



The Swift

Knerdy Knitters / SFV

Rediscover your stash, lose the guilt and get excited!

Your stash -- the glorious bags, bins and bundles of wool, cotton, bamboo and tencel in balls, cakes and skeins blooming and throbbing with color -- can be a laboratory of creativity or a brooding source of guilt about unfinished projects.

With the Knerdy Knitters' annual WIPs (works in progress), Chains and Stash Exchange coming up on Aug. 29, we're devoting this issue of *The Swift* to tips and tricks for stash management.

We can't promise you a perfect way to manage your stash, but we can tell you that going through and organizing your

stash will:

- Make you feel richer in fiber than you ever realized.
- Be a fun and creative play time.
- Help you cut the ties on projects you realize you no longer want to make.
- Point the way out of ruts and boredom.
- Reclaim a wealth of needles, hooks and notions buried your stashed projects.

What you cull, you can bring to the stash exchange. With your fresh knowledge of your stash you can make wiser picks to take home from the exchange.

WIPs, Chains and Stash Exchange Party Aug. 29

If you've got stash -- and what knitter doesn't? -- mark your calendar for our annual **WIPs, Chains and Stash Exchange** at 7 p.m. Monday, Aug. 29.

You don't have to get a body piercing or a dominatrix outfit, but you do need to go through your stash in search of fibers you want to break up with. Bring them to the party and see what new fibers you can go home with.

Location is pending, so keep an eye out for your evite!



Yarn courtesy of Needlepoints West

Calendar

August 2016

- 8 TGIFiber, 7-9 p.m., Monday at TGIFridays, 19855 Rinaldi St., Porter Ranch.
- 15 Yarn Club, 7-9 p.m., Monday at Panera, 132 E. Palm Ave., Burbank.
- 22 Guild meeting, 7-9 p.m., Monday at Panera, Burbank.
- 29 WIPs, Chains and Stash Exchange party, 7 to 9 p.m., Monday, location TBD.

September 2016

- 3 Saturday Stitches, 10 a.m. to noon at Starbucks, 1520 W. Olive Ave., Burbank.
- 10, 11, 17 and 18, volunteer days at the LA County Fair DIY Studio.

- 12 TGIFiber, 7-9 p.m. Monday at TGIFridays, 19855 Rinaldi St., Porter Ranch.

Needlepoints West -- not just for needlepointers

Walking into Needlepoints West is like opening the door into a fairy tale cottage.

It's not just the faux timbers or the cozy rocking chair outside. It's the realization that the inside has **so** much more than you imagined.

For starters, the store goes through the block. It's huge inside, with several rooms full of eye-catching, finger-tempting fibers of all colors, textures and weights.

And if you thought this was just a needlepoint store, guess again.

Not just needlepoint

"I have enough needlepoint yarns and canvases to be a stand-alone needlepoint shop," said owner **Joanne Bronson**, who is also a Knerdy Knitter, "and I have enough yarn to be a stand-alone yarn shop!"



Joanne Bronson

The shop opened its doors in 1972.

Joanne, who bought the store 15 years ago, is the fourth owner. She's the one who added yarns, tools and notions for knitting and crocheting.

Joanne learned to knit at the age of five and then to crochet from her great-grandmother.

She was working in the jewelry business (sorting and stringing Tahitian pearls) before she acquired Needlepoints West.

"I fell into the yarn business," she said. "I had worked part-time at Needlepoints West and told the owner if she ever decided to sell to please give me a chance to buy it."

Several years later, that's exactly what happened.

Supportive community

"We have a very nice community here. We're welcoming, low-key and friendly," Joanne said. "People come here and make friends. They may have a lot going on in their personal lives -- troubles



Needlepoints West is located at 6227 W. 87th St., in Westchester.

with children, ailing parents or friends with cancer -- and here they are surrounded by incredibly supportive people.

"I love seeing the friendships that develop between customers."

Products from smaller companies

Joanne said she loves smaller yarn companies and likes to bring their products into her store.

She describes herself as "an emotional buyer" when it comes to buying yarn for her own knitting habit. If she's on a trip and sees something that grabs her, she'll buy it.

Joanne has tried weaving and spinning, but always comes back to knitting.

"My philosophy is go with what you love."

But, she admits ruefully that just like the rest of us, she loves "to start things and I love to get things finished, but sometimes I get sidetracked in the middle."

8 tips for stash management

by Jeannette Hartman

Going through your stash can be like shopping all over again. So grab your favorite adult beverage and go for it:

- **Pull out your yarn, wherever it hides, and look at what you have.** This means bringing your yarn out from under the bed, the back of the closet, the corner of your bedroom -- everywhere. Bring it out into the light where it can be free, and you can see what you have. (You might want to do this when there's nobody around to ask, "Don't you have enough already?")
- **Decide what gooses your juices.** That fuzzy, sparkly fun yarn? That hunky chunky you fell in love with? That colorful Noro with the green you hate? Just because you fell in love with it once, doesn't mean you can't get a divorce. Some yarns are one-night stands and some yarns inspire a long love affair. Sort your stash into two piles: 1) what still turns you on, and 2) what just don't do it for you any more. Keep what you love and bring the rest to the stash exchange where someone else might start a love affair with your "exes."
- **Project versus yarn.** Sometimes you buy yarn for a project. As the years go by, however, the project gets less and less appealing. If you still like the yarn, keep it -- just ditch the pattern.
- **To inventory -- or not -- that is the question.** If you have a big stash, you may need an inventory to stay on top of what you have. Ravelry.com has a wonderful stash feature under the "My notebook" menu. When you make an entry, you answer a series of questions about the yarn's weight, yardage, colorway and dye lot, intended project, cost, etc. You can also post a photo. Once you've input the information, you can sort your stash by weight, color, yardage, fiber type, etc. Because it's stored online, you always have access to it. Lists in a knitting notebook or an electronic spreadsheets can work, too.
- **Find an organizing principle.** What qualities -- color, eight or fiber content -- will work best for you in organizing your stash. Grouping like yarns together makes it easier to know what you

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How do you store your stash?

Some knitters have dedicated storage units for their stash like the one above; others have hard-sided bins or soft-sided totes for keeping yarn under the bed or in a closet.

The important part of stash storage is keeping it safe from dirt, dust and moths. Depending on your space, your budget, your preferences and the size and variety of your stash, there's a wide range of options from cedar-lined hope chests to antique chests of drawers to Christmas ornament storage units to compressible storage bags.

Here are some suggestions:

- **Hard-sided bins.** These bins come in a variety of sizes and shapes. They stack and have a fairly tight seal for keeping bugs and dust out.



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Stash organizing tips

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have. The categories should reflect how you use your stash yarn.

Yarn for a specific project, I put in a plastic bag with a copy of the pattern or a note about what I want to do with it. My “unassigned yarn,” I loosely organize by color or weight. I store my stash in numbered bins in a corner of my bedroom. One bin might have a collection of good fibers like wool or silk; another might have garish acrylics for yarnbombing or dog blanket making.

No matter how you organize, it’s important to gather all balls or skeins of a given yarn together in the same place.

- **Separate the tools (needles, hooks, scissors and notions) from the yarn.** Once you start going through your stash, you may be amazed at how many needles, hooks and notions have gotten stashed with your yarn or unfinished projects. It’s like getting a windfall to have them back with the rest of your needles, hooks and notions.

Joanne Bronson, owner of Needlepoints West and a Knerdy Knitter, suggests having a traveling tool kit that you can drop into a project bag and later move to another instead of storing duplicate supplies in each project bag. The traveling bag can include your favorite scissors, stitch markers, tapestry needles, crochet hooks for fishing up lost stitches, a tape measure and a row counter.

- **Patterns.** These can go into file folders or three-ring binders with tabbed dividers for categories: sweaters, shawls, dog patterns, hats, baby knits, etc. Patterns you buy on Ravelry.com stay in your digital library. Patterns you buy online are often downloads. If you have a good computer back-up system, you may not need to keep paper patterns after you’ve used them.
- **Notions.** My favorite way to store small notions is in clear plastic fishing fly boxes, but I’ve also used plastic craft boxes, empty pill bottles or mini-Altoid boxes. For a long time, I used a plastic Craftsman tool chest to store straight needles, crochet hooks and other things. In the end, I decided that it wasn’t an efficient use of space and put the needles in one of the large plastic bins I use for part of my stash.

Stash storage ideas

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- **Soft-side storage totes.** Rubbermade makes flexible, zippered totes in various sizes for storage. The bags are stackable and have handles for easy carrying.



- **Compressible bags.** Space Saver and other companies make storage bags that can be vacuum packed. Some work by rolling the bag up and pushing the air out through a one-way valve; others require a vacuum cleaner to suck the excess air out. The bag and its contents take up far less room than ordinary bags. They don’t compress as well around balls of yarn. They do offer a tight seal to protect against moths.



Talk to Us

Knerdy Knitters of the San Fernando Valley publishes *The Swift* monthly. To submit news items or photographs, e-mail them to News4KnerdyKnitters@gmail.com.

Learn more about us on KnerdyKnitters.com, [Facebook.com/KnerdyKnitters](https://www.facebook.com/KnerdyKnitters), or on [Ravelry.com/groups/knerdy-knitters-of-the-sfv](https://www.ravelry.com/groups/knerdy-knitters-of-the-sfv).