Archival Conservation Basics

Collection Surveys
and Basic Preservation Steps

Collection Surveys…

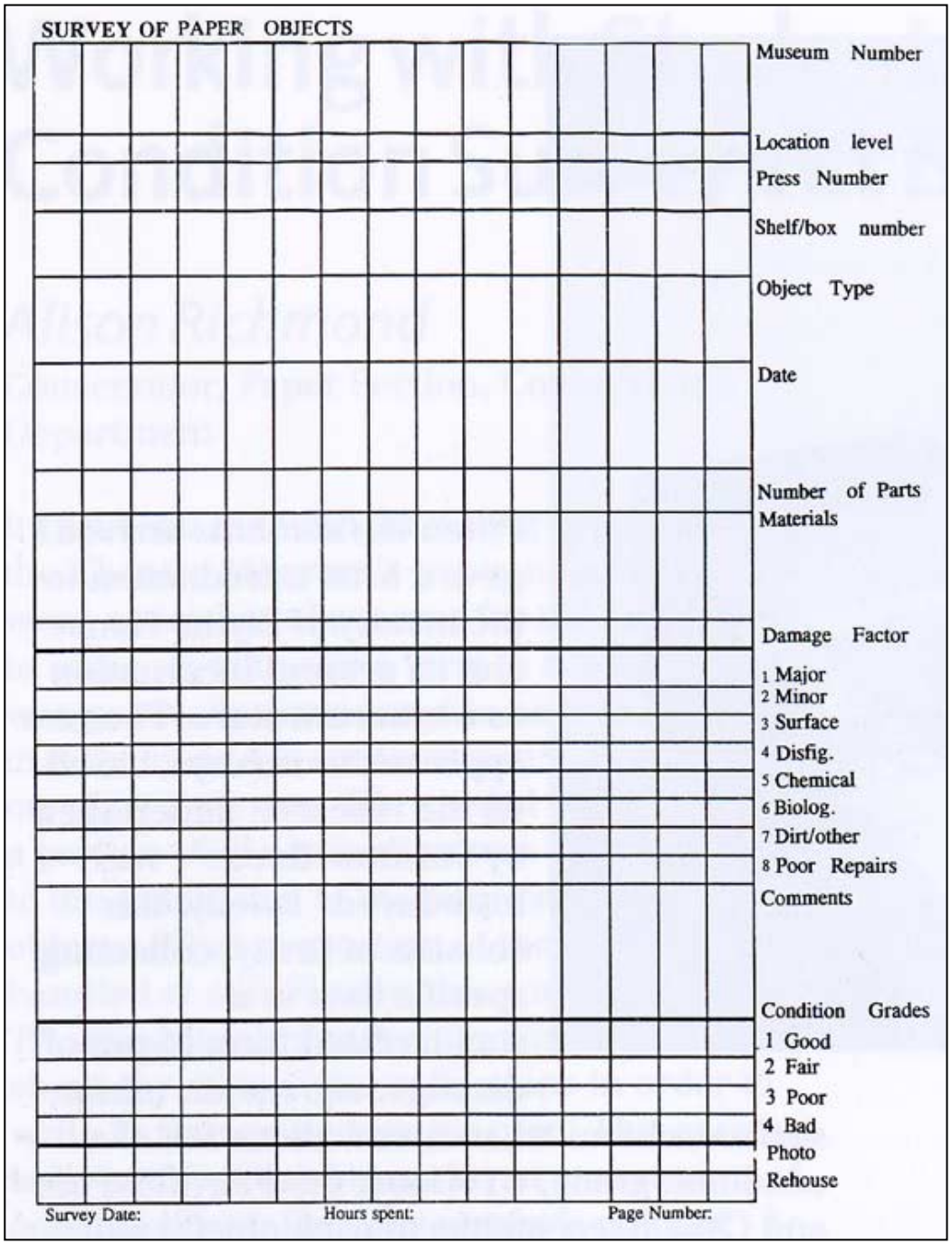
- Help you assess the needs of your collection
- Provide data that can be used when creating projects
- Familiarize the surveyor with the scope and condition of the collection
- Assist in comparing your collection's storage and housing with recommended standards
- Identify items that are treatment priorities

Planning a Collection Survey

- A successful collection survey will need careful planning
- Determine the purpose of the survey
- Determine the scope of the survey
- Create a survey form
- Estimate the time it will take
- Remember: collection surveys are short-term projects that will usually disrupt normal operations.

Creating Collection Survey Forms

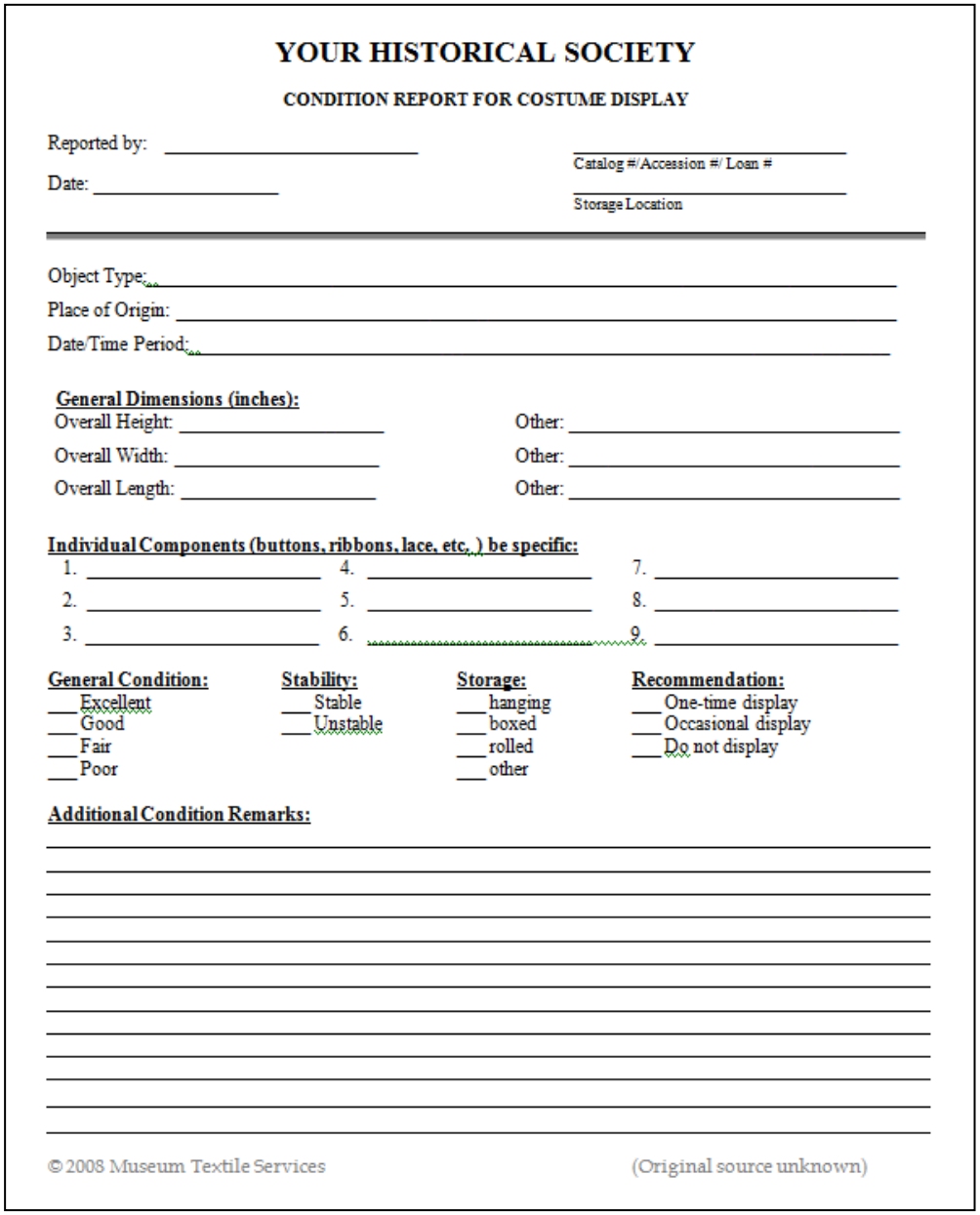
- What goes on the form is determined by the purpose of the survey.
- The form helps make sure you are assessing the same criteria at the beginning of the project as you are at the end.
- Since each collection survey and institution is different, it is easiest to make your own form instead of trying to find one that meets your needs.



- Simple form with boxes to check

1. Item no longer usable	Treatment needed
a. Paper disintegrates if handled	Replace or
b. Paper contains lignin	Reproduce
c. Item needs major/minor repair	
d. Item is mutilated	
2. Item usable for limited period if carefully handled	
a. Paper bad but still intact	Replace or
b. Paper moderately good but not permanent	Reproduce or
c. Paper contains lignin	Minor repair only
d. Paper in need of major/minor repair	
e. Binding needs major/minor repair	
f. Poor quality binding	
g. Item is mutilated	
3. Item is now in good condition but not of permanent quality	
a. Good quality paper	Repair or
b. Fair quality paper	Replace in future
c. Paper contains lignin	
d. Binding needs major/minor repair	
e. Poor quality binding f. Item is mutilated	
4. Item is usable for indefinite period if repaired	
a. Excellent paper	Repair
b. Sturdy binding	
c. Binding needs major/minor repair	
d. Poor quality binding but will hold	
5. Item usable for a long time, excellent paper, good binding	
a. Mutilated	Repair mutilation
6. Poor quality or improper storage container	Replace

- Form with different criteria for different levels of deterioration



YOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CONDITION REPORT FOR COSTUME DISPLAY

Reported by: _____

Date: _____

_____
Catalog #/Accession #/ Loan #

_____
Storage Location

Object Type: _____

Place of Origin: _____

Date/Time Period: _____

General Dimensions (inches):

Overall Height: _____ Other: _____

Overall Width: _____ Other: _____

Overall Length: _____ Other: _____

Individual Components (buttons, ribbons, lace, etc,) be specific:

1. _____ 4. _____ 7. _____
2. _____ 5. _____ 8. _____
3. _____ 6. _____ 9. _____

General Condition:	Stability:	Storage:	Recommendation:
___Excellent	___Stable	___hanging	___One-time display
___Good	___Unstable	___boxed	___Occasional display
___Fair		___rolled	___Do not display
___Poor		___other	

Additional Condition Remarks:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

 (Original source unknown)

- A form tailored to the specific needs of a costume collection

Survey Form

1. Note call number
   Bar code
   Note shelf
   Year of publication
   Place of publication

2. Is this volume shelved correctly?
   Shelved in wrong location
   Not shelved straight
   Shelved on spine
   Shelved on fore-edge
   Shelved too tightly

3. Leaf Attachment
   Double-fan adhesive
   Perfect
   Sewn through folds
   Oversewn
   Spiral
   Stapled
   Saddle stitched
   Other
   Other type of leaf attachment

Type of Volume
   Monograph
   Part of multivolume set
   Periodical
   Other
   Other type of volume

Type of Binding
   Published hardback
   Publisher paperback
   Pamphlet
   Other
   Other type of binding

4. Is volume in a protective enclosure?
   Yes/No

5. Is enclosure satisfactory?
   Yes/No

6. Is there a dust jacket?
   Yes/No

7. Mylar cover?
   Yes/No

8. Condition of dust jacket
   Good
   Fair
   Poor

9. Condition of Binding and Text Block
Check all that apply:
   Broken text block
   Detached or missing covers(s)
   Red-rot leather
   Torn spine
   Loose hinge(s)
   Damaged cover(s)
   Missing pages (not mutilation)
   Damaged pages (not mutilation)
   Loose pages
   Torn end sheets
   Loose cover (s)
   Warped
   No Damage

10. Environmental Damage
   Yes/No

11. Rate the following as none, mild-moderate, extreme:
   Mold
   UV
   Dust
   Insect
   Water
   Other
   If other, please specify

12. Mutilation and Patron Damage
   Yes/No

13. Rate the following as none, mild-moderate, extreme:
   Pencil
   Ink
   Highlighter
   Paper clips
   Dog-ears
   Post-it notes
   Bookmarks and other paper
   Pages torn or removed
   Animal damage
   Food or drink stains
   Adhesive
   Other
   If other, please specify

14. Gutter Margin Width
   1/4 inch or wider
   Less than ¼ inch

15. Previous Treatments
   Spine replacement
   Tip-in
   Hinge-tightening
   Page mends
   End sheet replacement
   Pages photocopied
   Binding
   Photocopied/reformatted
   Enclosure made
   No previous treatment

16. Treatment Recommendation
   Box
   Pam binder with envelope
   Send to conservator
   Mylar book jacket cover
   Does not need treatment

17. Additional Comments

- Detailed survey for a rare books collection

Preservation Evaluation - Manuscript Collections

Evaluated By:	CAGE Number:	Date Reviewed:
Listed Manuscript Priority:		Preservation Priority: ___ 1-Highest ___ 2-High ___ 3-Medium ___ 4-Low ___ 5-Lowest
Number of Items/Volumes/Boxes:		

Needs:	Yes	No	Comments
Boxes, Folders Replaced			
Contents Redistributed			
Spacers Needed			
Vacuum: Dirty Contents			
Vacuum: Mold ___ Severe ___ Moderate ___ Minor			
Preservation Photocopies			
Preservation Scans			
Interleaving			
Previous/Damaging Mends			
Tape/Adhesive Removal			
Humidification/Flattening			
Paper Mends (Japanese Tissue)			
Encapsulation			
Custom Enclosure			
Frame/Mat Removal			

General Notes:

Conducting a Collection Survey

- One person: break it up into pieces, write up a summary after each piece
- Multiple people: make sure the instructions for filling out the survey form are clear so that there are uniform results
- This is not the time to be working on the collection. Once the survey is complete, you can make a plan for carrying out the recommendations of the survey results.

Collection Survey Results

- Once the survey is complete, the information collected needs to be assessed.
- How do the survey results help answer questions you had when you started?
- How well did the survey serve its purpose?
- What action should be taken in response to the survey?
- What are the priorities of your recommended actions?

Collection Survey Activity

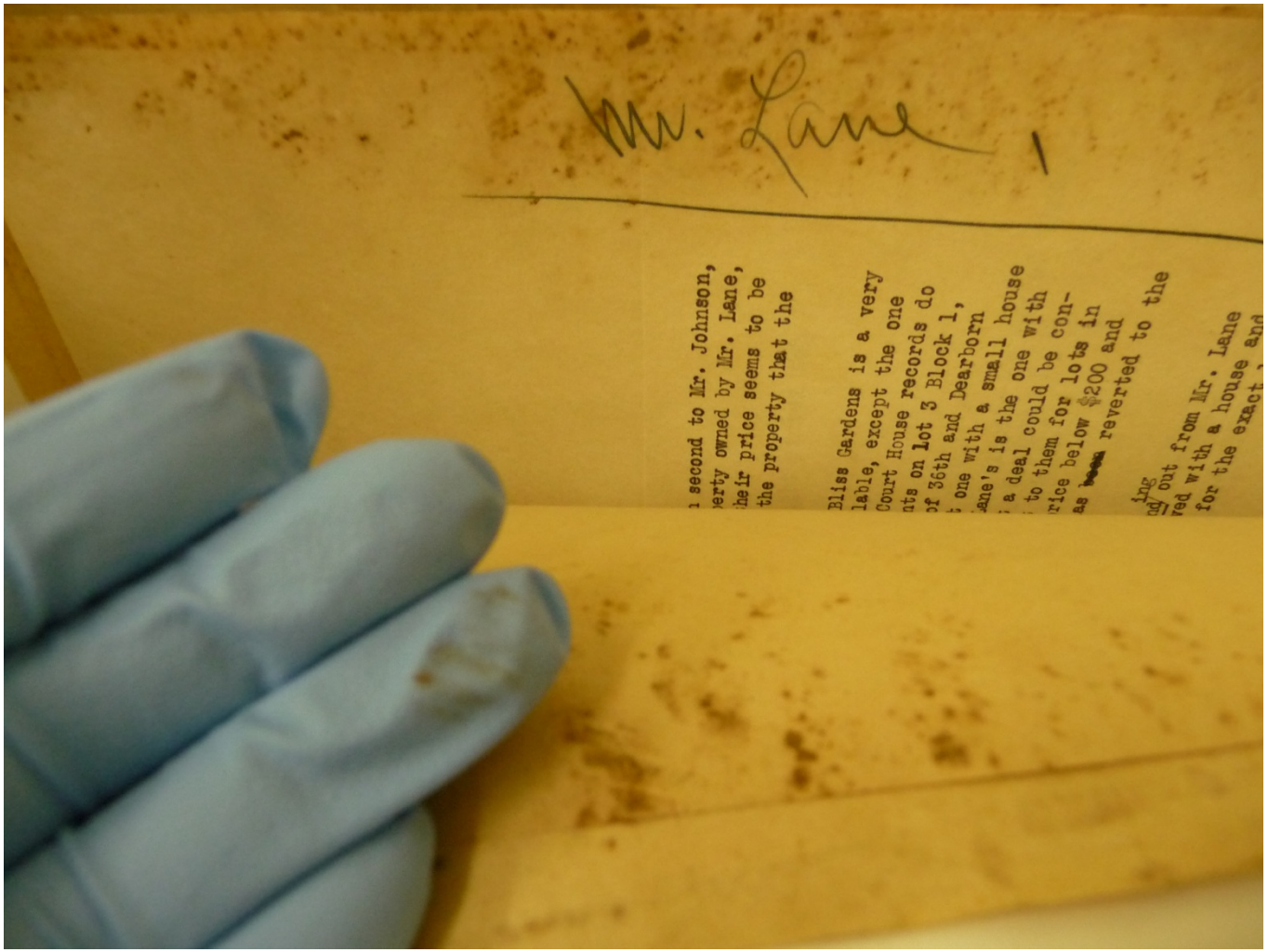
- Scenario: You work for a small institution, and you would like to assess the general preservation needs of your collection. Please survey your box of materials with the provided survey form.
- Results: Use the back of you survey form to write a report of your survey. Remember to include recommendations and priorities for action.

Break

Basic Steps to deal with issues you may have discovered in the collection survey

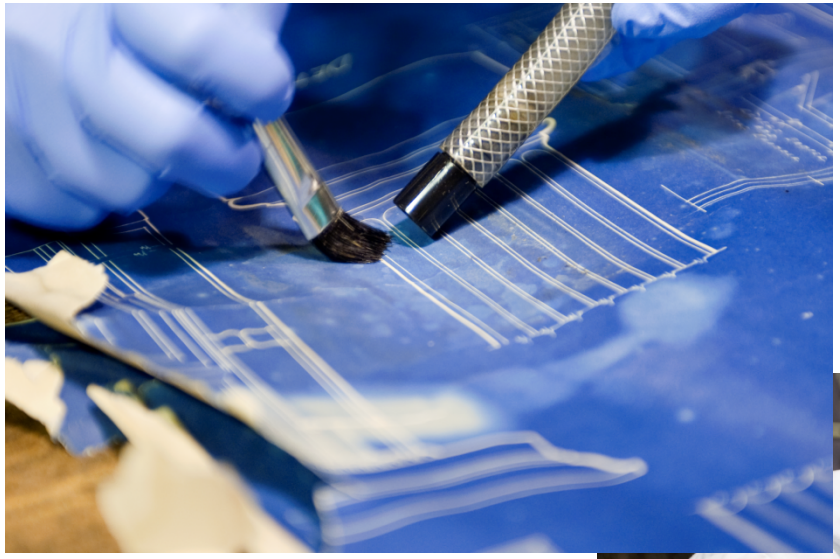
Mold

- Make sure it's not because of the storage conditions, like water leaks or temperature and humidity spikes
- Before the mold can be removed, it must be dry and powdery
- Remove with a vacuum or a brush outdoors on a dry day



- Mold in a collection. Note the powder coming off on the gloves.

- Cleaning mold in the loading dock.



- Brushing and vacuuming away mold

Mold

- You may want to consider discarding the covers of books with severe mold.
- If there is ever a water disaster or temperature spike in your storage area, you will want to check all items that have ever had mold in case it comes back.
- Seal moldy items you are discarding in plastic so they do not infect the rest of the collection on their way out.

- Moldy items sealed for disposal.

Encapsulation

Why should you use it?

- Allows items to be viewed without causing handling damage.
- Gives the protection of an enclosure without having to be taken in and out of that enclosure.
- Protects items from the atmosphere.
- It can also provide a psychological protection: When a patron sees that an item has been carefully encapsulated, they will often be more careful with it.

When should you use it?

- Use for things that will be handled often.
- Use for things that are fragile.
- Use for things that are hard to handle without causing tears. This includes large items as well as very fragile or brittle things.

When should you not use it?

- Do not use with anything that has pencil, charcoal, pastels, or other media that may lift and shift with the static charge in the polyester film.
- Don’t bother using it for items in good condition.

Polyester Film

- Polyester film is inert, so it will not harm documents.
- The DuPont brand name is Mylar, which is a term often used interchangeably with polyester film.
- Sheets, sleeves, folders, and rolls of polyester film in various sizes can be found in most archival supply catalogs.
- The usual thicknesses are 3 mil to 5 mil (.003 inches to .005 inches)

Things to watch out for

- Moisture and humidity can become trapped in a plastic encapsulation. Check over encapsulated items in the event of a humidity or water disaster.
- The acidity of very acidic items can become trapped in the encapsulation, causing deterioration to accelerate. Only encapsulate very acidic things if they will be handled often, or if you include a buffer to absorb any acidity.

Encapsulation Sizes

- Mylar sleeves are sold in standard photo and paper sizes, but custom enclosures are needed for anything that is an unusual size.
- There is a certain amount of cheating you can do for items that are only slightly larger than the standard sleeves sizes.

Encapsulation methods

- Tape
- Sewing
- Heat welding
- Ultrasonic welder

Encapsulation methods: Tape

- Use double sided tape to seal the enclosure.
- Leave a generous margin, because the tape can migrate
- The ONLY acceptable tape for this is 3M Scotch Brand Double-Sided Tape #415

Encapsulation methods: Sewing

- Use a zigzag stitch
- Familiarity with a sewing machine is helpful
- Best method for combining another material with Mylar for the enclosure.

Encapsulation methods: Welders

- Heat welder: This is how pre-made sleeves are made.
- Minter Ultrasonic Welder: Uses sound waves to weld a seam in the Mylar.

Encapsulation Activity

- Mylar sleeves are sold in standard photo and paper sizes, but custom enclosures are needed for anything that is an unusual size.

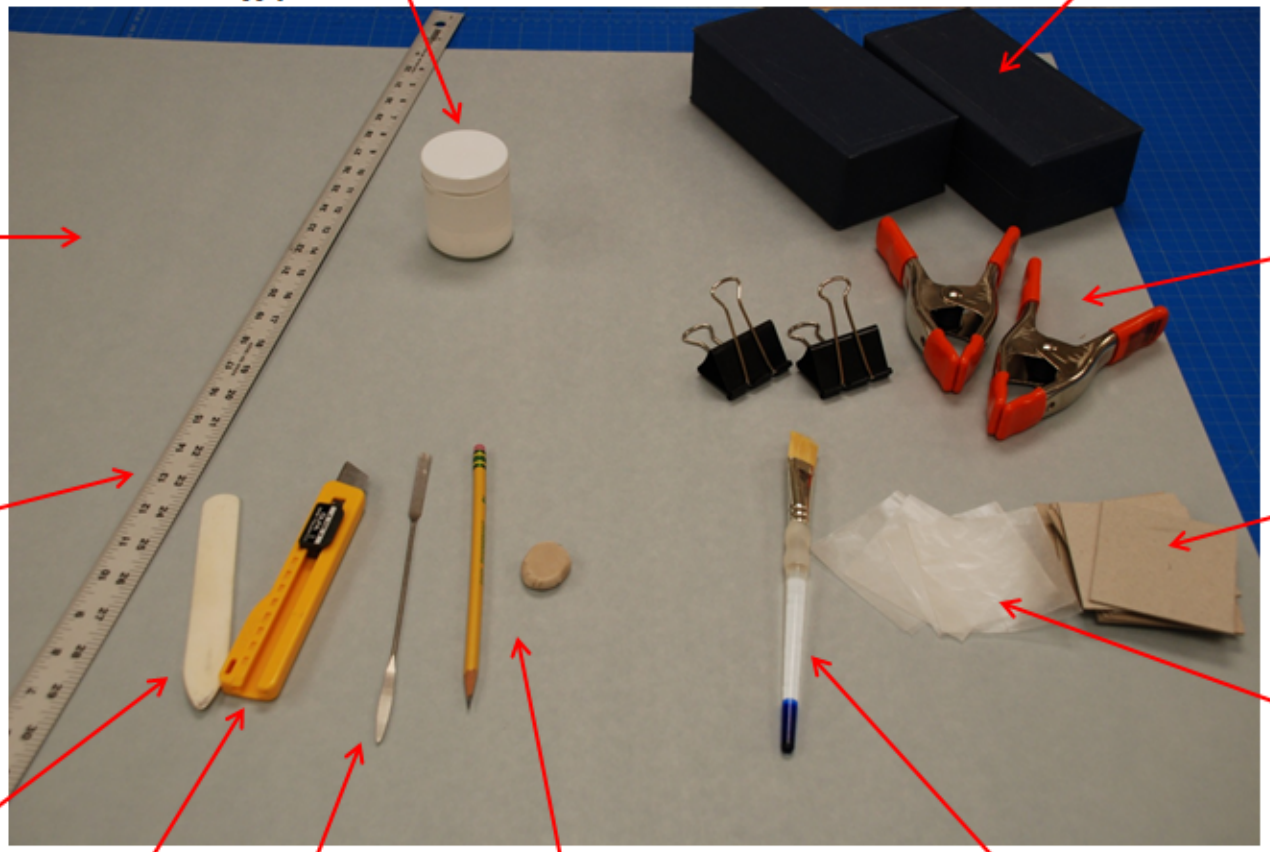
Large Custom Boxes

- Large, unusually sized books like scrapbooks often need custom boxes.
- Boxes protect books from dust and fluctuations in temperature and humidity while they are sitting on the shelf.
- Boxes help enclose any loose items that come off of a book.
- Boxes allow you to stack books without putting too much pressure on the books at the bottom of the stack.

- Scrapbook in a standard sized box

- Scrapbook in a custom box

Box Supplies



PVA Adhesive
An archival adhesive available from most archival supply vendors

Weights

1/16" Board
I use E-Flute corrugated board from Gaylord

Clamps
You can use binder clips, clamps from a hardware store, or even clothes pins

Straight Edge
It should be longer than the shorter dimension of your board

Scrap board pieces

Wax Paper

Bone Folder

Knife

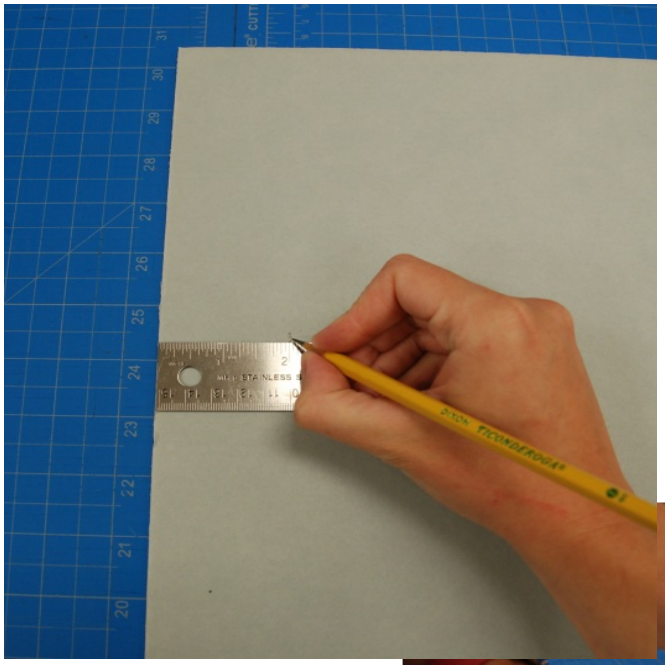
Microspatula

Pencil and Eraser

Paint brush

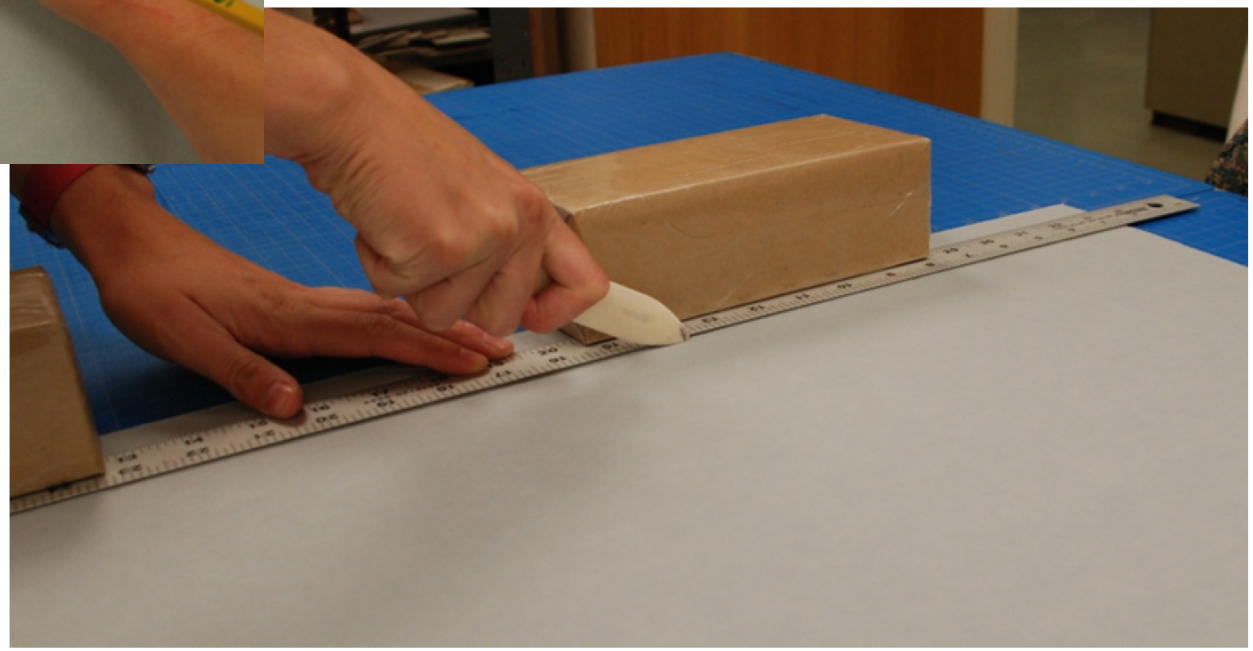
Find the thickest part of your book, and measure that thickness.

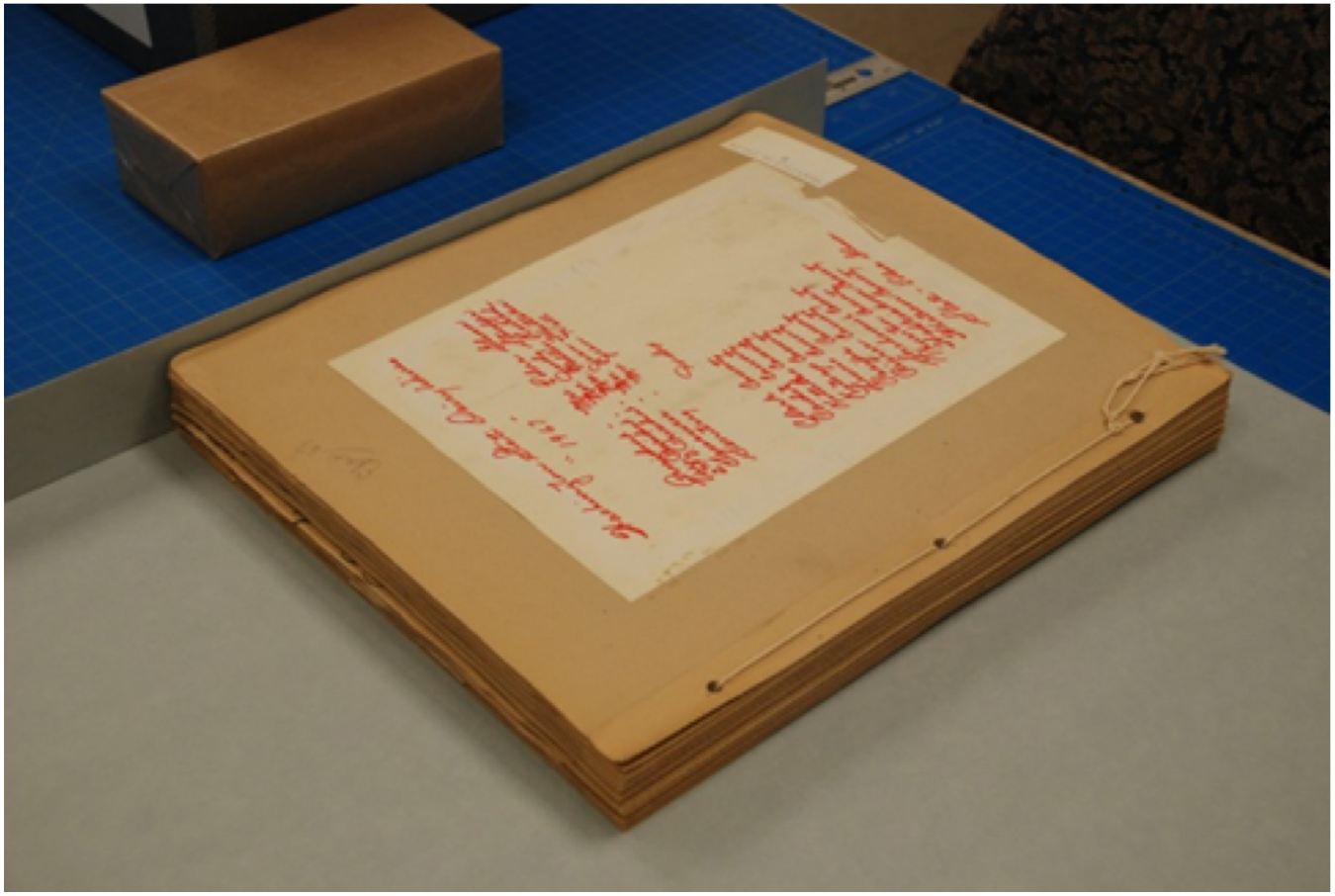
From one of the shorter edges of the board, make a fold that is one book thickness from the edge.



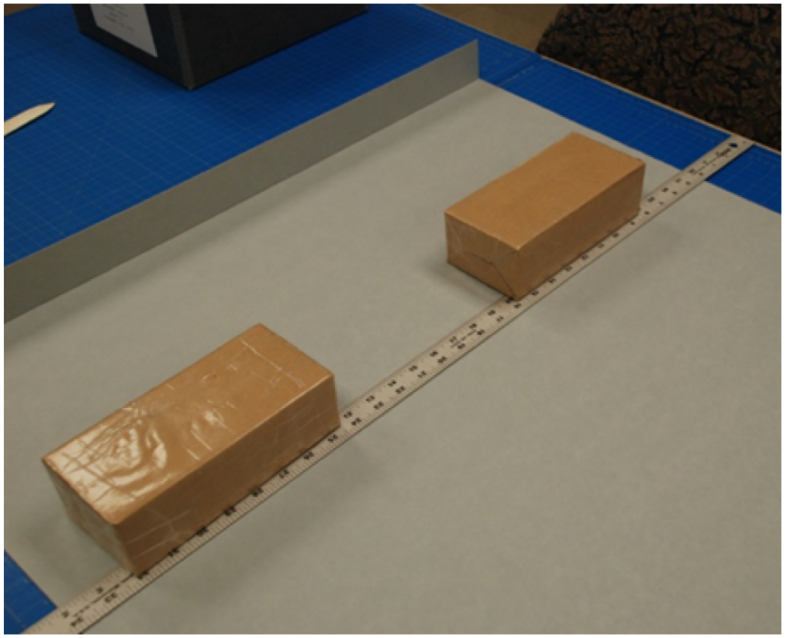
Mark the measurement

Score the line where you'll make the fold with a bone folder

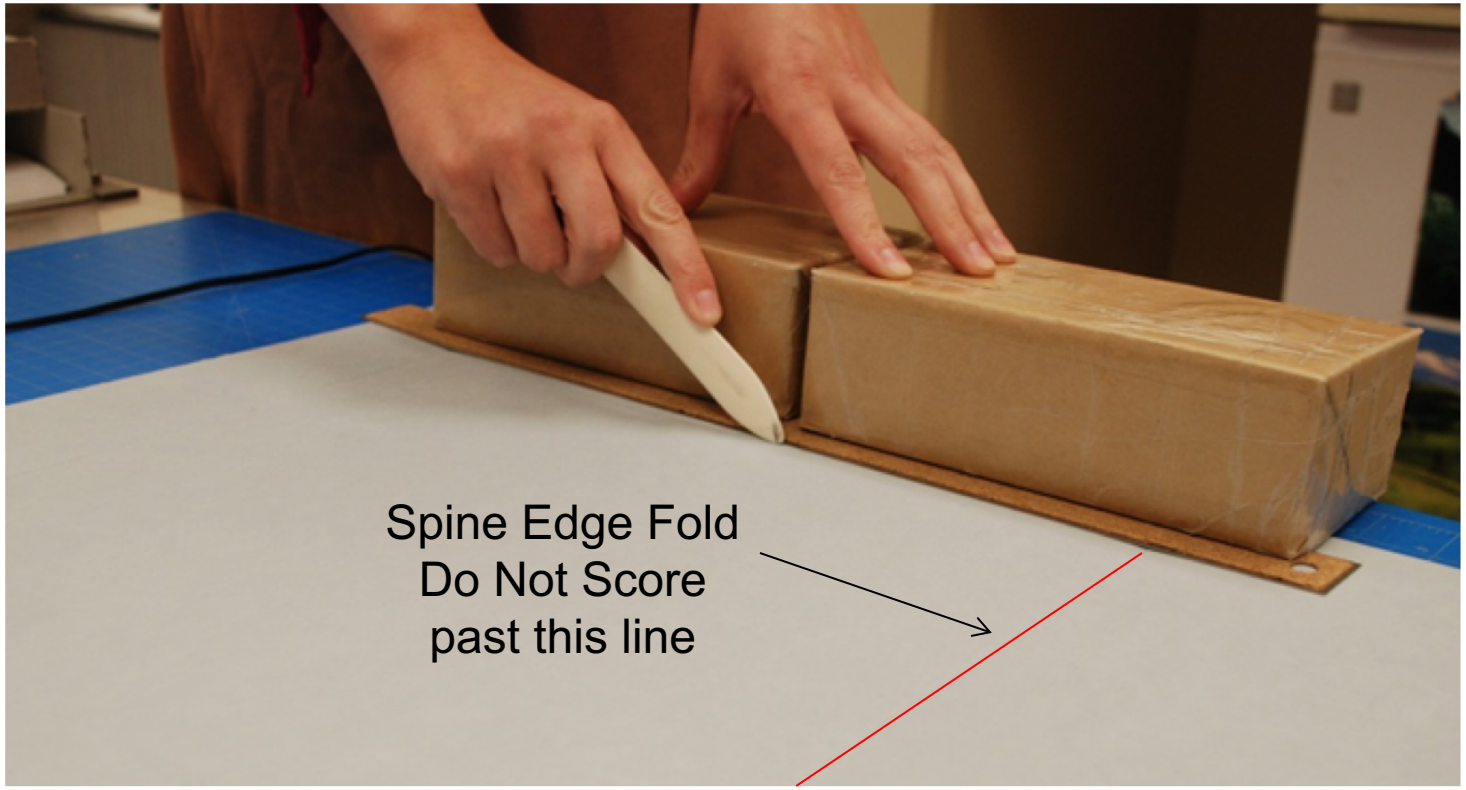




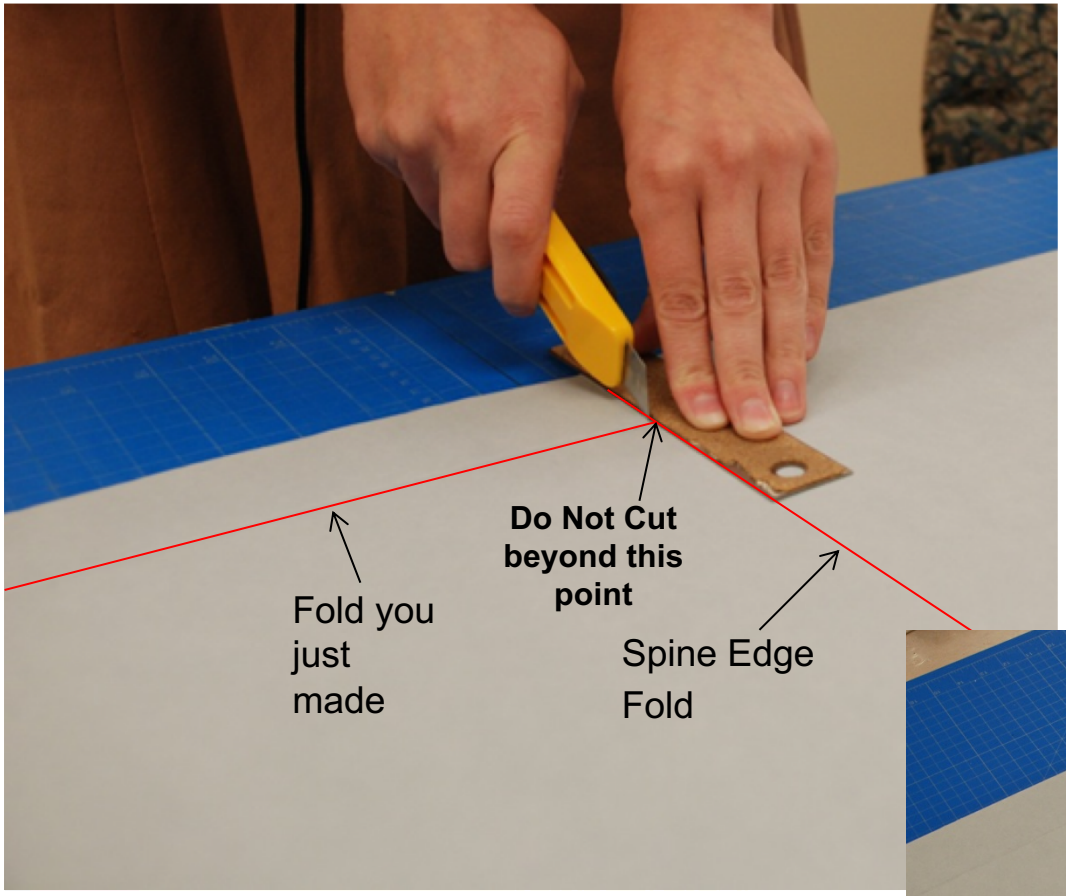
Fold the flap you just made up to 90 degrees. Set the book on the board with its front edge butting up against this flap.



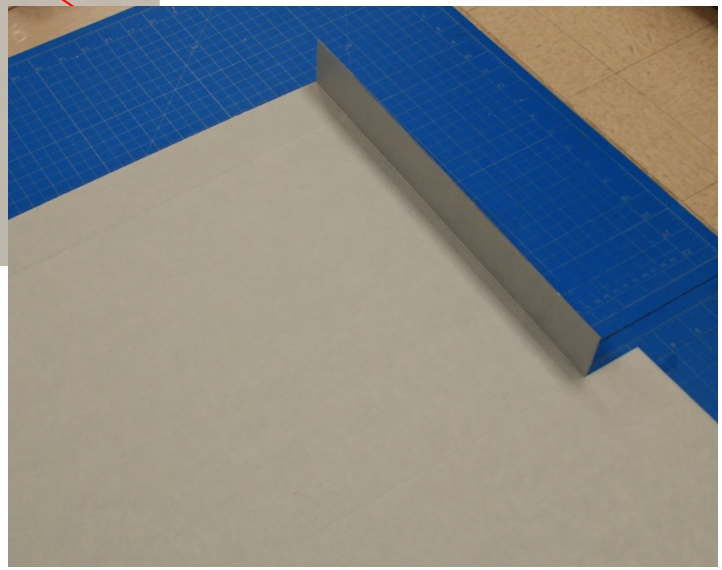
Make a fold on the board at the spine edge of the book



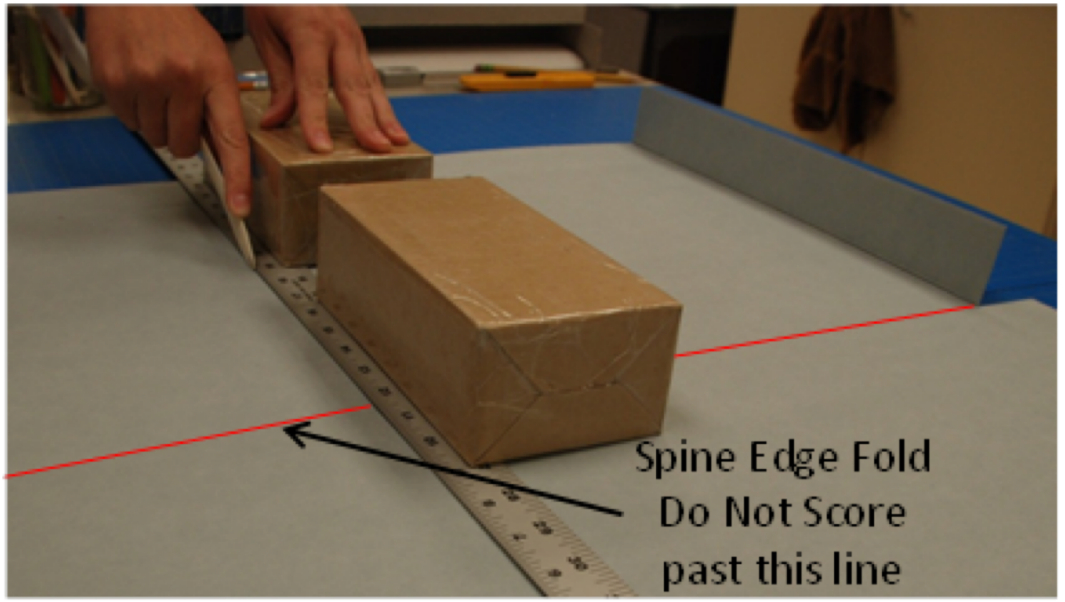
Make a fold that is one book thickness from the bottom edge of the board, just between the spine edge fold and the front edge of the board.

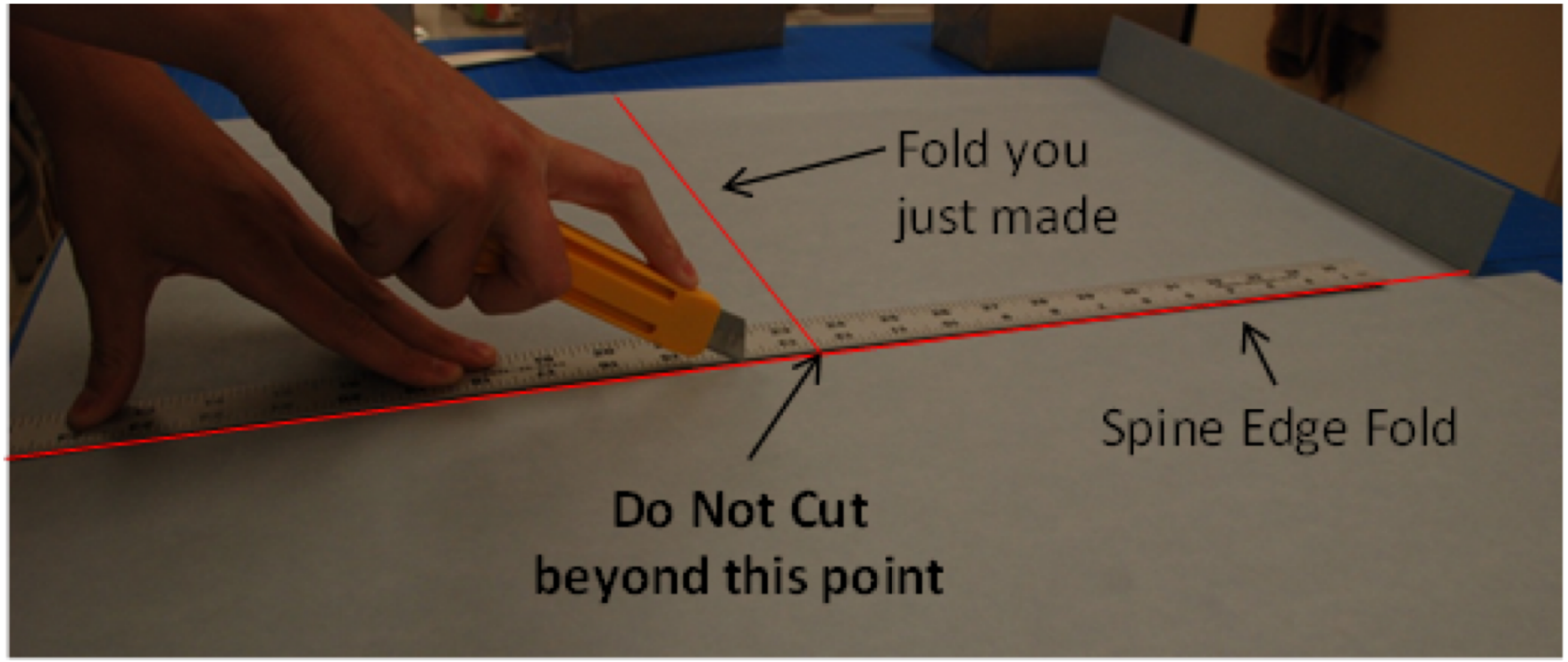


Cut from the fold you just made down to the bottom edge of the board. Fold that flap up.

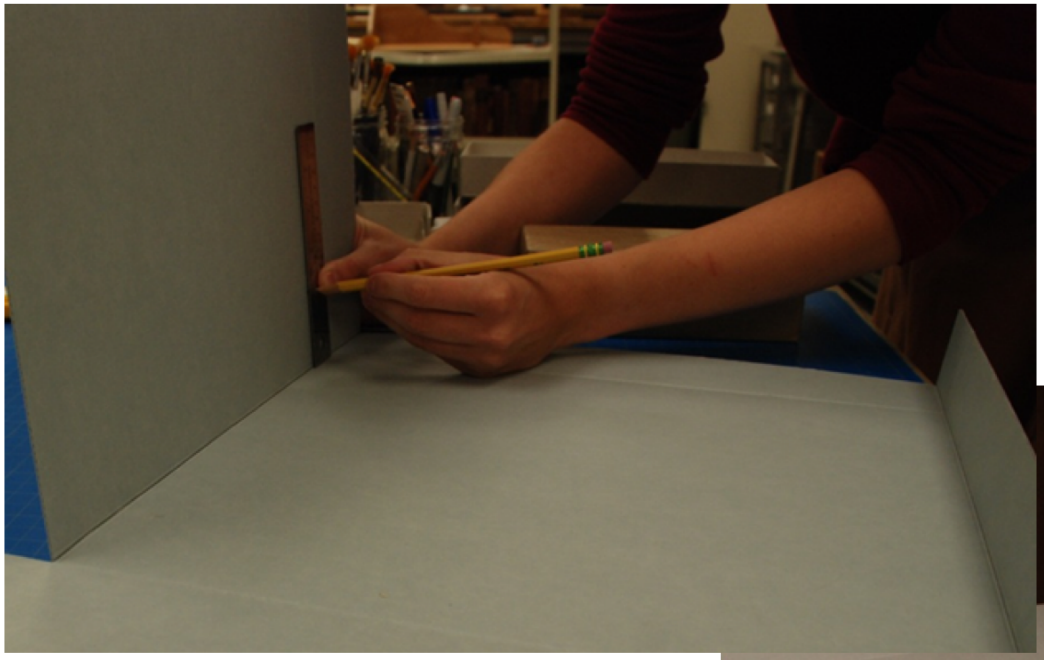


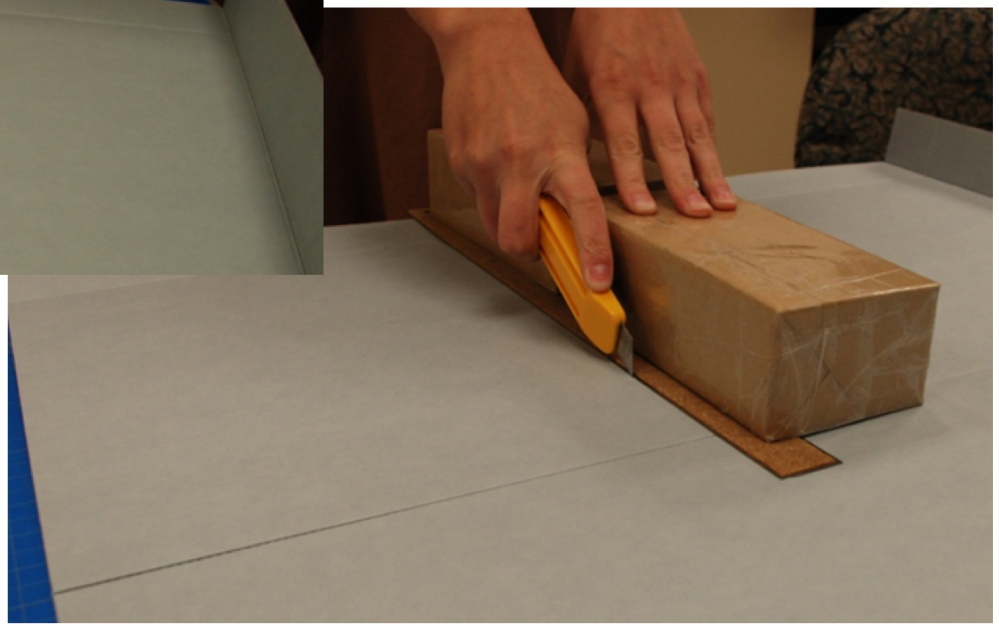
Place the book against that flap. Make a fold on the board at the top edge of the book.



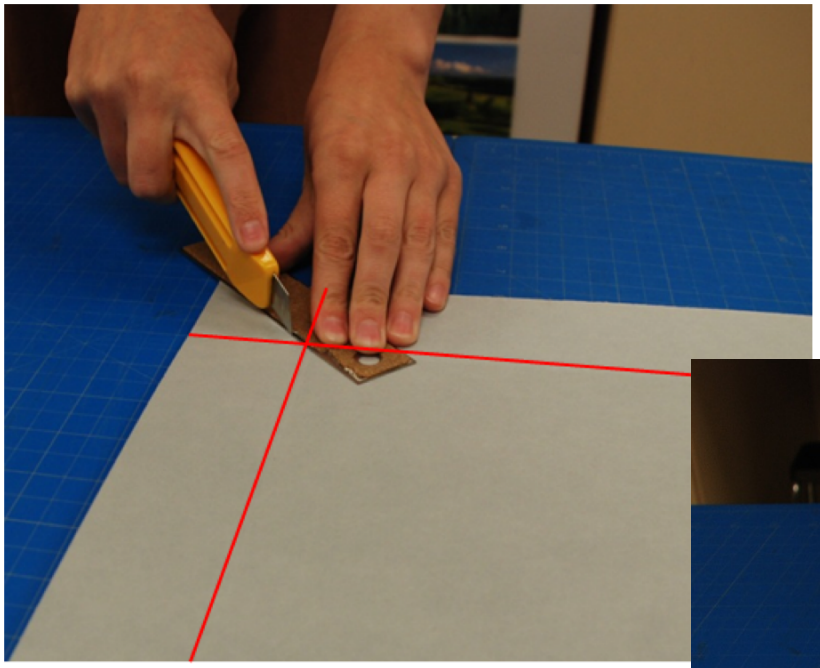


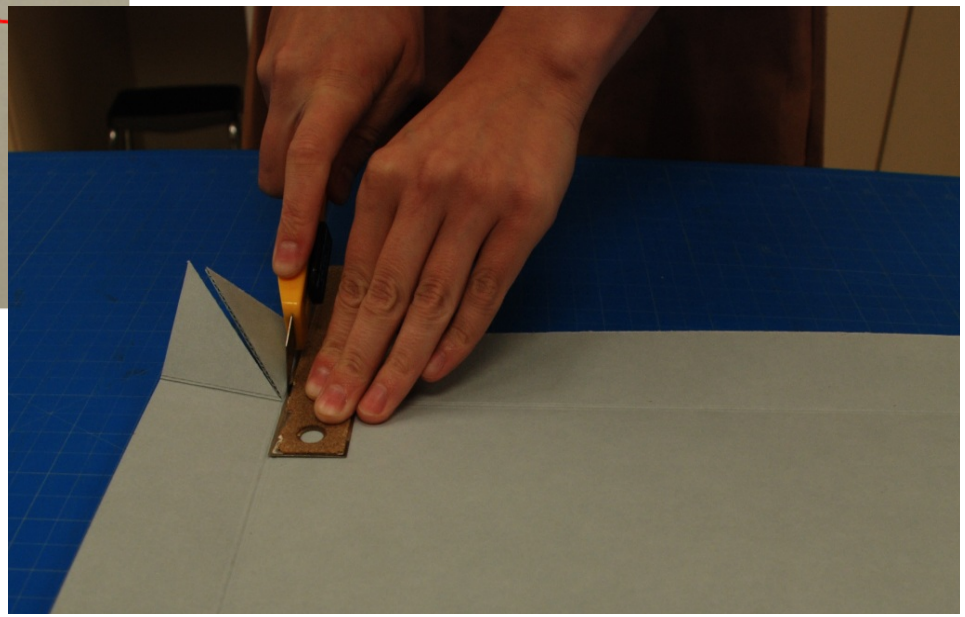
Cut from the fold you just made up to the top edge of the board. Fold that flap up.



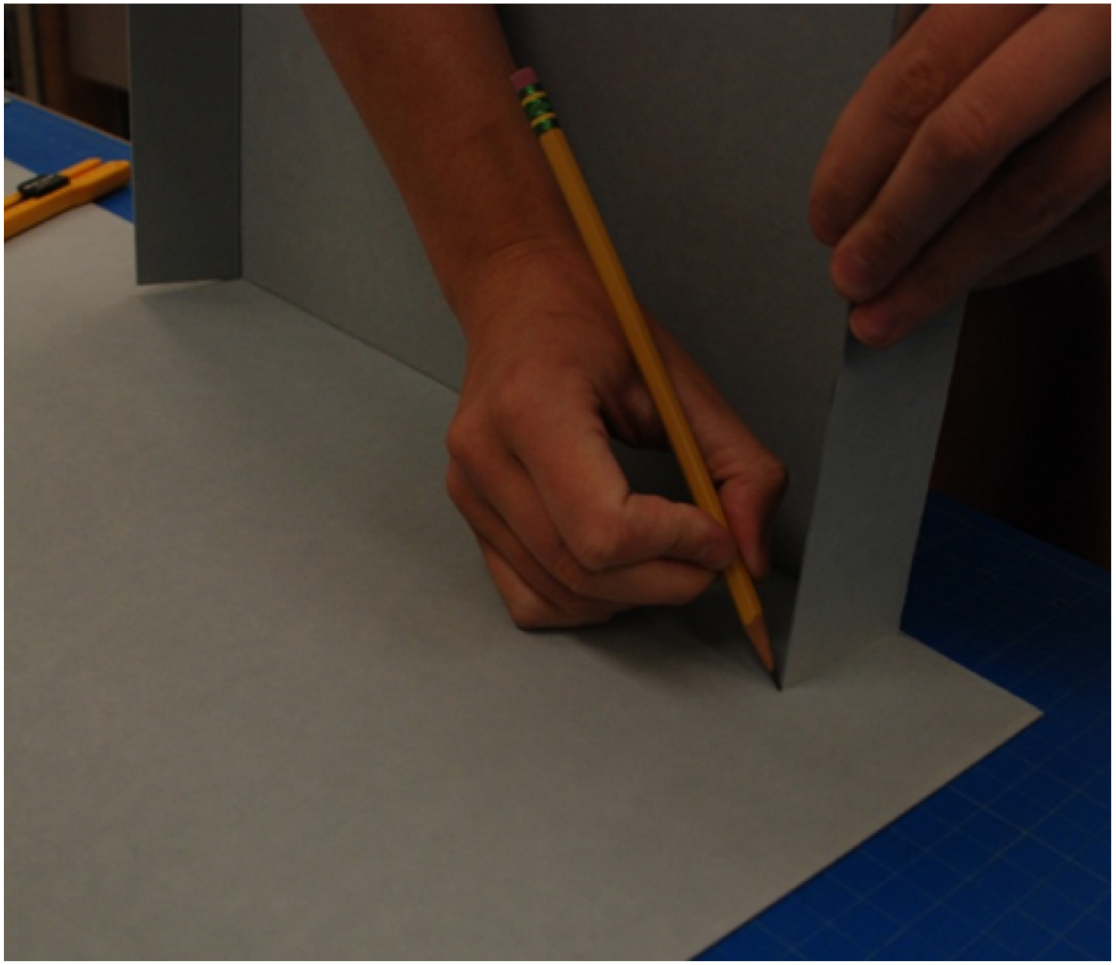


Measure one book thickness up this giant flap, and cut it down to that size

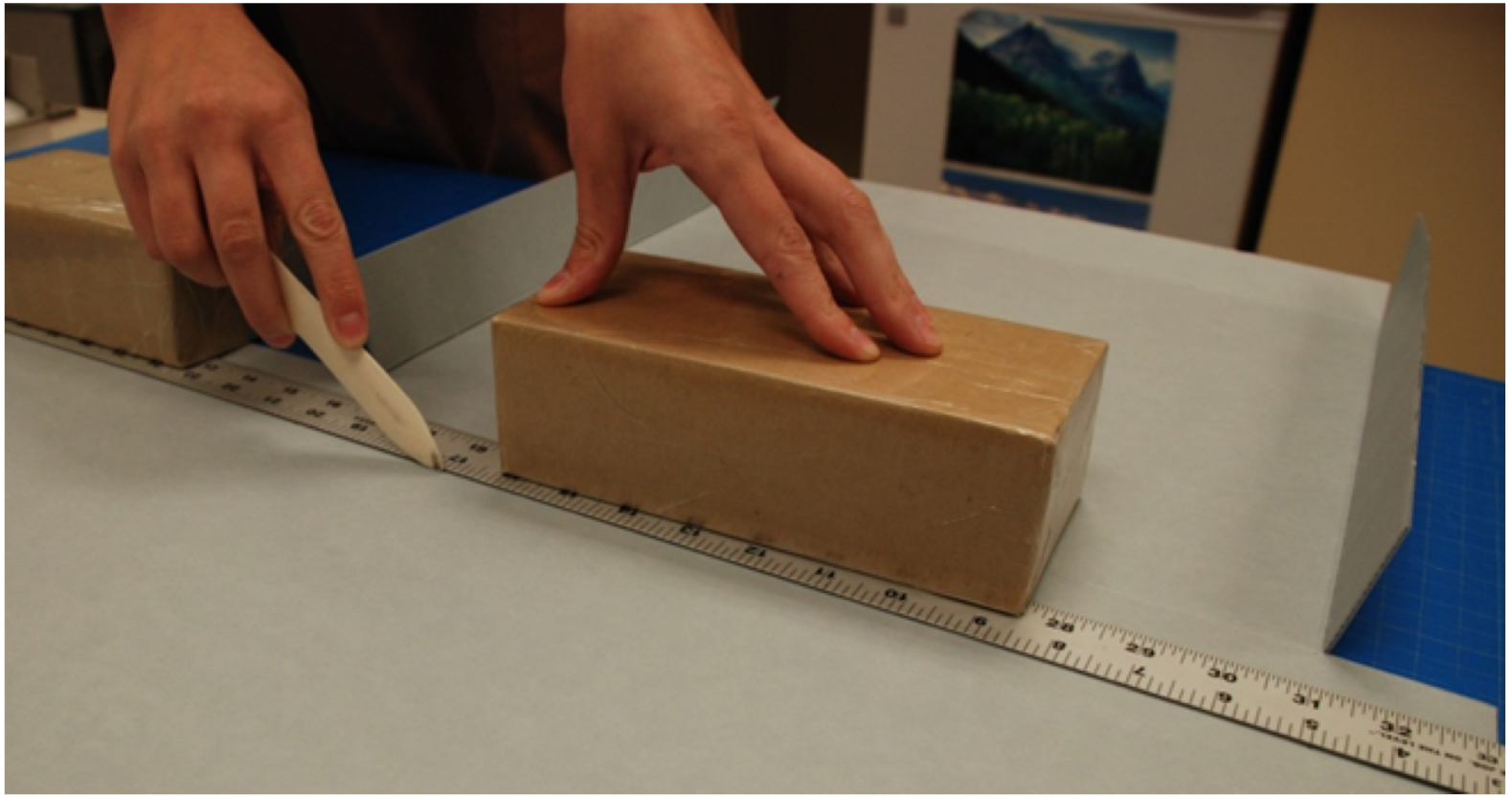




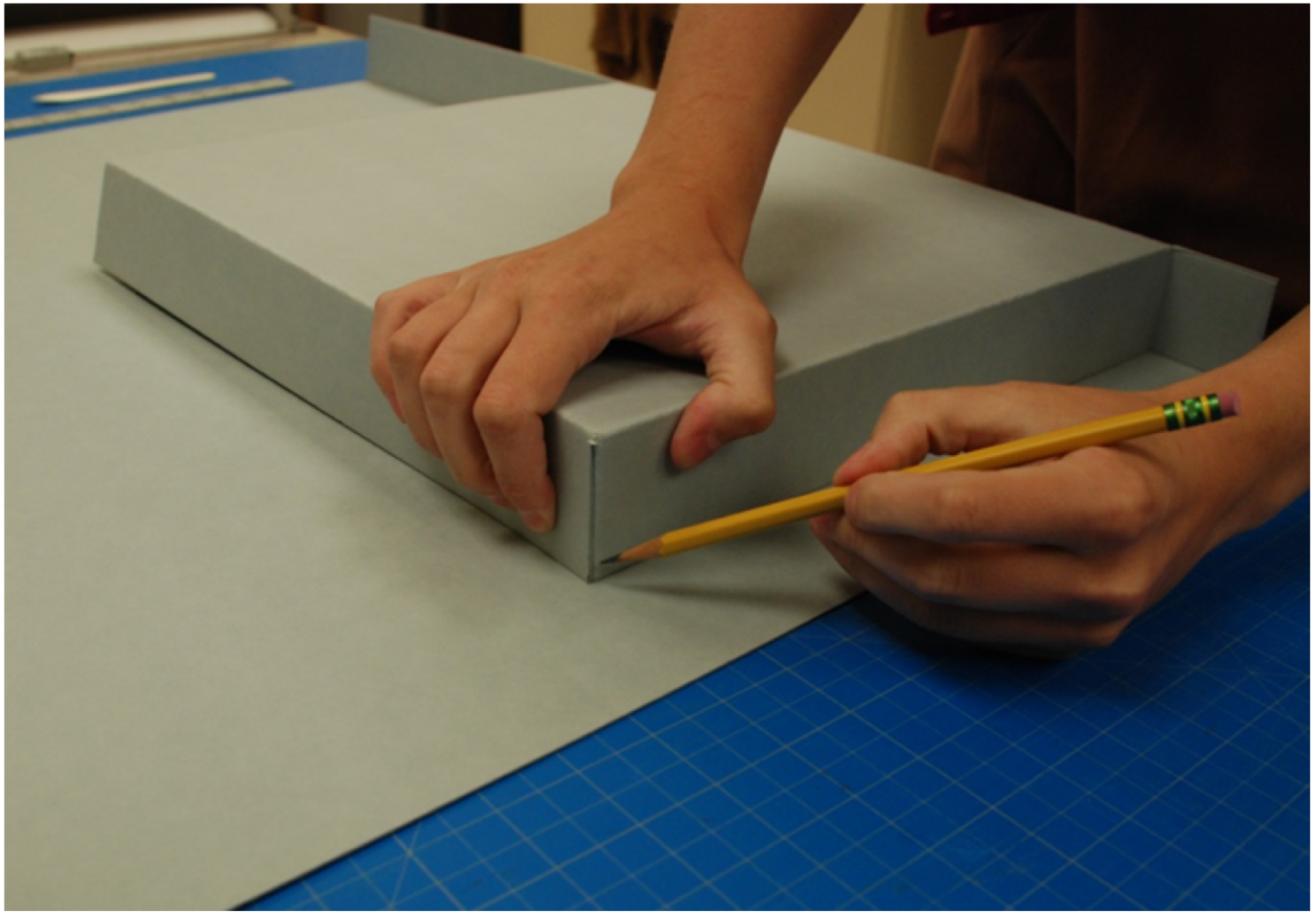
Make diagonal cuts at the corners. Cut off the triangles on the front flap, leaving the triangles on the top and bottom flaps.



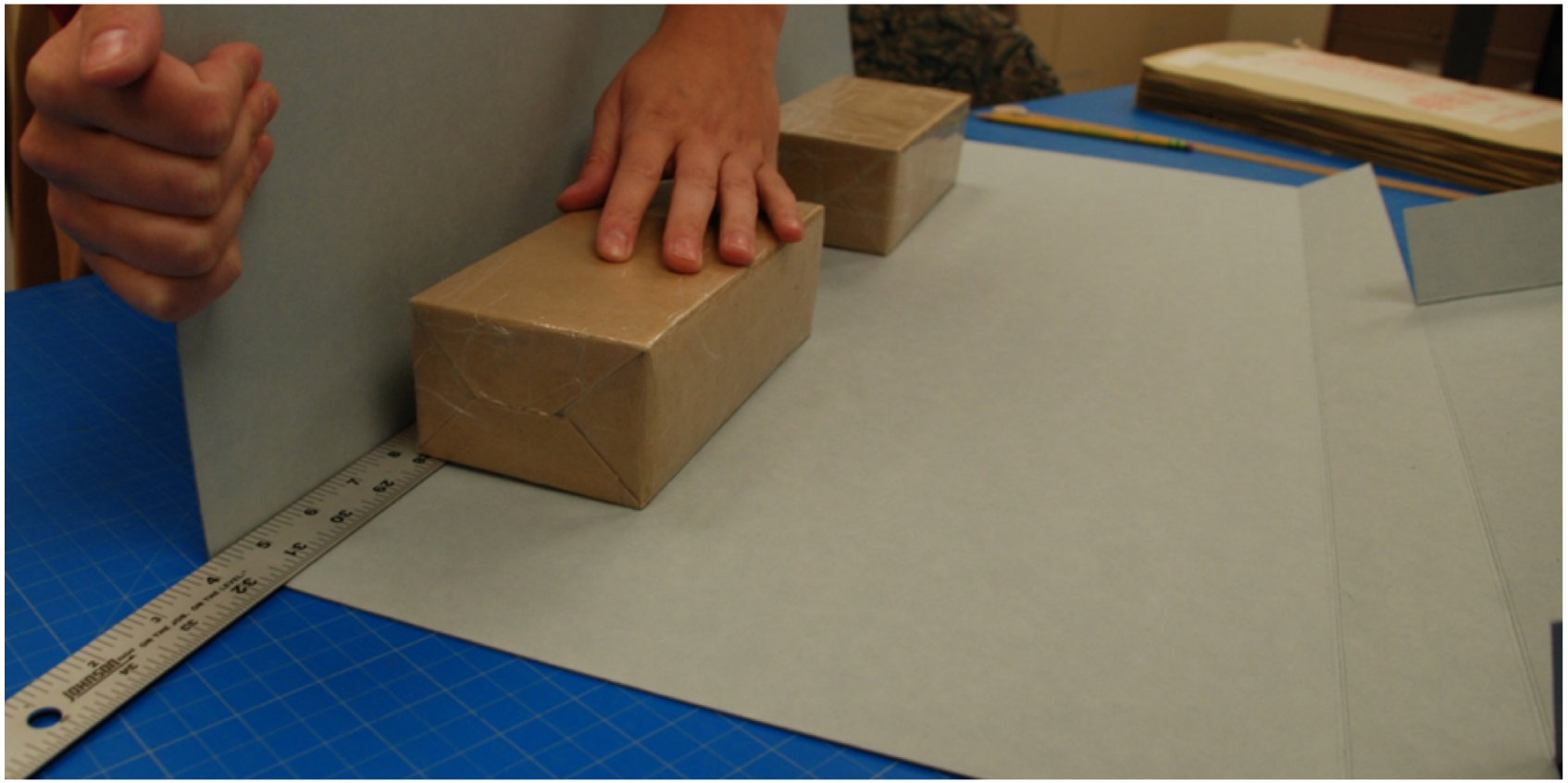
Fold up the top and bottom flaps, and fold up the board at the spine fold. Mark where the flaps hit the board.



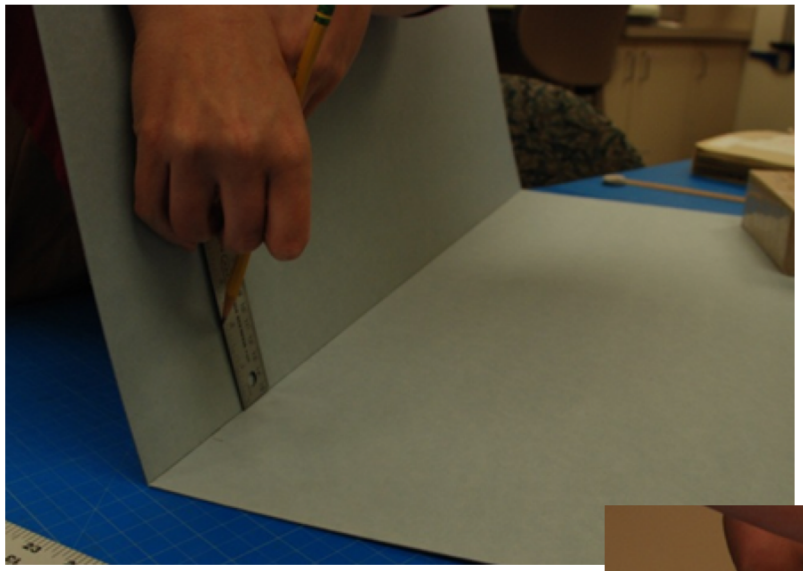
Make a fold at the marks you just made.

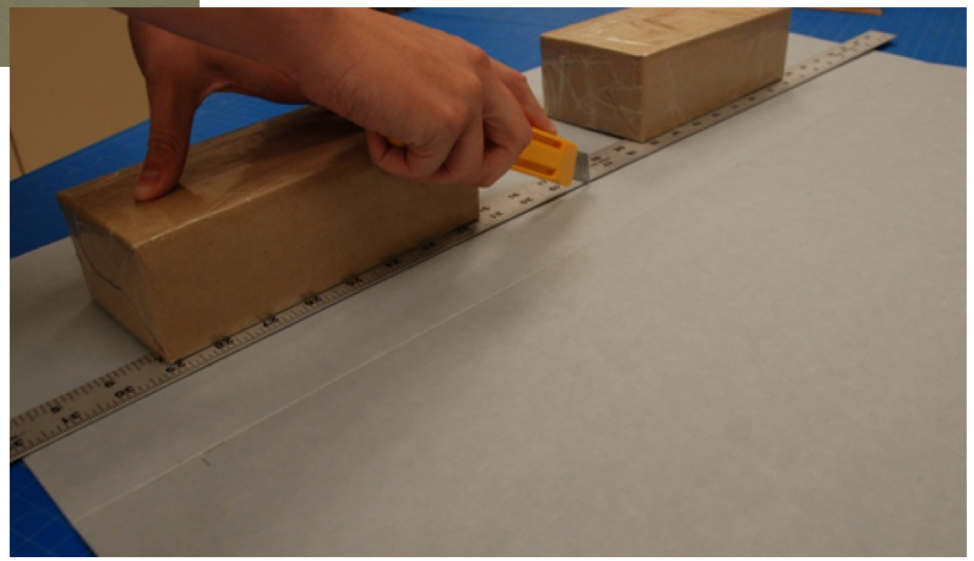


Fold all the folds you've made so far to 90 degrees. Mark where the corners of the box hit the board.



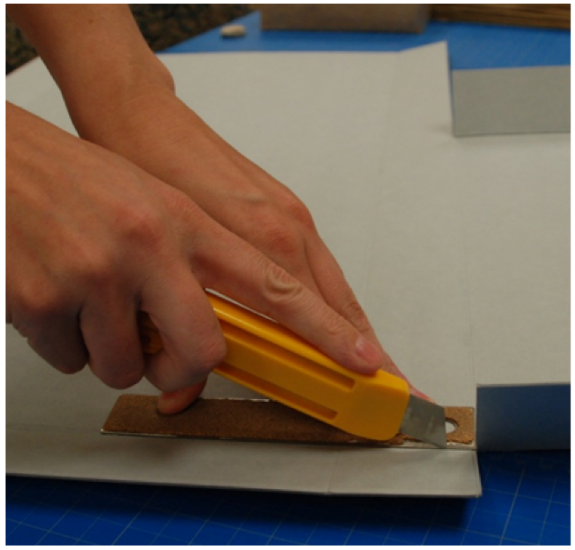
Make a fold along the line created by the corner marks.

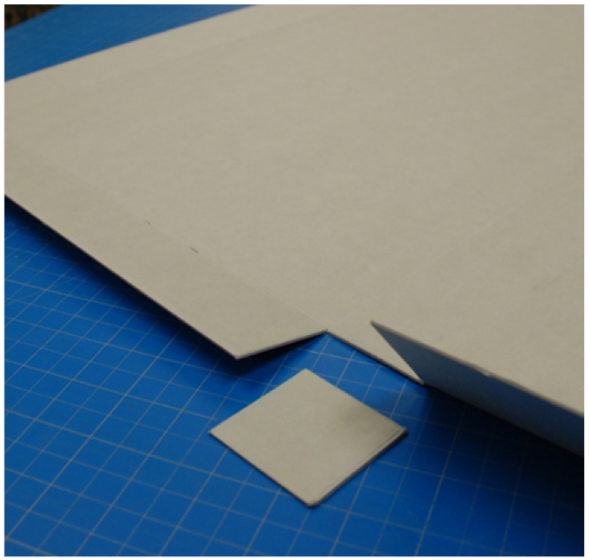




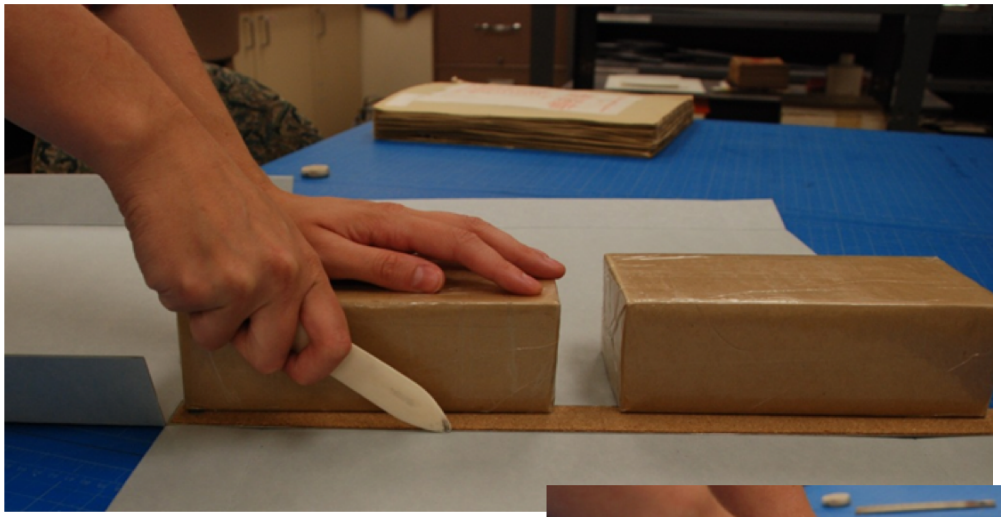
Measure and cut this flap down to **1/4 inch less** than one book thickness.

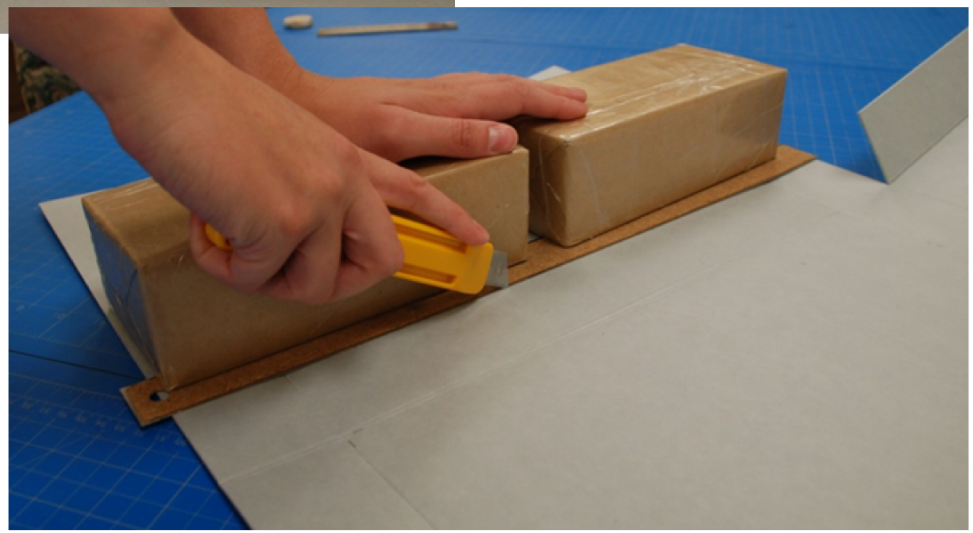
Make a fold along the line between the corner mark and the edge of the bottom flap. Fold up the flap



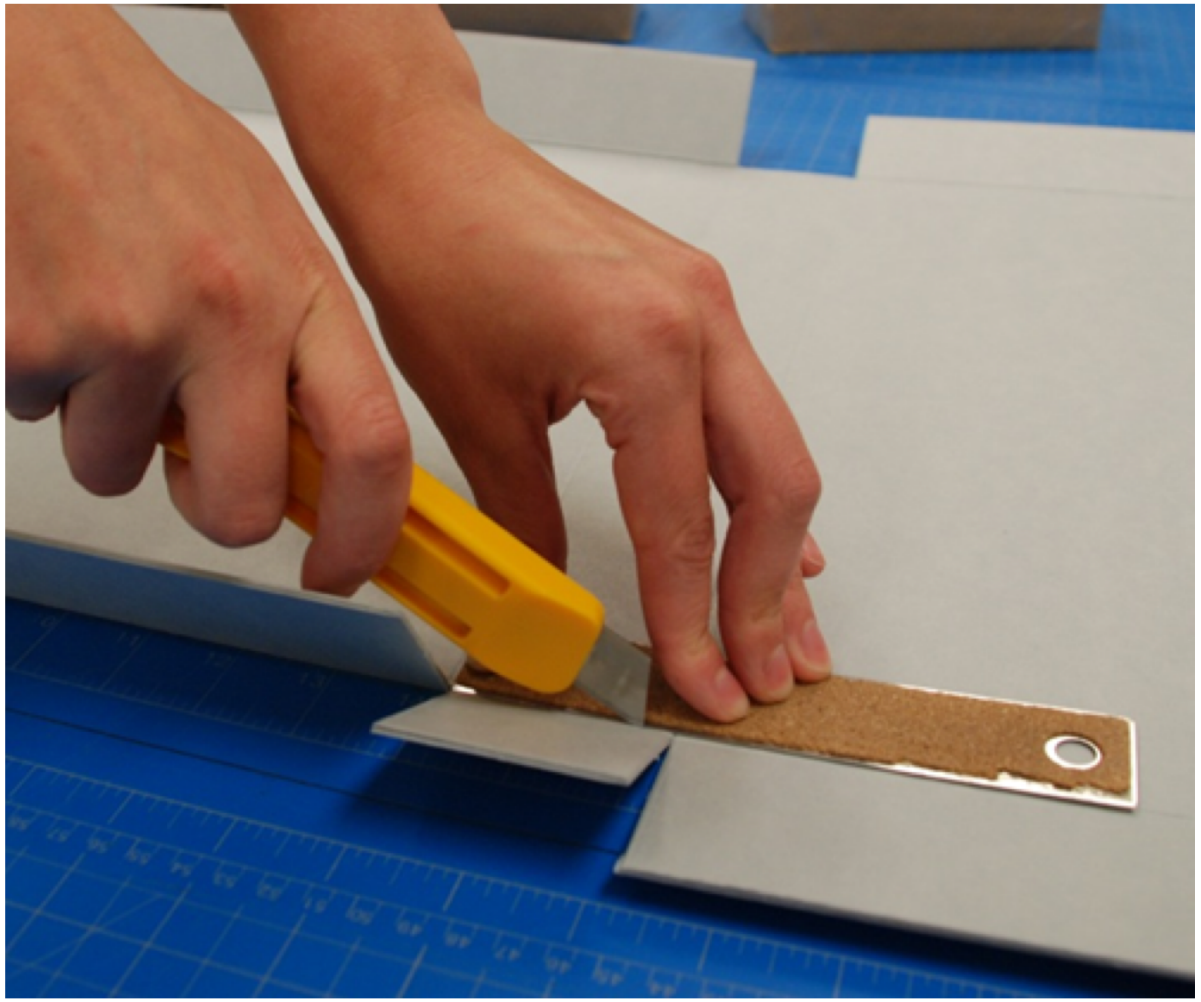


Cut away the small square on the spine edge of the box, cutting along the folds.





Make a fold along the line between the corner mark and the edge of the top flap. Cut this flap down to 1/4 inch less than one book thickness.



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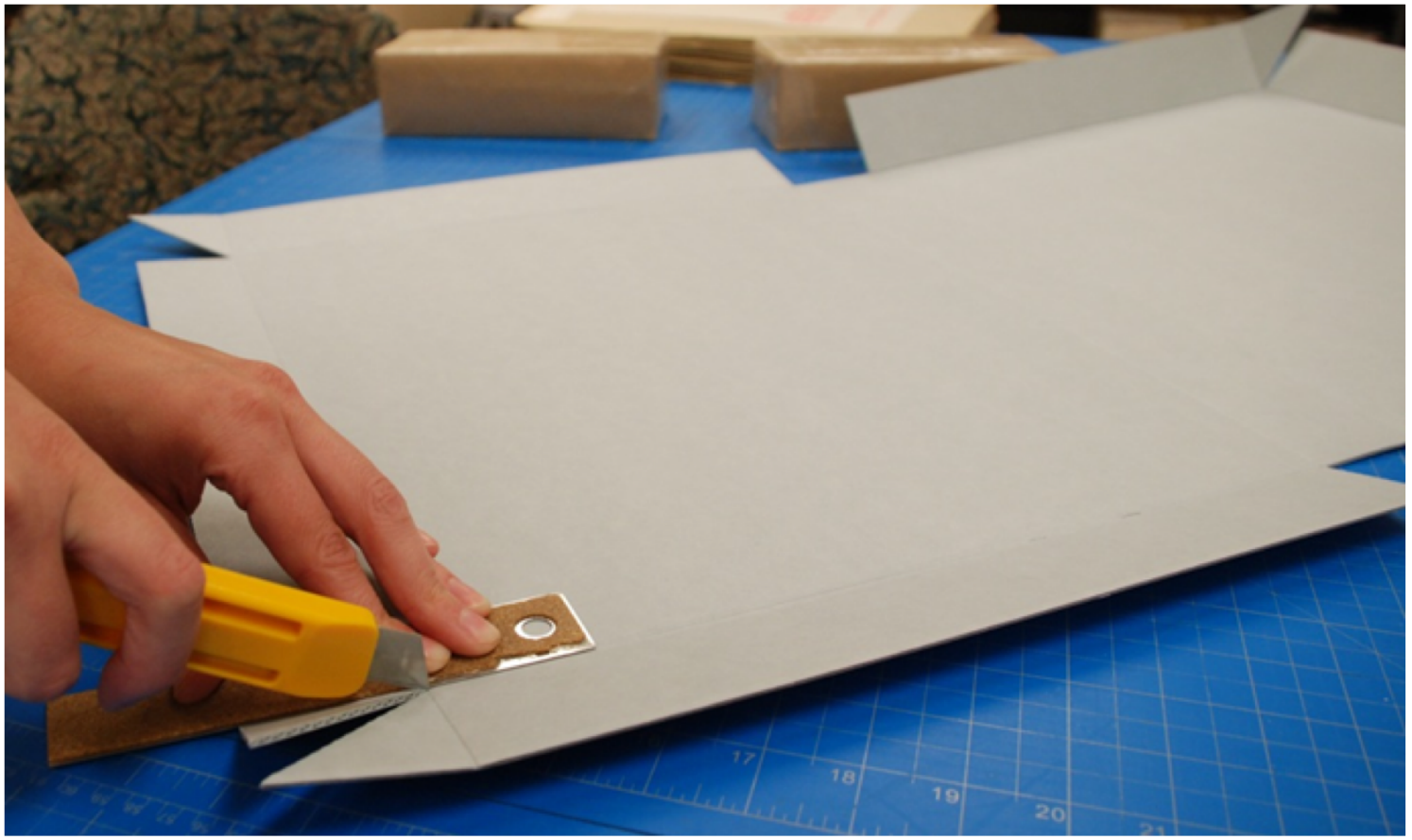

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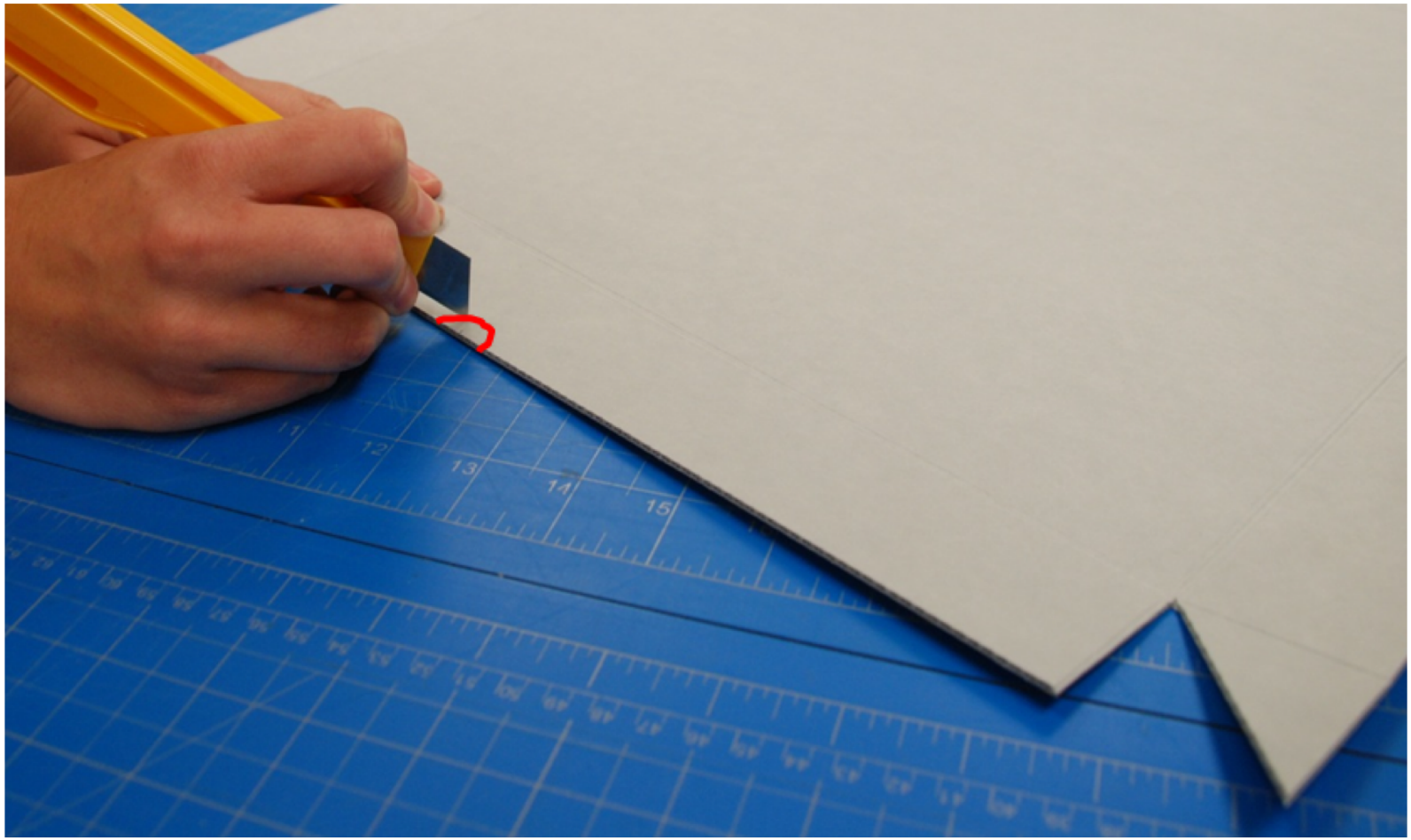
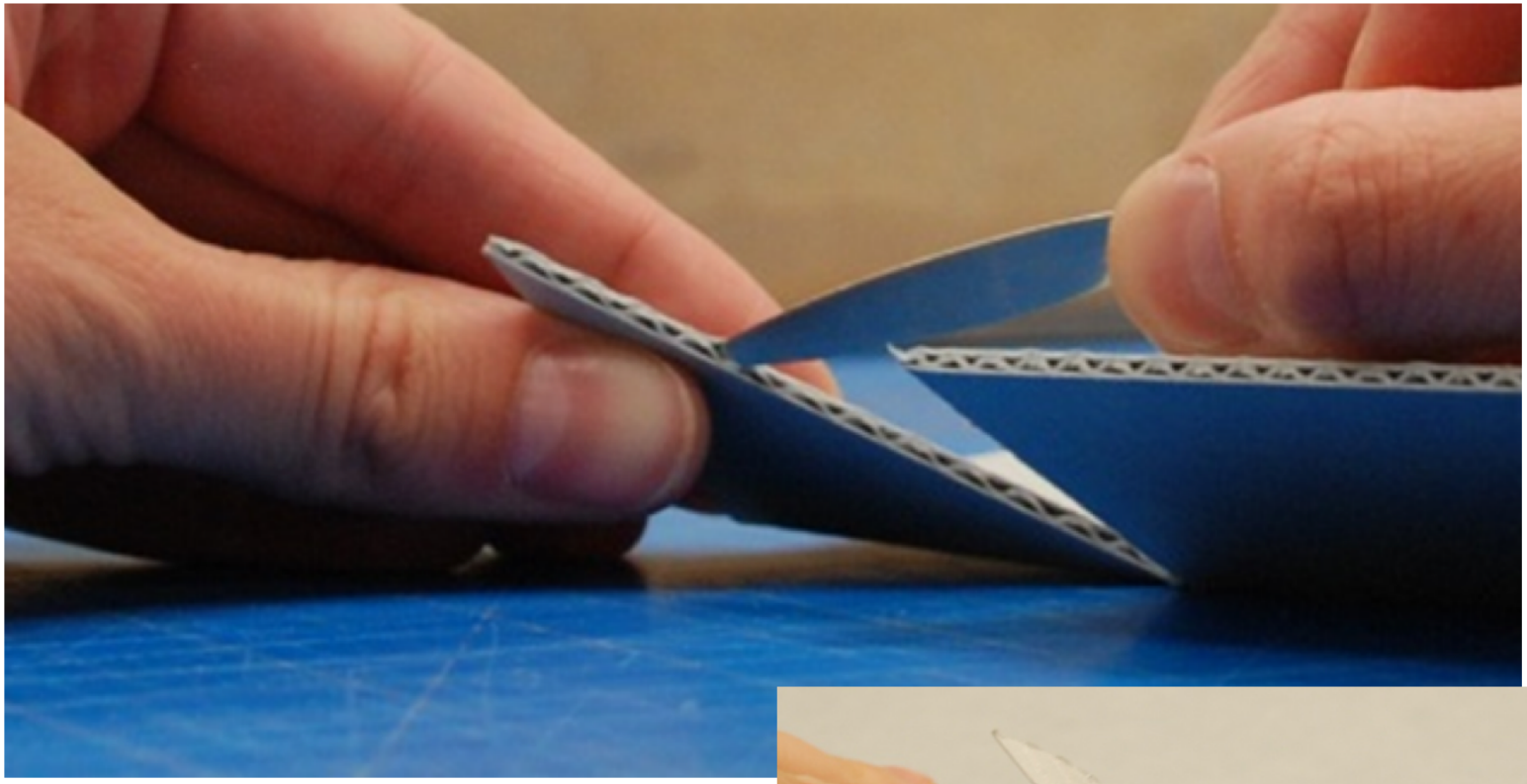
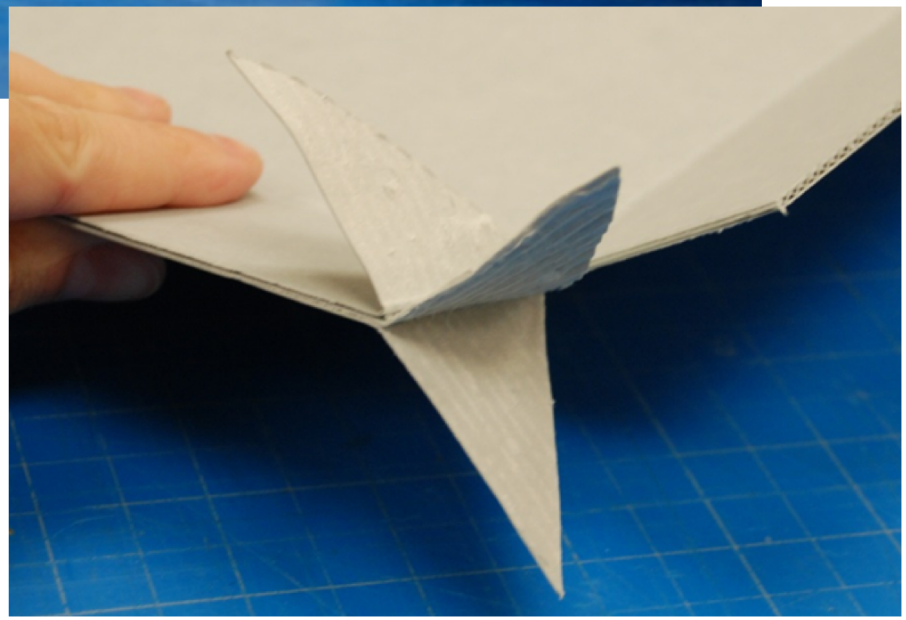
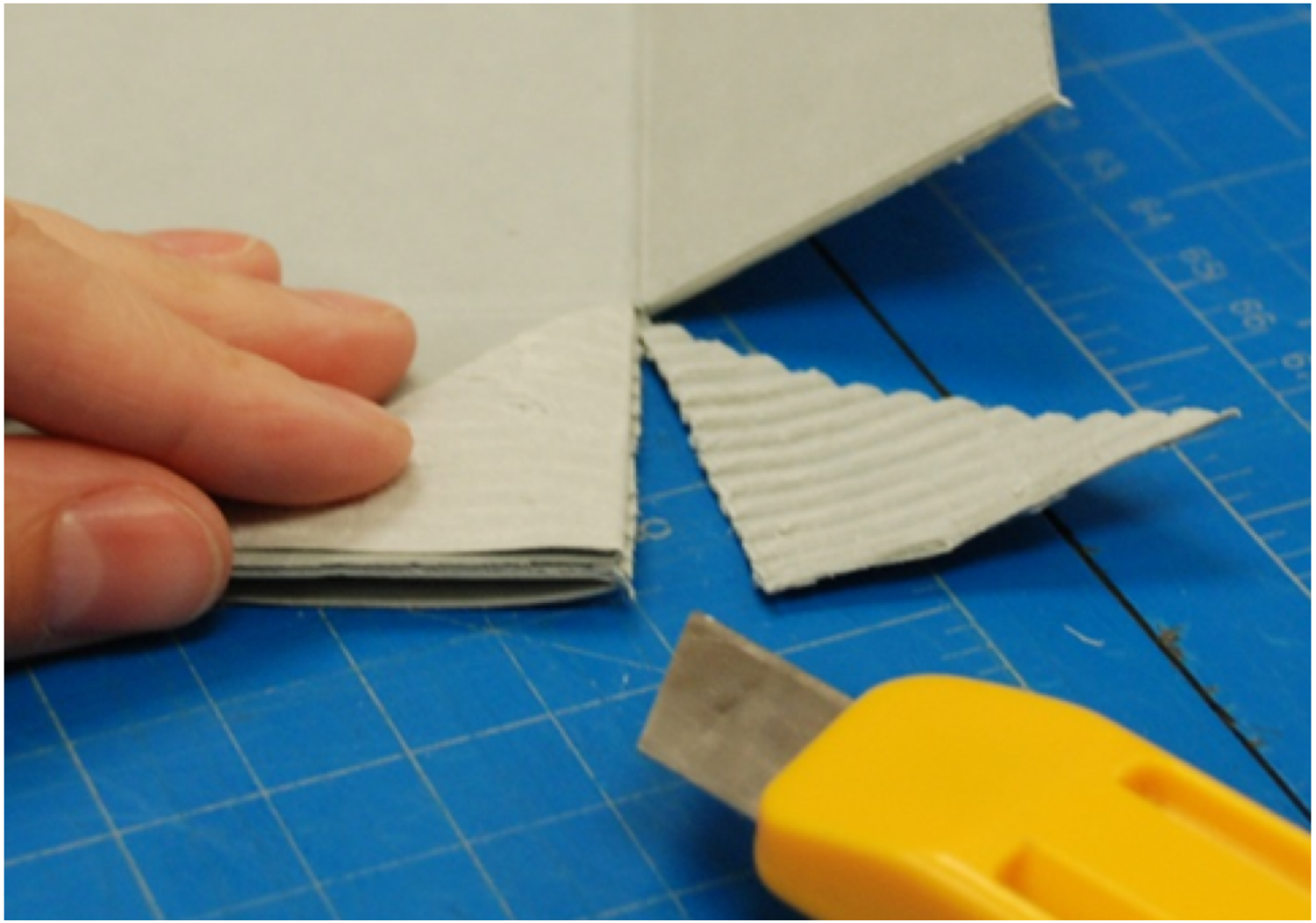


Cut a half circle out of the edge of the middle of the top front flap to create a thumb hole.

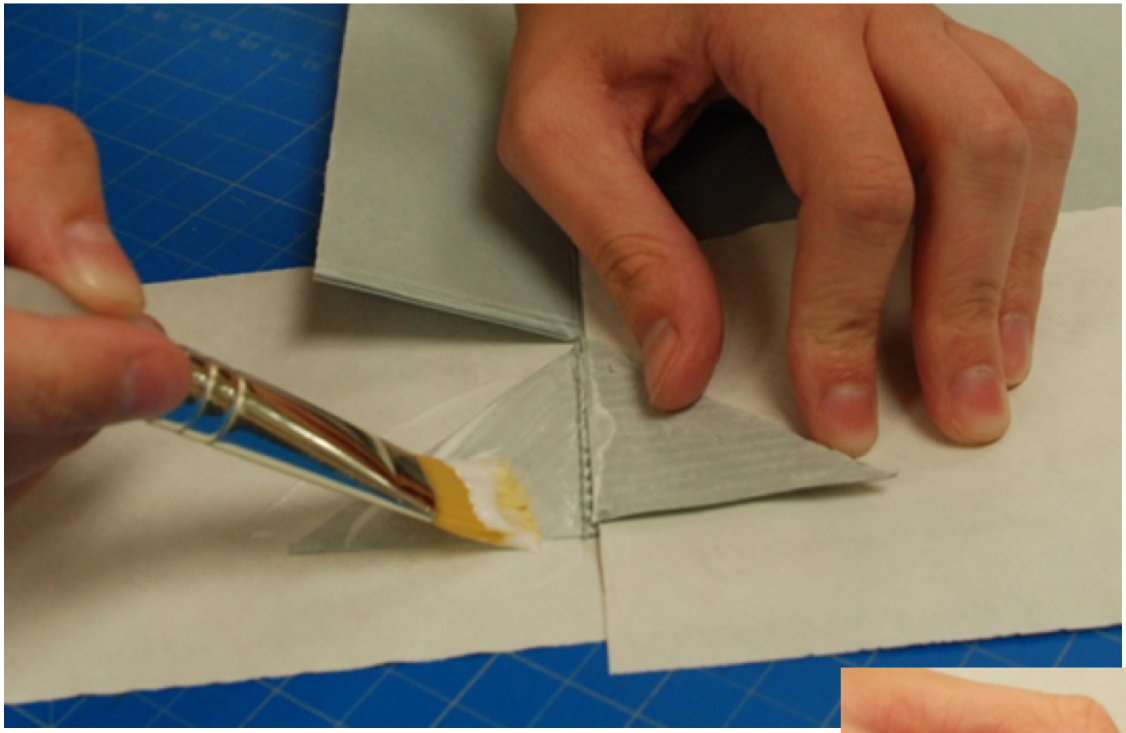


Delaminate the triangles.

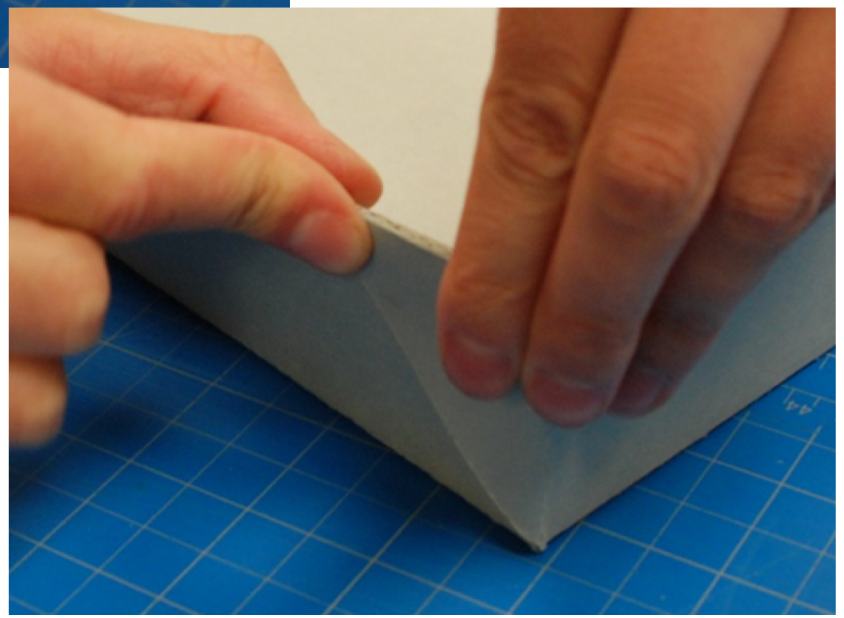


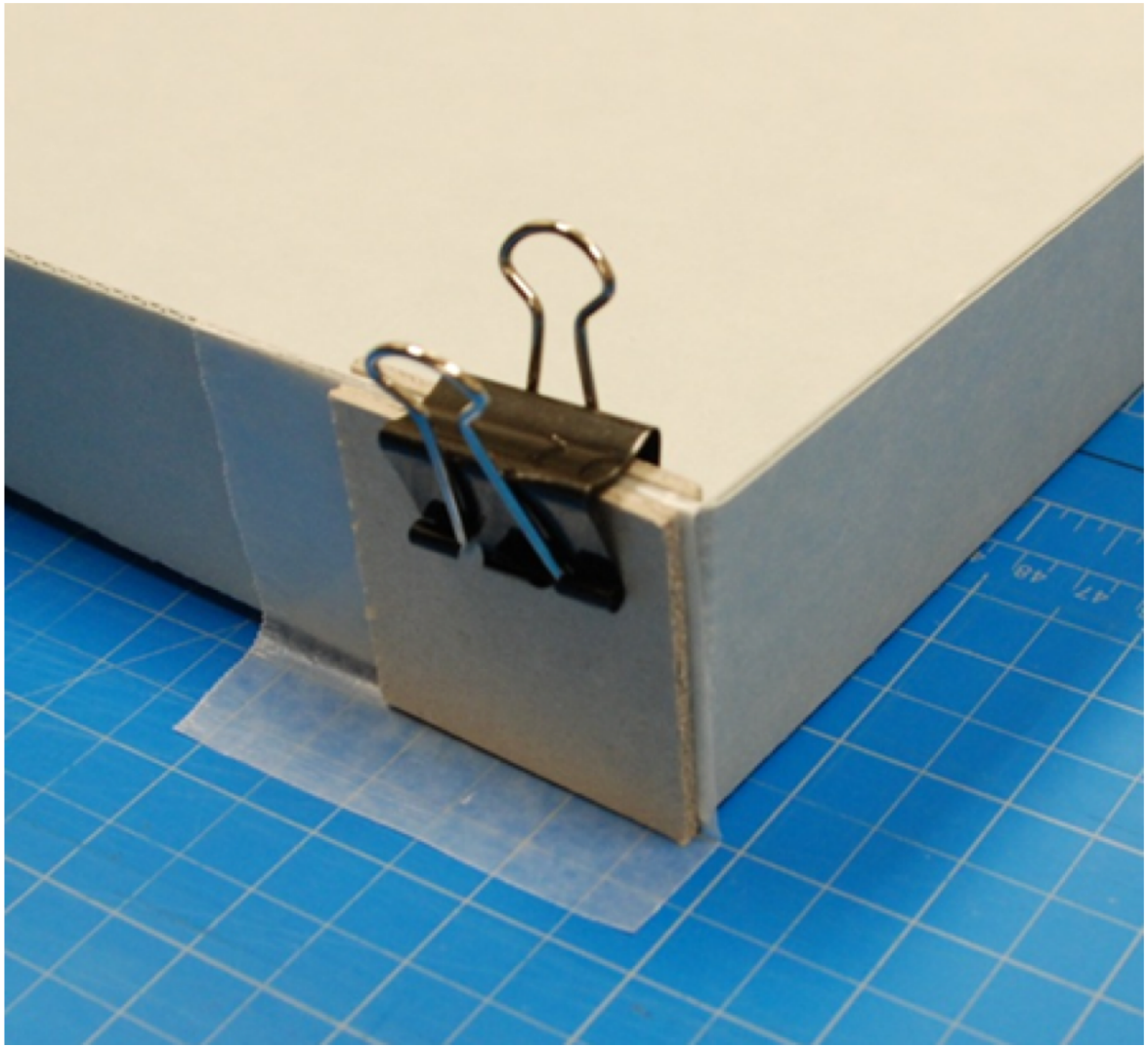


Cut out the corrugation



Glue the corners.





Let the corners dry.