

How to make a \$1000 ring flash for about \$5: The Dan Way.

Article and photos by Dan of and

What you'll need:

- 1) **Cardboard** (can also be made with Styrofoam) – For the actual box
- 2) **Scissors or xacto knife**– to play soccer with, heh, ok to cut with
- 3) **Tape** (clear duct tape is best, you can also use a stapler to quickly attach certain joints) – to keep it all together
- 4) **Tin foil** – To make the light bounce around inside the box and out
- 5) **Standard computer paper** (not the bleached stuff) or tissue paper – to be used as diffuser
- 6) You need a **flash sync cord** to make this work, or a really good remote flash slave.

Making the frame

My Ring flash measures 15.5” tall by 12.5” wide by 3” In depth. For macro I would recommend something smaller, for a better fashion ring flash I would recommend something at least 10” bigger.

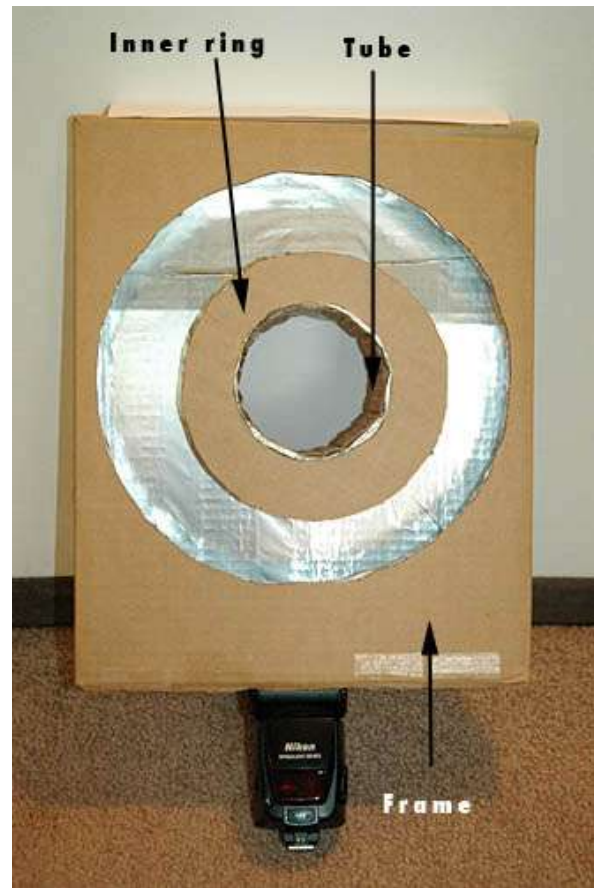
The following instructions depend on the size of your original cardboard so I won't mention sizes but only how to put it together.

- 1) First, create the front of the ring flash by cutting a piece of the cardboard to the size you want the frame to be. (If you can, don't just cut the 15”x12” piece, also leave 3” on each side to act as the depth of the box)
- 2) Use a protractor or just circular items from around the house like pots & pans to create the ring where light will leave the frame and then cut it out. Be sure to leave the right amount of space at the bottom of the frame for the flash. In other words leave about 3 inches at the bottom of the frame and cut the circles from the top of the cardboard.
Draw two circles, about 3” in circumference from each other to allow light to pass through.
IMPORTANT: When cutting remember to keep the inner ring.
- 3) Create the back of the frame the same size as the front.
- 4) Line the **WHOLE INSIDE** of the frame with tinfoil (the shiny side not the dull side of the tinfoil) including the tube and the top, bottom, sides, front and back of the frame. Everything should be covered in order to reflect light.
- 5) From a strip of cardboard make a tube that fits inside the cut out inner ring as seen in **Diagram #1**.
- 6) Cut the same size hole at the back as the original inside circle. This is for the tube to go through and should be the same size as the tube you made as the camera will go through the inside of both sides of the frame to shoot through. Then place the cut out piece (inner ring) over the tube as in **Diagram #1**.
- 7) Tape it all together with the cut out piece and tube attaching to the back of the frame so you have a floating circle through which to shoot.
- 8) Take another strip of cardboard and fit it snugly around the head of your flash. Tape that piece together over the flash (but don't tape it to the flash and then insert and attach it to the bottom of the frame.
- 9) Now tape two sheets of paper together and then tape them over the front of the flash to act like a diffuser.

Diagram #1



Diagram #2



Example set up:



Example photos:



