

ORGANIZING AN EXISTING QUILTING SPACE

Sue Dixon, January, 2010

WHAT IS AN IDEAL QUILTING SPACE?

Books and sources on the internet say to have the following:

Storage for fabric, magazines, books, tools, planning area, cutting area, pressing area, sewing area, comfy chair and TV or radio.

An industrial engineer (IE) will say:

The main focus of this work area is sewing, all other items are tangential; everything in the room must lead to enhancement of sewing activity; (no matter how long you set in your comfy chair no quilt is produced)

There is a difference in making a tidy work space and an organized one that supports sewing.

Your quilting space should protect your body, protect your investment in tools and fabric, protect your sanity, and protect your productivity.

Frank Lloyd Wright bragged that he could design a house that looked good but had so many problems in its design that a happily married couple would divorce within 6 months of living in the home.

An IE is always seeking a balance between efficiency and effectiveness.

When analyzing a work space, the IE is seeking to put together a work area and staff that can do the work required. Many factors are involved including how much space is available, how competent the staff is in the work and how much budget is available.

PROTECTING YOUR BODY

Sewing: arm should be at a 90 degree angle from body

Cutting your arm should be slightly downward – rotary cutter is about 3 inches tall, so adjust table to height that allows this

Pressing your arm should be slightly downward – iron is about 7 inches tall so table/board needs to be adjusted appropriately

When standing for long periods, rest foot on small stool or large can

Be sure you have correct amount of light- age 60 persons need 40% more lighting than younger persons

PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENTS

- Use a surge protector
- Cover your machine when not in use
- Don't blow into it
- Clean/oil regularly

Shopping list for protecting your body and protecting your investments:

- Chair that adjusts
- Surge protector
- Lamp(s)
- Fan
- Light bulbs
- New oil
- Paint brush for cleaning machine
- Small stool/large can
- Duster
- Compressed air

PROTECTING YOUR SANITY

Some quilting books say to have cutting, pressing, and sewing on a triangle

IE says why? You do not cut, press, and sew one item at a time
Cutting can be done where you can be comfortable – kitchen counter works very well

Pressing can be far from machine for exercise

Need secondary cutting and pressing beside machine

STORAGE

Fabric

- Scraps
- Chunks
- Fat quarters
- Yardage

Threads/bobbins

Tools

Patterns

Books

Magazines

What one factor controls quilting space organization? Size of room? Budget? Location?

Answer: Do you want to see everything all the time or just what you're using now? Controls what kind of storage containers, bookshelves, etc. you put in room.

PROCEDURE FOR ORGANIZING ROOM

Unpack all shopping bags – if contents should stay together put in plastic bag, lay aside.

Gather up all batting – put in trash bags – lay aside

Gather like items together:

- Tools
- Patterns
- Books
- Magazines
- Embellishments
- Fabric

Sort fabric according to color
Sort color stacks according to size

Stand back and take a look at what you have

Do you have only quilting items?

If not, plan where to place items

Sue has 3 big sorts in her room:

- Non-quilting sewing
- Embroidery
- Quilting

Note: As you work, if you find items that belong in other rooms, place by entrance to deliver later

Decide what kind/how much storage containers you need.

Sue likes to see only what she is using at the moment, so has closed containers

Sue has 18 bins for scraps, chunks, and fat quarters and other items (see list below), two baskets for yardage, 14 drawers for tools, 6 drawers for work in progress, one rolling basket for tall items and one 8-shelf bookcase for all other items

Relocate furniture, storage in pleasing manner.

Sue does planning in her home office, major cutting at a kitchen counter, and rests in her living room.

Sue's 18 bins:

1. Non-quilting sewing
2. Embroidery 1
3. Embroidery 2
4. UPO 1
5. Future projects
6. Unopened kits 1
7. Unopened kits 2
8. Red/pink fabric scraps, chunks, and fat quarters
9. Brown/orange
10. White/beige
11. Black/gray
12. Purple
13. Green
14. Blue
15. Oriental
16. Holidays
17. Empty
18. Don't Know What to Do With

TOOL CHEST 1

Measuring
Marking
Cutting
White/beige thread
Colored thread
Next to Sew
Sewing now

TOOL CHEST 2

Tools – circle cutter, etc
Tools – what was I thinking?
Empty
Glues
Appliqué bonding materials
Bindings/labels
Piano border scraps

BOOK SHELVES

Yardage in baskets
Books
Magazines
Box of embellishments
Box of wool squares
Box of panels

Stuff I don't want in quilting room: photos overflow books

Shopping List for Protecting Your Sanity:

Containers

PROTECT YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

Attachment A Example of Quilting Time Estimate

Attachment B Conquering UFOs/WIPs Procedure

Shopping List for Protecting Your Productivity:

Plastic bags

Other Productivity Thoughts:

Know thyself – your own time “wasters”

Sue's time wasters as of January 1, 2009

Needle threading – have mastered machine needle threader

Binding – have mastered binding that you cannot see where it begins or ends

Fabric selection – too perfectionist in choosing fabrics – hope to conquer in 2010

Productivity ideas:

Put 2-liter bottle of water and dryer sheets by pressing station

Use voice mail

Kit up totes with meeting supplies

MASTER THE CONCEPT OF “GOOD ENOUGH”

Sue's 2010 Quilting Time Estimate

7 days each week x 24 hours per day = 168 hours per week

<u>Hours</u>	<u>Activity</u>
56.0	Sleep
10.0	Daily hygiene
4.0	Read paper, coffee, check news
4.0	Exercise
14.0	Meal prep, eating meals
3.0	Finances and mail
4.0	Brill Trust work
3.0	Errands and grocery shopping
3.0	Drive Wes to meetings and/or doctors
4.0	Take care of niece and nephew
5.0	Evening out
4.0	Helping family members and/or friends with taxes, PC
1.0	Phone calls
6.0	Quilting or bee meeting, other quilting activity
<u>2.0</u>	Church
123	SUB-TOTAL non-quilting activities
<u>12</u>	Add 10% drop, interruption and fatigue factor
135	GRAND TOTAL

+	168	Hours in week
-	<u>135</u>	Non-quilting activities
=	33	Quilting hours
-	<u>3</u>	Subtract 10% drop, interruption and fatigue factor
=	30	Actual quilting time available weekly
/	<u>7</u>	divided by 7 days in week
	4.28	Actual quilting hours per day rounded to 4.0 hours

52 weeks minus 2 week vacation and 4 week December = 46 weeks

30 quilting hours x 46 weeks = 1,380 hours for quilting yearly

**1,380 annual hours/46 quilting weeks = 30 hours weekly or
approximately 4 hours each day**

Sue's Conquering UFOs/WIPs Procedure

Gather unfinished items together or make list of unfinished items.

Lay aside any kits that have not been opened; put in appropriate storage.

Lay aside any holiday projects that holiday is not within next three months; put in appropriate storage.

Lay aside any class "training" items that you do not want to finish (you have the knowledge that no one can take from you); put in appropriate storage.

Determine why remaining items are not finished:

LOST INTEREST: Kit up; put in appropriate storage.

STILL NEED/STILL INTERESTED - LOST TIME TO COMPLETE:

What stage of the project did you lose time?

Planning stage, gathering supplies stage, or cutting stage,
kit up; put in appropriate storage; add to work
list when time is available.

Sewing stage:

No current time available for this project: kit up; put
in appropriate storage; add to work list
when time is available.

Time available: add to work list

Quilting stage:

No current time available: kit up, store, add to work
list when time is available.

Send to long-arm quilter

Time available: add to work list

Binding/label stage: Add to work list.

Review annually.