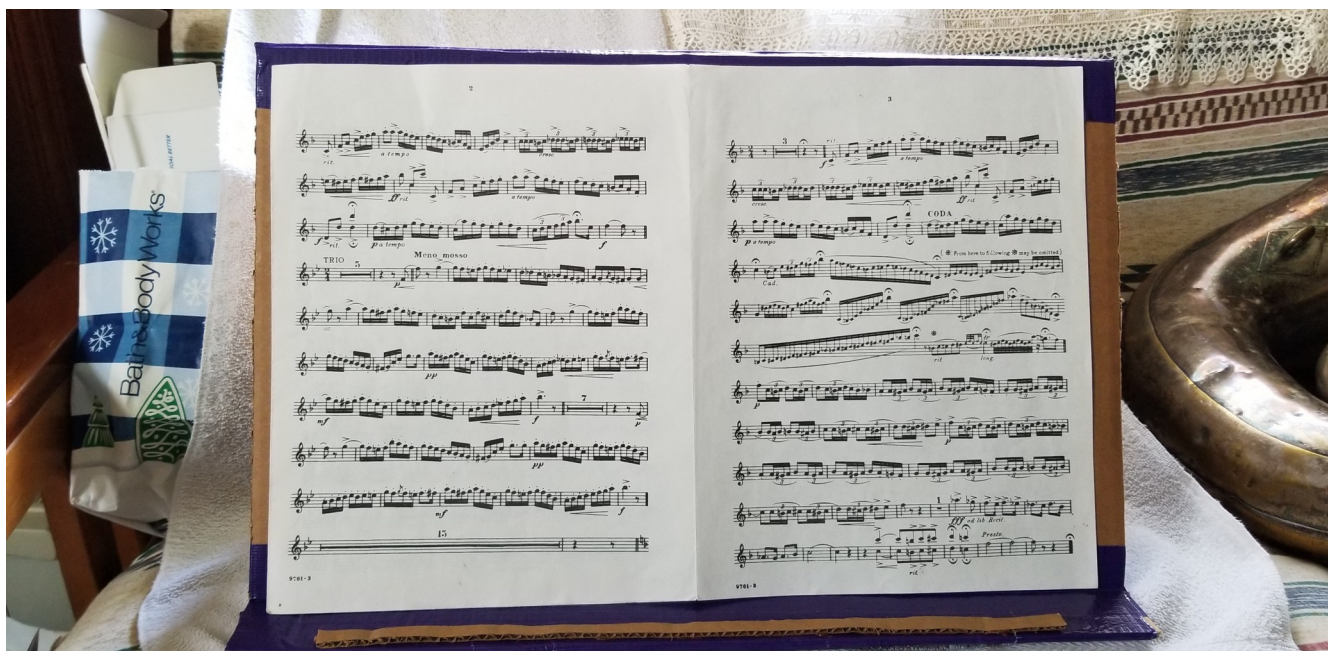


“Building a Cardboard, Desk Top, Music Stand”



April 2020

1. Introduction:

Thanks to a very understanding and loving spouse, I am able to practice music in pretty much any room of the house.

My generally two favorite places to practice are either in the Living Room, or at my computer desk, so that I can watch movies in either place while I practice.

Closed captioned, of course.

While most of what I do in practice is either from memory or includes specific exercises that I make up as I want, sometimes I do have a particular written piece of music that I want to work on.

On those occasions, I don't really want to drag out and assemble a music stand just for that, so I built a fold up music stand from cardboard that will sit on a desk top, or coffee table (*since I often practice while sitting on the floor*), and will hold the music at the height and angle I want.

I certainly realize that making this was not rocket science, and maybe even some of you have already done something nicer, but:

- It has been handy to me
- While I could have made this out of plywood, it didn't need to be that strong and the cardboard won't scratch whatever surface I put it on.
- It **literally** just takes a couple seconds to either put it together and take down.
- It is no thicker than 3 pieces of cardboard, so it takes up almost no storage room at all.
- It can easily slip between two books in a book case, if needed, for either storage or between something similar for transport.
- All the materials are probably already sitting at everyone's house, if your house is like mine, so mine was basically free.
- If something happens to this one, I can make another (*or fix this one*) in just a few seconds.
- I showed this project to someone who travels frequently (*WITH an instrument, of course!*) and practices on the road whenever possible. Interest was expressed that

this might work out well to easily pack for road trips. Or, to even assemble with parts found at the destination.

- I thought about spray painting mine just to make it look better, but I found I really didn't care that much.
- **It is all one piece construction**, so I don't have to plan on dropping parts while I'm putting parts of it together.
- And aside from this, there might be other uses for it:
 - Holding a recipe book open
 - Something useful and safe for small kids..or for clumsy adults like me.
 - A convenient place to put your cat's smart phone so that he can continue to binge watch “Hells Kitchen”.or “Tom and Jerry” cartoons.

So, I thought I would send this out in case others might think this project to be useful to them as well, but (*like me*) that they weren't sure how to do it without spending some money.

Or that they would be afraid of winding up with something so bulky and awkward so as to not be either useful or desirable.

2. Materials Needed

- a. Two pieces of cardboard of equal size for the front and back of the music stand .

All recommended sizes are mentioned below.

- b. One piece of cardboard to use as the lip of the music stand to hold the music.
- c. One piece to be used as the horizontal brace for the stand to set up on the table and to help hold the stand and the music at the desired angle.
- d. Three or more thin, short, pieces of cardboard.
 - One will be as long as the music stand is wide, and will be placed at the front edge of the lip to help hold the music onto the stand.
 - Two or more thin pieces will be cut about the same width as the horizontal piece. These will be placed perpendicularly on the horizontal piece as braces for the back of the music stand to help hold it open at the desired angle.

3. Tools Needed:

- a. **Box Knife**
- b. **Safe, flat surface on which the cardboard can be cut**
(Don't ask me how I know this is important.)
- c. **Duct Tape, or Packing Tape, whichever is more accessible to you.**
 - I think you will find a wide roll of any kind of tape to be preferred, as opposed to using a usual small sized roll of scotch tape.
- d. **Hot Glue Gun (Not required, but helpful)**
 - I had one, so I used it. But more tape could be used for this step as a quality substitute.
- e. **Anything that would help to make straight cuts.**
 - I used a framing square to help give me more polished lines and right angles. This wasn't necessary, but I had one.
 - I just didn't want the final project to look like total junk. I just wanted something that would help me keep my lines straight.
 - You can just cut the whole thing free hand, if you are confident, but I'm not that good,

4. Cut Cardboard as Needed:

- a. **Lay out and cut the front and back pieces of cardboard for the stand.**
 - I would recommend that the front and back parts be equally sized.
 - I made mine 18" wide and 11" tall. This would accommodate 2 pages of concert music.
 - I thought about just making it just big enough for march music in either portrait or landscape form, but I didn't plan to pack it up and travel with it, so the extra size in order to make it large enough to hold 2 pages in portrait

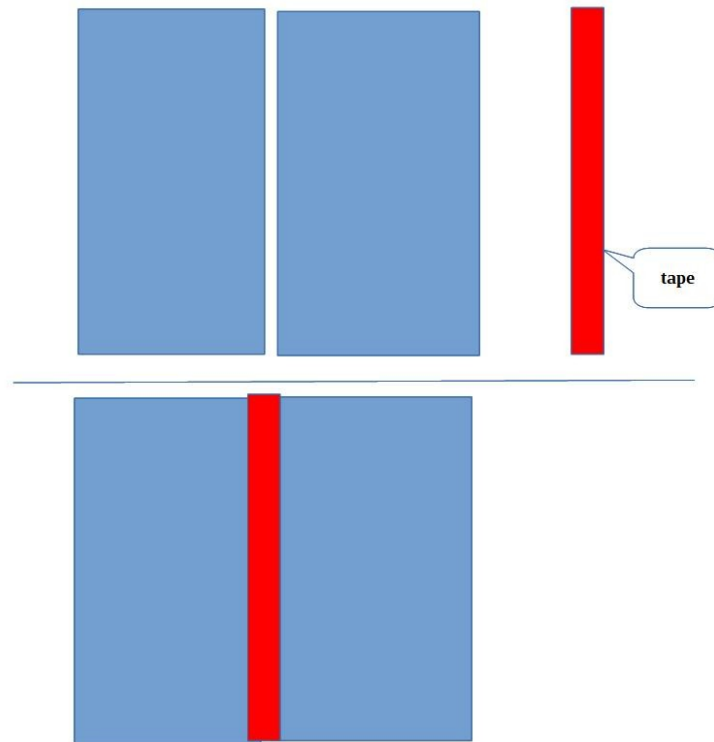
format wasn't a problem for me. And, if I am working on a concert piece with multiple pages, I like to see the next page coming up, anyhow.

- Thanks to current Ohio travel restrictions, and the magic of on-line shopping with Amazon and other vendors, I had boxes where the cardboard I needed this size was all in one piece and flat.
 - I didn't want to start the project with any cardboard that already had folds already in it,. I wanted the music to sit as flat as possible.
- b. Lay out and cut the cardboard to be used for the lip of the stand, which is where the music will sit.**
 - This will be as long as the music stand is wide.
 - The width of the cardboard lip to hold the music is fairly arbitrary, but I made mine 1 ¾ inch wide. You can replicate the width of an existing stand that you have for comparison, if you want.
- c. Lay out and cut several smaller pieces of cardboard (*this can be done at the conclusion of the project so that you can get a better idea how long and wide you want to make this*):**
 - One thin piece will be placed on the front edge of the lip to help hold the music onto the stand. This will be as long as the music stand is wide.
 - Two or more small pieces to be placed perpendicularly on the horizontal piece in order to hold the stand together at the desired angle when it is open.
- d. Lay out and cut the horizontal piece that will help hold the stand together once it is assembled.**
 - Again, this is an arbitrary measurement, but I made mine 11” by 6”. However, while it ought to be long enough to give you some options in how you want the stand to sit when open, it still needs to be short enough to fold up in between the front and back sections. Diagrams are placed later in this document.
 - The 11’ long measurement gave me the ability to set different stops in order to determine whatever angle I wanted the stand to unfold at in order for me to best see the music.

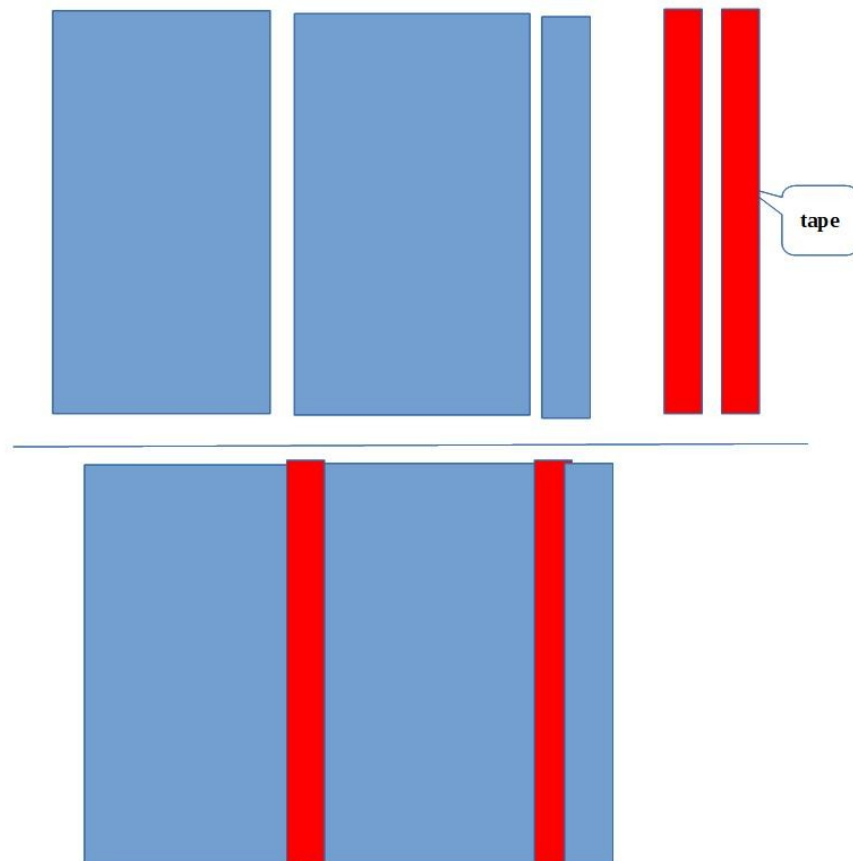
5. Construction Method

- a. Lay out the two pieces for the front and back of the music stand lengthwise.
 - b. Leave a little gap between them so that when the pieces are folded as the stand is assembled, they will hold their folded shape easier. This gap only needs to be @ $\frac{1}{4}$ inch.
 - c. Run tape on both the front and the back side of both pieces, connecting them.
- (Image 1)**

(Image 1)



- d. Lay out the cardboard piece to be used for the lip next to the long side of the music stand you have determined to be the front.
- Tape this to the front piece, also leaving a little gap between the lip and the front so that it will fold well. This gap only needs to be @ ¼ inch.
 - Run tape on both the front and the back side of both pieces
- (Image 2)**

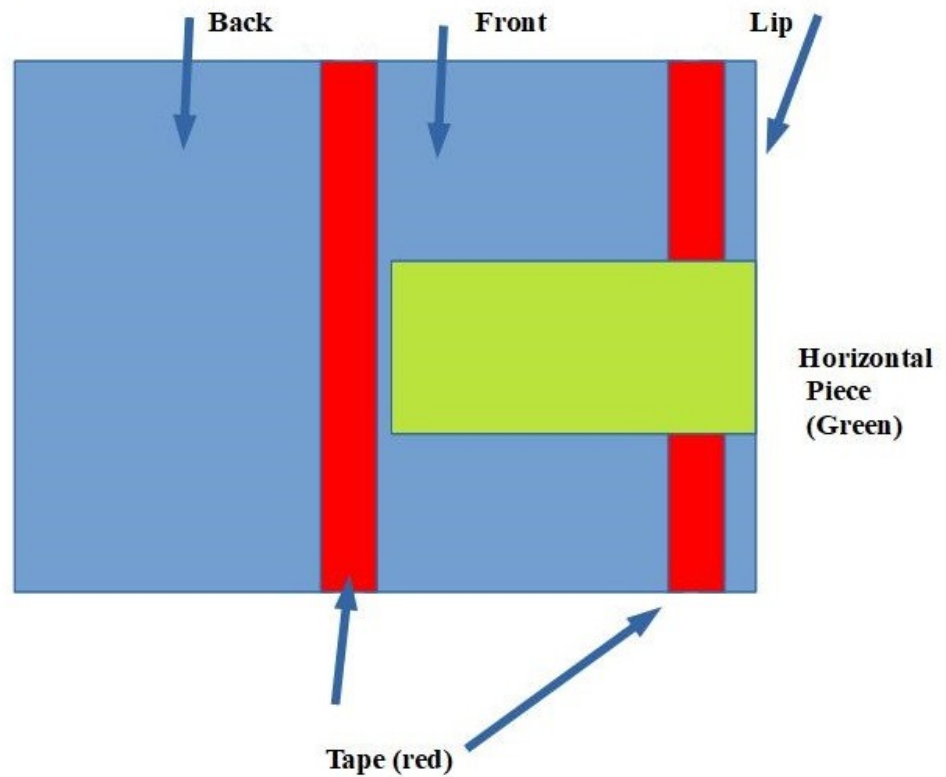


- e. Center the horizontal piece to the lip, and tape the horizontal piece to the **underside** of the lip so that when the stand is folded up, the horizontal piece will fold up in-between the front and the back pieces.

The length of the horizontal piece will be used to sit the music stand on the table, and the wide side will be taped to the underneath side of the lip. The pic below is looking at the underneath side of the stand.

(Image 3)

Adding Horizontal Piece



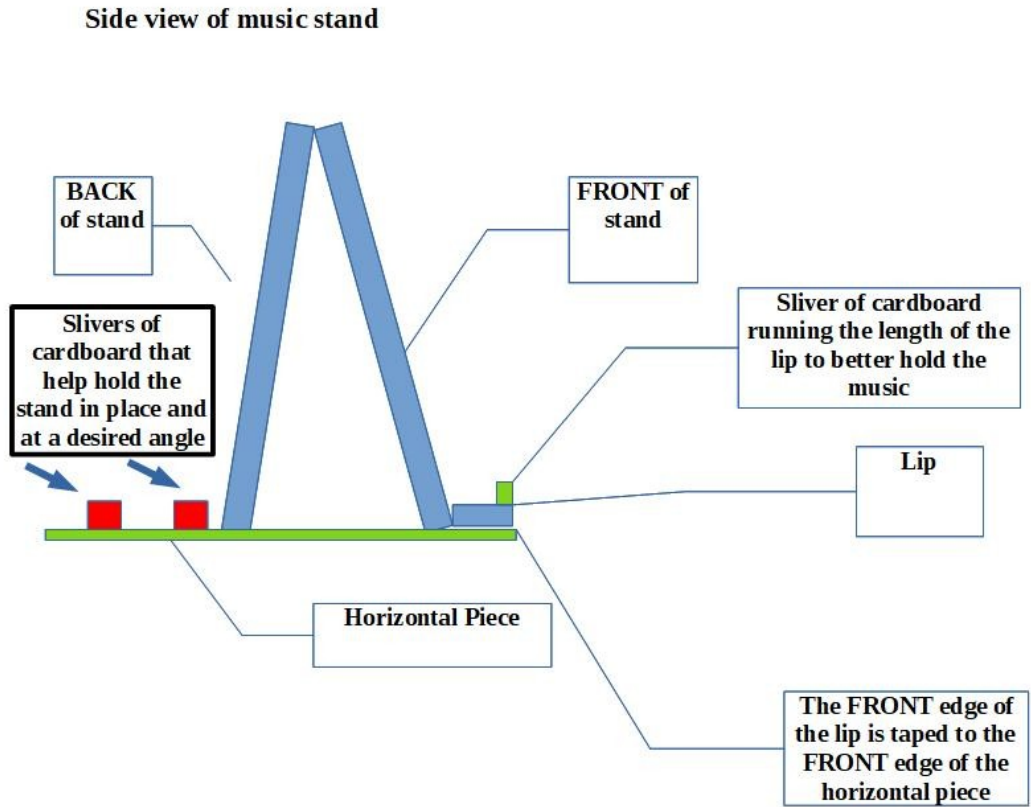
- f. Glue or tape the sliver of cardboard to the front edge of the lip.

- This will help hold music on.
- I also added a piece of duct tape across the entire lip to maybe give it more friction to the music paper, but this probably isn't needed.

(Image 4)

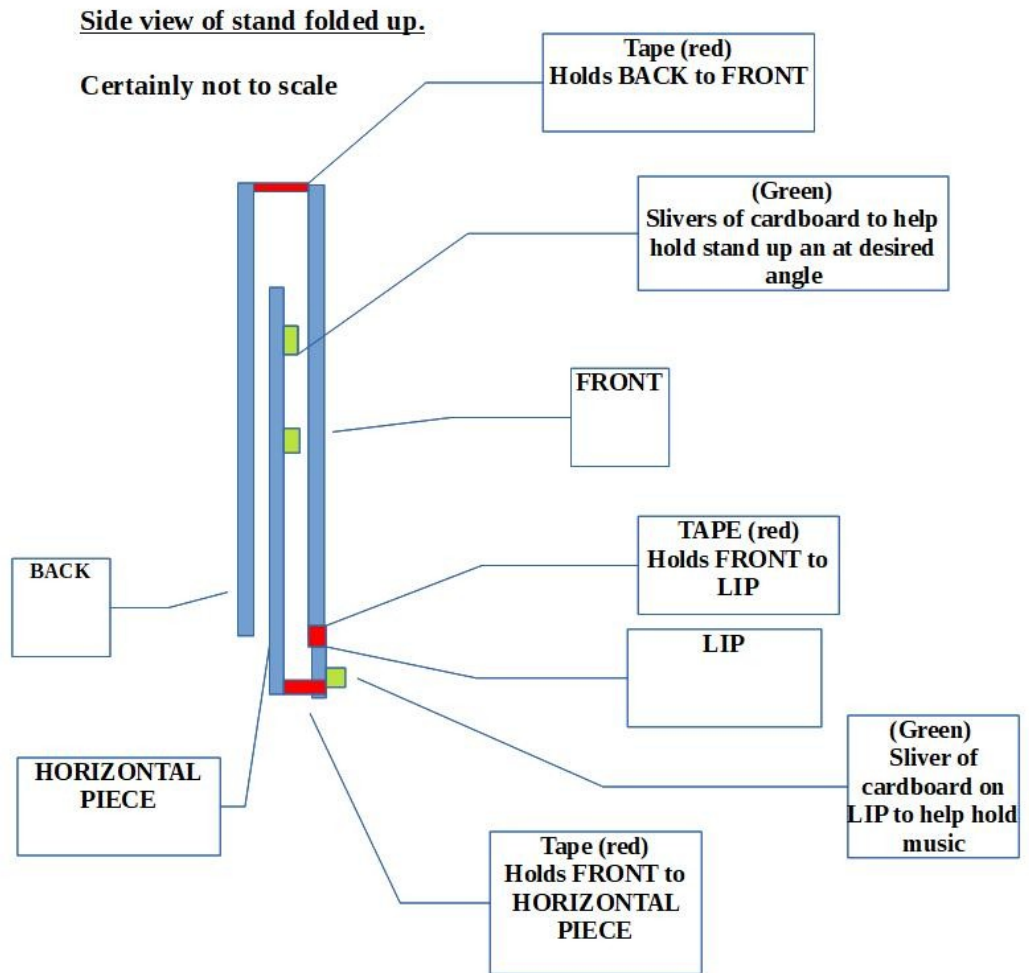
- g.** Glue or tape the slivers of cardboard to the TOP of the horizontal piece so as to help hold the stand together and allow you to adjust the angle as desired.

(Also Image 4)



- h. Here is the side view of the music stand folded up (Image 5)**

(Image 5)



Pictures of the completed Music Stand can be found on the web page

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