

lesson 1 get inspired

WELCOME!

Welcome to Organize Your Creative Space! I'm so excited that you've decided to join me for this workshop. I look forward to sharing top tips and strategies for setting up a creative space that truly works for you and supports your creative process. You'll find out how to pull together a space that looks like you, thinks like you and allows you to enjoy your creative work even more. Best of all, you'll learn how to create an organized space that inspires you and fuels your creativity.

My name is Aby Garvey. I'm a professional organizer and the founder and co-owner of simplify 101. I also enjoy creative pursuits like scrapbooking, knitting and sewing. I began scrapbooking just after becoming a first-time mom, which was years before I became a professional organizer. I was drawn to scrapbooking because it offered the opportunity to organize my photos and memories. I also couldn't resist the chance to play with stickers, markers, paper and glue—things I have loved all my life.

Like many scrapbookers, my first work area was my kitchen table. While this had some benefits (it kept me near my baby and my husband), it also had drawbacks. I spent a good portion of my scrapbooking time pulling out supplies, getting set up and putting everything away again when it was time for our next meal. This constant “pull-it-out-set-it-up-put-it-away” cycle stifled my creative process. Unless I had a big block of time to scrapbook, I simply didn't. (And if you've ever been a new mom, you know that big blocks of time are very hard to come by.) I needed a new plan and a new space.

I muddled through kitchen table scrapbooking until my second child was born. This was also when we decided to finish our basement. It was then that I set up my first official scrapbook area. My initial creative space was in

a large walk-in closet off the play room in our finished basement. Since then, I have set up two additional spaces for myself. I've also guided countless coaching clients in setting up their own organized creative spaces, and I've written two books on the subject of getting organized for scrapbooking.

Whether your favorite creative endeavor is scrapbooking, sewing, journaling, home decorating, jewelry making, card making, painting or something else, this workshop is for you. It distills what I've learned over the years about what *really* works when organizing your creative space. I've broken the ideas down into a simple-to-follow, step-by-step process. Throughout the workshop you will see a red stop sign followed by the words **"Take Action!"** This is your queue to stop reading and start doing! By following the action steps outlined in this workshop, you will create the changes you're craving for your creative space. Regardless of your starting point, your space and storage limitations, if you follow these action steps, you will be well on your way to working in an organized and inspiring creative space by the end of the workshop. Here's a quick overview of the action steps you'll be taking in the lessons ahead.



“If at any time during the process you get stuck or hit an obstacle, simply visit the forum and share your challenge in the “questions for Abby” section. I’ll help you get back on track—and back into action—in no time!”

We'll kick off the workshop with Lesson 1, where you'll begin dreaming about your ideal creative space. You'll start by becoming more clear about the elements that work well for you in a space, as well as what doesn't work for you. You'll also go on an inspiration scavenger hunt, so you can determine how you want your space to look. You'll imagine how you want and need your space to function by creating a prioritized list of the activities that take place in your creative space. The lesson wraps up with fun action steps where you'll become more aware of your creative process and collect tools and supplies that will come in handy when it comes time to declutter and organize your creative space.

In Lesson 2, your primary focus will be on creating a vision and a plan for your space. You'll pour through the inspiration items you collected in lesson 1 and begin to piece together a vision for how you want your space to work. Next, you'll learn about zones and the role they play in organizing your

space to support your creative process. Then, you'll pull all your ideas together into a simple plan to transform your space into an organized and inspiring place. You'll wrap up the lesson by getting into action decluttering your tools and supplies. Your focus will be creating space in your area by letting go of some easy clutter—things you know you're ready to part with and things you know belong in another room in your home.

In Lesson 3, you'll get busy putting your plan into action! You'll start by selecting your approach to sorting and editing your supplies, and then you'll learn about various ways you can organize your tools and supplies. You'll call on what you learned about yourself and your creative process in the previous lessons to organize your tools and supplies in ways that will work great for you. After you sort, it's time to make decisions about what to keep and what to let go of, so everything fits comfortably and orderly in your creative space. You'll learn questions to ask while editing your supplies that will help you keep what you'll use and love, and feel good about clearing out clutter.

We'll wrap up the workshop with Lesson 4 where you'll pull together your organized and inspiring creative space. Woo hoo! You'll start by making your space sparkle with elbow grease and maybe even a fresh coat of paint. Next, you'll get your furniture into place and select containers to organize your tools and supplies. You'll learn my favorite tips and secrets for selecting containers that will make your space even more functional and attractive. Finally, you'll add finishing touches to your space, so it is an inspiring place that ignites your creativity.

Are you ready to get started making it happen? Let's begin by dreaming about your ideal creative space.

GET INSPIRED: WHAT'S YOUR IDEAL CREATIVE SPACE?

Step 1: Dream About Your Ideal Creative Space.

WHAT WORKS FOR YOU?

One of the best ways to figure out what will work great for you in your creative space is to begin with a list of what already works for you and what has worked in the past. If your current creative space isn't working at all right now, then think back to an earlier time—a time when your space sparked your creative spirit. Or think about a different space—maybe your office at work or your study area in college. It's okay if the tasks you did in this space are vastly different from the creative work you do now. You'll still find valuable clues about your space preferences that you can recreate in your creative space.

everyday example:

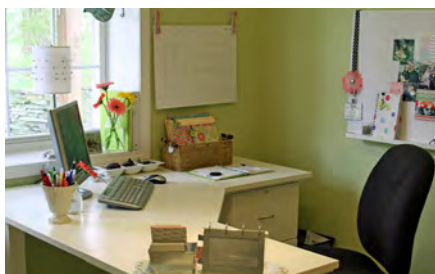


Personal touches in my creative space
work for me. What works for you?

One of my favorite spaces of all time was a cubicle at a research and development facility I worked at early in my career. Clearly I didn't scrapbook or do creative hobbies in this space, but there is still a lot I can learn from this super functional space. Then, I can bring similar elements into my creative space. Here's a quick list of the elements I loved about my cube:

- * Good lighting (including natural light via a window)
- * An L-shaped desk (my favorite layout to this day)
- * Plenty of convenient storage
- * A bulletin board directly above my primary work surface, which allowed me to keep reference items in sight and close at hand
- * Clean, light-colored furniture
- * Plants, photographs and other personal touches that made my cubicle feel homier

My current creative space, which is where I do the bulk of my creative work for simplify 101 as well as personal projects, such as scrapbooking and crafting, has many of the same elements as my favorite cubicle office:



- * Good lighting (including natural light via a window)
- * An L-shaped desk
- * Plenty of convenient storage
- * Inspiration boards that I can see from my primary work surface, and reference materials at arm's reach
- * Clean, light-colored furniture
- * Plants, photographs and other personal touches that make my creative space feel comfortable and homey



TAKE ACTION!

Assess what works for you. It's time to get into action and tap into what you know about yourself. What works well for you currently or what has worked well for you in the past? Think about your favorite space—even if that space was used for something other than the creative work you do now. If you've never had a space that worked perfectly that's okay, too. Capture the elements that *did* or *do* work well for you. Maybe it was the layout of your desk, or the big bulletin board with ideas and reference items. Maybe you enjoyed having easy access to the supplies and project materials you need for your projects. Perhaps it was an area to stand up to work, or maybe you loved that you could spread out and sit on the floor, or sit on the floor and do your work on the coffee table. Maybe, despite some of its other inconveniences, you love the fact that when you do craft projects at your kitchen table, you can talk to your family members. The idea here is to simply capture anything you know about your preferred working conditions. To guide you through this thought process, complete the first section of the *work style + preferences questionnaire*.

“The Lesson 1 worksheet is quite comprehensive. Get through this one to jumpstart your creative organizing process and the rest will be a piece of cake!”

work style + preferences questionnaire

Section 1: What works for you?

Think about your current creative workspace. List what works well for you in this workspace. Consider elements such as lighting, furniture, layout, the size of your work surface, your chair, accessibility and style of storage solutions, accessibility of tools and supplies, color scheme, personal touches, and so on. Jot down your ideas in the space below.

Now think back to another workspace you've used in the past. This could be a workspace at a previous or current job, your study area in college or even your play room as a kid (creativity is the name of the game!). What worked well for you in that workspace? Capture your ideas in the space below.

Follow-up questions to assess what works well for you in your current creative workspace:

Which items in your creative space are you always able to find?

How are these items organized?

Where are these items stored?

What type of container are these items stored in?

Which organizing systems or storage solutions are you currently using in your creative space that ARE working for you?

Why are these systems effective?

This is a sample of the first lesson of the workshop

Organize Your Creative Space. To learn more, visit www.simplify101.com.