

## AROUND THE MAKER WORKSHOP, BROUGHT TO YOU BY DREMEL

By John Edgar Park

### » Project #1: Secret Hollowed-Out Book Safe

I love hollowed out books. They make excellent hiding places or they can be used as unique and tricky double gift wrap. “Ah-ha, it’s a book wrapped up in a book!” I’ve built hollowed-out books before using the time-honored, frustrating, and very time-consuming hobby-knife method. This time, I decided to speed things up (by hours!) using my Dremel Multi-Max oscillating tool.

Since this made cutting so much quicker, I was also more willing to cut multiple chambers inside the book. Use this method to build a hiding place for your electronics, jewelry, and secret plans for the midnight raid on the cookie jar. It could also be used to make a unique project box for one of your electronics builds.

### Directions

**Step 1:** Open the front cover and first few pages of the book. Clamp the book in place. Brush glue on all of the outside edges, making sure to apply some to the contact point between the pages and the back cover (Figure A). Let the glue dry for 15–20 minutes.

**Step 2:** Place the items you want to store inside on top of the open book. Trace around them with the pencil (Figure B). Use the ruler to make the edges straight. Next, use the ruler to measure the maximum depth needed for your items to fit. Write down this measurement, you’ll use them later in determining the depth of your cuts.

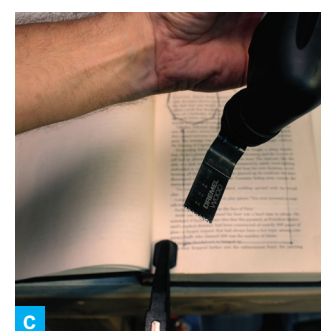
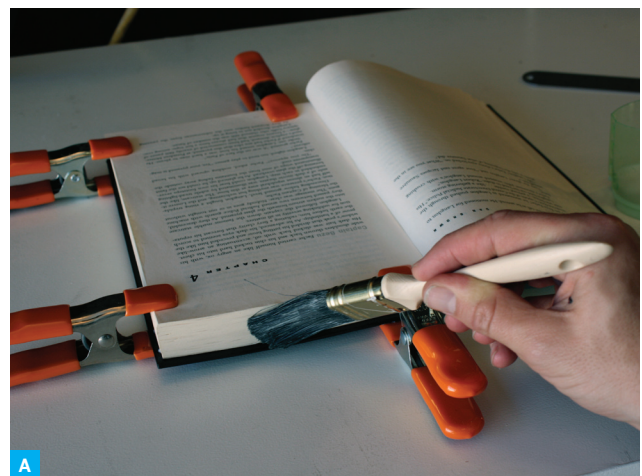
**Step 3:** Clamp the book to your workbench. Affix a narrow flush-cut blade onto your oscillating tool (Figure C). Blades made for soft wood will work well on paper. Note the marking on the blade’s depth gauge; you’ll be watching this as you cut to your measured depth.

**! WARNING:** Put on your safety goggles. (ALWAYS wear your goggles when operating the tool.)



### MATERIALS

- » **An old hardcover book**  
(I got mine at a thrift store for \$2)
- » **Secret items**
- » **Dremel Multi-Max oscillating tool** with flush-cut wood blade
- » **White glue**
- » **Small paintbrush**
- » **Pencil**
- » **Ruler**
- » **Clamps**
- » **Hobby knife**
- » **Safety goggles**



**Step 4:** Turn on your oscillating tool, bring it straight down on the pages and begin cutting along your pre-drawn lines (Figure D). You'll want to let the tool do the work — don't use too much pressure. Once you've made your plunge cut to the proper depth, lift the tool out. Repeat the process, moving along the lines. Take your time, working around the entire pattern, always appreciating how much longer this would take using a hobby knife!

**Step 5:** Remove the paper core you've cut out (Figure E). You may need to do some cleanup work to get any stubborn sections out, particularly on the lower pages. You may find it easier to use a hobby knife for this. See, we're still on speaking terms with the hobby knife.

**Step 6:** Vacuum up any paper dust that has accumulated. Using the paintbrush, seal the compartment interiors with glue (Figure F). Then lightly brush glue on the top page. This will allow the clean facing page to stick to it, which we will then cut out to reveal the compartments.

**Step 7:** The top page may be a bit grungy-looking at this point, so we'll cover it. Lightly brush glue on the top page. Then cover it with the uncut previous page. Later, we will cut through the new, clean top page to reveal the compartments below.

**Step 8:** Close and clamp the book, then allow to dry for at least an hour (Figure G). This will help force down pages that were warped during cutting. You may also want to add another coat of glue around the outside edges of the book for good measure.

**Step 9:** Un-clamp the book. Using the hobby knife, carefully cut the compartment covers out of the clean top page (Figure H).

**Step 10:** Once the glue has fully dried, you can hide your super secret stuff inside the custom compartments. Now, hide the book in plain sight on your bookshelf!



## About the Author

John Edgar Park is the host of *Make:* television and a CG Supervisor at DisneyToon Studios. Find him online at [jpixl.net](http://jpixl.net).