

Pattern Organisation

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<http://www.burdastyle.com/techniques/pattern-organisation--2>



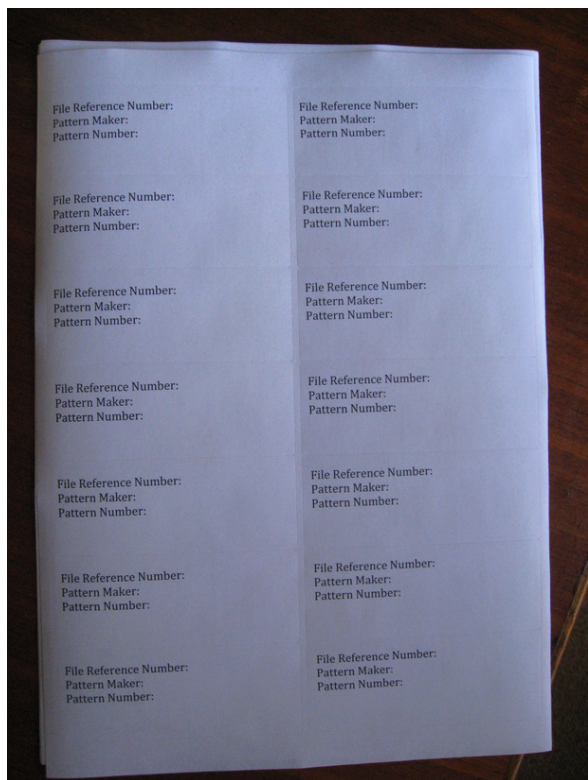
I don't know about you, but my patterns were in a complete mess. I'd run out of storage box space & had gotten into the nasty habit of just piling them on top of the boxes they were meant to go in. Needless to say I was getting really tired of never being able to find the pattern I was after, so I spent my weekend re-organising my patterns. Because I like to be able to quickly flick through the patterns I have, I decided to organise my patterns by using a computer database & ordered filing system. It sounds complicated by it isn't. This technique describes roughly what I did. I have not given specific instructions for setting up the database, as this is dependent on your operating system & software. However I just used the wizards that came with the program. For your reference I used Open Office's database tool 'Base'. You can download it for free here, they offer versions for Mac, Windows & Linux OS: <http://www.openoffice.org/>

Step 1 — Create a Filing System



The first step is to consider the basis for your pattern filing system. I decided to group my patterns into categories similar to those in pattern books (e.g. dresses, jackets, skirts etc.). I then sorted into my patterns into these categories. For each of these categories I created a suffix & then assigned consecutive numbers to the patterns, i.e. for dresses, D-001, D-002 D-003 etc.

Step 2 — Make Some Labels



The next step was to make some labels to be attached to each of the patterns, to file them. On my labels I included the specific file reference I created, the pattern maker & the original pattern number.

Step 3 — Label the Patterns



I put each pattern in a brown paper bag, (many of my patterns are quite old & torn so they can't just be left in their current envelope. Alternatively you could use envelopes or any other packaging. I affixed a label to each bag, filled out the details & started filing.

Step 4 — Making a Database



I created a database on my computer with the information shown in the picture above. I haven't gone into details here, as they will differ depending on your software of choice/operating system. If you do not know how to do this though, just google it & you'll find a few tutorial websites. Alternatively you can use the wizard functions in the software. This is what I did, (with a little fiddling). Finally I took photos of the fronts of all my patterns & linked these to each of the database entries. Now my patterns are organised & I can review them all on my computer, without having to unpack them all. I am planning to expand the database in the coming weeks to include a little check-list so I can check which fabrics the patterns are recommended for. My husband also suggested a button that switches the images between the front & back of the pattern... so who knows. Now all I need is for someone to make this an iPhone app for me!!!
