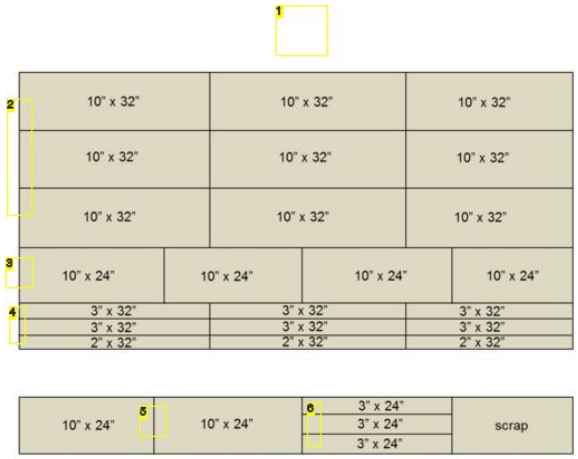


Image Notes
1. I made three small cabinets from one sheet of 4 x 8 foot, 3/4 inch plywood, plus an additional piece of the same plywood that was 10 inches wide. All measurements are approximate (due to kerf loss).
2. Tops, bottoms and middle shelf pieces.
3. Side pieces.
4. Rear shelf supports.
5. Side pieces.
6. Front vertical supports.

Step 2: Assemble the cases

I built these in a fairly quick and dirty fashion using 1 1/4" pneumatic brads to tack all the pieces together, and then 1 1/4" drywall screws fastened into pre-drilled and countersunk holes to hold everything together more securely.

See photo notes for assembly details.

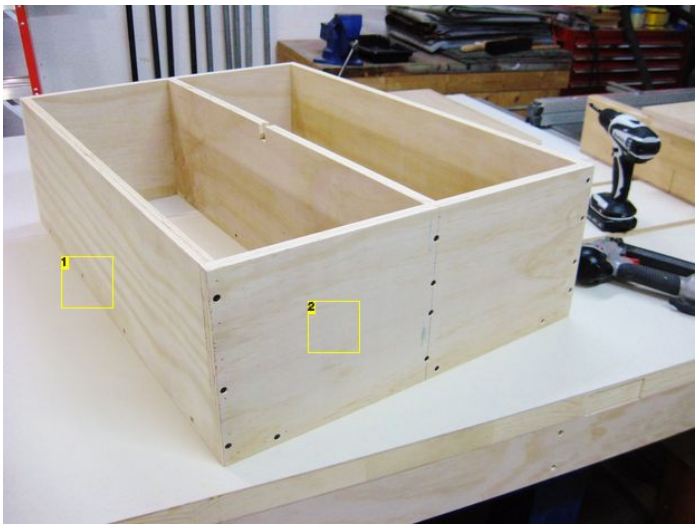


Image Notes
1. I began by fastening all of the support braces to the respective shelves/top and bottom pieces as needed...
2. ...then I fastened the side pieces to these shelves. Be sure to mark and place the middle shelf precisely.

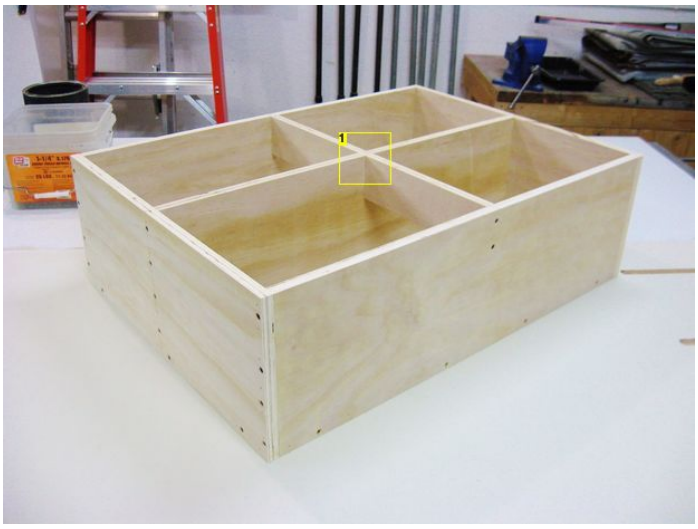


Image Notes
1. The front vertical support and middle shelf are notched here so they fit together snugly.

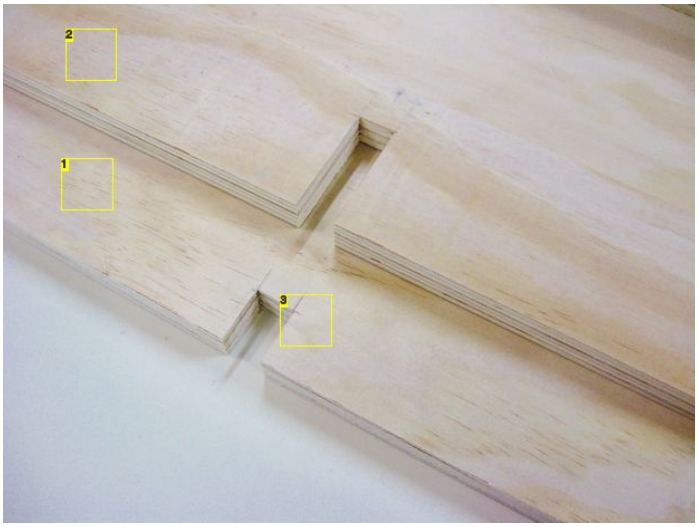


Image Notes
1. Middle shelf.
2. Front vertical support. This is only 3 inches wide although it's hard to tell here.
3. Mark and cut out mating notches using jig saw or band saw.

Step 3: Route edges and sand

I used a small trim router with an 1/8" roundover bit to route all edges of the cases.

I then sanded the edges lightly by hand with 220 grit sandpaper.

Step 4: Paint cases

The cabinet cases were then painted inside and out with flat black paint.

Step 5: Road sign doors

The doors for a cabinet like this can be made from almost anything . . . wood, plywood, MDF, pallet slats, you name it.

I happened to have some old aluminum street signs left over from my thieving days as a delinquent, troubled youth, so I used these.

Just kidding . . . I actually used to work for a small city and was friends with the people in the road department. Any time road signs were replaced (due to damage, etc.) they let me have any old signs I wanted before they hauled them off to be recycled. I amassed quite a collection.

I spent a little while sorting through my old signs to figure out a layout I thought would look nice and balanced.

The signs were then cut to the needed sizes using a circular saw with a standard wood framing blade, and a straight edge guide. I wore full safety goggles and a dust mask. A grinding bit was then used in my dremel to knock down all the sharp edges of the door pieces.

Step 6: Attach doors and hardware

The metal doors were attached to the cabinet cases with decorative strap hinges. This kind of hinge was the only kind I found that would allow me to bolt the thin metal doors to them as needed, but I love the finished look.

Handles were then added, as well as magnetic catches. The catch plates were epoxied in place (photo 4).

Image Notes
1. The hinge mounting holes need to be enlarged on one half of the hinge to fit the bolts. Drill out carefully by hand or with a drill press.

Image Notes
1. Mark hole locations on doors, drill, and fasten hinges BEFORE attaching hinges to cabinet case. Then you can position the doors as needed, and easily fasten the hinges to the case. Predrill the holes for the screws first.

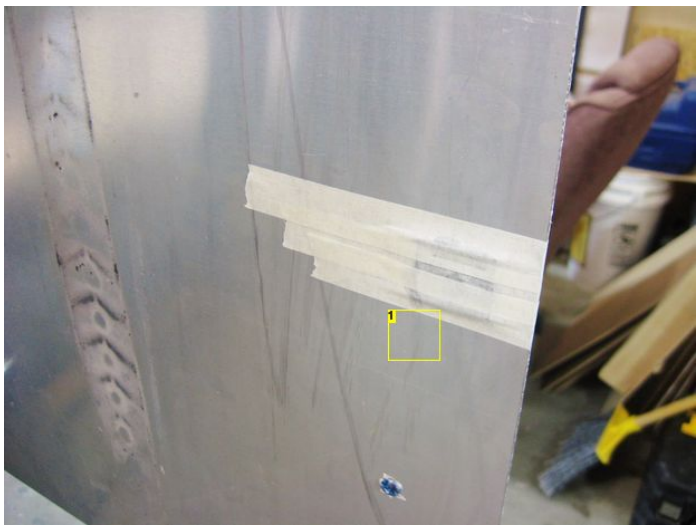


Image Notes
1. The steel strike plates were epoxied in place to the non-magnetic aluminum. The tape was removed after the epoxy cured.

Step 7: Hang cabinets

To hang the cabinets on the wall, I first screwed a straight board to the wall in perfectly level position where I wanted the cabinet bottoms to be.

Each cabinet was then propped into place and fastened with screws through pre-drilled holes into the wall studs. Then the bottom board was removed.

Step 8: That's it!

Fill the cabinets full of stuff and you're done!


DRUG-
FREE
SCHOOL
ZONE
ENFORCED
STOP


DRUG-
FREE
SCHOOL
ZONE
ENFORCED