

Tyro Tool of the Month - The Plano Stow 'N Go Pro Rack 3600 Organizer

Wood Carvers, whether they use wood burners, rotary tools, palm or mallet chisels, and/or paints, have a variety of containers to store and transport their tools. It almost seems like each carver has his own unique tool box and system. This month's tyro tool is an organizer tool box which can be customized to easily double the number of items that may be stored and organized.

The Stow 'N Go Pro Rack 3600 Series Organizer Tool box is made by Plano Molding Company (the same folks that make 80% of the fishing tackle boxes in use). The Model 1363-30 includes:

- Bulk Top Storage with a tension lock latch (11.5" X 7" X 4.25" minimum internal space)
- two Prolatch™ deep size boxes Model 2-3630-01; each is 11" X 7.25" X 2.75"
- one Prolatch™ standard medium size box Model 2-3650-02; 11" X 7.25" X 1.75"
- These 3 Prolatch™ boxes have hinged tops, front latches, and come with removable dividers to create adjustable size compartments. The boxes are clear to allow easy identification of contents and quick access to stored tools and accessories.
- Dimensions: 13.375" L X 10" W X 14" H



Model 1363 Stow 'N Go Organizer



Note the internal shelf guides.

The three boxes are held in three slots in the front of the organizer toolbox by a front grate with top latches and bottom hinges. While the clear boxes that come with the 1363 organizer toolbox are nice, I recommend replacing at least the deep ones with different Plano boxes that better fit a wood carver's needs. You may customize your tool box to fit your tools using a variety of organizers made for the 3600 series. If the organizer label says "3600 Series" then it should fit this toolbox.

Here is what I did to double the amount of tools and accessories the 1363 tool box may hold. I replaced one deep box (2.75" high) with two Prolatch™ shallow size boxes Model 2-3601 StowAway Utility Box; 11" X 7.25" X 1.13". Two of these StowAway shallow boxes have a combined height of 2.26. Also, each deep box fits into a space defined by internal shelf guides (see photo above). I have found that the height between these guides permits stacking a shallow box 1.13" with a standard medium organizer 1.75 (a combined height of 2.88). The math inclined may say "wait a minute, 2.88 is greater than 2.75, do we need to carve a chip off the ole box?" Nae, not even a wee bit because the internal dimensions between the guides of this toolbox will permit both a medium and a shallow box to fit in a single deep box slot. It is a tighter fit, but not too tight. I tried out a similar modification on Plano's larger 3700 Series box, but the 3700 component tolerances do not allow two boxes to fit.



BEFORE



AFTER



Shallow Box 3601

Why is this such a big deal? Well, the design of the shallow StowAway box has an interior space divided into 4 fixed lengthwise channels. Each of these channels has removable dividers that can create up to 21 compartments. Each of the top three channels has an internal width of at least 1.625" and an internal height of about 1 inch. Each channel may be divided to produce various lengths e.g. 1 5/8", 3 1/4", 4 7/8", 6 1/4", 7 7/8", 9 3/4". These adjustable compartments are perfect to hold slim items without any wasted space. Items that fit these shallow compartments include:

- pencils
- erasers
- razor blade
- 6" flexible ruler
- wood splints
- popsicle sticks
- spare corks
- dental picks
- sanding sticks
- emery boards
- files
- carving knives
- thumb guard
- bird eyes
- small paint tubes
- paint brushes
- cotton swabs
- epoxy sticks
- straight pins
- microplane
- bird feet
- woodburner tips
- Colwood handle
- tip puller
- honing paper
- brass brush
- toothbrush
- brass tubes

This fortuitous quirk of the 3600 Series tool boxes means almost twice as many tools may be organized in the same space. One shallow box can hold several sanding sticks of multiple grits or 12 paint tubes or 4 or more knives or many pyrography nibs along with many other small items.

So here is what I did. The 3650 medium box that comes in the top slot of the tool box has 3 channels that run the width of the box and to their right a single large compartment. This is a convenient box which may be used to store e.g. 3 palm chisels and a carving glove, protractor, tack cloth. However, I opted to replace it with a same sized box having a different configuration. The model 2-3600-01 organizer has 6 vertical channels, each over 6 1/4" long. Each channel is ideal for holding a palm gouge or chisel. In the next slot, I replaced the deep box with two stacked Model 3601 shallow boxes: the first having 4 sanding sticks, sandpaper, flexible model sander, emery boards, and microplane, and the second having 3 carving knives, an x-acto knife, a pocket knife, razor blade, thumb and finger guards, and spare corks. The bottom deep box was replaced with: (a) another 3601 shallow box which holds my pencils, 2 erasers, straight pins, epoxy sticks, dental picks, wooden popsicle sticks and coffee stirrers, pencil sharpener, 6" metal ruler with depth gauge, 6" flexible plastic ruler, and bird eyes; and (b) a Model 3607-10 single compartment box which holds my carving gloves, protractor, compass, Vernier caliper, divider, and a tack cloth. I suggest that you check the fit of the tool box that

area.

Oh, one more thing, the identical tool box is sold under the Creative Options brand in a reddish (pink?) color with a clear see-through front grille at Hobby Lobby for \$59.99, so the \$21.99 FleetFarm price is a great deal.