



A 31
Day
Series

31 Days of UFOs

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Dedication

To all my lovely blog readers... I've made so many wonderful friends over the years, not just UFOs :)

You keep me motivated, you bring me joy.

Thank you for staying with me on my blogging journey!

Lv. Joy

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Introduction

This free ebook is a compilation of the blog post from my *31 Day Writing Challenge* for 2016 on my blog *Days Filled With Joy*.

This challenge was hosted by www.write31days.com and turned out to be a really fun one! I wasn't sure if I could do it since I had never blogged for 31 days straight.... but I survived and even enjoyed it!

As many others have done with their blog series, I decided to turn it into an ebook so that everything is in one handy spot, no need to load blog posts. You can save this ebook to your computer or any e-reader device and take it wherever you go (if you are so inclined!)

I decided to include some of the blog post comments as well because there were lots of good suggestions and I don't know about you - I love to hear other people's opinions on things so that I can learn from them.

I hope you enjoy this series as much as I did writing it!

Lv,
Joy

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Day 1 – 31 Days of Quilting

When I came across the [31 Days website and challenge](#), I thought, hmmm... that sounds like fun... and hmmm... that sounds totally crazy! I am not a regular blogger at the moment, so how would I be able to do 31 days straight? And on top of it being a crazy idea in a “normal” world, my world is about to change with [yet another international move](#).... I had many thoughts of quitting before I even started, but then I thought... even though it seems like the worst time to do a challenge like this, I am going to give it a go!

The topic I have chosen for the 31 Day challenge is *Quilting UFOs*. I think I should be able to write a bit about this because I do believe I am the Queen of UFOs! In a few days I will reveal exactly how many UFOs I have, or for those who have no idea what I am talking about, Unfinished Objects. They consist of patchwork, flimsies, crochet, knitting and other sewing projects like aprons and non-quilted table runners.

With all my moving around I seem to drag them with me wherever I go, and when you look at the list that I made [HERE](#), I have actually finished very few since I wrote and posted that. AND I also acquired some more heaps more since then, so by the end of this month I will update that list.

For this series I am going to concentrate on my quilting and patchwork UFOs. My yarn treasures I will ignore for now :) There are not so many of them, and they are just things I pick up every now and then.

During this 31 Day challenge I will not only be *writing about UFOs*, but I will also be working on a few and giving you weekly “Show and Tell” updates on a Friday. I hope that by the end of the month I will be able get some UFOs finished and also motivate you to start organizing and finishing your own UFOs.

The topics for each day are as follows:

Day 1 – this post you are reading :)

Day 2 – UFOs WIPs and other Quilting Terminology

Day 3 – My Quilting UFOs

Day 4 – Do I need to keep all of my UFOs?

Day 5 – What if I really don't like some of my UFOs?

Day 6 – Inheriting UFOs

Day 7 – Show and Tell UFOs

Day 8 – Forgotten Treasures

Day 9 – Don't Give up on us Baby...

Day 10 – Steps to Finishing UFOs

Day 11 – Early Show and Tell

Day 12 – Organizing UFOs Part 1

Day 13 – Organizing UFOs Part 2

Day 14 – Organizing UFOs Part 3

Day 15 – Choosing which UFOs to work on

Day 16 – More on Choosing UFOs

Day 17 – Free Quilting Printables

Day 18 – Getting our UFOs Done

Day 19 – Scatter Your UFOs!

Day 20 – UFOs on the go

Day 21 – UFO Swap

Day 22 – Show and Tell

Day 23 – Your thoughts on UFOs

Day 24 – Time for UFOs

Day 25 – Joining Online UFO Challenges

Day 26 – Setting Personal UFO Goals

Day 27 – Blogging About UFOs

Day 28 – Show and Tell

Day 29 – Staying Sane While Finishing UFOs

Day 30 – Allowing Yourself to Start Something New

Day 31 – Final Day and a Challenge!

So here's to a busy but fun month!



Day 2 – UFOs, WIPs and other Quilting Terminology

Now before I launch into the ins and outs of UFOs and similar things, I just want to clarify some terminology so that if there are any new quilters here, you will not get totally baffled! I know the definitions of each of the terms I will be using can be easily found using Google, but it will be easier if they are here. So here goes:

1. UFO – Unfinished Object

Basically any craft project that you have started and have not finished. I tend to see a UFO as a project that I haven't worked on for a very long time.

2. WIP – Work in Progress

To me these are projects that I am working on regularly. It might be one that I have been doing for months, but one from which I haven't been distracted from for any length of time.

3. WISP – Work in Slow Progress

A perfect example of this are two of my projects – my Hexie quilt and my Yoyo quilt. I have been working on these two on and off for years now.

My Hexie quilt started out as being a camping project – I took it with me every time we went camping or out to the desert. Just a easy project to work on and take with me. I don't consider this a UFO because I do come back to it regularly, but not as often as my WIPs.





The same goes for my Yoyo Quilt. I saw a picture of a gorgeous Yoyo Quilt and thought I have to make it! But I knew it would take a very long time. So it is a slow progress quilt and will be until it is done.

4. PHD – Projects Half Done

This is really just another name for UFOs :) But it sounds a bit classier!

5. Flimsy

A quilt top that is all pieced, but not yet quilted

6. NewFO

A new project that will hopefully not turn into a UFO!

7. Stash

Fabric that us quilters collect to be used “one day”! *Oh, and it is constantly growing :)*

Can't wait to see your UFO's. I signed up for two different UFO challenges this year, and they really help me to stay on track and get some things finished. Then I can start more! :) ~ Sunny ~

Day 3 – My Quilting UFOs

Since I got my new Studio, I have been sorting and organizing all my stuff that has been in boxes or storage since I got back from Arabia. Sadly I have a lot of UFOs in amongst all that stuff! On a positive note, however, I actually got excited finding most of them and I am keen to get them done!

My UFOs range between about 15 tops that are ready to quilt, to quilts that I only made a block or two of..... and then somehow got distracted.... Probably with a new project or moving house!

As I sorted through everything, I think I have just about found all my UFOs.... My first tally was...

Ahem.... 148... which I thought was quite impressive, right? But then I found some more.... so the magic number (until I find some more hidden away) is...

176

Wow.... that is a lot of quilting UFOs !

So what have I classed as UFOs as opposed to WIPs, WISPs, or PHDs?

1. Flimsies

Tops that I have finished and set aside to quilt on Emmie G, but due to having had her in storage haven't quite gotten there.

2. Forgotten Projects

Quilts, table runners, and wall hangings that I have started, then set aside for whatever reason to finish another day. I may have needed to buy fabric for it, or some other necessary item, or I got sick of it... or.. Or.. You get the picture.

3. Class Samples and Market Items

Because I teach classes and had a shop, I have quite a lot of samples that I started but didn't finish the actual quilting. I also have lots of smaller items. like quilted table runners and bags, that I started to make for sale and haven't finished yet. When I make items for my shop or for markets I tend to make about 5 or 6 at the same time because I like to sew production line. Which results in lots of unfinished items.

I talked to Alice and asked her if I had to include these in my UFO list? And she said I did. So there you go. Alice is my quilting conscience. So I am being a good girl and have included them.

So, 176 Quilting UFOs... can you beat that or am I really the Queen of UFOs?!

Wow – I thought I was bad with thirty something on my list! I am trying very hard (and mostly succeeding) to refrain from buying anything new until I whittle down the list. Or If I do by something, it has to get made immediately, while I'm still interested :)

~ Sunny ~

Cool!!!! I hope you beat me, but I haven't had time to finish counting. I only made it to 49 that I have listed and neatly put together and I still need to put them on the right sheets.

~ Alice ~

Must get my lists updated and let you know.... But was thinking maybe 100.....but I don't have the 'shop sample' excuse you have..... ~

Chookyblue ~

Oh that is hilarious Joy.... I am overwhelmed by mine but it's not nearly as impressive as yours.... so now all this counting is done are you going to do some of them... perhaps start something new until the feeling settles!!! ~ Fiona ~

You just might take the prize! ~ Kim ~

Day 4 – Do I need to keep all my UFOs?

As I was sorting through my UFOs, lots of thoughts went through my head. I had moments of pleasure at seeing a long forgotten project. Others were rather a puzzle to me and made me think that I might be getting Alzheimers because for the life of me I couldn't remember what they were and what I was supposed to be making!

As I realized just how many UFOs I actually have, I thought – do I really need or want to get all these done?

All of my UFOs were started with much enthusiasm.

Obviously, as time progressed, I lost some of that enthusiasm and didn't finish them!

Some UFOs I found were ones I started after I finished my first ever quilt. Once I had the taste of quilting, I wanted more! Lots more! So I started various other simple quilts. One of them was the Purple Gardening Quilt that was a UFO for a long time until I finished it nearly 3 years ago and it became a flimsy waiting to be quilted.

As I look at some of these early projects I do wonder whether I should finish them or give them to the opshop or (shock horror) toss them!

I am not someone who gets rid of things lightly and after thinking about it I am going to try to finish all of my UFOs for the following reasons:

1. I did like them once...

.... and really I do like most of them now.

2. I can donate them to charity or give them as gifts if I don't want to keep them for myself...

... and I have set aside some already to be given away once they are finished.

Day 5 – What if I Really Don't Like Some of my UFOs?

When you are sorting through your UFOs, what happens when even after all the reasons I mentioned yesterday you really, really don't like some of them anymore.

You know how your tastes change over the years. When I started quilting, I loved country style fabric and quilts. I still do, but I also learned that I love working with bright colors. Although I don't have really bright quilts in my home, I do enjoy making them.

If you really don't like the project anymore, and can't bring yourself to *finish it* to give away, there are a few things you can do:

1. Give it away unfinished

Someone in your quilt group may love the quilt you don't like anymore, and be happy to finish it. Ask your friends and see if you get any takers!

2. Sell it at a garage sale!

You're never going to recoup the cost of the fabric that went into the project, but you know someone else will love it and finish it for you! My mum once bought a quilt at a garage sale (it was finished already, but it is the same principle) and she has hung it on a wall in every house she has lived in since.

3. Donate it to an Op Shop (Thrift Store)

This is another way to donate to charity, by just putting the whole project in a bag, instructions and all, and I am SURE a quilter out there will pick it up, finish it, and be sooo excited with their new treasure! I know that I have picked up some UFOs from Op Shops and either finished them or passed them on to others that I know would appreciate finishing them.

There is another fun idea which I will devote a whole post to later in the month, but that's it for today folks! I've been driving in and out of town the past few days because my dad is in hospital and I need an early night!

Have I motivated more of you to go COUNT your UFOs??? Please tell me some of you have more than me....!!!

LOL! Nobody has more UFO's than you!!! But I agree, if there are some that you have totally lost interest in, rehome them. Someone, somewhere, will love them. Don't let them weigh you down. I had started a small sampler quilt and even put it on my UFO challenge list for this year. Pulled it out, and just had NO interest in it. But I didn't want to pay a 'fine' for not finishing, so I pulled out some different fabric, and from there it was a breeze to finish. I'm probably still going to donate it, but at least it's off the list. ~ Sunny ~

I had to go through and sort all my quilts and ufo's before I moved down here a year ago—so I know how hard the decisions can be—I donated a lot to a local library (actually I donated some to them about every year for last 8 years or so—but they got a lot more then) and I did sell some to friends (really cheap) and gave some away—but I still have a ufo pile of tops—ufo's blocks—so I need to go through them again as all the ones that I had hand basted for hand quilting—I have finished —so need to get some more ready—love and laughter, ~ Di ~

I really haven't excelled at this like you have!!!! I had 37 at the beginning of the year and I have completed 5 of them... however I think I may have started some more... but those don't count since I am working on them???????

Hugz ~ Fiona ~



Day 6 - Inheriting UFOs

I have another category of UFOs that I didn't mention the other day.

I fondly call them my inherited UFOs

They are mostly from people who have left the country and moved elsewhere, or people I have left behind in my travels. Some are ones that my DD didn't want to finish, and I can't get rid of them!

The reason I called them inherited UFOs is because they hold a bit of sentimental value due to who gave them to me. Some are really not my style, but I want to finish them and will probably give them away as gifts or charity quilts. Others I will finish and keep to remind me of the person I "inherited" them from.

One inherited UFO was a block of the month from our quilt guild in Arabia. At that stage I wasn't even a member, but I made a block for a friend who was a member. The way they did it in those days was to choose a block pattern for the month, and everyone who wanted to make a block, made one and brought it in to the next meeting. Those with a finished block went into the draw to win the whole quilt. The fabric and pattern was included, so when the quilt was finished, it was not a scrappy one, but a nice matching one.

My friend was not well at the time and I ended up making three blocks for her, and she won each time! So she gave me one of the quilts, which was sweet of her.

This is the quilt, and while I do think it has pretty colors and will be nice when I put it together, I didn't look at it and say "Wow, I love it!" And so it became a UFO.



I have set it aside and plan to work on it when I go back to Arabia at the end of the year. I think after 12 years it deserves to be finished! It went in the suitcase with DH a few weeks ago and is waiting there for me :)

I don't mind inheriting UFOs. Some of them are just orphan blocks that I really love and will turn into a quilt one day. Others I will make and give them away.

What about you? Have you inherited UFOs and do you mind receiving them? Maybe you have received a UFO from a loved one who has passed. To me that would be even more precious, and a true treasure indeed.

I have a few UFOs of my own, but my aunt was going to give me one that my mama started but didn't finish. I also have something of my mama's to finish, but haven't gotten started. I'm trying hard to work through my own UFOs so I don't pass them along to others. I think I might have about 20 tops that need quilting. ~ Katie Joy ~

I have inherited a few.... I find it hard to say no when offered ... I feel like I will offend the offerer if I say I don't like them! – and anyway I am addicted to sewing...

Hugz ~ Fiona ~



UFO inherited from DD, finally finished!

Day 7 – Show and Tell

I thought I'd have a "Show and Tell" once a week where I show you which UFOs I have been working on. Week 1 and I haven't worked on any yet, just sorted and tried to organize everything. [As I mentioned](#), I sent some UFOs along with DH to Arabia to work on, one of which is this one called Snake Trails:



[Alice](#) was teaching me this waaaay back when she lived in Perth and [we went to visit](#). It really doesn't need much to finish, so I thought it would be a good one to do when I get there.

Another one I popped in DH's suitcase was this one:



... which I might as well call a mystery quilt because I have no idea what I was making with it.

There are 10" squares with triangles on one corner, and some other half square triangles in there as well....

Ha!

If anyone can tell me what I was thinking, please do. Otherwise, I will look at it next year in Arabia and turn it into something!

I took Alice's Birthday Quilt to Dubai as well, but DH's suitcase got too heavy so I brought it back to Oz:



It is called "Alice's Birthday Quilt", not because it is *for* her, but it is a quilt we started on her birthday way back in.... um.... er.... 2007....!

She was living in Oz back then, and came around for the weekend for us to sew....



Alice on the left, me on the right. Alice's quilt has purple in it of course, and I seem to be helping her cut squares.... We sewed all weekend and when she had to leave we solemnly vowed that we would finish the quilts... and we will soon, right Alice?!

Of course I seem to have lost the pattern so I hope she still has it...

This UFO will go in my suitcase when I head back to Arabia because I really want to get it done.

So those are the ones that I will be working on when I head back overseas, and here is a tub that I want to start working on here before I leave:



Not sure how many I will get done, but I will make a start at least! Tonight is [FNWE](#) so I will head out to my studio in a little while and pick something to get started. I'll see some of you there I 'm sure...

I really do not have many UFO's but a lot of I Want To Makes!
look at you two babes! Yes sweet Alice has to have purple!
Hope you make a big dent in your long UFO list !! ~ Lola ~

Hi! Waving from FNWF across the globe. I have several small projects ready to quilt, and nothing to piece right now, so I'm pulling out a 'new' UFO tomorrow. Keep the momentum going..... ~ Sunny ~

So lovely to see a picture of you and Alice I like to put a face to names.... and I had no idea that Alice used to live over here in Aus...

Hugz ~ Fiona ~

Yes, we will finish the birthday quilt and all of the others soon!!! I need to pull that one out—I haven't even counted that one yet. I am much better at flying geese now too!!! Sad how many UFO's I have from way back when. I remember I finished the heart on Garion's birthday 2005. My first quilt and my first finish. Now I need to finish the stained glass since it was the second one I started. So much sewing—never enough time!!! ~ Alice ~

Day 8 - Forgotten Treasures

As I was sorting through my UFOs last month, I came across a few that I completely forgot I had. Even worse, I had no idea what I was making! Two thoughts crossed my mind at this stage:

1. Oh my goodness, I really am getting old!!!!

And

2. I need to start making notes with all my projects!

It really is ridiculous that this can happen! I'm sure it has never happened to you :) I mean these quilts I started were ones that I probably thought were going to be brilliant and possibly the next quilt to go viral on the internet.... And a few years later I totally forgot what I was making....

I showed you a pic of one of them in yesterday's post, the 10" squares and half square triangles. Here is another one, made from a honey bun and I assume meant to be for a baby or cot quilt:



It looks like I made 5 stratas, and then... what I was going to do next is anyone's guess!

So what to do with these UFOs that I have no memory of even starting, or perhaps just a vague one, and that have no notes, no accompanying pattern.... no clues as to what it was meant to be?

1. Phone a friend

In my case, Alice, who usually knows what I am doing, but then again, sometimes she has also forgotten so then we are back to square one...

2. Make it up as you go along

Which is probably what I was doing in the first place since there was no clear pattern or instructions attached.

3. Just finish it somehow

In other words, it really doesn't matter what it was supposed to be, it is now going to be something totally different and unique and I am still going to love it... or give it away and someone else will love it.

And wouldn't it be funny if I finished it and it actually turned out to be what I originally meant it to be? Of course I will never know because I forgot.... Sigh....

Please tell me you have some of these UFOs in your house???

Found some UFOs! Alice said I was in the club! Have two big tops from the eighties that need quilting. not worth paying some one to do. May stay UFOs!! hahaaha-ha! ~ Lola ~

Day 9- Don't Give Up on us Baby....

Ever since I started writing this series I've been humming the song "Don't give up on us baby, we're still worth one more try".... ([Here it is on Youtube](#) if you want to get it stuck in your head too.)

I don't know about you, but there have been times when I have looked at all my UFOs and thought of giving up... after all, how long will it take for me to finish them? And how long do I have to wait to start something new?!

It is tempting to give up. But then I look at some of my UFOs like this one:



And this one:



When I look at them *they make me smile* and I know that I can't give up on them or the others. Those piles of UFOs are worth another try....

***Don't give up on us, baby
We're still worth one more try
I know we put a last one by
Just for a rainy evening
When maybe stars are few
Don't give up on us, I know
We can still come through
– David Soul***

Working on a UFO on a rainy evening, that sounds pretty good to me... So here's to not giving up on our UFOs!

(Sudden thought: Maybe the song has nothing to do with UFOs and is stuck in my head because it is telling me that it is only Day 9 of the 31 Day Challenge and that I shouldn't give up What do you think?)

Never give up! Actually, if a particular project is filling you with dread and dragging you down, then it is okay to give up and move on. Our hobby is supposed to be fun! And sometimes challenging. But if you really don't want to do something, it's pointless to continue. Especially if you start avoiding the sewing room because you don't want to face it. ~ Sunny ~

Those are beautiful and fun UFOs. I can't wait to see the UFOs you finish! I have plenty of my own, but I don't seem to be much for finishing these days. Someday, I'll start ticking some projects off. I have to challenge myself.
~ Katie Joy ~

How funny – I have done both of those quilts that you showed... and I love them so of course I don't think you should give up on them.....

Hugz ~ Fiona ~

those ones are great and yes don't give up on them and don't give up on the 31 days as I am really enjoying them and hopefully it will motivate me.....i've started by getting my lists sorted..... ~ Chookyblue ~

Very inspiring to go through your UFOs like this – most of mine (and there are a few!) I fall in love with all over again when I pull them out too! ~ Raewyn ~

Day 10 – Steps to Finishing UFOs

Enough chatter about what UFOs are, whether we should finish them or not, etc, etc. On to actually getting them done!

(By the way, please read the comments on the posts, there are lots of good tips in them as well. Thank you lovely readers!)

Today I want to talk about the steps I am taking to get my UFOs finished. They are steps I have used to get other UFOs done in the past, and now that I seem to have more than ever, I need to put them into practice again!

I think having some sort of plan is key to finishing UFOs. For me at least. I like to write things down, preferably with old fashioned pen and paper, and then try to get everything into some semblance of order!

I'll be going through these steps in more detail in future posts, so this is more of an outline. Here are some of the key steps I think help get those UFOs done:

1. Organize the UFOs

UFOs are much easier to finish if they are somewhat organized. I'll be telling you more tomorrow about how I organize mine.

2. Break the UFOs up into steps

Smaller steps to finish a large project is so much less daunting than looking at it as a whole. I hosted a challenge years ago called [Finishing Stitches](#) which was focused on breaking down UFOs into smaller bites.

3. Choosing which ones to work on

Before you finish them, you need to somehow choose which ones you will work on first. With a list as long as mine, it is less overwhelming if I choose a few, and leave the rest for another day.

4. Actually setting aside time to finish them

I'll be sharing lots of ways to set aside time to finish those UFOs. Time is always a big issue. Especially when we want to start new things!

I still make a list and photograph them at the beginning of the year... this is when I tidy up and order them a bit. Otherwise I do much the same as you with organising them except for finding time – I can't find it!! haha – seems I am too busy making new UFO's.....

Hugz ~ Fiona ~

I should make a list and start working on mine but a little scared to have it on paper. Good for you for making a plan to work through.

~ Katie Joy ~



Day 11- Early Show & Tell

I'm changing up the order of posts today. I thought I'd show you the UFOs I've started (yes started!) working on!

Hopefully by next show and tell I'll have a few of them done! That's the goal at least :)

So I have started with chain sewing for this [Disappearing Nine Patch](#) I started in 2009:



I got one disappearing patch done way back when, and a bunch of 9 patches. All the squares were cut out for more 9 patches so I thought I'd start chain sewing them and then "disappear" them all at the same time later :)



I also pulled out the [100 patch](#) to keep working on, I think I am pretty close to having all the patches done:



I then picked this strings quilt which only needs a border:



And a wallhanging that only needs binding:



And finally for something that requires a bit more thought, this BOM that [Alice](#) and I started (along with how many others Alice? 2009 was the Year of BOMs for us):



I already had a go of [turning this into a finished quilt](#) a while back, but somehow lost momentum... and I really would like to finish it, so it is going on my list of UFOs to work on this month.

So, out of the tub I filled with UFOs to work on, I have chosen these to start with. I'm actually looking forward to getting these done.. let's see how I go!

I can't remember if I finished that last one or not. I will hunt for it tomorrow and then I will give you a report.

~ Alice ~

Day 12 – Organizing UFOs

Part 1

So on to organizing UFOs! My first step is to hunt them all up – in boxes, tubs, cupboards, suitcases (oh no! I forgot I have a suitcase out in the caravan... I hope there aren't any more UFOs out there!!!) and then lay them all out on the biggest table I have....



This pic was taken [the last time I attempted to get my UFOs organized](#), and I'm pleased to say that quite a few of those projects on the table have been completed, but there are a lot that are still UFOs today.

I laid them all out in my studio last month and as the table got too full, I started putting them in tubs:



I also divided them into different types of tubs, like the one above is obviously my Christmas one. The other specific tub that I put UFOs straight into as I sorted was the tub for Flimsies. As much as possible, I put the flimsies in with some backing so that I don't have to go hunting for that when I go to quilt them.

I tried to make sure I kept patterns with the UFOs, any extra fabric needed, special thread or rulers, and even binding with the flimsies that I had already cut out so that it means there will be less hunting and organizing to do when I actually work on the project.

Once I had them all organized into piles, I ... oh, that will be for [tomorrow's post](#), otherwise I won't have anything left to write about for the rest of the month!

YIPPEE!! Mine are all neatly corralled, so I get to skip this step. I keep them in a bag or a box, with the pattern, and any specialty rulers or thread. And if I have a flimsy, the binding is pinned to it. In my early days of quilting, I didn't immediately make the binding, and the fabric accidentally got used for something else. Lesson learned.

~ Sunny ~

When I decided which ufo's to keep in my move—I also tried to match them to at least backing fabrics and if I had them hand basted, then I pretty much made sure that I had cut strips for the binding and pinned those strips to the quilt—and now here is the funny—I unpinned those strips here to hand quilt the quilt—then couldn't remember where I put the strips—!!! that's me!!!

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

I think I have all my flimsies in the one box with their backing.....

~ Chookyblue ~

We talked about flimsies on the phone yesterday and I've counted mine now & have 23. As I've quilted 25 quilts so far this year (8 of those were for the local shop), I'm hoping to clean them up by Xmas next year. Have 11 quilty bits to think about & 8 odd UFO's. Not counted the "woolly" stuff yet. Not sure I'm as organised as you, but maybe you can tell me how I should set it all out. Take care.

~ Susan ~

Day 13 – Organizing UFOs

Part 2

Ok, so we've got all our UFOs somewhat "corralled" as [Sunny](#) put it in the comments yesterday!

Next step is to bag and tag them.... this is where you find out that zippy bags are your friends. I learned this from [Alice](#). (Zippy bags are sturdy and can be used again and again and again just in case you are worried about using plastic...)

I have different size zippy bags depending on the project, and to "tag" them I just use sticky labels. That way when the project is done, I can take the label off, and

use the bag for something else in my sewing room – most likely another ufo

If there are more than one of the same thing I put them in one bag, like these little Christmas appliques:



Then when they are all bagged and tagged they go back in the tub like this:



Same Christmas tub as the one I showed you yesterday. But now all in bags and nicely labeled...

Why do I bother to bag and tag them?

1. Because if it's all in the same bag I am less likely to lose parts of the project.
2. Less handling of blocks and fabric means less fraying and damage. I have found the blocks that are in plastic have stayed nicer than those I left lying around.
3. I can easily pull them out and find the UFO that I want, without mixing all the projects up.

[Tomorrow is the next step](#)... which takes a little bit more time!

I use snap lock bag for heaps of stuff in the Chookshed.....they are esp useful for EPP pics as you prepare papers.....

I even have the bigger ones that I can put a whole quilt/backing/pattern in if needed to keep it all together so like you say things don't get separated and lost.....

~ Chookyblue~

I've got lots in bags, though not necessarily zip lock ones. Must get some different size ones, so that I'm more organised. Glad you are doing this as I'd like to get my back log done & dusted. Thanks Joy and take care.

~ Susan ~

Most of my smaller projects are in zip=lock bags, and I do reuse them. Like you, I have several sizes available. Nice to see you're getting everything corralled!

~ Sunny ~



Day 14 - Organizing UFOs

Part 3

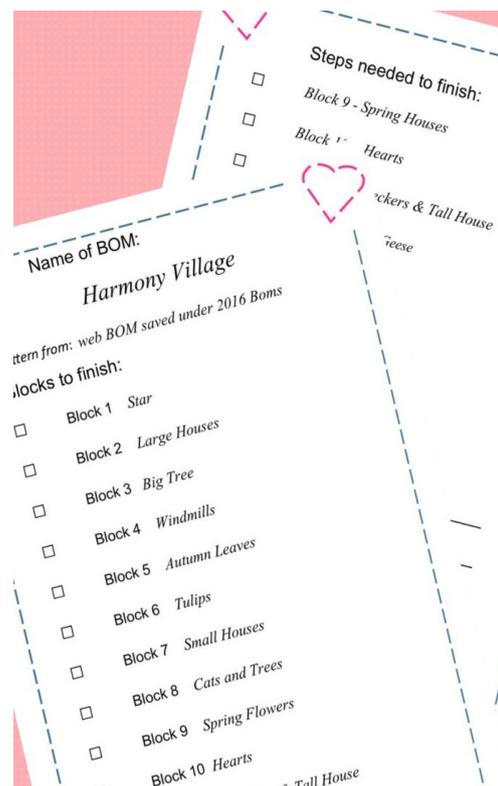


Ok so we've found all our UFOs, put them all in bags or containers of some sort, nicely labeled, now what? Oh, I forgot to say yesterday that of course as I go through the bagging and tagging step, I write them all down on a loooong list :)

In the next step I look at each UFO a bit more closely.

Something I am doing now that I haven't done before is to take a photo of the project so that I know what I am talking about when I look at my list.

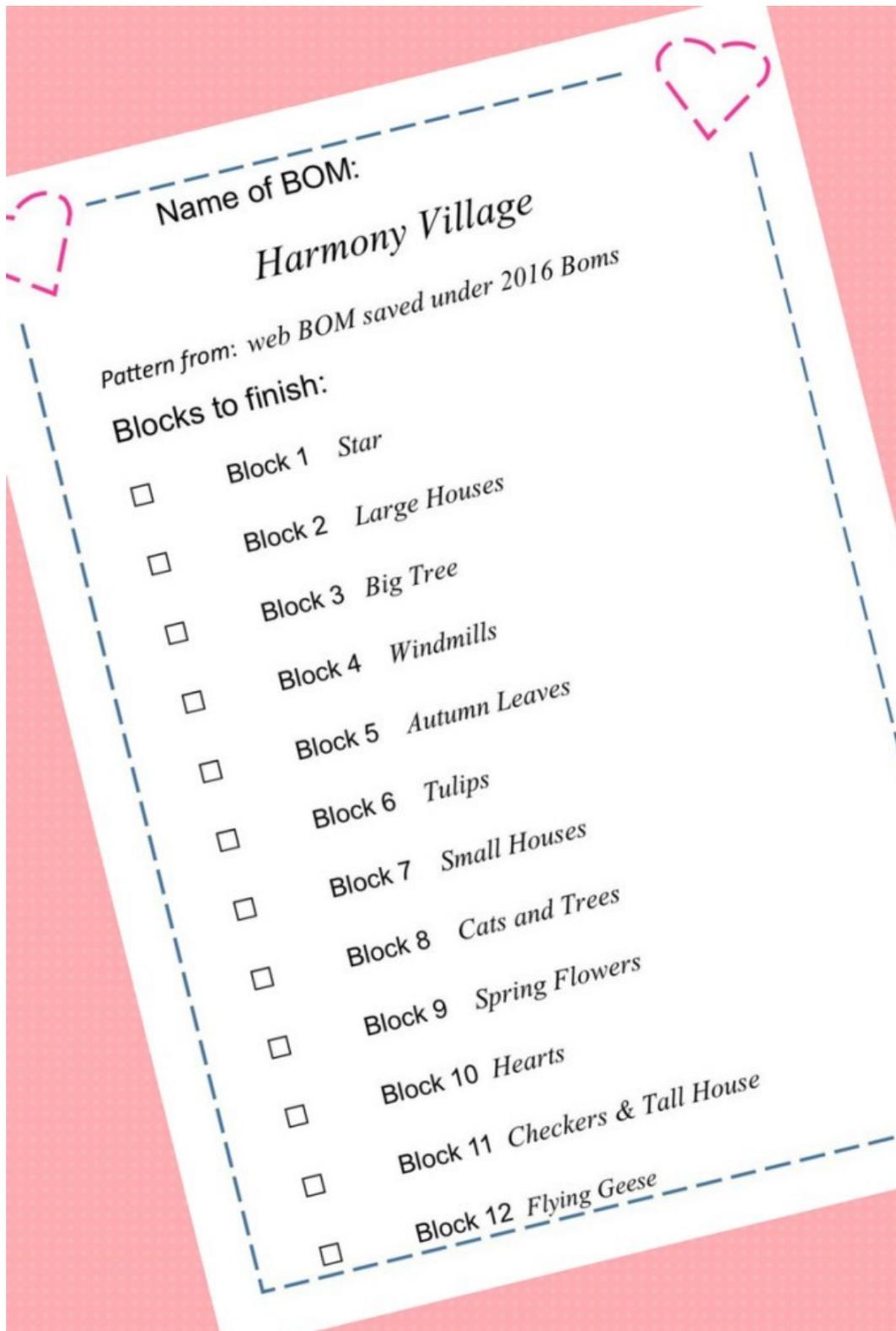
Then I use another printable to break the project down a bit more.



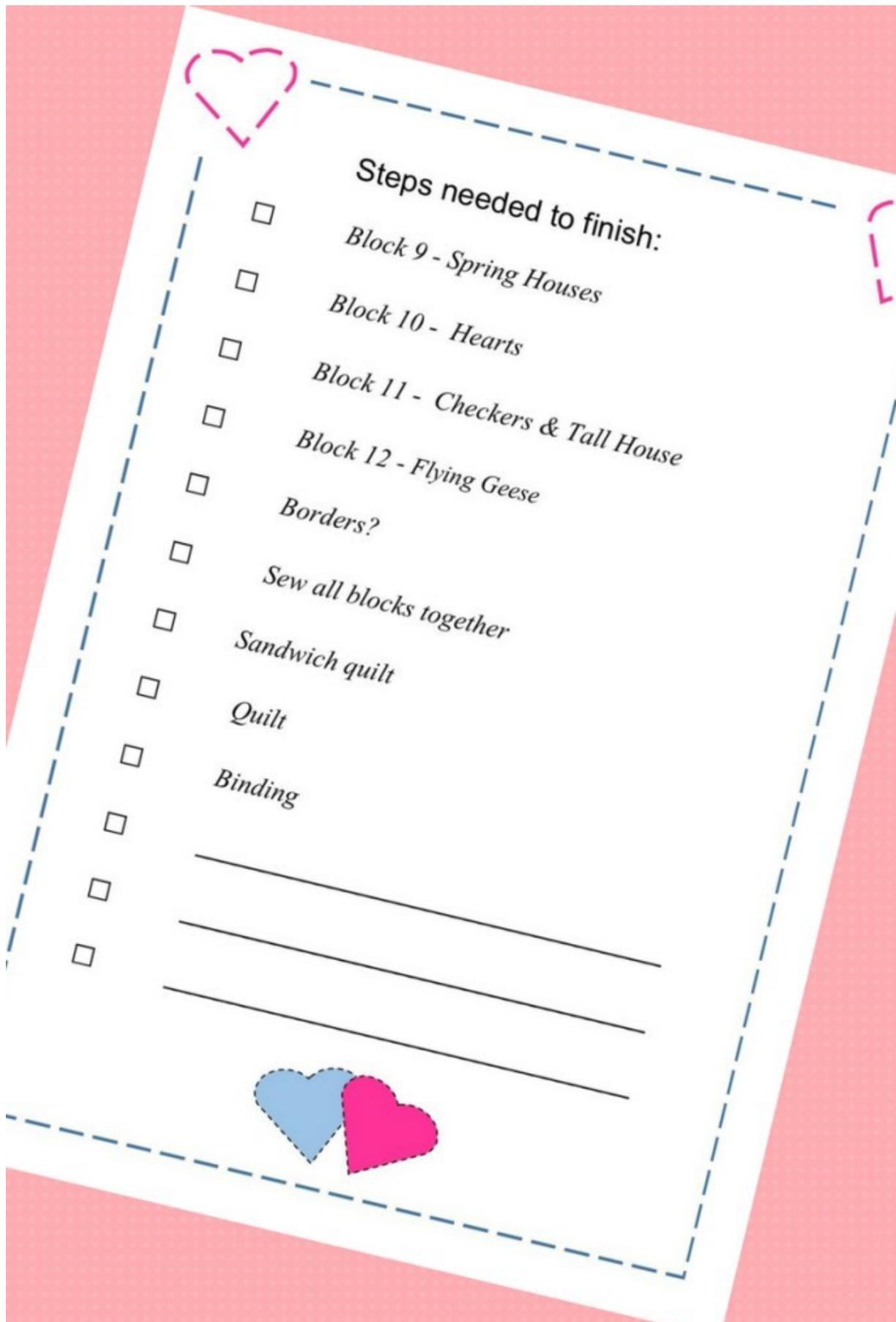
I have different printables that I use for different projects.

Take for example [Harmony Village](#), the BOM [Alice](#) and I started in 2009.

On the first page I have the name of the project, then the names of each block and a tick box for whether I've finished them or not:



The second page is just a long checklist of what needs to be done to complete the project:



I know this seems like a lot of work, but for me it just makes it all so much more manageable. It gives me a great overview of where I am actually at with the UFO.

Above on the first sheet I can see that I have actually nearly finished all the blocks – only three more to go! That makes me really want to get stuck into it and see those last blocks finished, so that I can put it all together.

Writing down the steps to finish on the second page also motivates me because there isn't really that much to do – just finish the three blocks, put a border if necessary, then quilt and bind. Not as daunting as I thought it was!

Now I will be putting up some free printables on the web for you guys this month, so that if you want to use them to keep track of and break down your UFOs, you can download and print them for your own use. So stay tuned!

I just want to say thank you for all your comments, I am behind in replying, but I will catch up this weekend! I really appreciate you all joining me on this journey!

That's a good idea to track what needs to be done for a finish. I put a quilt on a UFO list one time that I needed to quilt and bind. When I pulled it out, I realized that I had never put the blocks together! With sashing, that took an entire long day at a retreat. I'll be updating and revising my list soon, and I'll be sure to add this step.

~ Sunny ~

I'm really enjoying this wip series so sorry for not commenting earlier! I really need to do this... keep up with the posts and it might motivate me to sort out my wips!

~ Wendy ~

Day 15 – Choosing Which UFOs to Work on

I was at my local quilt group this afternoon and telling them about my UFOs..... They were very impressed! Then of course they asked me how I was planning on finishing them.. Was I going to start with the ones that were nearly finished so that I could get the list down quickly? Or was I going to tackle it by type, like flimsies? Or was I going to pick one and finish it, and pick another and finish that...

Well, I can tell you right away that I don't pick one and work on it until it is done and then pick another one... I am just not that type of person. I mean, if I was, I wouldn't have UFOs to start with, right?!

I prefer to work on more than one at a time. This way I don't bored. Like the ones I mentioned in [Day 11 – Early Show and Tell](#), I like to choose a variety, and then work on them a bit at a time. This may seem like a strange way to tackle them, but it seems to work best for me.

Choosing which UFO to work on can be as simple as picking one that has a time frame in which it needs to be done, e.g. a birthday quilt or gift for someone. (It was probably for that person's birthday last year, but oh well...!) It could also be one that you really love and want to get done first.

Over the next few days I will share the two main ways I use to choose which UFOs to work on. They seem to work best at keeping me focused and on track, and helping me to actually get them done.

How do you choose which UFOs to work on first?

Yes, I like to do a few things at once. I did actually work on a UFO this week thanks to your nudging... now it is put away for when I feel like doing the next step! I also like to pick out one that doesn't need much to it and have a quick finish – I don't think I have any of those now!

Hugz

~ Fiona ~

If I have time constraints, I work on that project first. Then if there are any small ones that I'm constantly moving from one spot to another, I tackle them next. After that, it's a matter of deciding if I need a piecing project, a quilting one, or applique, etc. I like to have several going at one time, in different stages. I take simple piecing to one friend's house, handwork to one sewing group, etc.

~ Sunny ~

I am so far behind!!! Right now I think guilt is what makes me choose. Need to keep working on the donation quilt for the Humane Society and the Secret Santa present for work and see what else I can have time for. Of course you know I will not finish either one of them before I start fiddling with something else or start something new.

~ Alice ~

hey your 1/2 way almost.....keep on going I work on to many things at once also.....mind you if we started and finished a project then started and finished a project we would not be in the mess we are in.....BUT hey.....i'm all for a million projects on the go at once.....do what the mood dictates.....

~ Chookyblue~

I am like you in the fact that I like a variety to work on, too– I like to have a hand quilted project going, an applique project, an embroidery project, a counted cross stitch project–ect (and I always have a knitting project going) then depending on the mood and time I just pick up one and work away!!

though right now–the projects are all applique as I am working on some Christmas stuff–but week ends is my cross stitch time, especially while watching racing– and I am behind on those (monthly ones–still on Sept!!)

and I did get some knitting done today–I knit down on the dock watching the waves, and birds and squirrels!!

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

Day 16 – More on Choosing UFOs

From the comments on yesterday's post it looks like I am not the only one who likes to work on many UFOs at the same time! Today I will share the main ways I choose which UFOs to work on, both of which have been mentioned in the comments yesterday as well! Looks like we are all on the same page :)

1. Choosing different sizes of UFOs

When I look at my piles of UFOs, I like to choose different sizes of UFOs. What I mean by this is that I want to have some small ones that will be done quickly, and some bigger ones that will need more time but that I can intersperse with the quicker ones. Eventually these bigger ones will turn into almost finished and therefore “smaller” ones if that makes any sense at all!

For example with the UFOs I have chosen to work on this month, you can see that I have a couple that just need the binding. One was the tree pictured on [Day 11](#), the other is this sample from a class I took on free motion quilting:



I can get the binding on them sewn on by machine in less than an hour, and then finished by hand in the evenings. That's two I can cross off my list fairly quickly :)

I chose the Disappearing Nine Patch and the 100 Patches because they don't take much brain power! I can sit and chain sew them while my mind is pondering all the 101 things I really should be doing to prepare for my international move. In a sense it is actually calming for me to chain sew. It relaxes me and I enjoy seeing the blocks come together quickly.

Harmony Village is one that I have wanted to finish for ages, but it seemed like I needed to concentrate too much, so I sort of let it fall by the wayside.

Now I can see I only have three more blocks to do, I can set myself a goal of concentrating on a block at a time for about an hour or so, and I am sure I will get them done this month.

2. Different Types of UFOs

The second way I choose UFOs to work on is to work on different types at a time. This for me keeps me happily motivated and helps me feel like I am doing lots of fun things at the same time!

So I will choose some that are hand sewing, some that are applique, some stitchery, paper piecing, etc, etc.

This month so far I have really only chosen piecing and some quick binding finishes. I am concentrating on finishing more this month, and so have picked less variety than I normally would. But it's important to be flexible and fit in with whatever is happening in your life at the time. When I am traveling, I'd take more hand sewing, embroidery and applique UFOs with me. I am home this month and trying to make the most of my studio, so I am sticking with machine projects right now.

I need a plan—I have some larger tops done that I moved down with a year ago and i now that I am out of ones to hand baste, I need to put together a couple—(wonder if I have any batting to do that??) and I have several sets of finished blocks—and I know I even got the lattice fabrics and maybe the border ones—so need to put together some more tops—but all this sounds like work!!!!!!

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

Day 17 - Free Quilting

Printables

Today I'm sharing some free Quilting Printables that you can use to track and organize your UFOs. These are color ones and as you can see my printer seems to be running out of ink!



I think a trip down to Officeworks is in order, and I hope I don't come back with more than the ink.... it is a dangerous shop!

I've included different sheets to track with, depending on how much detail you want to go into. You can also print as many copies as you want.

You'll find the printables at the end of this ebook :)

I've just read and caught up on the back log (for me) of your posts and have found it all very informative, especially as you know that I have many UFO's too. I'm still struggling settling back into a routine, but hopefully it will happen soon. I'll see if I can print out a couple of those sheets. I also like to work on various projects and at the moment am hand sewing binding and crocheting whilst I watch TV of a night. (not at the same time I might add). Take care.

~ Susan ~

Day 18 - Getting Our UFOs

Done

We've talked about finding our UFOs, we've talked about sorting our UFOs. We've also talked about how to organize and break them down in order to finish them. Now we're going to start looking at strategies to actually get them done. At some stage we just need to start working on them or we will never get anywhere!

I've come up with a few ideas of how we can get them done, including fun ways and challenges. As we did with sorting and organizing our UFOs, it is good to come up with a plan to make the time to work on them and finish them.

Some of the next topics will be:

1. Scatter them around!
2. UFOs on the go
3. Scheduling
4. Challenges

.... And a few more! So hang in there with me for a bit longer, it is day 18 and we are over half way through the series! I don't know about you... but I've been dreaming about UFOs... I think my subconscious will be quite happy when October is over!!

I've loved following along with this series. My Number ONE tip for getting them done is to Get. Off. The. computer. I would be so much more productive if I spent more time sewing instead of reading blogs, facebook, and playing Words with Friends.....

~ Sunny~

Can't wait to see what strategies you come up with. My excuse is usually that I have housework to do. Uggh! I have found one I want to do, but now trying to work out how I was putting it together & it's so small (nearly tears).

~ Susan~

Day 19 – Scatter Your UFOs!

If we only worked on our UFOs in our sewing rooms, we wouldn't get much done!

I have found that one of the best ways to work on multiple UFOs at a time is to scatter them around. There is nothing worse than sitting down somewhere with time to spare and not having something to work on. I like to keep my hands busy. Here are some of the places you can scatter your UFOs around:

1. Next to Your Favorite Chair



Is there a favorite spot in the house where you sit regularly?

I like to have some handwork next to my comfy chair in the lounge room so that when I sit down for a rest, I can pick it up and do a bit while I watch a movie, listen to a podcast, or just have a cuppa.

It may be the binding of a quilt, or some embroidery, but it lives next to my chair until it is done. Sometimes I have two or three next to my chair, that way I can do a bit of hand binding, then some embroidery or hexies.

2. Next to Your Bed

Ok, so sleep experts would probably disagree with this one, but having some handwork to wind down before bed is a good thing in my opinion! Sit it in a basket next to your bed or on your bedside table, and just relax with some comfy pillows... often doing some hand stitching gives you that relaxed feeling, and helps calm your thoughts before you go to sleep.

Just don't fall asleep while stitching and lose the needle in your bed somewhere!

Disclaimer: I will not be held responsible if you do this :)

3. In the Kitchen



Do you have a kitchen table where you sit and have a cuppa every now and then? Have a little basket there with a small project, or a bigger basket on the floor with a bigger project, so that it is nice and handy for you to work on a little at a time. If friends come over for a cuppa, you can sit there and sip tea while working on a UFO.

So those are a few ways to scatter your UFOs and get them done in the spare moments of your life. Do you have places where you scatter and finish your UFOs other than in your sewing room?

Here I thought you meant to scatter the ufo's around so you had to hunt to find them—like a couple in each closet—then one can play hide and seek—though I am always doing the seeking—as I am not sure where I hide them!!!

Ok enough of trying to be funny—I really only have one place that keep my projects that I am working on and that is in a basket by my rocking chair—the only thing I do in bed is sleep!! and I have to use the kitchen/dinning room table right now as my 'sewing, cutting and ironing' area—do miss the set up I had in NY—will try to do something different in Jan about a sewing table—but right now all moneys goes on Christmas gifts and shipping costs—maybe I will put the table on my list for the kids!!??

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

I can always hunt to find my UFOs. They are scattered here and there throughout my whole house :) ~ Katie Joy ~

OK, I thought that I was going to be a pro on this one because I went the same direction as Di.

They are definitely scattered but not where they should be. I can work on this one!! I will work on this one!!!!

~ Alice ~

Hi Joy i have my UFO's scattered in the loungeroom and sewing room. I just had a big cleanout of my sewing room only to find more UFO's, lol .

~ Shez ~

Good idea, but then I think I'm already onto the beside my lounge chair bit anyway. Usually have about the same as you, though crochet & knitting pop in too. Take care

~ Susan ~

Day 20 – UFOs on the Go!

I like to take projects with me where ever I go, and UFOs are great to take. Sometimes you think you are just heading out of the house, doing some errands quickly and then heading straight home. But often there is spare time during these trips out and about, and you can use them to work on your UFOs. Here are some suggestions of where to keep UFOs for when you are on the go:

1. In Your Car

How much time do you spend in your car? Not driving, but waiting. I do the school pick up a few days a week, and am generally waiting for at least 15 minutes for DS to get to the car. This is a perfect time to do a few stitches, or of course I could play Candy Crush, but the former is much more productive! Small projects are good for this, and you can actually get a lot done in 15 mins. It adds up quickly! Joining Hexies and Yoyos are great for keeping in the car in a cute zippy bag and just picking up as needed.

2. In a Bag Ready to Take to Appointments

Yes, I have been known to make myself very comfy in the doctor's waiting room doing embroidery or hexies! It makes for good conversation too, mostly with older ladies who think it is lovely that there are some younger people keeping up the old skills. Often I have had ladies expressing an interest in learning how to quilt or embroider and I can point them to where they can join a group. But mostly, I just like to keep my hands busy and get something done while I'm waiting, for often up to an hour. Finishing off the last fiddly bits on a UFO is easy to do in this setting.

3. In a Bag Ready to Take to a Friend's House

Even when I go to a friend's house for just a cuppa, I like to bring something along. I have gotten a bit of a reputation for always having something with me to stitch, and if I don't, people wonder if I am feeling alright! It's easier to bring some bigger projects along when you are going to a friend's place. Hand stitching the binding on a quilt is a great project for this situation.



Yesterday I machine sewed the binding on a quilt, table topper and small wall hanging. Today I took Dad to the hospital for a follow-up checkup after his operation two weeks ago, and I brought them along with me to work on while I was waiting for him. It ended up taking all day and I got the table topper done, half of the quilt, and made a good start on the wall hanging. I was quite pleased!

Do you take projects with you just in case you have spare time?

I am one to take along some work also—though these days it is usually just my knitting
love and laughter,
~ Di ~

Yes it's a good idea to take with you. I find some 'non sewing' friends feel a bit offish if I sew – it's like they think I am not giving them attention... in days past you always had some knitting or something in your hand – I think it is moving towards that again
Hugz ~ Fiona ~

My hands always have to be busy. I tend to take crocheting in the car or when I'm visiting a Hospice patient. I also take crocheting when we dine at friends' homes, because if we sit and chat after the meal, I will nod off if I'm not busy. Thanks for mentioning yo-yos – reminds me of another on-the-go project that I can kit up. I've made major progress on a UFO the last two days!!
~ Sunny ~

Day 21- UFO Swap

Before we start on today's topic, I just wanted to post a link to a [new blog friend of mine](#) – she is also doing the [31 Day Challenge](#), and hers is about quilting too. She did a great post called [Hexies on-the-go](#), and it fits in with my post yesterday, so I thought I'd share it.. go over and say hi if you have time, it's well worth a read!

Ok, back to our topic – a great way to finish UFOs is to have a swap! Ok, so you don't actually "finish" that particular UFO, you are just palming it off on someone else.. But, it is a way of getting excited about finishing a "new to you" project! Like the saying, "one man's trash is another man's treasure", you could say "one gal's UFO is another gal's NewFO"!

There is often something about someone else's UFO that looks so much more appealing than your own:

It is new to you!

It is different!

It is full of pretty new fabrics that you probably don't have in your own stash!

Because of the above reasons, it is quite likely that you will get into finishing it off quicker than you would your own.

UFO swaps can be informal between two or three friends, or it can be a fun thing to do in a quilt group or guild.

Have everyone bring in a UFO of the same sort, e.g. a quilt, table runner, or wall hanging. Decide whether it needs to have all the fabric ready to finish the top, or just have the UFO as is.

Then you can draw numbers, or straws or take turns in going up to pick one. You can put them in bags so that no one can see what they are getting, or actually choose which one you want.

You might end up with one you don't like, but you never know, it could be one that you will treasure the rest of your life. I personally treasure someone else's UFO because it reminds me of them... and makes it more special no matter what the color or style.

Flimsies are great to swap too. You can swap them permanently or even temporarily to just have someone else finish the quilting on yours and you do the same for them. It's a fun way to get them done, and sometimes we just need a little nudge!

Have you ever swapped a UFO and were you happy with how it all worked out?

I have never swapped a UFO, and don't think I could. I did read a funny story online a few months ago about a UFO though. I don't remember whose blog it was on or I would give them credit. The quilter decided there was a UFO that she had lost interest in, and was never going to finish. So she bagged it up and dropped it off at her local thrift shop. A week or so later, a friend of hers appeared with the bag and said "Look at the bargain I found at the thrift shop. I just love it, and was hoping you would finish it for me!!" Quilter couldn't say no, so she took it home and promptly finished it for her friend. So that's another way of finishing a UFO.

~ Sunny ~

No I don't think I have swapped—I have given lots away—mainly to my friend back in NY, Anne and she finishes them and donates them to Hospice—she makes over 100 quilts a year for them and about 40 or so baby quilts each year that she donates to our local Santa give away for kids 0-2 that don't other wise get a gift—and then there is all the quilts she makes for her family-!! She loves all my blocks that are orphans too—in fact I just sent her some blocks that I have even made since I was here, that I decided I did not want to use in a quilt!!!!

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

I haven't swapped one, though I have received them. I am on a 'destash' group on facebook and notice quite a few people selling them..

Hugz ~ Fiona ~

Day 22 – UFO Swap

Last night I joined in with [FNSI](#) and worked on UFOs. I did most of the binding of the Christmas quilt in the pic above, and finished it tonight... so that is 2 finishes so far – unfortunately I found 5 more UFOs so that makes my count 181 UFOs!! Minus two finishes....

I did plenty of chain sewing this week:

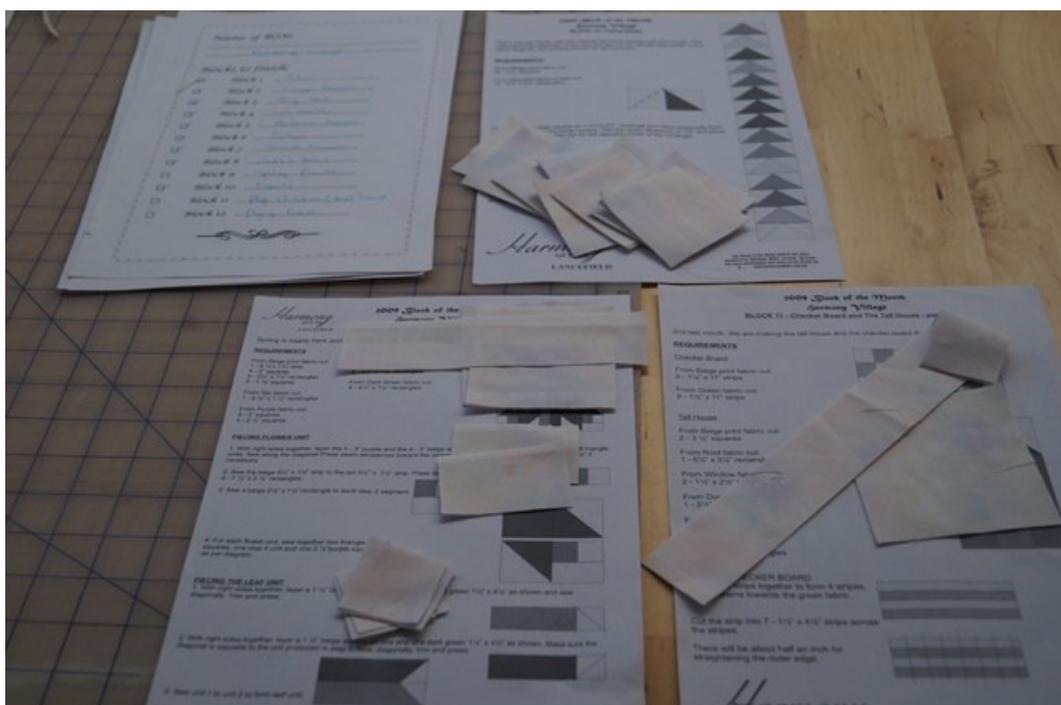


....which is a very odd number so I need to do some more. I think I will make 24 and then do borders, so there will be some more chain sewing happening next week!

I decided to work on Harmony Village a bit. I ironed all the blocks and put them up on my design wall in some semblance of order:



Then I cut out the background for the last blocks that need to be made:



I'm happy with my progress, and hopefully I'll get a bit more done this week-end and next week...

Have a great weekend everyone!

Yep– I do think you are the ufo queen!!!My count is under 30–ok maybe under 40– with some from this year–did not think I had that many — do need to look over my list and see how many actual finishes I have for the year– did just count and I have 7 tops to quilt that are all ready for that part and 5 or so sets of blocks ready to go into tops– Love the last one you are doing–think I had started that one in NY but is one that I gifted to my friend Anne for her quilts– keep stitching–

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

Oh no! 5 more UFO's!! Don't you hate when that happens? I went to Jo Ann's to day to get some fabric to start a new project, which I certainly do not need to do. Oh well....There's still room on my list for a few more. Glad to see you have a couple of finishes.

~ Sunny ~

I'm not even looking for anymore, though I've so many of my own designs in the folder and plenty of fabric to make them. I actually started Bubs this morning and have a very old little top on, so at least I've done something, more or less. Love the bottom quilt & wonder how you'll quilt that one. Take care.

~ Susan ~

Day 23 – Your Thoughts on UFOs

Today I thought I'd do something different and feature some of your comments, my dear readers... there have been some great suggestions and I thought I'd highlight a few in this post. I've enjoyed reading each and every comment, even though I have been late in replying to some... It's been a busy month! But we are getting there! I have to say, I've learned a lot about myself and many of you this month, it's been fun!

On how many UFOs you guys have:

Fiona:

*Oh that is hilarious Joy.... I am overwhelmed by mine but it's not nearly as impressive as yours....
I had 37 at the beginning of the year and I have completed 5 of them...*

Chookyblue:

Must get my lists updated and let you know..... But was thinking maybe 100.....

Alice:

Cool!!!! I hope you beat me, but I haven't had time to finish counting. I only made it to 49 that I have listed and neatly put together and I still need to put them on the right sheets.

Sunny:

Wow – I thought I was bad with thirty something on my list!

Lola: (on day 8 of the challenge)

Found some UFOs! Alice said I was in the club! Have two big tops from the eighties that need quilting. not worth paying someone to do. May stay UFOs!!

Di:

Yep– I do think you are the ufo queen!!!My count is under 30–ok maybe under 40–with some from this year–did not think I had that many...

Danette:

I have so many UFO's that it would take away from my stitching time to make a list. My plan this year is to use scraps and to finish started projectsat least more often than I buy new ones!

Words of wisdom and handy tips:

Sunny:

if there are some that you have totally lost interest in, rehome them. Someone, somewhere, will love them. Don't let them weigh you down. Never give up! Actually, if a particular project is filling you with dread and dragging you down, then it is okay to give up and move on. Our hobby is supposed to be fun! And sometimes challenging. But if you really don't want to do something, it's pointless to continue. Especially if you start avoiding the sewing room because you don't want to face it.

Kim:

I agree with Sunny...to an extent. If working on it really doesn't bring me joy anymore, I'd rather donate the unfinished project to someone who could enjoy finishing it, like maybe to someone at the quilt guild.

Fiona:

I still make a list and photograph them at the beginning of the year... this is when I tidy up and order them a bit.

Sunny:

My Number ONE tip for getting them done is to Get. Off. The. computer. I would be so much more productive if I spent more time sewing instead of reading blogs, facebook, and playing Words with Friends.....

And in closing, some humor.....

On “Scattering UFOs”:

Di:

Here I thought you meant to scatter the ufo’s around so you had to hunt to find them—like a couple in each closet—then one can play hide and seek—though I am always doing the seeking—as I am not sure where I hide them!!!

Alice:

OK, I thought that I was going to be a pro on this one because I went the same direction as Di.

Shez:

I have my UFO’s scattered in the loungeroom and sewing room. I just had a big cleanout of my sewing room only to find more UFO’s, lol .

Katie Joy:

I can always hunt to find my UFOs. They are scattered here and there throughout my whole house :)

Hmmmm.... I think maybe we should start a Scattering Hunt for UFO tradition....!

And on “swapping UFOs”:

Sunny:

I have never swapped a UFO, and don’t think I could. I did read a funny story online a few months ago about a UFO though. I don’t remember whose blog it was on or I would give them credit. The quilter decided there was a UFO that she had lost interest in, and was never going to finish. So she bagged it up and dropped it off at her local thrift shop. A week or so later, a friend of hers appeared with the bag and said “Look at the bargain I found at the thrift shop. I just love it, and was hoping you would finish it for me!!” Quilter couldn’t say no, so she took it home and promptly finished it for her friend. So that’s another way of finishing a UFO :)

Thanks everyone for joining me this month, not long to go until this series is done!

Lots of good information, and I am behind reading it all, so will go back soon catch-up. Well done.

~ Jude ~

Good fun reading those. I did love the story of the returning ufo! classic Hugz

~ Fiona ~

that's hilarious about the quilter's friend buying her UFO! I still need to list mine. I did make a list last year and there were around 300... I should probably update that, I'd hope I've finished one or two of them!

~ Wendy ~



Day 23 – Time for UFOs

Time is an issue for all of us, in all areas of our life. Time to sew can be hard to find, and time to finish UFOs even harder because we all want to start new things :)

Deliberately making time to work on our UFOs can be a way of getting them done. Here are a few ideas to do this:

1. Set aside one hour/evening/morning/day a week to sit down and only work on UFOs.

If we plan to set time aside, it is more likely to happen. We can plan to have an easy meal made up on that day, or get take-away..., do anything that will free us up for that time we have scheduled. Then turn off all distractions and sew, sew, sew!

2. Take your UFOs to your next Sit'n'Sew

Many of us go to a regular sit and sew. I have a group that I go to once a fortnight, and one on Mondays that I make it to less often.... I am now trying to take UFOs with me, so that I can focus on getting them done. Pick a project to take every week and in no time it will be finished!

3. Organize a UFO Finishing Day

How about getting a bunch of friends together for a day of just working on UFOs? Make it a fun day – bring a plate of food to share for lunch. Bring a little gift to swap at the end of the day as a reward for all your hard work... it is amazing how much you can get done in a day and encourage everyone else with their UFOs!

These are just a few ways of making time to work on UFOs. What other ones can you think of?

I am currently involved in two UFO Challenges. These really force me to get the UFO finished, because I don't want to 'pay' if I don't. Payment is usually something like a small notion or a spool of thread, it's not costly, but I still don't want to pay! I have two due in November, one is currently being quilted, and the other still needs a LOT of hand stitching. It will be going to sit and sew a couple of times, and over to a friend's house for our sewing day. It WILL be finished in time!!! ~ Sunny ~

Day 25 – Joining Online UFO Challenges

Over the years I have joined several online UFO finishing challenges and I have actually met many of you through these challenges. They have helped me get quite a few UFOs finished, and I have noticed that the past few years I haven't joined any... and my number of finishes dropped...

One year I joined the challenge hosted by [Tag Along Teddies](#), which is not necessarily limited to UFOs, but is a challenge to finish One Project a Month. I made sure mine were UFOs :) I'm sure if I went searching in my blog archives I'd find I got a lot done that year.

Another challenge I joined once upon a time was [Sew It's Finished](#), and again, I got lots done that year...

At the beginning of the year I found [this challenge](#) hosted by All People Quilt.... I almost joined it, but I was in such a state of disorganization that I chickened out...

I am thinking that next year I will join an online challenge again, or start one of my own... after all, with over 180 UFOs I need to do something! (oh, found another one yesterday... count is up to 182, with only two finishes...)

Are there any challenges you have joined that I need to know about? Please share them so that we can all have a few choices next year... or join them all :)

Hello Joy. I have been doing one project a month for a few years, its is lovely to know that there is that to kick start you if you are feeling a little slack! I have recently joined in a mystery cross stitch and are doing the Christmas one as well. Variety is the spice of life.

Happy UFOing.

~ Bev ~

I've participated in One Project A Month for the last couple of years, and it's helpful to me. If nothing else, I'll finish a doll quilt or placemat just so I have something. And I was in Sew It's Finished for awhile, but for some reason, I didn't follow through with that one. I think I was a fairly new quilter at that time, and didn't have many UFO's to choose from. Now, I have tons of projects at all stages, so there's always something I can pick up and work on, either sewing, quilting, or hand work. I know there are other UFO challenges online, but I can't think of their names right now. Good Luck!!!

~ Sunny ~

P.S. And it seems to me that if you can commit to bogging every day for a month, you'll find time to sew every day next month! :)

~ Sunny ~

I've never joined in a challenge to finish anything, just push myself when I think it's time to get my butt into gear, though I usually finish gifts for people. I'd be scared of looking a fool, if I said I was going to do something, then I didn't. Take care.

~ Susan ~

Yes, I have joined a couple of those too – didn't you host one also? that was fun...

Hugz

Hugz ~ Fiona ~



Day 26 – Setting Personal UFO Goals

I am a very goal oriented person. That is why I like to join challenges, online or otherwise. One summer a few of us in our local guild decided to challenge ourselves to finish a certain amount of UFOs over summer.

Summer in Arabia is very hot (45C to 50C) and most people leave for three months to escape the heat. But some of us stayed there that year, and [got together regularly in the comfort of an airconditioned sewing room](#) to work on UFOs. We all put a “little something” in a bag to reward ourselves at the end of summer, one sewing item for each UFO we were going to finish... and if we finished them we would get our “prizes”.

Some of us reached our goals, but I think the prizes are still in a cupboard in Arabia somewhere, lol! We forgot all about them! I think I should hunt them up when I go back at the end of the year!

For each of us we set personal goals for a set amount of time – summer in Arabia. And this is what goal setting is about. Having a goal with a time limit.

This goal can be personal and not shared, or it can be personal and shared with a few people... or it can be personal and shared with the world on our blogs! (More about that tomorrow.) But it is a personal goal in the sense that it is OURS, not someone else's. We determine what we get done in what time frame... and then set about using some of the strategies we've talked about this month to get them done.

To Set Goals or Not to Set Goals?

Some people don't like setting goals because they are worried they will fail. I like setting goals because it gives me something to aim for. Otherwise I think, oh, next week I will work on some UFOs... rather than, hey, my goal was to get one done this month – where am I at on that goal?

If I fail at the goal, at least I've tried and I have usually achieved something. If it is a monthly goal and I want to get four ufos done (one a week) and I only get 3 done, well, that is better than nothing and they can go on next month's goal list.

I will be setting myself some personal goals for next year to finish my UFOs. Do you think I can finish them all in a year??!! Hmmm... let me think about that one!

What about you, do you like to set personal goals or do you work better without them?

Now that would be awesome if you could get the whole lot finished in one year.... Go for it... You might need a bigger present box..... ~ Chookyblue ~

It seems that every time I set personnel goals I always lose!!!
not sure what there is about it—but I do lose!
I think I do better sitting goals with others or in a group—
I do know one goal I need to set—and that is to get something basted (top, batting, backing) for hand quilting—have no project in the works like that right now—
hummmm—I will go think on that —

love and laughter, ~ Di ~

I do set myself goals and quite often achieve them, but sometimes, yes, they slip by. The one I really want to achieve for next year is that “BOOK”. Do you think I can get it done. I’ve one more of the quilts sitting laid over the machine, which I’ll get stuck into next week. I may bring all the finished ones tomorrow for you to cast your professional eyes over (hee, hee).

~ Susan ~

yes i like goals too – and challenges. and I like to reward myself – with a new project! so that I can make sure the next year I still have plenty of UFO’s to work on?????

Hugz ~ Fiona ~

I like setting goals for myself, but sometimes I’m not so good on the follow through. I have lots of good excuses and some not-so-good excuses. I think I like a combo of setting goals and having a little bit of personal accountability to keep me on track.

~ Katie Joy ~

Day 27 – Blogging about UFOs

Blogging about your UFOs can be very useful. I mean, you don't have to blog about them for a whole month like I was crazy enough to do.... but having them as part of your blogging routine is helpful. Even sharing your personal goals on your blog can help you achieve them. It is all about making them visible and making yourself accountable.

I like to have [my list of UFOs](#) posted on my blog as a separate page. As I said when I started this series, [this one is old](#), and I will update it soon. Having it online makes it easy for me to go and look at my list, rather than having it floating around on a scrap of paper or a file in my computer somewhere. Of course I have my master list printed out in my Quilting Binder (more on that next month!), but I also like to have it online for reference.

I like that I can just cross things off on my online list as I get them done. It is very visual, and I am a very visual person. It also encourages other people to look at my list and think – oh, mine is not as long! Phew!

Blogging about your progress is great too. We all like to encourage each other and we love to see what we have achieved – that is really a major part of why we blog, right? I love to see people finishing UFOs and other projects, it really motivates me and makes me keen to finish more of my own. It is a win-win situation for both the blogger and the reader.

Blogging about UFOs and their progress is like a visual diary of our achievements. I like to go back and read old blog posts to keep me motivated and bring back good memories. I know there are people who print and bind their blogs every year. I'd love to do that one day because it would give me something to flick through and see my quilting journey over the years.

I have had many blogging breaks over the years, but I am glad I have still blogged for as long as I have, and hope to continue. And I hope that I will keep finishing all my UFOs – you'll know because I'll be blogging about them!

Good post again, you are giving me lots to think about, have been wanting to finish projects and not getting anywhere, but good intentions....??

~ Jude ~

I gave a spiral bound graph paper notebook, and my list is in the back of it. Love making checkmarks and striking through the finishes. I also note which ones will be going to Retreat with me, and move some of them to the To-Be-Quilted list. I'm also a very visual person, and very organized. One quilting buddy is just in awe of my notebook. I'm very blessed to be able to spend more time quilting than many of my friends, and I accomplish a lot by being organized. Looking at the list on a regular basis also sometimes prevents me from buying new projects/fabric. Because I already have plenty! So glad you are a blogger/friend, and you chose this topic for the month. Off to sewing group in a few minutes with a UFO in hand.

~ Sunny ~

I sure do hope you keep blogging.....and finishing UFO's

~ Chookyblue ~

I have a list of my quilts in progress and a couple binders on the shelf with quilting stuff to keep me on track. I get out of the habit of looking in my binders, but keep my Leuchtterm notebook with me all day every day. I'd be lost without it. The first page is for my finishes so I see accomplishments first. Second page is a list of WIPS, UFOs, and flimsies in need of my time. I have about 20 flimsies to quilt and a few other projects going, too. I do like seeing things finished and being able to give them to others. So maybe less UFOs and more finishes for me soon. I've enjoyed your 31 days of UFOs.

~ Katie Joy ~

Day 28- Show and Tell

It's been a busy week and not much sewing on UFOs sadly. I did finish one 100 patch and am half way through another:



...but other than that not much sewing done. Sometimes life happens and you don't get as much done as you would like to. I have learned to go with the flow and not beat myself up during these times. I like to look at what I have done, not what I haven't....

I had to go in to Melbourne one day to do some visa stuff, and then I spent a fair bit of time in my studio sorting things out for a sale I'm having tomorrow afternoon.

As many of you know I had a shop in Arabia and brought all the leftovers back with me.

I am trying to sell off as much as I can so hence the sale tomorrow.....



It's been good to keep sorting things so that I can pack it all up again (LOL), but at least it will be packed in an organized manner rather than just dumped like it was last time.

So that is it for show and tell today... I'll hopefully get more done next week!

I can't believe how organized you are—but then you have the space to it — and I know that helps—I was just thinking today that 2 of my closets look messy—wonder who messed them up—so need to do something about that!!
good luck with the sale—

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

Day 29 – Staying Sane While Finishing UFOs

Have you been reading through this series and wondering how I can not be overwhelmed and insane with having so many UFOs? Well, truth be told, I am not overwhelmed, but as for sanity... well, that is a different matter!

As I have been sorting through my UFOs I have enjoyed seeing all my projects again, and I look forward to finishing them. But that doesn't mean I don't have days when I fear for my sanity! [Alice](#) and I have regular messenger sessions encouraging each other to stay sane and breathe :)

Friends!

I think friends are a great help in staying sane while finishing all our UFOs. It can be overwhelming, and constant encouragement is necessary. Thankfully the quilting community, online and otherwise, is AWESOME! There is so much support out there. We all love to encourage each other because we are in the same boat. And more than that, we don't JUDGE each other, which can happen from people who just can't understand how we got ourselves into such a situation – I mean over 180 UFOs??? How is that even possible?! There must be something very wrong with me!!

Meeting New Quilters

Something else that helps my sanity is meeting a fellow quilter for the first time and chatting with them... not long into the conversation things like this come up:

“My stash”- yes, my stash is overflowing into the dining room and bedroom too....!

“The latest quilting” – oh yes, I NEED to join that, it looks awesome..!

“Ufos” – um... yeah... I have a few... actually I have a lot... actually I have over a 100....!

Instantly we are friends for life! No longer do we doubt our sanity! No longer do we think, I can't ever catch up on these UFOs because this lovely new friend has WAY MORE than I do!!! (Well, in my case I haven't found anyone with more yet.. but oh well...)

These are the kinds of things that keep me sane while completing my UFOs – knowing that I am not alone and that with the support of my quilting community I can do it.... And tomorrow I will share the **#1 reason I can stay sane** while completing UFOs...

I love the quilting community, whether it be here in my town or online. I've made so many friends, and they do help me stay on track. Oh, and they steer me to all the new stuff which leads to more UFO's eventually. Living the good life! So glad I met you online.

~ Sunny ~

In creating my 'ufo's' down through the years, it has given my many new friends—like Sunny (who I have met now 3-4 times in person) and you and Alice and Lola—and soooo many more—so maybe —we shouldn't feel bad about so many ufo's—but instead think of all the fun and happy times we have had in making that ufo and the friendships we have developed along the way—and talking about quilts—one of my very favorites is the one we all did with starting with the centerpiece-basket of flowers and then some of you took turns creating the next round of patterns to go around it—do you remember which one I am telling you about—it not I will take a photo of it and send it to you—it hangs in my foyer here!!!

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

Me again—on the topic of 'sanity' it is all of you that have truly kept me sane in my whole world not just quilting—thanks—love and laughter,

~ Di ~

quilting friends.. both in person and online have helped complete UFO's and also make new ones!! I think without friends and sewing my sanity would not be salvagable at all..... it's cheaper than therapy...

Hugz ~ Fiona ~

Day 30 – Allowing Yourself to Start Something New

I think today's topic is the most important one to keep in mind during this whole month of talking about UFOs: *Allowing yourself to start something new.*

So often I hear people say that they can't start something new until they have finished all of their UFOs. And they sit there in misery, watching everyone else start fun new things while they plod away at something they may like, but need a break from!

Yes, you may say that the reason I have so many UFOs is because I allowed myself to start too many new projects!! True. But I had lots of fun along the way!

As [Sunny](#) said in one of the comments, quilting is our hobby. It is meant to give us pleasure, to relieve stress from our lives, not to cause more. Not allowing myself to start something new is a good way to stress me out, let me tell you that! But working on some UFOs and still starting some new projects keeps me going.

I know some people use new projects as rewards for finishing UFOs. I think this is a great idea. Finish 5, then you can start something new... (or finish 1, then start...?!). This method helps us get UFOs done, but also allows us to start on a fun new project which keeps us sane.

Of course sometimes our UFOs are so old that they almost seem like they are "new" – which I am finding with some of the ones I uncovered this month! But that is a bonus. Don't let your UFOs hold you back and make you guilty. Allow yourself a treat now and then, and start something new!

Hooray for new projects! I'm leaving for retreat in a couple of days, and I packed up two new projects along with a couple of UFO's. I do start new things from time to time, but now I'm far more likely to finish what I start than I was in the past. And...I tend to make smaller projects so they're easier to finish. I really am trying to get my UFO list under control, but it's definitely NECESSARY to start new projects from time to time. Like you said, if you can't get inspired to work on what you've started, making something new might just be the jolt you need. Happy Stitching!! Only one more day. . . . ~ Sunny ~

That is a very good reminder! I try to keep a couple hand quilting projects going at a time so I can switch back and forth and not get burnt out. I also probably start more projects than I will ever finish. But most are scrappy projects I can pick up again at any time. I've really enjoyed your posts this month! I won't hide my UFO list in shame anymore :)

~ Katie Joy ~

My weakness in starting new projects is at the beginning of the new year when all the new bom's come out!!! I do need to go back though this years and see what might need finishing—I do know that in Aug I did send some blocks from some of them to my friend Anne for her hospice quilts as I decided I did not want to go with them—but there is still some in my basket—sounds like a good job for one day this week!!! and just this week I did list a couple new projects that I would like to make—!!!

love and laughter,

~ Di ~

OK, all good ideas. but I'm a bit stuck in unsettled mode at present & seem to be falling back on my crochet of a night . I should really be handsewing bindings & getting something else onto Bubs. What a great day yesterday! I enjoyed spending a few hours with 5 lovely ladies. Thank you ever so much. Take care.

~ Susan ~

very important to reward with a new project... finish one start 3 and so on...

Hugz

~ Fiona ~

Day 31- Final Day and a Challenge

Can you believe it?! It is Day 31 and I have somehow managed to blog about UFOs for a whole month – amazing! I hope you are not all sick of hearing about them, but have got some motivation to finish.. as I have...

My final tally of UFOs is 184 (I found two more) and this month only I managed to finish 2.... So that leaves 182....

182

I did not finish a whole lot, but I have managed to find ALL (I hope!!) of my UFOs, document them, and put them in some semblance of order. And that is quite an achievement, I am sure you will all agree!

Taking this month off to focus on my UFOs has been great. I have renewed motivation to work on them and get them done. I wonder... could I get them ALL done in 2017??? Let's see!

For now I'd like to thank you all for joining me on this journey, leaving comments, and encouraging me! And I'd like to invite you to join me on a little challenge...

Christmas is coming up quickly, and I thought it'd be good to keep momentum going and challenge myself to finish two Christmas UFOs in time to gift or use this year. I have chosen this one:



It's a strippy quilt – the top needs finishing, then quilted and bound, so this will be a relatively big project to finish. I hope I am not finishing the binding on Christmas Eve, but... you know me...

The other is a very quick one, this apron:



Just needs the hemming finished and the straps sewn and attached. So one “big” ufo and one “small” one. I think I can do it...

Will you join me in this challenge? Pick two projects, post about them on your blog, and we will keep each other accountable. They don't have to be big ones. And since I haven't hosted a giveaway for such a loooooong time, there will be a small Christmas gift up for grabs! So, leave me a comment if you want to join in, then blog about it and lets get a few Christmas UFOs done by December 25th!

well done Joy.... it has been great reading and hearing about your very impressive stash of UFO's! haha..... I'd like to join in the challenge- must go and have a dig in the box...

Hugz

~ Fiona ~

I've really enjoyed seeing your posts about UFOs this month. I am glad to have made a new quilting friend as a result of Write 31 Days! 182 is a big number, but I'm sure you are going to have fun working on finishing them up. I'll take your challenge of finishing two UFOs by Christmas! I will share them on my blog and have fun seeing if a little accountability might help me out with some finishes. ~ Katie Joy ~

You did a great job of blogging for the 31 days and on a tough subject really—ufo's—did not know one could blog about them for so many days!!
I know I have one small Christmas quilt to handquilt—will have to look to see if I have another one some place!! Will let you know in a day or two—
love and laughter, ~ Di ~

I was thinking that I pulled out my only Xmas ufo & did it earlier this, but I have another from a Xmas quiltalong, where I read the rules wrong & made wallhanging instead of a table runner. Hmmm! Might find that & do as a giveaway or gift. Thanks for the nudge. BTW, great month of posts. Well done you. Take care.

~ Susan ~

Just think, if you finished one UFO every two days, you could be all finished in a year. Bwahahahaha! I only have one Christmas UFO, but it's a biggie. And it's going to retreat with me in a couple of days. Fingers crossed for major progress.

~ Fiona ~

Enjoyed reading your post about your UFOs..
Even though I only have one Christmas UFO I would still like to join in. Thanks...
~ Maria ~

Ohh that is a great idea! I have already started do finish two Ufo's and have some more to go. So your challenge is just right in time, lol! Thanks for doing this!

~ Susan ~

I don't really have a Christmas UFO, but I have a twin quilt that I'd like to have the top done before Christmas, so I'll count that as a Christmas present to myself and the daughter whose current quilt is in shreds. Voila! Christmas UFO.

And I want to finish a "quiet book" for my grandson's birthday which is just a couple of weeks after Christmas.

Thanks for the nudge. ~ Kim ~

Hi Joy, well I have no Christmas UFOs, but I'm certainly looking forward to using my spare time on the school holidays to work on some projects that are at various stages of completion... I'm mostly of the habit of working on 4 or 5 things at any one time, and finishing things fully before starting something else; a habit I think comes from my days of sewing clothes for my kids. I cannot imagine having such a huge number of UFOs!! Good Luck!

~ Anthea ~



Day 31 Days of UFOs

Postscript

September 2017

It's almost been a year since I wrote this series, and I am finally getting around to making this ebook!

Writing this series was a great push to try to work on my UFOs... as I continued packing and sorting for my overseas move, I found MORE UFOs, until I got to a total of:

216!

In an attempt to tackle this ridiculous amount of UFOs, I set myself a challenge for this year to try to finish HALF of them... ie 108 :)

It's been slow going this year.... I've been travelling a lot, but last month I focused on UFOs and got 20 done in one month... Add that to what I already got done in the previous months - it adds up to 42 done so far.

Now we only have three months left in the year and I am not sure I will meet my goal of getting 108 done!

But even if I don't, 42 done is pretty good! I am sure I'll get some more done between now and Christmas, and if not, I'll set a high goal again next year.

I will get them done!!!

I hope you got some motivation to finish your own UFOs from this series.

Do feel free to email me or drop a comment on my blog if you have any questions or need motivation :)

Thanks for joining me on this journey!

*Lv,
Joy*

joy@daysfilledwithjoy.com

www.daysfilledwithjoy.com

Next Steps



Join me every month with [Finishing Stitches](http://www.daysfilledwithjoy.com)—a monthly challenge to finish UFOs and not create more!!!

Let's get those UFOs done!!

But Wait! There's More!

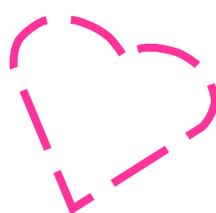
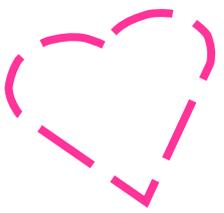
As mentioned earlier in this book, I have added the free printables at the end of this ebook.

Print as many as you need and I hope it helps you get organized!

I'll be making more printables so be sure to keep an eye on my blog, or sign up for my monthly newsletter to get free printables and patterns!

Sign up for *Days Filled With Joy* *Newsletter!*

Keep flipping the pages to get to the free printables :)

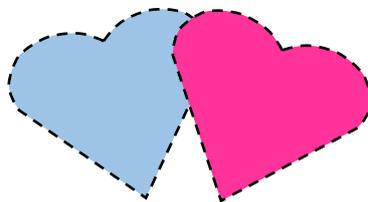


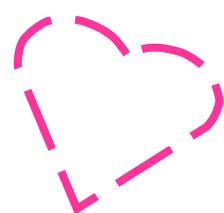
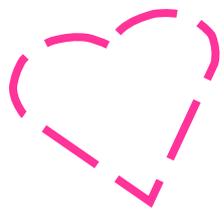
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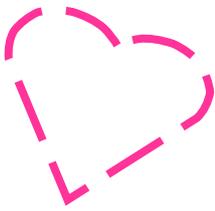
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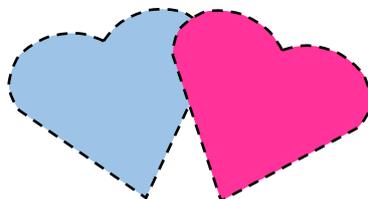
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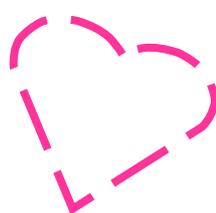
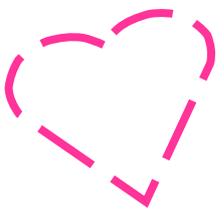
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Steps needed to finish:





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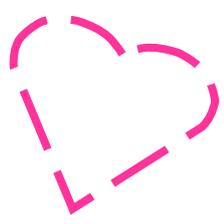
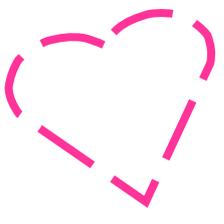
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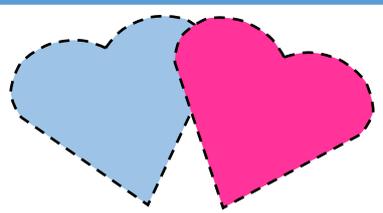
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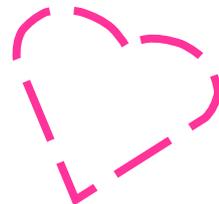
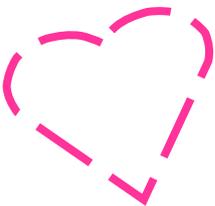


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Shopping List





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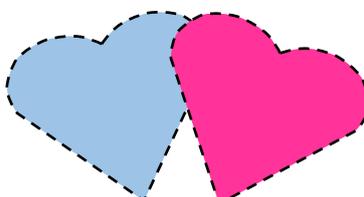
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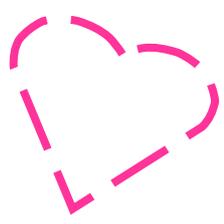
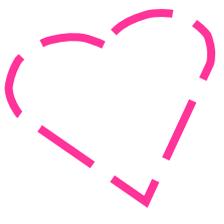
Blocks to finish:

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<input type="checkbox"/> Block 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Block 6	<input type="checkbox"/> Block 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Block 8
<input type="checkbox"/> Block 9	<input type="checkbox"/> Block 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Block 11	<input type="checkbox"/> Block 12

Other steps needed to finish:

- _____
- _____
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- _____





Quilt Shop Shopping List

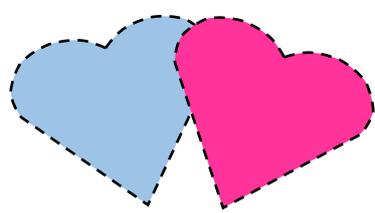
Project to buy for:

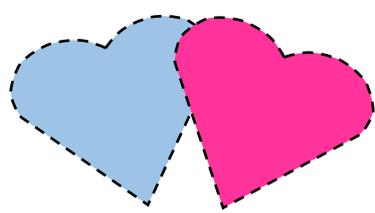
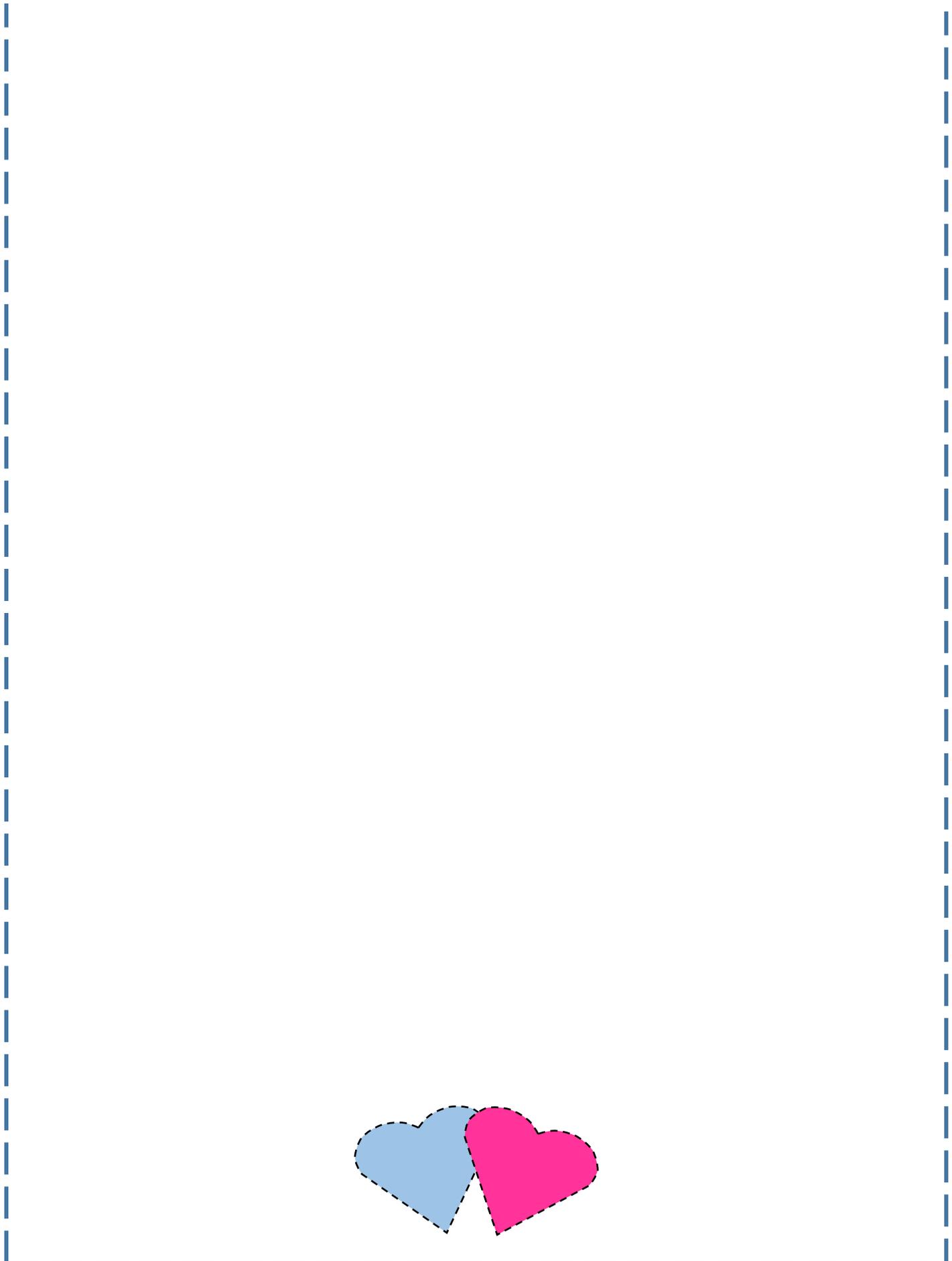
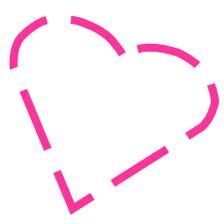
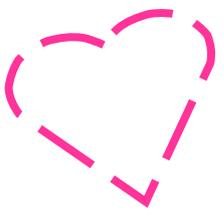
Threads & Notions:

Fabric:

Other:

Batting:





MY UFOs

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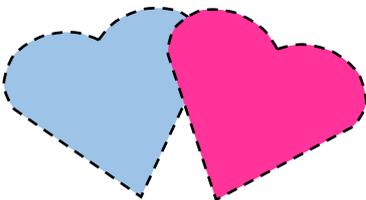
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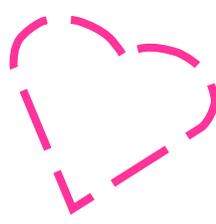
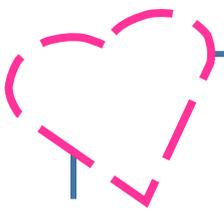
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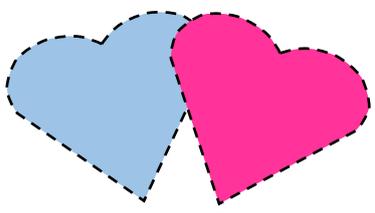
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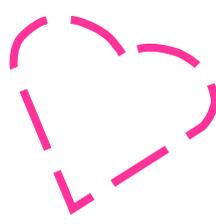
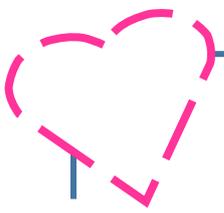




MY UFOs

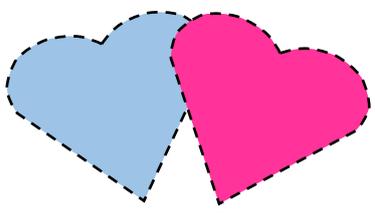
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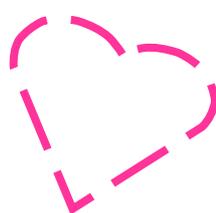
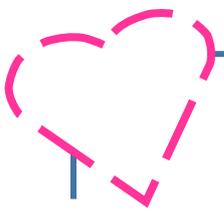




MY UFOs

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MY UFOs

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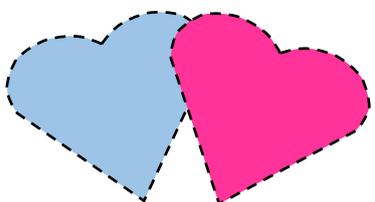
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MY UFOs

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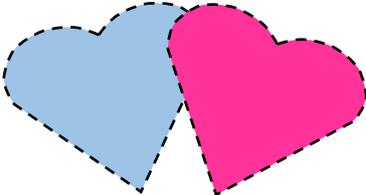
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MY UFOs

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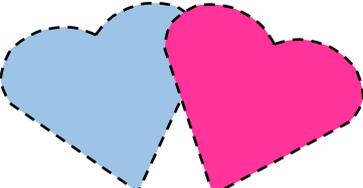
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MY UFOs

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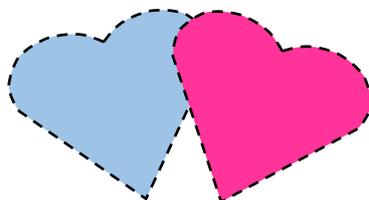
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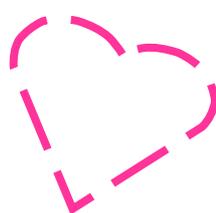
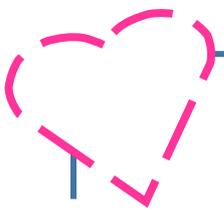
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MY UFOs

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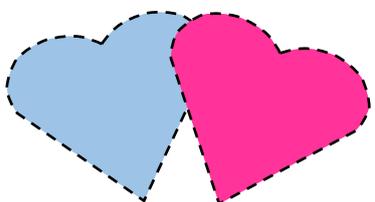
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MY UFOs

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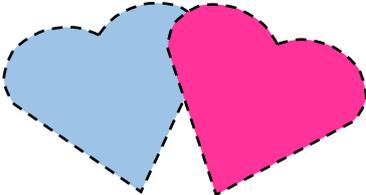
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MY UFOs

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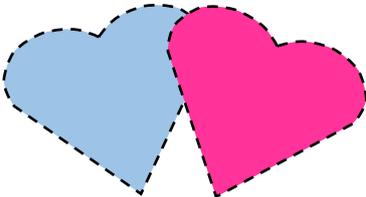
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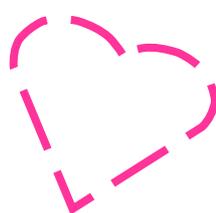
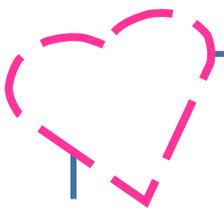
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MY UFOs

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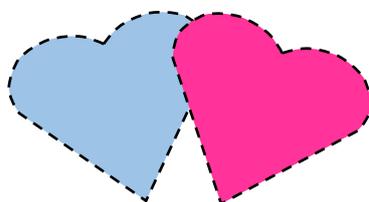
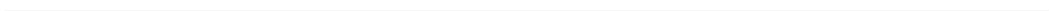
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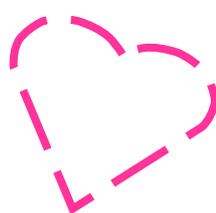
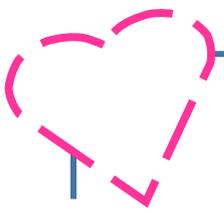


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MY UFOs

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