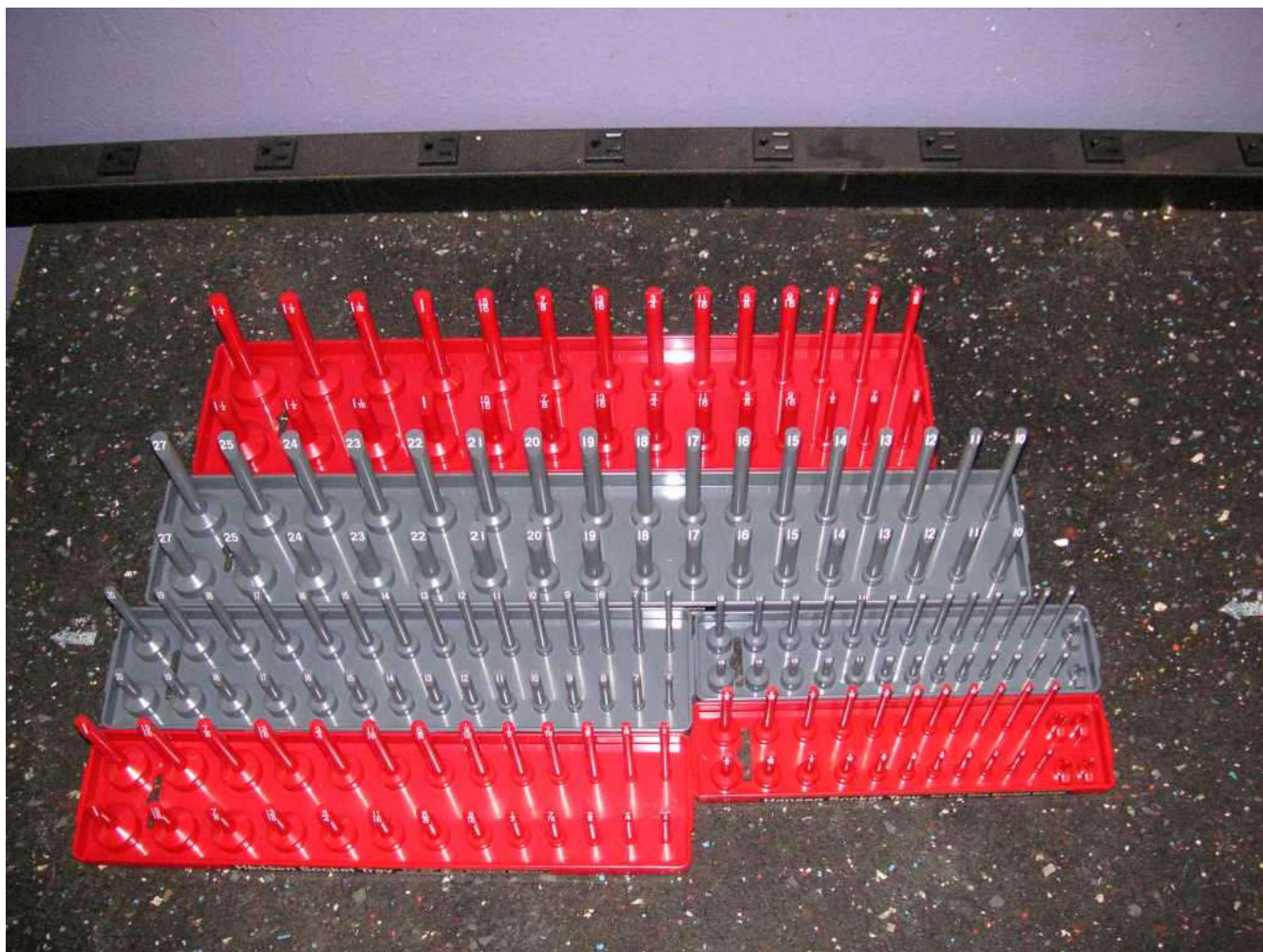




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Hansen socket trays

I suffered for 20 years with a toolbox drawer full of miscellaneous sockets. Then I found Hansen.



I found these [Hansen socket trays on Amazon.com*](#). I bought the full set of 6 trays, 1/4, 3/8, 1/2 in SAE and metric sizes.

Here are the six trays I got for 56 bucks from Amazon. The spikes where you store the sockets have the size printed on the angled top of the spike. Unlike those spring-steel storage racks, there is no resistance when you pick a socket up.

You can see the base of the pins flare out. It took a few minutes for me to figure out that you are supposed to store the sockets with the drive square up. Hansen has sized the flare to fit the hex of the socket. I hated when I went to get a socket from those spring snap racks and the whole rack came up with the socket.



Here you can see the mess that my socket drawer had become. The yellow holder of 1/2" drive metric sizes covering up the torque wrenches. I had a plastic version of those spring steel snaps at the very front, holding my SAE 3/8 drive regular and deep wells.

They are the sockets I use most on my 6 Harley Sportsters and they are half-hidden by the front lip of the toolbox. At right angle to that rack there were two metal trays with 3/8" drive metric sockets. If I stored the deep-well tray parallel to my SAE rack it would flop over when I opened or closed the drawer.

You can see that problem on the lower right, where two of those accursed spring racks loaded with screwdrivers and angle drivers. The biggest disaster is the black plastic tray of 1/4" drive sockets all in disarray on the right middle.

There are three black plastic racks. On the left one holds 3/8" drive miscellaneous tools. In the middle is 1/2 drive. On the right is that mess of 1/4" drive sockets. Bigger 1/2" drive sockets are at the right rear. What a disorganized mess.



The first problem I had with the Hansen socket rack was that my Snap-On 1/4" drive metric sockets did not all fit on the pins. The center hole in these four sockets are smaller than the plastic pin.



ECO (engineering change order) approved, as we say in the design community. I just cut the pins shorter with a pair of Dykes. Drills don't cut the hardened steel sockets. The pins are still long enough to keep the socket from falling over. I can't say the same about the little pin on the far right meant to hold the 4mm deep-well. I may have to re-engineer that with a deeper tube or a metal screw from underneath instead of the short plastic pin.



I also had to grind the little tabs down on the side of two trays so the would fit in my particular toolbox drawer.



ECO approved again. I just cut the deep-well pins off the tray with my trusty Jet Taiwan band-saw.



Here you can see the how the pins on the 3/8" drive deep-wells just clears the depth of the drawer. Problem is that the 1/2" drive deep-well pins on the other tray are way too long to fit in the drawer upright.



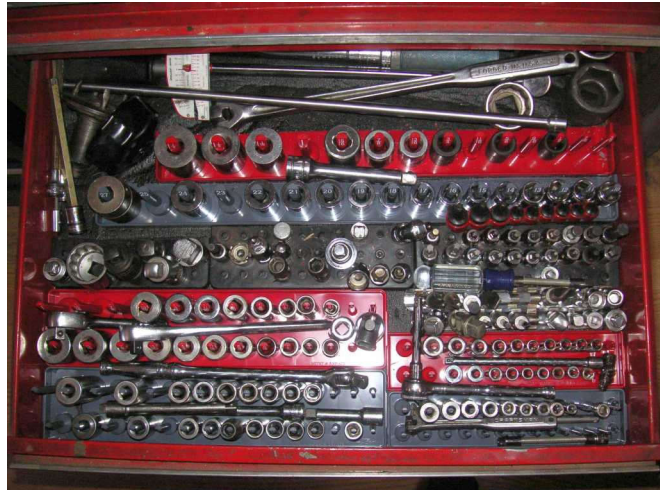
This is a good view of the black plastic trays I had been using. These have a place for all the sockets that are not hollow. The tray is an array of holes. You snap a plastic dowel in holes where you want to hold a socket. It does not work for deep-well sockets, they just fall over when you close the drawer. These trays do have a nice benefit. You can cut them up with your handy Jet Taiwan bandsaw so they fit just right in the new scheme of your socket drawer. I cut up two of the three trays so they would fit.



I had to bandsaw some old trays I had to fit the toolbox drawer.



Here is the detritus left over from my switching to the Hansen socket trays. In the back is the two half of the trays that held 1/2" drive deep-well sockets. They did not fit in the drawer laying flat either, so I will keep them in the garage instead of the workshop. They may come back if I buy that 40-inch toolbox I am hot for. I didn't have many 1/2" deep-well sockets anyway. To the right is the goofy yellow holder Stanley came up with. Stupid. To the right of that are the two metal trays that held my 3/8" drive metric sockets. In the middle are the black plastic trays. one untouched, one with a piece cut off the narrow way and one narrow strip left from the tray I used two pieces of. At the bottom is the accursed plastic version of the the metal spring rack. All this will go to the toolbox in the garage. I am going to buy another set of these Hansen racks for the garage toolbox.



A plan view of the new socket storage paradigm shows a much better layout. I don't even own 1/4" drive metric short sockets. I use the metric sockets rarely, so the are first. under the front lip of the drawer. SAE 3/8" and 1/4" drive come next. I do still use two of the accursed steel spring racks. Then come the black plastic trays, which still need reorganization. The 1/2" drive SAE and metric racks come next. I will swap them so that the SAE is in front. Behind the big sockets are the torque wrenches and some odd-ball stuff like an oil-filter wrench and a wrench for the compensating sprocket for old iron Sportsters.



Here is the money shot, the new setup is more organized and easier to use. You can see how the drawer lip occludes the short metric sockets at the front trays.



Here is a back angle where you can see the lack of short metric sockets.

This setup will be a pleasure to use. Best yet, I won't leave any sockets under the hood of the car since I will see they are missing from the rack. I spent a summer in college working at a Volkswagen dealer. Leaving a 19mm Snap-On wrench in the cowl area convinced me of the importance of a organized toolbox.

Watching the Porsche mechanics taught me how you put the sockets back in the tray the second you are done using it, even if you will need it again in 20 seconds.

*Caution, [the Amazon page I ordered from](#) said that the vendor was ReStockit and the price was \$56.99 + \$7.35 shipping. Instead the order went to Tool King and I got charged \$79.99 + \$4.26 shipping. A least there was no tax. I changed the linked text to [a different Amazon page for what I think is the same product](#). There is yet a [third Amazon page for the same product](#), with different vendors and prices.