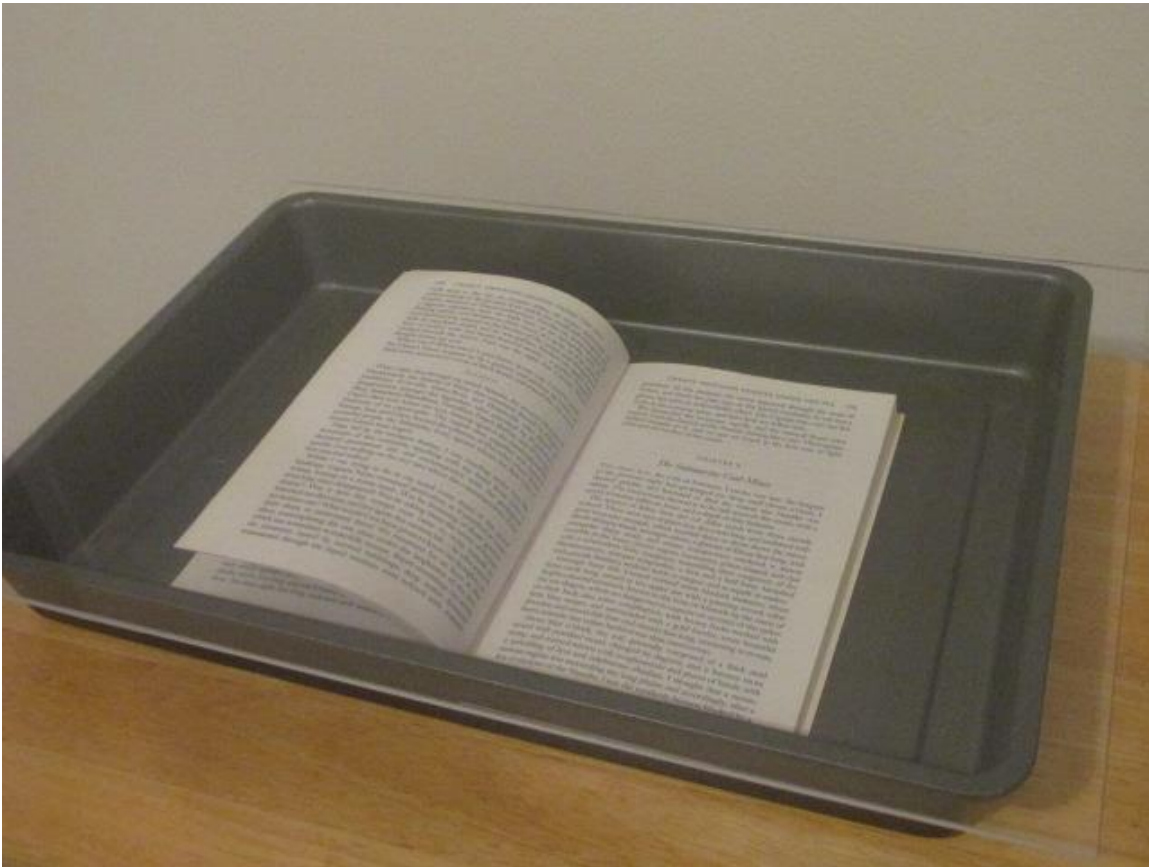


## A very simple reading box



**This is a cheap and simple reading box to use when the fumes from books are a problem.**

*Keywords: reading box, print fumes, ink fumes, book fumes, chemical sensitivity, mold sensitivity, chemical intolerance, disability, adaptive technology*

People who have chemical sensitivities or mold sensitivities can be sickened by the fumes from books and magazines. Using electronic book readers and other technology is often a solution, but sometimes there is a need to read from paper.

People have used reading boxes for decades. There used to be a small cottage industry manufacturing them for sale, but electronics killed that business.

Here we show a very simple reading box you can quickly put together for very little cost.

### **How to use this reading box**

To use it you simply lift up the lid and put in an open book. You may need to break the spine of the book so it will stay flat. Then put the lid back over the book. The lid should hold the pages open.

To flip a page, lift the lid, move the page, and put the lid down again.

The problem with this simple reading box is that you'll get a whiff of fumes every time you lift the lid. This may especially be a problem in a small room without ventilation.

Using this reading box still reduces the fumes a lot, and it is sufficient for some people.

You can improve on it by sitting outdoors, perhaps with an electric fan to move air across the box.

If it is still not safe enough, you'll need one of the more fancy boxes. This website has articles about them too; see the link at the bottom of this article.

### **Putting together the reading box**

There are only two parts to this reading box: the tray and the lid.

The tray can be bought in a grocery store. Some sort of cooking pan should work, such as for roasting a turkey or baking lasagna. These are usually made of steel or aluminum. Some have a non-stick (Teflon) coating, which you may want to avoid.

Choose a size that can hold the kind of book you want, but don't make it so big it becomes impractical.

The sides should be high enough so there is room for the book, but not so high the pages won't touch the lid (the lid holds the pages down).

The one in the picture is 15 1/2 x 11 inches, and 2 inches high (40 x 28 x 5 cm). In the store it was labeled for baking lasagna.

The lid is simply a piece of glass or plastic that is cut to size. The lid stays in place by its own weight; there is no need for any hinges or clasps.

You can get glass from a frame store or from someone who installs and repairs windows. Just bring the tray and ask them to cut a piece that fits, with a little

overhang. To protect your fingers, either get them to mount the glass in a frame, or wrap the edges with aluminum tape.

You may also be able to find a picture frame of a suitable size, either new or in a second-hand store. Just throw away the back side.

There are multiple kinds of plastic to choose from, especially PVC, acrylic (Plexiglass/Perspex) and polycarbonate.

The easiest is to buy a wide plastic storage box in a store, then either use the lid as is or cut a piece from the box. You'll need some sturdy shears or a small saw to cut it.

Storage boxes are usually made of PVC, which some people react to.

Safer materials are acrylic (Plexiglass/Perspex) or polycarbonate. You can order them in sheets, along with the scoring tool you'll need to cut them (a saw will splinter the edges). The box in the picture had a lid cut from a piece of Plexiglass (Perspex) that is 1/8 inch (3 millimeters) thick.

### **More information**

More articles about reading boxes on [www.eiwellspring.org/copingwithEI.html](http://www.eiwellspring.org/copingwithEI.html).