



Organize Each Area and Create an Efficient Floor Plan

Getting your entire business organized to run efficiently is a must if you want to run a profitable, well-planned-out business. Now that sounds like a dream statement for some people, but it's very important, and like I said, a must.

Each area in your business needs to be set up and organized. Even though you have a small space, you will have different departments. Having a plan makes it easy to organize each area of your business.

You have your office, your showroom, receiving, preparation, hooping, your embroidery production, finishing and shipping.

Now, many of these areas will be overlapping when you have a small space, but they still need to be kept separated. You will have different processes for each one and you do not want your areas or departments interfering with each other as you're going through the processes.

Your processes will change as you grow, but to start with, you need a designated area for each process. Now, on my table, I can receive and ship, but I do my receiving on one end of the table and the shipping on the other end. This keeps them totally separated, and if you have any type of help, full time or part time, you will see how important this is.

Each area of your business needs to have a system for its operation. This is not only very important in your organization but this is something that you cannot do until after you have your business started. I teach this topic more in depth in my 9 Steps to a Profitable Embroidery Business course.

Now, this is too advanced for the person just starting out. You need to learn all of the processes of running your business and creating your products first.

We will talk more about systems that you need to have in place when you first start your business a little later.

Now, creating an efficient floor plan. Without a good workflow plan, you will be wasting a lot of valuable time. This is very important in order to ensure that you will have an efficient workflow. A layout for the most efficient workflow should be done in a loop, if at all possible, so that each area is not conflicting with another area. In a good workflow, the work runs very efficiently from one area to the next without wasted steps from one job process to another.

This is just as important to the one-person shop in the home as it is to a large, multi-head shop, or even a shop in a retail location. When you are working from home, you are usually very limited in your floor space, or your wall space, but you must make it very efficient in order to make it profitable.

Separate sections for each process. When you are working on your floor plan and trying to figure out where each part is going to be sitting, you must plan to divide it into separate sections for your different types of processes. Each area uses different supplies and tools, and they need to be kept in that area. So you really want to think about that as you are planning out your workflow. This can even be done in a very small, one room shop.

The workflow should be as follows, regardless of what size shop you have. You've got your order. This is your order processing;

- taking the order,
- logging it in,
- ordering your products.
- Then you've got receiving. Receiving should be located as close to the incoming door as possible. This is receiving the goods in from the distributors and other customers.
- Staging. This is shelving where the received orders are waiting for the prep work, the hooping and the designs to be finished.
- Prep. Where the garments are hooped and placed into baskets or bins, ready to be transported to the embroidery machine. Now, in a one-person shop, this may be in front of the machine, and done as you are also embroidering.
- Staging 2. This is where garments are already hooped, ready for the embroidery machine operator. In a one-person shop, you would not have

this area, if you do not have enough hoops to hoop garments ahead for production.

- Then you've got your embroidery machine production,
- your finishing, which is where your garments are trimmed and packed. The packed garments are then made ready for shipping.
- Then you've got your shipping or your pick up. Now, these areas may be overlapping, but the flow must stay the same.

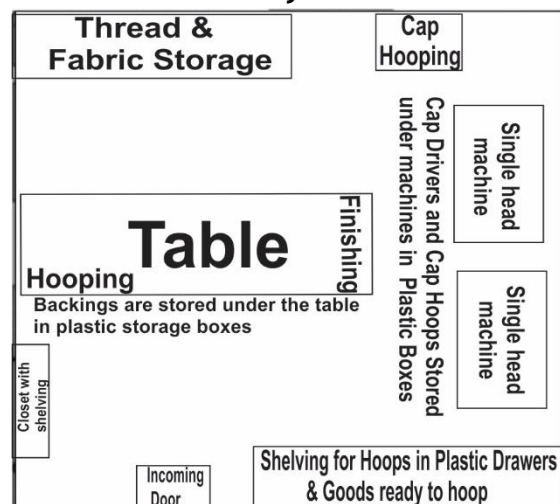
I have a very small room that is my work room at home. I have a video that you can watch to see how I had it organized at one time, and since making the video, I have added more shelving, moved my table and added more plastic storage boxes. These changes have allowed me more storage in a small space, while maintaining an efficient work space. I have even more organizational storage in my room now than I did in the video.

Now, here is a link to the video as it was before I made the changes.

<http://embtrainingresourcecenter.s3.amazonaws.com/organizing-your-workspace.mp4>

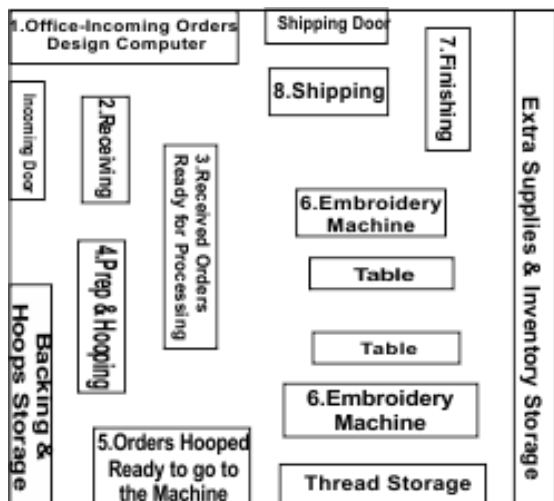
Now the easiest way to create a good workflow is to purchase some graph paper and create pieces of paper to scale that will represent each of your items that take up floor space. You measure out the space that you have and start laying out your pieces of paper that you have marked for each piece of equipment, and you're going to create your floor plan according to your particular space.

This is a basic layout after I made my changes. I have two machines and only



one table. This is my prep area and my hooping, and this is my finishing. You can see they're at opposite ends of the table. And I still keep my tools assigned in the different areas in my plastic drawers, and I bring them out when I'm working on that particular task, and I do not use the same tools for all the processes. When you do this, you end up misplacing tools and you spend a lot of time looking for the right tools to use for a certain process.

I have several different pairs of scissors; many the same, but the ones that I use for trimming the backing are not the same ones that I use for cutting the backing or the topping before I hoop. Think of each space as being self-sufficient, while still being a part of a bigger job flow.



Now here is a drawing of a basic layout for a small shop that has two, two-head embroidery machines. This was actually created for a small shop that had a retail front end with a separate room for their embroidering. This was a large 16 by 16 foot room in the back of the store. The best physical layout of your shop will determine how you will be able to place your machines for the best possible production.

The most efficient layout I have found has been having two machines across from each other with one wide table in the center, or two narrow tables in the center, one for each machine.



Now, this my office. This is in another room. And this gives me more room in my work area, without having to take up the desk space. Even if you have your computer and desk in the corner of another room, it's going to give you more floor space in your actual workroom. The picture in the center is of course my desk area. The picture on the right is the shelving unit that is on the right side of my desk, and the picture on the left is the shelving unit that's on the left side of my desk. This gives me a lot more floor space in my workroom.

Many machines today do not have to be hooked directly to your computer. You can transfer your designs to your machines by copying to a USB flash drive, or even remotely from your computer. All of this is possible in today's

world. Now, some machines have to be hooked directly from your computer to your machine, but generally a small laptop will work for that.

Now, if you have room in your basement to store some of your supplies, so that you're not taking up floor space in your work room, you may want to consider this as an option. I have a lot stored in my basement, and this gives me more floor space in my workroom. I put a shelving unit inside of my workroom closet for additional storage of jobs that needed to be done before I rearranged my room. Now I use the closet to store blank goods in plastic tubs on the shelves. I do not have much in inventory, but that's another whole subject that we will not get into for this training.

Purchasing Other Tools and Equipment

Now, there are other tools that you will need to purchase in order to do your job efficiently. Some of the tools will depend on what your market is and what types of items you are embroidering. I have created a basic list for your convenience and there will be more tools that you may want to purchase later on, but these are basics that you must have. Now, you can download that list right from inside of this program.

- You're going to need a work table. Now, you want one at least 3 by 6 feet. A 4 by 8 table would be much better, it all depends on if you have the room for it.
- Shelving. A hooping device; and I recommend The Hoop Master. It's going to save you a lot of time in hooping and all of your garments will be hooped in the same spot for each size.
- A steamer. A floor model. Not one of the handheld ones. I highly recommend the Jiffy Steamer because it will outlast the less expensive ones.
- More hoops. I recommend at least four or six hoops in the 12 and 15 centimeter size for your left chest size designs, hooping for each head. For a single head machine, you will need a minimum of four of each. It is hard to get a good, steady production flow without them.
- An 18 inch ruler.
- Marking pens, air erasable.
- Chalk pencil.

- Small, flat soaps. I use hotel soaps. I place them in my bathroom for hand washing until they get narrow and sharp on the edges, and it's perfect for most of your marking.
- Scissors, for cutting off your backing.
- Small, curved point scissors for getting into those small areas during finishing.
- Nippers, to trim your threads while you're working at the machine.
- 6-inch bent tweezers. Rather than the straight tweezers. They are easier to pick up your threads while threading the machine. They are one of my indispensable tools.
- And thread tension gauges. These are huge in keeping control of your tensions, both top tension and bobbin tension.

Purchasing Supplies

There are basic supplies that you will need to purchase and have on hand to work with. Now, you may receive some when you purchase your machine, but it will not even be enough to get you started. You usually receive samples.

Now, I'll be using the term 'backing' and 'stabilizer' in my supplies. Backing and stabilizers are exactly the same thing. In the commercial market, they're called backings. In the home market, they're called stabilizers, and we're going to be starting a commercial business, so here I am using the term backings.

Now, here's a basic list of supplies and I'll provide you with a list of suppliers.

- Thread, polyester. You may have rayon on your machine when it's delivered. You will need all the basic colors, and additional colors that you will be using for your particular market.
- Cutaway backing, or stabilizer. I recommend 2 ounce, medium weight backing, and this is for your heavy knits.
- No-show backing, or stabilizer. Now this is for your lightweight knits.
- Tearaway backing, or stabilizer. This is for your woven fabrics. I recommend a 1.5 ounce crisp tearaway. I do not recommend the soft tearaways. They do not look good when you tear them away from the garment. They also do not give you enough stability. The crisp tearaway helps with fine detail in your designs.

- Cap backing. This is a 3-ounce cap backing, and it's used for the fronts, sides and backs of caps. I also use it at times to help with puckering on a design that is a heavy stitch count.
- Embroidery Solvy, or topping. Actually, Solvy is a brand name of topping. This is used on top of knit garments and towels. This helps to keep the thread on top of the garment, instead of sinking in.
- Needles. I recommend 70/10 sharp needles for your woven fabrics, and 70/10 ballpoints for your knits and satin fabrics.
- Bobbins. I like the Fil-Tec magnetic bobbins, but you will need to find out if they work with your machine. They do work in most machines, and they keep their tension all the way to the end. When you are creating a high-quality product, this is very important. They also are a huge time saver.

Setting up your office. Your office area is a multi-purpose space. You are going to need to set it up with some very necessary equipment. This area will be used for creating your design work, as well as accounting and word processing. Now, you may already have all these items in your home, but here is a list of the office equipment that you're going to need.

- A Computer, either a desktop or a laptop will work. However, I like the desktop, with a larger monitor when I'm working on my designs. It's so much easier to edit your designs when you have a large monitor.
- A Printer. A color printer to print out your design sheets, brochures, letters to clients.
- Desk,
- Chair
- and a File Cabinet.

Homework

- Download your goal sheets. Set all of your goals and start your weekly and daily planning.
- Go through your preliminary planning.
- Decide on which machine and software to purchase, and if you have questions on which machine to purchase, you can contact me and I'll be happy to help you.

Send me an email to joyce@TheEmbroideryCoach.com. That's joyce@TheEmbroideryCoach.com.

- Decide on how you are going to purchase it.
- Create your floor plan.
- Download your list of tools and supplies.
- Go over the list of tools and supplies needed and figure out which ones you need to purchase.
- Then you want to check to see what office equipment you need and get that purchased and get your office set up.

Now, this Joyce Jagger, The Embroidery Coach, and if you have any questions or need any more help, feel free to contact me at joyce@TheEmbroideryCoach.com.