

# Drawer Upgrade

2007 Arctic Fox 29-5T

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This project was done to help my wife with the drawers in the kitchen which she always has had a hard time opening. It spread to the rest of the trailer before the planning stage was done. I have a friend that is a cabinet maker and he did most of the work on the drawers. First things first, is a good rule, so I will start at the beginning. My friend told me that if I wanted the full extension slides for the drawers, the current drawers would have to be discarded and new ones fabricated. The reason for this is that the full extension slides are mounted on the sides of the drawers and this space has to come from somewhere. What we lost in width was made up in depth.

The drawers were fabricated from plywood. We found out that you have to dovetail the plywood before you cut the dado (a slot in the four sides of the drawer to hold the bottom of the drawer) or the plywood will splinter where the dado is located. After all of the pieces were dovetailed and had a dado cut in them, they were assembled using commercial grade wood glue and brads. Then they were sanded smooth, the top edges of the drawer were rounded over to avoid sharp edges, then they were sprayed with polyurethane to seal them in the event something leaked in the drawer.

This is the edge of one of the drawers showing the dovetail and slide mounted to the side of the drawer. Another decision that was made was to reuse the drawer fronts. These were screwed down to the front



of the old drawers. The screws were removed and the old fronts mounted to the front of the new drawers. Some measuring had to be done to get the old drawer fronts in the correct position to match the location of the original drawers. Once this was done, the drawers were mated to the old drawer fronts. This eliminated having to fabricate new drawer fronts and try to match the stain. Also, new holes were drilled to allow the use of the thumb locks to keep the drawers from opening

while travelling. Also in the above picture you can see where the part of the full extension slide is attached to the drawer. Three screws hold it in place.

The back of the full extension slide is connected to a device call a cup. Two metal brackets are mounted on the cup which is made out of plywood one half inch thick. The brackets hold the slide securely in place and help to maintain the alignment of the drawer. The cups were attached in most cases to structural members already in the trailer. The exception was the drawers just below the tank monitor which required some addition work to have a solid base to screw the cup to. Additionally, I decided to

close off the side closest to the sink so that small items would not work their way around and jam the drawer open an inch or so. This is a picture of the cup with the metal bracket attached and the slide connected. Below the black screw is the section of plywood that was used to wall off the storage area from the drawers.



The cup is screwed into the support member that was added to the original cabinet to have a place to mount the cup to.

The next picture shows how the slide was attached to the opening in the cabinet containing the drawers. In the original configuration, this area had a plastic rub plate that supported the drawer. It was removed along with the centrally mounted slide for the drawer. The full extension slide was then screwed to the cabinet and the drawer mounted.



The original hardware was then installed after a hole was drilled through the new drawer. I chose to mount a thumb lock on the drawers to keep them from opening during travel instead of using on the self-closing type of full extension slides. I didn't think that the spring holding the drawer closed would be strong enough for a drawer full of pots, and other heavy stuff. I looked on line and found the thumb locks I was looking for at:

[www.camlock.com](http://www.camlock.com)

This picture shows where the thumb locks were mounted in relation to the drawer itself. A hole drilled in the drawer front just above the level of the drawer itself. The thumb lock was then installed so that when the knob was parallel to the floor the drawer was unlocked and ready for use. When the lock is vertical the drawer is locked and ready for travel.



One other thing is that the drawers are narrower than the original drawers. This is made up for in the extra length that was gained when the drawers were lengthened to use all of the space available.

My friend the cabinet maker did all of the drilling for the thumb locks and to installed the knobs on the drawers. This is a picture showing the thumb locks in the vertical position ready for travel in the kitchen. The bottom drawer holds most of the heavy items such as pots and pans.



One thing that we did encounter that we did not plan for was that some of the drawers were a little loose when they were closed. A solution was to purchase the little stick on felt circles and attached them to the corners of the drawer which took up the space resulting in a tight fitting drawer.



This is a picture of one of the drawers full open. This drawer lacks the pull knob but it was installed after this picture was taken. Another item of interest was that the cam on the thumb lock (the arm that moves to lock the drawer in place) was too long. It was ground down in an electric grinder until it would close without hitting the underside of the flooring in the pantry. As you can see, you can reach everything in the drawer and you don't have to fight it to get it open. All of the drawers in the trailer are now full extension drawers.