

March 2022 - Scrap Building and Management

(Concept sparked by flow chart in 2022 issue of American Patchwork and Quilting Magazine)

(Also, listen to the American Patchwork and Quilting Magazine Podcast: [Episode 540: Make the Most of Closet Storage](#), January 10, 2022)

Each person, situation, space, circumstance, etc is different....so the way you build and manage your stash is different too and will change over time.

There is no one “correct” answer. These are questions and jumping off points to help you think about what will work for YOU.

Scrap Building

- Know Your Goals
 - WHY have a stash?
 - Not to have to run to the shop each time?
 - Purely buy for each project?
 - Inspiration vs function vs collecting?
- Size Matters
 - What size of fabric cuts do you have?
 - What size do you use most?
 - What should you look to buy? To keep? To cull?
 - Think about
 - Yardage
 - Fat Quarters
 - Precuts/sets
 - Kits
- Your Style
 - Do you like to mix and match lines? Use a single collection? Kits?
 - Do you like to follow a pattern?
 - Do you like to work BIG or small?
 - Quilts
 - Pieces
- Build in Freedom
 - What makes you feel free?
 - Having lots of options?
 - Having just the right supplies and no extra “clutter”?
 - What are you go-to supplies that you use over and over?
- Know Your Requirements
 - How do you pull or mentally categorize fabrics?
 - Color?
 - Print type (dots, stripes, florals, etc)
 - Designers?
 - Age (juvenile?)
- Is it Sustainable?
 - Is your stash durable/maintainable?
 - Ecologically responsible (if that is a value of yours)?
 - Deadstock
 - Thrifting
 - Second hand (destashes, etc)
 - Natural fibers / companies with a commitment to green practices

Scrap Management

- Know Your Goals
 - Do you need to protect your stash from children, pets, sunlight, spills...
- Size Matters
 - What size of fabric cuts do you have already?
 - What do you anticipate purchasing more of?
 - What is a scrap?
- Your Style
 - Do you like stored items to be visible or hidden?
 - What makes things easy to access for YOU?
 - Height
 - Distance from the place it is needed
 - Number of steps to open/access
- Build in Freedom
 - Do you want/need to be able to reconfigure your space?
 - Working in a shared space (dining room table, guest bedroom, etc)
 - Do be able to sew with others (friends, children, grandchildren)
- Know Your Requirements
 - Do you want/need to do all the process steps in this space or spread it out? (Does your stash need to be stored across multiple locations)
 - Is your set up ergonomic? (Clip lids on bins, heavy buckets overhead...)
 - Do you need WIP and UFO storage? (Often stash fabric needs to stay with in progress projects)
- Is it Sustainable?
 - Reassess frequently...is it still working?

And above all, keep in mind the foundation....joy! *What invites you to create?*

- Fabric visible? In reach so you can pet it?
- A tidy, clean space?
- Leave the next step set up
- Ender/leader projects / ongoing projects / multiple projects?

Practical Tips to Consider

- Avoid storing fabric in PILES
 - Weight sets folds (creates more work to iron out before you can sew)
 - Hard to take fabric out and put it back
 - Some alternatives
 - Card folding
 - Baskets
 - Storage boxes
 - Hanging files
- Be consistent in how you fold
 - Seems to break the laws of physics and create more storage space
- Sort your fabric the same way you tend to pull your fabric
 - By color
 - By project type
 - By designer
 - By fabric line
- Do test pulls to see what is missing in your stash or what is hard to access
 - #30daysoffabricstacks

- <https://www.stitchedincolor.com/blog/2017/5/23/30-days-of-fabric-stacks>
- What do you tend to AVOID?
 - Usually there is something there that isn't working. What is it? How can you fix it?
- Set up stations to store things near where they are generated or used (scrap sorting by the cutting table or design wall)
- Leave extra room to allow for stash growth and to make it easier to pull and replace fabrics
- Be honest with yourself and gentle. Your stash needs to work for the you of today not anyone else.