



Organizing the Perfect Sewing & Quilting Studio

Tips for Organizing Fabric

Perhaps the most challenging part of organizing a quilting or sewing studio is deciding what to do with your fabric. There is no right or wrong way to do it. The most important thing is to find what works for you.

The options are endless when it comes to storage. Consider the following:

- **Bookcases, preferably with adjustable shelves**
- **Armoires**
- **Wall units**
- **Closets with shelving, preferably open and adjustable shelving**
- **Curio cabinets**
- **Dresser with drawers**
- **Filing cabinets with large drawers**
- **Rolling office carts**
- **Vertical units with pullout baskets**
- **Plastic tubs**
- **Boxes**
- **Baskets**
- **Any other fun, yet practical option you can come up with!**

As you consider storage options, remember that fabric fades when it is exposed to sunlight or full-spectrum lighting. You might not want to consider furniture with glass doors, or if you do, install a simple fabric curtain inside the glass door to block the light.



Likewise, wood can play havoc with fabric. The natural oils from the wood or the stain used to color the wood can actually transfer to your fabric. Seal the wood with a high-grade varnish or paint it. Another option is to line the shelves with acid-free paper.

If possible, locate your fabric storage next to your cutting table or design wall. This helps your creativity immensely and increases your efficiency, resulting in more sewing time.

When it comes to actually organizing your fabrics, think of how you work and how you evaluate your fabric before sewing. Consider organizing your fabrics by one or several of these options:

- **Types of fabric, such as cotton, flannel, wool, etc.**
- **Color**
- **Hue**
- **Type of prints, such as holiday, juvenile, plaids, etc.**
- **Use, such as home dec, garment, quilting, etc.**
- **Cuts of fabric, such as fat quarters, precuts, yardage, bolts, etc.**

Organizing your fabric may seem like a daunting task, but with a little thought and planning, it actually goes faster than you think. Just do a little each day, and before you know it, you will have it all arranged to perfection!



Tips for Storing Thread

Your sewing or quilting is only as good as your weakest link. One of the most overlooked considerations in a sewing or quilting studio is thread. Proper storage is essential to keep this vital sewing component in tip-top shape.

Thread weakens with age. This is primarily due to a lack of humidity. Thread can also discolor, especially if exposed to sunlight or full-spectrum lighting. Dust is another enemy.

Consider these options for storing your thread:

- **Thread racks: keep them away from windows**
- **Shallow drawers; either stand the spools up or place them into draw organizers**
- **Baskets**
- **Boxes**
- **Closet shelving**
- **In the freezer**

Seriously think about adding a humidifier to the room, especially if you live in a dry climate. If you can't humidify the area, spritz your thread with a non-staining silicone spray or even water before using. You can also use a thread conditioner that attaches to your machine. Likewise, for hand sewing you can pull the length of thread through a small container of thread conditioner or pull it through bees wax.



When it comes to organizing thread, I suggest sorting it first by use, and then by color. Since I store my threads near the appropriate machine for ease of use, I sort my threads into the following categories:

- Longarm quilting
- General sewing, to include quilting
- Embroidery

You can also sort by types of thread such as cotton, polyester, rayon, etc. You may also want to further sort your thread by weight.

If you have a lot of thread, the thought of sorting it can seem overwhelming. With a little thought to how you work, organizing your thread actually goes pretty quickly and will make your life so much easier.



Building Your Own Library

BOOKS:

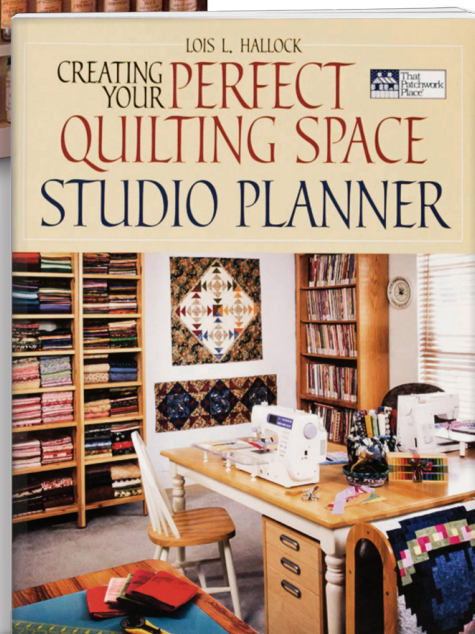
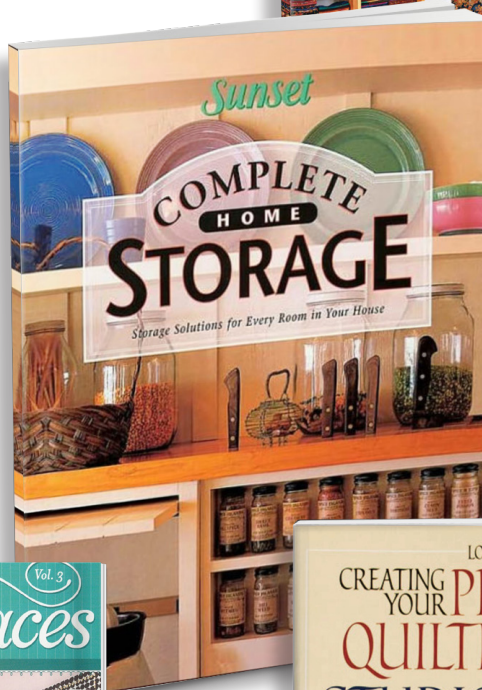
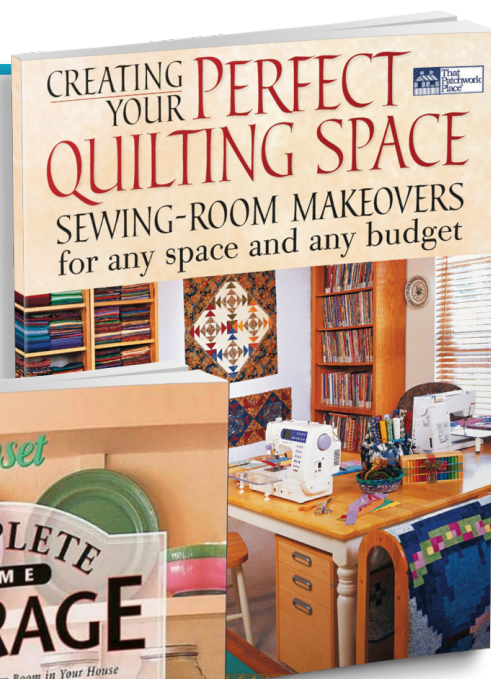
- Hallock, Lois. *Creating Your Perfect Quilting Space: Sewing-Room Makeovers for Any Space and Any Budget*. That Patchwork Place, 2005.
- Sunset Books. *Complete Home Storage*. Sunset Publishing Corporation, 1989.

COMPANION MATERIAL:

- Hallock, Lois. *Creating Your Perfect Quilting Space: Studio Planner*. That Patchwork Place, 2007.

MAGAZINES:

- Creative Spaces. (A Quilters Newsletter Special Issue Publication.) F+W Media.



Quilted Sewing Machine Organizer

Instructor: ZJ Humbach

This organizer is 24" across the front, which will fit most larger machines. Feel free to adjust the size to fit your machine.

Shopping List:

- ⅔ yd. quilted fabric
- ¼ yd. fabric for binding

Cut:

- Quilted fabric:
 - 1 - 24" x 24" square
- Binding fabric:
 - 3 - 2 ¼" wide strips



