

Collecting Insects: Standard 4-H Display Box



The standard 4-H Display Box is a storage unit for pinned insects, a unique display case and, if properly built and outfitted, a source of protection for collected specimens. The sturdy construction of the box protects the collection when you carry it from place to place.

The more airtight the box, the more insect scavenger-protected it can be. To protect the insect collection from scavengers, put mothballs (or crystals) or an insect kill strip in the box. Attach the strip or the moth balls in one corner of the box by using netting or insect pins. A small piece of kill strip gives good protection for several months.

The standard size for 4-H insect collection display boxes is 19 x 16½ x 3 inches (outside dimensions). This is the same size as the “Cornell Drawers” that are used to store insect collections at most universities and museums. Display boxes of this size are easy to handle and can be stored in standard insect cabinets. Boxes with dimensions other than 19 x 16½ x 3 inches are not acceptable for displaying 4-H insect collections in contests. However, boxes with nonstandard dimensions may be useful for storing and holding extra specimens, or for displaying specimens or collections in venues other than official 4-H contests.



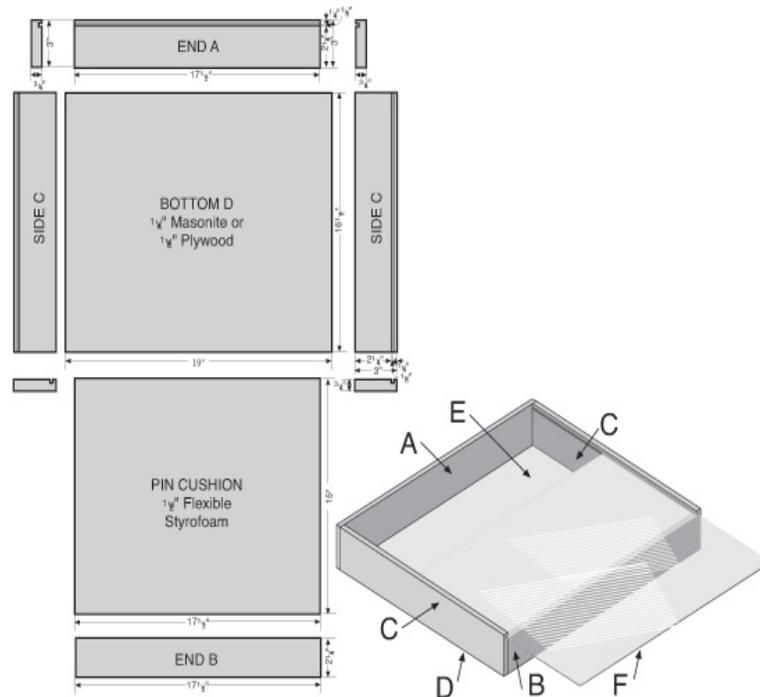
Holding Boxes

Almost any box with a secure top can serve as a temporary holding box for insect specimens. It is important to secure pinned specimens in a tight (airtight if possible) box soon after pinning. Scavengers can attack pinned specimens and destroy a collection in a matter of weeks.

Cigar boxes that are deeper than 2 inches make ideal holding boxes. In the bottom of the box, place a piece of flexible Styrofoam or another soft medium that will support a pin. (Don't forget to put a small piece of kill strip or a mothball in the box to protect against scavengers.) You can adapt other sturdy boxes in much the same way. For short-term storage, use plastic boxes for this purpose. Specimens tend to collect moisture and mold in these types of boxes, so you probably need to add silica packets to plastic containers when they are used for insect storage. You can build a holding box much like the standard display box, but you need to use a tight-fitting lid instead of glass.

You can purchase the Standard 4-H Display Box and holding boxes. For more information on where to purchase the standard boxes or holding boxes, contact the Entomology and Plant Pathology Department, Mississippi State, MS 39762.

Part	Quantity	Materials	Size (inches)
A – end	1	white pine	$\frac{3}{4}$ x 3 x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$
B – end	1	white pine	$\frac{3}{4}$ x 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$
C – sides	2	white pine	$\frac{3}{4}$ x 3 x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$
D – bottom	1	plywood	$\frac{1}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 19
E – pinning surface	1	foam	$\frac{1}{2}$ x 15 x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$
F – top	1	glass	$\frac{1}{8}$ x 16 x 18 $\frac{1}{8}$



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