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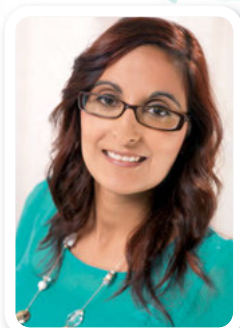
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If in doubt, please
omit them.



WELCOME...

... to *Make and Sell Crafts*, the **ultimate guide** to earning money from your lovingly-made creations. There has been a growing trend over recent years for **handmade** goods – shoppers love being able to buy something

individual that can't be found on the high street, and they also like the **idea** of supporting artisan **businesses**. With websites such as Etsy or Folksy so accessible, it has never been easier to get your work noticed – and that's before we've even mentioned **social media**.

Whether you are just starting out in the industry or have been a trader for years, our glossy pages are jam-packed with **expert advice**, top tips and inspiration set out over 130 pages. We have covered all bases, from copyright to returns **policies**, registering your company to search engine optimisation. As well as quick tips for you to dip into, we also have in-depth features, allowing you to gain an insight into the market. And, if all that's not enough, we've included 25 **copyright-free projects** to get you started today.

Good luck with your new venture and happy making!

Lorraine

Lorraine Luximon,
Editor, *Make and Sell Crafts*





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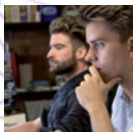


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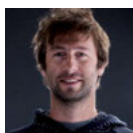
MEET THE EXPERTS

GET TO KNOW A LITTLE MORE ABOUT
OUR CHOSEN EXPERTS AND CASE STUDIES



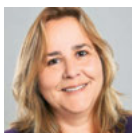
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www.wemakewebsites.com



ANT JONES

Ant Jones runs CliQQ Photography, whose work can be seen every month in the pages of consumer magazines *Crafts Beautiful*, *Papercrafter*, *Homemaker*, *Let's Knit*, *Sew*, *Make & Sell Jewellery* and *Let's Get Crafting*.
www.cliqq.co.uk



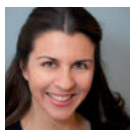
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Corinne Bradd is a regular contributor to *Sew*, *Papercrafter*, *Let's Get Crafting*, *Homemaker* and *Crafts Beautiful* magazines. Unless stated otherwise, Corinne has designed the projects to make and sell in this publication.



DALE COOK

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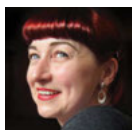
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The story of...



ALEXIS DOVE

Alexis Dove started her own business in 2006, where she also runs a workshop.



ALISON YULE

Alison Yule is a textile designer and owns her own business.
alisonyuletextiles.co.uk



ALYSSA SMITH

Alyssa Smith launched her company in 2010, and has had her designs worn by celebrities Dawn Porter and Sheridan Smith.



CHLOE HAYWOOD

Chloe Haywood is a milliner and won Young Clothes Show Designer of the Year aged 16.



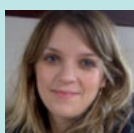
DOUG RICHARD

Doug Richard is an international entrepreneur and former Dragon's Den panellist.



SARAH HANSON

Sarah Hanson is the founder of Dolls and Daydreams.
Dollsanddaydreams.com



STACEY WILLIAMSON

Stacey Williamson is a paper artist and the founder and owner of Two for Joy.



TURN YOUR PASSION INTO POUNDS



TURN YOUR IDEAS INTO CASH AND GET YOUR CREATIVE BUSINESS OFF THE GROUND WITH **EMMA JONES'** BUSINESS ADVICE

The UK is witnessing record numbers of people starting a business, and a good number of these are artisans and crafters who have turned talent into turnover and passion into profit. You may craft for a hobby but this is something that can be turned into a way of making a living.

1 STICK TO YOUR NICHE

Come up with a business idea or activity that caters to a well-defined audience. For example, if you make handmade cards, why not create a niche in cards with humorous sayings or using particular materials so you can build your profile as an expert in this particular field? Focusing on a niche is good for business as you keep marketing costs low (you know who and where your customers are so can be focused with your spend) and customer loyalty is high as customers can only source this particular product from you.

2 TALK TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Tell trusted ones about your idea and ask for their feedback. They are most likely to point out your strengths and offer honest input. They also have potential to be your first customers! Create a SWOT Analysis which stands for Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/ Threats as it will highlight which areas need further work and the direction in which you can confidently take the business.

3 TEST OUT THE COMPETITION

Try to buy from the competition to see what's good (and not so good!) about the service, packaging and price points. It could even be that you identify ways to work together; this is called co-opetition!

4 RESEARCH YOUR CUSTOMERS

Increase your customer base by being in the spaces and places your customers frequent. Use social media and online survey tools such as SurveyMonkey and Wufoo to ask customers where they shop, what they read, how they like to buy, and are they being well served. Carry out this research face-to-face at fairs and markets, too.

5 COMBINE SKILLS

In this market research phase, you may have identified an area in which you need help, maybe with sales and marketing or finance. In which case, consider partnering with someone who has these skills, so together you make the perfect team!





BUSINESS

6 BE ORGANISED

Work up a document that will act as your route map, showing where the business is now and where you're heading, taking into account steps along the way. It's easy to remember what to include as it spells I'M OFF!

IDEA – What's your vision?

MARKET – Who will be your customers or clients? And who is your competition?

OPERATIONS – How will you develop the idea, promote it and provide excellent customer service?

FINANCIALS – Can you earn more than you spend, so that the business makes a profit? Do you need to source any funds initially?

FRIENDS – Do you have a support network on hand to offer business advice? Are there complementary businesses you've identified with whom partnerships are a possibility?

Return regularly to your plan to check progress against targets and update it as you respond to new opportunities.

7 CHOOSE A COMPANY STATUS

Have a think about the company status that suits you best from these three options:

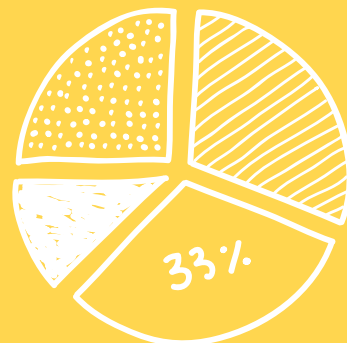
SELF-EMPLOYED – this status means you are working for yourself. You keep records and accounts of your own activities and, in acting alone, get to keep all the profits but are also solely liable for any debts.

LIMITED COMPANY – these companies exist in their own right, with the company's finances kept separate from the personal funds of its owners, so your liability is limited.

PARTNERSHIP – if you'd like to be self-employed but want to work with a friend or colleague, consider a partnership. It means that two or more people share the risks, costs and workload. It's advisable to talk to an accountant about the company status that'll work best for you. Find a certified one by visiting the Institute of Chartered Accountants' website (www.icaew.com)



IF YOU'RE WORKING FROM HOME, DO CHECK THAT YOU ARE COVERED BY INSURANCE



8 REGISTER THE COMPANY

Having decided on the status, there are a couple of organisations you need to contact: Companies House (www.companieshouse.co.uk) and HM Revenue & Customs (www.hmrc.gov.uk). Have a company formation agent such as www.companiesmadeeasy.com to register the business for you with Companies House. The rules on registering a new business with HM Revenue & Customs are pretty clear cut; you are required to do so as soon as you start earning from any business activity.



THINK



9 INFORM AUTHORITIES AND TELL THE NEIGHBOURS!

More than 60% of businesses start from home, and it's important to inform your insurance provider if you will be doing so to ensure any business equipment and stock is protected. I'm often asked if you should tell the Local Authority and the answer is certainly 'yes'. This is because further council tax may well be payable. In addition to this, I would advise you to inform the neighbours out of courtesy – talking to them about the business may turn them into happy customers too!

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- Huge choice of built-in stitch patterns
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FINDING INSPIRATION

ISA MARIA SEMINEGA GIVES HER ADVICE ON
HOW TO FIND IDEAS AND HARNESS THEM

Ideas are the raw material of any creative business, so it's not surprising that every now and then the pressure to 'be inspired' can seem overwhelming. Every designer has at some point experienced the terror of a blank sketchbook alongside a row of perfectly sharpened pencils. Where do ideas come from? Some say that inspiration comes from the mind, and some say that there is no such thing as a new idea. One thing is for sure, the products of our imagination are almost always related in some way to the world around us.



LESS OBVIOUS

If you are creating a collection to sell, you will need to create something unique. Seek inspiration in less obvious places – try looking at interior and glossy magazines, spot colour trends and use the shapes and patterns to inspire you. Inspiration is everywhere, in wallpaper designs, the composition of a photograph, in nature, and in the latest designs. Keep your mind open to inspiration and you will always have it to draw from when you need it.

TACTILE TRENDS

Use materials you can find around your home or in nature to further your product development ideas. Add an extra dimension to your work by starting from scratch with

items you can feel, touch and smell. If you want to create a collection themed around nature, collect acorns, fir cones, leaves, sticks and feathers. Think about how the textures work alongside each other and how different materials can help you communicate the idea behind your designs effectively. Use these concepts in your work, contrasting and complementing a variety of textures, colours and patterns.

MOOD BOARD

Use Pinterest, or more traditional methods of collating such as pulling together inspiration from magazines and fabric cuttings. Display colours you like, patterns and atmospheric photos that express what you want your next collection to be about.

PEN TO PAPER

Using your moodboard, seek out common themes for your initial ideas. Doodle quick images or sketch whole designs on paper first. Whatever you decide, this process can help you see where your collection is going and how all the pieces work together as a whole.

BUILD A COLLECTION

The ideal collection will have something for everyone in your target market. Aim for one or two higher priced pieces then balance it out with some more affordable items. Your range can be built around a theme or perhaps even a season (such as Easter or Christmas), colour or style so there are lots of opportunities to get creative.

**SOCIAL
MEDIA IS
INVALUABLE
WHEN TRYING
TO RAISE
AWARENESS OF
A COMPANY**

CREATE YOUR OWN DESIGNS

A LACK OF DESIGN CHOICE LED **HELEN SNELL**
TO CREATE HER OWN FABRIC RANGE

Business bite

It's something that many people dream of, but translating a textile design from paper to cloth can prove challenging. Helen Snell, founder of 20th Century Cloth, explains the process that goes into making her line of vintage-style fabrics.

RETRO REVIVAL

My background is in printed textile design and before starting my own company, I designed for several high street brands. My real passion always lay with vintage fabrics and whilst making my own clothes I struggled to find suitable designs. I realised the obvious thing was to combine my skills and passion, so I set up 20th Century Cloth, an online boutique specialising in retro 1950s prints. I'm influenced mainly by

photographs of this fabulously decadent era, as well as fashion sketches and old pattern envelopes. I'm also inspired by vintage printmaking techniques.

DESKTOP DESIGN

When I'm designing, my process will vary depending on what I want to achieve. With the Memphis Noir pattern, I hoped to produce smooth vector-based squiggles so I created the design digitally using Adobe



Illustrator. However, with the Kona Bambusa print I wanted to achieve a hand drawn look, so I went back to 'old school' techniques – stretched paper with inks and brushes. I always scan my work if it's created by hand.

PERFECT PALETTE

Now that digital printing is so prevalent, the possibilities are endless. Naturally, the design must always have an accurate repeat, but things like screen separations and colour limitations are a thing of the past. Having said that, because the style I'm trying to achieve is from an era when fabric was screen printed, I always reduce my palette in order to echo the original print process.

PRINT PRODUCTION

My fabric is printed digitally in the UK. Initially I send a tile of each design to the printers and they print a sample onto a metre of specified fabric. I then decide if I am happy with the colours, which fabric base to print on and

which designs to produce. This process can be repeated until I am happy. I sell my fabrics exclusively through my online shop, but I'd also recommend social media; it has been an invaluable tool in raising awareness of my company.

Helen's advice

- Find a good textile course and learn the technical aspects of design; repeats, fabric bases, colour theory and software skills.
- Do some work experience in the industry. Colleges tend to focus on creativity but it's important to understand how fabrics are used in reality.

UNDERSTANDING COPYRIGHT

PROTECT YOUR DESIGNS FROM COPYCAT
CRAFTERS SAYS **EMMA JONES**

If you've come up with a great new idea, the last thing you want is for someone to take it from you. Whether starting or growing your business, it's important to protect your intellectual property – or 'IP' as it's commonly known – so others can't replicate your brand, designs or trademark quality. The following information explains how to keep your IP safe. By following the advice below you'll be able to keep your creative cards close to your chest!

1 WHAT IS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY?

There are four different kinds of intellectual property that you can protect. According to the Intellectual Property Office (IPO), they are:

- › Patents – these protect, essentially, what makes things work: what makes a wheel turn or the chemical formula of your favourite fizzy drink
- › Trademarks – these are signs (like words and logos) that distinguish goods and services in the marketplace
- › Designs – what a logo or product looks like: from the shape of an aeroplane to a fashion item
- › Copyright – an automatic right that comes into existence for anything written or recorded

2 ARE THERE OTHER USEFUL SOURCES OF INFORMATION?

Yes! Check out these to start:

- › The British Library IP Centre (www.bl.uk/bipc) is highly regarded for its work in advising on IP protection at one-to-one clinics or at larger events
- › She's Ingenious – www.shesingenious.org is the Association for Women with new products and inventions, and is particularly well suited to business owners with new product inventions
- › Venture Proof – www.ventureproof.com was founded by qualified trademark attorney Charlie Ashworth, and specialises in registering trademarks, patents and designs for small businesses

Spend some time getting to understand IP – no matter which stage of business you're at, it's better to be protected.

3 WHAT ARE PATENTS?

You may decide to register a trademark to protect your company name or brand or, if you've come up with a new invention, a patent. Once registered, this prevents other companies from using your name or designs without your permission. These forms of IP make up part of your brand alongside a strong web presence and promotional materials. Cally Robson is the founder of She's Ingenious,



which helps women protect new product ideas, and she says: "Right at the start you should learn about the different forms of IP and how protection works. The insights you gain could affect how you shape your business and its future ability to be distinctive, block competitors, scale up, and command pricing that will earn you profits."

4 HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

Patents can be expensive to register and maintain, but registered designs represent a

weaker form of protection (you can't prevent someone making a small change to your designs and taking this to market) so will cost you less to register and protect.

5 HOW CAN I REGISTER?

You can view costs, find out more about the IP categories and both register and protect your assets by visiting the UK Intellectual Property Office website (www.ipo.gov.uk) – there is also a basic confidentiality agreement on the site which you can download for free and use to protect your ideas.

LAUNCHING CHRISTMAS LINES

A FESTIVE RANGE WILL PAY DIVIDENDS,
SAYS ISA MARIA SEMINEGA

It's no secret that small businesses need to start preparing for the Christmas season early, and the sooner you get started, the sooner you'll have some great offerings for anyone looking for some homemade gifts, so it's worth introducing a seasonal product or line.

FESTIVE TOUCHES

Homemade gifts are much sought after in the lead-up to Christmas, which enables designers operating on a small scale to be noticed alongside well-known brands. And, to keep ahead of high street names, the introduction of fresh items is vital. That said, you needn't go to great expense. If you're short on time and money, introducing an entire new collection might not be favourable. Instead construct one limited festive design or update popular items in new colourways. That way existing customers will still have fresh items to pour over and first-time buyers a greater choice, without leaving too much of an impact on finances or time.

PAPER PRESSIES

It's also worth discovering the benefit of gift certificates, which at peak seasons are customer favourites. Create simple, branded cards with pretty envelopes inexpensively from home or a printing company. Alternatively, form an online version for free that can be emailed directly to the customer. Always include key terms and conditions with the vouchers as well as outlining them on your website. These will need to state the length of time certificates are valid for, their value and how to redeem them. Refer to examples from larger retailers for an idea of what to include.

INDIVIDUALISE IT

Personalisation services are also winners with consumers. Although they take longer to make, people love to purchase bespoke gifts and are often prepared to pay more for them. To work effectively, have distinct ideas



Jan Constantine adds a festive range to her collection each year

of what customisations can be made – whether it's the addition of names, choice of fabrics, thread shades or additional decorative stitching. It's also imperative to agree realistic time frames for each personalised product and to outline all of the information in product descriptions, so that orders can be made in time for required dates.

WRAP IT UP

Time is precious for many, especially over the festive period, which makes gift wrapping so desirable. Although you can, of course, offer the service for free I'd recommend charging a small fee or using it as a promotional tool. For example, free gift wrapping could be offered for a limited time to boost sales or to encourage customers to buy more, i.e. 'spend over £50 and you'll qualify for free gift

wrapping'. Stock up on twine, string, ribbons and gift tags to ensure your packages arrive looking great.

MAKE IT EASY

Once you've formed your collection, make your customers' jobs a little easier by including clear descriptions as to who the product would be great for. Also write up dimensions, colourways and suggest complementary gifts within your range.

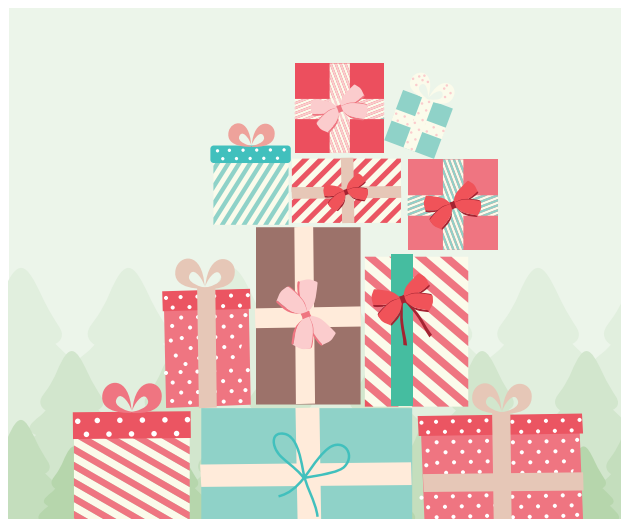
There really is a wealth of opportunities to enable designers to embrace the season and expand their businesses. So, whether it's a complete overhaul or an update of an existing line, adding limited items to your offering will enable customers more opportunity to find something they'll love.

First & foremost

Before you launch into full Christmas mode, there are three questions you need to ask yourself;

- 1 What are your best sellers?
- 2 Which designs have the highest profit margin?
- 3 How can you reach various price points?

The answers will help you to narrow your focus.



Crafting is no longer viewed solely as a hobby but has evolved into a means of generating or supplementing a wage. And, with modern technology becoming more accessible it couldn't be easier to make a living from your craft. But if you haven't jumped on the bandwagon just yet, don't fret – here's the advice you'll need to get your selling off to the right start.

ALWAYS
READ THE
TERMS AND
CONDITIONS
BEFORE
COMMITTING
TO ANY SITE

SELLING YOUR CREATIONS

TURNING YOUR STITCHES INTO SALARIES TAKES MANY FORMS

"The 'About Us' section of your website gives you the opportunity to share the story of your business"

WHERE TO SELL

Handmade goods are big business and can be sold via many channels; however, the quickest and easiest way to get your products noticed is online. Even those with limited knowledge of the web can set up shop as there are various effective and helpful portals with clear guidance on how to use them. For instance, online marketplaces such as eBay and Crafty Bob provide space for you to manage your own shop and are perfect for the web-shy. These sites have a standard design and virtually hold your hand through the set-up process, explaining each of the steps and usually providing information on how you can get the most from them. However, as the saying goes, nothing comes for free and most sites will request a percentage of profits made and may encompass obligatory listing fees or additional costs, all of which should be outlined in the terms and conditions, but usually amount to very little.

Web dictionary

- › Web Hosting: Allows you to access the worldwide web
- › E-commerce: The selling of goods electronically
- › Domain Name: The website address, e.g www.sewmag.co.uk
- › IP Address: Your computer's unique code which can be discovered online, just type 'what's my IP Address' into Google
- › Search Engine Optimisation (SEO): The means of increasing your ranking on search engines such as Ask and Google

DIY WEBSITES

If you have a fair amount of knowledge when it comes to the web, it may be worth setting up your own website – and if you decide to do so there are many companies offering the resources to give you that initial boost. Sites such as WordPress provide the software for you to design your own space, often with free templates and advice too.

Although you'll keep all of the money generated from the sale of your products, there may be charges for e-commerce software and monthly web hosting as well as for domain names, dependant on the site you're using. Many sellers trade from a spectrum of sites as well as on their own to take advantage of the platforms available. But, before you commit to any it's fundamental that you carefully read the terms of use.

This can seem a little daunting – not to mention boring – but it's important that you're fully aware of exactly what you're signing up to and the rules associated with use. Don't be tempted to sign up without doing so!

LEGAL EXPECTATIONS

When selling items via various existing sales channels, be sure to heed the legalities and that good old favourite, the tax man. Although this area no doubt puts a dampener on the process, the fact is that it cannot be avoided and with direction can be dealt with painlessly. As an overview, you should be registered with HMRC and paying tax on sales if you're seen as trading.

As a rule of thumb if you buy goods to sell on, make profits or register as a business seller on an auction site you are classed as a trader. However, if you sell to cover costs, auction personal goods or gifts and sell irregularly, it's likely you won't be.

That said, we believe it's always best to be safe than sorry, so speak to an adviser to confirm your status. And, if you are trading you will need to register your company at www.hmrc.gov.uk and pay tax. But, don't fear, as it will only be deducted based on profits and not sales.

BEST PRACTICE FOR ONLINE SELLING

- › Take and use high quality images, clearly showing your product. Use natural light as flashes can alter the appearance of products.
- › Be truthful about what you're selling.
- › Write clear descriptions of the goods so the consumer knows exactly what they're purchasing.
- › Only sell original designs.
- › Request your customers' details and ask for permission to store them so that you can use the data for mailouts or marketing.
- › Package your products thoughtfully to provide a great first impression when the items arrive.

OUR PICK OF ONLINE MARKETPLACES

- › Etsy is a US-based, easy-to-navigate site www.etsy.com
- › Crafty Bob is a new and exciting online marketplace from Craftsuprint www.craftybob.com, 01925 228 079.
- › eBay is a popular auction site that's ideal for occasional selling www.ebay.co.uk
- › Folksy is a popular choice with UK crafters www.folksy.com
- › Wow Thank You hosts a wealth of handcrafted treats by UK Designers www.wowthankyou.co.uk

THE FINISHING TOUCHES

Now you've got the space locked down, all that's left to do is get your products out there. When it comes to writing copy for your site, it's best to type what you'd like to say onto a word processing programme so that it can be spell checked and you can read over it with fresh eyes before it goes live.

The 'About Us' section is very important but is often undervalued. It provides you with an opportunity to share the story of your business and promote the great practice and products you offer. Don't forget to include details about yourself and any other team members so customers can start to establish a better understanding about the company and build an alliance with you.

Each of your products will require a description. It needn't be lengthy so keep it short, sweet and, more importantly, honest. We've seen great creative examples where rhyming has been used which goes down a treat, but don't forget to add a concise line or two outlining the dimensions and other need-to-know details too.

Now, after the initial hard slog, you can sit back and be proud of your efforts – that's until the sales start coming in, anyway!



PERFECT BRANDING

BRANDING IS AT THE HEART OF ALL
SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES

Whether you're crafting on a large scale with a group of employees or working single-handedly as a designer, branding is of equal importance. It's all around us and serves to help customers make sometimes subconscious, buying decisions. With online marketplaces, fairs and craft stalls bursting with stitchers eager to make their marks, it's your brand identity that'll set you apart.

The mistake that many make is believing that the logo is where the hard work starts and ends. In reality, it's not simply about the aesthetics; branding involves the way you communicate with customers, the types of products you sell and how you promote yourself.

ESTABLISHING VALUE

Branded products are often sold for more than nameless counterparts, as customers build an expectation of the goods and buy into the name and ethos. So, make your designs recognisable – after all, we're all guilty of being swayed by pretty packaging. Choose your colours carefully, pick fonts that'll be clear and easy to read, and if you do decide to add a logo, ensure you're 100% happy with it as changing it later down the line may cause confusion.

FIND YOUR AUDIENCE

Consider what you'd like your brand to portray – be it refined luxury, retro romance, contemporary style or practical products. How can you communicate this verbally, and with visuals? Next, turn your attention to the consumer and, more importantly, who will be buying – for example, if it's a children's line, the users will not be making the purchasing decisions, so bear in mind that it's the adults who will be. Think about these points whenever you design a new piece, write any copy or make firm business decisions.



Tilda fabrics are instantly recognisable to stitchers



YOUR STORY

Customers love brands that are multi-dimensional, ones with a story and likeable characters behind them. If you have a website include an 'About us' page, with snippets of information about the business and yourself. Enclose fliers with purchases telling customers more about the brand, so they can establish a connection with it.

POINT OF DIFFERENCE

Even if you create the sweetest of stitched treasures, without great branding you're likely to blend into the background. Think of unusual ways to set yourself apart and host focus groups to gain a greater understanding of what you could offer that other brands aren't.

Consumers respond well to signature brand touches, be it that all goods are wrapped in tissue paper or displayed in nostalgic brown gift boxes. These touches will enable customers to spot your goods across a crowded craft fair.

TOP TIPS FOR GREAT BRANDING

- 1 Remain consistent – allow your customer to build trust in your brand
- 2 Keep it simple – don't get carried away with fancy fonts and logos
- 3 Stick to your budget – utilise free tools and advice
- 4 Make it fitting – ensure your branding is reflective of your products and values
- 5 Add personality – give your products depth with clever communication, whether via dialogue, graphic design or your tone
- 6 Round it up – use your branding as a tool to collate all of the factors that make your business fabulous

Source:
www.designcouncil.co.uk

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CRAFTY FRANCHISING

USE YOUR SKILLS TO BECOME A CRAFTING FRANCHISE

Many believe franchising is limited to aspiring restaurateurs, hoteliers and retailers, when in truth the practice translates into all industries. Crafting is a huge sector with great interest and mounting demand as many long to regain skills from yesteryear – in fact, clothing alterations franchise, The Zip Yard is one of the UK's

fastest growing. So, if you're thinking of becoming your own boss, why not consider joining the franchising ranks?

Put simply, to franchise is to use an existing business model. So, unlike setting up a company single-handedly, you join an existing brand which has set practices and a reputation for you to inherit.

"You have the support of a team who can offer advice on funding and business planning, with ongoing training and proven systems to ensure that the business succeeds," Nigel Toplis, managing director of The Zip Yard, explains. Although part of a business family, running a company in this way still enables you to be your own boss. The only implications are that the franchisor decides the products and services that are on offer, and the way in which they're delivered and represented.

The ingredients of a budding franchisee aren't too dissimilar to that of an entrepreneur; passion, dedication and focus. "A business background would be an asset too," Nigel adds. "Although, in most cases, training is given in all aspects of running the business, including planning, sales, marketing, shop management and administration." And, in many cases, advanced skills aren't a necessity as the ambition and desire to run a business is of foremost importance.

When it comes to money, a set amount will be required initially and advice on lending is, more often than not, readily available. "In our experience most banks will loan up to 70% of the cost of the business – so long as the franchisor has proven credibility," clarifies Nigel. It's also worth investigating government funding that may be available to you and considering potential ongoing fees that you may incur.

As with all successful operations, a great deal of hard work is the driving force behind all thriving franchises. So, if you've got the time, dedication and determination, it's definitely a prospect worth considering!

For more information, visit The British Franchising Association at www.thebfa.org



"As with all successful operations, a great deal of hard work is the driving force behind all thriving franchises"

Benefit of franchising

- › The idea has been created, tested and taken to market.
- › Well-established operations often have national advertising campaigns and solid trading names.
- › Many offer training programmes.
- › Good franchisors can help to secure funding for your investment.
- › You can benefit from discounted bulk purchases.

TOP TIPS

- › Conduct initial research.
- › Speak to existing franchise owners.
- › Ensure it'll be manageable given your financial situation.
- › Be realistic about your goals and how much time and money you can put in.
- › Don't rush into any decisions.



RUN YOUR OWN WORKSHOPS

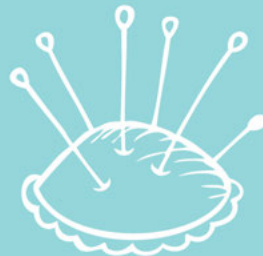
WHAT ARE THE KEY CONSIDERATIONS WHEN RUNNING WORKSHOPS?



For many crafters, sharing skills with others is a rewarding and valuable means of earning a living. And, with the recent increase in popularity of traditional crafts, workshops are much sought after. If you've got the knowledge, patience and ambition to host creative classes, what's stopping you?

FIND YOUR FOCUS

It's vital to have a clear idea of what you'd like your workshops to entail before you start. Consider the feasibility of different subjects, your own abilities, the equipment involved, timings and pricing. To gain a better insight it's important to research and attend existing workshops. "I have been a professional curtain maker for years and knew that I could give guidance and tuition to others," says Penny Waight of Blindingly Simple Workshops. "My classes are based on a brilliant one I once attended. So, I knew what I wanted to achieve and had a clear idea of the structure from the start."



KEEP EVOLVING

Once set up it's important that you continue to grow your workshops and look for ways to improve. "A good business can't stand still, it must either grow or move in another direction," Penny confirms. "I use the feedback I receive to gauge whether I'm meeting the expectations of the attendees, and to discover how I can make future experiences even better."

SPREAD THE WORD

Once you've made all the important decisions regarding your workshops, turn your attention to marketing. Online avenues are often free, wide-reaching and instant, as Penny confirms: "Once my site was created, it took no time for emails to be received and for the phone to start ringing."

GET COVERED

Of the numerous insurance policies available, public liability is of foremost importance as it'll cover you against potential claims made by students if injured. It's also worth considering health cover to protect you if you fall sick and are unable to work, buildings and contents, and finally, professional indemnity as a safeguard against potential legal action.

LEGALISE IT

To keep the tax man happy, you'll need to register yourself as self-employed regardless of whether or not it's a part-time vocation. So if you'll be running your workshops alongside a full-time job, you will need to be classed as employed and self-employed. Speak with a representative at your local tax office for more advice.



HOME COMFORTS

Although there is the option to hold courses from external premises, for convenience and to keep overheads to a minimum many choose to host tutorials and workshops at their homes. "We converted our garage into a workshop and have had hundreds of people pass through our door," says Penny. If you decide to work from your living space, it is advisable for you to speak with your local council beforehand as there may be certain regulations to be adhered to or additional tax to pay.



STAY SAFE

Health and safety may not be the most exciting of subjects, but it is of high importance. Be sure to familiarise yourself with relative laws and carry out risk assessments, removing any potential hazards. You can find guidelines at www.hse.gov.uk



THE LEARNING ZONE

WE LOOK AT HOW TAKING A COURSE CAN HELP YOU HOME IN ON YOUR TALENTS TO AID YOUR BUSINESS

You've decided that you want to attend a workshop to learn a new skill for your business adventures, but which one is right for you, and how do you go about attending? Perhaps you're thinking of setting up shop and want some artistic guidance before taking those first steps, or you currently have a crafty business and are thinking of popping along to learn something new. Read on for tips and advice on attending workshops and why experts believe in the benefits of workshops for craft sellers.

DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT

The great thing about learning is that it never ends; over time, new methods and trends are introduced that could really complement an already known skill, or present an opportunity to discover something new. Whilst watching tutorials via online sites, such as Youtube, can be helpful in terms of insight, they are not always practical. Workshops, on the other hand, are designed to be the perfect working environments, and can help a crafter polish up on their techniques. "It helps to get away from

your normal routine, make some time for yourself and nurture your creative side, which is essential when thinking of new concepts for a business," Karen Murphy, tutor and owner of Crafts Bee, says. "The gains you get are reason enough to attend, but in addition lots of people get such a feeling of accomplishment, no matter what level they're on."

Planning a business takes time and effort, and wanting to develop your skills is a good sign that you're not rushing into anything. Although workshops are not specifically tailored to boosting business, they also focus on current crafty trends, so it would be a good opportunity to check out the market.

PREPARATIONS

The important questions when sourcing information are: can I commute to it? Does it cover the bits that I want to learn? How will this benefit my business? The easiest 'guide' to turn to the ever-resourceful internet, where teachers and event organisers will usually have all the basics listed on their pages.

If you want something a bit more

condensed, check out craftcourses.com, which lists a plethora of information, from course type to location. Alternatively, you can get in touch with your local council and ask for details. Karen says that, "not only do you need to consider what will be covered, but you also need to check if everything is provided, or if you're expected to bring materials with you, or purchase them on the day."

Be mindful that you don't decide on the wrong workshop just because it was around the corner, though if you find a class that involves a few other techniques in addition to the one you want, it might still be worth going. A photographer who shoots portrait and fashion shots would still hugely benefit from attending a class on wedding portraits, as the skills are transferable enough to be relevant to their trade; it will be a case of weighing up your craft in comparison to what is on offer.

WHAT TO EXPECT

After all that research, you've finally found one that looks interesting. First things first: get in touch with the workshop organiser before popping along. Quiz them over the structure of the day, ask what level the craft will be on and how many people are taught in one class.

Good instructors combine several aspects in a workshop: demo time, one-on-one time, a variety of activities, for example. A teacher will appreciate that people learn at different speeds and in different ways. Chances are that the teacher will have sold crafts at some stage, so it's a valuable opportunity to get some insight and ask them about their selling ventures.

If you're a newbie to business, it might be worth doing a little research on the key elements of setting up shop so you can come prepared. Take down notes and arrive open-minded and be willing to participate, but most of all have fun!

TAKE AWAY

Be aware that you are there to learn and digest information, so be easy on yourself if a project you made in class is not up to your usual standard. It takes time and patience to hone a skill. "Practice your new craft so that your work eventually develops a professional and well-finished look," suggests Karen.

Another thing to consider is copyright issues. The new skills are usually practiced on the teacher's copyrighted design, so always ask permission if you do want to use them.

You may even like workshops so much that you considering organising one yourself! If that's the case and you would like to run one from home, visit gov.uk and look at the legal ramifications, as they will be a different criteria to owning a small business. It could very well be a turning point in your life!

Visit craftsbee.com to view a range of workshops in London and Kent

Web watch

- creativelive.com offers free online workshops available 24/7
- meetup.com enables you to find a local group to participate in
- thedesigntrust.co.uk is a great resource for anyone looking to start a business





HOW TO... PACKAGE YOUR MAKES

WE INVESTIGATE THE IMPORTANCE OF CHOOSING WRAPPING AND BOXES THAT GIVE YOUR PRODUCTS A PROFESSIONAL FINISH

We all love pretty, individually wrapped gifts, whether giving or receiving them. However, with more of us opting to buy from big companies that have efficient but lacklustre packaging, customer expectation to be wowed is higher for homemade gifts, especially around Christmas time. With a plethora of information available from websites, gift shops and designers, there's lots of inspiration to be found for craft sellers.

SHARE A MESSAGE

At its most basic level, packaging protects products, however what gives it an advantage is the design. Incorporating wrapping with the product helps to get it known – most people are able to instantly recognise Cath Kidston by the floral design of its packaging. It adds value to a product through appeal.

Many grow excited when it comes to packaging, especially around Christmas, and it comes down to what it represents: nostalgia. A beautifully wrapped gift can leave someone brimming with anticipation and excitement on first sight. It becomes, then, a means of communicating with the customer.

FESTIVE IMPACT

If you are going to pick any time to start selling, then Christmas is it.

We are moving away from the overused wrapping paper and more willing to experiment. So, where does this fit into your packaging plans? Simple: by progressing without compromising, you can adapt your packaging to incorporate Christmas themes and motifs without much effort. This could be as simple as swapping plain tags for holly-shaped ones, or tying packages with festive bakers twine.

PREPARATION IS KEY

Don't put off thinking about your packaging; the more preparation, the better the result. Narrow down your resources and materials, weigh up the cost, and be aware that some products can only be sold in certain packaging; a gooey brownie in crepe paper would be pointless.

When attending craft fairs, always make sure you have more packaging in stock than products, as you will come across as unprofessional if you have to run around to find a spare plastic bag. If you're selling online, make sure you have a reliable, working printer and build good working relationships with your suppliers.

PACKAGING CHECK LIST
PREPARE A TOOL KIT WITH TAPE, SCISSORS, TWINE, STICKERS, STAMPS AND EXTRA BAGS



STATEMENT OF STYLE

There is nothing worse than investing masses of time and effort into making your items to sell, only for your packaging to be lacklustre.

Style is what will put you above the rest of the competition: it is a feature of your overall image that needs development, so do your research. Search for popular themes, what is readily available, and how you can make it better without infringing any copyrights. For example if you're selling vintage-inspired brooches, pairing them with an ultra-modern box is not going to

make the right kind of impact.

Packaging needs to complement the product, and vice versa. Your ultimate goal is to make people smile!

THAT'S A WRAP

The cost of packaging needs serious consideration. When selling online, think of the cost of a wrapping service and the implicated increase in packaging costs. You could use it as an additional area for profit by offering your items to be gift wrapped for a set price. Amazon is a great example of this, inviting customers to have the item gift wrapped at the point of sale.

If you are selling at a craft fair, work your packaging into your display as it is likely to draw attention. Showcasing with your products is a great way to draw attention to your stall, and also creates a real sense of value for the customer.

Our advice

- ▶ If you are on a tight budget for your wrapping makes, upcycling off cuts of card and fabric is a great option
- ▶ Ask a friend for their opinion. An outside perspective can be very helpful when developing your ideas
- ▶ Paper shredders are great to make a basket or gift set filler with

ATTENDING CRAFT FAIRS

CRAFT FAIRS CAN BE EXTREMELY FRUITFUL WHEN PROMOTING YOUR WARES, SAYS **ISA MARIA SEMINEGA**

THE BENEFITS

Whether you are just starting out with your crafting business or you are more established, attending craft fairs can be a fantastic addition to your business strategy. One of the biggest drawbacks to selling online is that it's hard for potential customers to see the quality of your work. Craft fairs allow customers to view your designs in person. They are also a great way to raise awareness of your brand with your target market.

WHICH ONE?

The first place to start looking for fairs is within your community; local newspapers and websites will usually have lots of adverts. Also, connect with other designers and crafters and see which ones they attend. UK Handmade (www.ukhandmade.com) has a great events section featuring craft shows all around the country. Not every fair will be right for you. Consider the location, cost of a table and potential for sales. How well advertised is it? All these factors will have an impact on how many sales you make on the day. Being selective means you can concentrate on the events that best suit your products, price range and target market.

APPLY EARLY

Some venues limit the number of sellers for certain categories, so apply early to secure your place. You could also share a table with another crafter. Not only does it split the cost but you'll be able to support each other on the day.

PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

Have business cards, postcards or small freebies like badges made up with your logo and web address. Be creative; promotional merchandise doesn't have to cost the earth and the return on your investment will be worth it.



USE EVERY OPPORTUNITY OFFERED AT CRAFT FAIRS TO SELL YOUR BUSINESS

Case study

Pauline Hagan from Benu creates leather jewellery which she often sells at craft fairs.

Here she shares her top tips

- 1 ORGANISATION:** Work out in advance how much material you require and prepare more stock than you think you'll need – you don't want to run out!
- 2 STALL DISPLAY:** Think about how to showcase your products; do they look best hanging or on a stand? It's essential to tell your brand's story through your stall and make it really eye-catching.
- 3 PACKAGING:** You want to create a lasting impression and it's often the smallest things like attractive packaging that keep customers coming back. Make sure to include a business card for each purchase.
- 4 SOCIAL MEDIA:** Use social media channels before and during to promote the event. Also try to create ties and engage with other sellers who you'll be able to meet at the fair and share experiences and tips with.
- 5 BE CONFIDENT:** This is the most satisfying bit – have fun chatting about your products and telling your story.

Visit www.etsy.com/shop/benushop for more information.

CHECKLIST

- Think about how much you will need to sell in order to make a profit. Is it feasible?
- Consider the time of year and whether it suits your customers' buying habits.
- Is the craft fair right for your product range? If you sell high-end jewellery, then a school fair isn't going to be relevant.

SPREAD THE WORD

GET TALKING ABOUT YOUR CRAFTY VENTURE, SAYS **EMMA JONES**

Your craft business is up and running, so it's time to let people know you're well and truly in business. The good news is that you can achieve this on a bootstrap of a budget by embracing free or low-cost technology and making friends with the media. Here's how:

1 WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

Be clear on your story and communicate this with customers, partners and passers-by! What is it that makes you stand out? Do you use something in a particular way, and is this for a reason? If so, this forms your story and will be what people remember you for. Hone and repeat it often.

2 BECOME AN EXPERT

Through blogging, tweeting and pinning you will become an expert in your sector; this is a good place to be as it means the media will make a path to your door. Have an opinion and share it with others, then you will soon attract fans, followers and media attention.

3 GET OUT AND ABOUT

Technology is a great enabler when it comes to marketing and promotion, but it's also good to

"Pinterest has become a particular favourite for the craft industry as it enables you to visually show off your products and design influences"

get out of the home office. Attend and agree to speak at events or even host your own! Offer to raise someone's profile in exchange for a space, do a deal with the local wine-seller, invite a speaker or prepare a launch, and hey presto, you have a platform to bring together contacts and customers. The closer you connect them to each other, the more connected they will be to you. These steps take nothing but your time, yet they will get you and your business noticed – and being noticed leads to sales – which makes for a good business.

4 TWEET, PIN AND BE LINKEDIN

Embrace social media; it's a powerful and free tool at your disposal to enable you to communicate with customers (existing and new), find suppliers, and get the word out about you and your business. Pinterest has become a particular favourite for the craft

industry as it enables you to visually show off your products and design influences. It's also the world's fastest-growing social network and generates more referral traffic than Twitter. Other sites to experiment with include Facebook, YouTube and Flickr. Spend a little time each day keeping your profiles updated on these platforms, then before you know it you'll be across the web and appearing high in search engine results.

5 KNOW YOUR TRADE

As you become an expert, get to know the journalists who cover your trade; the magazines, national print newspapers and influential bloggers. Follow them on Twitter (check out #journorequest to pick up media enquiries) and send them press releases with high quality images. When a journalist calls for a quote, always respond as promptly as possible – more often than not they are on tight deadlines!

→ FOLLOW || LIKE US || MAIL



"Overwhelming your customers with too much information really is the cardinal sin of social networking"

POLITE COMPANY

Common courtesy has long been the bedrock of any successful relationship and social media is all about interaction. When dealing with comments and queries, it's vital that you take time to reply – responding in a timely manner will encourage a positive rapport. Don't ignore or delete complaints, it will only irritate the complainant more and could lead to negative publicity. Always address comments, it allows other customers to see that you deal with criticism positively. Never use swear words or slang and don't share personal issues – it's just not professional.

BIGGER PICTURE

Successful brands often have one thing in common – they're not inward looking. As a business grows, its success not only depends on how the company interacts with its customers, but also how it relates to its competitors and the wider world. Post links to useful articles and events that might be of interest to your followers; if you get a reputation as a good source of knowledge you'll attract more attention. Don't be afraid to promote other businesses who are complementary to your own – if you're lucky they may promote you in exchange. Furthermore, never speak badly of your competitors as it makes you look petty and could potentially result in libel action.

FAUX PAS

Overwhelming your customers with too much information really is the cardinal sin of social networking, and it's the most frequent cause of losing followers. In this day and age we're bombarded with so much advertising that we tend to immediately block anything perceived as spam. Tell people about your offers, sales or new products but in moderation and interspersed with other non-commercial updates. Don't make repetitive or overly self-promotional posts. Like any relationship, it's healthy to give people a bit of space.

LET'S TALK

Technology might change, but human nature doesn't. People love to talk. Successful businesses understand that getting people talking is key to establishing brand awareness. Harness this tactic by asking questions and encouraging interesting debates relevant to your area of business. However, never engage in arguments; remember everyone can read your comments. Always think before you post; what's said cannot be unsaid.

GOOD IMPRESSION

Semiotics is the study of visual interpretation and meaning; in other words, first impressions count. The images you use to promote your business should always be good quality – rightly or wrongly, people often see poor quality photos as an indication of sub-standard products. Also, pictures rather than words will often encourage more interaction, but never try to pass other people's photos off as your own. Likewise, poor spelling and grammar can reflect badly on your business, so always take a moment to proof read your posts.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FIONA PULLEN, FOUNDER OF THE SEWING DIRECTORY, EXPLAINS HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE

Steve Jobs once said: 'It's not about faith in technology, it's about faith in people'. How right he was; social media is merely a tool, but it's the people who use it that matter. If used skilfully, it can immensely benefit the reputation of a brand. However, budding entrepreneurs should be aware of some common pitfalls.

JOIN THE SOCIAL MEDIA BOOM

CRAFT IS THE PERFECT INDUSTRY FOR
THE DIGITAL AGE



The social media boom has witnessed just about every industry jump on board and try its hand at this form of marketing. While it doesn't work well for every sector, crafting is certainly something that fits the bill.

It's highly visual, and something which people love to share and discuss, particularly online. The ease with which product pictures and project ideas can be posted on sites like Facebook and Twitter makes this form of media a great selling tool.

But remember, social media is not all about the hard sell, it's also for increasing awareness, sentiment and loyalty, engaging with people, and offering people something in return for

following/liking you; be it exclusive content, advice, discounts or competitions.

WHY IT'S GOOD

Firstly, it's free. It's not free time-wise, but free to access and use on a level playing field alongside other, bigger brands, in the way that traditional media advertising isn't. Engaging in social media can, on occasion, propel your brand into the

national conscious, too. Social media can also help improve your visibility on Google. Referral links on social media all help to improve your website's organic search rankings, meaning you'll be found faster, and ranked higher. If someone has heard positive things about a company, and this company shows up in their search results, they're much more likely to click through.

The most favourable social media site to boost search engine rankings is Google-owned YouTube, results from which are frequently indexed on page one. Companies that participate in social media already know that their social content is getting

indexed by the search engines. Now, when a consumer conducts a search, they can be presented with social networking profiles, images, videos, slide presentations and customer reviews. This is another way that social media improves organic conversion rates.

JOINING IN

It's never too late to join in. Sites like Twitter are only ever gaining in importance. Frequently beating the established news channels to break the headlines, it's shaking up the way information is both reported and consumed. But it's so much more than this; it's a tool that enables the world to have a conversation.

"Social media is not all about the hard sell; it increases awareness"

So how can you join in? One of the best ways to begin interacting is to offer advice, and this doesn't mean simply posting links to your blog, or to a top tips page. You can actively look for queries by typing different keywords related to your industry sector into the search bar. A well-known computer manufacturer currently does this very well, searching for model numbers of its machines and responding directly to any tweets which raise queries and problems. This is impressive to the customer, who is pleased to have the company jump in and offer to help, especially because they hadn't directly approached them. It really represents a high level of care.

To illustrate how this would work in the craft market, a quick search, typing the word 'knitting' into the search bar, returns a query from the Twittersphere of "I want to learn knitting. Teach me anyone?" from a female user. Perhaps you have uploaded a knitting tutorial, or multiple tutorials, on to your website or YouTube channel? Now's the time to direct anyone with this kind of query straight to it by simply replying to them with a link, and a small explanation.

They'll see your response when they check for replies, and hopefully click through to your site. If it's what they're looking for, they will regard your business favourably as you've actively helped them out without directly being asked. It needn't be a query, either. Search for people who are tweeting about crafts – there are thousands posting pictures of items they have knitted, tapestries they have constructed and home décor items they've created.

Offer them some (positive) feedback and tell them you like what they've made. It's so

easy to instigate interaction with others that share a passion for craft. One company that's been using social media to its advantage is World of Wool. Jenny Clayton, who runs the company's online activity, says it has become its main channel of communication with both its customers, and those with an interest in craft who aren't yet customers. "It makes people feel part of what we're doing, and gives them a sense of ownership," she says. "As well as informing people about things we're introducing, we simply chat to people. I research what's happening in the craft world, such as exhibitions, and put it on to our social media pages so that they work as an information resource."





"For example, I once uncovered a story about Australian Wool Innovation asking wool growers in the country to donate wool to be blended into a suit for Prince William's wedding. This sparked lots of debate on our pages – many people

felt that it should only be British wool used!"

Jenny finds that the company's social media activity is an excellent way to get feedback and find out what customers want from the business. "People love being able to communicate with us in this way," she says. "Rather than having to phone head office, they can communicate via a channel they're already using."

YOU CAN MEASURE IT

One of the most frequently-argued cases against investing time in social media marketing is that its benefits are intangible. Wouldn't it be a waste of valuable time to

spend hours working on a social media campaign, time that could be used elsewhere in the business? In a word, no. While it is possible to waste time and do it badly, social media activity, and its results, are certainly measurable. If you are running an ecommerce website, selling, or converting visits to your site into sales, is your primary goal, and this is measurable with Google Analytics, the free tool from Google that lets you see exactly how people are finding and interacting with your website. Simply examine the referral paths of visits to your sites, and see how many are coming from social media.

Remember though, a conversion doesn't necessarily have to mean a sale; if you're not selling on your website, your goals could be having visitors sign up to your e-newsletter. Tracking goal conversions in Google Analytics is easy and comes highly recommended.

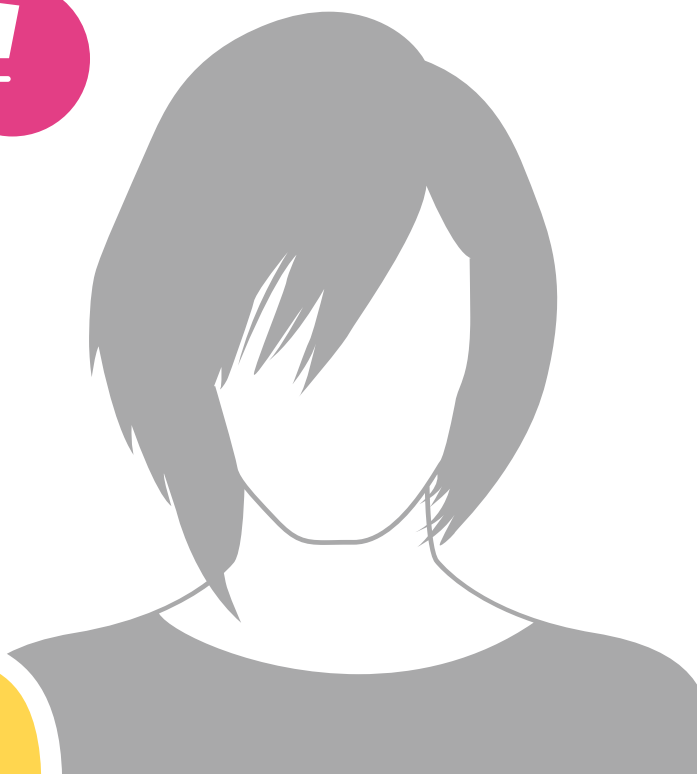
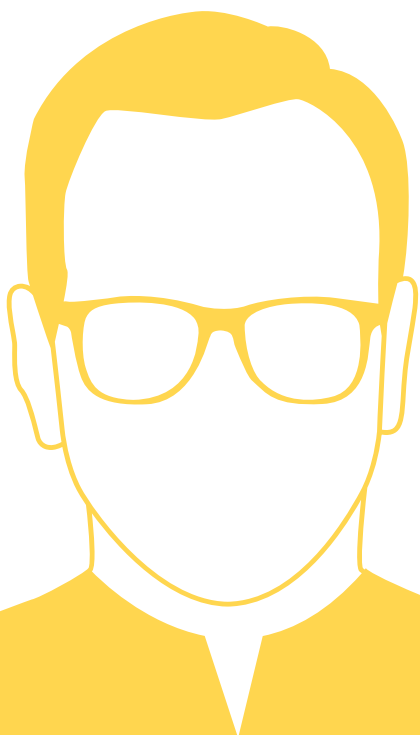
The second reason for spending time on this important medium is to protect your brand's name and image. If a customer gets

riled about something – be it an item not arriving from your website, or a bad customer service experience in your shop – they will let everyone know. Negative feedback needs to be dealt with quickly in the social media sphere, and so frequent monitoring is important.

Remember, it will take a while to start seeing tangible results, and you'll need to build up your social media presence gradually. But do it well, and you'll soon have a loyal base, who will give you their honest feedback on whatever you ask. "We advertise in consumer magazines such as *Crafts Beautiful*," says Jenny, "and each time we design a new print advert, we display it on social media before it's in print, and ask what our followers think of it. Luckily, all feedback has so far been very positive! But it's all about making the customer feel engaged and involved with your business – it keeps them coming back for more."



WWW.



INFORMAL BLOGGING

CREATE AND RUN A BLOG TO SUCCESSFULLY PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS IN AN INFORMAL BUT CUSTOMER-FOCUSED WAY, SAYS **ISA MARIA SEMINEGA**

SETTING UP

WHICH ONE?

A blog is an online space where you can share your inspiration and ideas. If you are looking to give it a go, I'd recommend blogger.com, a free platform that is easy to update. If you want more control over the look and are willing to pay a bit per month for web hosting, I suggest **Wordpress.org**. It's a little more complicated to set up as you need to upload it through your hosting provider but most give you the choice for a one-click install option.

GETTING STARTED

1. CHOOSE A NAME

for your blog, ideally your business name to keep the brand consistent. If you don't have one, then use your name and start building up your personal brand as a designer.

2. LINK YOUR BLOG

to a custom domain and your website. You should already have the domain name for your business (if not, get it before someone else takes it!). Providers usually have instructions on how to link a custom domain to your blog and a support team to help you.

3. SELECT A TEMPLATE

or theme. Blogger.com has free ones and you can find beautiful Wordpress themes at **www.woothemes.com**. Remember to keep the style consistent with your branding.

BLOGGING FOR BUSINESS

Writing regular content with lots of key words helps you rank higher in search engines. Consider what topics your target market is searching for, then write posts around them. Use your blog as an opportunity to help customers make a decision about whether to buy from you; showing your jewellery styled in different ways or how it fits in with current trends can be helpful. If people comment, always reply. A well-managed blog can bring people one step closer to purchasing.

QUALITY OVER QUANTITY

WHAT TO WRITE

Share different parts of your process, such as your initial sketches. You don't need to give away your secrets, but letting people see the work that goes into your makes can help them understand the value. Upload lots of photos and make your blog visual. In terms of the number of posts, go for quality over quantity. As long as each post has a purpose and some value it doesn't matter if you write once a week or every day.

COURSES AND WORKSHOPS

- › Blogging Your Way by Holly Becker at Decor8 www.decor8blog.com/ecourses
- › Photography for bloggers by Emily Quinton www.startupwife.com/workshops
- › The Blogcademy workshop www.theblogcademy.com

Case study

Product designer Karina Sharpe creates jewellery for her company Karina Jean and uses her blog to connect with her customers.

- › Showcase yourself; nowadays things are very much about the person behind a product. The blog gives my business a real voice and personality. It allows my customers to get to know me better.
- › Decide the purpose of the blog at the beginning. I cover my journey and process. I've called it a Journal instead of a blog as I feel this suits me better and allows me to be sporadic but genuine.
- › Think about what other people want to know about you. I write about creative journeys and the stories behind my products. Spend quality time on your writing but try not to ramble.
- › Try writing as if you are speaking conversationally. If you can find your own voice, people will come back often and feel like you are talking specifically to them.
- › Spend time on your images. Work towards a consistency in the style or mood. This will help to form a strong personality for your blog and help you find loyal visitors.

Visit www.karinajeans.com.au/journal





LOOK WHAT I MADE

SARAH HALBEISEN TALKS ABOUT THE HARD WORK, DEDICATION AND PASSION THAT GOES INTO HER BLOG



THE NITTY-GRITTY

First post: 16th October 2012

Updated: At least once a week

Nature: DIY, crafts, places I've been, cooking and baking

Favourite post: Always the most current

Craft hobbies: I love working with paper but also wood, felt, leather and fabric



FIRST UPDATE

Uploading my first post was actually quite a memorable moment. I already had images ready, which I didn't edit so they took forever to upload as they were such huge files. When I pressed the publish button I can remember thinking 'this is it, I'm a blogger' and feeling so happy. I wasn't sure that anybody was going to read the post and for me it wasn't about that; it was about creating something that could be seen and will be recorded.

CREATIVE BOB

I like the challenge of crafting and discovering how to achieve an idea I have in my mind – that's what keeps me interested. Often, I become so engaged and caught up in the process that I lose track of time and sometimes forget to take pictures, which isn't great when you want to create a tutorial post for the make.



MY SPACE

The initial idea was to use the blog as a means of keeping track of what I was creating. The focus has changed slightly now in that I aim to inspire other people too. Plus, a few months ago, I decided to include more details about myself as I felt visitors may want to know who's behind the blog.

NAME GAME

Picking the name was really hard. I was thinking about creating a blog for a long time and I was already producing content, but I just couldn't decide on a title. I was thinking about what I wanted to do with my blog when I thought of naming it Look What I Made, as it reminds me of when I had created something that I was proud of as a child – I'd want to share with the whole world! That's how I still feel about my projects.

CONSTRUCTING POSTS

A blog entry should be like a good meal: visually appealing, every bit enjoyable and one should leave longing for more. The internet is quite visual and a writer should consider this when putting together their posts, keeping the text short and light.

BIG MOMENT

On 27th of November I received more than 1,000 visitors to my blog. I had submitted one of my projects to Craft Gawker, a website that collects craft projects from bloggers worldwide. This led many people to visit my space which, at the time, had just five projects. I remember being incredibly excited, but at the same time it put a lot of pressure on me. Now that I had people reading my blog I wanted to create the best post possible and I have to admit that I had a tiny melt-down, stressing about whether I was up to it; my boyfriend had to calm me down!

GOOD ADVICE

I'm not sure if blogging is for everyone, but if you have the slightest interest go for it! If you enjoy crafting and don't mind spending the extra time taking pictures, editing and uploading them, writing a description and communicating with your readers and other bloggers, it can be the best thing in the world. The difficult thing is to maintain the site over the months, years and to be consistent. It is hard work and quite time consuming, but I love it, everything about it.



Find Sarah on...

- › www.look-what-i-made.com
- › www.facebook.com/lookwhatimade.blog
- › www.twitter.com/sarahnade01

NOT ALL BLOGS ARE EQUAL

CRAFT IS THE PERFECT INDUSTRY FOR
THE DIGITAL AGE

With more than 156 million public blogs all available on the worldwide web, it seems like everyone in the world's doing it, but for what gain? Websites can be static, with just necessary information. Your blog allows you to be more flexible and reactive, and introduce new product lines in detail.

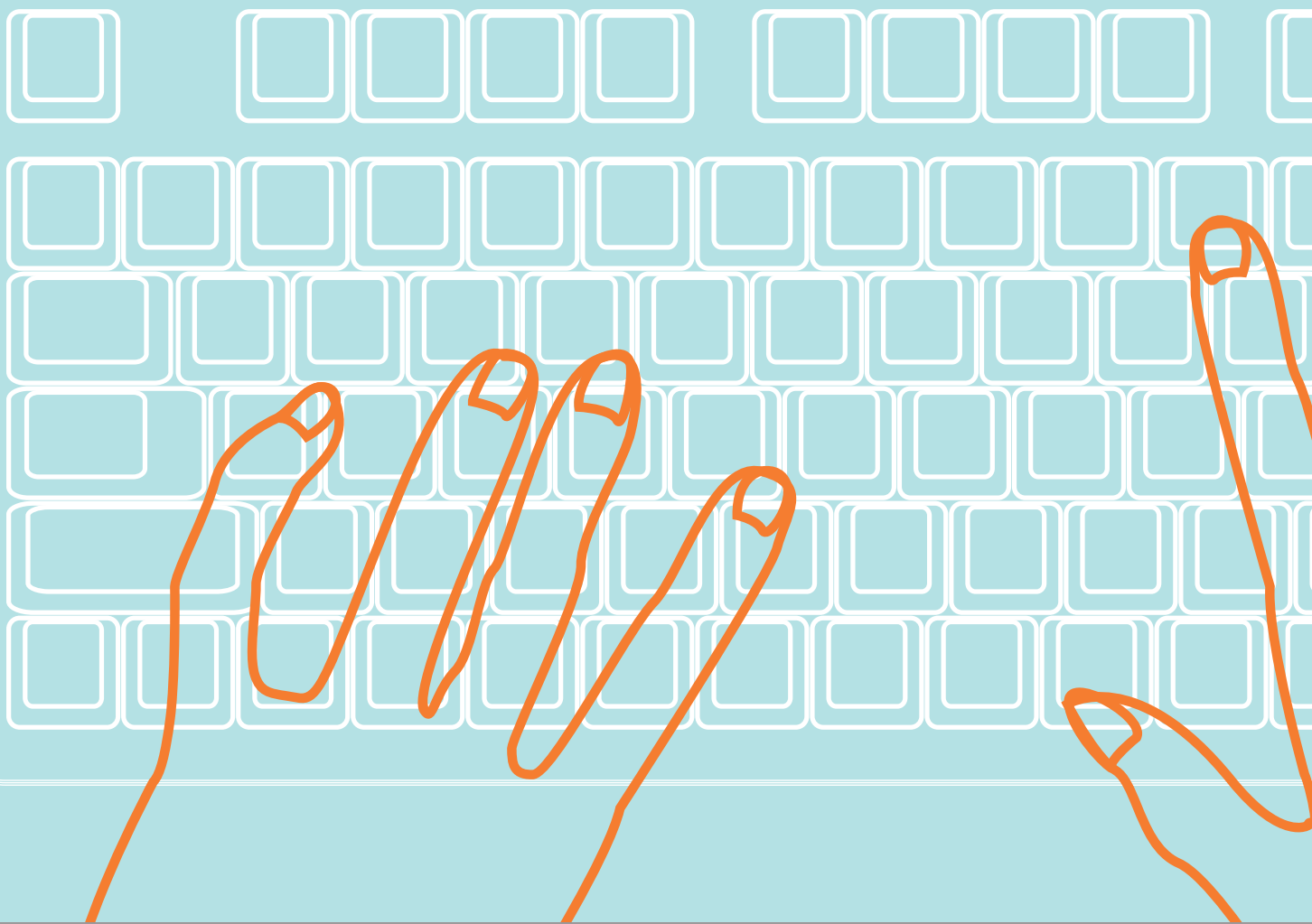
Not all blogs are equal. The ease at which someone can publish something on the web has made it a democratic medium; all can take part and have their say, but there is an awful lot said online which quite frankly just isn't worth saying. So, how to make your blog worthwhile of your time and effort?

DETERMINE WHY YOU ARE GOING TO BLOG

It sounds obvious, but it's important to start with goals in mind. The main reasons that any websites exist in business are to build a brand, to generate sales or leads, or to generate advertising revenue. Think about what you are

hoping to achieve. If you're running an online shop as well as a bricks and mortar outlet, it's likely you'll be looking to drive visitors to your ecommerce site where you can hopefully clinch some extra sales.

Perhaps you also want to help build what you offer into a trusted brand? Back in the



day, if someone wanted to learn to knit, for example, they'd ask someone they knew how to cast on and take it from there. Now there are more 'have a go' crafters than ever before, and often, the first place they'll look for inspiration and knowledge is online. By offering them good quality advice and information, customers will develop an affinity with your brand, and perhaps even loyalty too.

DETERMINE YOUR BLOG'S CONCEPT

Many blogs are started by people who just want to 'say' – but don't really know what it is they want to say. A directionless blog in business is a waste of your valuable time and money. There are so many blogs around these days which are literally a stream of

consciousness – a less-than-fascinating insight into everything a person did from the moment they rose in the morning. These kinds of blogs are pretty pointless because, in all honesty, no one really cares! As you're going to be using the blog to promote your craft business, that's most of the direction sorted. If you're purely a papercrafter, then you've got your focus. But a multi-discipline crafter might struggle a bit more.

WHAT SHOULD YOU FOCUS ON?

This decision will come down to a number of factors, such as what area you want to push the most, and how many resources you can pool into blogging. Focusing on one area and doing it really well is better than a diluted,

fragmented and wishy-washy blog with no real core target audience.

Finding your niche, however narrow, is often best, as too general a blog can get lost among the myriad of others out there in cyber space.

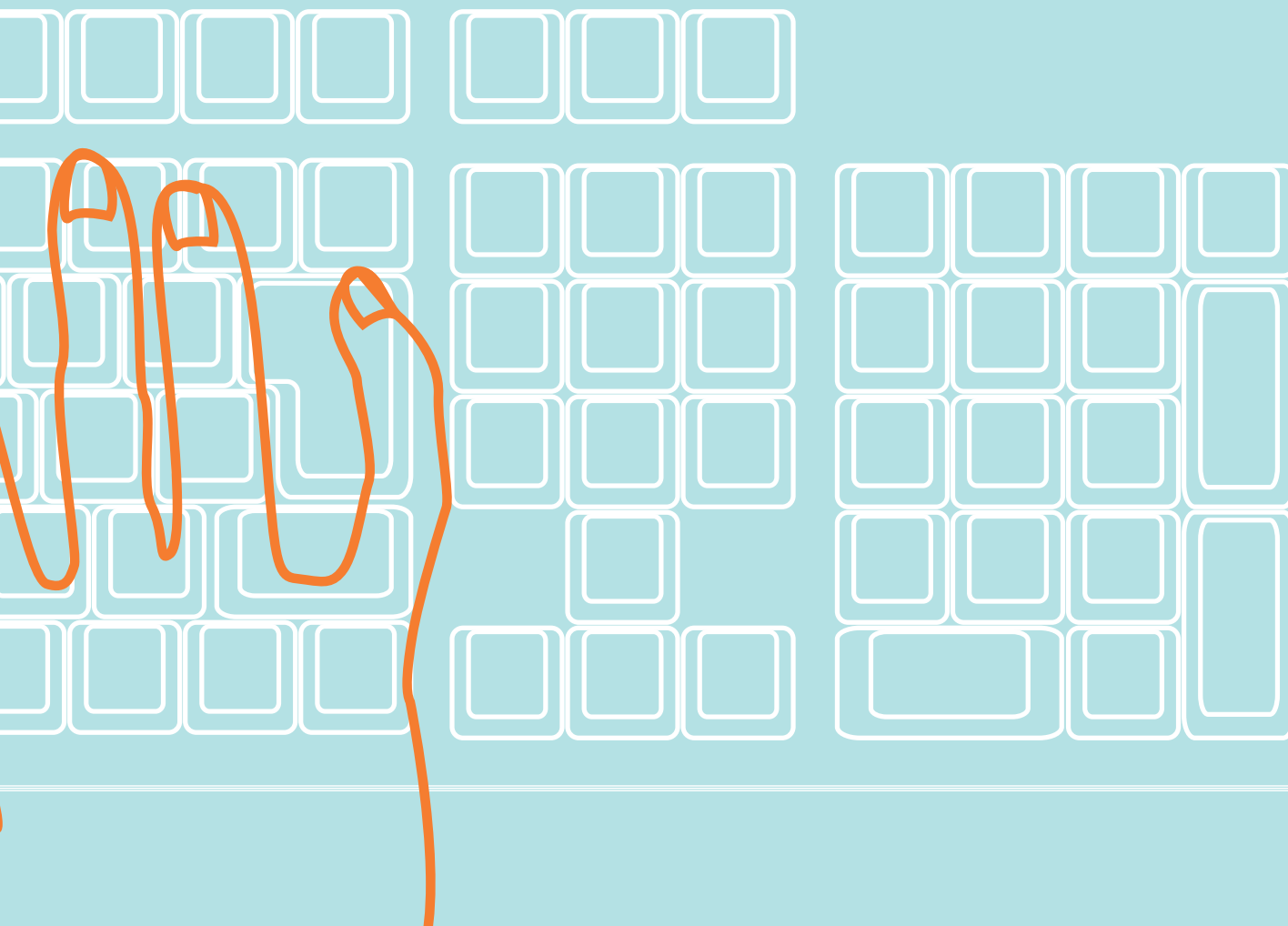
You'll need to post fairly regularly not only to keep visitors coming back for more, but also to keep the search engine spiders crawling as often as possible – though more on that later. Plan your first few postings – you can even write your first few postings and then delay the 'going live' dates so that you can manage your time well during the first few days.

SITE INTEGRATION

The question of whether you should integrate your blog into your current website is

important for two reasons. The first is that if you have used a content management system, such as WordPress, to build your site, you can easily construct a blog within this. If you do things this way, then you'll only be using one system, so that's only one to learn, as well as only one set of login details to update both the site and the blog.

Some bloggers prefer to keep the blog separate, and under a completely different domain name. The main reason is for search engine optimisation; linking websites can be really helpful in getting search engines to rank sites higher. However if your blog is new, it's unlikely to have much traffic for a while, or even much content, meaning Google or the other engines won't rank it very highly. Links only really count for anything if they come from a site the



search engine deems as credible and highly-ranking itself, and so generous links between the two sites probably won't do much for rankings at this stage.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

Ranking in search engines is determined by hundreds of factors, but a good rule of thumb is 'content is king' – this means populating your site with lots of keyword-rich copy.

It's so easy to find out what people are searching for online when it comes to products they want to buy, or services they want to use. Googling 'keyword tool google' will bring you to Google's AdWords site which allows you to type in any kind of search query and find out how many internet searches have been made both nationally and internationally for it. Pick which phrases or keywords you want to target, and title your page to include them. Make sure your page headings contain the words, and keep the density of the words within the main body content to between five and eight percent.

When a search engine spider arrives to read the page, it will determine what the content is about by reading the headers and the amount of times certain words are mentioned in the text. Mention them too many times, however, and the search engine will class the page as 'spam', leading to penalisation which is actually detrimental to rankings.

Look at the resources you have available. Will you be the sole blogger? It's best to post as frequently as possible, because this will get the search engine spiders visiting your site more frequently, resulting in more traffic. See page 41 for a more detailed look at SEO.

ORGANISING CONTENT

Most blog templates categorise entries by date as default, but with crafting, it generally works better to have named categories, especially if you are blogging across the crafting disciplines

WHAT SHOULD I WRITE?

This is where your crafting knowledge and expertise will really come into its own. The thing of value you have to offer to visitors to your blog is the 'how to' aspect. Your site can, of course, announce new product lines and discuss them, after all, shoppers love to know about the latest product on the market, but not everyone wants to read a sales pitch, nor is everyone on the lookout to buy right away.

Make your blog a destination for useful information to help people progress in their hobby. If people get stuck on something, it's an unfortunate fact that they'll often get frustrated and give up. The first place many people look for help is online. If you've got the time, you can create a comprehensive archive of the common problems people come up against.

Demonstrations are relatively easy to post online; for some projects, a simple step-by-step series of photographs is all that's needed, with clear descriptions of what is happening in the pictures underneath.

CALLS TO ACTION

You should look to tell visitors to your site to do something to progress things further. This can be 'sign up for my e-newsletter' – an invaluable marketing tool, or 'buy my products' if your site is transactional. You can also offer people the option to connect with you on various social media platforms, all of which you can integrate into your blog. The more multi-channel interaction you have with potential customers, the better.

BLOG DESIGN

Unless you have a good web designer to hand, or a big budget with which to pay one, stick to one of the many pre-designed templates available. These can be modified as you wish.

SOFTWARE

Where will you be hosting your blog? There are two options here. The first is to use a third-party service provider, like Blogger.com or WordPress.com. This is free, but will lead to less advertising revenue (should you wish to make money from your blog in this way). The second option is to buy software – WordPress.org is the most commonly-used – and host either internally or with a hosting provider.

Buying software is the option for more serious bloggers, and if you're just looking to update customers on latest products, and provide a few tutorials, the free option is perfectly fine.

MARKETING YOUR BLOG

There are numerous ways to draw more attention to your blog. You should of course promote each blog update to your followers on social media channels, making sure the headlines you use are catchy and make people curious.

One way to direct traffic from one blog to your own site is to write a really good guest post for a site which receives a lot of traffic. For example, is there a great craftshop blog out there that you really admire, and that's not in direct competition with your own business? Writing an interesting post with a link to your own site can attract a few clicks.

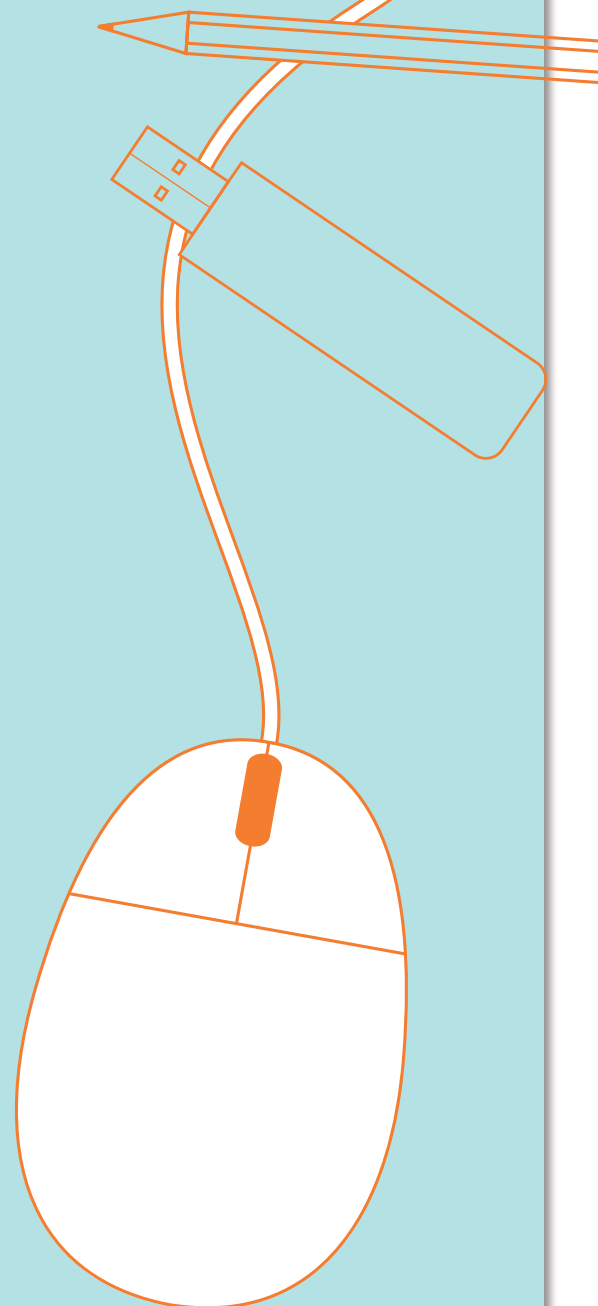
You need to make sure you do your best here and really grab people's attention, making them keen to find out more about you.

The same goes for leaving comments on other people's blogs. Perusing other blogs and posting on high-traffic ones can be useful. But beware, don't just post a link, as you'll be regarded as a spammer.

Offer something as an incentive for people to click, and join in with the community – after all, that's a whole group of potential customers in one place.

There are no hard and fast rules of blogging, and much of what you'll be doing at first will be trial and error.

Remember, the internet is full of open and free information, so harness this if you get stuck. Look at others' blogs and take inspiration from what they are doing well. Just like anything else new, it's a learning curve but one which will ultimately benefit your business.



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DESIGN A GREAT WEBSITE ON A BUDGET

AN EFFECTIVE WEBSITE NEEDN'T COST THE EARTH TO GET
UP AND RUNNING SAYS SERIF'S **DALE COOK**

Getting a business website up and running is easy and, with more and more people online, it's increasingly important too. You can get a site live in no time at all with free software like Serif's WebPlus Starter Edition and help is available to you online.

Designing an effective website is slightly trickier, particularly if you're working to a budget. This article gives you an overview of how to set up a professional website on a shoestring.

DECIDE ON YOUR DOMAIN NAME

Selecting your website's domain name is your first task and it might seem like a no-brainer. You want it to reflect your business, so the simplest solution is a `yourbusinessname.com` or a `whatyouoffer.com` domain (the latter will also help your search engine ranking for related search terms).

But what if the name you want isn't available? Even if it is, there are still other factors to consider before making your choice...

DOMAIN NAME LENGTH

A shorter name is usually catchier and easier to remember (`ebay.com`). For smaller businesses though, opting for a name that is slightly longer, but more descriptive, might make your site more memorable (`webuyanycar.com`).

DOMAIN EXTENSION

Consider your domain's extension too. The `.com` extension is most people's number one choice because

of its global appeal. And it's what visitors are most likely to guess at if they don't know your full address. However, the `.com` version of your desired domain might be taken, so let's look at the other option.

Suitable alternatives include a `.net`, `.info` or `.org` address (the latter is common among non-profit organisations) but so many more domain suffixes have become available recently. If you only trade in one country, your potential customers might be more inclined to buy from a national business. In this case, a `.co.uk` extension would not only work well, but improve your search engine ranking too.

If you do secure a `.com` address, make sure you don't sacrifice the quality of your domain name to get it. A first-choice domain name with a second-choice extension is better (and often cheaper) than attaching `.com` to a mediocre domain name.

WHERE TO BUY

Once you have decided on a domain name, check to see if it is available by using the search function on the website of any company that sells them.

You might get yours included with web design software, or as part of a promotional offer, or you might have to pay a great deal for a sought-after name. It will vary from one provider to the next, but bear in mind that you'll have to renew every year or two, so it pays to shop around, and might be worth buying for a longer term.

Similarly, the company you buy your domain name from might offer hosting too, which can be convenient if you're not highly technical, but don't take it up for convenience alone.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT HOSTING FOR YOU

When it comes to web hosting, it's easy to opt for the free or cheapest option, but try to consider these other important factors too...

WEB SPACE

If you've created a substantial website, consider the web space allowed by your hosting. Even if your site is only 10MB in size, if you create new pages or add images, audio, or MP4 videos etc, your allocated web space can decrease dramatically.

Your hosting might impose a limit, but this isn't a major problem – you can always upgrade if you need to. It's best to start with a package that gives you what you need and keeps costs down, and then upgrade your hosting if and when required.

BANDWIDTH

Bandwidth is the amount of information transferred from your site to all your visitors' computers and is another important feature of your potential hosting. For example, let's say your hosting equips you with 50GB of bandwidth each month and the sum of all the pages in your site is 100MB (0.1GB). This allows 500 people to view your website in a month (if they each look at every page). If you get more viewers or your site increases in size, it could be disabled – costing you potential sales.

As with your web space, try to keep cost in mind and start only with what you need, rather than over-compensating – it's easy to upgrade if you need to.

MAKE SURE
THE WEB
SPACE THAT
YOU HAVE IS
ENOUGH TO
CATER FOR
EVERYTHING
YOU WILL
WANT TO
DO WITH
YOUR SITE

SUPPORT AND RELIABILITY

Technical support and reliability are also paramount. Without much experience of getting websites online, you may come to depend on support from a hosting company, i.e. speaking to someone when a problem arises and resolving the matter as soon as possible. And you'll want reliability no matter how web-savvy you are. If your site goes down for example, you'll want to know why and how quickly it will be back online again.

For reassurance, try to see what other people are already saying about your potential hosting company. Read reviews and find out about the quality of service, uptime etc. before you commit.

ADVERTISING

Some packages will often be free or cheaper than others because they require you to display adverts promoting other companies or the hosting company itself, or to share your domain name with them.

This might seem like a good compromise, but the disadvantage is that adverts (in the form of pop ups, banners or advertising frames) can take attention away from your site, so shop around for an ad-free, standalone package.

LOCATION AND TYPE OF SERVERS

Securing hosting with a company that has servers in your country can be beneficial, principally for your search engine ranking.

But cloud hosting also offers advantages – your site is

hosted on servers around the world, making it faster for local visitors to access your site. Another advantage of this type of hosting is that if one server encounters a problem, another will pick up the slack. This almost guarantees your site is never down, although even the biggest names in cloud computing suffer downtime.

CREATE A PROFESSIONAL SITE

Designing a website as a small business is easy to do, but hard to do well. Free software and templates online mean you can create your website for little or no cost – great for your budget. But make sure you have your customers in mind as you design.

TALK ABOUT BENEFITS, NOT FEATURES

In order to connect with, and sell to, your customer, you need to think like a customer. Visitors to your site will need to see what your products do – but they also need to read about or see the benefits of

buying your products. For example, if you're selling cars, informing visitors that a car has the best fuel consumption in its class probably won't sell it to them. You need to tell them that they will save money, which they can spend on the more important things in life.

In other words, you're not selling a car, as they already want one – you're selling the idea of extra cash at the end of every month for the customer to do with what they please. Don't just describe a product or service; you can be the solution to the customer's problem.

KEEP YOUR DESIGN UNCLUTTERED

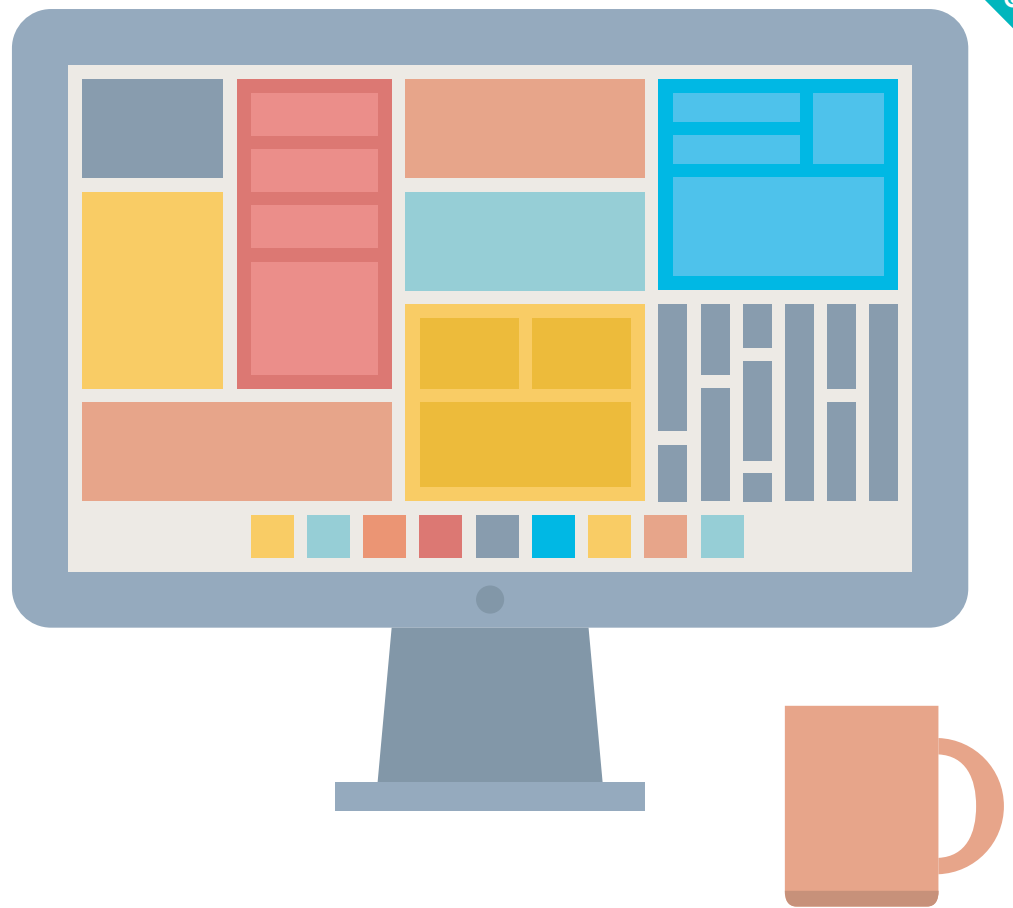
You want your website to be inexpensive, but attractive and professional; the best way to achieve this is by using a template that is relatively low in cost or even free. A clean and uncluttered template design will be easier for you to work with than a busy and unstructured one, not to mention much friendlier on the eye and better for the site's loading time.

Avoid using lots of different

fonts – one or two sans serif fonts are best for on-screen readability, especially if pages are text-heavy. Similarly, only use images and other media (quick and easy to add into templates) if they are relevant to the content, otherwise they'll just slow your page loading time and eat up bandwidth.

Also, the colour scheme across your website should be recognisable and memorable. You should use your existing brand colours (colours that you already use in other marketing materials) and a strong contrast between text and background.

There are more design elements to consider, like whether it uses HTML5, or how the site looks on smartphones and tablets, and whether complicated features or excessive text entry are a barrier to usefulness. The goal is a professional and easy-to-navigate website that enables a customer to go from product search to purchase in the quickest and easiest way possible. Make summary information, prices, and calls to action obvious; drive customers to make the right move.



GET TO GRIPS WITH PHOTOGRAPHY

THE QUALITY OF YOUR PHOTOGRAPHY CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SALE AND A LOST OPPORTUNITY.
CLIQQ PHOTOGRAPHER **ANT JONES** EXPLAINS

In terms of attracting new customers and increasing business, great pictures are at least as important as having good products in the first place, because with your marketing and PR, you are reaching out to groups of potential customers who have little or no experience of your brand or products. So the chances are their first experience will be when they see a photograph.

If this image is professional and striking, it could lead the customer to read about – and hopefully, eventually purchase your product.

HOW CAN BAD PHOTOGRAPHY AFFECT BUSINESS?

You are taking a number of risks by allowing sub-par photography of your brand to enter the public arena. The first and most obvious is that it will influence public perception of how you operate – people may assume that if you cut corners with your presentation, this could also be the case with your products, and even more so with customer service.

Essentially, poor presentation could be promoting an unwelcome 'bloke in a shed' image of your brand. Additionally, it is so easy to organise good quality photography, and so many companies are clued up in this area, that the few who skip or skimp on this key step in raising brand awareness become conspicuous for their lack of quality photos.

I work in the magazine industry, and I see how busy editors are, and how they get swamped with press releases on a daily basis. If yours doesn't come supplied with a usable image, there's a good

chance it will be moved to the bottom of the pile, or even filed as junk, and your competitor with a great photo will get your spot.

HIRING PROFESSIONALS

The first consideration is how and where the images will be used. Your set of photos needs to be versatile – for a catalogue or a press release, simple pack shots on a white background work well, but you may also need something more stylish for an ad campaign or for the main page on a website. Also consider whether the function of your product needs to be demonstrated, so it may be wise to show it in use with a model or in a room set.

You need to stay in control of your costs, so you need to find out whether the photographer charges per image or at a day rate; if it's a day rate they must be clear with you how many images they can supply you in the time booked, and what the implications are should you run over time. Usage and retouch fees are often added on, so you must make sure there are no hidden costs in the quote you are given.

It goes without saying that you must be confident that the photographer is capable of interpreting your brief, understanding what you need to say about your brand, and supplying you with photography to a standard you will be happy with. Ask them to show you some examples of their previous work that might demonstrate a style or brief similar to yours. Do they have a reliable and proven track record in your specific industry?

EXPERT TECHNIQUES

To get the best pictures we use a lot of very expensive lighting, have a huge and ever-expanding props cupboard, and regularly visit reclamation yards in the search for old bits of wood and furniture that we can paint up in the latest shades to create versatile room sets.

Products need to be clean, well packaged and clearly labelled. But please don't put sticky labels on them that we then have to scrub off!

To see more of how we work, take a look at some of our behind-the-scenes videos and

images on our blog and YouTube channel.

WORK THE CAMERA

Retouching is a critical stage in modern photography. Removing dust, marks and unwanted backgrounds is standard practice, but we also work with more advanced techniques such as toning and texture for a particular look, manipulating and moving the elements in an image, or combining elements from several images to create more exciting results.

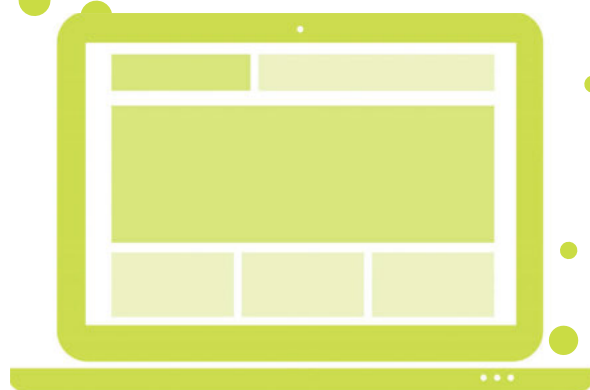
See more of Ant's work at www.cliqq.co.uk

"Great pictures are at least as important as having good products"



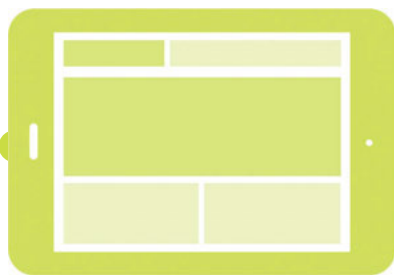
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THINK CAREFULLY ABOUT YOUR
COMPOSITION – IT MAKES ALL
THE DIFFERENCE



EFFECTIVE WEBSITES

ALEX O'BYRNE AND PIERS THOROGOOD,
FOUNDERS OF WE MAKE WEBSITES, OFFER
GUIDANCE ON MAKING A SUCCESS OF
YOUR BUSINESS ONLINE



One way you can make your business more efficient is with an effective website. At We Make Websites, we've worked with a large number of craft clients – from individual designer-makers, to large craft organisations including the Crafts Council – in each case, creating websites to help run their businesses more effectively and to better promote their products. Here are some important things to consider for any craft website.

BUDGET AND EXPECTATIONS

It's not necessary to spend lots of money initially if you're a new business or otherwise don't have much budget. You can get a quick, professional-looking web presence by using services like Squarespace.com or Shopify.com.

These types of service allow you to pick a website template/layout and then customise the design to your heart's content using a simple online editor. You should be able to get up and running for around £200 per year using one of these services.

However, if you have the budget, there is a number of advantages to hiring a web agency to design and develop your website. They are experts in the field so will know what will work best to achieve your business objectives. They'll use their experience to decide on factors like what content to put on the site to attract visitors, how best to lay out a landing page to increase sales or how to build the site to be flexible and extendable in future.

They will most likely also have expertise in related fields such as copywriting, graphic design, illustration and photography.

You should consider that for most people, your website will be the first place they check out your company and your work. For £1,500 to £4,000 you should be able to hire an agency that will design and build a bespoke website for you that runs on a content management system. You probably won't get e-commerce built in with the lower end of this budget, but you could link to a third party service like Etsy or Not on the High Street to allow your customers to easily buy products they've seen on your website (if you do decide to do this, make sure customers know that they will be taken to another website to buy the product).

For fully integrated ecommerce, in which the customer stays on your site throughout the shopping and checkout process, expect to pay upwards of £3,000.

YOUR BUSINESS OBJECTIVES

In order to steer the direction of your website, you need to know where you're heading. You can do this by defining at least one business objective that your site is going to help achieve. An example might be for the website "to increase wholesale orders by 20% before November" or "to double the number of commission enquiries we receive per month". Be as specific as you can and make sure objectives are measurable so you can determine their success at a later date. Your business objectives will help with decision-making during the development of your site.

"Your business objectives will help with decision-making during the development of your site"

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

The first thing that your business objectives will highlight is one or more target audiences. For example, if you wish to increase the number of necklaces you sell, your site needs to appeal to the female market in which most jewellery-wearers reside.

Ensure that the look and feel of your website is suitable for the audience and that each page guides the user to the objective. In this instance, you could include a call to action for your audience on the homepage somewhere, such as 'click here to buy the perfect Mother's Day gift', with photos of a completed piece.

"Ensure that the look and feel of your website is suitable for the audience and that each page guides the user to the objective"

ENGAGE YOUR VISITORS

One of the most important aspects of any craft website is the photography. Customers need to see clearly what they will be getting. Engaging photography will encourage visitors to explore your website and also make them more likely to buy your products. Make sure you include plenty of photography on your homepage to draw visitors in – using slideshows of images works particularly well.

“Make sure you include plenty of photography on your homepage to draw visitors in”

If you're selling products online, good product photography can make a huge amount of difference to your sales. If a potential customer can't see the product properly, they won't buy it. So make sure your photography is good quality and large enough to see detail (include a zoom function if budget allows). Include multiple photographs for each product to show different angles and, if possible, the product in context (if it's jewellery, someone wearing the piece; if it's a cushion, show a photograph of it in a living room).

The copy on your website is also an important factor for engaging and informing visitors. Make sure it is well-written, concise and split into small easy-to-digest chunks. For product pages, include all details a prospective customer might want to know.

ENGAGE WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

As well as engaging your visitors with the content on your website, in today's social web, it is important to engage with your customers as well. This means taking advantage of tools like Facebook and Twitter, as well as more craft-focused tools such as Pinterest, a social bookmarking site for images.

However, don't just make your social media outlets into a list of ads for your website and products. That will bore your audience. Interact with them by offering advice on your subject area or by asking questions of your

followers. It should only take 30 minutes a day and the viral nature of these tools will make that effort pay off. For more social media tips, see page 24.

Another way to use social media to promote your business is by adding 'like' buttons to your product pages. This allows visitors to quickly share products they like with their friends and, crucially, helps get the word out about your work. It also helps visitors who might be struggling what to buy, by showing them what other people like. Your web developer will be able to easily integrate these into your site.

Another way to help visitors decide to purchase products is by including testimonials from previous customers on your website. This 'social proof' puts people at ease and makes them much more likely to buy from you.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

In the 90s, websites typically required a 'webmaster' – an expensive, technical person whose job was to update website content for an organisation. Today, browser-based content management systems (CMSs) mean that non-technical individuals can easily edit the text and images on a website, eliminating the need for webmasters.

Most major content management systems have e-commerce support, which your web developer should be able to set up for an extra cost. This will usually include a shopping cart and checkout process, as well as product and order management features. This system can be used as a basis for more sophisticated features. For example, you may wish to add a wholesale customer log in area for clients that buy in bulk and therefore receive a discount. Or you may want to generate discount codes so you can run limited time special offers, such as 10% off a selected range. These will add additional cost to your website but you should consider them if your business is more established.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMISATION (SEO)

Search engine optimisation is the process of making your website more appealing to search engines. It can get very technical but there are some useful guidelines that can be followed in order to get most of the benefit.

The first step is to define which keywords you want to rank highly for – the more niche

the term, the easier this will be. A good example is 'butterfly necklace', a bad example is 'jewellery', which is a high-value term that already has lots of well-established (and well-funded) competition.

The single most important factor in increasing your search engine ranking is how many people link to your website. Search engines use can see this and use it to gauge how 'good' your site is. One way to get people to link to your website is to write interesting, humorous, timely or useful content as part of a blog. Blog posts like 'Top 10 tips for...' or 'Five ways to improve...' are often popular. Producing content like this is also beneficial for SEO because the content will typically include a good density of keywords relevant to your products.

There are also technical elements to SEO such as how well the page is structured and how descriptive the URLs are on your site. As mentioned before, a good content management system will make this easy to manage, by generating the page code for you and creating URLs that include lots of relevant keywords. Go to page 42 for more on SEO.

WEB DESIGN AGENCIES

If you've decided to spend some money on getting a site done, make sure you shop around to find a firm that you feel comfortable with. The first thing to do is check out their portfolio and see if there are any sites similar to what you want in there.

You should then arrange meetings with your shortlist of agencies to see which you prefer. You'll be spending a lot of time going back-and-forth about quite specific and sometimes complex subjects, so it is important that you can communicate easily with them. Try to meet with at least three companies or freelancers before deciding which to go with. Most companies will offer this first meeting free of charge.

No matter what your budget, after reading this we hope you've found some way of improving your existing web presence. Remember that your website can be more than an expensive shop front, and that it should be positioned as a core business tool for both marketing and managing your company. The efficiency savings from such an investment will pay off, not only in revenue, but also in time given back to you to focus on your products and customers.

“The single most important factor in increasing your search engine ranking is how many people link to your website”

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SEARCH ENGINE

OPTIMISATION



With the business world hurtling headfirst into the digital age, it is more important than ever to make sure that your shop or service has a website. Whether it's a fully-fledged ecommerce site with a shiny design and all the trimmings or a simple information page telling people where to find your physical store, going digital is all the rage. But how good is your website if people can't find you?

Without some decent visibility in search engines, chances are that you won't be receiving significant traffic or sales/enquiries and it could actually end up costing you money – hosting and site management aren't free in most cases and if your website isn't performing, you will be spending money on this and getting nothing back from it. As complex as the digital world can seem sometimes, any business owner can tell that this is far from ideal, but what can you do about it? Thankfully, there are a lot of things you can do and they will probably cost far less than you think.

“It stands to reason that if you are offering a service that your customers are looking for, more people are going to walk into your shop if they see it in the high street. That's how you should be looking at search engines”

YOUR VIRTUAL SHOP FRONT

It's all well and good to think that your company's new website is the prettiest thing you've ever seen and that people will be queuing up to buy something from it, but that's rarely the case in the real world. Unless you are a major brand, it is very unlikely that your site will be created and dominate Google for terms that people actually search for without putting in some serious work. Sure, people may search for your particular brand or business name just

to see if you have a website, but how much revenue is that going to bring you realistically?

Think of Google and the other search engines as a high street and your listing in them as your shop front – would you be getting more customers if your shop was in a prime location as opposed to being in a place off the beaten track? Of course you would. Naturally, shops that aren't in the best locations in the world can still succeed off the back of positive word of mouth or other advertising campaigns, but it stands to reason

that if you are offering a service that your customers are looking for, more people are going to walk into your shop if they see it in the high street. That's how you should be looking at search engines if you are a business owner with a website.

WHAT IS SEO?

Fortunately, getting a better location for your virtual shop front is a great deal easier than in the real world – it certainly doesn't involve the effort and cost of moving. There are a great deal of agencies out there offering a service called search engine optimisation – SEO for short – and this is continually proven to be the best way of improving your visibility in search results; it's not always as expensive as it sounds either.

Search engine optimisation is exactly what the name implies – the process of improving your website for performance in search results for your chosen phrases or 'keywords'. Although people might be searching for your particular business name and chances are that your site will perform well for that, wouldn't it be nice if people that were looking for the particular product or range of products that you sell could find you too? That's what a good search engine optimisation campaign can do for you.

HOW DOES SEO WORK?

A good SEO agency will start out by analysing your site from a technical standpoint and your marketplace to check:

A) how easy it is for the indexing robots (called 'spiders') from the different search engines to move through your site and find what they are looking for, **B)** what the most relevant keywords would be for your business **C)** which ones get the most traffic and so are the ones most worth going after. They will then start to amend your site from a technical perspective in order to make it as easy as possible for the

search engines to find what they're looking for and then begin building relevance to your chosen keywords on the site. While the onsite work is commencing, they will also be working to promote your website across the internet as well, building links to you that tell the world – and search engines – that you are a relevant source for your particular keywords.

Although this is an extremely simplified way of explaining what goes into an SEO campaign, for the most part Google is looking for relevancy. Good search engine optimisation is all about ensuring that your site is as accessible and as relevant to these terms as possible, and then telling the search engines about its relevance. If it's done right, there is no manipulation, no sneaking around and no 'cheating', it's just a combination of good technical work, enhancing the relevance to what's already there, hard work and a liberal dose of common sense.

It's worth mentioning, however, that SEO is not a magic wand – a reputable agency will not simply wave a wand and suddenly you will be page one, position one for a competitive keyword. It takes time and effort if you are going to do this properly and although some people will promise you quick results, you should be wary of anyone that does. This is because although they may well achieve these results in a short space of time, chances are they are using tactics which contravene the guidelines laid out by the search engines and consequently they will be discovered and damage your rankings in the long term.

To do SEO the right way takes time, but if you are serious about your businesses online presence, it's a worthwhile investment as results achieved the right way are far more likely to last.

WHO CAN YOU TRUST?

If you are new to the idea of improving your website's visibility in search engines via SEO, it's likely that you don't

know how to tell a professional from a fraudster or someone engaging in 'black hat' SEO – deliberately breaking the rules laid out by the search engines in order to achieve short term results. The best advice anyone can give you in this case is to look through your chosen agency's website yourself.

If the emphasis is on 'ethical' or 'organic' SEO, and if they have any Google or other industry accreditations to their name, it's likely that they will be performing legitimate work, especially if they've been around for a while. If they promise quick results or guarantee you search positions, it's probably time to close the browser window and look at another agency or consultant.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

This probably sounds very expensive, especially with the emphasis on improving your Google rankings the right way, but the good news is that it doesn't necessarily need to cost that much. Of course it all depends on how competitive a marketplace you are in and the size and construction of your website, but many reputable companies can provide you with excellent service at a price a small business can afford, and although it can sometimes seem difficult to justify this investment, the return you receive will often more than make up for this.



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AT A GLANCE SELLING ONLINE

SIMON ARMSTRONG FROM ECOMMERCE SPECIALIST
ACTINIC ROUNDS UP HOW TO SELL ONLINE

It's long been clear that online sales can both help to find new customers and provide an additional service to existing ones. If you want to take the step into online selling, then read on.

1

DO YOUR RESEARCH

The more you know about online selling, the better decisions you will make. So look out for ecommerce articles in the press or on the internet and talk to people who are already selling online.

2

DO IT YOURSELF... OR NOT

Decide whether you will set up the site yourself or employ a professional. If you have a limited budget and are prepared to spend the time, then DIY is an option. The pluses are you get your store going and you have complete control of your site. The downside is you will need technical knowledge and website design flair to achieve a site which will attract customers. These skills will take time to learn, many of which will only be needed to create the site and then won't be used often thereafter.

If you decide to employ a designer, it will be a dearer option as you are paying for their time and expertise but will be quicker to get up and running. The website should be more professional looking and better meet your original vision for your website. Any initial outlay on the design should be recouped with increased sales.

3

SOURCE THE BEST ECOMMERCE SOLUTION FOR YOUR BUSINESS

The heart of any web store is the underlying environment that it runs on, so it's worth taking time to make the decision on which solution is best for your business. There are two types of software: desktop software and cloud hosted solutions often referred to as 'software as a service' (SaaS).

Desktop software installed on a PC was the traditional route but increasingly is seen as old fashioned and not the preferred option. There are many reasons for this, including high initial costs to purchase the software and to set up the required infrastructure to support it. Scalability, as your business needs change, can be problematic and updates are both costly and time consuming, and compatibility can be an issue. Once you have created your website, you will need to upload your site to a hosting service on the internet and pay a monthly fee.

After saying all of this, if you don't have reliable internet access, a desktop solution still might be worth considering. A SaaS solution is the way the market is heading. People have got used to being able to access information whenever and from wherever they need to using tablets and mobile devices, as well as regular desktop and laptop computers.

Your website is held on a server and you access it via a web browser, such as Internet Explorer, Chrome, Safari and Firefox. Start-up costs are less for this option, with only a monthly fee rather than having the upfront cost associated with a desktop solution. Typically there is no long-term commitment, so if it does not work out, you can move to another provider or cancel, typically without incurring a penalty.



4

MARKETPLACE OR YOUR OWN WEB STORE

Many merchants opt to start selling on marketplaces such as eBay and Amazon. There are major benefits such as an immediate source of visitors, but also downsides such as the high fees and the adherence to strict policies. With your own website you have complete control over management of your

products, policies and processes.

Alternatively some online ecommerce solutions let you integrate both options. This is beneficial as when your business grows and the order volume increases, administering orders on separate systems can become a real headache; it is much better to have everything under your control in one platform.

5

IMPORTANCE OF IMAGES

The product pages on your ecommerce website are prime selling space and it's highly likely that the decision to buy or not will be made while these pages are being viewed, so they deserve plenty of attention.

Use good quality product images. A picture tells a thousand words and this applies more than ever to online selling. Have multiple images and make them zoomable so if users want to view any aspect of the product in more detail, they can. Learn how to shoot good images of your products, as evidence from successful ecommerce sites shows that this will make all the difference.

6

DON'T SKIMP ON INFORMATION.

Ensure product information is easily accessible and that all the necessary detail is provided to make a purchase decision. Nothing is more off-putting for a potential shopper than not knowing what you are buying or not being sure

if it will work the way that you need it to.

Be crystal clear on important details. Provide clear, prominent information on details such as price, delivery times, charges and stock availability. This helps to reassure customers before they make the purchase and ensures that their expectations are set in advance.

7

GETTING TRAFFIC TO THE WEBSITE

Setting up an ecommerce website is like installing a new telephone line for your business; just sitting by the phone won't make it ring. Promoting your site is crucial; if nobody

visits, you won't sell a thing.

Get seen in search engines. Search engines are the number one source of new visitors to web sites and Google is by far the most popular.

Experiment with pay-per-click (PPC) a popular and quick way of promoting your site using advertising services such as Google Adwords. Costs will depend on the keywords relating to your site and products, but you should be able to test a campaign for an initial low outlay.

8

PAYMENT OPTIONS

In order to take card payments on your website you will need an online Payment Service Provider (PSP) or payment gateway. If your business is already established with a trading record or you already have the facility to accept

card payments offline e.g in a shop, the best route is to apply for your own internet merchant account. This service is readily available from all of the major banks, and they will charge a percentage of each credit card payment, and normally a fixed charge per debit transaction.

You then use a PSP to link your website, the online buyers and your merchant account. Providers offering this service include SagePay, Actinic Payments and many others. Your choice of PSP should be based on cost and compatibility with your chosen ecommerce software solution.

Another option is to use a service such as PayPal. This service essentially combines the merchant account and payment processing into one package. It is reasonably priced, easy to set up and ideal for start up and small online businesses and really your only option until you get a merchant account of your own. You will pay a fixed fee per transaction or a monthly fee, plus a percentage of the transaction value.

9

PLAN YOUR BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Finally, you will need to plan, in advance, how every aspect of a transaction is handled including processing orders, taking payments

and fulfilling delivery.

Even though you are selling online, customers will still want to place orders via the phone and email, so make sure you can cater to their needs with the ability to process mail order and telephone orders (MOTO).

Processing payments is obviously a critical part of the overall sales process and you will need to research delivery services to get the goods to the customer's front door.



SETTING UP SHOP

SELF-MADE BUSINESS WOMEN **SARA DAVIES** AND **HELEN KENNAN** EXPLAIN HOW THEIR COMPANIES EXCELLED, EVEN IN A RECESSION

SARA DAVIES



**SARA DAVIES
IS THE
FOUNDER
AND
FIGUREHEAD
OF
CRAFTER'S
COMPANION**

Whether generating a few sales in the early days or trying to control the expansion of your company, managing the growth of your business is no easy task. However, if you get it right, the challenge becomes incredibly exciting and very satisfying.

The advice below is aimed at start-up and growing manufacturers and retailers alike in the craft sector. I know the industry well as I set up my own crafts supply company from my bedroom, while studying at university in 2005. Today, my business has grown into an international company with offices in the UK and USA that designs and manufactures crafts, and supplies thousands of products to enthusiasts across the world.

STARTING WITH THE NUMBERS

First and foremost, managing any kind of business starts with managing your finances. Start-up companies and budding entrepreneurs in the craft world; it's an absolute must to have a good handle on the business bank account (and if you don't, employ someone who does). If the business is too small to justify a specific finance person, then choose a good accountant, one who will get under the skin of your business and understand it so they become an extension of your internal team and advise you properly.

A common mistake many companies make is that they can generate sales, but they find further down the line that they aren't making any profit. More often than not, this is because they don't see all the hidden costs and don't have a good enough handle on the finances.

Carefully selecting an accountant will avoid this pitfall and help you keep a handle on those all important numbers.

You should choose to live by the saying – "turnover is vanity, profit is sanity but cash is reality". Don't have your head in the clouds and run away with big ideas and dreams that are going to deliver lots of sales if they are just that – sales. The fundamental aspect of any business should be to make a healthy profit.

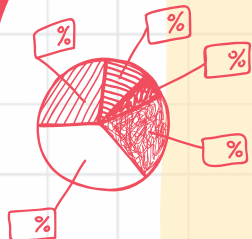
CASH IS KING. IF YOU CAN MANAGE CASHFLOW...

The end to the above saying is, "but cash is reality" – true, but that cash needs to be managed. Cashflow is the biggest killer of small businesses, you can be making sales and they can be incredibly profitable, but if you don't plan your cashflow, then you could end up in a sticky situation. Not having short-term cash availability to see you through a growth period can be fatal for your business, especially at a time when banks are not as helpful as they were a few years ago. In order to combat this you must look at all the opportunities facing your business and ask these three key questions:

- 1 How much time and effort does each opportunity take?
- 2 What return are you going to get? (Both turnover and more importantly profit)
- 3 How much cash is it going to tie up?

It is as simple as that. Weigh up the opportunity cost of each option and understand that you physically can't do everything at once; you won't have the resources let alone the cashflow. So, you need to select the options which are going to give the greatest return for the least amount of resource and cashflow.

business



KNOW YOUR STRENGTHS BUT RECOGNISE YOUR WEAKNESSES

Another point to consider is why you started up in business in the first place. You need to be asking yourself: 'What am I good at?' If you focus on your strengths, this is where you can add the most value to your business.

Once you have accepted you cannot function as a one-person band, hire someone to do the things you aren't so efficient at – one of my tutors at York University taught me a valuable lesson very early on. You must always play to your strengths, and then surround yourself with good people who can fill in the gaps of your weaknesses.

For example, I know that my key strengths are product development and sales (or basically just talking passionately about craft products!) I'm not so good at the technical stuff. So, when I first started the business I quickly realised I needed a website and decided to take evening-classes in web design. My tutor pointed out that this was a very bad use of my time as it would take me three times longer to build a website than if I enlisted the help of one of my

classmates at University. Furthermore, what they could make for me would far surpass what I could have designed myself – thus giving me a stronger start with my website, plus my time was better spent developing products.

"Cashflow is the biggest killer of small businesses"

Surround yourself with good people – the best that you can afford, no matter what size your business. When I first started out there was just me, and I couldn't afford to hire people, so I used freelancers and consultants to specifically fill the areas where I was weaker. I built a strong team, but one where I didn't have the responsibility of finding a huge pay packet at the end of the month (or filling their time).

As we've grown at Crafters Companion, we've gradually brought skills in-house and we have been fortunate enough to expand the

team. However still now, with 47 in-house staff, we still use many freelancers and consultants. I ensure they feel just as valued as my permanent staff and see them as an extension of my workforce – involving them in staff meetings, and keep them up-to-date on what's happening in the business across the board (not only in their areas of speciality).

Another trap to avoid at all costs is impatience. Do not try to grow too fast. If your business model is sensible and sustainable then success will come, but it will take time, which is a good thing. If you chase too many opportunities all at once, the chances are you'll spread yourself too thin and won't do anything well.

Also at the very beginning, you're unlikely to have the cash resource to undertake many projects at once, so if you do, you run the risk of losing money as projects may have to be pulled before completion.

To round up, my core advice is: do something you enjoy, be sensible with your money and delegate tasks you're not so great at to good people. If you cover all of these bases then you should be onto a winner.

HELEN KENNAN



**HELEN
KENNAN IS
THE
FOUNDER
OF LITTLE
PUNK
LONDON**

Starting a business has never been so difficult – nor more important. SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) are the lifeblood of the UK's economy: in 2012 99.9% of all private sector businesses were SMEs and they provide almost 60% of private sector jobs (figures from Department for Business Innovation and Skills). So ensuring there is a strong pipeline of start ups is critical to the medium- and long-term health of the economy.

Having said that, like lots of graduates, I was temporarily reprogrammed to seek out a corporate career where opportunities would be plentiful. So I started life as a drug representative for a well known global pharmaceutical company, eventually climbing the ladder to the point where I could jump ship into a relatively senior policy making role within what is now the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. From there, a director at the London Development Agency under Ken Livingstone's administration – helping London's businesses to grow and start ups to start – until eventually I ended up at City Hall a year after Boris Johnson took over the best job in London. So it wasn't until I had a family and gave up work that I finally decided to scratch the itch of some 20 years and set up my own little enterprise.

FINANCE

Understandably there were a few challenges along the way, with the main one, of course, being finance.

Yes, there are programmes for funding e.g green energy infrastructure, but these are not the domain of your average start up looking to

bring a new product or service to market. Most of us do not have millions invested in us from day one and will need some degree of external funding, if only to provide a contingency. I naively thought that – while the financial markets were of course tricky – banks were doing as the government had asked and were lending to small business.

So it then came as a shock to find out that my application for a mere £5,000 overdraft had

“If you really believe that you have something individual, then go for it”

been almost instantly dismissed because my newly incorporated company had no credit history. Of course it had no history, it was a new entity and of course I could have been advised that this would be the case at the first meeting with the bank, so that I could have taken steps to build up a credit history while I was preparing my plans.

Undeterred, I resubmitted the application on the advice of my business manager (same business plan but using my personal credit history rather than the company's) and again was rejected on the grounds that it was a start up business with no contracts in place.

So my second lesson is to not believe the marketing blurb from banks and assume that you will need a plan B for any external funding you might need. It means that start ups are having to waste time filling in forms, business plans and financial data sheets when there are hundreds of other things you need to be doing in your early days.

When starting a business, there is no denying that there is also some great information out there. Companies House and the Patent Office are brilliant sources of the basics and I would advise anyone to start there.

NEGATIVE VIBES

The third issue that I believe has a profound impact on the UK's ability to become an island of entrepreneurs is the British reserve/tendency towards assuming the worst. I can tell you that it seemed to me to be upwards of 80% of the people I met and talked to about my business in the early stages, discouraged me from continuing on the basis that it would be so hard/ most people fail/ wouldn't it be easier to go back to normal work.

I have a hypothesis that the negativity and presumed failure which budding entrepreneurs face when starting out, is a major contributor to the failure rate of new businesses in the UK.

I would encourage the government to invest a small amount of funding to properly research this cultural barrier, because it is not until you shine a light on a subject that you see its true form and potential. Who knows where that might take us in terms of policy and programmes of support – maybe we could all be issued with a business start-up coach whose

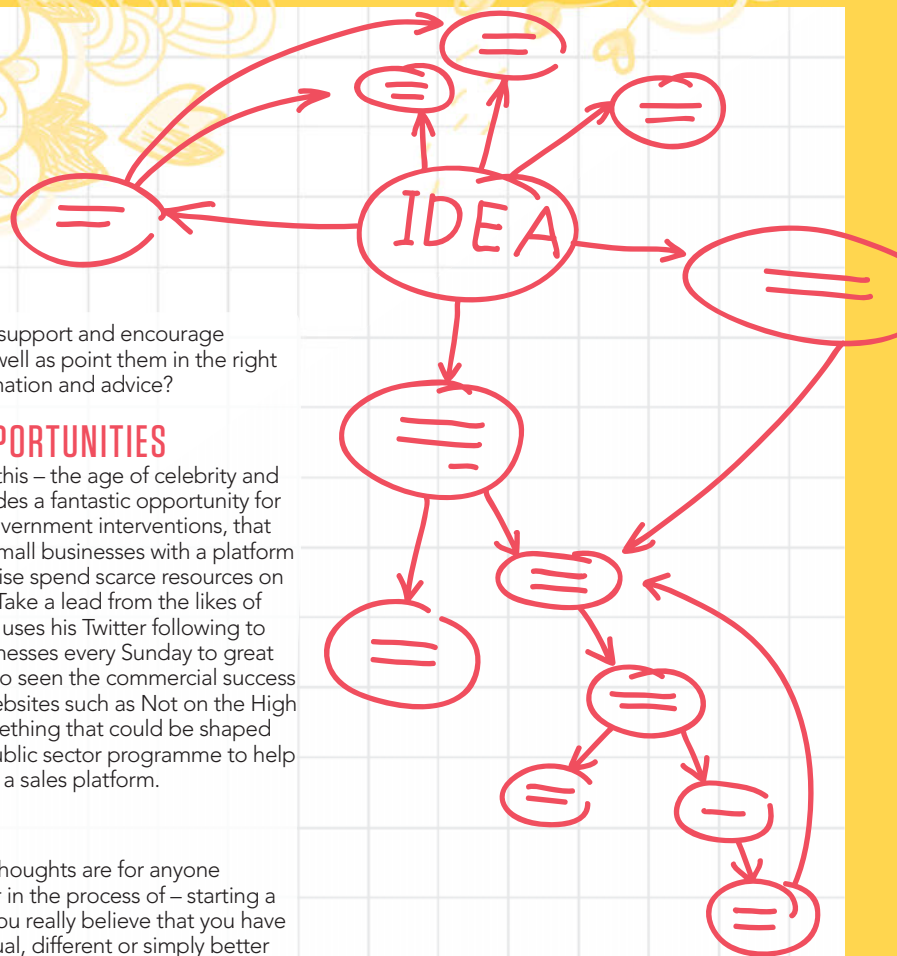
job is to motivate, support and encourage entrepreneurs, as well as point them in the right direction for information and advice?

GRAB ALL OPPORTUNITIES

My last thought is this – the age of celebrity and social media provides a fantastic opportunity for relatively cheap government interventions, that provide new and small businesses with a platform they would otherwise spend scarce resources on or simply not use. Take a lead from the likes of Theo Paphitis who uses his Twitter following to promote new businesses every Sunday to great effect. We have also seen the commercial success of group selling websites such as Not on the High Street – again something that could be shaped into an effective public sector programme to help provide SMEs with a sales platform.

DIVE IN

And my very final thoughts are for anyone thinking about – or in the process of – starting a small business. If you really believe that you have something individual, different or simply better than your competitors and you have the drive and persistence to overcome whatever is thrown at you, then go for it. Businesses can, and do, succeed every day in the UK, and if you work hard and relentlessly pursue your vision, you stand a really good chance of getting there. Listen to the advice and caution of others of course, but trust your own judgement to make the decisions you feel are right, and if you really believe in it – don't give up!



Top Tips on Developing a New Venture

HELEN SHARES HER INSIGHT

- › Register your business early and start building up your credit rating – for example, take out a mobile phone contract for the company. This will help you, if and when, you approach banks for loans/ credit cards/ overdrafts.
- › Register any intellectual property as soon as possible – the Patent Office has a great online service for trademarks and copyrights. If you are based around London make use of the British Library's business and IP centre, which offers an initial free consultation with an IP lawyer, and register your website name (domain name) at the same time.
- › Assuming you will need a website and, like me, are not terribly IT literate, make sure you invest in a web building service that comes with 24-hour telephone support in the UK - I have found that it's in the small hours that I am tapping away and have a question that needs an urgent answer!
- › Make sure you register early for HMRC services (online), for example VAT – it'll help later when you need to put in a return and will avoid any delays in e.g. VAT repayment.
- › Don't rely on the internet or social media – while they are great for creating awareness there is no substitute for seeing/feeling or experiencing your product or service first hand. Use local markets, seasonal fairs, exhibitions to get to your customers directly.

› Write a plan – it really does help to set out everything in a simple, clear document that you can follow; aside from anything else, there are times when it gets so busy that you will forget something important unless you've written it down. There are free templates available (most banks provide a link on their websites) and some good packages that don't cost the earth but that provide you with all the essentials for managing your business. Smarta business builder is the one I use.

› One of the best decisions I took was to use a PR agency from an early stage, and I would recommend that anyone who has a consumer product or service to seriously consider building the cost of PR in from pre-launch phase.

› Find out what people think about your product or service before you commit to production. Listen to what they tell you – they are your customers so they must be right.

› Make sure you have some positive people supporting you – when it gets tough you'll need someone who can encourage and spur you on from time to time.

Don't give up – if you really believe in your product/service, work hard and relentlessly pursue your ideas; focus and determination will carry.

www.littlepunklondon.com

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THINK ABOUT MARKETING

MARKETING STRATEGIST FOR ICONTACT (EMAIL MARKETING BY VOCUS), **JOHN W HAYES** BELIEVES THAT SMALL BUSINESSES NEED TO GO BACK-TO-BASICS WHEN IT COMES TO MARKETING STRATEGY

THE INTERNET
MEANS THAT
THE SMALLEST
BUSINESS IN THE
SMALLEST TOWN
CAN BECOME
SUCCESSFUL
GLOBALLY

Many small business owners view marketing as a necessary evil. I personally see it as the lifeblood of a successful business. If you want to stay fit and healthy in a less than healthy economy, you need to have some full-blooded marketing strategies coursing through your veins.

There are a couple of common misconceptions about marketing: A) it's expensive, and B) you never know what portion of your marketing spend actually works.

Both of these statements are untrue. You should never look at marketing as either cheap or expensive. It is much more appropriate to examine it in terms of efficiency; even the lowest cost marketing strategies are expensive if they don't yield a return. You should also be able to track and monitor the success of any marketing spend. If you are running campaigns and are unsure of whether or not they are

working, you should stop them straight away and put some simple measures in place to help track future efforts. This could be something as simple as training your staff to ask customers where they found out about your business.

WISE UP

A small business should familiarise itself with two basic types of marketing strategy. The first is demand generation or acquisition marketing. This is marketing that draws attention to your brand or product and helps you acquire new customers. It can be conducted over a wide range of media from newspapers, magazines, radio, events and tradeshow, and all the way through to more modern techniques such as pay per click advertising (PPC) on Google or the use of online marketplaces such as eBay and Amazon. Craft businesses hoping to build their online presence should also definitely look at the excellent Etsy.com, which is similar to eBay. Be prepared – acquisition marketing does not come cheap and even if it is done on a relatively small scale will significantly eat into your profits.

The second marketing strategy is customer relationship or retention marketing. This allows a business to re-market to newly acquired customers and help build long-term and profitable relationships with them. Retention marketing is often conducted using low cost, high return marketing techniques including direct mail and email marketing to see results.



"I'm staggered by the number of speciality shops I walk past every day with staff standing glumly behind their counters waiting for trade to walk in"

GLOBAL REACH

A growing, healthy business will want to exploit both types of marketing. In an ideal world acquisition will feed your retention which in turn will drive your profits. Remember, if you are relying on acquisition marketing to drive repeat business, you are effectively paying to acquire the same customer time and time again. This is the one such occasion that you are permitted to believe marketing is expensive. Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter can offer a blend of both acquisition and retention marketing by harnessing the power of your existing client base to spread the word virally to your wider network of friends and followers. All advertising

should be targeted towards your particular audience. If you work in a specific niche, this might mean advertising in the local media (no matter how reasonably priced) is not an effective method of targeting new business. In this case you should focus on the speciality press and on the internet.

I'm staggered by the number of speciality shops I walk past every day with staff standing glumly behind their counters waiting for trade to walk in and ignoring the opportunity of mail order and internet shopping. Thanks to modern technology your business is no longer limited to the town or city where you are based.

Online, even the smallest business in the most remote corner of the world can now serve customers globally. You can track the success of traditional marketing campaigns (such as newspaper or magazine advertising) by using voucher codes or coupons, specific telephone numbers or by featuring a unique website or email address.

Every campaign should have a specific call to action, such as a customer picking up the phone, visiting your website or calling into your shop. Don't rely on pretty product images or low advertised prices to do this. By setting a deadline (eg sale ends this Saturday) or suggesting the perception of scarcity of a product (ie last few items in stock) is an excellent motivator to bring the customer in.

BE ENGAGING

You should also use every touchpoint (telephone call or email conversation) to collect client information. This could be a telephone number, postal address or email address for the purpose of re-marketing. By building up a database of people who have an active interest in or actually buy your products, you are effectively building a valuable resource for that long-term, profitable relationship. On this point, don't neglect to ask people who simply visit your shop for their contact details.

I often wonder how many relationships must be lost on the high street every day owing to lack of engagement at the cash register. If this feels awkward or intrusive, why not sweeten the deal by offering a discount voucher to every customer who gives you their email address?

When you collect this data it is vitally important that you segment it into specific groups or product interests and target any future campaigns accordingly. As a business you might have several different product ranges. If you understand what customers are interested in which specific product ranges, you can target them with more focused marketing campaigns that will improve your chance of converting more sales from your marketing activity. Also, by improving the relevancy of your marketing campaigns you can increase the frequency of them. People rarely object when they receive something that is both relevant and interesting to them.

So remember marketing is only expensive when it is untargeted, untrackable, lacks a specific call to action and fails to help you collect customer data. If this all sounds too simple, that's because it is. Successful marketing for small and medium-sized business is more about common sense than creative ideas.

Marketing checklist

HAVE YOU?

- › Signed up to social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter? Make sure you do to spread the word virally about your shop.
- › Got an online presence? A fully-functioning website can help even the smallest businesses serve customers on a global scale.
- › Sent a press release to the local newspaper? If you are planning to host an event or special workshop, then use your local media to get the word out.
- › Offered any voucher codes or coupons? Put a deadline on when they can be spent; it'll motivate customers to come in and buy.
- › Collected a database of customer information? Try to collate an email address from each customer for the purpose of re-marketing.

MANAGING A DATABASE

TO MAKE THE MOST OF WHAT A DATABASE CAN OFFER
THERE ARE A FEW KEY AREAS TO CONSIDER BEFORE
UNDERTAKING ANY DATABASE PROJECT, SAYS ANALYSIS
MARKETING'S **DAN BARNETT**

WHAT IS A DATABASE?

I'm sometimes contacted by businesses who say they need to 'buy a database'. In this sense, what they mean is they are looking for a list of households/businesses to use in a marketing campaign. Generally speaking you can't 'buy' data, but you can 'rent' marketing lists for use either for a single campaign or for an agreed period such as 12 months. It is when the customer has an interaction with you that you can capture them in your own database.



DO I NEED A DATABASE?

The first question to ask is whether a database is actually suitable for your needs. If you only have a handful of regular customers, then it's likely that using a spreadsheet would be sufficient enough to capture the basic information that you will need to be able to monitor your business.

If you have a number of customers who buy at varying frequencies from a range of products, then a database can help to structure

REMEMBER,
UNLESS THE
DATA YOU
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STRUCTURED,
ATTEMPTS TO
UNDERSTAND
IT WILL BE
FUTILE

this information in a better format to be able to answer relevant business questions. Also, if you are looking to be able to use the information to drive marketing campaigns, then a database makes more sense as you can use it both to create the lists but also to store a contact history of who has been sent what.

WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS FOR BUILDING A DATABASE?

Depending on the level of complexity you can either use an off-the-shelf database package or have something custom built. Having a bespoke database developed may cost more, but has the advantages of holding the kind of data you need and reports that are relevant to you.

Microsoft has a number of free templates for both spreadsheets and databases that could give you an idea of what could be done. The downside is that if you have something

"Rather than trying to build one grand single database, it is often better to keep things simple"

developed specifically for you, the level of after sales support you'd get might not be the same.

If you are getting something developed, then agreeing terms for support and ability to modify and create new reports is key. In terms of off-the-shelf packages, entering 'crm software' into Google will give a huge range of providers who could meet your needs. A lot of these are now hosted online, which provides a backup of your data that you would otherwise have to do manually if the database was on your PC.

Personally, I'd recommend initially focusing on getting all your data in a single place such as in a spreadsheet, with separate worksheets for sales and contact details. Tools such as Excel have become increasingly sophisticated and a lot of what previously required a database can now be achieved in Excel using tools such as Pivot Tables. If once you've done this you are still keen to understand more about your customers, then look in to building a database.

WHAT INFORMATION DO I NEED TO INCLUDE?

Regardless of whether you choose a spreadsheet or database solution, the key is to record information accurately and in a logical fashion, for example, ensuring customer name/ account number is captured every time there is an interaction with them will mean that each interaction can be traced accordingly.

With regards to what should be included, the more information you capture, the more flexibility you have. When capturing data, key areas would usually include:

- Customer name and contact details
- Transaction details (date/amount/ products sold)
- Contact history i.e, emails/ phonecalls/catalogues

Depending on any other systems you use, it might be that you just want basic information in your database.

HOW DO I ENSURE MY DATABASE WORKS AS I WANT IT TO?

For a database to be of any value, the data it holds needs to be in a structured format. An example of this would be customer name details; ideally you will use a unique customer/ account number to be able to identify each customer. Without a unique key, you run the risk of not being able to identify customers correctly.

The more structured your data, the easier it will be to capture accurately. An example of this could be all items sold having catalogue numbers/stock keeping unit (SKU) codes which are grouped by category, e.g AA1234 where AA relates to the category and 1234 to the item. This will enable you to track sales by category and the number of different categories a customer has purchased in.

The key difference between a spreadsheet and a database is that where a spreadsheet usually has information held in a single place, a database has information stored in separate tables. This reduces the amount of data entry and makes data manipulation easier.

Within a database the customer's name, address, order summary information and order information would be held in three separate tables linked by key fields. Here each customer can have any number of orders and each order can have any number of items. Each time a customer makes a new order, their details are already available and only the order information simply needs to be added.

Using the database structure it would be far easier to manipulate the data to calculate things such as:

- Number of customers
- Average order value
- Date of last order per customer
- Number of different categories a customer has bought from
- Geographic profile of customers

As well as the examples above, this information can then also be used in other areas such as email newsletters or generating campaign lists. These kinds of things are done by creating queries on the database.

This might sound daunting but can be set up relatively easily in database systems such as Access. There is a whole spectrum of levels of complexity from storing data in a single spreadsheet to having a database that interacts with your website to update prices and stock levels and which generates confirmation orders, marketing campaigns etc.

Rather than trying to build one grand single database that does it all, it is often better to keep things simple. When the current process becomes insufficient, move on to the next level of complexity. The key thing to remember whether a single person business or a huge organising is that unless the data you collect is well structured, any attempts to understand it will be futile.

ONLINE MATTERS AT A GLANCE

WE HOPE THAT AFTER READING THE INFORMATION FROM OUR EXPERTS ABOUT ONLINE ACTIVITY YOU'LL BE RARING TO GO. AND IN CASE YOU NEED A LITTLE REMINDER OF THE KEY ISSUES, HERE'S A SUMMARY OF SOME THE SALIENT POINTS

SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT ALL ABOUT THE HARD SELL, IT'S ALSO FOR INCREASING AWARENESS, SENTIMENT AND LOYALTY, ENGAGING WITH PEOPLE, AND OFFERING PEOPLE SOMETHING IN RETURN FOR FOLLOWING/LIKING YOU; BE IT EXCLUSIVE CONTENT, ADVICE, DISCOUNTS OR COMPETITIONS. **ONE OF THE BEST WAYS TO BEGIN INTERACTING USING SOCIAL MEDIA IS TO OFFER ADVICE.**

Google Analytics is the free tool from Google that lets you see exactly how people are finding and interacting with your website. **ENSURE THAT THE LOOK AND FEEL OF YOUR WEBSITE IS SUITABLE FOR THE AUDIENCE AND THAT EACH PAGE GUIDES THE USER TO THE OBJECTIVE.** THE COMPANY YOU BUY YOUR DOMAIN NAME FROM MIGHT OFFER HOSTING TOO, WHICH CAN BE CONVENIENT IF YOU'RE NOT HIGHLY TECHNICAL, BUT DON'T TAKE IT UP FOR CONVENIENCE ALONE. **SEO applies to the whole of your site – from the domain name and the page title to the headings, body text, image names, descriptions and other metatags.** RANKING IN SEARCH ENGINES IS DETERMINED BY HUNDREDS OF FACTORS, BUT A GOOD RULE OF THUMB IS 'CONTENT IS KING' – THIS MEANS POPULATING YOUR SITE WITH LOTS OF KEYWORD-RICH COPY.

IN-STORE MERCHANDISING

SET UP YOUR SHOP SO THAT IT IS
ENTICING AND INVITING

We've all been there – ventured into a shop, had a quick lap around and left just as quickly with nil purchases. We'd tell ourselves, and any enquiring sales staff, that we were just browsing, but in truth, it was probably something about the experience that put us off.

People have to be in a certain state for optimum buying mode, and, while you can't control external factors such as preconceptions and stress levels, you can aim to provide an environment which inspires, intrigues, and makes people feel motivated to buy.

Pay attention to everything in store which can affect a customer's experience, such as displays, sounds, climate control and lighting, and make sure they are at their most comfortable so they linger for longer.

Here are our top tips for successful shop merchandising.

LET'S GO OUTSIDE...

It's not for many months of the year that we want to linger outside in the UK, but for those that we do, why not make the most of them? Shops can make the most of good weather, where there's the space, and

get customers interacting with products before they've even set foot inside the store.

Create a sense of excitement with flags and bunting, and display a few eye-catching offers outside of the premises. Depending on your craft and style, it might be a good idea to display 'unthreatening' wares; something a little more mainstream that will appeal to a wider audience. Entering the store will seem less intimidating as they'll have had a look at some products already, and something may have caught their eye. If you are also considering running workshops, the shop window is a good place to advertise them.

THE WINDOWS...

As every good visual merchandiser knows, the shop window is the true sales opportunity. There's a split second or two in which to make your pitch to the people passing, so make it a good one.

Saying this, a common, and perfectly understandable mistake, is to cram windows far too full of stock to demonstrate the vast amount of products carried within. While this does indeed showcase a large amount of stock, it's unbelievably off-putting and cluttered for a customer who will also find it a struggle to process all of the information.

**PAY
ATTENTION
TO EVERYTHING
IN STORE WHICH
CAN AFFECT
A CUSTOMER'S
EXPERIENCE**



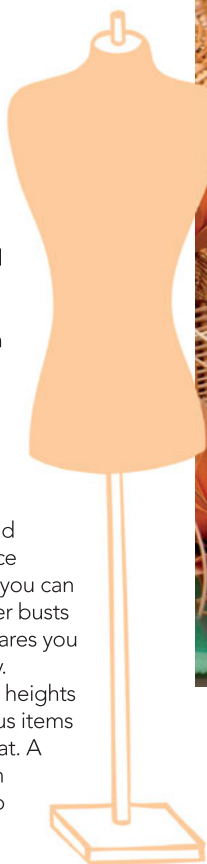
Mannequins can be expensive and obviously take up a lot of space, but can give stunning visual effects, especially to display gorgeous homemade accessories and clothes. If space doesn't allow, you can opt for cheaper busts if it's knitted wares you wish to display.

Change the heights at which various items are displayed at. A basic common technique is to use a triangle shape – there should be something for eyes to rest on at each corner. Whatever it is, set the scene with a few key products, rather than dozens, and try to create the mood and feel you want your customers to get after buying from you. For example, if you are pushing your handmade wedding stationery for the bridal season, go for romance in your windows, and catch the eye of any bride-to-be who may be on the lookout for original pieces for their big day.

Think about your markets: brides-to-be may well have been inundated with the plethora of products out there, and you need to plant the seed that they can have something a bit different. Combine this with signage, for example 'It's your big day – why not make it truly personal?' and display some of your beautifully-executed stationery.

Merchandising is all about identifying aspirations – the visual cues that the customer will get when they buy from your shop will work wonders.

Create depth perception and define your area with some kind of backdrop to create interest for the brain, and always avoid the temptation to fill every space. The old cliché-less-is more comes into its own here.



Don't forget items can fade over time in direct sunlight, and might not be suitable for resale. Change your window displays about every six weeks, if you can, to keep appealing to new customers, and don't be afraid to use an idea you've seen in another shop's window, whatever it is they sell – it's not copying, it's inspiration.

As every jeweller knows, well-lit jewellery is in its most beautiful state when it can gleam. Why not introduce a bracelet of the month, or even the week, and of course, wear your own eye-catching makes. It'll be a talking point with customers, and you'll be a walking advert for your products. Likewise, any sewn or knitted clothing or accessories are best shown off as they are intended to be worn.

When it comes to grouping, it sounds obvious, but do make sure similar products are near to each other. It helps educate the customer as to the depth of product you carry in a particular category, and makes good use of a customer's time. No one wants to pop in to a shop for something quickly, only to be frustrated and unable to find what they want because the order of merchandise is illogical.

THREE'S A CROWD...

A best-selling crowd, that is. There's a tried and tested method in visual

merchandising, and it's the set of three. Place things in ascending groups of three, and watch how customers are persuaded to buy. It's transitional what's ascending; height of items, width or even price – it doesn't really matter, it's the three that counts.

CAN SMELL HELP YOU SELL?

In a word, yes. While most merchandising is visual – after all, who actually walks around a shop with their eyes closed? – big brands have for some time now been aware that in our image dominated society, consumers are bombarded with visual branding and merchandising, so much so that they pay little attention to it.

Companies now focus on other senses too, pulling in custom through more than just vision alone – primarily with smell. Smell is the most evocative sense of memory and emotion, with experts saying that up to 75% of the emotions we generate on a daily basis are affected by smells.

Clearly, if a product or brand aligns itself with a certain smell, it can evoke certain emotions in consumers too. Researchers in the US have found that smell helps consumers remember product information and, interestingly, can alter time perception, which in the retail world translates as making people



linger longer, and therefore being more likely to buy.

WEB-WORTHY...

Merchandising practice applies to the online world, too. If you're selling on the web, make sure you've a visually-pleasing site. Principles of bricks-and-mortar merchandising translate relatively easily; group products with panels of 'customers who bought this item also bought...' type prompts, and 'related product' links, all of which encourage people to stay on site for longer.

KEEP TRACK

Finally, keep track of any displays you make if you change them regularly. It doesn't matter if something doesn't work well, you can always try again, but take some camera snaps each time you change a display, and you'll easily be able to recall a display that worked particularly well for future use.

After being fired from every job, it became evident that I needed to set out on my own **DOUG RICHARD** All I knew was I wanted to make jewellery for a living and I refused to consider any other career. **ALYSSA SMITH**

I originally did a degree in agriculture, as my first ambition was to be a farmer! It was only after travelling the world that I realised my passion lay within jewellery

ALEXIS DOVE Folksy

has not just been about sales. It's opened up a whole new world for me which I had no idea existed; it's so inspiring **CHLOË HAYWOOD**

I have three main characters that feature regularly in my work and I like to dream up exciting stories for them **STACEY WILLIAMSON**

I have a blog where I share free sewing tutorials and host giveaways for my new patterns **SARAH HANSON**

The natural world often features in my work in some way **ALISON YULE**

THE STORY OF...

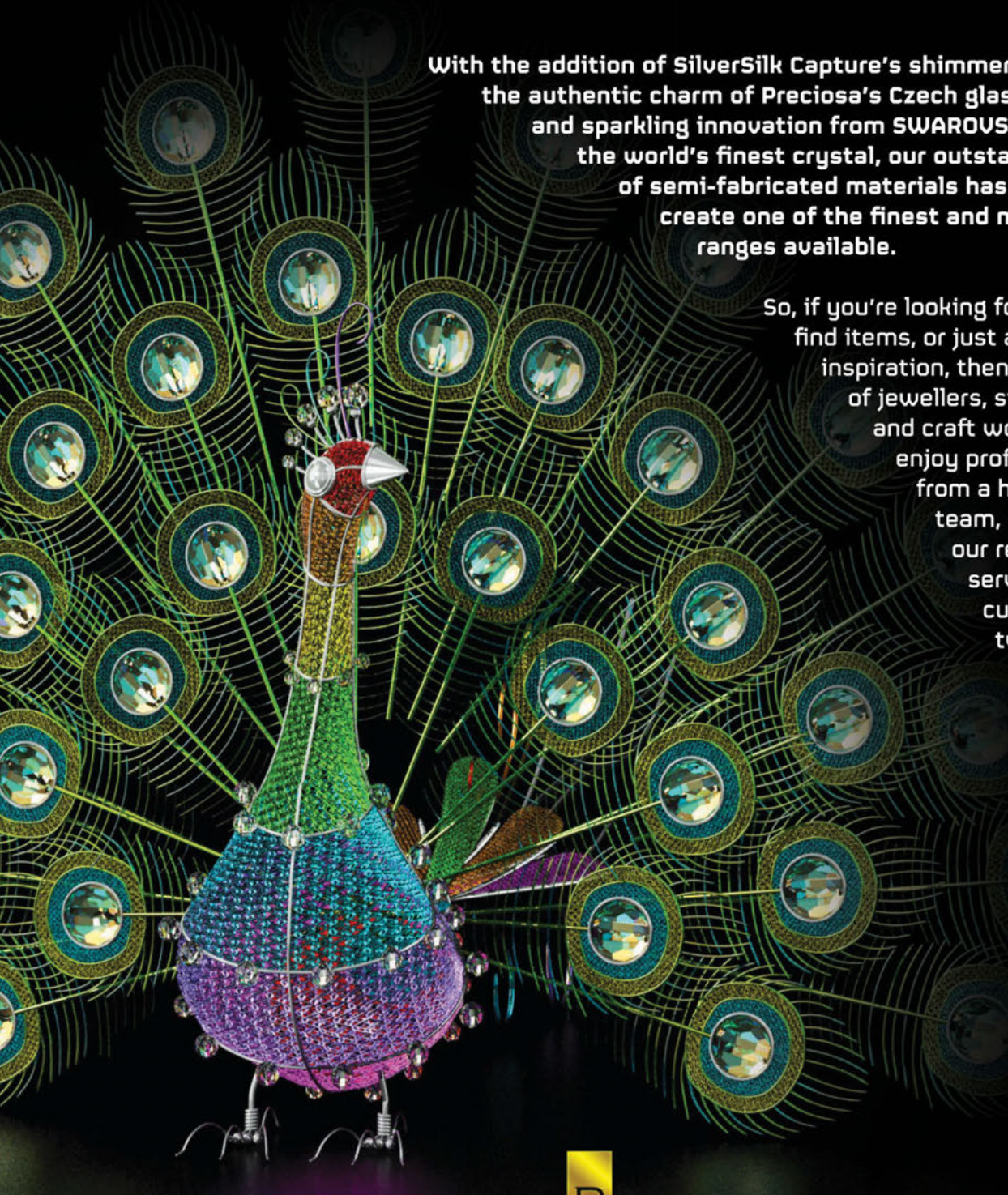
CHECK OUT THE INSPIRATIONAL TALES OF DESIGNER-MAKERS WHO HAVE TAKEN THEIR CAREERS IN NEW DIRECTIONS

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THE BUSINESS GURU

FORMER DRAGON'S DEN PANELLIST AND BUSINESS EXPERT
DOUG RICHARD ON WHY CRAFTS ARE BOOMING

It has never been a better time to be a creative business owner – with the sky-rocketing success of marketplace sites like Etsy, combined with the internet revolution and a renaissance in handmade crafts and homemade skills, the world is ready and waiting, and Doug Richard explains how to get started.

After being fired from every job I ever had it became evident that I needed to set out on my own.

I decided to become an entrepreneur as it turns out I'm pretty unemployable! When I came to start my business my brother was also in the same situation, so we set out on our first venture together. I'm really drawn to creative businesses as they are fun, simple to start and easy to make a success. The majority of problems are easily solved as they are usually business related.

I was inspired to write a book specifically targeted at the creative industry.

Firstly, it was not something that was directly addressed in the marketplace and I wondered why. I was inspired to pen the title to help remove the obstacle that was restricting the unbelievable potential and talent of the creative sector in the UK. The main obstacle of which is giving creative people the confidence to set out on their own and make a living from what they love to do. I wanted to take essential but scary business principles and make them accessible, fun and easy to understand. I was actually surprised that once I sat down to write it there were a great deal of things to talk about.

I predict that there will be a continued resurgence in the craft business industry for a long time coming.

Small companies can easily get themselves up and running due to the accessibility of the web. Successful businesses all have something in common; a clearly defined product and group of people to market to, plus the ability to answer the first question I always ask – what do you do that people need or want? In my experience, underestimating the effort involved in getting the word out about your product is what leads to most failures.



FIND OUT MORE BY VISITING DOUGRICHARD.NET AND SCHOOLFORSTARTUPS.CO.UK

THE TOY DESIGNER

DESIGNER **SARAH HANSON** GIVES ADVICE ON CREATING A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WITH CHILDREN IN MIND



So often we find something we love and have the urge to make one for ourselves. Sarah Hanson, founder of Dolls And Daydreams, provides just that with her fun and easy step-by-step photo tutorial patterns for children's dolls and softies.

My life took an interesting turn after organising a charity doll drive for the children of Haiti.

I designed and offered an easy free doll pattern online and the response was amazing. We collected more than 500 dolls for the children and have since continued to make and send out thousands to those in need all over the world. Through this wonderful work I received so many kind comments and requests for more designs and patterns, and Dolls And Daydreams was born.

As an artist it is extremely important to me that what I create is truly one-of-a-kind and something you've never seen or made before.

I spend a long time researching each design, drawing lots of sketches and making a

concept/inspiration board with fabric swatches. Next is drafting the pattern. On average I create eight to 10 fully-finished prototypes, and countless section prototypes testing out fabrics, face placement and shapes. This allows me to make sure my designs are easily reproducible so that my clients' finished dolls can look just like mine. Then it's off to my pattern testers.



Safety first

› It's incredibly important for me to design safe toys for all ages, but it's tough to know what age group your makes will be in the hands of, which is why I always ensure the tags say whether it's safe for children under three years of age.

› Little ones have a tendency to pop things in their mouth, so nothing should be detachable because they'd be a choking hazard. I always give alternative baby-safe methods for embellishments, such as embroidering the eyes instead of using small appliqués.

› You should always pre-wash your fabric. Not only does it mean you can hand wash your toy without it shrinking, but you'll also remove any harmful fabric agents used by the manufacturers.

› Use top quality supplies such as 100% wool felt. Not only is it amazing to work with, but it won't bobble from lots of cuddles like polyester blends do. Quality products equal positive word-of-mouth referrals and that's the best form of advertisement.

Because there are numerous steps in making each pattern, I usually have three designs on the go at any given time, all at different phases of completion.

This keeps my mind fresh so that I am able to provide a range of patterns that all have my distinctive design aesthetic whilst still pushing me forward, sparking not only my creativity but those of my clients. I'm heavily influenced by Japanese Kawaii, meaning 'cute' and, of course, my children play a big role – what would they love to play with? What colours appeal to them...?

I'm proud to say I rely on word of mouth – there's nothing more flattering than when clients tell me that they found me through their friends.

I have a blog where I share free sewing tutorials and host giveaways for my new patterns. I also love seeing everyone's creations, so Facebook is brilliant for us to share our dolls and softies with each other. First-time sewers say they can't believe how easy it is to make them, and the icing on the cake is seeing little ones cuddling their new handmade friends. It melts my heart. My advice to others would be to follow your dreams and be original. It doesn't matter if you have a crazy idea – if you don't try it, you'll regret it!

"It's incredibly important for me to design safe toys for all ages"

TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT WWW.DOLLSANDDAYDREAMS.COM

THE MILLINER

MILLINER AND FOLKSY PRO **CHLOË HAYWOOD** ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF HER FASCINATING BUSINESS

Always a fan of dressing up, Chloë Haywood won Young Clothes Show Designer of the Year at the age of 16. Since then, she's launched Hatastic! and her one-of-a-kind designs have been shown at both London and Milan Fashion Weeks. The wonderfully down-to-earth entrepreneur is, however, still happy working at the bottom of her garden in Surrey.

I've always made things for myself if I can't find what I want in the shops.

In 2009, I was invited to a few weddings and wanted a different outfit for each one. I was desperate to wear a gorgeous ivory Biba dress for the first ceremony, but couldn't find anything to go with it that wasn't bridal or horrendously expensive. I decided to make my own hat from what I had at home. When I wore it, I called it my Isabella Blow moment and not only did it look amazing, but guests asked me where I got it from. I challenged myself to create a different one for every wedding that year.



What is Folksy?

► Folksy, based in Sheffield, is a website that was created with the aim of showcasing the creations of the UK's designers and makers. Launched in 2008 by James Boardwell and Rob Lee after they were inspired by the UK's craft communities, Folksy has gone on to become the most popular site in the United Kingdom for handmade gifts, as well as supplies.



Around this time, I was based in London and my husband worked away from home a lot.

As a result, I spent my spare time drifting around junk shops buying vintage and selling it online for a profit. The market was changing however, so I started looking for another hobby to keep me occupied and provide a bit of pocket money; and then I remembered the fascinators. I'd sold a couple of creations on eBay but because my designs were becoming more unique, I couldn't see how anyone could search for them. I then came across Folksy and felt that I could really get to grips with my shop.

Selling hats online is not ideal and clients would prefer to try them on before buying, which is understandable.

However, being on Folksy has not just been about sales. It's opened up a whole new world for me which I had no idea existed; it's so inspiring. I spend a lot of time on the forums

chatting to other designers about ideas and events, and have made lots of friends. Everyone is so lovely and generous with advice, and the fantastic team at Folksy has always been so supportive. It's quite a popular marketplace now, yet I still receive friendly personal replies to emails which is invaluable.

One of my first stockists was ECO.

The creative director Livia Firth (wife to Colin!) was very generous in offering advice about my products and how to sell a collection. I tweaked my logo and added a crown on the 'H' making Hatastic! a brand rather than a name, which made an enormous difference to sales. It takes a while to understand your audience, but I now know mine are 25 to 35-year-old women who like to dress up but are very much aware of their environment. If you don't know who you're selling to, you have a hobby. When you know your target audience, you have a business.



"If you don't know who you are selling to, you have a hobby. When you know your target audience, you have a business"

TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT WWW.FOLKSY.COM/SHOPS/HATASTIC

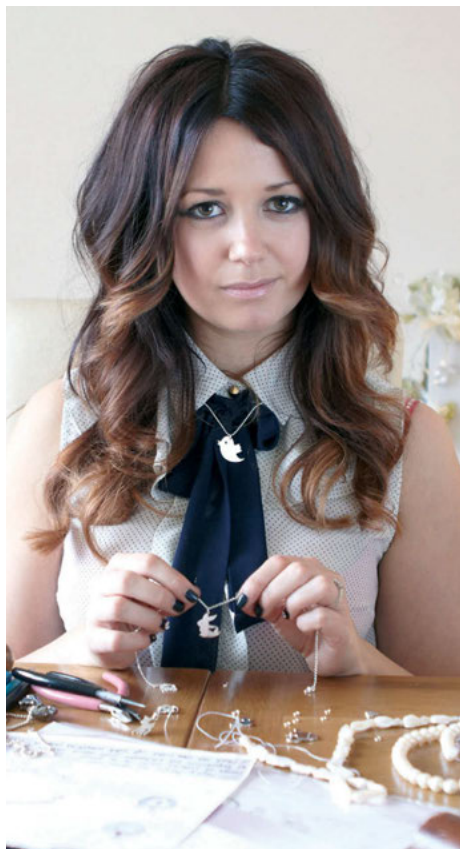
THE JEWELLERY ENTREPRENEUR

CELEBRITY FAVOURITE **ALYSSA SMITH** DISCUSSES HER FIRST STEPS IN THE JEWELLERY BUSINESS

Alyssa Smith is a self-made designer with her own successful business to boot. Driven and extremely talented, she reveals how her hard work got her to where she is today.

My parents used to make jewellery and began teaching me the basic skills from a young age.

It became a part of my life; something I enjoyed and kept on developing. While most little girls dreamed of being princesses, I wanted to see famous people wearing my jewellery! Once I had completed my A Levels



Alyssa's start up tips

- › Work in your spare time to supplement your income
- › Keep your website looking great to entice people in
- › Read craft books and take evening courses to get up to speed



I went on to study art and design at the local college before moving to the University of Hertfordshire to study a degree in Applied Arts and Marketing. Here I specialised in silversmithing but also took regular evening courses at local colleges to better my skills. As soon as I left university in 2010 I started Alyssa Smith Jewellery. I didn't even know how to complete a tax return! All I knew was I wanted to make jewellery for a living and I refused to consider any other career. At first, my lack of business knowledge was a real problem. To help overcome this, I sent myself on free government funded courses in book keeping, accounts, tax returns and internet advice with the Prince's Trust. I also purchased books on how to start a business.

I worked in my spare time at an independent jewellery shop to supplement my income and pay for basic tools.

I didn't make any customer orders until they had paid for the item first; I would then use the money to purchase the materials to make the piece. This was a key part to keeping afloat financially. I also did a lot of car boot sales to raise finance for my first e-commerce website. It left me with hardly any possessions but at least I had a website to get me going!

I call my site my shop front and it has to look beautiful to entice potential customers in. I've gone from someone with no clue about running a business to someone who was nominated for (and won!) national awards in business. In 2012 alone the company was nominated for 15 awards, which was great for publicity. I also have a number of celebrities, such as Dawn Porter and Sheridan Smith, who endorse the brand. To have people like this promoting me means the world.

I have also collaborated with Formula 1 presenter Suzi Perry, creating a charity collection of race track inspired jewellery. I take inspiration from my customers. I interact on a daily basis with them via social media and find out what they would like me to make. This way I always know there will be a demand for my collections. My advice to anyone starting a jewellery business would be to make sure you have thick skin; surround yourself with positive people and keep your spirits high. Also, formal training isn't always necessary. There are a lot of fabulous books and evening courses available which can help you. Finally, it's important to think outside the box; there are a lot of jewellers in the world and you will need to make your mark by being different.

Alyssa designed a racing-themed collection with Formula 1 presenter Suzi Perry



Contact book

- › Visit www.herts.ac.uk to check out the Applied Arts and Marketing courses
- › Sign up for government funded courses at www.princes-trust.org.uk
- › Take evening classes in jewellery techniques at www.herts.ac.uk

"While most little girls dreamed of being princesses, I wanted to see famous people wearing my jewellery"

SEE MORE OF ALYSSA'S DESIGNS AT WWW.ALYSSASMITH.CO.UK

THE CREATIVE PAPERCRAFTER

LONDON-BASED PAPER ARTIST AND OWNER OF TWO FOR JOY, **STACEY WILLIAMSON** CREATES ORIGINAL HAND-CUT ARTWORK, SCREEN PRINTS AND GREETINGS CARDS CENTRED AROUND TRAVELLING INTO THE UNKNOWN

I was always an arty child – forever painting and making things.

I knew that I would have an art-based job from an early age. I started my career as an editorial and TV make-up artist, painting faces rather than canvases. Alongside this, I created paper cut artwork and gave them to friends and family as presents. I soon realised that this was the path I wanted to take, so after 13 years of make-up work, I embarked on a new venture. When I started my company, it didn't have an official name until I was asked to create a wedding commission for a couple in Ireland; in the image I put two magpies to symbolise luck and joy. It felt perfect for my business and 'Two For Joy' was born.

I tend to create stories for my artwork before I start on the imagery, and I aim to create magical pieces that will make people smile.

My inspiration is quite heavily based on travel and adventure. I have three main characters that feature regularly in my work and I like to dream up exciting stories for them. I often have the start of a story in my head for some time before the imagery comes to life.

The lovely thing about what I create is that it appeals to a wide audience.

Many of my clients buy my work for their children, as art is something that can be treasured forever. It also appeals to 'big kids', adults who love the whimsical and fun nature of my work. I create lots of bespoke work for



"After 13 years of make-up work, I embarked on a new venture"

private clients; wedding presents, invitation designs and Valentine's gifts. My work is also a great present for one-year wedding anniversaries as the first anniversary tradition is to give paper.

There's still a great market for greetings cards; my quirky cards have had very steady sales since I started out.

I feel that the art market is struggling slightly, which is why I like to produce screen prints of some of my original artwork, to offer an affordable, yet lovely alternative. My screen prints are always limited edition, so they are still very special. I don't tend to be led by trends; I like to use colours I feel will work in harmony with the image I'm creating. I like to try some more daring colours in the summer months though, very vibrant and zingy.



Going the extra mile

› In a bid to enhance business and give customers something extra special, Stacey offers paper cutting workshops. Designed to inspire people's inner artist, Stacey teaches her students how to create their very own handmade greeting cards with the delicate art of paper cutting, and with the addition of homemade cake and plenty of tea, it always goes down a treat. Why not utilise your skills and give your customers something special by teaching them all you know about craft?

› www.twoforjoyart.com

I plan to develop the story aspect of my work further.

I have four stories so far that are featured on my website and have many more ideas stored away. I would love to create books for my stories alongside my imagery, which will be my main goal.



FIND OUT MORE BY VISITING TWOFORJOYART.COM

THE JEWELLERY MAKER

ALEXIS DOVE SHOWS IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO FOLLOW YOUR
JEWELLERY DESIGN DREAMS

Alexis Dove originally wanted to be a farmer, but after travelling the world, she realised her passion lay in jewellery designing. She went on to launch her own business in 2006 and has never looked back.

I have always had a passion for jewellery and can remember as a child spending hours looking at my grandmother's jewellery. I have collected unusual pieces that embody antiquity and history since my late teens. I started sketching designs and playing around with jewellery at school, but it was just as a hobby. I originally did a degree in agriculture, as my first ambition was to be a farmer! It was only after travelling the world that I realised my passion lay within jewellery.



Alexis' start up tips

- Be prepared to put in lots of hours
- Some business knowledge is useful
- Offer bespoke commissions too

"The trade itself is very supportive of new businesses and I am thrilled to be a part of it"



My interest in jewellery was born when I developed a captivation with ancient cultures and traditions of adornment. I love the use of rich hammered gold with unusual stones, such as rose cut diamonds to create unique pieces. I have also always been inspired by nature and am fascinated with antiques; I spend hours in museums soaking up all the history.

Once I decided to embark on a jewellery career I then trained at the Sir John Cass Foundation, specialising in Fine Jewellery and Diamond Mounting. Afterwards, I worked in the trade for seven years before taking the plunge in 2006 to start my own business. I had so many ideas and, after making a tiara for a friend's wedding, I had the basis for my first collection. It was a woodland-themed service and the inspiration for my first make, the Foxy Pendant.

Establishing a brand is exhausting; you have to put in a lot of hours, working seven days a week and late nights.

Some business know-how is helpful; I studied marketing at the agriculture college which came in useful. I also worked part-time in a jewellery shop alongside a space co-operative called Rosehill workshop in Brighton. There were 10 jewellers all creating their first collections, so it was nice to bounce

ideas off one another. The trade itself is very supportive of new businesses and I am thrilled to be a part of it. I initially wanted to run a small scale business, but each year the brand has grown to include some wonderful stockists that I have become great friends with, and my jewellery is now sold in more than 60 shops and galleries.

I have opened a boutique where gorgeous commissioned pieces are crafted, particularly precious jewellery, and I also have an e-commerce website.

I would love to continue to grow the commissioning side of the business. I have a very special area in my workshop dedicated to creating unique pieces of jewellery by appointment. Customers have a significant part in the design process and are encouraged to choose their own precious stones, including sapphires, rubies and old cut diamonds. I combine these with rich beaten gold and palladium to create unique, timeless pieces.

If you're looking to start a jewellery collection, then don't let your fears stand in the way of your dreams.

Making a success of your business is hard but rewarding; after all, you will only get out what you put in. The jewellery community is amazing to be a part of!



Alexis' first creation, the Foxy Pendant has gone on to become hugely popular



Contact book

- Visit www.thecass.com to view the jewellery courses.
- Book a space at Rosehill workshops on 01273 674511

SEE MORE OF ALEXIS' DESIGNS AT WWW.ALEXISDOVE.COM

THE TEXTILE DESIGNER

AFTER A LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE, TEXTILE DESIGNER **ALISON YULE** DECIDED TO EMBRACE HER HOBBY AND MAKE IT INTO HER NEW CAREER

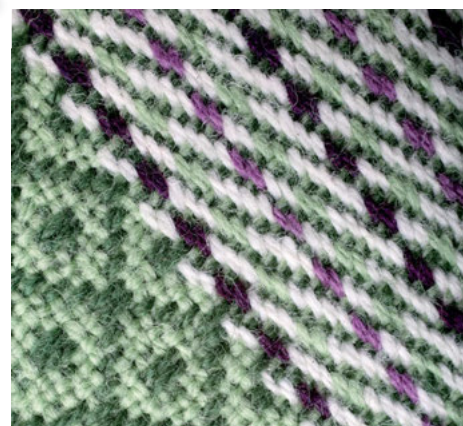
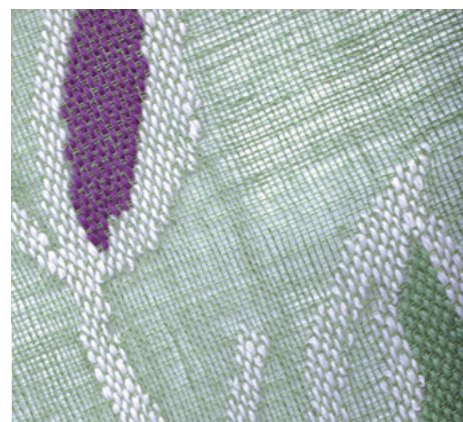
With dreams of being a textiles designer since she was a child, life ended up getting in the way for Alison Yule. However, she was forced to turn tragedy into triumph, thus making an endearing success story, consisting of hard work and of course, talent.

I discovered weaving at the age of six and began to weave when I was eight years old.

I took an O level and A level in craft, design and practice – gaining both qualifications at my technical grammar school, without going to college. I spent a lot of my time weaving for friends, family and myself instead, until I was widowed at the age of 44 with a seven-year-old. It was such a life-changing experience. I knew I'd have to supplement my income and I wanted to do something that I knew I'd enjoy. At that point I decided to go to Bradford College and take a part-time course in handwoven textile design. I gained a distinction and two awards from the Bradford Textile Society annual design awards.

When I started my business, my aim was to design and hand-weave bespoke fabric for both the interiors and fashion markets.

I get my inspiration from my clients or I find it myself from anything really. My sketches are made in a variety of media, including paint, pastel and collage. I select areas from the sketches to develop further, such as colour, shape and texture. The ideas that come from these developments are made into warps and put on the loom for experimentation. The final woven designs are then worked out from the warps that were a success.



"I think it's more important that my clients are happy with my designs and are comfortable with their selections rather than keeping up with the latest styles"

I'm excited about a wide range of inspiration, but it's usually colour and texture that are the first catalysts.

The natural world often features in my work in some way, either flora or landscapes. My target market is private clients with substantial incomes; interior designers and architects for their high-end clients as well as hotels, restaurants, holistic therapists in their luxury spas, and office receptions or suites.

I think the market is performing fairly well at the moment.

After the crash of 2008 I lost two big commissions, as both clients were bankers who'd been made redundant. It's been quite a struggle to claw back the ground that was lost, but I've found that in my high-end market sector, there is always money to be found, especially if you know where to look.

I don't tend to focus on trends, I work with the inspiration I'm presented with and have found that I am usually up with the current trends anyway.

I think it's more important that my clients are happy with my designs and are comfortable with their selections rather than keeping up with the latest styles. With regards to the future, I'm working on some off-the-peg designs that can be purchased by the metre and some new ideas for exhibition pieces that evoke memories of holidays.

Quick fire questions

- › What did you want to be when you were younger? A textile designer.
- › What is your favourite project you have created? I love each and every one as I'm designing and weaving it, but if pushed, the Euonymus Collection.
- › How would you describe yourself in three words? Passionate, fun, precise.
- › If you were stranded on a desert island with only one crafty item, what would it be? My spinning wheel.



FIND OUT MORE BY VISITING ALISONYULETEXTILES.CO.UK

AT A GLANCE Q & A s

BUSINESS ADVICE FROM THOSE IN THE KNOW



Tailor your stock to appeal to the audience

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO GO ABOUT SELLING AT CRAFT FAIRS?

Locate where and when appropriate markets are being held – sites like stallfinder, gumtree and other craft sites are good starting points. Then my key tip would be to do your research.

Make sure you know your rights as well as the rights of the consumer. Also ensure you have appropriate public liability insurance. What other businesses are exhibiting, what products are for sale – the organiser will be able to give you an exhibitor list. Is it in a well populated area? What's the footfall like? Is there adequate parking for visitors? Go and check it out so you can see for yourself – pretend you are a potential customer; would you travel to this certain location? Is the fair expected to be full of traders? A half empty room can make you look lost and potential customers will be put off. How many leaflets are being distributed and where? Will it be advertised in the local newspapers? But also find out if it is listed online – in this technological age, people will use Google to find events.

Tailor your stock to appeal to the audience the event is marketed at, and make sure you have a range of products with varying prices. A couple of expensive items £20+, some medium items £10+ and then lots under £5, as these will appeal to children and quick token gifts or stocking fillers.

Joanne Dewberry
Small business owner and business blogger

HOW CAN I ENSURE THAT MY PRICES ARE COMPETITIVE WHILE ALSO COVERING THE TIME IT HAS TAKEN ME TO MAKE MY PRODUCTS?

Covering the time it has taken to create your stock while remaining competitive is tricky.

You will find it very hard to compete on price, so I wouldn't recommend dropping your prices. Instead, find ways to add value. You can do this in lots of ways through your brand, your service, your packaging, your marketing and also where you choose to sell your jewellery makes.

Do you have a clear and consistent brand that communicates why your products are special? If not, it's worth spending a bit of time identifying some key values for your brand, (e.g. are you natural and fair-trade or glamorous and aspirational?) so that your customers can associate with what you are all about. You can then communicate these through your marketing, website, point of sale materials and so on. For example, could you include a note with each product that gives it a meaning, or explains how it was made or what it is made from? Or perhaps offer customers seasonal style-tips or gift-guides? Can you provide add-on services such as a product guarantee or cleaning or repair services?

Packaging can add value or cheapen your product. Don't cut corners on packaging, but design something in line with your brand values (e.g. glossy boxes for a sophisticated brand or natural cotton bags for an organic one). Add it into the costs when you price your products, to make sure you get a return.

Think about where your ideal customers are shopping. If you are always coming up against bargain hunters, perhaps you are selling in the wrong places. Seek out more up-market gift shops or craft fairs where customers expect to pay more and are happy to part with a few more pennies.

Consider the commercial brands that you admire and buy, and look at how they add value for you as a customer. It's about finding ways to engage and excite your customers, and it's about more than just selling your makes.

Clare Yarwood-White
Owner Create a Craft Business
www.createacraftbusiness.com

HOW CAN I INCREASE CUSTOMER INTERACTION ON MY SOCIAL MEDIA?

Promotions, events and responding to customer feedback; these are the key places to start when trying to boost your engagement.

To increase interaction you need to both engage existing fans with exclusive promotions based on loyalty schemes and early tip-offs for new products or events, but also reach out to new users with first-time purchase deals and offers.

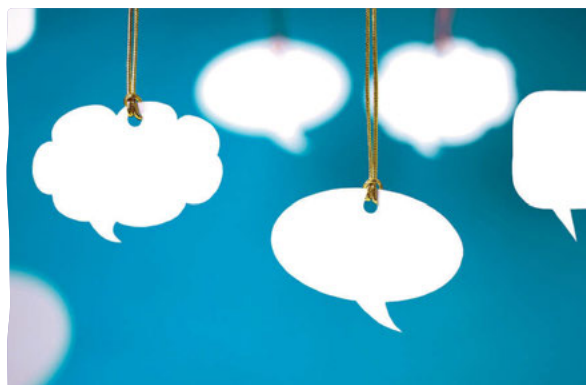
While your social channels are a great tool to update the consumer with the latest deal, product or company news, be careful not to just let your Facebook or Twitter become a promotional channel.

Bright, fun images which directly ask for feedback are another key way to engage with customers effectively. Pictures of new products, snaps from events you run or take part in and amusing/inspirational images you come across will all help define your brand and open a dialogue between you and your customer.

Social media is all about managing word of mouth, something that businesses haven't been able to do very well in the past. However, management tools now make it easier to spot which techniques are working best for your business. The key is to have a system in place to address any negative feedback and engage with any positive.

Don't be scared to engage directly with your online following. To start this can be as simple as thanking a new customer on Facebook for buying a product or attending an event, or even simply acknowledging their 'like', comment or post on your wall.

Peter Heffring
CEO of Expion, social software company,
www.expion.com





I RUN A RETAIL BUSINESS, AND I'D LIKE TO START SELLING MY OWN DESIGNS THROUGH THE BUSINESS – BUT HOW DO I MAKE SURE THAT I APPLY MY TIME EFFECTIVELY?

Passion for your business is great, but there also needs to be a proven business case otherwise it's easy to get distracted and lose motivation. So, how can you apply your time effectively?

The first step has to be to carry out extensive market research. Once you are sure that there is a market, you can start to work out the time you need to invest to make a return. For example, to design an outfit through to production might take two days – if you sold that outfit for £200 you would make £100 per day. What if you could design an outfit and then in three days make five of them? If each sold for £200 you would make £333 per day. Will your clients pay that? Do they need to be special or can you design one and make many?

Every business has to spend time on income generation (selling and making money) and also on income speculation (working on the business, finding clients or customers, marketing and networking), income saving tasks (like accounts and tax, sourcing best value items to sell) and admin (dealing with post, phone calls and emails).

In my experience the split is 40 per cent income generation and 20 per cent each on the other areas. If you run a retail outlet, this rule will be spread out across the staff. If you can achieve this in under 20 per cent of your time and still run the business then that tells you how long you can spend on the project.

Vicki Wusche
Property entrepreneur and author,
www.VickiWusche.com

WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO FORM A LIMITED COMPANY?

The primary consideration is, of course, money.

As a sole trader you will pay income tax on all your income, plus National Insurance contributions. As the director of a limited company you will pay corporation tax on just your company's profits (that's income minus expenses), and can reduce your income tax payments by paying yourself a mixture of salary versus expenses.

The threshold is different for every business, but at some point it will begin to make financial sense to make the switch from sole trader to limited company. The other main consideration when incorporating is limited liability, meaning once you have formed a limited company you and your business are legally separate.

This means if the worst should happen and your business goes belly-up or you are sued, your personal belongings such as your house or car cannot be touched.

With a limited company, you only stand to lose what you originally invested in the business. Other advantages include more flexibility to change and grow – with a limited company you can dish out shares to friends and family, or take on employees relatively easily. The only disadvantage to incorporation is that you as a director have certain responsibilities, and your company must report annual data to HMRC and Companies House.

If you can handle the extra reporting – or find a good accountant to do it for you – incorporation is usually a very prudent move.

Jon Norris
Web editor, Crunch Accounting Brighton
www.crunch.co.uk

Passion for your business is great, but there also needs to be a proven business case, otherwise it's easy to get distracted and lose motivation



HOW CAN I SET UP A RELIABLE ONLINE RETURNS SYSTEM FOR MY ONLINE SALES THROUGH MY WEBSITE?

While some businesses may dread handling online returns, it does not have to be a painful experience. Here's how to make the process go smoothly and nurture a positive relationship with your customers throughout.

➤ **Meet customers' expectations** – Give detailed, accurate product descriptions and photos on your website so the person who buys the product will know exactly what they're getting.

➤ **Keep it clear** – Mark your returns policy clearly on your website, on receipts, in the package and on customer correspondence so there is no room for confusion. Go for clear wording and avoid any complex legal jargon so there can be no doubt about what your rules are.

➤ **Choose a time frame** – Whether it's 30, 60, 90 or 120 days, make the time frame clear to

customers so there's no room for interpretation. It's a good idea to have a separate time period for damaged or malfunctioning goods, as this will build customer confidence.

➤ **List the requirements** – Let customers know what's required of them when they're returning a purchase. Can they give it back once it's been opened? Does it need to be in its original packaging? Clearly communicate these requirements to your customers.

➤ **Pay for postage** – Offering to pay for the return postage may seem like a hefty expense, but it will build brand loyalty in the long run. Whatever you do, avoid any nasty, hidden costs for your customers.

➤ **Over-communicate** – Keep customers informed at every step of the return process by sending out alerts when a return is received, processed and when the follow-up is completed. It will save you a lot of time and hassle in dealing with calls from anxiously waiting customers.

➤ **Make the most of returns** – Instead of dreading a return, look on it as an opportunity to create a positive relationship with your customers. Use the process to gather feedback about why they aren't happy with their purchase, so steps can be taken to improve their experience the next time. If the customer is pleased with the transaction, it will increase the chance of them purchasing from you in the future.

James Hardy
Director of EMEA region,
www.Alibaba.com

I WOULD LIKE TO MOVE MY BUSINESS TO A DIFFERENT PREMISES BUT DO I HAVE TO STAY HERE UNTIL THE LEASE RUNS OUT?

You may be able to assign, or transfer, the lease to a third party. In these circumstances, you may well have to act as a guarantor of the incoming tenant.

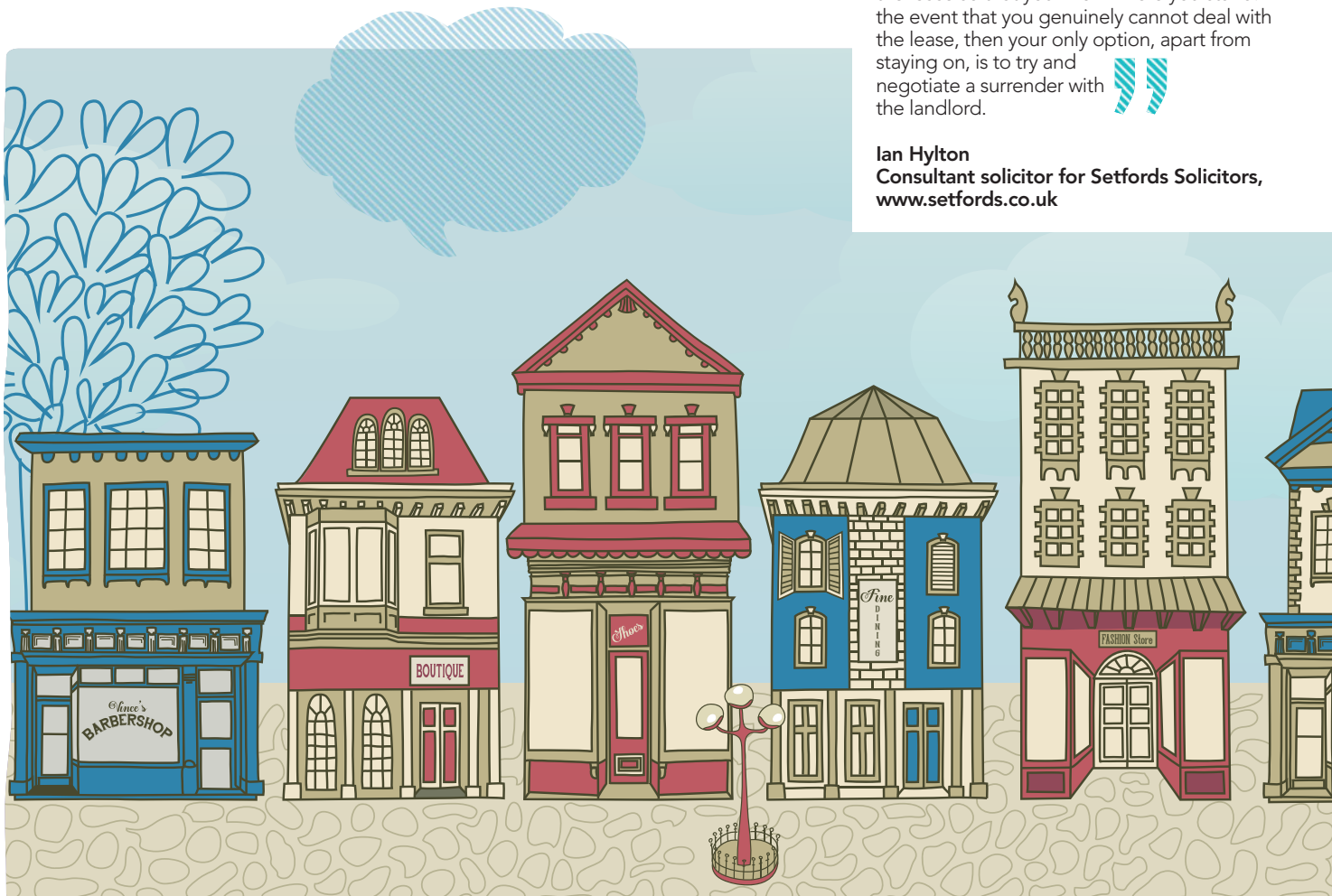
Secondly, you may be able to underlet the property, so while you are still liable to the landlord to pay the rent, you have a third party occupying the property and paying your rent in return. Either of these options would normally require the landlord's prior consent.

In either case, you are not completely free as in the event of the third party defaulting, you will still be liable to the landlord. If the lease is silent as to whether you can assign or underlet, then you are free to do so. Better still, you can do so without having to obtain the landlord's consent. It would be unusual however to have a commercial lease that was silent on the issue, or indeed that did not require the landlord's prior consent to dealing.

A third possibility, and one that I always advise clients to consider seriously at the start of the lease, is that you as a tenant are unable to deal with the lease whatsoever. If this is the case, there will be an express prohibition to dealing with the lease by way of assignment or underletting.

I would advise you to ask a solicitor to review the lease so that you know where you stand. In the event that you genuinely cannot deal with the lease, then your only option, apart from staying on, is to try and negotiate a surrender with the landlord.

Ian Hylton
Consultant solicitor for Setfords Solicitors,
www.setfords.co.uk



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Lorraine Luximon, Editor

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CUTE CROWD PLEASERS

EASIER THAN YOU THINK STITCHED DOLLY

HANDMADE CLOTHES AND YARN HAIR MAKE
THIS SIMPLE DOLLY A WINNER

SELLING POINT
MAKE A WARDROBE
OF PRETTY
CLOTHES TO GIVE
CUSTOMERS A
CHOICE OF OUTFITS



TEMPLATE

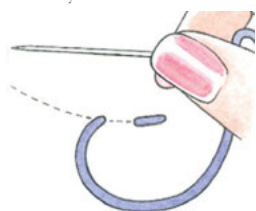
Rag dolls are one type of toy that prove **popular** generation after **generation**, and this pretty lady is so simple to make that you'll be able to produce a whole **family** of them in no time at all – the **perfect** way to add volume to your stock

ESSENTIAL KIT

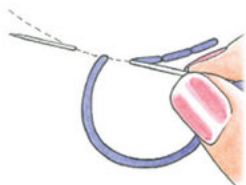
- › Fabric, cotton: pale pink, FQ; Art Gallery Fabrics, Bijoux Bohemian Charms, Cream; Floral Elements, Sunflower; Nature Elements, Blue Green, Hot Pink
- › Stuffing, polyester
- › Thread, Embroidery
- › Yarn
- › Needle, knitting
- › Shirring elastic
- › Snap fasteners

Back stitch

This is a strong hand stitch with a neat finish, that's perfect for working facial features on your dolly.



1 Secure the thread on the wrong side of the fabric and bring the needle through to the surface to start the first stitch. Move a stitch length backwards along the sewing line, take the needle back through the fabric and then bring it to the surface at the end position of this stitch.



2 Moving back along the stitching line, take the needle down through the same hole as the previous thread. Bring it to the surface for the end position of the stitch. Repeat along the sewing line to create even stitches.

TO STITCH THE DOLLY

1 Using the templates on pages 126 to 130, cut two body shapes from pink cotton fabric, then sew together with a 5mm seam allowance, leaving a 5cm gap for turning. Clip all curves, then turn out.

2 Begin stuffing the legs, using a knitting needle to push the fibres into position. Once complete, move onto the knees, sewing across them with embroidery thread and a fairly taut running stitch to create a joint.

3 Continue to fill the thighs and torso, creating joints at the top of the leg and waist to allow the doll to bend. Next, stuff the head quite firmly and push plenty of wadding into the neck to keep the doll's head upright. Once complete, fold in the raw edges and oversew closed.

4 Cut four arms from pink fabric using the templates. Stitch together in pairs leaving a gap along one side of the upper arms. Turn out and firmly stuff, jointing the arms at the elbows in the same way as for the legs, then sew the gap closed. Create a thumb by backstitching a short line through each hand.

5 Oversew the tops of the arms to the shoulders, checking the thumbs are pointing in the right direction. Use a soft pencil to lightly mark facial features. Sew over the marks using three strands of embroidery thread, securing the ends at the back. Create a hairstyle with yarn and use satin stitch to secure it to the head.

PANELLED SKIRT

1 Sew a 5mm hem along one long edge of the hot pink Nature Elements fabric, 3.5cm x 60cm. Work running stitch along the opposite side and gather until it measures 40cm long.

A BASIC TECHNIQUE GIVE YOUR DOLLY PERSONALITY

- › Working facial features and hair onto any plush is what brings the make to life. While it may be the final fun part of the project, it's also make or break as a couple of stitches in the wrong direction may lead to a glum dolly or moody kitten. So, be sure to plan your face before you begin stitching and practice on a scrap of fabric if you're inexperienced.
- › This dolly used backstitch to work the definition on the face, using French knots for the nose. It's important to pick your thread colours carefully.
- › To add hair, first sew long lengths of wool across the head from side to side, backwards and forwards. Work loose strands into the style individually by sewing each length into the head, leaving a 6cm tail. Next make a tiny oversew stitch, then wrap the yarn around your thumb, 6cm from the doll, and back into the head. Make another tiny stitch and repeat until you reach the end of the yarn. Continue adding strands in neat rows, making the oversew stitches 3mm apart. When finished, cut each of the loops and plait, then tie and trim the ends.

Our advice

Use a good quality, high thread count cotton, especially for the body of the doll. This will stop the seams splitting over time





“Add a snap fastener to each side of the back of the waistband”

2 Stitch a long edge of cream Bijoux Bohemian Charms fabric, 5.5cm x 40cm, to the gathered side of the first strip with right sides together. Turn out, press the seam and topstitch over the work to neaten. Gather the unstitched long edge of the fabric to a width of 30cm.

3 Cut a strip of sunflower Floral Elements fabric, 5.5cm x 30cm, stitch to the previous length, then gather to 23cm. Attach and gather a 5.5cm x 23cm panel of blue green Floral Elements print to 19cm. Fold the tiered layers in half and sew up the back seam, lining up the fabrics neatly. Fold and stitch the raw edges by 5mm to create neat seams.

4 For the waistband, sew a 3cm x 19cm strip of fabric

to the top gathered edge of the skirt with right sides facing. Turn out and fold the raw edge and both short sides under by 5mm, then fold in half over the top edge and slip stitch down. Add a snap fastener to each side of the back of the waistband.

FLORAL BLOUSE

1 Cut one front, two back and two sleeve pieces from floral fabric. Stitch the back pieces to the front at the side seams, with right sides facing. Fold under by 5mm and hem the long bottom edge, the two sides and areas of neckline between the armholes.

2 Fold the two arm pieces in half with right sides together, then stitch the long

seam and turn out. Line up the underarm seam with the side seam of the blouse and sew together, stopping at the neckline. Fold in the raw edge of the remaining portion of the sleeve and hem.

3 Fix a strip of matching fabric, 6cm x 9cm, to the end of the sleeve, as for the waistband, to create a wide cuff. Add pleats to the end of the sleeve, if necessary, to fit the cuff. Repeat for the other side.

4 Check the fit of the blouse on the doll. Add a pleat to the centre-front of the neckline to prevent it from gaping, then decorate with a single button. Sew snap fasteners to the back of the blouse.

“Treat your dolly to some pretty accessories”

SEW GATHERED KNICKERS

➤ Fold a strip of floral fabric, 6cm x 25cm, with right sides together and stitch along the side seam. Turn each long seam under by 5mm.

➤ Sew one side with small running stitch using ordinary thread, then work the other side in the same way but with white shirring elastic so that the hem will gather. Press with the short seam in the centre, then work a few stitches at the bottom of this seam to create two leg holes.

FINISH WITH FABRIC SHOES

➤ Cut four shoes from blue green Nature Elements fabric. Sew in pairs with right sides facing. Fold the top edge in by 5mm and work with small running stitch.

➤ Sew running stitch in a narrow horseshoe shape around the front of the shoe, using all six strands, then tie the loose ends at either side into neat bows to gather and create a 'v' at the front of the shoe.

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CUTE AND CUDDLY FABRIC BUNNY

THIS CHARACTER IS BOUND TO BE A
POPULAR BUY WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

Our advice

Use coordinating fabrics to
make a whole wardrobe of
clothes for this cute critter

SELLING POINT
AN ADORABLE
BUNNY WITH A
REMOVABLE
OUTFIT

Created using **Tilda** cotton, this **rabbit** has long ears and limbs and an **endearing** embroidered face to give her plenty of **character**

ESSENTIAL KIT

- Fabric, cotton, fat quarter: oval rose; white rose; ornament; gingham, green; spotted, teal; plain, white
- Felt, pink
- Fibre filling
- Thread, embroidery
- Ribbon, satin, pink, 7mm
- Buttons, pink, 15mm, two
- Press studs

DIMENSIONS:

- Approx 15cm x 52cm

STITCH A BUNNY

1 Fold gingham fabric in half right sides together and trace the body, arm, leg and ear shapes using the templates located on pages 126 to 130. Cut out from both layers leaving a 5mm seam allowance. Fold spotted fabric in half and trace the arm, leg and ear shapes only. Cut out as before.

2 Pair up the pieces, right sides together so that each limb and ear are made of both fabrics and the body is made from gingham only. Set the ears aside and stitch around the remaining pieces, leaving a gap for turning and stuffing where indicated on the pattern.

3 Pin the ears to pink felt and cut to size. Stitch around all three layers leaving a gap at the base. Trim the felt as close

to the stitching as possible and turn out so the ears are slightly padded. Turn out all the other pieces and press.

4 Firmly stuff the arms, turn in the raw edges of the gap and oversew closed. Stuff the legs and tack the tops closed. Stuff the head and close up the gap as before. Use a stitch ripper to carefully open part of the seam at the top of the head and body. Make a tuck in the base of each ear and push through the seam gap. Pin in place and oversew the seam closed, holding the ears in place as you do so.

5 Open the seams at the bottom of the body, insert the tops of the legs and sew closed as for the ears. Pin the arms to the sides of the body and make button joints using strong thread for extra security, passing it through the tops of the arms and the body from button to button several times. Embroider the features onto the face using satin and chain stitches with three strands of embroidery thread, covering any knots with embroidery for a neat finish.

MAKE THE SHORTS

1 Fold over 12cm of white rose fabric right sides in and trace two short pattern pieces on the fold. Cut out with a 5mm seam allowance. Open out and place right sides together. Stitch along

the two curved sections. Open out the resulting tube, pin together and stitch the inside legs. Double hem 1cm at the bottom of the legs and slip stitch.

2 Double hem 1cm at the top of the shorts and slip stitch, leaving a 2cm gap in the hem at the back. Use a small safety pin to thread narrow elastic through the channel. Knot the ends together, trim and stitch up the gap.

3 Make a tuck in the bottom of each short leg to narrow the diameter. Secure with a few small stitches and add a pink ribbon bow.

CREATE THE TUNIC

1 Cut two tunic pieces from folded oval rose fabric and two from plain white. Open out and cut one piece of each fabric down the centre to make two halves. Pair the fabric pieces up right sides together and stitch around the

curved necklines, armholes and straight edges of the back halves.

2 Clip the curves, turn out and press each piece. Pin and stitch the slanted sides of the tunic front lining to the back lining. Fold together, right sides out. Repeat for the sides of the printed fabric. Join the shoulders with French seams for a neat finish.

3 Cut a strip of green ornament fabric, 6cm x 70cm, and fold in half lengthways, right side out. Press the fold, turn in the short ends and gather the raw edges to the width of the tunic hem (about 42cm). Tack the frill to the edge of the tunic front, right sides and raw edges together.

4 Turn down the frill and press. Turn under 5mm of the lining fabric and slip stitch over the raw edges of the frill to hide them. Stitch two pairs of press studs to the back edges of the tunic to fasten.



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These delightful little **strawberries** are decorated using **simple** stitches and appliqué shapes. They're ideal as **pincushions** or, alternatively, make a few and string them together for a **sweet garland** – ideal for **customers** wanting to decorate for summer **parties**.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- Felt, red, green,
- Embroidery thread
- Ribbon
- Fibre filling
- Sewing kit

STRAWBERRY PIN CUSHION

1 Copy the pattern located on pages 126 to 130. Cut out and fold in half. Press to form a crease. Sew a line of running stitch along the crease using three strands of cream embroidery thread.

2 Fold the sides of the semi-circle to the middle on both sides and press. Stitch along these lines as before. Continue creasing and sewing to create a total of 16 lines of spoke stitches leading from the bottom centre of the shape.

3 Fold the semi-circle in half, with right sides together and backstitch along the straight side, 5mm in from the edge. Turn out and sew a line of running stitch along the top of the resulting cone. Stuff with fibre fill and gather up the running stitch to close the top.

4 Cut a strawberry hull shape from green felt with eight petals, then pin to the top of the pincushion, covering the gathered area. Stitch the hull down around the petals with three strands of green embroidery thread.

5 Sew a loop of gingham ribbon to the centre of the hull. Shape three leaves from felt and create the veins with running stitch in contrasting thread. Sew the ends of the leaves over the base of the ribbon loop to cover it. Cut two white felt flower shapes and attach to the base of the ribbon loop with a few small yellow stitches.



TEMPLATE



FARMYARD INSPIRED KITCHEN SET

A WHIMSICAL SET THAT'S
THE PERFECT GIFT FOR DOMESTIC
GODS AND GODDESSES

So often it's the little things that **light up** a room, and this **trio** is no **exception**. Comprising oven gloves, a pot holder and a string dispenser in **rustic fabric**, it's bound to **appeal** to the chef who loves a bit of **retro styling**.



ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric, cotton: heavyweight, 19cm x 82cm; 19cm x 23cm, two; lightweight for lining, 19cm x 82cm; 19cm x 23cm, two
- › Wadding, quilting, 2oz
- › Bias binding, 2m

DIMENSIONS

- › Oven gloves: 19cm x 82cm

STITCH SOME OVEN GLOVES

1 Lay a 19cm x 82cm piece of lining cotton right side down. Place a piece of wadding the same size on top and add two smaller pieces at either end. These will provide extra protection for your hands. Lay heavyweight cotton of the same size face up on the pile and pin the layers together.

2 Use a drinking glass or saucer to draw curves at all four corners and cut away the excess fabric. Sew tacking stitches around the edge of the layers and remove the pins.

3 Outline the large motifs on the top layer with a small running stitch, then mark out diagonal lines in both directions on the background of the fabric using a chalk pencil. Sew over the top, avoiding the outlined shapes.

4 Pair 19cm x 23cm of heavyweight fabric with lining fabric of the same size and stitch right sides together along the bottom 19cm wide side. Turn out, fold over and press the seam. Secure the fold with a small running stitch. Repeat.

5 Place the rectangles at the ends of the quilted panel with linings facing and the raw edges together. These pieces form the pockets. Pin in place, flip over and cut the corners of the pockets to match the quilted panel. Tack them in place around the raw edges and remove the pins.

6 Pin and stitch bias binding to the top side of the oven gloves with a 5mm seam allowance, stitching through all layers of fabric. Fold the strip over the raw edge, fold the strip under and oversew to the inside of the oven gloves. Remove any visible tacking stitches.

SELLING POINT...
PERFECT
ACCESSORIES FOR
ADDING A TOUCH
OF VINTAGE STYLE
TO THE SMALLER
KITCHEN

Our advice

We've hand quilted our duck designs for a rustic look, but if you're in a hurry, any good sewing machine with a drop feed will allow you to quilt around complicated shapes.



Our advice

Use this same technique to make coasters and mats for the breakfast table



ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric, cotton: heavyweight, 10cm x 15cm; lightweight, fat quarter
- › Wadding, quilting, 2oz, 20cm x 25cm
- › Bias binding, 1m
- › Thread, embroidery, orange

DIMENSIONS

- › Pot holder: 20cm x 24.5cm
- › String dispenser: 18.5cm x 20cm

MAKE A POT HOLDER

1 Cut two 7cm x 15cm strips of lightweight printed cotton, then pin them right sides down on either side of a heavyweight cotton motif

panel measuring 10cm x 15cm and stitch. Fold out and press. Sew two 7cm x 21cm strips to the top and bottom of the panel in the same way. Fold out and press to create a fabric frame around the motif.

2 Lay lightweight fabric face down, place 20cm x 25cm wadding on top and add the framed panel to the pile face up. Pin the layers together and use a drinking glass or small saucer to draw curves at each corner.

3 Trim all the fabrics to the same size as the framed panel, including the curved corners. Tack around the edges to hold in place and remove the pins. Quilt the outline of the motif with a small running stitch and add a diamond pattern to the background.

4 Using three strands of embroidery thread, sew a

running stitch around the frame. Pin and stitch bias binding to the top edges of the quilted panel. Make a hanging loop from leftover binding, lay flat at the top of the panel and sew the ends to the edge.

5 Fold the strip over the raw edges, fold under, and oversew to the reverse of the pot holder, covering the ends of the hanging loop. Fold the loop up and press. Remove any visible tacking stitches.

SEW A STRING DISPENSER

1 Sew leftover strips of lightweight cottons together to make a 20cm x 40cm rectangular panel. Fold under the two short edges and hem. Fold the panel in half, right sides out, and press the fold. Open out.

2 Cut a motif from heavyweight cotton, leaving a 3mm border around the edge of the design. Pin it to the centre of one half of the folded panel, then use three strands of embroidery thread to blanket stitch it in place.

3 Embroider lines of running stitch next to each seam of the panel. Fold in and press 5mm on both long edges. Fold the panel in half along the previously pressed line. Pin the side seams and sew with a running stitch.

4 Make a hanging loop from a strip of cotton and sew to the top left of the bag. Add a coordinating button to cover the stitching. Use a leather punch or knitting needle to make holes across the centre of the bag front, then edge with blanket stitch. Place balls of string or twine inside and poke the loose ends through.



SELLING POINT
PERFECT FOR
THE KEEN
PHOTOGRAPHER

Our advice

Enlarge the tripod sling so that it can carry a yoga mat, and you've got a whole new customer base to market it to

PRACTICAL AND HANDY BIRDWATCHING SET

NATURE LOVERS WILL ADORE THIS USEFUL SET
TO KEEP THEIR EQUIPMENT SAFE

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric, Spoonflower Scrummy range: Just Puffins; Just Small Puffins, fat quarter of each
- › Wadding, quilting, lightweight, fat quarter
- › Snap fasteners, two

DIMENSIONS

- › To fit a pair of binoculars 5cm x 14cm square
- › Use a 5mm seam allowance unless otherwise stated

CUTTING GUIDE:

- › Back and base: 15cm x 20cm, cut one from each fabric
- › Front: 15cm square, cut one from each fabric
- › Top and flap: 10cm x 15cm, cut one from each fabric
- › Sides: 5cm x 15cm, cut one pair from each fabric
- › Straps: 5cm x 55cm, cut two from each fabric

BINOCULARS CASE

- 1 Cut and press all the pieces following the cutting guide and use a circle template to round off the two lower corners of the flap. Pin the outer fabric pieces to lightweight wadding, pattern side up, and trim the wadding to the same sizes. Stitch the top of the back panel to the uncurved edge of the flap, right sides together. Flatten the seam towards the back panel and topstitch with matching thread. The patterns should face in opposite directions.
- 2 Stitch the bottom of the front panel to the end of the back panel and topstitch as before. Again, the patterns will face in opposite directions. Pin each side strip to the sides of the front panel ensuring the pattern is the same way up this time. Stitch down this seam before pinning the bottom edge of each side panel to the bottom section of the back panel. Sew this seam before pinning and stitching the remaining long

This gorgeous set has been made in **puffin-print** fabric by Scrummy for Spoonflower, and comprises a padded **binoculars** case, practical **tripod** sling and a **coordinating** covered sketch book

edge of the side panel to the rest of the back panel. You should now have the complete bag and flap shape.

3 Take the lining fabric pieces and assemble another bag and flap in the same way, omitting the topstitching. Tuck one bag inside the other, right sides together. Pin the two flap sections right sides together and sew around the edges of the sides and flap. Turn out the flap and bag through the gap. Turn in the raw edges and pin. Topstitch the front of the bag 3mm from the edge to secure. Continue stitching around the sides and flap of the bag to keep the layers neat.

4 Make the strap by joining the 55cm long strips of fabric in pairs on one short edge. Place the strips right sides together and stitch down both long edges. Turn

out and press flat. Turn in the short ends and tack. Pin the ends of the strap to each side of the bag and securely stitch in place. Remove the tacking stitches.

5 Mark the position of snap fasteners on the outer flap with a pencil, approximately 2.5cm in from the edges and base. Place the binoculars in the bag and fold the flap over. Run a pin through the marks into the fabric below, lift the edge of the flap and mark the position of the pin on the front of the bag for a perfect fit. Alternatively, mark the front 2.5cm in from the sides and 2.5cm down from the top edge.

6 Remove the pins and binoculars before setting two pairs of snap fasteners on the pencil marks using a setting tool and hammer, ensuring that the two parts are the correct way round.





TRIPOD SLING

1 To create the pocket, cut a 16cm x 35cm rectangle from puffin and polka dot fabric. Place right sides together and sew along the top long edge. Open out and press the seam to one side before folding right sides out, allowing 5mm of the lining fabric to be seen above the outer fabric, press and trim the outer fabric to the same length as the spotty lining.

2 Place the pocket fabric outer side up onto one short edge of the 32cm x 50cm plain cotton rectangle, raw edges matching. Pin and topstitch a straight line from the centre of the pocket's long, folded edge down to the raw edge.

3 Place the small square of plain cotton over the pocket, raw edges matching and with one side overlapping the centre line by 5mm. Stitch along the bottom edge. Pin and sew the adjacent side of the square to the base of the pocket on the other side of the centre line.

4 Pin and stitch the remaining sides of the square to the pocket raw edge, one at a time. There will be excess fabric on the main part of the bag, do not trim this.

5 Fold the strip of polka dot fabric right sides together

lengthways and stitch 5mm from the long raw edge. Turn out and press to make a strap. Fold the bag in half right sides together, place the strap inside and allow one end to emerge at a 45° angle from the base of the bag where there is excess fabric. Pin and stitch from the corner of the base square to the long edge of the bag at 45°, attaching the strap as you do so.

6 Ensure the strap is not twisted inside the bag and pin the other end between the bag sides, 45cm from the base. Stitch the long edge of the bag from the 45° angle to the top of the strap, encasing the short edges of the pocket as you do so and leaving the top 5cm of the bag side seam open.

7 Hem 5mm at the edges of the open seam. Double hem the top of the bag, folding over 1cm, then 2cm. Stitch along the hem to leave a channel for a drawstring. Turn out the bag and press. Thread a 40cm length of round black elastic through the channel and knot securely. Pull the loop of elastic round so the knot is hidden within the channel. Thread a spring loaded cord lock onto the excess loop so the drawstring can be tightened.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- Fabric, cotton: plain, 32cm x 50cm, 9cm square; Spoonflower Scrummy range, Just Puffins, 16cm x 35cm; white polka dots on yellow, 16cm x 35cm, 5cm x 85cm
- Elastic, 2mm, round, black, 40cm
- Cord lock, spring loaded

DIMENSIONS

- To fit a tripod 45cm tall excluding tilting head, and 25cm in circumference when folded down





PRETTY PATCHWORK UPCYCLED QUILT

USE VINTAGE FABRICS AND OLD CLOTHING TO MAKE
THIS PRETTY QUILT AND CUSHION

We're all guilty of hoarding **old fabrics** and clothes with the intention of making something with them 'one day'. These **cost-effective** makes are simple projects, so those proficient at patchwork will be able to **whip up** a quilt and cushion **quick smart**.



SELLING POINT
MADE FROM
VINTAGE AND
UPCYCLED FABRICS

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric: embroidered tray cloths, antimacassers or tablecloths; shirt, men's, cotton; floral print, scraps; plain, backing
- › Wadding, quilt, 2oz
- › Card

DIMENSIONS

- › 98cm square

MAKE A QUILT

1 Wash, dry and press vintage fabrics and cut old shirts into useable panels, discarding plackets and collars. Next, cut a 15cm square and a 5.5cm x 15cm strip from card to use as cutting templates. Place the square template on the reverse of embroidered fabric, positioning it centrally over a motif. Draw around the square in pencil. Mark out more squares in this way.

2 Machine stitch 2mm inside the square borders before cutting them out. This will prevent the embroidery

coming undone if cutting through a design and will also stop the linen fabric stretching out of shape while you piece the patchwork together.

3 Use the card strip to mark and cut several pieces of men's shirt material and floral scraps. Lay the strips together in sets of three and stitch together on the long edges with a 5mm seam allowance. Press the seams flat and use the card strip to mark and cut across the trio to make a strip of blocks. Combine them to make several blocks of nine patches and sew together as before.

4 Make more square blocks from three 5.5cm x 15cm strips of fabric. Use up any oddments of embroidery that were too small to make whole squares from. Press all the patches and lay out on a flat surface in a symmetrical design. Ours is five patches by five patches. Stitch the squares together in strips, then into a whole block, taking care to match up corners neatly.

5 Cut several 5.5cm wide strips of floral fabric and sew end to end to make a

continuous piece, long enough to outline the patchwork. Cut and sew to opposite edges of the quilt top, trimming away the excess each time. Sew to the remaining edges to complete the border. Repeat this process again with different fabrics until you are happy with the look. Press the quilt top.

6 Measure the dimensions and cut wadding and backing fabric 1cm larger than the quilt top. Lay out the backing, place the wadding on this and add the quilt top face up centrally over the two. Pin in place, starting from the centre and working out in all directions, smoothing the layers as you do so.

7 Quilt using a straight stitch, working out as before to avoid creasing the backing fabric. Quilt the borders and retrim the raw edges if necessary. Turn under 5mm of the quilt top. Turn in the backing fabric and wadding to match and pin. Slip stitch the edges with thread to coordinate with the border fabric.

STITCH A CUSHION

1 Press a dressing table mat or doily and lay onto a piece of paper. Mark around the central cotton panel with a pencil through the holes of the crochet onto the paper to create a rough template. Cut a piece of floral fabric 2mm bigger all round than the template.

2 Fit the mat into an embroidery frame or lay flat. Pin the floral fabric shape over the centre of the mat. Fold under the edges of the material and slip stitch with two strands of coordinating embroidery thread.

3 Cut a 30cm square of different floral fabric and pin the crochet mat to the middle. Use white thread to stitch in place around the centre shape. Stretch the crochet edges out and pin, top, bottom, left, right, followed by the spaces in between. Sew down the edges as before.

4 Edge the border of the floral square with a 3cm wide strip of plain white cotton in the same way as for the quilt border. Add a second border of floral fabric 5.5cm wide. Press the cushion top and use two strands of coloured embroidery thread to add a neat running stitch next to the border seams. Your panel should measure 45cm square.

5 Cut two 30cm x 45cm pieces of backing fabric. Hem one long edge on each piece. Place the cushion top face up, lay one piece of backing face down, raw edges matching and the hemmed edge sitting over the crochet mat. Lay the other piece of backing fabric face down against the other edge so the two hemmed edges overlap to form an envelope back. Pin in place and stitch around all four edges. Turn the cushion cover right side out through the envelope back and press. Top stitch the edges 5mm in from the seam if desired and insert a cushion pad.



Our advice

Car boot sales and charity shops are great resources for old linens and embroidery. Don't be afraid to have a rummage and remember that even a badly stained tablecloth will have useable pieces that can be cut out.



SELLING POINT
WIPE CLEAN
PICNIC WEAR

SPRINGTIME BEST SELLER PICNIC SET

PRACTICAL OILCLOTH IS IDEAL FOR THESE PICNIC
BLANKET AND CUSHION MAKES

Get this set made and photographed in time for **spring**, and you'll have a seasonal **winner** that is bound to be a website hit. They are made from **durable** and practical oilcloth, and these have been **designed** using a lighter weight flexible acrylic for the top of the cushions and a thicker **pvc-coated** cotton for the reverse.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- Fabric, oilcloth: various patterns and weights to total 2m; solid, 1.5m or cotton
- Cushion pads, 45cm
- Zip, 35cm to 40cm
- Paper, graph
- Thread, quilting, strong, contrasting colour

DIMENSIONS

- Mat: 105cm square
- Cushions: 45cm square



STITCH FLOOR CUSHIONS

1 Cut sixteen 12cm squares of patterned oilcloth. Sew into pairs, blocks and then one large 4 x 4 block, right sides together with a 5mm seam allowance. Finger press the seams flat before top stitching in a contrast thread, 2mm to the left of each seam. The panel should measure 45cm square.

2 Cut four 8cm x 45cm strips of oilcloth and one 5cm x 45cm piece. Cut three 8cm x 45cm pieces of wadding and pin them to the back of the same size strips. Pin and stitch these to three sides of the patchwork panel, right sides together with a 5mm seam allowance.

3 Take the two leftover strips, place one against a zip edge so the right side of it is face down on the right side of the zip mechanism and there are equal amounts of fabric at either end. Stitch in place, using a zipper foot. Open out the fabric and finger press. Repeat with the other strip of fabric on the opposite edge of the zip.

4 Concertina fold the wider strip over the top of the zip so that the width of the whole piece is 8cm. Pin the concertina and topstitch to hold it in place, concealing but not enclosing the zip. Pin and stitch one side of this strip to the remaining side of the patchwork panel. Line up each corner and sew the strips together on the short edges.

5 Turn the sides of the cushion right sides out. Use a chalk pencil and ruler to mark lines parallel to the long seams but 2cm down from them. Fold the side pieces between these lines and use a strong quilting thread to sew running stitch through the layers from line to seam to create a padded, mattress type edging all the way round.

6 Cut a 45cm square piece of oilcloth, or make a second patchwork panel if you prefer, to create the back panel. Open the zip slightly before pinning this piece to the sides of the front panel, right sides together. Match up the corners neatly and stitch in place, ensuring the wadding is secured with the stitching. Open the zip fully to turn out the cushion cover and fill with

a suitable pad. Repeat to make as many cushions as required.

MAKE A PICNIC MAT

1 The mat is made up of small squares, rectangles and larger squares arranged in a random pattern. One small square will measure 11cm, rectangles are 11cm x 22cm, and larger squares are 22cm. Use a piece of graph paper to plan your design, making the finished piece 110cm square (10 small squares per side), or your own desired size.

2 Once happy with the layout, cut oilcloth into corresponding shapes. Small squares measure 12cm, rectangles are 12cm x 23cm, and larger squares are 23cm. These sizes allow for a 5mm seam allowance on each side. Lay out the fabric pieces, varying the colours and prints for maximum contrast.

3 Begin to sew the pieces together in blocks, right sides together with a 5mm allowance. Match up seam lines as the blocks join together for a neat finish. Finger press the seams as you go along to keep the work neat.

4 Cut 110cm of wadding, or measure your finished panel and cut to the same size. Trim backing fabric 3cm larger on all sides. Lay the fabrics on the floor with the backing face down, the wadding and then the patchwork panel face up. Pin together at regular intervals starting in the centre and working out in all directions.

5 Use a double thickness of contrasting quilting cotton thread to join the layers together. Simply sew down and back through all layers where the corners of the patchwork meet. Knot the threads tightly together several times and trim to leave 5mm tails of thread on the right side. Work from the centre out and remove pins as necessary.

6 Finish the edges of the mat by turning under 5mm and pinning the edges of the patchwork panel. Turn the sides of the backing fabric over the edges of the wadding and pin behind the folded patchwork so it protrudes by 5mm. Slip stitch the two fabrics together to leave a narrow border of backing fabric.

PRETTY PATCHWORK TEACUPS

CREATE ORNATE PATCHWORK CUPS AND SAUCERS
FOR AN ORIGINAL STORAGE OPTION

Patchwork is very popular these days, and these makes offer a storage option with a difference for an alternative solution to keeping safe homeless odds and ends.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric, Art Gallery Fabrics: Bijoux by Bari J, Divine Gypsy Rosewood, Bohemian Charms Cream, Bohemian Charms Honey, Dancing Harvest Guava; Oval Elements by Pat Bravo, Blue Lagoon, Chocolate Cherry; Nature Elements by Pat Bravo, Hot Pink, Ocean Breeze
- › Wadding, 2oz
- › Thread: sewing, white; embroidery, burgundy
- › Yarn, scraps

DIMENSIONS

- › Teacup: 8.5cm x 15cm
- › Coffee cup: 14cm x 16cm
- › Saucer: 18.5cm diameter

Our advice

The higher up you position the handle, the more chance there is of the cup tipping over. You can overcome this problem by sewing a coin into the base to counterbalance.

SEW A TEACUP

1 Trace the template from pages 126 to 130 onto card. Cut six teacup pieces from a variety of printed fabrics, six from coordinating fabric for the lining, followed by another six from lightweight wadding.

2 Pin and stitch the six printed fabric pieces together with a 5mm seam allowance, then sew the wadding pieces together in the same way. Repeat the process with the lining fabric, but leave a 4cm gap in the centre of one seam for turning.

3 Place the wadding 'cup' over your fist, then slip the outer cup over this, right sides out, and add the lining cup over this, right sides in. Line up the top raw edges and side seams, then stitch around the top edge.

4 Turn out the outer and wadding cups through the opening in the lining. Slip stitch the gap and push the lining inside the cup, securing with a few small stitches.

5 Cut a 5cm wide strip of printed fabric measuring 24cm long. Fold it in half lengthways, right sides together, and sew 5mm in from the edge to make a tube. Turn out and press.

6 Trim 10 to 12 lengths of double knitting yarn twice the length of the tube. Knot another piece of yarn at the centre of the hank, threading the ends through a darning needle. Fold the yarn in half at the knot and use the needle to pass the hank through the length of piping.

7 Fold in the raw ends of the tube, trimming the yarn if necessary, and stitch. Take a double thickness of thread and sew running stitch along the seam, gathering it up tight to allow the tube to curl into a spiral. Create a small one for the first part of the handle and secure with stitches.

8 Run looser running stitch along the next part of the seam to make a gently



curving top, then secure. Begin again at the other end, sewing on the opposite side to the seam to allow the handle to curl in the other direction and create a scroll. Stitch the handle to the side of the teacup, passing the thread through all layers of the cup and spiral.

STITCH A SAUCER

1 Cut six saucer template pieces from different printed fabrics, then stitch together to form a complete circle and press.

2 Trim a 20cm diameter circle of wadding and backing fabric. Layer the three circles together: place your

wadding first, then your patchwork circle right side up, followed by the backing fabric wrong side up.

3 Stitch around the circumference, leaving a 4cm gap. Turn out the saucer through this opening, so the wadding is sandwiched between the two cotton fabrics. Fold in the raw edges and slip stitch closed.

4 Cut a 9cm diameter circle of fabric, turn under, then tack 1cm around the circumference before pressing. Pin the circle to the top centre of the saucer and sew running stitch around the edge with burgundy embroidery thread.

BEAUTIFUL HEART-SHAPED PINBOARD AND BOOKCOVER

PINBOARDS MAKE GREAT GIFTS, AND THIS
PATCHWORK ONE IS NO EXCEPTION



SELLING POINT
THE BOOK COVER
CAN BE REMOVED
AND REUSED





ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Pinboard
- › Fabric, cotton: assorted, 10cm square, 32; lining, 50cm square
- › Ribbon, grosgrain, striped, 1.5cm wide, 200cm
- › Paper, 50cm square
- › Foam board, 50cm x 100cm
- › Buttons, cover, 2.3cm, three
- › Wadding, medium weight, 100cm x 50cm
- › Embroidery thread
- › Notebook
- › Fabric, patterned
- › Wadding
- › Notebook, plain hardback
- › Knife, craft
- › Tape, double-sided

DIMENSIONS

- › Pinboard: 42cm x 48cm
- › Notebook: 10.5cm x 14.8cm

MAKE A PINBOARD

1 Fold a 50cm square sheet of paper in half and cut a large heart shape from it. Use this as a template to cut two hearts from the foam board and fix these together with double-sided tape to increase the thickness. Draw around the template onto lining fabric and cut out leaving a 1.5cm seam allowance. Fold the seam allowance in and tack in place. Press to set the curved edges.

2 Draw a vertical line down the centre of the template and from this draw a series of diagonal lines at 45° from the vertical, 8cm apart in both directions to make a grid pattern. Arrange your fabric squares over the grid until you are happy with the placement of the different designs. Don't forget that even small sections of squares on the grid will need cloth covering them.

The plush **patchwork** is a pretty feature of this pinboard. The coordinating grosgrain **ribbon** and covered **buttons** also add to its appeal.

3 Begin stitching rows of squares together into strips using a 1cm seam allowance. Press the strips and keep them in the correct order on the grid before stitching them together to make a fabric panel. Press again and check the fabric will cover the whole heart with 3cm overlap. Use the template to cut two hearts from wadding and roughly tack together. Fix the wadding to the foam board with a little double-sided tape, lay the material over it and pin in place ensuring the centre of the fabric and the heart line up.

4 Use double-sided tape to temporarily attach the edges of the fabric tightly over the wadding and onto the back of the foam board. Cut

and pin lengths of ribbon over the front of the heart, covering some seams and fix the ends to the back as before.

5 Cover three buttons with matching fabric. Stitch these in place where the ribbons cross using six strands of embroidery thread and a sharp needle that is long enough to pass through the fabric, wadding and foam board. Keep the thread fairly taut so the buttons are pulled into the wadding and create a dip.

6 Take the pressed heart of lining material and pin to the fabric at the back of the heart to cover all raw edges. Slip stitch in place around the edge with small stitches to complete.



STITCH A NOTEBOOK COVER

- 1** Open a notebook and pull the pages away from the spine as far as you can. Use a craft knife to cut through the end papers close to the spine to release the book from its cover. Lay the book to one side and flatten the cover.
- 2** Cut a piece of wadding the same size as the cover. Lay it onto the back of a suitable piece of fabric so that an attractive image will be on the left-hand side and there is at least 2cm of fabric spare around all edges. Pin the wadding to the fabric. Turn over and use sewing thread to backstitch around the outline of your chosen motif. Remove the pins and fix the quilted fabric to the spine of the book cover with double-sided tape.
- 3** Fold in the raw edges of the fabric on all sides, mitring the corners and securing with double-sided tape. Attach more tape to the inside of the book. Create new endpapers from the first and last pages of the book by sticking them to the inside covers, covering the raw edges of fabric and holding the book in place.

DIAMANTÉ EMBELLISHED PEACOCK BAG

A STATEMENT BAG THAT IS PRACTICAL
AND EYE-CATCHING

With its hot fix **gems**, this bag may be one of the more time-consuming additions to your **product range**, but it is unusual, and customers will **love** the attention to **detail** of the carefully applied gems.



TEMPLATE

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric: V&A, Teal Peacock; Teal Tree Blossom; Fuchsia Peacock; Fuchsia Tree Blossom, fat quarter of each; cotton lining, coordinating colour, 50cm; backing fabric, quilt, 50cm
- › Wadding, quilt, 2oz
- › Clasp, magnetic
- › Snap fasteners, two
- › Hot fix wand
- › Gems, hot fix, glass, 3mm, range of colours
- › Templates, card: 8cm
- › Pencil, chalk
- › Loop turner
- › Cord (optional)

DIMENSIONS

- › Patchwork bag: 10.2cm square
- › Cosmetics bag: 19cm x 20.5cm

PATCHWORK BAG

1 Use an 8cm x 15cm card template to trace and cut six peacock motifs, three from each colourway. Use an 8cm square template to cut another 44 pieces of fabric, with equal amounts from each design.

2 Arrange the cut outs into five panels; two sized at 10.2cm square for the front and back, and three sized at 5cm x 10cm for the gussets. Intermingle the peacock motifs throughout the panels and keep the designs the same way up. Sew the cut outs together with a 5mm seam allowance and press.

3 Choose a large panel for the front of the bag and stitch the gussets to either side and along the base. Add the second square panel to the other side of the base, taking care to invert the design so that when it is folded up to meet the sides of the bag, the motifs will be the same way up as those on the front.

4 You should end up with a 'T' shape. Press this to flatten all seams. Place the quilt backing fabric on a flat surface with the wadding on top. Lay the patchwork face

up on the wadding and pin down through all three layers, distributing pins over the surface. Trim the wadding and backing to the same shape as the patchwork.

5 Machine stitch around the rectangular peacock patches. Add more quilting by stitching diagonally from corner to corner on each square block, avoiding the rectangles. Repeat in the opposite direction to create a cross in the centre of each square.

6 To stitch a denser quilting pattern, flip the layers over and draw lines centrally between all of the diagonals if desired. Remember to stop and start at the edges of each rectangle. Press the quilted panel then lay face up onto the coordinating lining material, pin, and cut this to the same size.

7 Fold the back panel of the quilted bag over to meet the front panel, right sides together. Pin and stitch the side gussets to the sides of the back panel. Complete the bag by sewing the base of each gusset to the sides of the bottom one.

8 Cut several 6cm wide strips of leftover fabric and join end to end to make two straps, each 115cm long. Fold right sides together on the long side and sew 5mm from the edge. Use a loop turner to pull the fabric tubes right side out and press. Thread thick cord through them to fatten if desired.

9 Tack the ends of the straps to the top edges of the front and back of the bag, matching the raw edges and placing the straps 2cm in from the side seams. Cut a 21cm x 27cm rectangle of leftover fabric and use a side plate to draw curves at the two bottom corners. Trim away the excess fabric. Use this as a template to cut the same shapes from wadding and lining fabric.

10 Stitch the flat edge of the flap to the top of the bag's back panel, right sides together, ensuring the strap is laying flush against the bag with the ends included in the seam. Place the shaped lining fabric onto the right side of the flap with the wadding over this. Pin in place and stitch around the curve, starting and stopping where the flap attaches to the bag. Turn out the flap so the wadding is sandwiched between the fabric and lining. Press the curved seam before topstitching around the flap, 5mm in.

11 Mark the centre of the flap lining, 3cm up from the sewn edge. Fit half a magnetic fastener to the inside by pushing the fixing bars through tiny slits cut in the lining and wadding. Bend the bars flush to the clasp, accessing the back of the fastener through the raw edge of the lining and wadding. Fold the flap over the front of the bag, mark the position of the fastener and fit the other half to the front panel.

12 Assemble the lining in the same way, then slip over the quilted bag wrong side out. Pin the top edges of the lining to the top edges of the bag, working from one side panel, round the front to the other side panel, lining up seams where possible. Do not pin the back panel because this needs to be kept open for turning. Ensure the front strap is laying flush against the front of the bag before sewing along the top edge, including the ends of the strap in the seam.

13 Turn out the lining and push inside the quilted bag. Topstitch the seam as before, close the bag and fasten the clasp. Flatten so the side gussets jut out. Fit snap fasteners to each side of the gusset, facing out, so the sides can be tucked in and fastened temporarily for a narrower bag, if desired.

DECORATE WITH DIAMANTÉ

- › Locate the peacock template on pages 126 to 130. Copy the design onto the flap of the bag using a chalk pencil. Working from the centre out, cover the lines of the design with alternating colours of 3mm hot fix crystals using an applicator. Simply screw the correct size nib into the barrel before turning the tool on, then allow it to heat up on the low setting, taking care not to touch any part of the metal barrel. Arrange crystals on a plate, right side up. Lightly push the nib over the gem, lift it from the plate, watch for the glue on the back to melt, then press quickly against the fabric before removing the tool to leave the gem in place. Continue to add a double row of crystals to the outside edge.



SELLING POINT...
RUSTLE UP A
COORDINATING
MAKE-UP BAG TO
SELL AT A SPECIAL
OFFER PRICE

SOFT AND SAFE TABLET CASE

THIS RETRO-PRINT TABLET CASE WILL APPEAL TO THOSE WHO LOVE MODERN TECHNOLOGY FOR WHAT IT DOES RATHER THAN WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE



SELLING POINT
STYLISH AND
PRACTICAL ANSWER
TO KEEPING
TECHNOLOGY
PRISTINE

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Card, A4
- › Fabric: Art Gallery Fabrics, Dreaming in French range; plain cotton, pink
- › Fusible wadding

DIMENSIONS

- › 20.5cm x 26cm

Many people love the combination of **old and new**, and this tablet case uses **nostalgic** prints for an elegant touch. If you enjoy making it, why not create a coordinating range to **protect** everything from an i-pad mini to a laptop?

MAKE A TABLET CASE

1 Place a protractor at the bottom left corner of an A4 sheet of card and mark 10 degree intervals using a ruler. Draw lines from the corner of the sheet through the marks to the edge of the card to create a fan design. Number each section and cut out to form templates.

2 Pin the nine pieces number side up onto the wrong side of the various printed fabrics and cut around each one, leaving a 1cm seam allowance. Fold over the edges and tack to the templates neatly.

3 Oversew each covered template to the next one in sequence using a coordinating thread and small

hand stitches, removing the tacking stitches and card as you go. Press the finished rectangle of patchwork.

4 Cut fusible wadding into two pieces, 20.5cm x 26cm, and iron one section to the reverse of the patchwork leaving a 5mm seam allowance on the two edges adjacent to the starting corner of the fan. Quilt the patchwork

to the wadding along the lines of the fan.

5 Trim the excess fabric from the remaining edges to 2cm. Iron the other piece of wadding to a 25cm x 30cm rectangle of backing material, and trim with a 2cm seam allowance.

6 Place the two pieces of the case with right sides together and pin, making sure the wadding rectangles are lined up accurately. Stitch around three sides of the panel leaving the top edge open. Turn out the pouch, fold in the top raw edges and tack down.

7 Cut two 20.5cm x 26cm rectangles of plain lining fabric, plus a 1cm seam allowance on all sides. Stitch around three sides but do not turn out. Fold out the top 1cm and tack. Slip the lining inside the pouch, pin the two folded top edges together and slip stitch.



MAKE THE ROSETTE

1 Using the picture as a guide, sketch a motif onto a 10cm square of plain cotton. Embroider in complementary shades of thread. Use backstitch to outline and fill with long and short stitches. When complete, press and iron wadding to the back, making sure the motif is sitting centrally.

2 Trim the fabric and fold the edges over the wadding, tacking into place. Take a strip of patterned fabric, 4cm x 60cm, and fold in half lengthways. Gather up the raw edges with running stitch to make a ruffle.

3 Tack the ruffle to the underside of the oval motif and stitch into place with coloured embroidery thread. Fix the decoration to the bottom corner of the case with small running stitches, being mindful to only go through the top layer.

QUILTED BED RUNNER

BRIGHT FLORALS WITH A TOUCH OF ZINGY LIME
GIVE THIS MAKE A SUMMER FEEL

A bed runner will take less of your time and **resources** to produce than a quilt. This **pretty** option is simple to make, and the **frilled** edge adds an extra point of interest.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric, Art Gallery Fabrics: Naturella range, Garden Aquarella, Night Glowing Daisies, 1m of each; Luxe in Bloom range, Cascade Coral, 1m; cotton, white, 70cm x 2m
- › Wadding, lightweight, 70cm x 2m

DIMENSIONS

- › 69cm x 192cm

CUTTING GUIDE:

- › Floral fabric: 16cm squares, cut 12
- › Daisy fabric: 12cm squares, cut 24, cut in half diagonally to make 48 triangles
- › Cascade fabric: 15.5cm squares, cut 24, cut in half diagonally to make 48 triangles

STITCH A BED RUNNER

1 Make up a block by stitching the long edges of two daisy triangles on either side of a square, right sides together with a 5mm seam allowance. Press the triangles open. Pin and stitch two more daisy triangles to the remaining sides of the square, noting that the edges will seem to overlap the previous shapes. This overlap will be obscured by the next set of triangles provided you keep to a 5mm seam allowance.

2 Repeat step 1, attaching four cascade triangles to the daisy and floral square. Press the whole pieced panel, this should measure 30cm square. Make eleven more panels in the same way. Cut several 3cm wide strips of

floral fabric and use 30cm long pieces of these as sashing to join the panels together into six pairs. Join the pairs to make the bed runner panel with 62cm long strips of sashing between each pair.

3 Add a border of 3cm wide floral strips around the whole runner. Cut several 6cm wide strips of daisy fabric and join end to end to make a very long piece, roughly two and a half times longer than the border of the quilt. Fold in half right sides out and press.

4 Tack the raw edges of the folded strip to the outer edge of the border, right sides together, ruffling the folded strip as you go along. Do this by gently pulling the thread to create gathers. Add extra ruffles at the corners to ensure they sit neatly when turned over and add extra fabric at

the strip if required.

5 Machine stitch over the tacking to secure the ruffles then press the whole runner top. Lay plain cotton right side down, place wadding over this and position the runner right side up on the top. Pin the three layers together, starting from the centre and working out.

6 Top stitch the layers together in line with the inner edge of the border sashing. Trim the wadding and backing fabric in line with the edge of the ruffle before turning in a 2cm hem and slip stitching to the back of the runner, covering all the raw edges. Secure the layers together over the surface of the runner by knotting embroidery thread through the fabric at the four corners of each floral square.



Our advice

Simply rearrange the completed panels to make a quilt. Twelve panels laid out three by four will measure around 1m by 1.35m, perfect for a child's bed

SELLING POINT
AN ELEGANT
ADDITION TO THE
BEDROOM THAT
WON'T OVERPOWER
THE DÉCOR

ON-TREND PATCHWORK OWL

BOTH OWLS AND PATCHWORK ARE
BANG ON TREND, AND THESE MAKES
COMBINE THE TWO PERFECTLY

SELLING POINT
QUIRKY MATCHING
MAKES THAT WILL
ADD A SPLASH OF
COLOUR TO ANY
LIVING SPACE



Creating **patchwork** makes is actually very simple, so the addition of the **applied owl** takes this project from basic to eye-catching.

And the **great** news is that you can use up all those small bits of fabric that may otherwise find their way into the bin.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric, assorted
- › Fibre filling
- › Buttons, diamante, 1cm
- › Felt, cream, scraps
- › Embroidery threads, coordinating colours

DIMENSIONS

- › Owls: 12cm x 12.5cm
- › Cushion: 39cm x 39cm

MAKE AN OWL

1 Press the fabrics and place face down. Locate the templates from on pages 126 to 130, then trace the main body shape of the owl onto two different patterned pieces of material and cut out leaving a 1cm seam allowance. Cut two pairs of wings from contrasting fabric. Remember to flip the pattern pieces over so they are symmetrical.

2 Trace the zig zag pattern onto a piece of fabric, leaving a 1cm gap between each line of points and flipping the template over to avoid wasting fabric. Don't cut these pieces out; instead pin the traced material to a



contrasting pattern, right sides together.

3 Using a sewing machine, carefully stitch along all the zig zags. Cut between each line of stitching to separate the strips, trim the seam allowance to 3mm and clip into the 'V' shapes. Use a knitting needle to turn out the points, then press each strip with an iron. You will need at least four or five zig zag strips at 15cm long.

4 Turn half the strips over so that the patterns alternate. Fold under 5mm of the top raw edges and pin the strips across one body piece on the right side. Use two strands of coloured embroidery thread to sew a double line of running stitches across the top of each piece.

5 Sew the two pairs of wing pieces together on the curved edge. Trim the seam allowance, clip, turn out and press. Tack the wings to either side of a body piece, over the zig zag strips and in line with the edge.

6 Cut two 2.5cm diameter circles from felt and two 5cm circles from fabric. Run a line of running stitches around the edge of the fabric circles. Place the felt discs inside the cloth and pull the stitches tight around each to create a covered button effect.

7 Cut a beak from felt and stitch to the centre of the head. Leave a little gap on one straight edge to push a tiny amount of stuffing under the beak, then close the gap. Pin the fabric covered 'buttons' on either side of the beak and sew in place with a running stitch. Stitch a diamante button to the centre of each one.

8 Place the second owl shape over the first, right sides together, enclosing all the stitched-on pieces. Match up the edges as closely as possible, then stitch around the shape leaving a 5cm gap on the bottom edge for turning. Avoid catching the lowest line of zig zags in the base of the bird.

9 Trim the seam allowance to 5mm, cutting away excess zig zag strips. Clip the curves and turn out. Firmly stuff the owl with fibre filling. Fold in the raw edges at the bottom and oversew closed, pulling up tightly to slightly gather the base.

STITCH A CUSHION

1 Make a decorative owl as above but stuff lightly before oversewing to the centre of a 20cm fabric square. Cut four strips of contrasting fabric 5cm x 22cm and press in half lengthways, right sides out. Tack these around the edge of the square to make a border.

2 Cut 20, 6cm squares of different patterned fabrics. Stitch into two, six square long strips and two, four square long strips with a 5mm seam allowance. Pin and stitch the shorter strips to either side of the bordered square, right sides together. Open out and press flat before pinning and stitching the longer strips to the top and bottom of the panel to complete the frame.

3 Add a border around the cushion top with a 40cm square of plain fabric, adding a zip to one edge if required.

TEMPLATE



Our advice

Clip the corners of the zig zag strips before turning to ensure crisp points are achieved

SEASIDE SIMPLE CROCHET BLANKET

YOU'LL NEED SOME BASIC SEWING SKILLS
TO MAKE UP THIS SEA-INSPIRED DESIGN



SELLING POINT
MAKE TO ORDER
AND INCORPORATE
FABRIC OF THE
CUSTOMER'S
CHOICE

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Yarn, Yeoman Yarns: DK Panama, cream, denim, haze, linen
- › Fabric, nautical prints, 10cm squares
- › Crochet hook, 3mm
- › Embroidery thread, pale blue

ABBREVIATIONS

- › sl st - slip stitch
- › dc - double crochet
- › tr - treble
- › 2trtog - work 2 trebles together
- › 3trtog - work 3 trebles together
- › ch - chain
- › ch-sp - chain space
- › rpt - repeat

The **nautical** fabric squares on this project make this more than a straightforward **granny square** crochet **blanket**. And because it's made with **children** in mind, it really will be a quick make for crocheters, so you could make a complete range in a **variety** of colours easily and quickly

SQUARES

1 Fold in the edges of a nautical print fabric square by 5mm and press. Use three strands of embroidery thread to work 24 blanket stitches along each side.

2 Using a 3mm crochet hook, attach linen-coloured yarn to a corner with a sl st through the top of the blanket stitch. Ch, miss a stitch and work dc into the next, continue this sequence to make 12 dcs.

3 Ch 2 and dc into the same corner stitch, before crocheting the next edge. Work the entire square and finish with a sl st.

Row 1: in linen ch 3, work 2trtog into ch-sp, then ch 2. Next, * work 3trtog into the next ch-sp, ch 2 and rpt from

* to the corner, ch 4, work 3trtog into same ch-sp and ch 2. Continue from * in the same way to complete square, finishing with a ch 4 and joining to the first set of tr with a sl st.

Row 2: change to denim and work as row 1

Row 3: change to haze and work as row 1

Row 4: change to cream and work as row 1

BLANKET

1 Create 12 squares. Use linen yarn and sl st into a corner of one square. Dc into a corner of an adjoining patch. Ch 1, dc into next ch-sp of the first piece. * Ch 1, dc into the next ch-sp of the second square, rpt from * to the end. Line up the corners with an

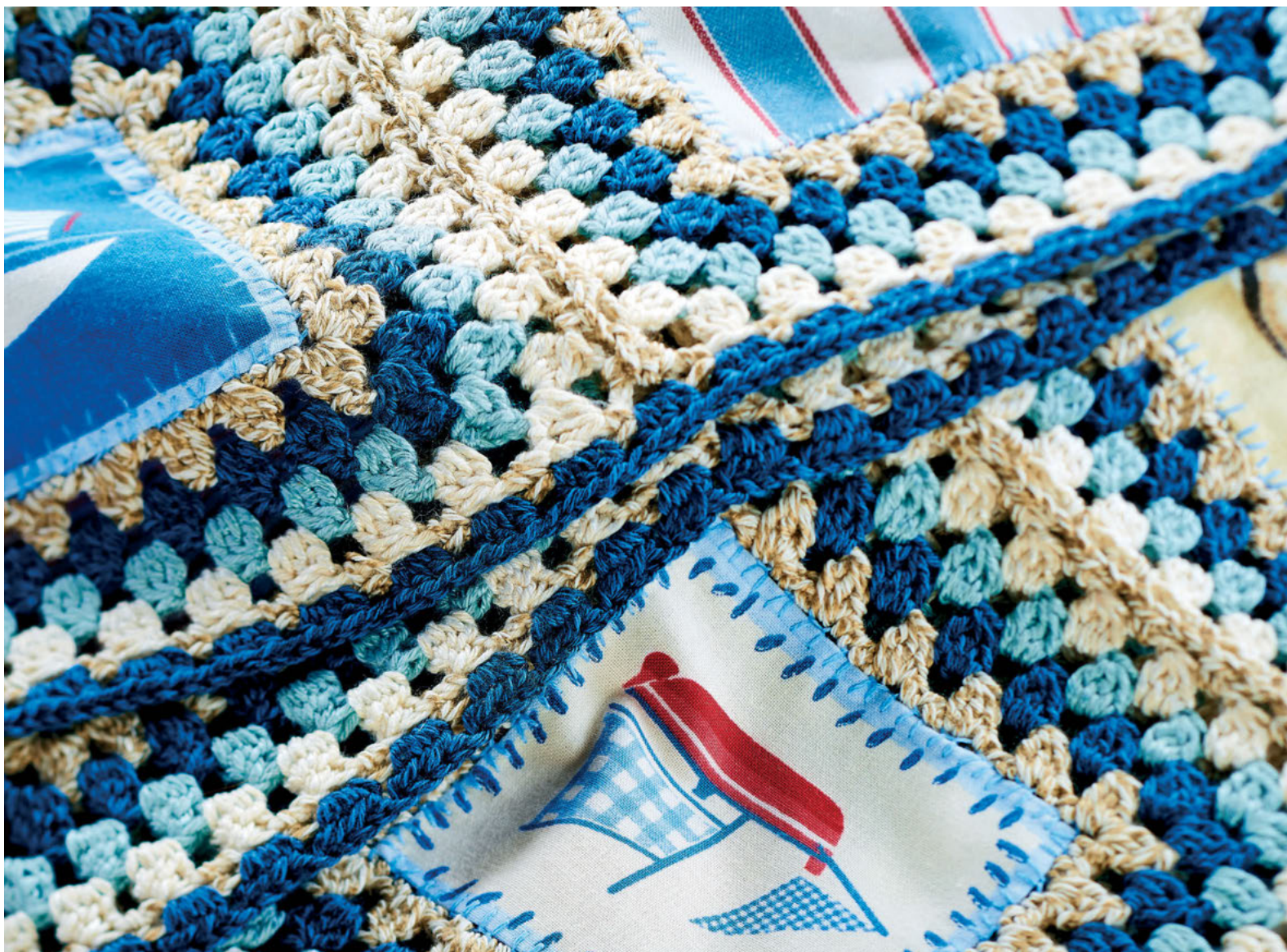
extra dc in the first piece.

2 Use the technique to work continuous vertical lines before completing the panel with horizontal ones. Neaten the edge with a row of dc worked into each ch-sp with ch 2 between the dcs. Work twice into each corner.

3 Attach denim yarn to a corner ch-sp of the blanket with a sl st. Ch 3 and work 2tr into same ch-sp. Next, * ch 1, 3tr into next ch-sp, rpt from * to the end, working two sets of tr into each corner. Press and shape the completed design.

SHOPPING BASKET

Yarns, Yeoman Yarns, 0116 240 4464, www.yeoman-yarns.co.uk



SIMPLE STRIPEY FOOTSTOOL

THIS POUFFE IS GIVEN ITS FORM THANKS TO A ROLLED UP DUVET



This comfortable pouffe looks like a trickier make, but it is simple to crochet and assemble. The cushions will add to its appeal for those who like to coordinate without having everything matching exactly.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- Yarn, Yeoman Yarns, Cross Chunky Pure: Raspberry x 2, Lime x 3, Koala x 3, Ecu x 4
- Fabric: upholstery-weight, 40cm square (optional)
- Crochet hook, 6.5mm
- Cushion pads, 40cm
- Duvet, single

SQUARES

Row 1: In lime yarn, make a magic ring and work 6dc into the ring and join with sl st.

Row 2: Ch 2, dc into first st, 2dc into all remaining sts and join.

Row 3: As row 2.

Row 4: Join Koala yarn and ch 2, work dc into first st, *dc, 2dc, rpt from * to end and join.

Row 5: Ch 2, work dc into first st, *dc, dc, 2dc, rpt from * to end and join.

Row 6: Ch 2, work dc into first st, *dc, dc, 2dc, rpt from * to

end and join. Join Ecu yarn and ch 2, work dc into each st to the end and join.

Row 7: Change to Lime and work as row 5.

Row 8: As row 6 in Lime.

Row 9: As row 6 in Koala.

Row 10: Ch 2, work dc into first st, *dc x 4, 2dc, rpt from * to the end and join.

Row 11: Change to Ecu and work as row 6.

Row 12: Change to Lime and work as row 10.

Row 13: As row 6.

Row 14: Change to Koala and work as row 12.

Row 15: Change to Ecu and work as row 6.

Row 16: As row 6.

Row 17: Change to Lime and work as row 6.

1 Make a second circle in the same way, swapping the koala and ecru yarns to ensure the alternating pattern continues and the yarn is used up equally. Count the number of stitches on both outer rings, there should be around 130 on each piece. Make a chain of this number of stitches in Lime yarn and join into a ring.

2 Work two rows of dc around the ring in Lime, Koala and Ecu, alternating the colours until the tube is 19 rows deep. Assemble the pouffe by sewing one circle to one end of the tube with mattress stitch, ensuring the colour pattern is running in the same direction.

3 Roll up a single duvet on the long edge. Curl the roll into a spiral and fit inside the tube. Uncurl a little to fill out the pouffe and stuff the middle with a cushion pad if necessary. Fit the second circle on top of the tube and mattress stitch into place as before.

CUSHION

1 Make a chain of 44 stitches. Turn, ch 2, miss 2 sts and work dc into third and every other st. Repeat row two, changing the colour where desired until the panel is 34 rows long. Make a second panel in the same way and sew together on three sides with mattress stitch.

2 Insert a 40cm cushion pad and stitch up the remaining side. Alternatively cut a 40cm square of co-ordinating upholstery-weight material. Fold in raw edges and pin to the back of crochet panel. Sew into place with matching thread using small backstitch.

SHOPPING BASKET

Yarns, Yeoman Yarns,
0116 240 4464,
www.yeoman-yarns.co.uk

ESSENTIAL KIT

- > Yarn, Yeoman Yarns, Panama cotton/acrylic, Kiwi, Lime, Rosso, Ochre, Linen, Fiesta, Salmon
- > Crochet hook, 4mm
- > Needle, darning

BLANKET

1 Using colour one and a 4mm crochet hook, 6ch and join into a ring with a sl st. Make 1ch and work 12 dc into the ring, join with a sl st. 2ch, dtr into same st, * 1ch, 2dtr, 2dtr, rpt from * around ring, join to the first pair of dtr with sl st.

2 Change to colour two and join to a ch sp.

3 Work 2ch, dtr into ch sp, * 3ch, 2dtr into same ch sp to make a corner. 2dtr into next space between the pairs of dtrs, 2 dtr into next ch sp, rpt from * around the ring to end and join with sl st. The ring should now resemble a hexagon.

4 Change to colour three and join to a ch sp.

5 Stitch a round as above ensuring two sets of dtrs are worked into each corner with a ch between them and another set of dtrs are created on each side to keep the edges of the hexagon equal. Each subsequent round will be worked in a different colour and have an extra set of dtrs on each side until six of the seven colours have been used. Finish the edge of the hexagon with the last colour, attaching with a sl st and working dc into each st and 2dc into each corner.

JOIN THE HEXAGONS

1 Make seven patches in this way, each starting with a different colour. Press with a steam iron and stitch together, oversewing on the wrong side, to make a larger hexagon. Continue making patches to build up the size of the throw, using the centre colour of each patch as a guide when placing the pieces.

2 When complete, press the whole throw again with a steam iron.

VINTAGE STYLE BLANKET

BRIGHT AND BOLD OR SUBTLE AND UNDERSTATED
– THIS BLANKET HAS A TOUCH OF NOSTALGIA

This blanket really does have that **comforting** feeling of **yesteryear**. It could actually double up as a **tablecloth**, so if you enjoy making it, why not produce another in more subtle pastels that will look great on a **dining room** table?

SELLING POINT
VINTAGE-CHIC
MULTI-PURPOSE
BLANKET

SHOPPING BASKET

Yarns, Yeoman Yarns, 0116 240 4464,
www.yeoman-yarns.co.uk

This **eye-catching** throw can be made in all manner of **pretty** pastels or bold yarns, and you can stick to this **simple** four-colour option, or go all out to attract those who like a **zingy mix** of hues.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Yarn, Yeoman Yarns, soft cotton DK cones, white, pale blue, mid blue, moss green
- › Crochet hook, 4mm

FLOWER

1 Using colour one, ch 6 and join into a ring with a sl st.

Round 1: ch 1, work 12 dc into the ring, join with a sl st and fasten off.

Round 2: attach colour two with a sl st, ch 1, work * dc, ch, dc, (dc, ch10, dc), rpt from * to end and join with a sl st, fasten off.

Round 3: attach colour three to a single ch sp with a sl st, ch 1, * work 16 dtr into the 10 ch loop, dc into next ch sp, rpt from * to end, join with a sl st and fasten off.

2 Manipulate the dtr evenly around the loop, press and sew in all ends. Make several flowers in this way, alternating the colours used and using a different one for each centre ring.

JOIN THE FLOWERS

1 Lay all flowers out, face up, in the pattern you wish to join them. Take the first flower and attach the green yarn to a dc. * Work 8 dc up one side of a petal, ch 3 and work 8 dc down the other side of the petal, dc and rpt from *. Join with a sl st and fasten off.

2 Take the second flower and work up the side of the first petal as before. Ch 1, sl st through ch loop of first flower, ch 1 and continue working dc down the other side of the petal. Work the rest of the outline, joining corners where necessary.

3 Continue working in this way to join all of the flowers, making a throw as large as required. Stitch the yarn ends in and trim.

DELICATE FLORAL THROW

GET YOUR STOCK SPRING-READY WITH THIS PRETTY MAKE

SELLING POINT
IDEAL MOTHER'S
DAY GIFT

SHOPPING BASKET

Yarns, Yeoman Yarns,
0116 240 4464,
www.yeoman-yarns.co.uk

PRETTY SCALLOPED BEADED COLLAR

USE YOUR STITCHING SKILLS TO
CREATE THIS PRETTY ACCESSORY

A beaded collar is a great way to **update** a well-loved garment, giving it a new lease of life. The **beauty** of this make is that it can be used on a variety of tops and dresses, adding instant wow-factor to an **outfit**.

SELLING POINT
A SIMPLE WAY
TO TRANSFORM
AN OUTFIT



TEMPLATE



ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Fabric: cotton, printed, 25cm
- › Felt, pink, 25cm
- › Fusible webbing, 25cm
- › Ribbon, grosgrain, 10mm wide
- › Thread, sewing
- › Jump rings, small
- › Head pins, silver
- › Pearls, glass: 5mm; 12mm
- › Bicones, 4mm, crystal AB
- › Seed beads, white
- › Sequins, pearlescent white

COLLAR NECKLACE

- 1 Iron a piece of fusible webbing to the wrong side of a square of printed cotton. Use the collar template on pages 126 to 130 to cut a piece from fabric and another from coordinating felt. Remove the backing paper and fuse the cotton to the felt.
- 2 Stitch a line of pearlescent sequins and white seed beads around the edges of the collar by bringing the thread up through the hole in the sequin, into a seed bead and back down through the sequin. Allow the sequins to overlap like fish scales to form a continuous line. For the top edge, stitch extra seeds to create a row of beads on top of the sequins.
- 3 Use the print of the cotton material as a guide to stitch individual pearls and bicones

onto the main area of the collar. For a more random print, use a ruler and pencil to mark a meshwork of dots onto the fabric. Make two 4cm long strings of pearls and bicones to attach to the centre base of the collar. Fold under the raw edge at the top sides of the bib and stitch lengths of coordinating grosgrain ribbon to each side. If desired, cut another collar piece from felt, using the template and adhere to the reverse of the beaded piece to conceal the working.

MAKE A MATCHING BRACELET

- 1 Stitch leftover pieces of fabric from the necklace into a wide strip, long enough to fit comfortably around a plain bracelet. Sew the short sides into a ring, slip over the bracelet and secure the long edges together with ladder stitch inside the bangle.
- 2 Stitch sequins and seed beads to the outer curve of the bangle, overlapping them as for the collar. You should be able to pass the needle in and out of the fabric in one movement, because of the curved surface of the bangle.



Finish the set

CREATE MATCHING EARRINGS

Thread a head pin with a seed bead, a large pearl and an assortment of smaller pearls, bicones and seed beads to a length of 2.5cm. Trim the end of the head pin to 1cm and use round-nosed pliers to bend it into a loop. Attach to an earwire with a small jump ring. Repeat to make a pair.



SELLING POINT
CREATE MATCHING
EARRINGS TO
COMPLETE A
LOVELY SET

"The dainty ribbon fans and antique, gold-beaded frames give this necklace an elegant vintage look"

KARON CRAWFORD,
DESIGNER

TEMPLATE

VICTORIAN ROMANCE NECKLACE

ADD A TOUCH OF FEMININE GLAMOUR WITH **KARON CRAWFORD'S** ANTIQUE RIBBON NECKLACE

This **Victorian-style** necklace features purple organza ribbon for a soft, **feminine** look that won't overpower. The combination of purple AB crystals, cream **pearls** and the almost verdigris tones of amazonite alongside **antique gold** pewter and Viking weave gives this design a vintage, **regal** feel.

ESSENTIAL KIT

BEADS:

- › Rondelles, Chinese crystal, purple AB: 4mm x 6mm x 17; 6mm x 8mm x 10
- › Czech fire-polished, faceted round, 8mm, metallic amethyst x 2
- › Glass pearls, cream: round, 3mm x 4, 4mm x 20, 6mm x 10; teardrop, 6mm x 10mm x 12
- › Amazonite, faceted round, 8mm x 9
- › Spacer beads, antique gold-plated pewter, TierraCast: faceted heishi, 3mm x 5; twisted heishi, 4mm x 8; coiled, 5mm x 14; rococo, 6mm x 10

FINDINGS:

- › Ribbon, organza, purple
- › Earring findings, antique gold-plated pewter, duchess, TierraCast
- › Connectors, antique gold-plated, TierraCast: empire link x 2; 5 to 1 link x 1
- › Bead frames, antique gold-plated, circle, 14mm, TierraCast x 11
- › Clasp, toggle, antique gold-plated, heirloom, TierraCast
- › Bead caps, antique gold-plated, tiffany, 8mm, TierraCast x 12
- › Head pins
- › Eye pins
- › Wire, 0.4mm, gold-plated copper

TOOLS:

- › Pliers: round-nosed; flat-nosed
- › Cutters, heavy gauge
- › Lazee Daizee Viking Knit Tool Kit

NECKLACE

1 Slip a 6mm x 8mm crystal rondelle, rococo spacer and 6mm glass pearl onto an eye pin. Fold a length of ribbon into a fan and thread onto the eye pin, followed by another 6mm pearl, rococo spacer and rondelle. Open the loop of another eye pin and attach it to the first pin at the centre of the fan. Trim the first pin and finish with a plain loop. Repeat to make four more beaded pins.

2 Pass a 4mm glass pearl, a bead frame with an amazonite round in the middle and another glass pearl onto an eye pin. Trim and loop. Repeat to make another five eye pins. Make two more but use 8mm Czech fire-polished beads in the frames.

3 Starting with a bead and ribbon link at the centre of the necklace, alternate three amazonite and two ribbon links to form the left side. Attach this to a connector. Secure a purple fire-polished link to the single loop of the connector and add the bar end of a toggle clasp. Repeat for the right side of the necklace finishing with the ring part of the clasp.

4 Thread a 4mm x 6mm rondelle onto the eye pin hanging from the centre of each of the ribbon links and finish with a basic loop. Take five head pins and thread each with a 5mm coiled spacer, pearl teardrop, coiled spacer and 4mm x 6mm rondelle. Trim and loop. Attach four of the drops to the eye pins hanging from the ribbon links.

5 To make the focal pendant, secure an amazonite bead to the centre of a five loop connector with 0.4mm wire. Attach more wire to an outer loop, then thread on a faceted heishi spacer, pearl teardrop and 4mm x 6mm crystal rondelle. Take the wire back through the pearl drop and faceted spacer, turning the rondelle onto its side, and wrap twice around the same loop. Take the wire over to the second loop, winding it around twice. Repeat for all the loops.

6 On the last one, take the wire back down through the spacer, pearl drop and rondelle. Thread on a 4mm twisted spacer, 3mm glass pearl and twisted spacer. Pass the wire through the next rondelle and repeat for each one. Take the wire through the last rondelle and back up the first pearl drop and faceted spacer, finishing by wrapping it twice around the connector loop and trimming. Take a piece of 0.4mm wire through the centre rondelle and make a wrapped loop to attach the remaining pearl drop from step 4.

7 Make the Viking weave links. Insert a Lazee Daizee head into the top hole of the tool, making sure that each loop sits above each edge of the hex. Cut 80cm of 0.4mm gold-plated wire. Insert one end into the diagonal hole, extending a 3cm tail. Holding the wire with your finger, insert the other end down through one of the loops in the head.

8 Pull the wire down and across in front of the wire to form an elongated loop using the indent to establish the length (Fig.1). Hold the first loop in place with your thumb and repeat to make another five (Fig.2). For the second row, bring the wire to the right and around the back of the first loop (Fig.3). Bring it around in front and over to the right and take it behind the second loop. Continue this weave to complete the row. When you reach row four, pull the initial anchor wire out of the diagonal hole and trim as necessary.

9 To add extra wire, move the last loop formed so that it is sitting over the entry point of the diagonal hole. Insert 80cm of wire, extending a 3cm tail. Holding down the tail, bring the rest of the wire around the next loop and continue to complete another row (Fig.4). Remove the knit from the rod and bring both tails together. Place the knit back onto the rod and continue to weave, catching both tails for the next three rows. When you have reached the desired length, cut the top loops to remove the head and the loose wires.

10 Cut three 20cm lengths of scrap wire and insert them into the loops on row two. Twist together and pull the knit through the 5/16 hole in the draw plate. Roll the knit several times through a soft cloth to align the stitches and make drawing easier. Pull the knit several times through the hole closest in size to the knit and continue to reduce, pulling it several times through each hole until the desired width is achieved (Fig.5). The weave can be cut to any length and it won't unravel. The finished length should be 6.5cm long.

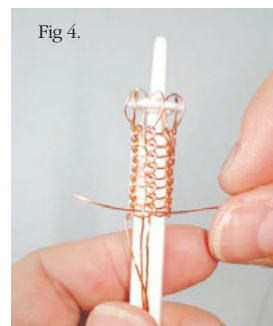
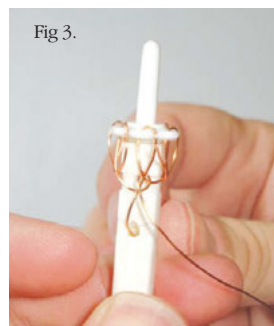
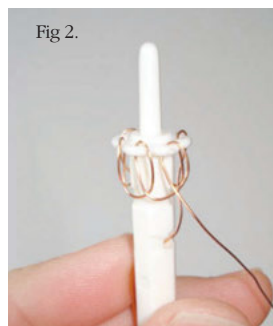
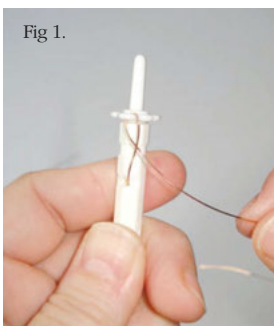
11 Remove the scrap wire and insert a length of wire through the top loop. Thread on a bead cap and finish with a wrapped loop. Repeat for the other end to finish, then make three more to the same length and attach each end to the bottom of the ribbon links from the centre of the necklace outwards. Make another two Viking weave links measuring 6cm long and secure to the last ribbon links and the connectors either side of the necklace. Add the central focal pendant.

Finish the set

CREATE MATCHING EARRINGS

Link pearl drops to amazonite frames and attach earring findings at the top.





MAKE A RECYCLED VINTAGE RANGE

TRANSFORM BROKEN PIECES OF OLD JEWELLERY INTO
NEW, SALEABLE PIECES WITH LINDA JONES' MAKES

Our advice

Look out for old necklaces in charity shops and boot sales, and ask relatives for any broken vintage jewellery that they want to throw out

This particular project started with a **broken 1960s** paste necklace that has been **reworked** into a new vintage-style set, with toning beads and handmade wire **components**. You can create your **own designs** using these techniques from any attractive old pieces of jewellery, with the added **advantage** of selling them as one-of-a-kind or **limited** editions.

SELLING POINT
MARKET THIS
RANGE AS LIMITED
EDITION

ESSENTIAL KIT

BEADS:

- › Jewellery pieces, vintage
- › Beads, toning, assorted

FINDINGS:

- › Wire, 0.8mm, brass
- › Earring posts, flat pad, with butterfly backs

TOOLS:

- › Pliers: round-nosed; flat-nosed; chain-nosed
- › Whammer
- › Steel block
- › Mandrel, cylindrical, 1.5cm

NECKLACE

1 The original vintage paste necklace was composed of 15 faceted crystal cabochons. This was broken up into seven units for a necklace, six for a bracelet and two for earrings. Spend some time deciding on what coloured beads would blend best with your original piece. This example has strains of purple/burgundy in the stones, so these were combined with mauve crystals and a contrasting green to enhance the tones, plus cream pearls to add a touch of richness and reinforce the vintage feel, with yellow pearls and gold beads as an extra blended colour tone.

2 The original style of the necklace had the cabochon crystals linked together in a row. However, as this design would feature more colour with the bead selection, a central focal point was created to provide a nice balance to the composition. For this, a central hanger was formed out of brass wire, so that one of the cabochons could be suspended lower.

3 Cut 13cm of 0.8mm brass wire and find the centre with round-nosed pliers. Wrap the wires around one of the circular shafts, crossing the wires over in opposite directions to form a central loop. Add beads on each projecting wire to the length desired. Use round-nosed pliers to create links at each end of the wire, curling

outwards in opposite directions. Spiral the wire around the links until the gap between them is the same width as the top links of the cabochon crystal to be suspended. Connect the hanger to the cabochon with jump rings.

4 Create drops by threading your chosen palette of beads individually with brass wire, creating links at one end and head pins at the other. Lay the central part of the necklace flat on a bead mat and begin positioning the threaded pearls, chips and crystals on each side to get a feel for the colour balance. Create jump rings out of 0.8mm brass wire (or use ready-made versions) and attach the top links of the threaded beads to the links between the cabochon crystals. The yellow pearls were suspended from eye pins in this design so that they could hang below the other bunches.

5 The sides of the necklace were created with some of the original back extension chain and the hook clasp from the original necklace. The desired overall length of the necklace was worked out initially with a piece of string, and the central beaded area was subtracted from this measurement. Some extra glass bead drops in blending colours of green and purple were made up and linked together for each side. These were connected to two halves of the original chain, plus the clasp to attain the length desired.

BRACELET

1 Six of the cabochon crystals from the original necklace were linked together with jump rings to form the main bracelet. Create a toggle clasp, working directly from a spool of 0.8mm brass wire. Wrap the end three times around a cylindrical mandrel, 1.5cm in diameter. Carefully remove the circular coils from the mandrel and cut from the spool, leaving a 13cm tail. Bind this projecting wire around the coils to hold them all together. As you wrap the wire around, ensure

you leave a gap between one of the bindings, so that you can later attach this to a jump ring and onto the end of the bracelet.

2 Once all the wire is used up and wrapped around the coils in a random fashion, squeeze the sides of the circle to re-shape slightly into an oval. Place this on a steel block and 'stroke' hammer to flatten and work harden. The other end of the clasp is created with 13cm of 0.8mm brass wire. Using round-nosed pliers, find the centre of the strand and cross the wires over in opposite directions to form a small central loop.

3 Thread each projecting wire on each side of the central loop with a wire coil or bead of your choice. Create tight spirals at each end of the wire, spiralling it right up to the coils and beads to form the 'T' of the toggle. Create an eye pin stem out of 0.8mm wire for the stalk part of the 'T' and attach to the central loop. Connect the toggle clasp to each side of the linked cabochon crystals. Create a selection of bead drops as for the necklace, to suspend between the cabochons.



Finish the set

CREATE MATCHING EARRINGS

Add earrings to the set by suspending the vintage components from beaded hangers, then add earring posts glued to wire spirals.



NAUTICAL DELICATE SEASIDE CHARMS

BOOST SUMMER SALES WITH HELEN CANT'S
BEACH-THEMED SHRINK PLASTIC JEWELLERY



SELLING POINT
OFFER VARIETY TO YOUR
CUSTOMERS BY USING THE
MEDIUM AND LARGE ICE
CREAM MOTIFS TO CREATE
A MATCHING BROOCH AND
EARRING SET.

What better way to celebrate the summer season than with a beach-themed jewellery set? Featuring a range of quirky shrink plastic charms, nautical beads and pearls, you'll find them to be positively popular



ESSENTIAL KIT

BEADS:

- › Glass, round: 6mm, pink x 2; 8mm, blue x 3; 10mm, red x 3
- › Cotton-wrapped, round, 15mm x 18mm, blue and cream x 4
- › Pearls, round, 12mm x 4; 8mm x 2
- › Metallic, round, 6mm x 8
- › Charm, anchor, silver-plated
- › Ribbon, 5mm, striped red and white

FINDINGS:

- › Shrink plastic, inkjet, white
- › Chain, silver-plated: extra large link; large link; small link; extension x 2
- › Jump rings, silver-plated; 5mm; 6mm; 8mm
- › Head pins, silver-plated
- › Clasps, silver-plated: lobster; toggle
- › Earwires
- › Eye pins

TOOLS:

- › Computer with image editing software
- › Printer, inkjet
- › Oven or heat gun
- › Craft knife
- › Cutting mat
- › Hole punch, small, single, circular
- › Acrylic spray, can
- › Cutters, wire
- › Pliers, round-nosed
- › Scissors
- › Tape measure
- › Nail varnish, clear

BOAT NECKLACE

1 Using a craft knife, cut the boat motif from the shrink plastic. Avoid touching it to prevent any smudging of the ink. Use a small circular single hole punch at the left and right-hand sides near the top, then another at the right-hand side of the base.

2 Place the motif into an oven or use a heat gun to shrink according to the manufacturer's instructions. If it doesn't lie completely flat when shrunk, press it between two flat objects before it cools. Leave to fully cool, then apply three coats of acrylic spray, allowing to dry between coats.

3 Thread a silver bead, a blue and white cotton-wrapped bead and another silver bead onto a head pin. Trim the excess, then form a loop using round-nosed pliers. Repeat to create a matching pin. Thread a red and blue glass bead onto a head pin, trim and form a loop. Repeat to make another one, then create two single beaded head pins using a 12mm pearl for each.

4 Cut two 22cm lengths of large link silver-plated chain. Use 8mm jump rings to secure each length to the holes at either side of the boat charm, then 5mm ones to attach each style of beaded head pin to both lengths of

chain. Using a 6mm jump ring, attach an anchor charm to the hole at the base of the boat. Fix a jump ring, extension chain and lobster clasp to the ends of the chain.

BEACH HUT NECKLACE

1 Cut the beach hut and largest starfish motif from the shrink plastic. Punch a hole at the top of the beach hut, a second on the left-hand side, then a third at the right-hand side, 1cm down from the first hole. Punch holes in the two right-hand legs of the starfish, and another at the top-left through the body.

2 Shrink the motifs, leave to fully cool, then apply three coats of acrylic spray as before. Using two 8mm jump rings, secure the starfish to the left-hand side of the beach hut. Cut one 20cm length and one 22cm length of small link silver-plated chain. Use more jump rings to attach the shorter chain to the starfish and the longer length to the right-hand side of the beach hut. Cut 25cm of striped ribbon, thread through a link of chain to the right of the charm and tie a bow. Trim any excess ribbon, then apply clear nail varnish to the ends to prevent fraying. Attach a jump ring, extension chain and lobster clasp to the ends of the chain.

Our advice

Boost your collection with matching charm bracelets. Created with a selection of shrink plastic charms and beaded head pins, they'd be a great seller at craft fairs.

HOW TO... PRINT THE FREE MOTIFS

- › Download the PDF file at www.makeselljewellery.com. Open the first page of the file using image editing software such as Photoshop or GIMP. For optimum printing quality, ensure the resolution of the page is set to 300 pixels per inch. In Photoshop and GIMP this can be done in the 'import' dialogue box which appears when opening the document. Also ensure the page opens at US letter size which is 215.9mm (8.5") in width by 279.4mm (11") in height. If using Photoshop, also ensure that crop to 'media box' is selected in the drop down list under the page options.
- › As the colours will intensify once the plastic is shrunk, lighten the motifs before printing by reducing the opacity which can be found in the layers palette. This can be made visible in Photoshop by clicking the Windows menu then the layers option, or in GIMP by clicking the windows menu followed by the layers option in the drop down list under 'dockable dialogs'. You may need to experiment a little, but as a guide for most the opacity will need to be reduced to around 60% to 70%.
- › Before printing, double check that the page is set to print at US letter size. In Photoshop, click the file menu then the print option. In GIMP, click the file menu then the print option and look under the image settings tab. Also ensure that the paper size is set to US letter size under your printer's own options menu and that the print orientation is set to portrait. As a size guide, the boat motif should measure approximately 11.3cm at its tallest point once printed. Ensure that your printer is set to print at full size and at its highest quality level, then load a sheet of shrink plastic, print the motifs and leave to dry for at least an hour. Repeat to open and print the second page of the document.

"The nautical look is always a popular choice for summer. Use our free motifs to enhance your range"

SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE PAPERCUT DESIGNS

THESE SIMPLE PAPERCUT CARDS ARE
EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE

SELLING POINT
A BEAUTIFULLY-
PRESENTED
COMPLEMENTARY SET
SHOULD PROVE A
POPULAR RANGE

TEMPLATE



Delicate papercuts are extremely **on-trend** at the moment, and it's easy to see why. They have a **vintage** appeal and, mounted as a card, really stand out from mass-produced options. They're also extremely **versatile** as they provide completely different look depending on whether they are mounted on plain or **patterned** paper.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Card, assorted colours
- › Paper, assorted colours and patterns; carbon
- › Ribbon, striped, red/white
- › Punch, eyelet, 1/16"

LOVE

1 Cut pink card, 17.5cm square. Trim patterned paper, 15cm square, and mount onto red, then place onto the blank. Trace the downloadable Love design onto the back of red paper and cut out the smaller areas.

2 Place the papercut onto a cutting mat and use a small eyelet punch to create holes around the scallops. Add glue to the back of the design and fix to the centre of the patterned panel.

BIRD ON BRANCH

1 Trim green card, 14.8cm square, and paste patterned paper, 14cm square, onto the centre. Trace the downloadable bird design onto the back of another piece of green card and cut out the background, working from the centre out.

2 Cut pink card to the same size as the border of the papercut. Fix the bird design over the pink square with 3-D foam pads to create a shadow, then mount the panel onto the centre of the card blank.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

1 Fix a slightly smaller panel of patterned paper onto an A6 landscape blank. Trace the birthday design onto the back of white paper, using carbon paper and a soft pencil.

2 Cut out the background of the design with a sharp craft knife, then turn the papercut over and glue to the middle of the patterned card.

BIRDHOUSE

1 Create a blank, 12.5cm x 20cm. Cut patterned paper, 12cm x 19.5cm, and fix ribbon to the left, tucking in the ends. Adhere the panel to the blank, then trace the downloadable birdhouse template onto white paper using carbon paper and a soft pencil.

2 Carefully cut out the background of the design, starting with the intricate



Our advice

A hammer or spring-loaded eyelet punch makes short work of little holes and is invaluable for doily patterns

Fiskars' punch eyelet has a built-in spring hammer to punch through heavy card and fabric, and set eyelets easily with just one tool.

www.fiskars.com



areas before cutting out the larger ones. Turn the image over and fix to red card. Trim to the border of the papercut before glueing onto the blank.

HANGING HEART WREATH

A SWEET MAKE THAT CAN BE ADAPTED
TO A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS

This **floral paper** wreath could be an extremely cost-effective project when made using **old newspaper** and redundant **books**. Place the blooms close together for maximum impact.

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Selection of papers
- › Card, thick
- › Quilling tool
- › Hot glue gun
- › Ribbon, satin, narrow
- › Paper, carbon

PAPER WREATH

1 Select several papers, then use a sheet of carbon paper to transfer a coil template onto the wrong side of paper. Cut out the continuous spiral with scissors.

2 Slip the outer end of the spiral into the slot of a quilling tool and begin winding into a tight coil with

the right side of paper facing in. Stop winding when you reach the centre disc of the spiral.

3 Release the coil and allow to uncurl, easing it into a neat rose shape. Apply a dab of hot glue to the uncurled disc and push the edges of the coil onto this, holding it in place until the glue has set and is firm.

4 Make several roses in this way, enlarging or reducing the downloadable template for a variation of sizes. Draw a large heart frame shape onto

thick card and cut out.

5 Cover with a pastel paper, clipping the curves and folding them under at the edges. Pierce two holes at the top of the heart and thread with narrow satin ribbon. Tie the ribbon into a neat knot and trim the ends.

6 Lay the heart flat and apply a little hot glue to the back of a rose. Fix this to the centre point of the heart shape and hold it in place until the glue cools and sets completely. Continue glueing roses over the frame.



SELLING POINT
MAKE BESPOKE
VERSIONS FOR
VALENTINE'S,
MOTHER'S DAY AND
CHRISTMAS

Our advice

You can use this technique to create a collection of shapes that can be grouped together on a wall



TEMPLATE



PAPER AND RIBBON BRIDAL BOUQUET

FABRIC AND PAPER COMBINE TO MAKE A
BOUQUET WITH A DIFFERENCE

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Ribbons, organza, satin, from 1cm - 5cm wide
- › Papers, patterned
- › Fabric, cotton, silk, satin
- › Beads, pearl
- › Buttons, crystal, pearl
- › Embellishments, flat-back; crystal, pearl
- › Florist's tape, green
- › Pipe cleaners

With **brides and grooms** alike all looking to add an **individual** element to their big day, this pretty bouquet is sure to strike **home**, particularly for those with an **eco-conscience**

FOCAL FLOWER

1 Cut a circle of fabric, 8cm in diameter, and work running stitches around the edge. Wrap a long thin strip of wadding around the top of a pipe cleaner. Place the circle of fabric over this and pull the stitches tight to gather the fabric around the wadding and create a padded lollipop shape.

2 Secure the gathers and sew the fabric around the pipe cleaner to hold it in place and form the base. Stitch crochet lace to the back of a large diamanté embellishment, working

through the gaps and gathering the lace.

3 Sew a short end of patterned organza, 3cm wide, to one side of the embellishment behind the crochet lace. Fold the ribbon into a loop, 2cm long and secure behind the lace. Continue looping and sewing to create a ring of petals, then trim any excess ribbon.

4 Add a second ring of petals in the same way, using 10mm-wide cream organza. Pin the completed flower to the top of the padded lollipop and fix into place with small oversew stitches.

BEAD-CENTRED BLOOMS

1 Make a small padded lollipop as for the focal flower, but using a 5cm diameter circle. Stitch a selection of pearl beads closely together on the top of the fabric ball.

2 Create loopy petals from organza ribbon, 10mm-wide, and sew around the cluster of beads, adding a second ring of larger petals below this with satin ribbon, 20mm wide.

FABRIC ROSEBUDS

1 Fold a strip of fabric, 7cm x 25cm, in half on the long axis. Slide the top out by 2cm and pin to the edge of the bottom. Secure with a few stitches, then sew the two



SELLING POINT
MAKE TO ORDER
IN THE HAPPY
COUPLE'S WEDDING
COLOURS

Our advice

Make slightly smaller versions as complementary bouquets for bridesmaids

layers together with running stitch.

2 Gather the fabric strip, securing with stitches, then fold the end in and bend half a pipe cleaner over it.

3 Roll some of the gathered fabric around the top of the pipe cleaner, securing with stitches. Continue to make a rosebud.

RIBBON ROSES

1 Use running stitches to gather one short end of wide satin ribbon, 40cm long, and tuck under a pipe cleaner. Wrap the ribbon around it once before folding it over at a 90° angle.

2 Stitch the edge of the ribbon to the stem where the two sides cross to hold in place. Continue folding and stitching to create a series of petals curled around the central coil.

3 Once you reach the end, fold down the short raw edge and stitch it to the pipe cleaner. If desired, glue a pearl bead to the centre with strong PVA.

PAPER DESIGN

1 Use squares of patterned or music score paper to fold origami lilies. Glue a small paper cone to the top of a pipe cleaner before pushing the other end through the centre and out of the bottom, leaving the cone in the centre of the flower.

2 Apply thick PVA around the rim of the cone and fix a small diamanté embellishment to the top.

FINISHING THE FLOWERS

1 Wrap narrow double-sided tape around the base of each flower and secure the end of a length of florists' tape on top to cover the raw ends of ribbon or fabric. Wrap the tape around the pipe cleaners to form a stem, stretching the tape to release the stickiness.

2 To reinforce the stem, wrap the tape back up and down the pipe cleaner. Gather the flowers together in posies of five or six and wrap the stems with tape, then bunch into one bouquet and wrap again.

3 Cover the stems with wide satin ribbon, wound along the length of the stem and back before tying into a knot to secure.



FOLD AND CREASE ORIGAMI CRAFTING

ONCE YOU GET THE ORIGAMI BUG, YOU'LL BE
USING IT WHENEVER YOU CAN



SELLING POINT
SELL YOUR ORIGAMI
BUTTERFLIES
INDIVIDUALLY SO THAT
PEOPLE CAN USE THEM
TO EMBELLISH THEIR
OWN CARDS

Our advice

Sharpen your
creases using a
bone or plastic
folding tool

Origami can be as **simple** or as complicated as you would like to make it; once you've **mastered** the basics you'll be **keen** to up the ante with some more complicated makes

ESSENTIAL KIT

- › Decorative paper, lightweight, double-sided
- › Scoring tool
- › Cutting mat
- › Metal ruler
- › Cardstock, assorted colours
- › Adhesives

YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE

1 Take a 15cm square of double-sided paper and fold in half diagonally. Open out and refold in the opposite direction. Flatten the sheet and fold each corner to the centre.

2 Flip over the folded square and bend the corners back to meet the middle. Crease these folds firmly before opening out the sheet completely.

3 Place the square wrong side up and fold in the sides to the middle along the creases already formed. Push the top edge in, opening up the top corners as you do so. Allow the paper to fold along the creases to form a 'T' shape.

4 Repeat this step on the bottom edge to form an elongated hexagon, then fold back on the long axis to make a boat shape.

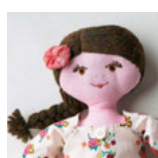
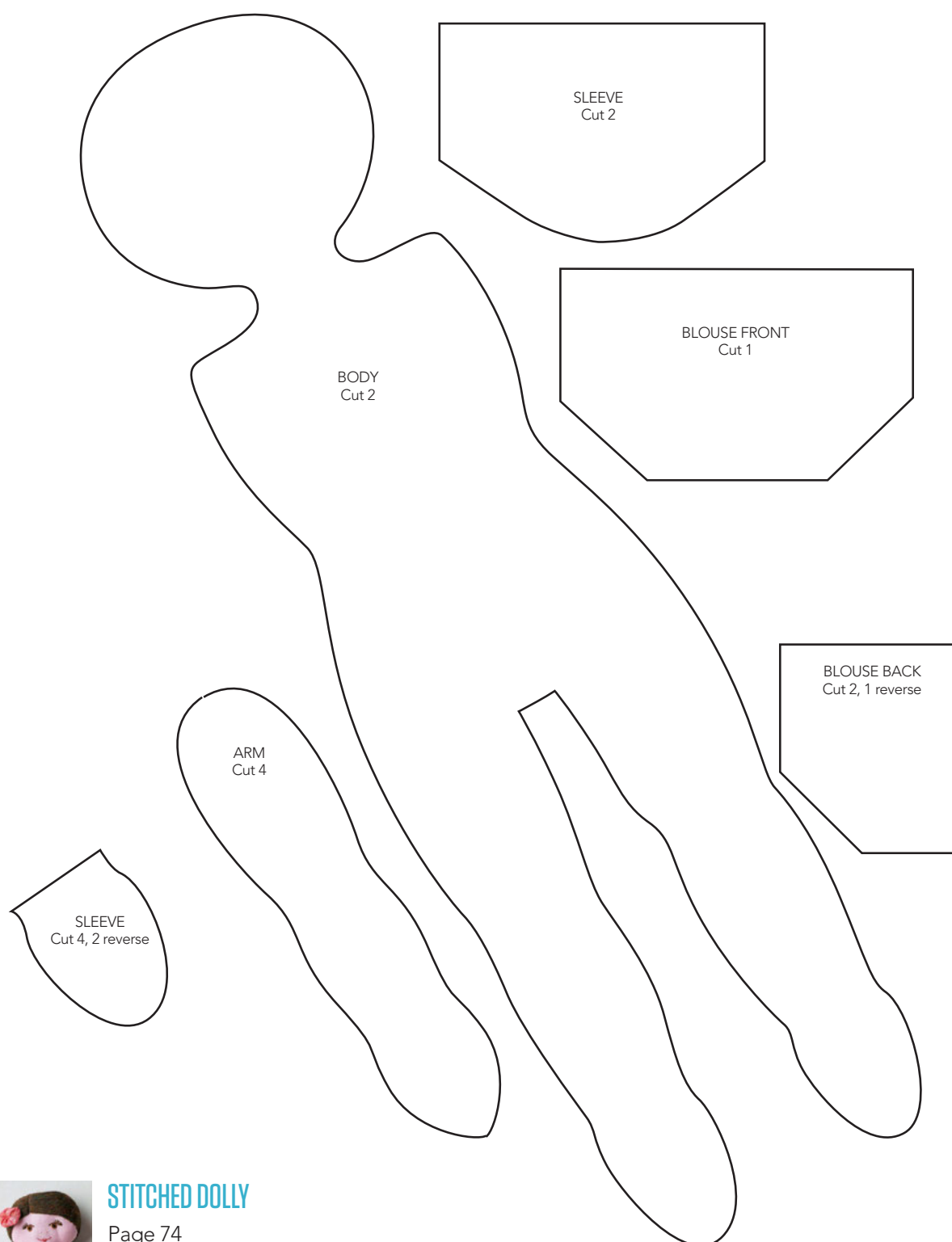
5 Bend down the front sides of the boat to make a triangle; this fold will make the four wings of the butterfly. Next, fold in a small section on each side of the bottom wings.

6 Fold the butterfly in half, grasp the top of the fold and bend the upper set of wings back, creating a dart in the paper that allows the bottom ones to separate. Fix the finished butterfly to a decorated blank.



USE THESE TEMPLATES

TO GET CREATING AND SELLING WITH EASE



STITCHED DOLLY

Page 74

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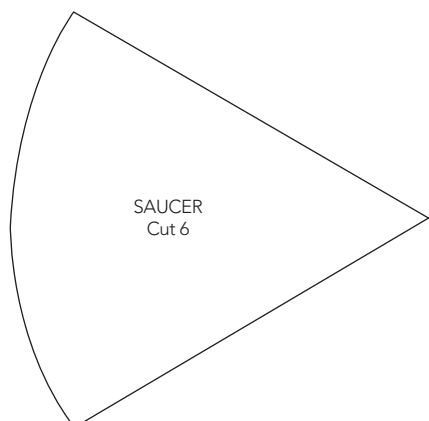
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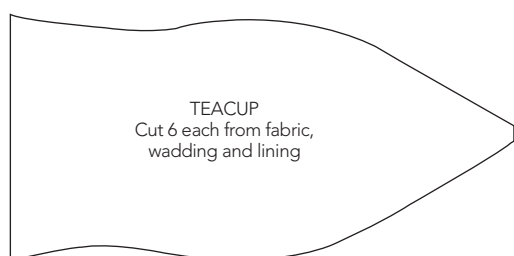
PATCHWORK TEACUPS

Page 92

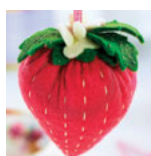
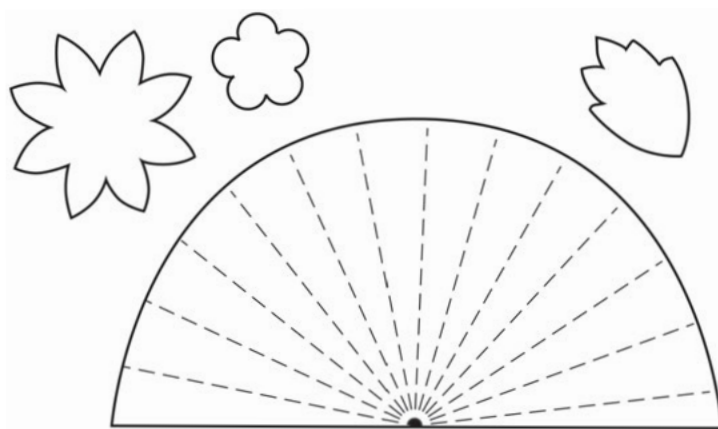
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SAUCER
Cut 6



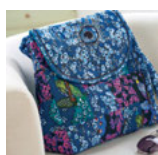
TEACUP
Cut 6 each from fabric,
wadding and lining



FELT FRUIT

Page 80

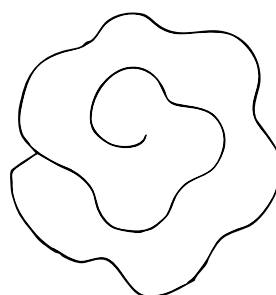
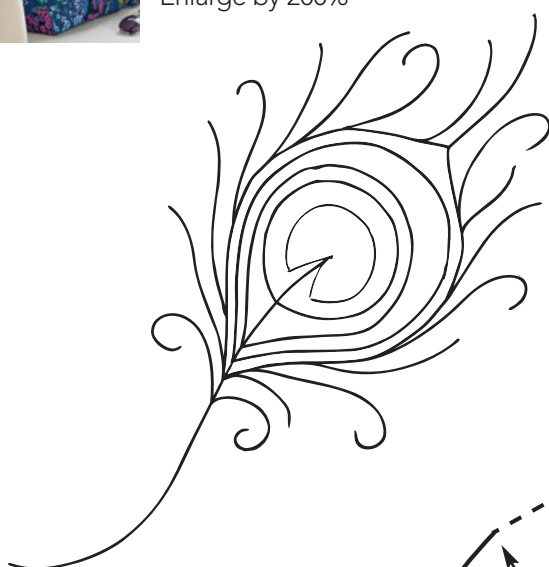
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PEACOCK BAG

Page 96

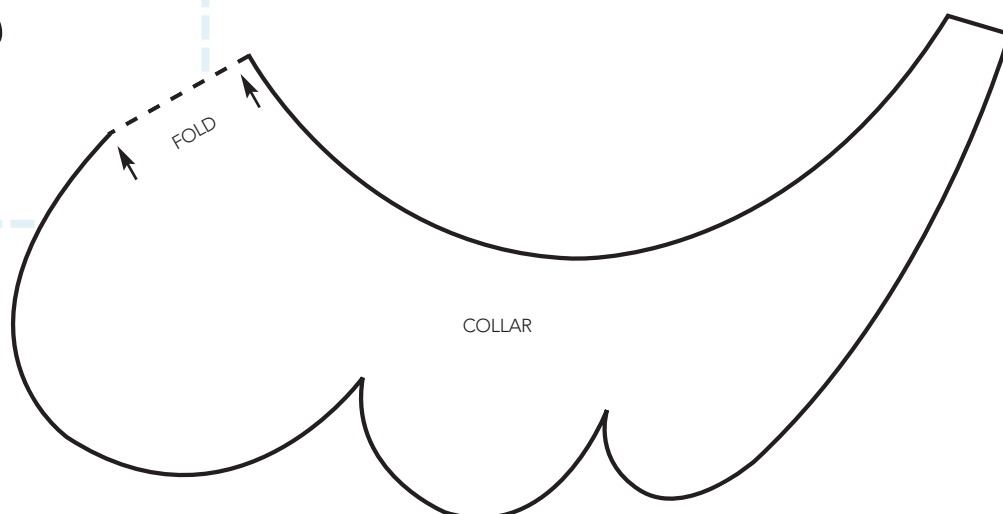
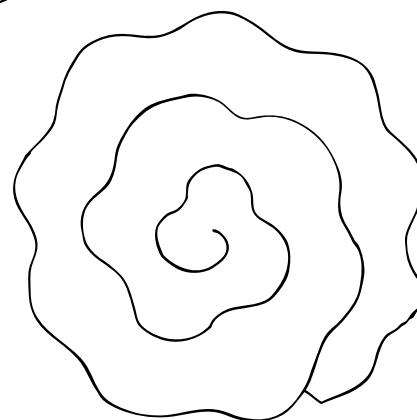
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HEART WREATH

Page 120

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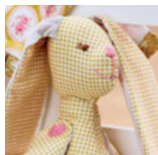
COLLAR



BEADED COLLAR

Page 109

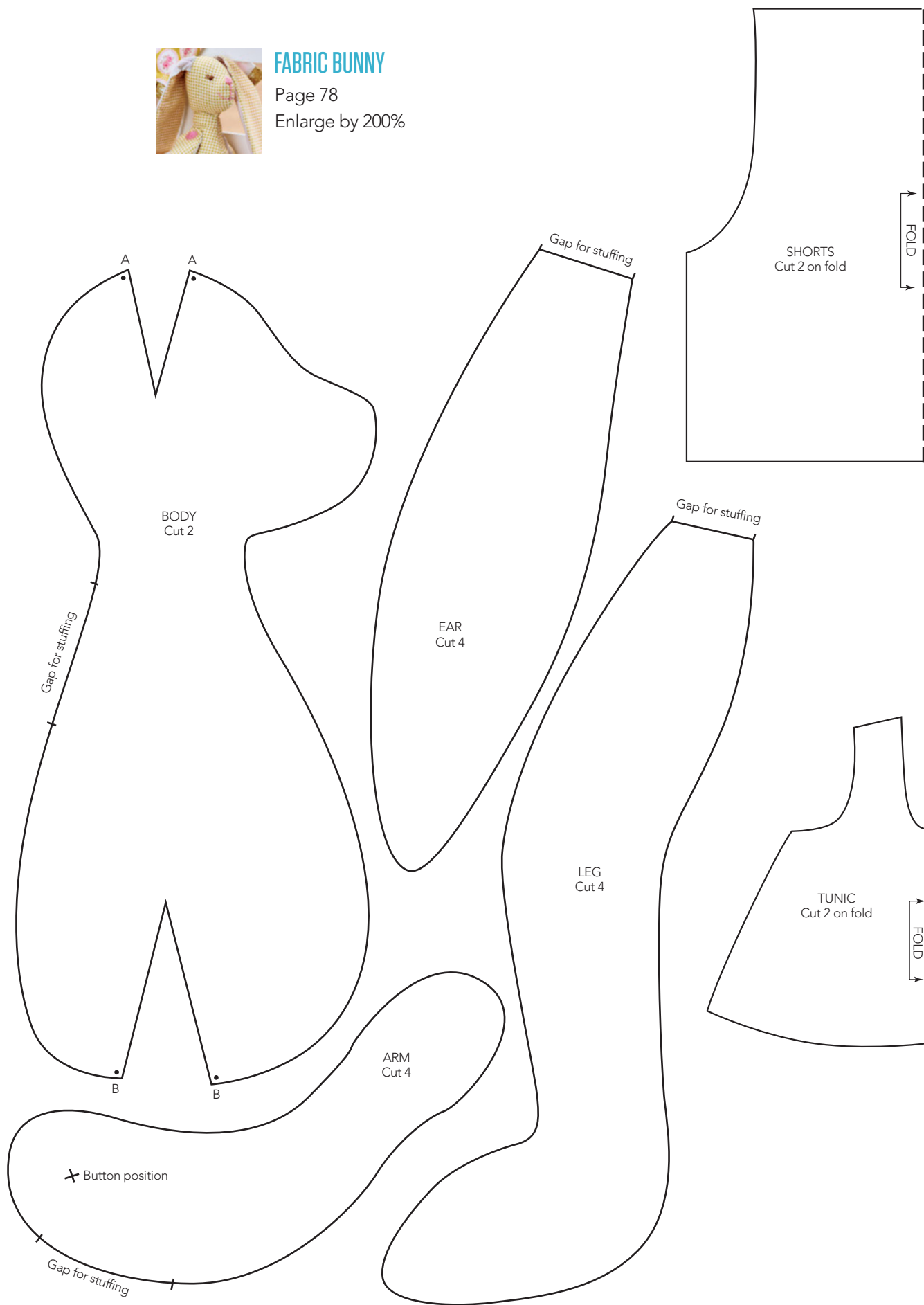
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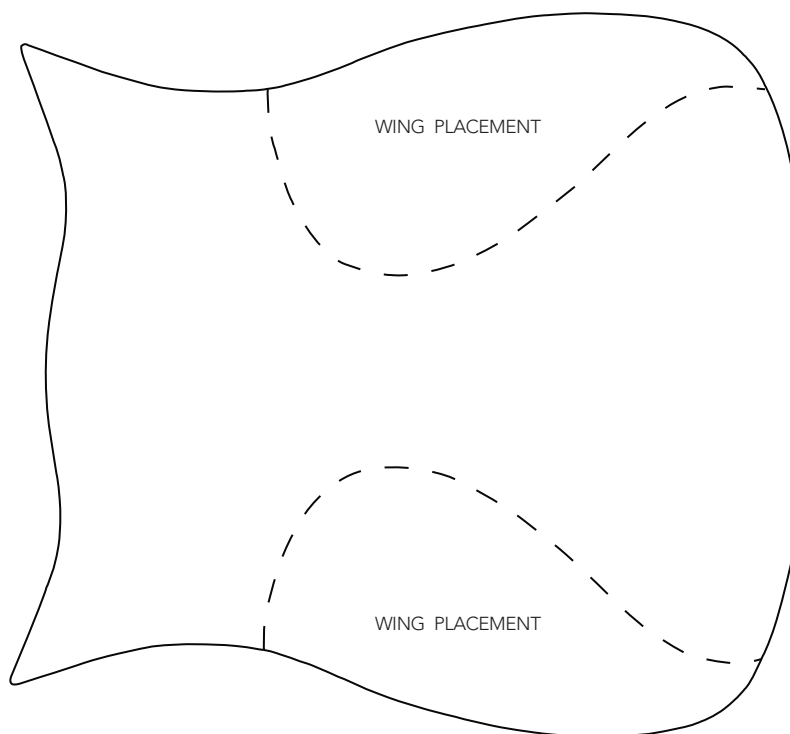
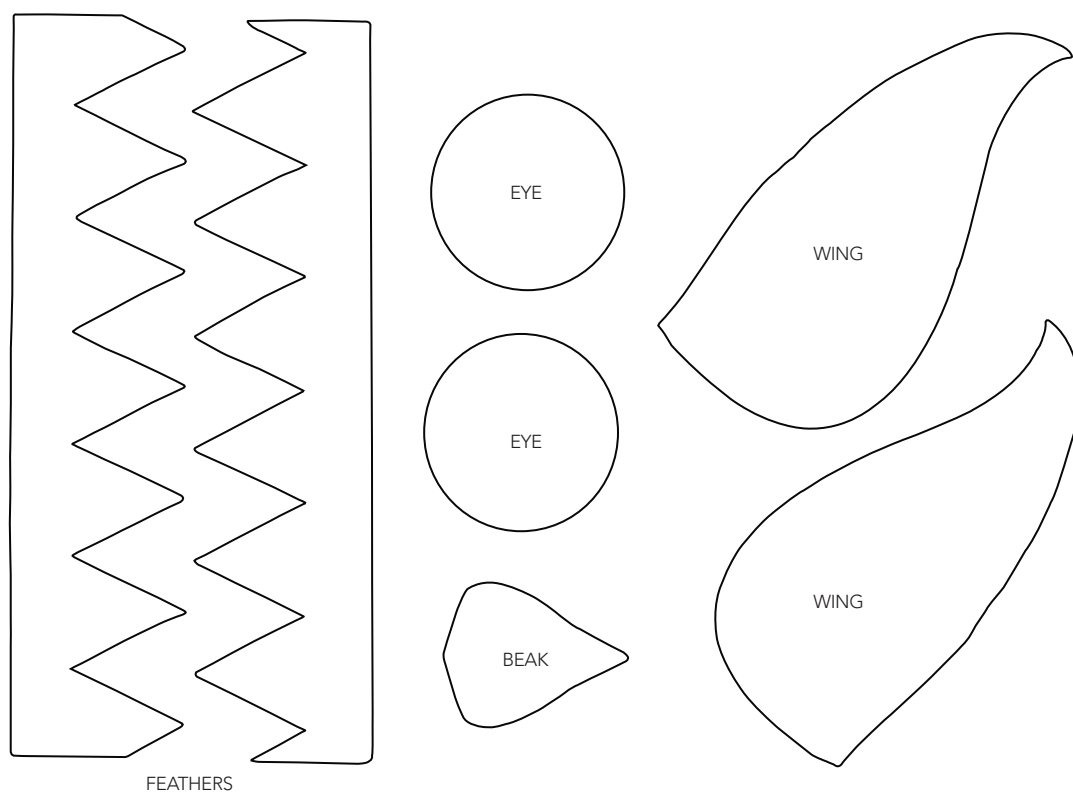


FABRIC BUNNY

Page 78

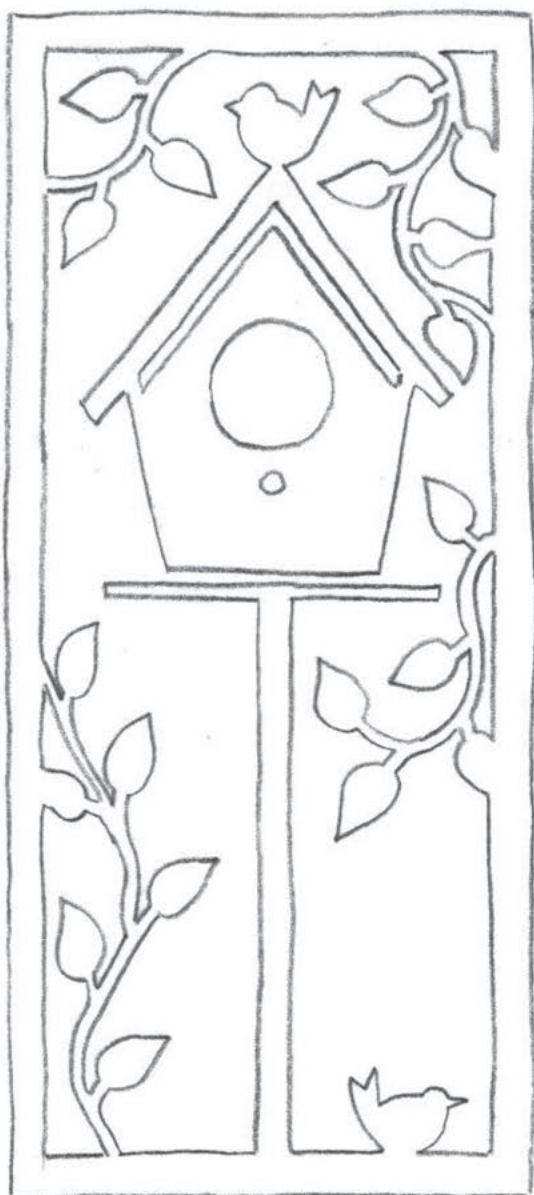
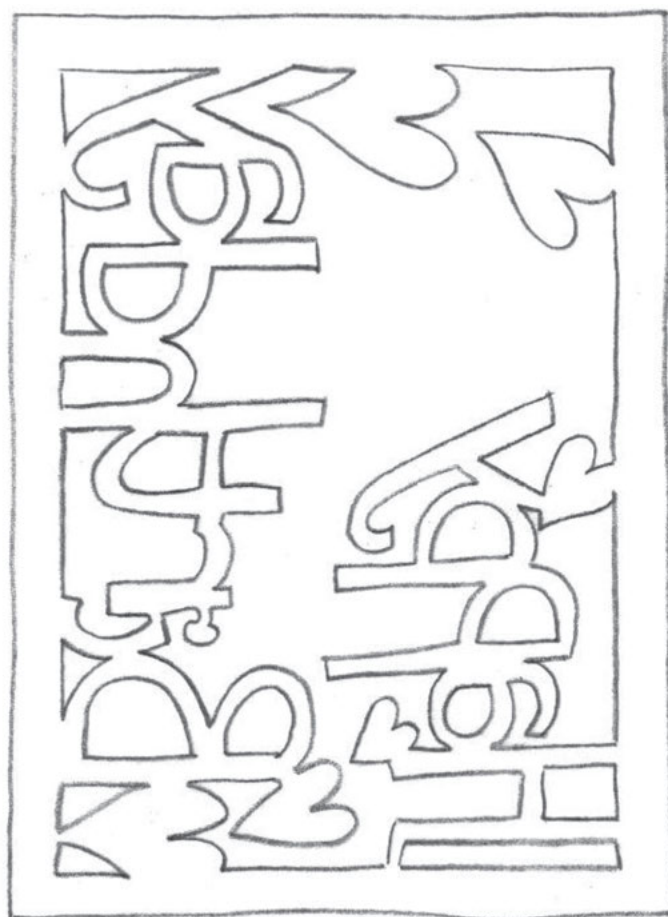
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PATCHWORK OWL

Page 102
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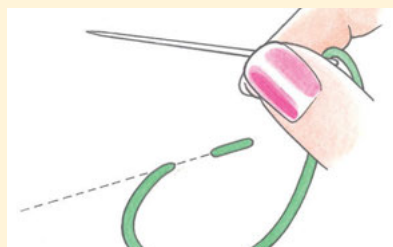


BACK TO SCHOOL

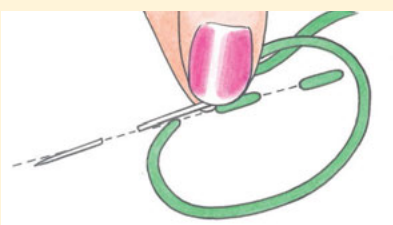
Most creative types will have their primary passion, and many will also want to expand their repertoire of skills. If you fancy getting to grips with something new or want to reignite an old skill, the following pages contain the basics of a variety of crafts that'll have you increasing your product line and mixing media for some uber-creative additions to your stable. We've also handpicked a selection of courses that might take your fancy and help to move your business in a new direction. And, our final inspirational word comes from notonthehighstreet.com's CEO and founder, Holly Tucker.

RUNNING STITCH

A simple row of stitches that creates a dotted line of thread.



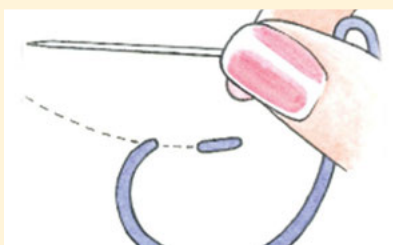
1 Secure the thread on the wrong side of the fabric, then bring the needle through to the surface to start the first stitch.



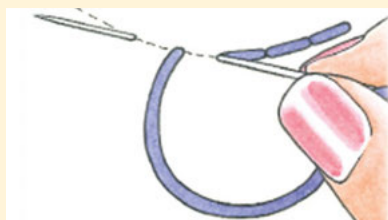
2 Moving forward take the needle back down through the fabric and then bring up again. Keep the distance between the gaps and the stitches the same size and continue along the stitching line.

BACK STITCH

Strong hand stitches with a neat finish.



1 Secure the thread on the wrong side of the fabric and bring the needle through to the surface to start the first stitch. Move a stitch length backwards along the sewing line, take the needle back through the fabric and then bring it to the surface at the end position of this stitch.



2 Moving back along the stitching line, take the needle down through the same hole as the previous thread. Bring it to the surface for the end position of the stitch. Repeat along the sewing line to create even stitches.

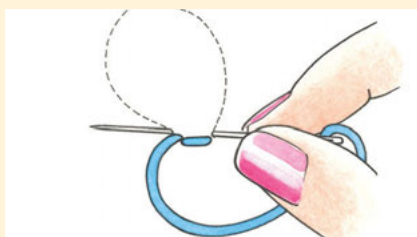
STITCHING TECHNIQUES

ALL THE SEWING TERMS YOU NEED TO
START MAKING YOUR TOYS TODAY
(START STITCHING WITH CONFIDENCE)

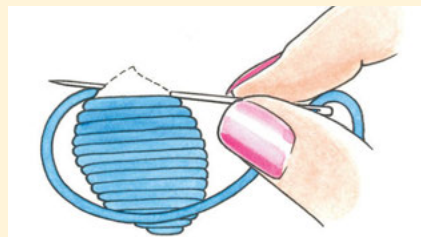


SATIN STITCH

This decorative stitch requires parallel lines of thread to make a design. These can be worked horizontally, vertically or at an angle.



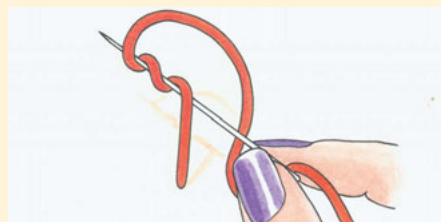
1 Start with the secure end on the wrong side of work. Pull the needle through to the surface on the base of the outline to be filled. Take the needle to the outline on the opposite side and push the needle back through to form a long, straight stitch.



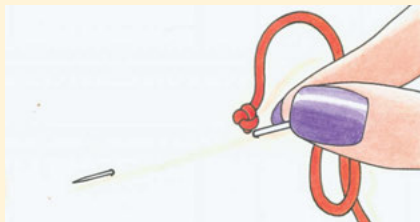
2 Take the needle down next to the end of the first stitch and under the work, bringing it back through at the start of the previous stitch forming a parallel line of thread. Repeat this process until the desired area is filled.

FRENCH KNOTS

Strong hand stitches with a neat finish.



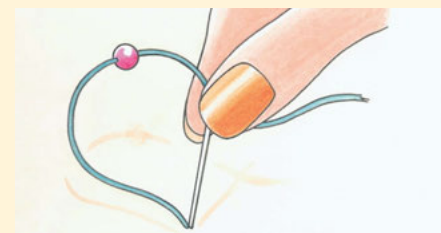
1 Bring the thread to the surface at the position for the knot. Wrap the thread around the needle tip twice and take the needle back through the fabric where it came up.



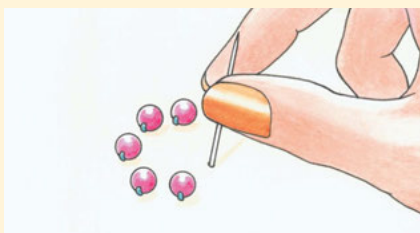
2 Ease the knot on to the surface of the fabric, holding it steady whilst pulling the needle through to the wrong side. Stitch to secure or return to the surface for next French knot.

INDIVIDUAL BEADS

Strong hand stitches with a neat finish.



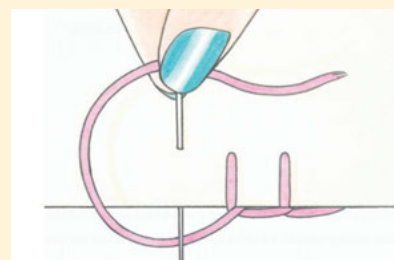
1 Secure the thread in the position of the first bead. Pass the needle through the hole in the bead and back down through the fabric underneath the bead.



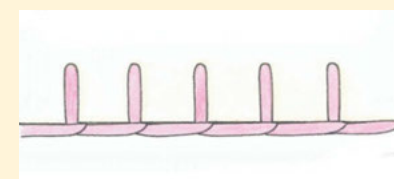
2 For individual beads, secure the threads on the wrong side. For rows or clusters, bring the needle up through to the surface at the position for the next bead.

BLANKET STITCH

Also known as buttonhole stitch, used for reinforcing the edge of thick materials.



1 Secure the thread and working along the edge, bring the needle to the surface of the fabric.



2 Take the needle through from the back of the fabric to the surface on the stitching line. Loop the end of the thread under the needle and pull through to adjust so that the stitch lies along the edge of the fabric.

3 Repeat to create evenly spaced stitches along the fabric edge, maintain an even tension to avoid distorting the fabric.

SLIPSTITCH

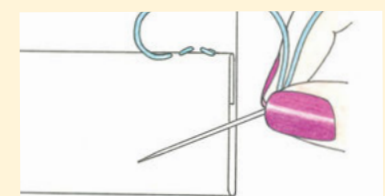
Working on the fold in the fabric, secure the thread with a double stitch.



1 Pick up two threads of the fabric with the needle tip, then slip the needle through the fold of the hem. Bring the needle out 0.5cm along.



2 Then, pick up two more threads of fabric before returning through the fold of the hem.



3 Pull the thread lightly as you work to tighten the stitches, being careful not to distort the fabric which makes the stitches visible.



SAFETY FIRST!

For safety reasons, do not use small beads on projects for under threes. Instead, embroider French knots onto your toys with spare yarn.

TERMS & TECHNIQUES

Appliqué: Decorative technique with one piece of fabric stitched on top of another.

Bobbin: Removable spool underneath the needle plate on a sewing machine where the lower thread is wound.

Interfacing: Fabric placed between the main material and facing to give the item structure.

Pleat: Even folds of fabric stitched to create shaping or for decoration.

Raw Edge: The cut edge of fabric.

This can be finished with zig zag machine stitch to prevent fraying.

Reverse Stitch: A sewing machine setting that allows you to work back over a row of stitches to secure.

Right Side: This is the side of the fabric that will be shown when the project is completed. When given the instruction right sides facing; place the fabric right sides together.

Selvedge: The finished edges of woven fabrics.

Tacking Stitch: A hand sewn

temporary stitch used to hold fabrics together, or as a guide before stitching.

Top Stitch: A machine straight stitch used on the right side on an item. Often used in contrasting colour for decorative effect.

Wrong Side: The reverse side of the fabric, which will be the inside of the completed project.

Zig Zag Stitch: A machine stitch used to secure raw edges of fabric and for decoration, used in a variety of sizes.

HOW TO... STUFF TOYS

Most toy parts need to be stuffed quite firmly so they hold their shape. Add a small amount of safety toy stuffing at a time, pushing it well into the base of the part you are working on. Try to tease each bit of stuffing before inserting it as this makes it more pliable and gives a smoother effect. Stuff matching pieces as equally as possible, checking legs and arms against each other as you work to ensure they match up. Don't be tempted to overstuff as this will make attaching the limbs difficult.



TOP TIP

When stitching facial features onto your makes, less is more. Keep eyes, noses and mouths small and in proportion to the toy to avoid it looking scary.

HOW TO... ATTACH LIMBS

Before sewing arms and legs to a toy, check they are evenly stuffed and identical in size and shape. Pin the limbs in position, taking into account whether the toy is designed to be sitting or standing and ensuring they are equal distances apart. Use yarn tails to join pieces together where possible as this provides a firm anchor for sewing up. Using matching yarn (we have used blue for illustrative purposes) and a tapestry needle, sew the limbs onto the body very firmly, taking a stitch on the limb and then a stitch on the body alternately until it is sewn firmly in place.



TURN THE TABLES

HANDY KNITTING GUIDE TO GET YOU STARTED



NEEDLE SIZING TABLE

UK (mm)	USA	Old UK/Canada
2	0	14
2.25	1	13
2.75	2	12
3	-	11
3.25	3	10
3.5	4	-
3.75	5	9
4	6	8
4.5	7	7
5	8	6
5.5	9	5
6	10	4
6.5	10 1/2	3
7	-	2
7.5	-	1
8	11	0
9	13	00
10	15	000
12	17	-
15	-	-
16	19	-
19	35	-
20	36	-
25	50	-

STEP ON THE SCALES

Just like tension, the weight of yarn can greatly affect the outcome of your work – which is especially disorientating when, as with needle sizing, yarn weights differ from country to country. The handy guide above should sort out any confusion.

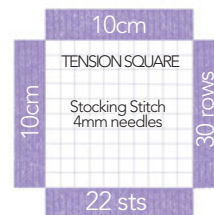
“Using the correct size of needles for the yarn weight helps to produce a taut, neat fabric”

ESSENTIAL INFO

Everything you need to start knitting now!

Tension headache

The tension square is a rather dull, yet essential part of the knitting process. Usually made up of a 10cm square of the stitch pattern used in your project, it demonstrates your gauge (the amount of stitches and rows per cm that your knitting equates to). Getting your gauge correct to the pattern's specifications is crucial to creating well-fitted garments.



■ If you knit to a larger gauge than the pattern calls for (for example, if the tension is 24 stitches to 10cm but your 24 knitted stitches measure 11cm) this will be multiplied across your garment and the finished item will be bigger than it should be – and vice versa if your square comes up smaller.

■ To create your tension square, cast on the number of stitches specified plus six more, using the yarn and needles recommended in your pattern. Make sure the stitches are not too tight or too loose. Knit until your work measures 14cm long using stocking stitch unless another stitch is specified. Knit the first and last two stitches on every row to prevent curling, then cast off. Now comes the important part – measuring your stitches.

■ On the right side each stitch is signified by one complete ‘V’ shape in your work. Lay a ruler horizontally and use marker pins to indicate 10cm and count the stitches, including half stitches. Do the same with the rows. Now compare this to the recommended tension given in the pattern. If there are too many stitches, your gauge is too tight – switch to a larger set of needles and try again. Similarly, if there are too few stitches, your gauge is too loose – try with smaller size needles.

■ Laundering your finished swatch in the same way you would your finished item is also a good idea – it will demonstrate what will happen to it once it is washed. Will it shrink? Will the colours bleed? Will it soften? This shows how best to care for your items once they are completed.

US	UK	Gauge over 10cm	Average needle size
Baby	2ply/Lace	30 – 32 sts	2.25mm – 2.75mm
Fingering	3ply	27 – 30 sts	2.75mm – 3.25mm
Sportweight	4ply	23 – 26 sts	3.25mm – 3.75mm
Worsted	Double Knitting (DK)	21 – 24 sts	3.75mm – 4.5mm
Fisherman/Medium	Aran	16 – 20 sts	4.5mm – 5.5mm
Bulky	Chunky	12 – 15 sts	5.5mm – 8mm
Super Bulky	Super Chunky	6 – 11sts	8mm or larger

STARTING RIGHT WITH YARN

LEARN TO KNIT TODAY WITH THESE CLEAR GUIDES

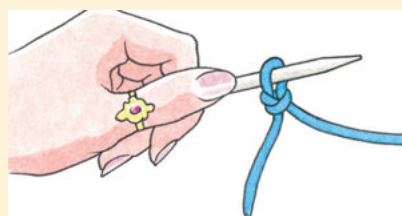


SLIP KNOT

The very first thing you need to do, before you even start casting on!



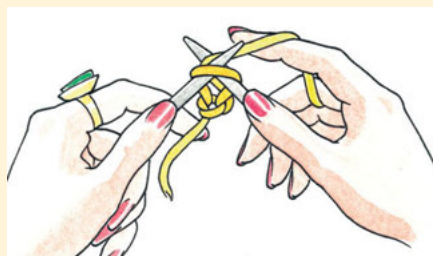
1 Holding the yarn under your left thumb, wrap it twice around your left index and middle fingers, with the second loop closer to the base of the fingers. With the backs of the fingers uppermost, insert the tip of the needle beneath the first loop and over the second, then pull the second loop under the first.



2 Remove your two fingers and gently tug on both ends of yarn to tighten the slip knot around the needle.

CAST ON

Creating stitches to knit with is surprisingly easy – this is the most common cast on method used



1 Make a slipknot on the left-hand needle and pull it taut. Insert the right-hand needle into the knot from front to back, passing under the left-hand needle. Wrap the ball end of yarn anti-clockwise around the point of the right-hand needle.



2 Pull the loop that forms back through the original stitch and insert the tip of the left-hand needle into the new stitch from underneath to transfer from the right to left needle. There should now be two stitches on the left-hand needle.



3 Repeat the above steps, knitting into the top stitch on the left needle and returning the new stitches from the right to the left needle until you have the required number of stitches.

KNIT STITCH (K)

Also known as garter stitch, the knit stitch is the foundation of knitting



1 Once cast on, insert the tip of the right needle upwards and from front to back into the top stitch on the left needle. The right-hand needle should sit behind the left-hand one. Wrap the ball end of yarn anticlockwise around the tip of the right-hand needle.

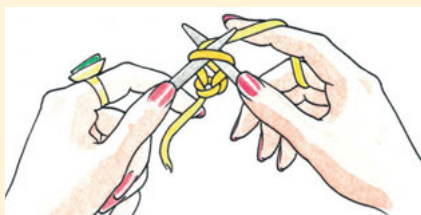


2 Using the right-hand needle, pull a loop of the wrapped yarn through the original stitch to create a new one on the right needle.



3 Slide the original stitch off the left-hand needle. Repeat from step one. You are now knitting! The knit stitch can be combined with other stitches to create hundreds of different stitch patterns.

CABLE CAST ON



1 Create a slipknot on your left hand needle, pulling it taut (but not too tight). Carefully insert the right needle into the knot from front to back, passing under the left hand needle. Wrap the ball end of yarn anticlockwise around the point of the right needle.



2 Pull the loop that forms back through the original stitch (knot) and insert the tip of the left hand needle into the new stitch from underneath to transfer it from the right hand to the left hand needle. There should now be two stitches on the left hand needle.



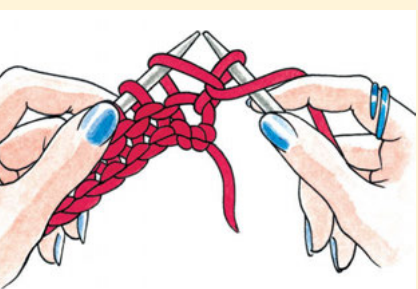
3 Insert the right needle between the two stitches on the left needle and wrap the yarn around the needle tip anticlockwise. Draw this loop through to make a stitch and slip it up and onto the left needle. Repeat this creating a new loop behind the last stitch and passing it left needle in front of the previous one.

PURL STITCH (P)

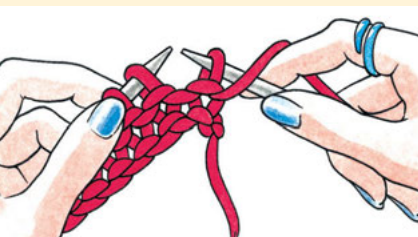
Most frequently seen paired with the knit stitch to create different stitch patterns like stocking stitch and ribbing



1 With the ball-end of the yarn at the front (towards you), insert the tip of the right-hand needle into the front loop of the first stitch from right to left, with the right-hand needle in front of the left-hand needle.



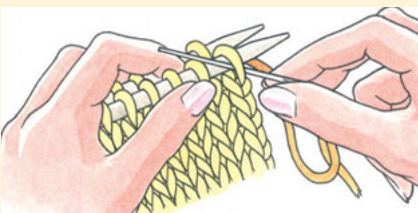
2 Draw this needle backwards and upwards, forming a new stitch on the right-hand needle.



3 Once the new stitch has been formed on the right-hand needle you can let the loop from the left-hand needle slide off the end. Repeat until all the stitches have been purred and you have completed the row.

GRAFT THE TOE

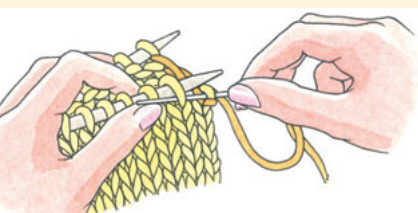
Kitchener Stitch is the method used to achieve this. It is worked as follows:
SET UP: Before starting you need to prepare the stitches on the needle. Hold the two needles with the remaining stitches parallel. The loose end of yarn should be coming from the back needle and lying to the right of the work.



1 Thread yarn end onto a tapestry needle and insert it purlwise into the first stitch on the needle closest to you. Pull the yarn through but leave the stitch on the needle.



2 Insert the tapestry needle knitwise into the first stitch on the back needle and pull the yarn through, leaving the stitch on the needle.



3 Having set up as shown in steps 1 and 2, repeat steps 3 and 4 until all stitches have been grafted. Insert the tapestry needle knitwise into the first stitch on the front needle and slide the stitch off. Before you pull the yarn through this stitch insert the tapestry needle into the next stitch on the front needle purlwise and pull the yarn through, this time leaving the stitch on the needle.



4 Insert the tapestry needle purlwise into the first stitch on the back needle and slide it off. Before pulling the yarn through this stitch, insert the tapestry needle into the next stitch on the back needle knitwise and pull the yarn through, leaving the stitch on the needle.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Check out www.letsknit.co.uk for an array of exciting projects for you to try. There are designs suitable for all levels of experience. Please note, however, these aren't copyright free so can't be sold.



CROCHET TECHNIQUES HOOKED UP

MASTER THE BASICS OF CROCHET WITH OUR HANDY GUIDE

Whether you're a complete beginner or just want to refresh your memory, our step-by-step guide of the basic stitches will help get you started.

SLIP STITCH (SL ST)

This is a very flat stitch and is also used to join a chain into a ring

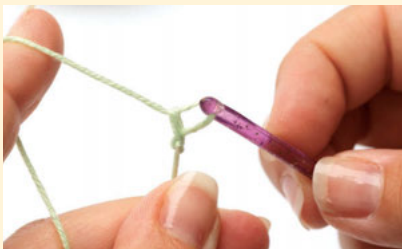


1 insert hook into st – you will now have two loops on the hook, yoh



2 Pull yarn through both loops

FOUNDATION CHAIN



1 Make a slip knot and pull it on the neck of the hook – don't pull it too tight or it will be difficult to stitch with. Coming from behind, wrap the yarn around the hook from right to left, across the 'neck'.



2 Catch the yarn and use the hook to pull it down through the slip knot. You have now made one chain (ch). Continue to make more chains, as directed in the pattern.



HOW TO...MAKE A MAGIC RING



1 Make a loop of yarn leaving the tail hanging downwards.



2 Insert the hook through the middle of the loop and draw the yarn from the ball through the loop, now make 1ch. This does not count as a stitch. NOTE: these two steps form the base of any magic ring



3 Now work into the ring as instructed. After this round, close the centre hole by pulling on the yarn tail



DOUBLE CROCHET (DC)

This is one of the main stitches in crochet. It's also referred to as plain stitch, or single crochet in the USA. Once you've mastered it, the world really is your (crochet) oyster.



1 Foundation Row: Repeat Step 1 from the Slip Stitch diagrams. Wrap and pull the yarn through the nearest loop on the hook. There will now be two loops on the hook.



2 Row 1: Pull the yarn down through both loops using the hook. You have just completed a dc. Continue along the row, working a dc into each chain in the foundation row. NOTE: After row 1, you will have one less stitch than in your foundation chain.



3 Row 2: Make one ch (this is known as the turning chain) before working into the first ch in the row. Unless instructed otherwise, insert the hook under both loops that create the V shape.



FINISH YOUR KNIT FINAL STAGES

FINISH YOUR PROJECT LIKE A PRO WITH THESE HANDY GUIDES

ON THE BLOCKS

Blocking is the process of stretching and shaping your finished items to create the correct dimensions from the pattern. It is also really useful for ensuring that pieces to be joined fit well together. There are a few different ways to achieve this, so check the information on the yarn ball band and pick the most suitable option.

WET BLOCKING

Dampen the pieces so that they are wet through and gently push out excess water. Spread the sections out on a towel to air dry. Use a tape measure to ensure each part is the correct dimensions to that of the pattern and pin into the required shape.

For a more gentle option, try pinning it in place



and lightly spritzing with a water spray. This is ideal for really delicate materials like cashmere which can be damaged by too much water.

STEAM IRON BLOCKING

Place a dampened cloth on top of the separate sections of your knitting. Work gently over this with a very hot iron, but be careful not to let the iron come into direct contact with the knitting as it can damage the work. Continue to press the work until the cloth is dry and the knitted fibres have been loosened by the steam. Then, pin the pieces to the desired shape and measurements and leave to set.



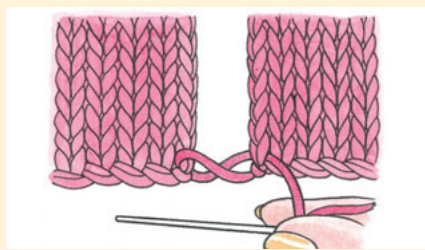
AT A LOOSE END?

Follow these steps for sewing in any loose ends:

- 1 Thread the yarn onto a tapestry needle and work with the WS of the knit facing upwards.
- 2 Insert the needle under the loop of each stitch, and draw it through. Work it up and down the loops of the stitches for 8cm.
- 3 Cut the yarn close to the fabric.
- 4 If you are weaving at a colour change, be sure to work the loose end into the corresponding colour to prevent it from being visible at the front of the work.

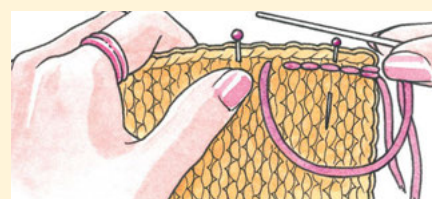
BEGINNING A SEAM

- 1 With the pieces to be joined placed next to each other with right side upwards, thread the tapestry needle and push it through the fabric after the first stitch, moving the needle from front to back. Then, take the needle and push it through after the first stitch on the second piece, moving the needle from the back of the work to the front. The yarn will form a figure 8. Tug gently to secure.



BACK STITCH

- 1 Pin the pieces to be joined, with the right sides together. Thread the loose end of yarn onto a tapestry needle. Start by stitching the two outer edges together, then bring the needle through the two pieces 1cm from back to front ahead of the previous stitch.



- 2 Push the needle back through at the position where the yarn emerged from the previous stitch. Return it to the front of the work, approx 1cm ahead of the stitch just made. Repeat this until the whole join is complete, working in a straight line.

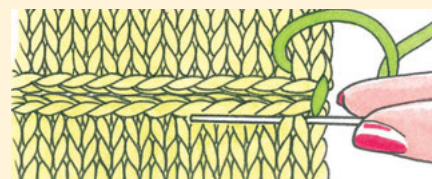
MATTRESS STITCH

- 1 With the two pieces to be joined lying next to each other, hook the horizontal bar of the first stitch with the tapestry needle. Move to the other piece and hook the first horizontal bar of the stitch on that side.
- 2 Repeat this moving from one piece to the next and pulling the yarn to tighten the join.



JOINING CAST OFF EDGES

- 1 Lay the two pieces to be joined right side up and with the cast off edges touching. Thread a tapestry needle with the loose yarn and push this through the centre of the first stitch, and then in and out through the centres of two stitches on the opposite side.



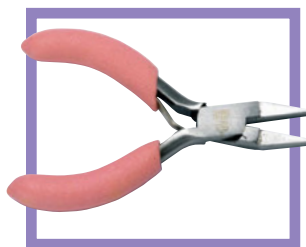
- 2 Take the needle over to the first side and insert where it previously exited, bringing it out through the centre of the next stitch. Repeat this process alternating sides and stitching single stitches until the pieces are joined.

JEWELLERY MAKING ESSENTIALS

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO START JEWELLERY MAKING TODAY

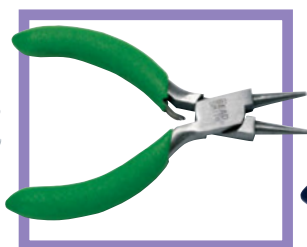
TOOL KIT

Whether it's for business or pleasure, these basic implements are a must



FLAT-NOSED PLIERS

This multi-purpose tool has flat jaws with a slightly rough surface, that can be used to hold jewellery steady while working, to bend or flatten wire, close crimps and more.



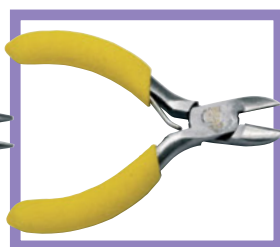
ROUND-NOSED PLIERS

The round, tapered jaws of these pliers are ideal for shaping wire into curves, plus curling head pins and eye pins into loops and creating your own jump rings from scratch.



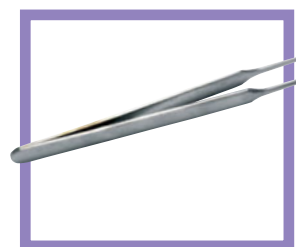
CHAIN-NOSED PLIERS

These feature half-flat, half round jaws with narrow points, for small precision jobs such as attaching jump rings, crimping and wrapping wire. Also known as snipe-nosed pliers.



SIDE CUTTERS

Use for cutting lengths of softer wire, such as nylon-coated wire, aluminium, copper, gold and sterling silver, and for trimming head pins and eye pins. For memory wire use specialist cutters.



TWEEZERS

Not all basic tool kits contain beading tweezers, but their fine points can help with fiddly tasks such as handling tiny seed beads or picking apart knots in thread.



SHOP AT...

The BeadSmith offers a wide range of beading pliers and tools, such as this Mini Colour I.D. Set, from £9.99. For stockist details, visit www.beadsmithb.com or email info@helby.com



WIRE GAUGES

Beading wire comes in various thicknesses; discover which is best for your project at a glance!

GAUGE	THICKNESS	USE
28	0.4mm	Binding, weaving and knitting
24	0.6mm	Threading small beads, binding and twisting
20	0.8mm	Most commonly used general purpose wire
18	1.0mm	Chunkier pieces and ring shanks
16	1.5mm	Bolder, chunkier jewellery
14	2.0mm	Very chunky, metallic wire jewellery

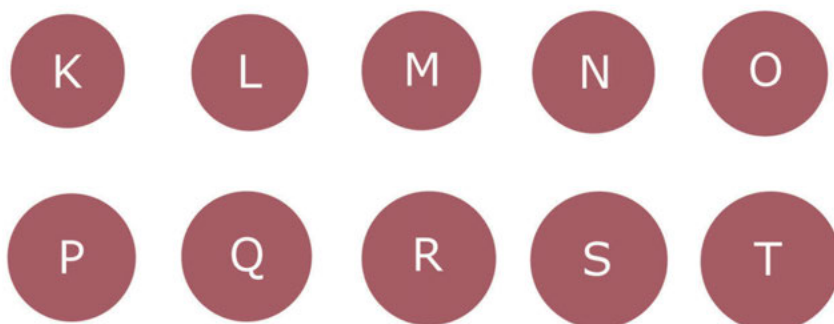
*Information from The Complete Guide to Wire & Beaded Jewellery by Linda Jones (£12.74, CICO Books)



RING SIZE TEMPLATES

To find your ideal size, place a ring that fits you over the circles, making sure the inside of the ring lines up with the outside of the circle.

This ring sizer is provided as a guide only. For the greatest accuracy it is advised that you have your finger measured by a professional jeweller



BEAD SIZING

FIND THE PERFECT FIT FOR YOUR PROJECT WITH THESE HANDY GUIDES. These charts are approximate and should be used as a guide only, as bead sizes can vary owing to different manufacturers and materials.

BUGLE BEAD SIZES

These can be measured either in millimetres or by size; Czech and Japanese bugles tend to be measured differently, so double check before you buy.

CZECH	
SIZE	LENGTH IN MM
1	2
2	4
3	7
4	9
5	11

JAPANESE	
SIZE	LENGTH IN MM
1	3
2	6
3	9



SEED BEAD SIZES

Seed beads are measured in aughts instead of millimetres, and relate to the number of that size that fit into an inch. For example, 6/0 or '6 aught' is six beads per inch. 11/0 is the most popular size used.

AUGHT SIZE	MM DIAMETER
6/0	3.3
8/0	2.5
9/0	2.2
10/0	2.0
11/0	1.8
13/0	1.5
14/0	1.4
15/0	1.3
Delica	1.8

FINISHING TOUCH

Our guide to the components that hold your jewellery creations together



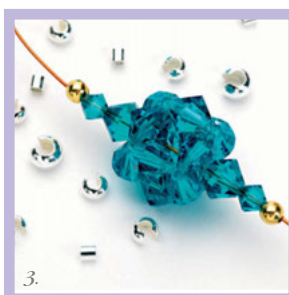
1 CALOTTES
Also known as clam shells, these are used to hide knots and raw ends of thread, wire or fine ribbon within, and are closed with pliers.

2 CLASPS
Used to join up necklaces and bracelets, there are various types including toggle, S-shaped and lobster claw clasps, ranging from practical to decorative shapes and designs.



3 CRIMP BEADS & COVERS
These tiny metal tube beads are used to connect clasps and space out beads, being squashed to secure with pliers. Add a cover on top for a neat finish.

4 EARRING WIRES
The most basic type of earwire is the fish hook variety for single drop or cluster designs, or try a chandelier component with multiple loops.



5 EYE PINS & HEAD PINS
Eye pins are thin wires with a loop at the end, for linking sections together. Head pins are similar but feature a small disc to stop beads sliding off.

6 JUMP RINGS & SPLIT RINGS
The basic jump ring is a loop that can be twisted apart, while split rings have two loops, similar to a keyring.



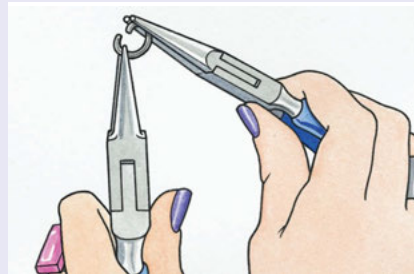


BACK TO BASICS JEWELLERY TECHNIQUES

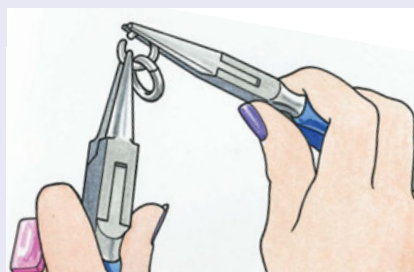
MAKE IT PERFECT EVERY TIME WITH OUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDES

OPENING AND CLOSING JUMP RINGS

Jump rings should never be pulled apart to open, as this will distort the shape



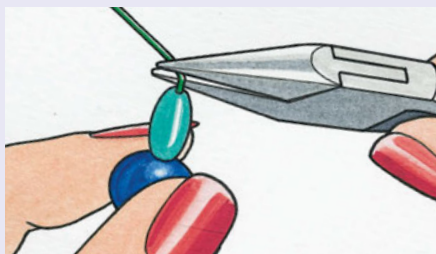
1 Hold the jump ring with two pairs of pliers, either two flat-nosed or a flat and round-nosed. To open, bring one pair of pliers towards you.



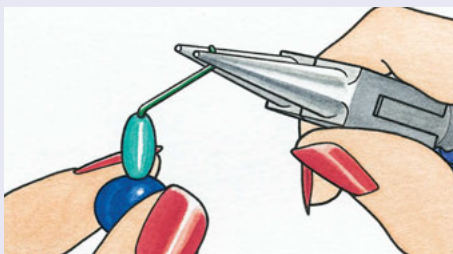
2 Attach another jump ring, chain or jewellery finding, such as a calotte. Then simply reverse the action to close, as shown.

PLAIN LOOPS

This is the easiest way to make a loop on head pins and eye pins, ready for joining to other findings.



1 Trim the wire to 1cm above the top bead. Make a right angle bend close to the bead, with flat-nosed pliers.



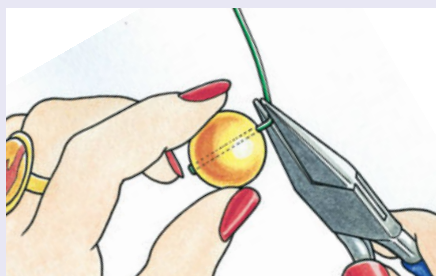
2 Hold the tip of the wire with round-nosed pliers and rotate to bend the wire part way around the tip.



3 Reposition the pliers and continue rotating until the tip touches the wire and the loop is in the centre.

WRAPPED LOOPS

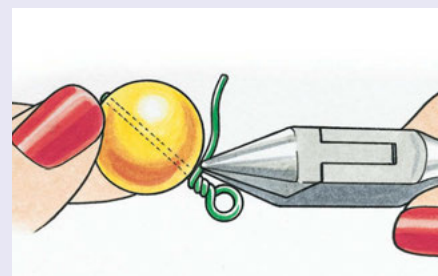
This is stronger than the plain loop and ideal for beads with slightly larger holes.



1 You will need at least 3cm of wire above the last bead. Hold the wire above the bead with snipe-nosed pliers and bend at a right angle.



2 Hold the wire close to the bend with round-nosed pliers and wrap the tail of the wire all the way around to form a loop.



3 Hold the loop flat in snipe-nosed pliers and wind the wire tail around the stem, covering the gap between the loop and bead. Trim with cutters.

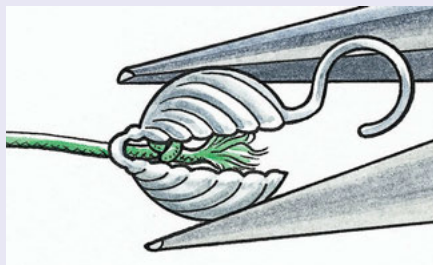
KNOT COVERS

THE WAY YOU SECURE YOUR JEWELLERY PIECES WITH CALOTTES AND CLAMSHELLS WILL DEPEND ON YOUR STRINGING MATERIAL...

CORD OR RIBBON



1 Feed the open calotte onto the cord or ribbon and tie a knot. Trim the end close to the knot.



2 Bring the calotte down so that it covers the knot. Close the calotte with pliers or your fingers.

NYLON-COATED WIRES



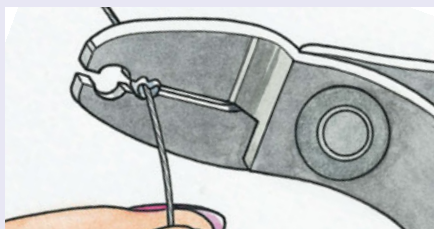
1 When using coated wires that do not knot easily, secure the end with one or two crimp beads, then close the calotte to hide the crimp.



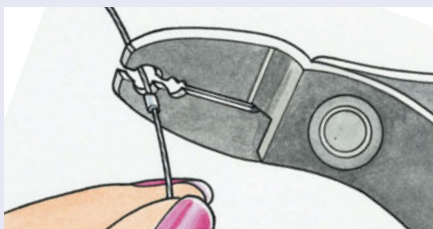
2 Alternatively, pick up a clamshell and seed bead and take the tail back through the finding.

CRIMP PLIERS

Crimp pliers are available in three sizes to suit different sizes of crimps. These have two holes in the jaws; the one nearest the tip is a plain oval and the one further along has a dip.



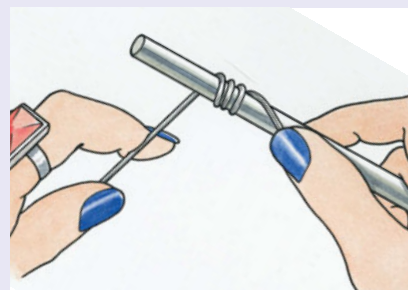
1 Position the crimp in the plain oval and squeeze gently to make it elliptical. Move the crimp to the oval with the dip and squeeze to curl.



2 Move the crimp to the plain oval and turn so that it is vertical, then squeeze the pliers to compress the crimp into a rounded shape.

MAKING JUMP RINGS

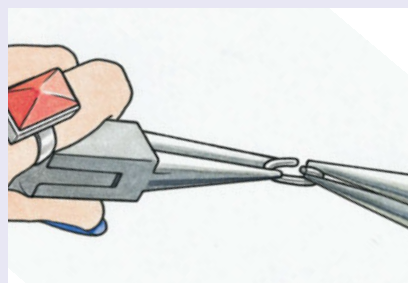
If you've run out of jump rings, follow this simple method and create your own, for handmade jewellery from start to finish!



1 Choose a circular instrument of the required diameter. Hold the end of a length of wire at one end and tightly wrap around the rod.



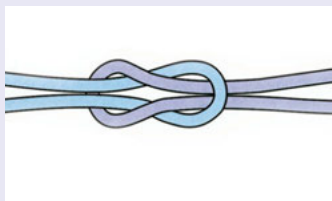
2 Slide the closely wound spring off the rod and use wire cutters to cut each jump ring in turn, trimming with the flat edge of the cutter.



3 To tension the jump rings so that they stay closed, push the ends slightly so that they overlap on one side, then the other. Pull back and the ends will spring together.

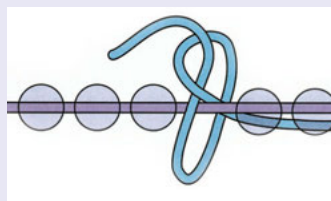
BEADER'S KNOTS

A USEFUL GUIDE TO THE MOST COMMON BEADER'S KNOTS



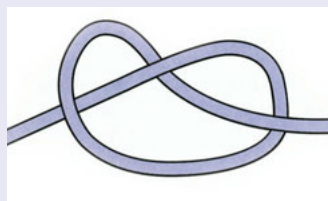
REEF KNOT

This simple knot is used to space beads or tie multi-strands together.



HALF HITCH

This basic knot is used to tie two ends of equal thickness.



OVERHAND KNOTS

Secure thread between beads in bead stitches and jewellery with this knot.

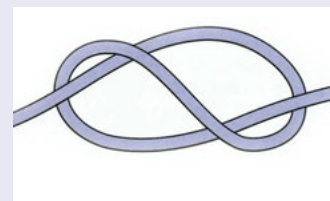


FIGURE OF EIGHT KNOT

An extra loop creates a larger knot that is more secure when used with calottes.

MASTERCLASS DIE-CUTTING

SUBVERT THIS PAPER CUTTING TECHNIQUE TO CREATE A RANGE OF JEWELLERY FROM DIFFERENT MATERIALS

If you're not very handy with a pair of scissors, die-cutting systems are a godsend for creating perfect, professional-looking shapes from paper and much more. They are also easy to use and many brands offer a wide collection of shape cutting dies ranging from simple outlines to flowers, butterflies and much more. Many types of material can be used for die-cutting as long as they're thin enough to pass through the cutting plates; and can be incorporated into jewellery with ease, as we reveal.



SHOP AT...

Sizzix Big Shot die-cutting system and dies from Sizzix; for a list of UK stockists, visit www.sizzix.co.uk or call 0844 499 8181.

MAKE IT PERFECT

WHAT WILL I NEED?

1 DIE-CUTTING SYSTEM

There are various brands available, which are simple to use and ensure crisp, professionally cut shapes every time.

2 DIES

These feature various shapes which are sandwiched with the chosen material before being run through the die-cutting system.

3 MATERIALS

Many types can be used for die-cutting, including paper, leather, plastic sheet and even thin metal. Don't use anything too thick or it will damage the machine.

1



2



3



4



4 HOLE PUNCH PLIERS

If die-cutting from thin metal, these are very useful for creating holes for hanging. Choose a pair suited to the metal sheet being used.



HOW TO MAKE

Create Corinne Bradd's pretty necklace with butterfly-shaped dies

1 Cut several strips of coloured plastic sheets and stack together. Place the ends of the strip over the butterfly portion of the die design that you wish to cut and sandwich between the two perspex cutting pads of a die-cutting system (Fig.1).

2 Lay the sandwich in the feed tray and push forward into the rollers, turning the handle in the direction of movement. Run the die sandwich completely through the machine (Fig.2) and lift the top cutting pad to reveal the shapes.

3 Continue cutting butterflies from the plastic as necessary, plus some from map paper covered in clear sticky-backed plastic on each side. Use punch pliers to cut tiny holes in the top of each shape (Fig.3).

4 Stack two or three butterflies together and connect with a jump ring through the holes (Fig.4). Add more jump rings in series to attach the die-cut shapes to your chosen chain. Bend the wings on some of the butterflies to add dimension to the piece.



TOP TIPS

Corinne Bradd gives her top tips for working with die-cutting machines.

1 Read the manufacturer's instructions before cutting. Many systems use dies of varying thickness and need different cutting pads for each type.

2 If you find it difficult to turn the handle of the machine, it's probably a sign that you should stop and check that the arrangement of dies and pads is correct, or try cutting something thinner. Mistakes can cause permanent damage.

3 Stock up on useful die shapes. Sets of circles and ovals are invaluable, as are small flowers and butterflies.

4 Experiment with scraps of different materials to see what cuts best. Thin papers, plastic and fabric can be stacked up and cut all at once. Chipboard, leather and metal should be cut one thickness at a time.

5 Leather works beautifully in a die-cutting machine and you can produce intricate patterns that would be difficult to recreate with a craft knife. The resulting shapes can be glued or stitched onto a variety of bases; leather itself, fabric, wood or metal.

6 Unbaked polymer clay sheets can be cut with a die-cutting system. Simply place the clay sheet between two pieces of paper and cut as normal. The paper prevents the clay from sticking to the dies and pads.

7 Keep a small box of scrap materials that can be turned into die-cut shapes instead of throwing them out. Have a cutting session and build up your stash of components in no time!

8 Go green and make funky jewellery from old packaging. Empty drinks cans, plastic milk bottles, and heat fused bubble-wrap can all be turned into something wonderful.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Create more stunning jewellery with die-cutting techniques

FABRIC WRISTBANDS

Supple leather can be cut with dies, allowing you to create professional-looking motifs that can be stitched in place. These wristbands feature strips of plain fabric and interfacing, which are decorated with various designs, before being backed with patterned fabric to hide the stitching, and having snap fasteners attached.



METAL PENDANT

Many dies will cut through thin sheet metal, allowing you to create more hard-wearing jewellery. Craft embossing foil works very well but is not rigid enough to use as a base section. For this design, we used a thicker sheet metal which can be hammered to make it flatter and more malleable, but you may find the die cannot cut completely through it. In this case you will need to use pliers to ease the pieces apart.



MASTERCLASS ECO-CHIC

TRANSFORM FOUND OBJECTS AND
FAVOURITE TREASURES INTO UNIQUE
PIECES OF JEWELLERY

Although there are many beautiful beads available for making jewellery, there's a lot to be said for including found objects into your creations. Celebrity faves like Tatty Devine are famous for their jewellery that features oddments hiding in everyone's home, such as badges, plastic figures and more. As well as being eco-friendly, it's also a great way to turn souvenirs, such as shells collected on an enjoyable holiday, into a piece that evokes fond memories.

MAKE IT PERFECT

WHAT WILL I NEED?

1 FOUND OBJECTS

Experiment with a variety of oddments, such as feathers, buttons, shells and old coins.

2 PAINTS

Give natural or worn objects a new lease of life with a coat of paint such as Pebeo's Fantasy range.

3 HOBBY DRILL

A rotary tool with a number of drill bits, such as the Dremel 7700 is useful for drilling holes and polishing.

4 JEWELLERY TOOLS

A basic set of pliers and wire cutters is also useful for adding jump rings and cutting chains.



HOW TO MAKE

Turn shells collected on holiday into Corinne Bradd's summery necklace



1 Use a thin diamond tipped drill bit and a Dremel rotary tool to create a small hole in a cockle shell approximately 6mm from the edge. Rest the shell on a piece of scrap wood and avoid pressing down while you drill, as this could result in the shell breaking (Fig.1). Stop and check the progress of the hole every few seconds and once you can see it is nearly through, use gentler bursts of drilling.

2 Colour the outside of the shell with a decorative finish such as Pebeo Fantasy iridescent paint, alcohol markers or chalk inks (Fig.2). Seal the colour if necessary and leave to dry before adding embellishments if desired using strong PVA and a fine tipped nozzle (Fig.3).

3 Carefully fit a large jump ring into the drilled hole and thread co-ordinating coloured cotton through the ring. Add crystal bicones, smaller beads, feathers, shells and charms to the ring as desired.



TAKE IT FURTHER

Use other items, such as old pennies and buttons to make other striking designs

COIN NECKLACE

First use a small metal drill bit to create a hole close to the top edge. Use a silicon oven mat to hold the coin as friction from the drilling will make it very hot. Rest the coin on a scrap piece of wood to protect your work surface. Once the hole is made, swap the drill bit with a felt polishing wheel and use this plus some jeweller's rouge polishing compound to remove any oxidation from the metal and reveal its bright lustre. Combine the coin with vintage beads, bead caps and filigree shapes for an antique effect.



BUTTON BRACELET

Take a handful of toning buttons ranging from 8mm up to 20mm in diameter. Use a small drill bit to make holes 2mm in from the edge of each one to fit a jump ring into. Tiny buttons will not need extra holes drilled into them, as the existing ones should be close enough to the edge to fit a jump ring through. Arrange the buttons evenly along a chunky chain bracelet, then add a little sparkle with the occasional crystal beaded head pin. Coloured marabou feathers can also be included; glue the quill into a short length of tightly coiled wire, bend the top into a loop for hanging and decorate with flat back crystals.

TOP TIPS

Corinne Bradd shares her top tips for making jewellery with recycled objects.

1 Nearly anything can be converted into a decorative element of some kind to use in jewellery. The most important consideration is size and weight, after that it can be doctored to suit your needs.

2 A rotary tool and set of small drill bits will allow you to attach items to jump rings. Diamond tipped drill bits are handy for very tough objects such as shells, sea glass and coins.

3 Most rotary tools will also have attachments for polishing heads and sanding wheels to put instant shine on old coins and wooden shapes.

4 Wearing safety goggles is essential when drilling, sanding and grinding items such as sea glass, which may have invisible flaws and could crack or shatter.

5 Colours can be changed with opaque acrylics or glossier paints. Even nail varnish will suffice. Coat the painted object with a good quality varnish or découpage sealer.

6 Jazz up plainer objects with layers of printed paper, lines of glitter, flat back gems or flock powder to create funky 'gumball machine' style jewellery.

7 Keep a stash of random oddments that could be turned into jewellery. Items like dolls' shoes, paper clips, washers, cake decorations and more can be used to create interesting designs.

8 When gluing items like a plastic button to a metal ring base, 'key' the reverse of the button by rubbing with sandpaper. This roughens the surface and helps the glue to adhere much better.

9 Keep your collection organised by storing different items such as buttons in old glass jars or boxes, so you're not desperately hunting through a tangle of oddments.

10 Check out charity shops and car boot sales for interesting finds, and ask friends and relatives to donate any bits and bobs they have hidden away.



MASTERCLASS WOODEN JEWELLERY

TRANSFORM PLAIN WOODEN BEADS AND BLANKS INTO STRIKING ACCESSORIES

Wood is one of the most versatile materials in jewellery making, allowing you to create all kinds of designs, from ethnic to sparkling statement pieces. Although it is possible to buy items ready-decorated, there are also plain beads and blanks available that enable you to create your own unique designs. We look at some of the many techniques that can be used with wood, from rubber stamping to painting and decorating with flat back gems.

MAKE IT PERFECT

WHAT WILL I NEED?

1 HOBBY TOOL

Hand-held designs, such as those from Dremel, are useful for drilling, sanding and carving wooden items. Ensure that you use the correct attachments and tips required.

2 WOODEN BLANKS

Many wooden beads, bangles and laser cut shapes are available plain for decorating. Always sand first before painting or stamping.

3 FLAT BACK GEMS

Sparkly stones will instantly jazz up a wooden article. Use the no hot fix variety, sticking them in place with glue and tweezers.

4 PAINTS

High pigment acrylics are great for embellishing wood. If you're uncertain about painting straight onto the surface, try drawing your design lightly in pencil first as a guide.

5 VARNISH

As well as providing a professional glossy finish, varnish can be essential to ensure that painted or stamped designs remain durable and waterproof.

6 PAINTBRUSH AND PENS

Use a brush to apply paints and varnishes to wood. Felt tip pens are also a good way to colour in stamped images, providing more control.

7 RUBBER STAMPS

These provide a quick and simple way of decorating a plain wooden blank. Try to use one with a reasonably flat surface and ensure it is smooth and free from dust.



SHOP AT...

WoodenPlus laser cut shapes from
www.funkylaser.com,
07900 484142.

Flat back gemstones from
www.josyrose.com,
0845 450 1212.

Plaid Folk Art Enamels from
www.onestrokeuk.com,
0118 989 4756.

Rubber stamps (PICA6301) from
www.personalimpressions.com,
01787 375241.

HOW TO MAKE

Make Corinne Bradd's funky bangle using rubber stamps



1 Take a plain wooden bangle, sanding off any existing varnish if necessary and removing the dust. Ink a small stamp design with black pigment ink. Carefully press the design against the bangle with a light rocking motion to ensure the full image is printed on the curved surface of the wood (Fig.1). Take care not to shift or smudge the image.

2 Re-ink the stamp and repeat the process to cover the bangle with randomly placed and orientated images. Leave the ink to dry. Use felt tip pens to colour the design (Fig.2) and fill in the unprinted background in a neutral shade. Allow all the ink to dry completely before finishing with a coat of clear acrylic gloss varnish (Fig.3).



TAKE IT FURTHER

Try one of these fun alternative ideas with wooden blanks

GEM PENDANT

Bare wood shapes are the perfect surface to add a little sparkle to. Flat back gemstones come in a wide variety of colours and sizes and can be fixed in place with a good quality PVA glue. Avoid using too much adhesive as it will squeeze out from under the stones as they are pressed down.



PAINTED BEADS

A fine paintbrush and pigment acrylic paint are all you need to make unique patterns onto big round wooden beads. We've used paints designed for ceramics, as these give a shiny finish to the design when dry and are scratch resistant when cured.

TOP TIPS

Corinne Bradd is a multi-talented and award-winning designer, who regularly creates projects for *Make & Sell Jewellery* as well as its sister titles *Sew, Crafts Beautiful*, *Let's Get Crafting* and *Let's Make Cards*. Here are her top tips for creating wooden jewellery.

1 Work in a well-ventilated area if sanding, drilling or carving wood and wear a face mask to avoid breathing in too much dust.

2 Keep the item you are working on steady; if you do not have a clamp or vice, try nesting it in a folded towel to cut down on vibration and hold it in place.

3 Go slow when using a hobby tool and carving tip; until you have got used to the feel of it, you'll need to work carefully. If in doubt, practise on a spare piece of wood.

4 Keep a piece of florists' oasis and a few wooden skewers to hand. They are very useful for holding painted beads while they dry.

5 Fine grade sandpaper or even an emery board are perfect for removing accidental scuffs on a smooth wooden surface.

6 Bare wood is receptive to a number of colouring materials including dye, felt pen and acrylics. Colours are best applied a little at a time, building up the tone in layers. As wood is absorbent, it is difficult to remove colour completely.

7 Check out carpentry workshops for off-cuts of wood; they often have bins of high-quality, unusual types at inexpensive prices.

8 Find out as much as you can about the type of wood being used before starting. Some, like ebony, are quite dense and will be harder to cut, sand and finish, while others may cause allergic reactions in some people.



MASTERCLASS POLYMER EFFECTS

CREATE ALL KINDS OF STRIKING METALLIC EFFECTS WITH THIS VERSATILE MATERIAL

The popularity of polymer clay for jewellery making is no surprise; being available in a wide variety of shades and easy to mould, it only requires an ordinary kitchen oven to set. If you want to get even more creative, there are various products to achieve amazing effects, such as metallic powders and flakes of leaf metal, that allow the original colour to shine through.

MAKE IT PERFECT

WHAT WILL I NEED?

1 POLYMER CLAY

There are various brands of polymer clay available, most of which are baked in a conventional oven.

2 BEAD PIERCING PINS

These allow you to make holes in beads and pendants without distorting the shape. They come in two thicknesses, 0.8mm and 1.7mm.

3 METALLIC POWDERS

This can be applied with a fingertip and adds a metallic sheen to clay, as well as highlighting imprinted designs in the surface.

4 VARNISH

There are various types created for use with polymer clay, to add shine plus make a design more durable.

5 BEAD ROLLER

This gadget helps to create uniform-sized beads; simply slide the base and top back and forth along the guiding rails.

6 ACRYLIC ROLLER

Essential for rolling out polymer clay, an acrylic roller is better than a wooden version, which can make the surface uneven.

7 CLAY BLADES

A set of very sharp blades specifically designed for polymer clay is a good investment, allowing for effortless cutting without squashing or distorting.

8 LEAF METAL

Create a shimmering effect with paper-thin leaf metal, which breaks up easily into flakes that stick to the surface of the clay.



SHOP AT...

All products used are from Staedtler. Visit www.staedtler.co.uk for stockists.

HOW TO MAKE

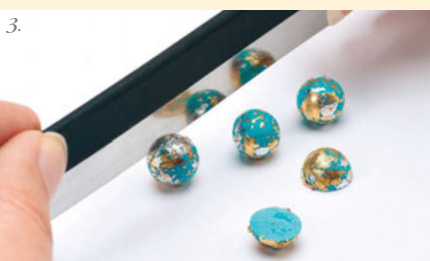
Create Corinne Bradd's Boudicca pendant with metallic foils, powders and chain.



1 Roll out jade polymer clay to 2mm thick on a baking surface and cut a 6cm diameter circle. Repeatedly press a small round-ended tool over the surface to create a hammered finish. Make round beads from the same colour in a bead roller. Pour a few multi-coloured foil flakes into a small dish and roll several beads into them to gather up the foil onto the surface (Fig.1).

2 Re-roll the beads in the roller to press the flakes firmly onto the clay (Fig.2) before half baking them for 10 minutes at 110°C. Allow the foil covered beads to cool before cutting in half with a flat blade (Fig.3). Arrange the hemispheres onto the pendant surface and press into place.

3 Edge the decorations with lengths of fine brass chain pressed into the unbaked clay (Fig.4). Dust the remaining hammered surface with gold metallic powder applied with a fine brush. Make a small hole at the top of the pendant for hanging before baking completely for 30 minutes.



TOP TIPS

Corinne Bradd gives her top tips for working with polymer clay.

1 Before using any type of polymer clay, it is best to condition (knead) the amount required to soften it, making it easier to work with.

2 Always check the manufacturer's instructions, as different brands often have their own baking times and temperatures.

3 Pre-heat your oven using a thermometer to ensure you have the right temperature; too high and the clay will burn, too low and it won't harden properly.

4 Never bake polymer clay items and food in the oven at the same time; they should always be kept separate.

5 Clean your hands properly after using polymer clay every time; mineral oil and soap is good, as the former helps to break down any left on your hands.

6 Rubber finger cots, available from chemists, are a good way to avoid leaving fingerprints in the clay and are less uncomfortable than wearing full gloves.

7 Always varnish a polymer clay piece after using metallic powders or leaf metal on the surface, otherwise it may rub off or tarnish.

8 When using metallic powder, it is best to wear a face mask to avoid breathing it in.

9 Try mixing a little metallic powder into the clay itself before modelling, to achieve a subtle, sparkly effect.

10 If you get leaf metal onto an area of clay where you don't want it, scrape it away carefully with a craft blade or fingernail, then clean the spot with a baby wipe.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Try these other techniques to create eye-catching pieces

BRONZED BANGLE

Cover a wooden bangle with strips of metallic polymer clay, using a strong base colour such as deep blue or green. Hammered effects are achieved by coating the clay with metallic powder before pressing a small round ended tool into the surface. Snakeskin patterns can be made by coating a thick sheet with metal leaf, then gently rolling out to crack the foil into smaller pieces. Interesting surface patterns can also be achieved with texture sheets, then highlighted with metallic powder.



SEMI-PRECIOUS PENDANT

Create a silver flecked quartz effect by layering pink and translucent special effect clay and applying a covering of silver leaf metal. Roll out to crack the leaf, cut in half and re-stack. Repeat to build up multiple layers. Cut 2mm thick slices from the side of the stack, lay side by side revealing the stripes and push together, re-rolling to make a sheet of sparkling quartz. Use to cover clay cabochons. Bake and apply a coat of gloss varnish.



Visit www.makeselljewellery.com to make Corinne Bradd's leather jewellery with polymer clay accents.

WOVEN SPHERES

THESE SPHERES CAN FORM THE BASIS FOR MANY PROJECTS





1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.

YOU WILL NEED:

Patterned papers
Washi tape
Ruler
Craft knife
Cutting mat

1 Cut six 5cm x 30cm lengths of patterned paper. Set one aside and assemble the other five into a star shape.

2 Ensure all the strips are interwoven.

3 Close up the strips so a small pentagon forms in the middle and secure with washi tape.

4 Fix the remaining strip into a ring and flip the star over so the tape is underneath.

5 Weave the ring onto the ends of the star,

securing each intersection with tape.

6 Continue fixing the loop to the ends so the strips form a half-sphere shape.

7 Join one of the strips to itself to make a loop.

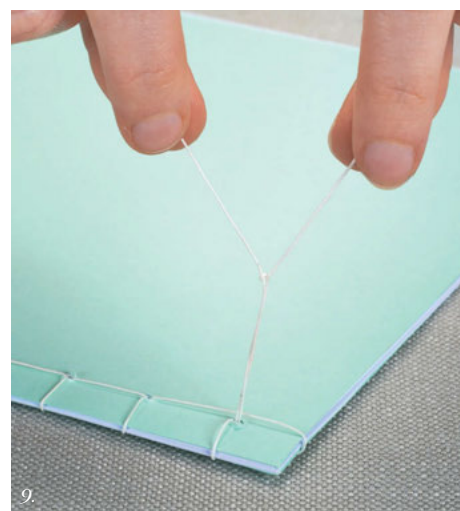
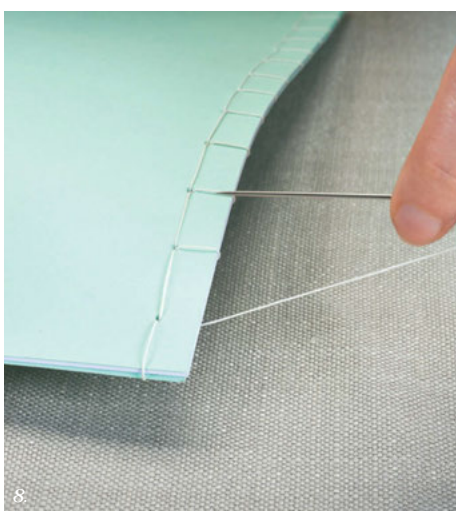
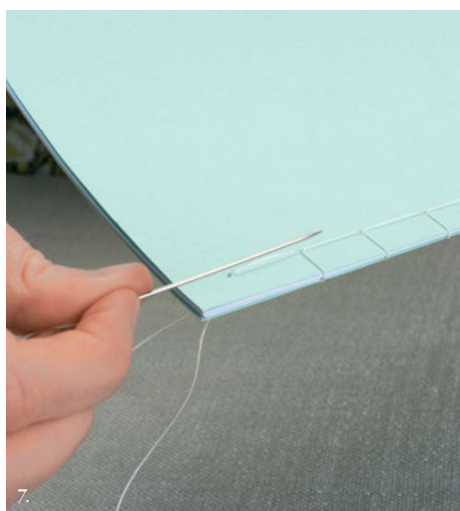
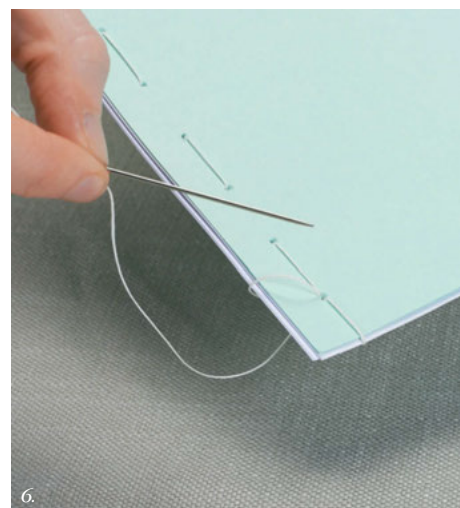
8 Join the strip adjacent to the first, ensuring that it weaves in and out of the strips that cross it.

9 When all strips are joined remove the temporary tape and roll the ball between your palms to shape it evenly.

HAND-BOUND JOURNALS

MASTER THE ART OF BOOK-BINDING BY
FOLLOWING OUR EASY STEP-BY-STEP





YOU WILL NEED:

Awl

Ruler

Pencil

Two sheets of card in your choice of size (we've used A4 and A6 here) for your cover

10 sheets of 120gsm paper in your choice of size

Book-binding thread and binders needle

Rough paper for your template (same size as book pages and card)

1 For the template, draw a line down from the rough paper, 1cm in, and mark off an even number of points spaced evenly.

2 Clip cover cards under the template. Punch a hole at each marked point using the awl.

3 Clip half the book papers under the template and punch the marked holes using the awl. Repeat with the other half.

4 Put all the pages, including the front and back covers, together. Thread the needle through the top hole of your book, leaving some thread loose.

5 Now make a running stitch along the holes in the book, pulling the thread tight each time through a hole while keeping your top thread loose.

6 Loop thread at the bottom of the book's spine and go through the bottom hole. Now place the book on its side, loop around the top of the spine and go through the bottom hole again.

7 Do a running stitch into the next hole, loop around the top of the spine and go through that hole. Repeat until you get to the top of the book.

8 Make a loop at the top of the book and go through the top hole. Slip the needle under two of the top bindings coming out of starting hole.

9 Finish binding your book by tying a tight knot with the original loose thread.



CREATIVE COURSES

TAKE A COURSE TO IMPROVE SKILLS AND
LEARN NEW CRAFTS TO SELL

YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED

If the extent of your 'picture framing' experience starts and finishes with popping open a clip frame, perhaps it's time to reassess the situation. Richard Williams' half-day taster course will help you to discover the intricacies of ensuring framed pictures are displayed to their best advantage. The three-hour, one-to-one session at his studio in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire includes mount cutting, glass cutting, and frame cutting and joining, and is ideal for anyone thinking of taking up the art of picture framing as a hobby. Alternatively, Richard's two-day, one-to-one course takes students to a more professional level where they will learn skills including mitre-cutting and joining the frame as well as aesthetic considerations such as mount colour and choice of frame. Because Richard's courses are on a one-to-one basis, students are also able to adapt them to suit their own requirements. For more information, visit inaframe.co.uk



FURNITURE FACELIFT

Those that have always wanted to give Annie Sloan's Chalk Paint a whirl, head to Warfield, Berkshire for Country Mouse Home's masterclass. Students learn numerous painting, ageing and distressing techniques on practice boards in the morning, then apply their new skills to their own piece of furniture after a light lunch. No prior skills are necessary. For more information, visit countrymousehome.co.uk

CYAN OF THE TIMES

If you're looking for some original artwork to take pride of place in your living room, the Cyanotype printing course held at The Joe Cornish Gallery in Northallerton certainly offers something different and, let's face it, gorgeous! Traditionally, this early form of photography was a favourite among botanists, who used the process to showcase plants' silhouettes, and so it is completely suited to nature lovers wanting to bring the outdoors in. Students will learn about producing negatives and will use computers to alter the images, as well as using nature's bounty to produce some works of art to be proud of. No experience is necessary, and you'll get to enjoy the spoils of the gallery's cafe. For more information, visit joecornishgallery.co.uk





IMAGE: © HILLARYS.CO.UK

PULL THE CURTAINS

EVEN BEGINNERS WILL WALK AWAY FROM GINNY PEACE'S ROMAN BLIND COURSE WITH A MAKE TO BE PROUD OF

ROLL UP: This one-day workshop is limited to just four people, and they're held in Ginny's lovely home in Cranbrook, Kent.

SKILL SET: All abilities are welcome, from those who are just starting out to advanced stitchers who'd like to go professional. In fact, many students have started their own businesses after attending the course!

ALL INCLUSIVE: Not only are all materials and course notes included, but you'll get coffee upon arrival, a two-course homemade lunch and afternoon tea.

TAKE IT FURTHER: Because you'll learn the practicalities of the craft, you'll be able to use your new skills throughout the house.

RECOMMENDATION: "Ginny Peace Interiors' courses have been marvellous. Ginny has given informative and enjoyable tuition to get me started on my new career. I had made curtains for years for my own home, and the courses at GPI have been perfect for me to start making curtains to a high professional level. I have come away with a good grounding to start making curtains, blinds and cushions for my own clients" Nicky, Wiltshire.

For more information, visit ginnypeace.co.uk



Every good creative crafter relishes the thought of transforming something tired and battered into a glowing centrepiece, so how about giving gilding a go? Check out gildingcourses.com where you'll find a three-day Water and Oil Gilding Course – a beginner's option that uses traditional methods and materials. Students are guided through the whole process from preparation to gilding, and return home with three completed projects. The classes are small, with numbers limited to just six, and are held between 10am and 5pm over the three days. Included in the price is expert tuition, use of all materials required, three small frames and a book of gold leaf.

SHADES OF WINTER

LUSCIOUS LAMPSHADES: The two-day course at Cocoon Home might be intensive (you'll even have to do a little homework), but it's aimed at beginners and you'll finish the course confident that you can take on your own commissions.

TELL US MORE:

Supreme stitcher Angela Constantinou runs the course at Homemade London, so you'll be getting expert advice and tuition. "I run Cocoon Home, a bespoke soft furnishing company," says Angela. "I also teach lampshade making at the London Metropolitan University."

CLASSROOM ANTICS:

Students will learn how to make a bowed empire lampshade with a balloon silk lining using traditional techniques, so mostly hand stitched. "No glue is used," says Angela. "We will also discuss best types of fabrics to use, suppliers, other types of frames and how to approach these." Along with their finished creations, students will also take home comprehensive notes so they can continue their endeavours outside of the classroom.

TAKE IT FURTHER:

"I also offer a one-day course to learn swathed, and knife pleated lampshades for those who have already completed this course," SAYS ANGELA.

For more details visit homemadelondon.com





GET HOOKED

Always fancied giving knitting or crochet a go, but never found the time? Now's your chance: Ministry of Craft in Manchester holds regular introductory and intermediate classes. Contemporary artist Rachael Gwilliam is the course leader, who is more than qualified to lead you through the twist and turns of yarn craft. Her work is exhibited both nationally and internationally, and has even founded the fibre art project Artyarn in the North West. Classes are held in the evenings, materials are included and you can even take home your knitting needles and crochet hook afterwards! Visit ministryofcraft.co.uk to book, and be sure to peruse the other classes on offer, which range from lampshade making to mosaics and printing.

"When I say artist I mean the one who is building things... some with a brush, some with a shovel – some choose a pen."

JACKSON POLLOCK



STITCH IN TIME

Embroidery, rather than being the laborious, time-consuming craft it's often mistaken for, is a dainty technique which lends itself to so many projects. On Rowan Tree Studio's beginners' class, you'll learn all manner of stitches and then use your new-found skills to create a beautiful sampler. rowantreestudio.co.uk

GO POTTY

Try your hand at coiling, slabbing, press moulding and throwing in one of The Ceramic Studio's many pottery courses. Courses range from a day-long workshop to hone your throwing skills, to three- or ten-week options. theceramicsstudio.co.uk





TUSCAN RETREAT

Whisk yourself away and get creative in Italy

TELL ME MORE: Started by Karon Brennan who is a qualified interior designer, textile artist, florist and milliner. After many enjoyable trips to Terre Gialle, Karon fell in love with it. However, when it came to holidays she found that she had more time on her hands and was aching to do the things she loved – craft. Now Karon runs a wide variety of courses in Terre Gialle and brought her two loves together!

WHERE? Terre Gialle is a secure resort in 20 acres of land and is surrounded by vineyards, olive trees, sweet chestnut trees, donkeys and there is even a resident cockerel. There is a swimming pool and tennis area, a lake and peace and quiet to spend time alone. Terre Gialle is an old building and is in the formation of a courtyard. All apartments and the craft school are located in this area, which is safe and sociable.

COURSES? The range of courses includes: paverpol, landscape painting, photography and photoshop, patchwork and quilting (different levels), floristry, glass painting, knitting and crochet, silk painting, lampshade making, card making – and that's just the tip of the iceberg! A variety of activities, such as sightseeing trips, wine and olive oil tasting and a dinner are also part of the package.

STAY? The accommodation is individual apartments and can be for two people or a person on their own.

SOUNDS GOOD? To book and find out more, check out crafttholidaysintuscany.com



JUST ADD BUTTER

BAKE FOUR DIFFERENT BREADS IN E5 BAKEHOUSE'S DAY-LONG CLASS

BREAD GALORE: The four breads on the menu are typically pain de campagne, ciabatta, 66% rye and bagels. Glorious carbicide, if ever we saw it.

SOURDOUGH SKILLS: Once you're settled, the hard (fun) work will begin; learning the ins and outs of sourdough, as all of the breads stem from this one recipe. Sustaining the sourdough mother, how to knead properly and shaping styles are all covered.

PERFECT 10: Each class is limited to just ten people; small enough so you can be sure you'll get personal tutelage, and big enough so there's an air of baking camaraderie.

BRING A BAG: Remember to bring a basket or bag with you to cart your creations home – it would be heartbreaking to leave them behind!

For more information, visit e5bakehouse.com





WINDOW DRESSING

Thought curtains were one of those projects best reserved for super stitchers? You couldn't be more wrong. Winney and Rose are your sewing Yoda; its courses in basic curtain making (£50) and Roman blinds (£60) cover everything you need to know, and all you have to bring is a sewing machine. The basic curtain class will show you how to measure windows, calculate repeats, fabric quantities and use interlining. The Roman blinds workshop is just as thorough, with lessons in channel placement, window hanging, decorative trims and edging. You'll make and take home a mini sample from each course, along with detailed course notes for at-home endeavours. Visit winneyandrose.co.uk for details.

PEN TO PAPER

Using just coloured or graphite pencil, discover how you can capture winter woodlife at Farncombe Course's three-day botanical drawing course in the Cotswolds. All abilities are welcomed, and there is the option to stay in the beautiful grounds, if you would like. farncombecourses.co.uk



TWINKLE TOES

Fashion a new pair of dancing shoes at Green Shoes' workshop in the picturesque Devonshire countryside. There's certainly no shortage of options: you can make any open sandal, Laurel Shoe, Heather Shoe, Willow Shoe, Foxglove or Hollyhock Pumps, Violet Mule, Vintage Bar Sandal, Vintage T-bar or simple sandals from its pattern archive – phew! The shoes can be created in any colour leather you'd like, and vegans needn't worry as there is an animal-friendly option, and you can select a traditional or wedge crepe sole. For all the details visit greenshoes.co.uk





PRESS PRINT

NEVER TRIED SCREEN PRINTING? NOW'S YOUR CHANCE

YOU'LL MAKE: Screen print onto bags, t-shirts or anything else you can think of! If you've got a specific project in mind, such as a cushion or a particular design, be sure to bring it along.

TAUGHT BY: Fine art printmaker Helen Bridges leads the course and she's more than qualified for the job – you'll find her work in the likes of

The Independent and the V&A and she has an MA in Fine Art Printmaking.

TECHNIQUES: Helen will leave no stone unturned in the five-hour class. You'll learn all the latest and greatest screen printing methods, such as stencil cutting and colour separation.

LOCATION: Situated just off Clapham High Street, London, The Papered Parlour is a short walk from Clapham Common tube and the main train station.

Visit thepaperedparlour.co.uk for more information.

FANCY FURNITURE

LEARN UPHOLSTERY, PAINTING, WOODWORK AND ALL ELSE IN BETWEEN AT THE GOODLIFE CENTRE

WHERE? Just a 15 minute walk from Waterloo station, London, The Goodlife Centre is perfectly located for locals and out-of-towners alike. The large, bright studio is fully stocked with all the upholstery tools you could imagine (and a few you can't!), and the surrounding area boasts lovely cafes and shops for after-class relaxation.

COURSES? Choose from a range of courses including: how to make a lamp, basic drill skills, upholster a traditional footstool, prepare and paint, make a wooden stool and furniture painting.

TIMES? Most weekday courses run from 6.30-9pm, with full-day classes running at the weekend. There are also sets of classes available, such as the upholster a traditional footstool, which runs over six evenings, and the Saturday and Sunday traditional lampshade making class.

SKILL? Most descriptions have the tagline 'suitable for beginners, enjoyable for everyone', but it's best to check individual courses for the exact requirements. But rest assured, 90% don't require any previous knowledge, and the 10% that do only call for 'rusty' skills.

SOUNDS GOOD? View all of the courses mentioned here at thegoodlifecentre.co.uk, where you can browse through the complete list or look at a course calendar.





FINAL WORD

HOLLY TUCKER

CEO AND FOUNDER OF NOTONTHEHIGHSTREET.COM HOLLY TUCKER TALKS ABOUT HER JOURNEY FROM SALES TO STARTING HER OWN BUSINESS

I've always been passionate about finding unique and beautiful items, whether for my home or to give to family and friends as gifts. Before I started my business, I used to collect foliage and make my own Christmas wreaths, and I still love nothing more than browsing antique fairs and finding unusual pieces to add to our home. After starting my career in advertising and sales, my inspiration for the website came when I created 'Your Local Fair', upmarket events that were staged in affluent areas of London and the South East. I loved working with a community of creative individuals and realised there was a market hungry for what they were offering.

Notonthehighstreet.com is the definitive online marketplace, where the most creative small businesses sell original and inspiring products to people looking for something different. We pride ourselves on banishing the ordinary. Our customers are looking for something different; they are individual, self-assured, stylish, thoughtful and creative. I think people have always had a desire for individual pieces for themselves and their homes, and, of course, for giving inspired and thoughtful gifts. Their challenge has always been finding these things outside of a craft fair or emporium, hence buying the unique and the unusual has traditionally been less simple than picking up

pieces from high street shops which typically sell 'mass-produced' goods.

Before we launched our site, there was a fundamental problem being faced by small creative businesses in the UK. Though many were offering high-quality, desirable products, they were outdated in their marketing and distribution and as such, were losing out to high street retail giants. Notonthehighstreet provides a solution for those small businesses and enables customers to browse and shop, 24 hours a day from a range of stand-alone companies they might not otherwise have access to.

"We pride ourselves on banishing the ordinary. Our customers are looking for something different"

From day one I have been totally clear about the vision and in love with the idea. I never believed the business would fail. Seeing our first Partner turnover £1million from the site has been one of my proudest moments, but, to me, every day is incredibly rewarding, and I'm so proud to be a part of it. I love working with real people; from the staff that we employ to the small business owners that sell on our site.

Since I was young I've had an entrepreneurial

itch and I believe that everyone can shape their own destiny. The best part about having your own business is being your own boss, but although it might sound like a luxury, it ultimately means the buck stops with you, which leads to lots of sleepless nights! You must always remember that you're doing this for your customer, and therefore each and every decision should be based on them.

We've recently had our house renovated and our living space is an eclectic mix of contemporary and traditional, which suits our style. I think a home should reflect the person who lives there. We aim to make it easier for

people to find those unique pieces that really make a statement. We don't sell one particular style, we choose sellers who offer great design and the best quality products, many of which can be customised to suit individual tastes, making it easy to or create a look or style that works for you.

Visit notonthehighstreet.com for more information.



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The Goldsmiths' Company
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The
GOLDSMITHS'
Company

ASSAY OFFICE



Cufflinks by Josef Koppmann

Making and selling precious metal jewellery? Remember to get it hallmarked, it's the law*

The UK Hallmark is one of the oldest forms of consumer protection and a legal requirement for anyone selling their goods. Not only is it a guarantee of quality, it also includes your very own sponsor's mark. Unique to you, your sponsor's mark can be an invaluable marketing tool leading to increased recognition and additional sales.

* Weight exemptions apply.

Find out more about hallmarking:

T: 020 7606 8971

E: info@assayofficelondon.co.uk

www.assayofficelondon.co.uk

Go ahead... get creative!



JP760 A ¾ size machine that is light enough to carry to classes, yet packed with 60 stitches and full of computerised features to make sewing easy.



DXL603 With built in stitches for quilting and heirloom as well as general sewing this is an excellent all round machine. Stitch selection and settings are so easy on the large information LCD screen.



QXL605 All the features of the DXL603 but with an automatic built-in thread cutter and advanced feeding system for precise stitching.



TXL607 Our first model with alphabet & memory facilities. It has direct stitch selection for the most useful stitches and a handy panel for quick selection.



MC5900QC This machine has computerised precision and is packed with over 500 stitches including 10 auto 1-step buttonholes. Type in and edit lettering from 3 full alphabets and create custom combinations of up to 50 stitches, it's all in the finer detail.



Janome has a great range of machines to offer the very best in computerised sewing.

Sewing difficult fabrics can get really tricky even for the more experienced. Janome machines are reliable and robust and tackle difficult fabrics with ease. The Memory Craft 5900QC has an incredible range of stitch options... whilst the portable Jem Platinum, DXL603 / QXL605 and TXL607 models are high specification machines at affordable prices.

For further information:
Telephone 0161 666 6011 or visit our website www.janome.co.uk

The World's leading sewing machine manufacturer

JANOME