

# Hybrid Camp Kitchen/ Camporee Cadre Box



There are many plans out there for construction of camp kitchens or cadre boxes. They are useful on any of your club campouts and especially useful for regional or international camporees. Most of these plans use plywood for the primary construction material — which works well but it has the downside of being heavy and expensive and takes a good number of man-hours to build. Take a look at this option for a lighter weight, less expensive, and easier build cadre box.

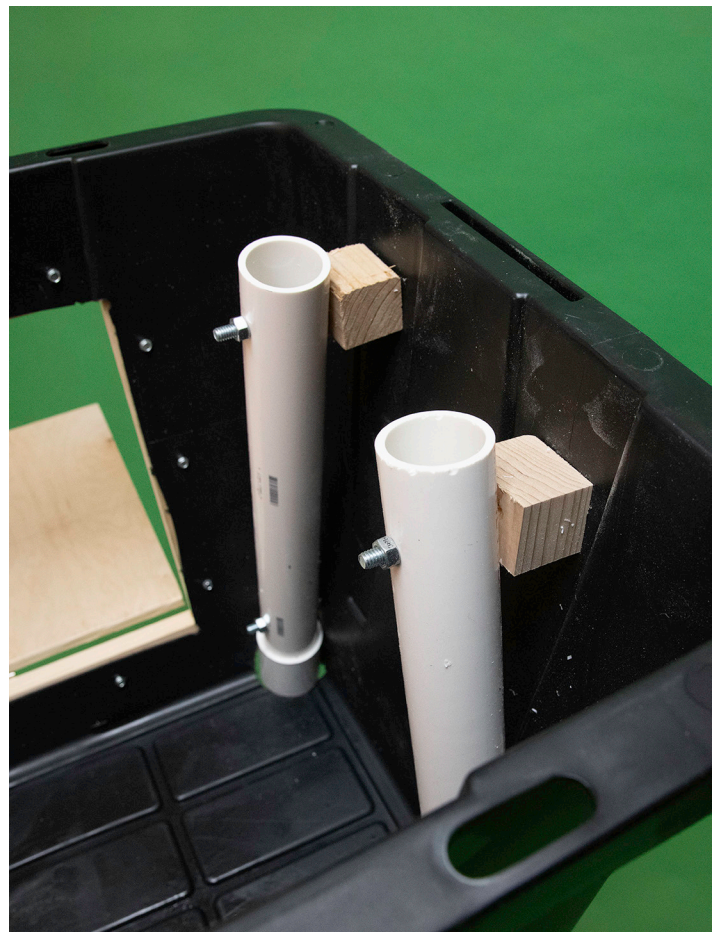
It starts with a 55 gallon (208 L) Tough Storage Tote from Home Depot so the foundation for your box is already complete. The project involves creating a side access door and adding legs for it to stand on. You can make the project even simpler by purchasing a lightweight camping table/stand to set your cadre box on but I will include the leg construction for those wanting to make a complete stand-alone cadre box. You should be able to buy all the materials including the Tough Tote, PVC legs and all

fasteners and latches for under \$100.00 (U.S. dollars).

## Step One

### Create a frame for the side access door.

I used some clear 1 x 3 pine board. The finished frame measured 36" w (91.5cm) by 17" h (43.2cm) which means the side door opening was 31" (78.7) x 12" (30.5). I used a miter saw to cut the corners of the frame and used some "L" brackets to reinforce the corners on the back side of the frame. Once the frame was made I used the inside of the frame to mark the borders of the opening I needed to cut on the tote. A jigsaw made quick work of cutting the opening. I fastened the frame to the tote by using about 15 -  $\frac{5}{8}$ " (1.6) long self drilling screws — drilling from the inside into the frame. The door itself I made from a piece of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " (1 cm) birch plywood 31" (78.7) x 12" (30.5) I used two zinc coated hinges to fasten the door to the bottom of the frame and used a couple eye screws / plastic coated cable / and cable clamps to create a mechanism that will hold the door flat when opened. I also used a slide latch to hold the door closed.





## Step Two

### The Leg Mechanism (see illustration on previous page)

You need to cut four holes in the bottom corners of the tote. These holes need to accommodate the diameter of the PVC couplings so I used a 2¼ (5.7) diameter hole saw for these holes.

I used 1½ (3.8) PVC pipe and four straight couplings. The legs were attached to the inside of the tote using four 3" (7.6) bolts on the bottom) and four 4½" (11.5) bolts (on the top where they go through the spacers). The bolts were ⅝ (.8) dia. I used 8 fender washers and 8 nuts. Since the sides of the tote slant inward from top to bottom I made four spacer cubes out of some scrap 2 x 4. The cubes were 1½" (3.8) all dimensions. The spacers and 4½ inch bolts were used when fastening the top of a short piece of PVC to the inside of the tote. the PVC pipe plus with the coupling attached should be about 17" (43.2) long. The couplings should just slightly protrude out of the holes in the bottom corners of the tote. Because you want a little extra stability the legs are placed on a slant. The top of my "inside the tote" PVC pipes were placed inward about 5½ " (14) from the outer edge of the

top rim of the tote. I put the pipe/coupling combination in place and then drilled a hole through the pipe, spacer, and tote sidewall. The cap of the bolt and the fender washer were placed on the outside of the tote and a nut against the PVC pipe on the inside. You may want to use a lock washer on the inside as well to hold the nut in place. Then drill a hole through the pipe and tote sidewall near the base of the tote. Repeat the inside leg assembly for the other three legs.

### Outside Legs

I'm a tall guy and hate bending over to work on food prep and accessing my cooking gear so I made my outside PVC legs about 38" (96.5) long. You will probably want something shorter — especially if you want the boys to do kitchen duty.

## Step 3

### Customizing

Another great aspect of this cadre box/camp kitchen is that you can easily customize it to fit your needs and change it up depending on your use. I used Sterilite storage units to create the drawers on the inside and also purchased some corrugated plastic sheeting to create some shelves. It's up to you as to what works best.

