

Philofaxy *2008*

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Chapter 1

2008

1.1 January

Happy 2008! (2008-01-13 19:01) - Nan



[1] It's been so long since I've posted to Philofaxy, it feels a little strange. I want to thank all of the readers who've been commenting on recent posts. Thank you for your input, and for inspiring me to keep the blog alive. My absence has been due in part to getting burned out at work last year (and it feels really good to use the word "last" here), to a temporary addiction to something called Facebook, and to, frankly, a lack of news. It's easy to write about Filofax angst when you're choosing between sizes and formats. I had settled into a stable Filofax system in 2007, and eventually there wasn't much to write about.

I spent the time between Christmas and New Year's setting up new refills in my 3 Filos – A5 for work, A5 for household, and Personal for personal. The biggest change was in Personal, when I went from week-per-2-pages to 2-days per page. As you can see in this picture, the new, white diary pages (bottom) take up a much bigger portion of the book. I had to cull quite a few other pages to make room.

But I'm enjoying the extra room on each page. Now I have room to write down more than "pay electric bill." I have room to write down the confirmation number when I pay the bill online. I have time to note addresses and directions. There's also a 1/2 page each week called Notes, which I've used so far for to-dos that don't have to be done on a specific day, and notes that go beyond a confirmation number.

I've also changed my tabs in the Personal: They're now **Projects**, **Maybe**, **Ideas**, **Lists**, **Life**, and **Tel**. The **Projects** section is for truly personal projects, like get-togethers with friends, holidays, and vacations. **Maybe** stands for "maybe do" and holds to-do pages. It's for Web sites I want to look up, people I want to get back in touch with, products I might want to order, and so on. **Ideas** may not sound very different from Maybe, but it is. It's for ideas that go beyond a single to-do. Cities I want to visit each have a page under ideas, as do Web sites I want to develop and articles I want to write. It's actually a pretty fallow section at the moment. **Lists** is an alphabetical collection of lists; mostly shopping/gift

lists alphabetized by venue. **Life** is an oddball name, I know. It's actually a euphemism for diet and exercise records. It makes sense to me.

Has anyone else done any tweaking for the new year?

1. http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/R4wBn1thYbI/AAAAAAAAAEM/ft7CDEcjGb8/s1600-h/DSC01825.JPG

pigpogm (2008-01-15 16:09:00)

After a while using notebooks, I brought back my Pocket Lyndhurst, but found it too big. I replaced it with a Mini Guildford, which is working out pretty well.

I'm toying with moving my tasks and notes into Emacs Org, but still using the Filofax for scribbling away from the computer.

Laurie (2008-01-17 05:40:00)

I finally settled on the Cotton Cream week on 2 pages as my calendar for 2008. I use a Personal size Filo, and since I'm a SAHM this works for home, travel (which is frequent, an international trip every 2-3 months with the whole family), personal, etc etc etc. This seemed like it would work pretty well for me this year. Then, in a sudden decision, everything is turned on its head as we prepare to move back to the US from overseas. In 8 weeks. So now we have to pack up our house, arrange for everything (including our car) to be shipped overseas, search for a house and job in the US when we are 8 time zones away...you get the picture. Suddenly the task load has increased exponentially. And just as suddenly, my Personal sized week on a page no longer has enough space. The days get quickly overfilled and the tasks overflow onto post-it notes stuck around the margins of the pages. So now I use my calendar and to-do lists in my bigger planner, which is not quite as big as the largest size Filo. It has a glorious layout: the top left quadrant is a month-at-a-view calendar; the top right quadrant has two separate lists for To Do and To Call, and across the bottom half is the weekly calendar Monday through Sunday as columns. There is lots of space to write, and it helps my forward planning to see my week, month, and to-dos all in one view. This is actually a Go Mom Classic size planner (which has loads of information pages, great for families), but I use it when I have something big coming up that requires a lot of forward-planning. So I feel a little split having my calendar in one binder and all my information/ addresses/ lists etc in my Filo. But, I'm not carrying these around anywhere, they are just on my desk, so it's not that big a deal.

Andrzej (2008-01-18 05:36:00)

A Happy New Year to you and all Philofaxy readers and contributors! My one and only Filofax system tweak has been to switch my diary pages from "two pages to a week multi language white" to "two pages to a week in cream". My theory was that this would be easier on the eye and I could benefit from the "this week" box for goals for the week. This has been a failure on both counts because I can't read the date without glasses and I haven't got used to looking in the top left hand corner and hence miss my cues. It's early days though; it took me ages to get used to the Filofax though I wouldn't be without it now.

It's interesting that you had a "temporary addiction to something called Facebook" for I also got dragged into this by a former work colleague. I could see it had endless time wasting possibilities and my page never moved from being utilitarian. Philofaxy on the other hand has always been a good read. I'm glad you're back.

Nan (2008-01-20 19:13:00)

Thanks for your comments, Michael, Laurie, and Andrzej!

Upcoming updates (2008-01-14 19:37) - Nan

I'm surprised – and overjoyed – to note that guests have begun returning to Philofaxy after just one new blog post after a 3-month absence. So as not to torture you (especially those of you that don't use an RSS feed), I'll let you know that I'm planning to update the blog about twice a week – once during the weekend (Saturday or Sunday), and once around the middle of the week (Tuesday or Wednesday). I have a few topics up my sleeve, and am always open to suggestions!

In between, you can visit (and hopefully add to) the [1]Flickr Philofaxy pool. The group has been

wonderfully active, with folks displaying some amazingly creative Filo configurations.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/groups/40748476@N00/pool/>

Leen Groeneveld (2008-01-15 06:10:00)

skcbaGlad to see that updates are coming! I really like reading them.

I am fond of Philofaxes, however I never had one. For a short time I used a Succes-organizer but I'm afraid I cannot live without Outlook and my little Palm. When I try to use a paperbased system I miss the repeating events like weekly and monthly meetings and birthdays. I miss having all adresses and other contacts in my pocket and a handwritten tasklist soon is a mess!

But: I look jalously to the beautiful Philofax and Succes systems that other people use! And may be once I can get used to such a system. Until that time I love reading your blog!

Nan (2008-01-20 19:12:00)

Leen, thank you for joining us!

You may be able to print your contacts to Filofax or Succes pages. Palm Desktop has a feature for this, and Outlook may, as well.

When I switched to Filofax from Palm, I had the same fear. I had hundreds of contacts synched to my computer. I decided to just write phone numbers in my Filo as needed. After doing this for 2 years, it turns out I need less than 100! That's right! The main list is safe on my computer, and the ones I need at my fingertips are right there in my Filo when I need them.

We even have one reader who puts her diary pages through the printer every year to add all the repeating events. Or my favorite method...sit down between Christmas and New Year's with a glass of wine and happy memories of everyone's birthday.

jiannazzone (2008-01-22 13:59:00)

I have printed my address book from Outlook to personal sized pages. I can print four to a page on legal sized paper or two to a page on letter sized paper. It is then a matter of cutting and hole punching to fit the binder.

I have way too many entries. During my years of Palm use, it was easy to just add every address and phone number "just in case I ever need it". I probably have the numbers I really need in my phone. I rarely need addresses away from my desk.

t23creates (2008-01-29 16:36:00)

Missed you so much! Great to be able to read about filox here again!

Well Enough Alone (2008-01-20 19:16) - Nan

It's time to come clean. A few days into 2008, just before I started posting here again, I had a Philofaxical crisis. After one-and-a-half years of all-Filo-all-the-time, I was one trip to the stationery store away from abandoning it all.

It all started one day at work, the first day after Christmas break. I was planning my work schedule for the next few months by projecting my upcoming deadlines. I used a monthly wall calendar to write down the milestone dates and hung it near my desk where I'd be sure to see it. Yes, I write the same milestones in the A5 Filofax I use for work, but then I don't see them far enough in advance. That's one weakness of the weekly Filo format, and it did affect my work performance last year.

I then flipped through my Filo, with a tab for general Admin To-Dos, and a tab for each major project containing both To Do pages and notes, and wrote down a list of things to do today on a big piece of paper. Another weakness of my system – no instant way to ferret out what needs to be done TODAY. You can see where this is going. The voices in my head start chattering...all I really need is a simple wall calendar and a running To Do list. I can keep my notes for each project in a file folder...wouldn't that be easier than maintaining a tab for each project and lugging a heavy book everywhere? A composition book for meeting notes...

I started making a list for everything I'd need to replace my 3 Filos (work, personal, and household). The list almost filled a large sheet of paper, and it included a small Moleskine to replace my Personal Filo. Well, those are already sold out for '08. Do I really want to change everything over, when I already have almost 2 years' worth of notes in Filo format? Do the weaknesses of my system really warrant starting over with completely different tools?

There was a time where I made lists like the above one or more times a month. But just as that kind of tweaking becomes an addiction, staying on track eventually becomes the path of least resistance. I started by promising to stick with my Filo system for just the last half of 2006. Then, the entire calendar year of 2007. Done. Now, another year – 2008 – is no big deal. I can just keep doing what I'm doing, with the option to change at the start of 2009.

But I'm going to add one thing to my Filo system – one of those Vertical Year Planners. And I put that list I made away for 2009 – in the pocket of my A5 Filo.

The Monkey (2008-01-21 12:18:00)

What I've decided to do is simply use the "Month On Two Pages" diary in conjunction with my normal diary (currently "Week On One Page", as my primary daily calendar is in my iPhone).

As far as "To Do"s are concerned, I simply keep a sheet (or two or three) of rules paper inserted in the current week layout of the weekly calendar. Usually, a white sheet for my personal To Do list, a yellow sheet for my Work To Do list, and a blue sheet for a Shopping List. I never have any trouble remembering to check my individual project To Do lists, because if they weren't projects that were in current progress, they wouldn't be in my Filofax. As far as replacing my stock of Filofax gear, I've already decided to manufacture custom inserts. I'm currently using four Filofaxes, a Pocket Kensington for my car, a Personal Buckingham (which just went to my wife), an A5 FSO Windsor for my primary book, and a Deskfax Sandhurst that I just got off of eBay is going to start the experiment to move up to a larger size.

If I end up not liking the B5 size, I've got an A5 Bridle and an A5 Finsbury in reserve that will become a second A5 book for household or my band.

After years of examining other systems, I'm back to Filofax, and I will only be switching to the system of my own custom manufacture, which is admittedly heavily Filofax-inspired, while still using Filofax products along with it.

jiannazzone (2008-01-21 13:21:00)

I am back to using a paper organizer after about ten years with Palm PDAs. I had previously used various size Day-Timers. I experimented with a customized Moleskine. I liked the pocket size but missed having my address book with me.

I have settled on a Personal Hamilton, two pages per week. I use blank sheets inserted into the current week for lists. They are trimmed short at the top and hole punched on both sides so I can move them opposite whichever page the current day is on.

I am of the "everything in one organizer" school. If it is not all in one place, I would miss something.

ikd (2008-01-21 16:58:00)

Same story here! I tried the vertical format, also, monthly, weekly, pda, moleskine, gmail/calendar.

In the end, I ended up retiring the filofax and using a combination gmail/calendar and moleskine notebook.

I Still have issues to iron out and deadlines to watch out for. I find it a must to save 10-15 minutes daily either at the end of the day or early the next day to refresh and maintain some sanity in my schedules.

I.

Anonymous (2008-01-29 08:19:00)

I love the look of Filofax but they aren't available near me; I'm looking online to buy one but I'd like to know where they are made first. Could someone please post?

Thank you,
Charlotte

jiannazzone (2008-01-29 09:04:00)

Filofax originated in England. My binder is older and manufactured there. The pages I have bought recently were printed in China. Regardless, they have a nice, "old world" look and feel.

Laurie (2008-01-29 13:25:00)

Hi Inky, this is exactly the issue that has driven me into the arms of the Classic size Go Mom organizer. It's definitely not as cool looking as a Filofax, but I've never seen any other system that allows me to see the entire month, detailed week, and To Do lists all in one view when the book is open. Now my To Do list doesn't get neglected behind some tab, I don't forget the bill that's due next Monday (instead of turning my weekly page to see it's due when it's already too late), etc. For a busy schedule and forward planning, it can't be beat. Something else I love about having my To Do lists situated in view along with my weekly schedule is that I can see gaps in appointments when I have time to actually do those To Dos. Right now it's the only thing keeping me sane as I prepare to move internationally. I can track what I need to get done and when, over the next several weeks. I can tick off my tasks and stay on my timeline because I can see it all at once. I daresay my personal sized Filo is in danger of being relegated to a reference book and being taken out of active duty!

Laurie (2008-02-01 04:34:00)

Hey Inky, you say you have 3 Filos, Personal, A5 for work, and household. What size and style do you have for household, what types of things do you have in it, and how is it working for you? (If you don't mind me asking...)

Laurie (2008-02-01 12:37:00)

It's me again. I have reached the end of my personal quandary. Some background: My sister shares my planner sickness and we are constantly debating the merits of Filofax vs Moleskine vs whatever else. She too was looking into the Go Mom planner because it is so darn functional. But the romance ended when she summed it up as "the mom jeans of planners." Yes it's functional and comfortable, but it is not classy or cool. I mentioned this to my husband and he said, "She's right. It's not sexy and cool like your Filofax." End of debate. Just goes to show that no matter how well something functions, it still has to have style. So now it's all-Filo, all the time for me. I have decided to resolve my issues this way: 1) I'll use my wall calendar a lot more than I currently do, for upcoming bills, deadlines, pack-out dates, etc to avoid surprises and stay on track. 2) I'll write smaller in my Personal size Cotton Cream Week on 2 pages. 3) If my To Do space each week gets filled up, I'll add a post-it note. I'm actually looking forward to NOT switching calendars all the time (I switched something like 7 times last year alone) because it makes it really hard to look up dates of things that happened when I have to search several different places. So now my commitment to my black leather Personal size Filo is renewed. I'll use it until it falls apart, and then I'll replace it. Unless of course I decide I need the A5 size...

Nan (2008-02-03 19:53:00)

Hi amper, Charlotte, Joseph, ikd! Welcome one and all.

Amper – I love the idea of keeping to-do lists within the weekly spread, especially color-coding the pages. I was just on a trip where I decided not to take my bulky A5 work Filo with me, and your solution would have been a good way to multitask in my Personal.

Laurie – Thank you for your thoughtful comments! I feel bad that your sis made you feel less-than-cool. I'm all for doing what works, no matter what people think. On the other hand, I definitely approve of all-Filo-all-the-time! (But I've also switched 7 times some years, too.)

Laurie (2008-02-04 00:33:00)

LOL Inky! I felt better once I realized that my struggle was really about my own identity rather than my planner, with the strong belief that my planner reflects my personality. I felt that by giving up my Filo I was giving up the independent world traveler I used to be before I had kids. Once I realized I'm still that person, my internal struggle ended!

1.2 February

Filofax for the home (2008-02-03 19:56) - Nan

I've just been away for a week, in a place where I, surprisingly, didn't have much Internet access. That's why there were no new posts last week. But I sincerely appreciate all of the recent comments – check out the previous post if you haven't read them!

One of our readers asked me to explain how I use my household Filofax, so I'll report on that now.

It's an A5 Filo, with a week-per-2-pages calendar. I prefer the horizontal format for this book, but all my local store had was vertical.

Basically, the book is supposed to be a Filofax version of the [1]Flylady "Control Journal," but it's still a work-in-progress. On the calendar pages, I record each day's routine tasks (:15 paperwork, :15 decluttering, and so on), as well as both my husband's and my appointments, and the dinner menu. I update it once a week, on Sunday.

The rest of the book is supposed to hold emergency numbers and other contact info, evacuation instructions, and so on. Flylady.net has instructions for preparing all of this, but I just haven't done it yet.

And most nights, do I collapse into bed before doing all of the day's tasks?

Yes.

1. <http://www.flylady.net/>

Laurie (2008-02-04 00:43:00)

FlyLady! Oh yes. I have a bit of a love/hate relationship with the whole concept. I have sort of hand-picked what works for me and I refuse to feel guilty about the rest. I do have general routines, but with two toddlers I can barely plan 10 minutes into the future, so if the routine doesn't get completed perfectly, oh well! My Personal sized Filo has a lot of Control-Journal aspects like Medical info for all of us, directories, contacts, insurance info etc. We travel internationally 3-4 times per year and I have to have all this stuff with me all the time. Makes my Filo really fat, but it's nice to have everything together when I need it, wherever I am. I'm already thinking about getting an A5 for this very purpose after we have moved back to the US next month and won't be traveling anymore, to have a "Mission Control" at home and my Personal size Filo (slimmed down) for my own personal stuff. It's delightful just to think about!

Leen Groeneveld (2008-02-05 05:17:00)

It's a problem. I cannot choose! I like Filofax (or Succes). I also like Moleskine and other little notebooks and diary's. But I also like using Outlook or Palm Desktop. And of course there is the G-mail calendar, which I also thinks great.

Since about eight years I am using a Palm. During a long time it could not be Synchronized at the office so I always worked with the stylus and synchronized at home. Since about a year I can synchronize at the office. Now I use Outlook (on the office-laptop) for everything, even for private dates, addresses, tasks and notes. Now I can use Outlook at the office and on the road and at home I have my Palm.

This works great! Since I am a gtd-fan I tweaked the tasks in Outlook so I can use them now just in the way I like to do. I never forget anything! I always have my whole Outlook (except mail) in my pocket.

But more and more I miss writing. I mean using a pen. So that's why I ask myself: Shall I buy a Philofax or a Moleskine? Shall I write in a journal every day instead of 'blogging'? As I said: I cannot choose! And of course: At work I have to use Outlook. My colleague's and I have to use Outlook and we have to share our Outlooks. So using a Philofax means that I have to put every date in Outlook as well as in a Philofax. I don't think that there will never be a mistake than....

So I still don't know what to do. reading this blog makes me think I will soon buy my first Philofax. But, it's expensive! And still I have to use Outlook.

So still I cannot choose!

Nan (2008-02-06 21:22:00)

Hi Leen – Welcome! We all struggle with these problems! I have to use a shared online calendar for work, but I make sure to only use it for major and shared events: Meetings, vacations, big deadlines. I write the details only in my Filofax.

In fact, I actually need to refer to the online, monthly calendar more often than I do now, so those deadlines don't take me by surprise!

How do you Filo? (2008-02-06 21:24) - Nan



[1] This week, at a reader's suggestion, I'm trying something new – a Roll Call! In the comments for this post, tell us the following (or any that apply):

- **How long have you been using Filofax?**
- **What size(s)/model(s) do you use?**
- **What calendar format works for you**
- **What's behind your tabs?**

I'll go first:

- Have been using Filofax, or DayRunner, or FranklinCovey on and off since the mid-80's.
- A Black A5 Finsbury for work, a Red Personal Finsbury for personal, and another A5 for household.
- Mostly, the week-per-2-pages, horizontal format. My least favorite is the vertical format week-per-2-pages, although that's what I'm using in my work A5 now; it's the easiest to get for A5. In my Personal, I'm experimenting with 2-days per page, and I think my dream format would be 2-days per page in A5!
- I've talked about my tabs frequently in my posts, but I'll sum it up here. In my Personal, I have Projects, Maybe, Ideas, Lists, Life (my code for health and fitness), and Tel. In my work A5, I have a tab for each of 3 major projects, plus To Do, Projects, and Notes, plus I use the A-Z tabs for contacts and reference info.

1. http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/R6p6PW4jXzI/AAAAAAAAAEU/hMWrr-1CtToA/s1600-h/Naval_Militia_Bugler_NGM-v31-p346.jpg

Adirondack Explorer (2008-02-06 21:58:00)

I started using a Daytimer in 1985. I switched between it and a Franklin-Covey binder. I also bought a Time Design on a whim one time. I'm still using the D-T. Although I'd love a Filofax, I can't justify the price with a perfectly good D-T on my desk!

jiannazzone (2008-02-06 22:35:00)

I began using a Daytimer in 1979. I went from pocket to loose leaf after a few years and used that until about 1995 and then went electronic. After a several glitches last year, I went back to paper.

I uses an old Daytimer binder with Filofax 2-pages per week. When I used paper before, I billed for time and used a two pages per day format. So, I have disciplined myself to be more efficient with my use of space. I do like the ability to carry an entire year in the binder instead of just a month or so.

I use the standard tabs. I am working on a system with different colored pages for different areas (work, home,

personal).

Laurie (2008-02-07 01:44:00)

I started using the Cambridge version of the Personal size Filo in 1995. A friend of mine had one full of all kinds of stuff, and I thought it was really cool to have everything in one binder. I bought my Personal size black leather Buckingham in 2001. I use the Cotton Cream week on 2 pages, because I like having the This Week box for my To-Dos on my calendar page. When this box gets full I add a post-it note to the bottom of the page. I have found that I have to see my To-Dos and my schedule all in one view. If my list is behind a tab somewhere it's "out of sight, out of mind" and I forget to even look at it! I have gone through many forms of calendar (Moleskine, Uncalendar, even the intense structure of Go Mom) but I always come back to my Filofax because it is where I store ALL of my information, and I feel split having my calendar in a separate book. I am definitely of the "all-in-one" camp. The other issue is that my family and I travel internationally several times per year (although that will end soon when we move back to the US next month—whole other topic) so I have to have all of my info in one portable thing.

So, for my tabs. Get ready, I have a lot. I have a tab for my Calendar, which has month at a view and the Cotton Cream week on 2 pages. Emergency, for phone numbers, emergency ID pages for each of my kids, and emergency medical authorization forms if my kids need medical care in my absence. Next is Medical which has medical records, vaccine info, etc for each of us. This has proven to be extremely useful when traveling. Next is Family Fun where I keep packing lists for outings, gift idea lists, birthday party planning pages, etc. Next is Meal Time but I don't use this section much, mostly shopping lists. It's intended for menu planning but I don't do that. Next is a section for kids' activities (my daughter's ballet class info, etc.). Then Directories, which is extremely useful. It has lists of friends and neighbors, medical and pharmacy numbers, numbers for home stuff like utilities, etc. Makes it easy to find when these numbers are listed by topic. Then I have a tab for Lists which is a catch-all. Notes, which currently is taken up with everything having to do with our move. Insurance, which has all the info for our various insurance policies. Travel with all of our frequent flier numbers, etc., and when we have a trip coming up this is where I put our info for our flights, accommodation, etc. Scotland, because we go there about once a year and it's nice to have all my contact info in one place. Finances, where I also have a calculator, which is really handy. Maps, because I have several. Then my A-Z tabs which contain addresses as well as various other information. Then last I have a business card holder with various cards for reference.

I have so much in my Filo that it makes it nearly impossible to switch to any other system! As Inky said it, staying with my Filo becomes the path of least resistance!

Simon (2008-02-07 06:18:00)

I began using a filofax back in the mid 90's but not for long. Following a period using a Psions & Palms, I returned to the fold with an A4 Lyndhurst about five years ago. I switched to a personal Lyndhurst about 18 months later & have been using it ever since. I occasionally experiment with other filo's (personal & smaller), but keep coming back to my Lyndhurst. There's something very satisfying about zipping it closed!

Having tried day-to-a-page, week-to-a-page, week-to-two-pages (Monday start, no notes), I've settled on week-to-two-pages, Sunday start with notes. I like that the weekends have the space as the weekdays. Important, when the weekends play an equal part of your week.

I make extensive use of the Post-It tags & the little filofax notelet to flag birthdays, anniversaries, appointments, appointment addresses etc.

I use the Notes, Projects, Diary, Information tabs (in this order).

Behind the Notes tab are recipes, ideas & general jottings. There's also a perpetual shopping list.

Behind the Projects tab are:

Running plan, I will be running the 'Bournemouth Bay 10K' run after Easter

General To-Do list;

Specific To-Do's about the house, garden & allotment w/plans;

An ongoing Book list of books to read and/or buy and

A Music list (same as Book).

Behind the Diary tab is also a home-made Month-to-View diary.

Behind the Information tab is information specific to me: payroll number; internet access information for work plus the information supplied by filofax.

In front of all my tabs are photo's of my family, plus contact information about me & my wife.

The Monkey (2008-02-07 23:35:00)

My first Filofax was an A5 Windsor Filofax System Organizer that I purchased on clearance sale from Pearl Paint in the mid 1990's.

I had previously used a Day Runner, which I purchased when they came out with a new format that was much more aesthetically pleasing than their original line (I think they called it Day Runner Professional), because at the time I was a buyer at an artists' materials shop and one of my product sources carried Day Runner products and I was able to purchase at wholesale cost.

I always wanted the much more elegant Filofax, but unfortunately I was an underpaid buyer, so I couldn't afford to invest in Filofax at the time.

That A5 Windsor FSO is now back to being my main Filofax, though I plan on replacing it with a brand new, black, A5 Bridle that I have waiting in the wings. First, I will attempt to utilize the black Deskfax Sandhurst I just picked up from eBay. If that doesn't work out, it will be on to the Bridle. I need to get refills for the Deskfax. For some time, I had switched to a Personal Buckingham for portability (which I had snagged at TJ Maxx empty for about twelve dollars), followed by a Pocket Kensington. I soon discovered that I really needed at least the A5 size, because I prefer a lot of writing room. I've repurposed my Personal Buckingham and Pocket Kensington. I had also used Newtons, Palm phones, and a Nokia 770 interspersed with my Filofaxes, as well as a very nice Dooney & Bourke Palm/notepad folio (another TJ Maxx find) that I kept stocked with quadrille pads, but no Palm).

I have developed something of a personal system, which involves:

1. A 100 % rag museum board fly sheet. This helps me write on the left side pages.
2. A Filofax clear flysheet. This protects my yearly calendar from damage. It used to be my front cover until I started adding the museum boards.
3. The original 1-12 dividers from my FSO. I wish these were still available, though mine are in good shape.
4. A Month on Two Pages diary (with ruler). This is for longer term planning.
5. A Week on One Page diary (with another ruler). This is my main paper calendar (my actual main calendar lives in my iPhone with my contacts). In the current week, I insert a white ruled page for my personal "To Do" list, a yellow ruled page for my professional "To Do" list, and a blue ruled page for a shopping list.
6. Stocks of white ruled, yellow ruled, and blue ruled paper.
7. The next few sections are filled with current projects, which will be on the colors of ruled paper, above, depending on their orientation.
8. I keep a section or two at the end for reference pages
9. Another 100 % rag museum board flysheet. This helps me write on the right side pages.
10. An A5 white ruled notepad in the back cover.

I've set up all three Filofaxes for 2008 in the same manner. The Pocket Kensington goes in my car, and I mainly use the Week on One Page diary for my mileage log. The wallet pockets of the Kensington are great for keeping my registration and insurance cards handy, along with any other auto-relevant cards and materiel.

The Personal Buckingham became my kitchen/home organizer and recipe jotter...until my wife decided that her Pocket Soho wasn't cutting it in her corporate job, and I gave her the Buckingham so she could look cooler in meetings.

Right now, I'm working on developing my own line of organizer inserts, so I expect I will discontinue purchasing Filofax refills after 2008, but my system will remain largely identical. I will, however, continue to purchase Filofax binders, and will be moving to multiple A5 or larger binders. I need one dedicated to my band, another to replace my lost kitchen/home organizer, and I may even develop excuses to use even more binders!

I've never used contact pages in my Filofaxes, because people's addresses and telephone numbers change too frequently, and I despise untidy contact information (my wife's Filofax is full of scribbled out contact information and looks atrocious to my eyes). These things are better managed on my phone and computers.

I used to feel bad about my Filofax, because I never used it as a time manager. I was always more interested in having extensive notebooking support. Then I learned to stop worrying about whether or not my Filofax's calendar reflected a busy executive lifestyle. I've been exactly the same way about my Newtons and Palm phones. Now I have an iPhone, and it's so much easier to manage than any device I've previously used.

Now I think I have the best of both worlds, iPhone for things the iPhone does well, Filofax for the things Filofax

does well.

One nifty thing I've done with my A5 Windsor—the FSO binder, being a child of the 1980's and 1990's, has a floppy disk pocket inside the front cover. In this pocket, I keep a miniature self-healing cutting mat that is just about the right size to fit. For some reason, I find myself cutting things on the go quite often, so I find this very useful.

Somewhere in my house there should be the storage box that came with my FSO...I'd really like to find that.

Tur_Tur (2008-02-08 08:08:00)

I've been using a Filofax since 1994. My current one is a Bromley in black leather. I've always preferred the personal size and the day-per-page-calendar format, and always one Filofax for business and private affairs. In fact, I cannot imagine using two calendars and I always wonder about how you cope with that. Every second year, I've tried to switch to a week-on-two-pages design to have more capacity and a good view on the whole week, but it never works and I come back to the day-per-page-format. Currently, I think about changing to A5 for more room to fill, but then I think that Personal is smarter. My tabs aren't labeled, the first section is a kind of outlook with the vertical year planner and some notes for future appointments, then comes the diary, notes, projects, information, and the ABC-section for telephone numbers and E-Mails.

Steve (2008-02-08 10:59:00)

- How long have you been using Filofax?

Since about 1986

- What size(s)/model(s) do you use?

I started off with a personal size, more recently I've added an A5 and Pocket size

- What calendar format works for you

1 page per week, printed off from Outlook

Laurie (2008-02-08 14:10:00)

tur _tur, could you please write more about how you use your page per day? I have tried this in the past but have not done well with forward planning. Could you please tell us how you keep track of upcoming events? I tend to get lost in the days and even forget what day of the week it is without the visual pattern of the week at a view. Also, are you able to fit the entire year in your Filo, or do you put in only a few months at a time? Any specifics of how you use this format would be great. Thanks!

ThaIwan (2008-02-09 11:37:00)

Since begin this year I use a FiloFax Kendal Personal Size. After years of digital devices with regular failure and doubts on how this supported me I went back to paper.

I use week on 2 pages plus a foldable year planner. Project tab for my project related stuff. Notes for keeping blank paper. I tend to make my meeting notes on personal size paper and store it with my Filofax. This will somehow force me to work tidy as I don't want to make a mess out of the Filofax. Information for reference papers. Addresses I use self printed papers. I took out the a-z tabs. Most of addresses are e-mail and so in my outlook or in my mobile phone.

Currently I'm experimenting on my task management. I realised that for me writing down tasks straight to a to do list is similar to writing down a whole project and so my steps are to big there. Something has to come between my brain and todo list. I'm using a business card holder for small index cards (bit of a hipster idea) on which big project tasks/deliverables will be written. It can also be specific company assignments that come up e.g. sales presentation. Each businesscard pocket can hold quite some cards and represents a certain project (customer account, company internal or private). It's easy to take cards out and get overview on what to plan, make notes on the cards etc. Any fixed date task may go into diary before so I keep my eye on that. From those two task registrations I write my daily todo's on a simple notepad which I stuck into my Filofax as well. Using filofax todo's for that will be a waste of expensive paper and that stuff is hard to get where I live now.

Leen Groeneveld (2008-02-09 14:25:00)

Well, today I bought a refill for my Succes-organisier. Format 95x150 which comes close by the Personal Filofax-format. I made the next sections: calendar (week on 2 pages), tasks (only private, the work-tasks are in Outlook

at the office), telephone (people I have to call and why I have to call), discuss (people I need to talk with and the things we have to discuss with each other) and notes for all short note-taking and, may be, meeting-notes. I think there will be a second note-section for the notes that are important (key-numbers, passwords and so on).

I intend to print the Outlook-contacts and fold the print in the organiser.

I know write all appointments in the Succes. I have the intention to look after it every friday-afternoon and put every appointment for the next three weeks in Outlook (for the team in the office).

The Succes is not leathermade. I think it's a sort of plastic. If I, at the end of this year, still use the Succes and I still like it, I will buy a leather Succes or, may be, a Philofax.

And oh, I also bought some little notebooks. I can stick one with me when I go on my way without the organiser which is too big to carry with me everywhere.

Γιώργος (2008-02-12 03:45:00)

I am waiting for my A5 Graphic Zip Filofax organizer this week. I have never use a paper organizer. Since 1985 I am using electronic ones. First a PHILIPS with 64K memory, later (about 1990) a CASIO with 512K memory, about 1997 a Psion Series 3, ay 2001 a Psion 5mx and since 2005 a Palm Tungsten E2.

So I will start with the paper organizer, maybe, from the next week. I think that I will keep my contacts and calendar on palm (as they sync with my desktop where I keep more than 1000 contacts and many many tasks on my calendar). I will use the Filofax for project planning, maybe various next item lists (ala GTD), and primarily for note taking during meetings with clients.

All the comments are really useful about the way other uses their organizers but I think that it will be interesting if we also **post our job function** along with the way we use the organizers.

I am a software/web development analyst so I spend enough time talking with customers about their needs which will be much easier to capture on my filofax than is on my palm.

Tur Tur (2008-02-12 04:53:00)

Hi Laurie

As I mentioned, I use the page-per-day-calendar in combination with a vertical year planner. That helps me to keep an eye on the main upcoming events. Additionally, I use a yellow text marker for the most important events. In the daily calendar section, I have normally sheets for three or four months, that's enough (I'm an assistant professor at a university, and I always start the semester with a thick Filo which gets thinner every second day. I always take the sheets out when the day passed, but I have never thrown one sheet away. That will make things easier for my biographer if I will ever have one :-). Or to deliver an alibi).

Again, I use text marker on the daily pages for upcoming events: yellow for important appointments that demand a preparation, green for holiday or time abroad, and sometimes blue for travelling time (the main idea is to take things to read with me, but normally I feel sleepy in trains and I love to look at people at airports, so I don't read anything at all – I think I had to stop that). But I agree that it's necessary to skim through the sheets sometimes and see what's next, but as a "philofaxy", I love it. It's like skimming through a good book. Normally, I spent the last hour of my working time on Friday for an outlook of the next month, looking for events or deadlines coming nearer.

I agree that the page-per-day-calendar has its disadvantages, but every time I tried the week-on-two-pages variant, I hate it when the appointments are not in line. And even if I don't use all the space to fill I have with the page-per-day, it's good to know I could.

Andrzej (2008-02-12 10:57:00)

Too late for roll call?

I have been using my Personal Classic Chocolate for just over a year. My calendar is arranged across two pages for one week and there is an "eighth day" box in the top left corner where I write and forget things. The Notes section is weighty information and projects, Projects is the hardly used home of 'To Do', Information is for passwords (in code) and log in and web addresses, Financial is for expensive purchases and medical stuff, addresses is used properly. An A4 'Black and Red' hard covered spiral bound is used for work.

stefano (2008-02-12 12:02:00)

I have bought this Filofax in 2002, but I haven't been using it all the times (Outlook seemed to suite my needs). Then I got involved in GTD, tried the digital way and finally started again with paper. So, I am actively using this Filofax from January 2008 (not much hu? :)).

I am using a Personal/Hamilton. Sometimes I think I would like to have a Classic (A5) to have more space.

I am currently using 1 week in 2 page. If I had an A5, I would probably use 1 day per page with room for To-do, calls, etc..

I am using the standard tabs (but I got rid of the addresses, which I don't use). If I knew how to customize my tabs, I would call them something similar to GTD (Next Actions / Waiting For / etc...) to match the actual content.

(This is my first post :). Keep it up with this great site)

Laurie (2008-02-12 12:16:00)

Hi tur tur, thanks so much for your description of how you use the page per day while still keeping your eye on upcoming plans. This is the crux of my battle with my Personal sized Filo: sometimes I just don't have enough room to write with my week at a view. I like the idea of a page per day, with all that room to write and record. Next time I get the itch to switch I might just try out your method. BTW I do color-coding too, it really helps me get a quick visual on my plans.

Tur Tur (2008-02-13 04:33:00)

Hi Laurie

I just read in your earlier posting that you change your calendar seven times a year, so I think "next time" will be quite soon :-). I think it's important to have a system that you love to use, that you enjoy holding in hands and leaf through. In my view, Filofax is not the most functional system, but sensuality is much more important than functionality. Therefore, in the "Go Mom versus Filofax case", I totally agree with your husband.

Laurie (2008-02-13 05:44:00)

LOL Tur Tur!!! I totally agree with the sensuality of it, there is no equal to the smooth soft leather of my Buckingham. Now that I have committed to staying with my Filo, my only switching around will be within the binder. So under this new rule of mine, the daily pages are an option for when I need variety. Thanks again for sharing how you use your system. I agree there are probably more efficient systems out there, but for me my Filo is a good combination of logistics and feel-good factor.

geew67 (2008-02-13 14:51:00)

I started using Filofaxes in the late 1980s and currently have four.

I use a pocket pimlico for personal use as i cycle to work and space is a premium in my pannier. In it i use the standard tabs. The diary is a week on 2 pages. The time of meeting or appointment dictates where it is written in the day - morning top, afternoon middle and evening at the bottom. I am also a big fan of jotpads which are used for to do's in the diary with no set date. I have changed the financial to a personal 'to do' tab in which include DIY jobs, photograph ideas, books to read etc. I use the information tab for info to keep, birthday pages and as a mini commonplace book. At the front i have a clear wallet with pictures of the kids in it. Credit card spaces are used for membership cards and a stock jotpad.

I also use an A5 Logic for Scouts (I am a Scout leader) which includes a week on 2 page diary (for Scouting only), a to do tab and a thick note section and of course the obligatory jotpads. In it i have an archive section of past meetings etc. in the back and front flaps go flyers etc. I did use it for university which included tabs for different subjects, homework to do tab and a diary. In the front of each subject tab also went a timetable. In the back i also had a CD-RW holder.

As i work in a lab, i use a slimline Richmond as a notebook. In it i have a to do tab, a notes tab, a filofax calculator and a jotpad. The notes section is for daily notes (plus meetings) and also notes from reading journals, articles, etc. I also use neon highlight tabs for things to go back to.

Lastly i have a personal Hampshire (my first) which is redundant at the mo. Mmm, what can i use it for?In it i have a filofax birdwatcher's life list from 1986 which is still in use!

Lovely Rose (2008-02-16 05:12:00)

How long have you been using Filofax?

I have been using my Filofax since Christmas last year. It was a the greatest gift my husband gave me.

- What size(s)/model(s) do you use? I'm using a black Metropol A5 Filofax. It keeps my mind clear. that's why i have only one filofax. more is too confusing;-)

And i have a A5 size because i have a large handwriting and a have more room.

- What calendar format works for you i am using the one week on two pages horizontal in 5 languages.

- What's behind your tabs?

1. My Diary,
2. My paid bills schedule and my moving plans. (we're about to move house).
- 3 my eating schedule. i'm a bad eater this helps me to eat at similar times.
4. Stock of paper and some sweet notes from my husband.
5. Adresses.

i also have a envelope in it i want to have a nive picture from me my, husband and my one-year old son in it.

I have a question for everyone who uses A5 Filofax: Do you carry your filofax around? And yes how do you carry it arround?

Mine stays at home if im taking it with me a put it in the giftbox and put in my stroller or in al large shoulderbag.
XXX

Adirondack Explorer (2008-02-16 21:33:00)

I carry mine new A5 black Finsbury in my laptop case if I'm on my way to work or just in my hand if out and about w/o my laptop. I have no hesitancy to carry it for it contains my life and I refer to it and capture in it often throughout the day.

Globalist (2008-02-20 21:56:00)

I first started using a personal-sized Filofax in 1988 and have continued to update my agenda in the years since. Though I like Filofax, I have some issues with their design and the manufacturer's insistence of including a zippered compartment - which I don't like. I'd like a Filofax that just has a simple pocket on the inside front and back covers.

A couple of years ago, I upgraded to a personal-sized agenda from Smythson of London. The one I have - which is no longer manufactured - is black, simple and elegant.

I travel quite a bit so I keep my frequent flyer cards in my agenda along with various city/transit maps and contacts. I have some special tabbed sections for notes on cities I frequent: NY, SF, London, Zurich and Berlin. I jot notes on new restaurants, shops and hotels to check out when I come across them...so when I travel, I have all that info at my fingertips.

I'd be happy to e-mail some photos if anyone is interested.

Adirondack Explorer (2008-02-21 21:54:00)

globalist:

Sure, post some pics!

Kevin (2008-02-27 08:34:00)

I've been using a Filofax since 1987. The current model I'm using is a 1987 Winchester with 7/8 rings in Burgundy (model code: 4CLF7/8). I also collect them so this is one of many. I sometimes use a 1986 Pigskin binder as my regular binder. I only ever use the Personal size - I have a A5 Filofax but it's too unwieldy.

I don't really use a paper diary any more and haven't for about ten years. My diary is mainly in Outlook and this feeds a BlackBerry and a Palm. I do have a paper diary (Week per Page) but it's hardly ever used.

My tabs are: Politics, Notes, Info and Cold War, the latter as I'm researching a book. I'll probably add others but I tend use fairly broad categories. I've always believed that the more you micro-manage information the more overhead you create in administrative chores.

Filofax used to produce lots of leaves for specific tasks that took away much of the effort of managing information, it's a shame they're current offering is so bland. (I also think they're current binders are terrible but that's another story...).

paulien (2008-03-12 05:10:00)

Can I still participate? Bit late I know.

I have been using filofax since may 2007, not quite a year yet. Short compared to some of you who have been using it longer than I am old (I am 25). Before that I was using a pocket moleskine and hating it. I have tried a plastic binder with a succes refill in junior size, which is almost exactly the pocket filo size. Succes is a Dutch brand, and much more widely available and cheaper here in the Netherlands. But I stopped using it very soon, because the succes refills have only five tabs, and the pages have very very narrow ruling. I write small, but not that small.

I have a personal size piazza in blue, but I am not really happy with it. The suede strip is becoming a bit dirty, and the rings don't exactly align to each other, so pages get stuck while turning. I am looking at another filo (personal finchley) but I would hate wasting 140 euro's I paid for the piazza.

I am currently using the cotton cream week-on-two-pages diary, and I like it. It has very subtle ruling in the Dutch version, and so it looks much neater than the unruled English version I had last year. And it shows all our own holidays and summertime changes, which often differ from English/American dates. I will continue to use this diary format.

I use the original tabs. The first has my diary. The second is my notes section, which I really should use. I now often don't touch it for weeks at a time, and that is a waste. Plus I keep forgetting things I should write there.

Then the project tab, which holds my to do lists for personal and work, a shopping list, then my projec list, and finally pages for larger projects. Larger projects are for example a research paper or a client project, and these pages hold outlines, objectives, contact info specific to the project etc. (I am a combination consultant/phd student in mathematics). The next tab is the info tab, and this has info like train and bus times I frequently use, books and cd's I want to check out, my copy machine code and the alarm code for work and such. Finally the address tab, where I use the abc tabs and write in pencil.

So all in all, I am happy with filofax, and with the size and refills, just not with my particular model. I could have known that the suede would get dirty, but I didn't know anything about suede. My mom told me I should have consulted her, moms always know these things. But the rings not lining up might be something I could go back to the store with. It is just a very small difference, milimeters, but it bugs me. What do you people think?

Tony (2008-03-12 17:57:00)

I hope this post works.

I started using Filofax about 1985.

Now my main use is the four year planner.

I lecture to gardening groups and just today got a booking for 2010.

My gripe with Filofax is that they only produce it a year in advance. So my current planner is 2006-2009 and I now need the 2010-2013 planner. Filofax won't produce it until next year. Why not?

Yours

Tony

Kevin (2008-03-13 04:34:00)

Paulien: if the rings aren't perfectly aligned then they're damaged. Very commonly people accidentally crush the spine making the rings misalign. It's not something you can really tolerate because it'll tear the holes in the leaves inside the binder.

TNN (2008-03-27 14:41:00)

firstly, glad to see this blog take off again. I was and am a fan of the content.

so down to my filo - I've spun from an a5 (that I got in 1998), through day runner a5, through personal and now to the slimline personal.

I have a week to two pages horizontal, and my tabs are 1) to do 2) notes 3) notes 4) blank sheets 5) business cards I find that most of my week diary is on outlook at work, so I use the filo for personal appointments that i dont want there.

Its a great system, it engages you back with paper, with organising, with touch.

hatza (2008-04-19 18:19:00)

I've been using Filofax just last 5 years or so, but started with another Filofax-compatible organizer early 1990s. I now prefer A5, although I may be about to mix it with Mini. I've used several off-brand makes and models and sizes, but mainly prefer the extremes of either Mini or A5. The Minis I have are two Time/System (vinyl & leather) and an anonymous combined fabric binder with wallet. The A5 cross-compatible leather binders are Filofax, Time/System (a.k.a Time/Design), and local brand Timex Space.

At the moment, I only use calendar on my smartphone and sync it with the system at work. I don't like to share personal calendar with office, but I haven't been able to reliably sync personal calendar with electronic work calendars.

I use my main A5 binder mostly for planning projects, journaling and printed references like contact information for offline use. Everything worth keeping is written to computer within a week. I'm an expert at losing stuff so I also backup some pages occasionally with a digital camera.

Second A5 binder works as an archive for old plans and third is kind of an artistic journal & commonplace book. I used to try to keep my journal in a binder, but I don't like how the binder mechanism makes it difficult to write on the left side pages. So now I have a separate notebook just for journaling until that book is full. I did like the freedom of rearranging old journal pages by theme so I may go back one day. Any important bits from the journal are entered to computer data anyway, so the journal's not that important.

The Minis have been temporarily replaced with even more pocketable small notebooks. They carry action lists and collected thoughts. I'm still not completely sure which is better; having a slightly larger mini binder or a wallet and two notebooks in several pockets. Thoughts are processed daily and action lists should be completed or refactored within weeks or a month so I don't bother backing up them.

filo lover (2008-05-24 23:57:00)

I love your site! Finally I don't feel so alone in my pursuit of the perfect planner. I started using Filofax in 1992. My first binder was a black personal size real calf leather made in England. (It's still gorgeous today.) It was made in the good ol' days of quality materials, before Filofax started branching out with names for their binders with disappointing leathers. I soon realized I needed more space (I write big), so I splurged on the beautiful Filofax System Organiser "Director" A5 model in tan leather made in Italy. It worked for awhile, but I was still seeking for the perfect planner for my life, and was easily wooed away to the Dark Side by Hyrum Smith to the Franklin Planner.

The Filofaxes went into a drawer, and over the years, I've used the Classic (carried in a black Scully binder purse), Compact (carried in a pink leather binder) and Monarch sizes (carried in a cheap 3-ring binder.) Then I had a baby, became a SAHM and suddenly didn't need a planner anymore. Fast forward to 2008. My baby is now in school and I am running a small business part-time. Good thing I am a pack rat. I had all the binders and pulled them out to see with one will fit my lifestyle now. Guess which one I was drawn to? You guessed it! My very first binder... the personal filofax in real calf.

The leather still glows and has that rich smell and feel I love. But here's the kicker... I still love the Franklin pages, and the Compact "Blooms" fits nicely if not perfectly (the pages are a tad bit too wide for me to snap it shut, but it's not a big deal for me.) I like to use their Blooms Tabs and also "Month on 2 pages" which has all my appts on it and I refer to daily. I keep my check book and register behind the Finances tab, daily to do notes behind Tab 1, My Journal/Diary behind Tab 2, Ideas/Dreams behind Tab 3, Lists of books, movies Tab 4 and Blank Pages Tab 5. Plus all docs, dentists, vet, medical business cards in clear plastic inserts and also gift cards in same plastic inserts.

The inside left cover has 8 slits for my drivers license, debit/credit card, Macy's card, health insurance card and voter id card. Plus I added a clear zip lock pocket for tickets to shows, etc. Of course I have the obligatory photo sleeves of husband and daughter.

My original first purchase now serves as my wallet, planner, calendar, journal, and Life Guide. I just love the size of the planner as it fits into my favorite purse and so it is with me at all times.

I just cry when I think of all the time and money spent to find the perfect binder planner when I've had it all along!

Thanks for the input! (2008-02-16 19:17) - Nan

I just want to thank everyone who answered our recent poll on [1]"How do you Filo?" I urge everyone with an interest in Filofaxes to read the responses.

The responses prove that there are as many unique ways to use a Philofax as there are people. At the same time, there are some things in common. Most of us have used another ring-bound system – like Day Runner or DayTimer – in the past. Many (myself included) have also used an electronic organizer. But we've all come back to Filofax, and somehow it feels like coming home.

1. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=7389431967121458070>

Leen Groeneveld (2008-02-17 07:59:00)

I loved reading how others used their Philofaxes (and others). I now use my Succes. The Palm is no longer in use (except using Handysopper for the weekly shopping) but I still have to discover what's the best way to use it for me.

Do I miss the Palm now? I don't!

Lovely Rose (2008-02-17 14:12:00)

Hi Inky,

I just dicovered your Bog via Google and i love it!!!

I put a link at my hyves profile to Philofaxy.

I was looking for experiences from other A5 Filofax users, wich i found here.

I wanted a diary wich was big because i have trouble writing small. I also wanted to refill it each year because i don't like to write my adresses and personal stuff each year in another diary.

Bu i couldn't find one. Until my husband gave me this metropol A5 Filofax as a christmas gift last year. And since then i'm writing everyrthing down. It's clearing my head and i love it!

xxx Rose

stefano (2008-02-19 11:50:00)

I actually never used a PDA before using my Filofax.

I sometimes wonder how it would be to be able to synchronize my calendar and my work Outlook with a click.

But then again, I read about so many people going from paper to digital and back to paper, that I think I'll stick to paper for some more time ;)

Leen Groeneveld (2008-02-20 03:17:00)

Hi Stefano,

For about 12 years I used pda's (Psion and Palm). Nothing wrong with that and it is indeed very easy to use Outlook and carry everything that is in Outlook with you in a small palmtop in your pocket.

But... after all this time I missed writing with a pen on the paper. I missed something that is really mine: my handwriting, my own tabs in the Succes (no, I don't yet have a Philofax) and I missed having something to put papers in.

And now I am Palmless! I use the Succes and have different tabs and sections in it now. And I carry some letters and a creditcard in it now. And meeting notes and so on. As Inky said: It feels like coming home!

stefano (2008-02-20 12:04:00)

Leen,

I see what you mean. I actually sit in front of my computer for most of my working day, and some odd hours at home as well at night and weekends.

And it does feel different having something "physical" to write things on as opposed to using a keyboard to enter bits stored somewhere.

It must be the same thing that keeps me away (for the time being at least) from digital photography. I so much love working with film, develop and print on my own.

I have had a quick look at the Succes organizers, and they look very similar to Filofax. Any particular reason you

want to switch?

Leen Groeneveld (2008-02-21 06:27:00)

Hoi Stefano,

Funny to see how different things can be. Before digital photography was possible I hardly made photo's. Now I neraly always carry my digital camera with me!

I indeed think there is not so much difference between Filofax and Succes. But my Succes is a cheap one with a plastic binder. If I stay using it (after such a lng time using a pda I have to prove this to myself) I want a real leather binder. I have to look whether it has to be a Philofax or a Succes. I also have to look at the format. The Succes-Senior I use now is not so big. Maybe next time I use an A5-model. I now have a week on 2 pages but may be one page a day is better. Of course I didn't have this 'problems' when using my Palm. But it's fun to be busy with this things now.

When I exactly know what I want then I can buy a leather binder. Or ask it for e.g. Christmas. Should be a wonderful present!

Stefano Ricciardi (2008-02-21 08:02:00)

Leen,

your approach makes perfect sense to me.

I have also the same dilemma about size: I now have a Filofax Personal, and some times think I would like to have A5 (more room) and one day on a page. But since I am also using a paper organizer for too little, I need first to understand whether this is really what I need (beside just being what I like).

neowagnerite (2008-02-21 19:57:00)

Hello...

I've been using my Filofax since the 1980's— GOD, I'M OLD—

but committed adultery with Day-Timers and Franklin Covey several times. I've been with Filofax since 2000. I love my personal Cavensish, and do wish Filofax still made Personal size Organizers with the larger ring mechanism.

Kevin (2008-02-27 08:44:00)

Filofax are making a new binder with 30mm rings instead of the usual 23mm rings:

<http://www.filofax.co.uk/store/SEURLF/ASP/SFS/DISPLAY./SIZEID.3/RANG EID.107/DSIZEID.3/SFE/organiser.htm>

It's called the "Guildford Zip". Unfortunately most of their range is the smaller 23mm ring size.

Andrzej (2008-03-03 05:28:00)

I took a page out of my Filofax so I could remember a paint code when out shopping the other day (walk light). It got left behind accidentally and thrown away by the person who mixed the paint only for me to recover it a few minutes later. Now my diary has a swatch of VW Fresco Green along with the code for next time. No electronic organizer is good enough to accurately represent color and I have found a new way to use my Filofax.

Anonymous (2008-03-03 23:39:00)

Hi Inky- Not sure how, but I found your site tonight and was really tickled to find so many Filo-Junkies. I've been hooked since the late 70's and own a few treasures.

I own the 75th Annivesary Binder (Personal Size) and also have the wooden box it came in as well as all the original accesories. I also have a beautifully aged Pesonal size binder from the early 70's. It is absolutely the best looking Filofax I've ever seen and I get offers for it constantly.

I will try my best to post photos of these guys as well as some old page inserts I feel certain you guys have never seen.

Very glad to find your site. I will check in often and hopefully become a regular visitor.

Ciao!

neowagnerite (2008-03-08 19:03:00)

Just got the "Guildford Zip" organiser recommended by Kevin. It's fantastic!

Iwan Andringa (2008-03-14 02:23:00)

Yes, using a philofax or whatever similar organiser feels like working on your own creation. Also it's character...it feels like picking up your favorite book. Together with a good writing device it's just a pleasure to work in and not to sit in front of your laptop or scribble on a pda screen and find out you need to scribble it again. After all these years of pda's and gadgets I decided to cut it out and go back to paper and I just love it...yeah guess it feels like coming home.

BTW...Inky...when's your next posting coming up? I enjoyed reading so far.

1.3 March

Guest Blog: A5 Quandry (2008-03-15 18:48) - Nan

Another from the always articulate Laurie Huff...

Here I am again, rethinking my Filofax for the millionth time. Now I think I have found my solution. I think it is time to upgrade to the A5. I recently realized why my Personal sized Filo calendar just doesn't work for me. It is not set up the way that my mind works. I visualize the week with the days as columns going across the page. Once I discovered that this is the only way I can effectively remember what I have to do, or even keep track of what day it is, I felt a huge amount of relief. That calendar format does not exist in the Personal size, only in the A5. And even if it did, I would still need the extra writing room afforded by the A5. That debate is over. It's not my Filo's fault that it doesn't work for me. "Don't cry little Filo. It's not you, it's me. Really."

But the end of one debate brings on a whole new one. Specifically, which A5 binder will I get? To be honest, none of them really turn me on. I would prefer a dark brown one, but the only A5s to be found in brown are the Kendal (too masculine) and the Classic. My problems with the Classic are that puffy cover, and mostly the small ring size. It only has a 1 inch capacity, which is just too small for me. I like to put lots of things into my binder, so I need all the room I can get. The only A5 binders with a larger ring capacity (at a mere 1/4 inch larger) are the Guildford (which comes only in black, again too masculine and definitely too executive-looking for me), and the Finsbury.

Okay, so the Finsbury. I like the price, by far the cheapest of the leather A5 binders. I like the larger ring size. But I just can't find a color I like. The pink is too frilly for me. I'm not sure what the green would be like, would I get tired of it? Black is okay, but again a little too masculine. Tangerine is definitely out, that color and I just do not get along. Maybe red, although I never wear anything red and as my husband says, I'm "not a red person."

This is an investment for me, and I want a binder I will be able to use and enjoy for years to come. Unfortunately for me I live nowhere near a retailer, so I can't see these in person before I buy online. I will be using this for personal, home, projects, travel etc. I prefer to have everything in one binder. Which is why I'm concerned the 1 inch rings might not work for me. I can't decide if I should get the chocolate Classic and cram it full, or if I should settle on a Finsbury color I can live with.

I want to ask all you folks with an A5: what style binder do you have? Are the 1 inch rings actually a problem? Any advice for me? Meanwhile my search continues...

Lovely-Rose (2008-03-15 18:58:00)

Hi Inky and Lauri!

Thank you! Finally some drugs for my addiction!

I have an A5 Filofax. It's an A5 called Metropol, a leather-look filo wich comes in black and brown. i don't know what ringsize it has. The Metropol fits every style you like.

Here in The Netherlands prices are about 50 euro for the metropol filofax.

Lovely Rose

Steve (2008-03-16 05:17:00)

I have the A5 Finsbury in Black. It's big sure, but it allows me to print off my own pages very easily.

As you say you have greater flexibility for the calendar format. I print mine off from Outlook, punch the pages and pop them in my binder.

The black leather still looks like new after two years of use. I use a little spray polish on it every so often and it cleans up nicely.

Steve

Anonymous (2008-03-16 08:29:00)

About the green Finsbury - I love green and choose it over other colors every chance I get, however, there is something about the Finsbury in green that just didn't work for me. The online pics are a bit deceiving in that the pebbled pattern is simply too busy when you see it in person and it is more like a pattern than a finish. The shade is a very light, bright emerald. Also, I was a bit disappointed in that the seam around the inside front cover did not catch the interior pocket completely. If you like to stuff the interior pockets you may have some trouble with the seams.

I soon returned it and went back to my personal Eton. My favorite binder in recent years - I just wish it were available in something other than black. I remember another blogger mentioned that the quality of the current Filofax offerings pale in comparison to that of several years ago. I completely agree but I'm still hooked. If you really want to graduate to the A5, invest in a good one. You won't be disappointed.

Leen Groeneveld (2008-03-16 10:12:00)

Hi Inky and others,

Just a few weeks ago I went back from Outlook and Palm to Succes. I wrote down here that it felt like coming home. But: I now concluded that a paper organizer doesn't fit to me! It soon was a mess so that I forgot todo tasks on the right time. And I forgot the repeating appointments which, of course, didn't repeat automatically.

However I am fond of paper organizers and love to see them I went back to Outlook and Palm. Now I can use repeated appointments and tasks, insert information at tasks and have hundreds of addresses with me.

A leather binder looks more beautiful and interesting than a Palm. But the Palm in combination with Outlook suits best for me.

I'm sorry, loved to discuss the Succes and Philofax and sure will go on with reading this interesting blog. But I'm no longer one of the paper users.

The Monkey (2008-03-16 12:22:00)

eBay is my new-found friend for Filofax binders. I was able to pick up a brand new black A5 Bridle from eBay, as well as a used but decent condition black Deskfax Sandhurst (which cleaned up very nicely with a couple treatments of neetsfoot oil and some beeswax) and a brand new burgundy Deskfax Richmond.

I passed on a brand new black Deskfax Buckingham that was offered in eBay Austria (which I'm now kicking myself for, it went for about 80 euro, I think), but the same seller has a very wide variety of Filofax binders on sale.

I've also come across excellent deals on discontinued binders on eBay, such as both black and brown Balmorals. I have saved searches for the types in which I'm interested.

Keep an eye out on eBay. Filofax doesn't make anywhere near the range they used to offer. Also check every Filofax retailer you can easily get to, especially ones which have been around a long time. They often have older stock of A5 binders in styles that aren't available any more.

Some of my favorites are the Portobello, Balmoral, Buckingham, Sandhurst, and Pimlico. They're out there if you look around, though admittedly it may take a while.

muse924 (2008-03-16 18:40:00)

Yes, what amper said! I scored a lovely choco brown A5 Balmoral, one of the older models, on ebay. Lots of pockets and such, and the pockets have a fabric lining.

I also have an older A5 sandhurst that I bought years ago, a caramel color. It's my favorite.

The Bridle is also very nice, although I don't own one, I would chose it if I were in the market and found one. I have seen those on ebay as well.
Perhaps they will begin to make them like they used to... but keep looking around in the meantime. Good luck!

Nan (2008-03-16 19:34:00)

Hi Leen –

When I made the switch from Palm to paper, it took me a year to fully get comfortable with paper. The repeating appointments are indeed one of the biggest challenges.

Although when I used the Palm I felt safe having hundreds of addresses with me, when I switched to Filo it turned out that I don't use more than 20 a year! As long as I have my full address book on my computer, I don't need to carry it all with me.

I have a feeling that paper may come back into your life someday. :)

TOWELNTEXAS (2008-03-17 14:53:00)

Hi Lauri-

No one has addressed the ring size issue so if I may: Ring size makes an incredible difference for those who like to keep a year's records or so in one spot. As well, if you use the Filo for holding receipts, outside papers, etc. it makes a difference.

I have a Personal sized Filo from 1990 that actually as a 1.75" ring. It was bought in France and I have never seen another. It is an absolute workhorse and will easily held the old day per two pages I loved and miss.

I agree with checking eBay, etc. but from what you write, I highly recommend the larger ring. There are a few things in which size matters and this is one :-)

Scott

The Monkey (2008-03-17 15:10:00)

Whoops, I forgot the ring size issue. My main Filofax binder has for many years been my A5 Windsor Filofax System Organiser, which has 1" rings (at least, so far as I can tell without removing all the pages to measure more exactly). I've never really found the need for more space, but I'm sure I probably wouldn't mind it. The Bridle I picked up from eBay has the 1.25" rings, so I guess I'll find out soon enough once I switch.

Leen Groeneveld (2008-03-18 12:43:00)

Hi Inky,

Thanks for your reply. I am happy now with the way I can use Outlook and Palm but of course it has to do with the fact that I am used to it. But if this Palm (my 3rd one) will be out of order may be I'll search another way. As I already told: I love these beautiful leather binders of Succes or Philofax. And I love writing with a pen instead of typing or using a stylus. So I thing you are right and someday I'll join you....

penny (2008-03-19 11:30:00)

This post made me laugh as I'm looking for *SMALLER* ring sizes for my A5.. I'd love an "executive" A5... I love the paper size, but the weight of the filo was too much for me to carry around. i'm not pleased with my current method.

good luck.

Kevin (2008-03-21 13:25:00)

I tried a A5 Filofax for a bit - the Graduate model I bought in 2000. I've occasionally tried the A5 format on and off ever since and I keep coming back to the same problems:

A5 means a big binder and its heavy. It takes up too much space in my work bag.

The range of papers is even worse than those of the personal size.

It encourages you to print things from your PC onto A5 Filofax paper which I find ridiculous. There is nothing to be gained from doing in nearly any situation. You start doing this you just start churning out your own bureaucracy which excessive organisation tends to encourage.

Jeff Abbott (2008-03-22 12:14:00)

I have a chocolate A5 classic. The smaller ring doesn't bother me—in fact it encourages me to process papers that are in there and archive them when done, rather than just carting them around with me. The look is truly classic and I don't think I would be happy with a smaller planner.

For all the talk of repeating appointments, I have to say it is less time for me to write them down a month at a time in my Filofax than to fix the synch with my old Palm if it duplicated them/screwed them up/erased them. Technology does not always save us time.

Iwan Andringa (2008-03-22 12:19:00)

Hi Leen,

As I made a similar switch and used to be a heavy user of pda's, outlook etc., I had similar issues. Recurring appointments, tasks...nice that outlook makes them automatically, but on the other hand...it doesn't hurt writing a bit and be aware of what you're scheduling. When you're writing them down you go through your agenda as well. But yes, it is true paper requires another discipline than digital. Also it depends a bit if you work with your agenda alone or if you're sharing it via e.g. exchange server. In such a case digital is far more comfortable. I used to work with exchange and was required to have my agenda up to date on the server so it's easier for other staff members to trace you when they need you or need your schedule. In my current working environment it would be advised to do the same but it ain't implemented that way as well I got fed up with improper functioning equipment/software, laptop crashes, re-installs that I switched back to paper. I work 6-7 days per week IT and business consulting and then it also feels good sometimes not to look at a screen but at a piece of paper that you wrote yourself. I also tried to work purely on my laptop as this bloody device is almost switched on 24/7 but no working of the screen all the time just didn't suite me.

Leen Groeneveld (2008-03-24 15:13:00)

Hi Iwan,

I indeed has to use Outlook and Exchange. Everything has to be up to date on te server. With my laptop I also can use Outlook at home. You are right about another discipline. And I think the digital discipline fits me the best as long as I has to use the Exchange-server.

Thanks for your comment.

Iwan Andringa (2008-03-24 22:25:00)

Hi Leen,

I think there's a hard fact in the case of working with systems like exchange, that working digital is just the most effective way. I remember the time that one of my employers gave all staff a pda in order to promote working with exchange, those working on paper rejected, complained etc, but later on they switched. In case we would be applying exchange here I most probably would be working digital again as well, same as you, but currently somehow, despite of my nerdy weaknesses for digital gadgets, nice 3rd party apps I have come back to the filofax...but naturally I also find enough nerdy gadgets around that area too. So all together the choice for paper/digital has a balancing between what is effective and what does one make feel comfortable in the end.

Leen Groeneveld (2008-03-25 12:32:00)

Hi Iwan,

I like reading this blog so you understand I like Filofaxes and other organizers. Just read Inky's latest blog and when I see the picture that came with it I think that indeed one day I will return to such a thing. For now, as you said, digital fits me the best. And, like a Filofax, you can change the way you use Outlook or Palm. Since I use Outlook I changed the way I use tasks several times. In fact it is more easy to change the categories in Outlook than changing the tabs in a Philofax.

There are more 'digital toys'that I love and use but I also love paper. That's why I always carry a little notebook and a pen with me.

gg (2008-03-26 16:47:00)

I have a Personal Slimline Filofax that I don't use. But I want to use it for something - maybe I'll stick it in my purse and use it for notes.

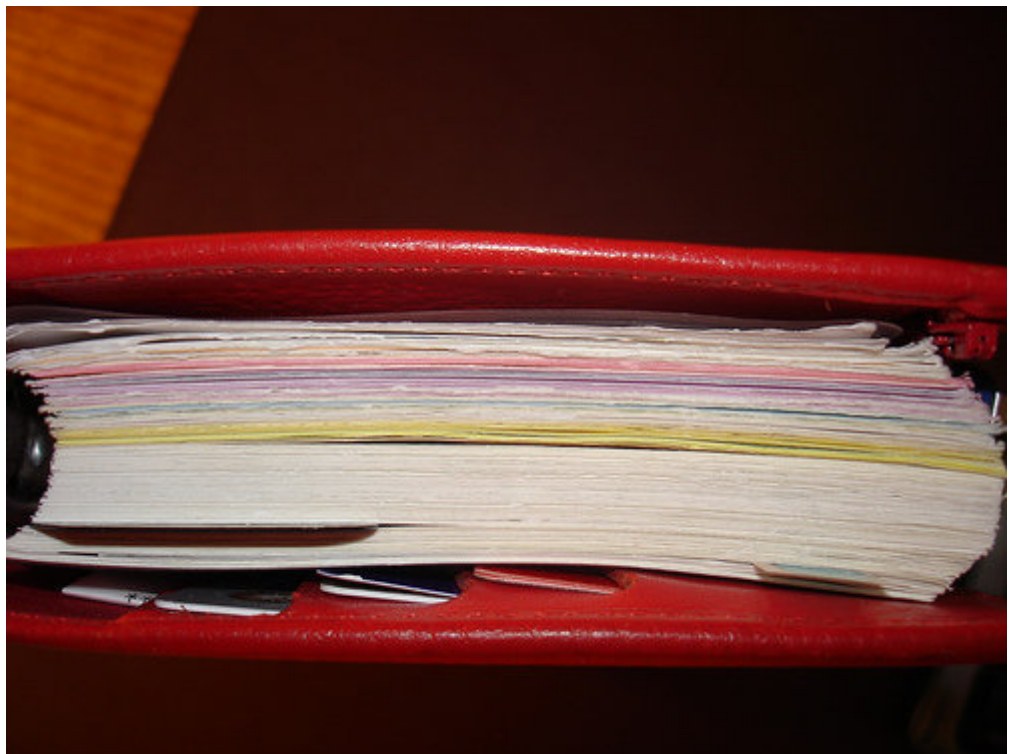
I had a hard time deciding what size to stick with. Eventually I made up my own - Classic size, week to two pages, with the days on the left page and the notes page on the right, no lines on the notes page and no calendar there. Then I print out some photos onto plain paper and stick them in amongst the pages. Add an envelope or two, some extra pages for note-taking, and take the thing to the print shop to be spiral bound. I've used that for several years and like it lots. It's thin, no padded leather binder, and fits in my purse nicely.

My problem now is that I have the Personal Filofax. What to do with it? A diary, maybe. Note-taking, or maybe something else. It's really too small a format for me to use for my appointments, but I don't know what to use it for.

Laurie (2008-04-02 21:09:00)

kevin, ITA with what you said about creating your own bureaucracy. I have to be careful of this myself! I tend to micromanage my tabbed sections a little too much sometimes.

Change is good (2008-03-24 21:03) - Nan





[2] I've recently decided, now that I no longer frequently switch between platforms (Palm to Franklin Covey, Franklin Covey to Circa, Circa to Moleskine), that the best part of using a Filofax is being able to make necessary and helpful changes *within* the same platform. For example, I started 2008 using a 2-days-per-page diary. (In 2007, I had used a ruled week-per-2-pages and wanted more room and freedom.) Well, I found that the extra room didn't do much more than let my handwriting get bigger, and crowd out the pages behind my rear tabs (left). Today I switched back to week-per-2-pages (unruled), and feel good about the decision (right). It only took me about an hour to rewrite 3 months of appointments. I'm going to rewrite the to-dos from the dated pages onto...well, To Do pages, so that I can move the page ahead from week to week.

I'm going to use my To Do pages differently, and I'll have to redo my tabs, but that's for another post. I now remember the feeling of week-per-2-page constriction, now that I don't have the extra Notes space, and the weekend days are especially compressed. I now believe that the 2-days-per-page is ideal for someone who has almost nothing in any tabs except the diary (not me), or for someone who has a 7-days-a-week schedule with lots of clients, appointments, or events to track (at this time in my life, anyway, not me either).

It's actually very easy to change formats in the middle of a year with a Filo. Just take out all the unused pages in your current diary, and add the new format from there on. No copying necessary. I've done it that way before. In this case, I decided to use the switch as an opportunity for cleanup, so I rewrote.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2359967422/>

2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2359967428/>

Fabienne (2008-03-25 04:28:00)

Hi. Last year I found a really great (in my view) diary layout for my Filofax: it's one week on one page, with a blank opposite page for notes.

I put a [1] picture on my flickr account for you to see.

It's the most convenient and practical layout for me: on the left page, I write down information specific to particular days (like appointments to dentist and such or birthday reminders) and on the right page, I write whatever things I have to do during the week, or extra information relating to events happening that week, or thoughts, etc.

What do you think of it ?

1. <http://flickr.com/photos/fabienne/2360871484/>

Stefano Ricciardi (2008-03-25 09:45:00)

Fabienne, for me the space left for each single day would be too compressed. I tend to have 3/4 appointments per day (plus must-do-today actions), so I need at least a week on 2 pages layout, for a Personal sized Filofax that is.

Anonymous (2008-03-29 18:17:00)

Hi, you mentioned in one of your posts whether you should use an A5 instead of the personal.

Well I have an A5 and just bought a personal both are Ascots. I'm eventually going to switch to the Personal because the A5 is really hard to carry and heavy. If you just leave it somewhere on your desk which is what I've done for the last 8 years, that's fine. But now I'm getting to the point where I want to carry it with me.

In case you're wondering how I acquired an Ascot personal, I called Filofax headquarters and asked them if they archive any of their old planners. Sometimes they do and they called me back and said they found this Ascot Personal and did I want it. I said, HECK YEAH! Got it the other day and it's awesome. Though I didn't get any deal on it.

So, FYI, they may have archived some other of the planners as well.

Change is good, part deux (2008-03-28 21:46) - Nan

I've updated the tabs on both my Personal and A5 (Household) Filofaxes.

Personal: To Do, Projects, Diet, Ideas, Lists, and Tel (no A-Z tabs).

Household: Routines, Quickies (things you can do when you have 5 free minutes), Projects, Notes, Appliances, Emergency, followed by A-Z tabs.

Stefano Ricciardi (2008-04-02 09:47:00)

Hi, what do you use to customize your tabs? From your latest post, it seems that you are not handwriting. Also interested in the kind of support you are using for each tab.

Nan (2008-04-02 11:02:00)

Stefano, I use a Brother brand label maker. I'm planning to do a post about how I do the tabs soon. I just have to take some pictures.

Behind the Routines Tab (2008-03-30 17:38) - Nan

Weekly Chores	Date	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Laundry	B												
Fold clothes													
Dust house													
Vacuum house													
De-trash cars													
Dump	N												
Groc shop	N												
Mow lawn													
Weed yard													
Rake leaves (seasonal)													
245 decluttering an area													
Clean bathroom													

[1] I've detached myself from the FLYlady pod, and outfitted my Routines tab with sheets I made according to my own system. In the past, this system has worked better for me than FLYlady; although I've kept my FLYlady morning and evening routines in place.

In my system, I separate things into weekly, monthly, semiannual, and annual tasks. I've made a page for each, with a place to initial for the date completed. I've provided an illustration, since that's the best way to see how it works.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2375405408/in/set-72157594177080225/>

Andrzej (2008-04-01 10:02:00)

"Routines tab with [custom] sheets"

I think this is a very good idea. My list would contain different items such as check chain tension, lube chain, lube pegs/levers (all concerned with safety with money connotations if forgotten). I've also already decided to pinch "De-trash cars". As a matter of interest what do the B and the N stand for?

Nan (2008-04-01 20:58:00)

Glad you found something useful! The thing I like about these custom pages is that it's easy to add more tasks any time.

The B and N are the initials of the person who completed the task.

Andrzej (2008-04-02 04:33:00)

Thank you Inky; this is another good idea. It takes no longer than a tick yet conveys information. Again in my context for lube points I could use F for full and L for lower. (The lower points tend to be "dried out" by water long before the brake lever for example).

This is a plan; I was going to write that I was now looking for a ruler only to remember that the springy page marker doubles as one. Also your point about custom lists being easy to add to was well made.

Nan (2008-04-02 09:12:00)

Andrzej - Ooh, the F and L are a great idea, too.

I used the page market to draw my lines. In fact, I was able to do it sitting in a restaurant because I had the built-in ruler right there!

I would recommend using a tissue to wipe ink off the edge of the ruler, every few lines. I learned to do that after I got some smudging, which you can see in some of the pictures!

scottcovington (2008-04-03 17:38:00)

Great idea Inkster! I'm going to work on a few of my own right now! Soon I will figure out how to post on flickr. My kids are dying for me to post my Filo-Art as I tend to illustrate the events in my life.

I'll post the link here if it's okay with you. It is my favorite, web FILO-SITE!

Thanks again!

Nan (2008-04-03 22:21:00)

"Inkster"...hmmm, I like it!

Yes, Scott, please post the Flickr link here. If you have any questions about posting to Flickr, I can help you. We want to see your Filo-Art!

I'm glad you're enjoying the site and hope more people will discover Philofaxy!

Nan (2008-04-03 22:43:00)

Here's my own latest Filofax picture on Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2386767088/>

Laurie (2008-04-08 20:59:00)

I love the idea of tasks to be done at certain times of the year, annually, etc. Great for winterizing the car, periodic home maintenance, and all those little tasks that would otherwise slip by unnoticed until something broke or went wrong! What a great way to keep up on things. I'm already devising a similar system for myself! Thanks for telling us about this.

1.4 April

Guest Blog: A5 Solution...or Not (2008-04-03 22:22) - Nan

We're very pleased to post this followup to the guest blog [1]A5 Quandry. So many of us are using A5 (5.8 x 8.3 in.) size Filofaxes, we're sure many of you can relate to Laurie Huff's words.

Congratulations on the green A5 Finsbury, Laurie! It's a beautiful organizer!

So to update everyone on my A5 quandary: I wound up getting the A5 Finsbury in green. I really like it. The color is nice, and the ring size is great. There is plenty of room for me to stick in all of my stuff. And I LOVE the calendar layout. It will be great when I am really busy and have a lot of things to schedule. But, but... by the time I received my A5, I no longer needed it! I ordered it at an extremely busy time in my life, and by the time I got it (a month later, when I got back to the US) the busy time was over. It seems to be "too much planner" for me right now. I moved all of my info over into it anyway, because I was excited about it. Then I tried carrying it around in my purse for a couple of weeks. It is just too big to drag around with me everywhere every day. So it sits on my desk. Which is perfect when I am at home. But to be honest, if I have to carry something around with me everywhere I would rather carry my black Personal size Filo.

Which sends me right back to my original problem: the Personal size calendar doesn't give me enough room to write when things get busy. I'm thinking of using my day-per-page dated Moleskine (which I am currently successfully using as a journal) as my calendar, and my Personal sized Filo as my reference/

address/ information book. During the busiest week last month I was using my Moleskine as my planner and journal, with my appointments and to-dos in a narrow column on the left side of the page and the rest of the page open for journal-writing for that day. I was pretty happy with that.

At the moment my life has slowed down so much that I hardly need a calendar at all, which is a strange situation for me to be in. But in a couple of months I will be preparing for yet another move overseas (long story!) so I think at that time I will begin to appreciate the planning power of the A5 size. We'll see. For now I have just about every calendar permutation I could possibly need: A5, Personal size, and page per day. Every time my life changes, my planner needs change too. With these 3 types at my disposal, I can use whatever works for me at the time. In the meantime I'm trying to just go with the flow!

1. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=7794622966384858473>

Nan (2008-04-03 23:02:00)

Laurie, I've been in the same position...order something, and by the time it comes, I no longer need it.

My recommendation is – for *anyone* in this situation – keep it. Six months or a year from now, you may very well have a need for this larger format.

I know it's happened to me! One of the beauties of Filofaxes is they're always there when you need them.

Laurie (2008-04-03 23:10:00)

ITA Nan! Except in my case, I think it's going to be more like a couple of months until I'll need all the Filofax power I can get! Another busy time is right on the horizon, and then I think I will be very glad to have the A5.

dewanna (2008-04-04 07:57:00)

This comment is a bit off topic, but I have found a lovely new replacement to my black personal size binder. We had discussed the current Filofax range in earlier posts and noted the selection and quality is not as good as it was several years ago. I searched Google for green binders and found PerAnnum.com. They carry a range of leather products by a company called Raika. Some of you may have heard of them, but it was new to me. I order a 'personal' size lime green binder and could not be more thrilled.

One note, though – I chucked the insides of the binder upon receiving it and inserted my current Filofax stuff. For me, nothing beats Filo inserts and the filler in the new binder is Scully I think. Too many lined pages to suit my taste.

Anyway, back to the binder... all their products come in a wide array of finishes and colors. They also make several other personal and business accessories in the same coordinating colors and finishes like checkbook covers, business card holders, padfolios, photo albums, etc. Each piece is handcrafted here in the USA (rare these days) and the quality is exceptional! You won't be disappointed. The only thing is that all colors and finishes are not always available at the same time – some are made as they are ordered and may take an addition four weeks.

The one thing I really like is the notepad in the back of the binder. I've never had one in the Filo and it has been extremely useful for those times when you need a lot of extra writing space. The notes can be inserted behind the tabs or filed away for reference.

Take a look when you have a chance!

muse924 (2008-04-04 09:18:00)

Hi, I use (and love) my A5 for my personal and work stuff; however, it doesn't go everywhere with me. I carry Pocket Kennsington Filo in my purse (so that it's with me at all times). It serves as a wallet with note pages. It's for notes, jots, and stuff to get moved into the A5 when I get back to it. Before shopping, I will make specific shopping lists in it. The Pocket has my insurance cards, store receipts until I'm back at my desk, any checks I am taking to the bank for deposit. It has info I need when I'm at a store, such as the filter size for the HVAC at home, and a movie rental list, etc. You get the idea. If and when I travel for personal, the Pocket goes with me and the A5 stays at home. Because of the Pocket's size, it's convenient to keep with me at all times.

Oh and thanks everyone for sharing your thoughts - I'm a big fan of this blog. :)

Nan (2008-04-04 22:20:00)

Hi Muse – Thank you for your good words. What a great description of how you use the pocket Filo. I used to use a Turquoise Pocket Finsbury the same way. I now use a Personal in addition to an A5, but I have that Pocket in reserve. I know it will be part of my life again.

That's what keeps me addicted to Filofax. If I stopped using it, I'd have to start carrying a wallet AND a notepad for shopping lists AND a pocket address book (I don't trust my cell phone for that info). The Filofax is actually less to carry, I believe.

Anonymous (2008-04-05 00:50:00)

I have a black microfiber Sterling pocket that I use the same way as Muse. It's my GTD ubiquitous capture device and wallet, insurance card carrier, etc. I like the microfiber as it's not bulky.

Just wish I could find a personal or an A5 in the same material.

Lovely-Rose (2008-04-05 09:00:00)

Hi!

My A5 Filofax stays most of the time at home. If i'm out and i need to write an appointment or something in it, i'll write it on a appointmentcard and i am planning to take a small notepad with me so i can write something down and rewrite it in the A5. I also use a lot of post-its.

Now we're in the middle of moving house and 'my A5 is traveling with me between my old house and my new apartment. It holds now also our mail and bills. I carry my filofax arrond in a big shopper with my 1 year old sons diapers, food and nursery things.

Greetings

Rose

scottcovington (2008-04-05 11:55:00)

Inky-

Please forgive me for writing what may appear to be a commercial ad here and please feel free to delete it...hopefully after you read it.

I have been a FiLo-HeAd for years; from the appearance of your photo, much longer than you. I have amassed a collection of binders and would like to sell a few. Included are a few Louis Vuitton, a 75th Anniversary Filofax (with the beautiful wooden box it came in) and a Mont Blanc piece or two. All or personal or A5 size. Can you please tell me the best place to sell them? I don't like doing eBay and hope they go to people who can really appreciate them.

Thanks.

Pam (2008-04-05 16:25:00)

Laurie, if the A5 is too bulky for you, have you thought of investing in some undated Day Planner sheets for your Personal Filofax? These are listed on the US Filofax site and you get 2 pages per day with space for appointments, notes and tasks. Since it sounds like you periodically have more and less hectic times, these might work to expand the diary when needed without you having to swap between different formats.

Nan (2008-04-05 16:38:00)

@anon - Thanks for the reminder about how light the microfiber ones are. There's a Filofax called Metro - that might be microfiber.

@rose - Good luck with your move. It sounds as if you're really well organized, and that your Filofax is a part of that.

@scott - Not an ad at all. Unfortunately, I don't have a good answer for you. Maybe one of our other readers will. I used to like Yahoo auctions better than eBay, but they're closed. Maybe some readers here will be interested in what you're trying to sell. And we know they'd give your Filos a good home!

Anonymous (2008-04-05 17:44:00)

Scott– Over at DIY Planner they have a bazaar where you can list things for sale or wanted to buy. You might check that out.

Adirondack Explorer (2008-04-05 22:09:00)

I love my black A5 Finsbury. I use it for everything and carry it with me wherever I go. I've used a number of different planners and Filo is my favorite, by far!!

Laurie (2008-04-05 22:21:00)

Hi Pam, thanks for the suggestion. I have definitely considered putting in day per page sheets into my Filo when things get busy. I guess I haven't because my personal size is already so fat I can hardly put anything else in there. If I did some streamlining I could do it. My main problem with the day per page is lack of forward-planning. I might reconsider this, definitely something to think about! Could simplify my system a lot. Thanks!

scottcovington (2008-04-06 16:53:00)

Thanks for the tips everyone. And "Inkster"...thanks as always for a fun site.

Nan (2008-04-06 22:12:00)

Laurie - I love the ring size on the A5 Finsbury, too. It holds so much and creates a feeling of freedom.

Anonymous (2008-04-13 04:20:00)

A question—

I'm not sure where this question belongs—I actually use almost all A5 for things that I'm going to be printing out, as smaller formats would require special paper and hole punches. I get a ream of 8.5 x 11 inch paper sliced in half at Office Depot and I have the hole punch so everything fits into my binders. Tho for this size I don't use Filofax—I use regular 3-ring binders. I have a pocket and a personal Filofax and am trying to decide what to do with the personal size.

Thanks for the information posted here. I've tried and failed to have my entire life in one binder, but apparently other people don't manage that either, so I don't feel so bad. It looks like we need to divide up our organizational needs between different binders.

I have a pocket Filofax that I use as a wallet and a Ubiquitous Capture Device.

And a spiral agenda that fits into my purse.

And a binder for business things that I leave in the car or at home.

And a binder with the Flylady Control Journal with printouts on housekeeping and productivity issues etc from various websites.

And I have a stack of productivity and organizational printouts that won't fit into the Control Journal.

Maybe I need to break out more binders and divide things up even more. I'd also like to have a binder devoted to my favorite recipes.

How do other people deal with this? Is it my imagination or is this a bigger problem for women? With our work and household interests? Do you have a stack of binders for different aspects of your life, piled up under the coffee table or on a bookshelf in the living room? Have you gone through a process of getting binders for different uses or areas of your life? How has that worked out? How do you live with them all? I'm decluttering now and getting the house tidied up and wondering how to deal with the binders. And maybe I should just throw things away, like all the printouts on decluttering—they seem to contribute to the clutter but I feel the need to browse through them for motivation. It feels like I take three steps forward and two back. Help, please. How do you manage your binders and Filofaxes?

Thanks!

Nan (2008-04-13 18:30:00)

Hi Anonymous - I understand how you feel about clutter; I feel that way most days myself. However, I'm going to give you the advice that I give myself: You're more organized than you think you are. A series of binders containing all your information over the years isn't a problem – it's fantastic! Your binders aren't the clutter – other stuff is! Your binders contain a huge amount of thinking in a relatively small amount of space.

You may not think you have a use for them right now, but I'd like to suggest that you *will* someday. If your collection is in your way, I suggest getting a plastic file bin to store them in. It won't take up a lot of space, and you can neatly store it out of mind until you're ready to look through it again.

I wish I had such a well-organized compendium of information as you do!

Laurie (2008-04-13 22:15:00)

Hi Anonymous,

I know people who have lots of binders, especially for home stuff. A Flylady binder/ Control Journal. A binder for info like kids' school contacts, schedules, local info, etc. A binder for household appliances warranties, maintenance records, etc. A binder for home maintenance/ renovations (with paint or fabric swatches in case you need to get more sometime, you can remember exactly what you used where). A binder for Christmas cards and preparations. In short, you can have binders for everything, whatever you are into, whatever you need. Many people have a small address book separate from their agenda/ planner. I prefer to have mine all in one since I tend to use them at the same time (calling to schedule things, etc). The trick is to find what works for you, which can take some trial and error. And, what I have discovered, is that every time you life changes, your information-managing needs change too. Good luck finding what works for you, and feel free to ask, people here have great ideas!

Laurie (2008-04-13 23:07:00)

Update on my A5 situation: I am falling deeply in love with my A5. We are already gearing up for our next move, so now I am using the A5 full-time. When I first got it I transferred most of my information into it from my Personal size, but held off on really getting into the details because I didn't feel fully committed to using it. But now that I am exclusively using the A5, I have filled in the details, which makes the planner even more effective at organizing my life. I am so glad to have the larger size, and already the weekly column calendar format is helping to keep me sane. So yes, it's big, but I also have a lot of information to manage so I'm very happy that I moved up to the big system!

Tur Tur (2008-04-14 02:47:00)

Hi Laurie

Nice to read that you are in love with your A5. I am still indecisive whether to change from Personal to A5, and open for arguments.

Anonymous (2008-04-14 06:13:00)

Thanks for the encouragement. It's great to have the chance to see how others think about things and know I'm not off on a tangent. I guess I'll try to think of my binder collection as a testament to my flexibility and perseverance – not a reminder of my fickleness. At least I'm not buying expensive binders (except for the two Filofaxes). For my last purchase I went to Office Depot and bought a three-ring address book for \$15. It's been a good deal. Of course the Filofax forms don't fit in there but it has been used for printouts and other reference so no prob.

I hope more people post the way they use their binders so I'll get some ideas. Meanwhile, I'm setting up one binder for recipes, one for FlyLady, one for daily business and personal stuff, and I have the pocket one for notes and reminders etc.

Thanks for the suggestions.

GG (formerly Anon)

Great Find - PerAnnum.com (2008-04-06 18:21) - Nan

In a recent comment, our reader Dewanna Walser turned us on to a new source of six-ring agendas compatible with the Filofax Personal size - [1]PerAnnum.com.

In Dewanna's words, these organizers are "handcrafted here in the USA (rare these days) and the quality is exceptional! You won't be disappointed. The only thing is that all colors and finishes are not always available at the same time – some are made as they are ordered and may take an additional four weeks." The organizers and other accessories (photo albums, checkbook covers, and so on) are made from Italian leather.

Thanks, Dewanna, for the great find. Who knew?

1. <http://www.per annum.com/products/R201.aspx>

Anonymous (2008-06-25 12:04:00)

I, too, agree with DeWanna as far as her comment of "Made in the USA".

Makes you want to eat "rice cakes" on Thursdays.....

Filofax Fitness (2008-04-12 06:10) - Nan

In previous years, there was a wider variety of preprinted Filofax refills. Project and Meeting planners, Shopping list forms, and more. There was probably an exercise planner, too. I'm not sure about Filofax, actually, but Franklin Covey was great for stuff like that. Now that fewer people are buying these paper products, companies have stopped printing these forms. We're expected to use our home computers to print our own forms, using software provided by Franklin Covey or homegrown solutions like those found at DIY Planner.

I'm becoming a regular exerciser, and I need a way to record the name of exercise or machine used, minutes spent or sets/ reps of each exercise. Spaces for heart rate and calories burned would be good, too. Not for each exercise, but perhaps for the entire session. My trainer is going to take me to a gym and show me a routine soon, and I need a way to write down what I'm supposed to do on each machine so I can remember it, and so I can create a record of the exercise I do on my own.

There isn't anything quite like this at [1]DIY Planner, although the site has an incredible array of forms for tracking Weight Watchers points and special health conditions like diabetes and migraine headaches. There's even a Meditation form! People have done a lot of work designing these forms.

Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be something devoted solely to exercise and activity. Furthermore, DIY Planner devotees mostly seem to be using 8.5 x 11, 5.25 x 8.5, or 3 x 5 (index card) sized formats. If you use a Personal Filofax size (3.25 x 6.75 inch), you've got a lot of tweaking to do.

Has anyone figured out a good way to track exercise in a Filo?

Realistically, I will probably create my own Personal forms using lined or grid Filofax paper and a ruler. But I'd love to see what anyone else is having success with!

1. <http://www.diyplanner.com/taxonomy/term/54>

Pam (2008-04-12 18:10:00)

Have you taken a look at Corrie Haffly's website? She has posted some details of exercise tracking sheets in the not too distant past which might inspire you to design something for yourself.

Nan (2008-04-12 20:55:00)

Hi Pam – I wasn't aware of Corrie Haffly's Web site before, but I've checked it out now! She does have some good ideas for exercise forms [1]here.

1. <http://corriehaffly.wordpress.com/forms-and-other-goodies/>

Lovely-Rose (2008-04-14 05:28:00)

hi,

i've made some forms of my own for my eating schedule. i draw them on the filofax squared paper.

Rose

Glenda (2008-04-16 05:49:00)

The UK TimeDesign website has some excellent templates that you may be able to use. I've downloaded all of them just in case I want to adapt them someday.

<http://tiny.cc/Z8dEZ>

If there's a Print icon to the right of the list, you click on that and a pdf file is displayed, and then you can save

the file.

Nan (2008-04-18 11:38:00)

Glenda, thank you for the link (and for making it tiny for us). I'll check it out and post about it!

Happens to the Best of Us (2008-04-14 19:37) - Nan

As the ringleader of a Filofax blog, I'm chagrined to admit what I'm about to admit. You see, I work in an office where we take turns bringing in bagels for the group every Monday. This week was my week to buy the bagels.

One would think that a big post-it note in my personal Filo saying "Bagels Monday," and an inscription in my work Filo saying "My Bagel Week" would be enough. It wasn't. I showed up at work this morning unbageled, and one of my coworkers had already gone out to get them in my stead.

It just goes to prove yet again that Filofaxes don't help us if we don't look at them. Usually, if there's something I need to remember 1st thing in the morning, I'll leave my Personal Filofax open to it on my night table, with my glasses hooked into the Filofax's rings, to ensure that I don't start my day until I've been reminded of what I need to be reminded of. (I'm not a morning person, OK?) I didn't do that this time, and it showed.

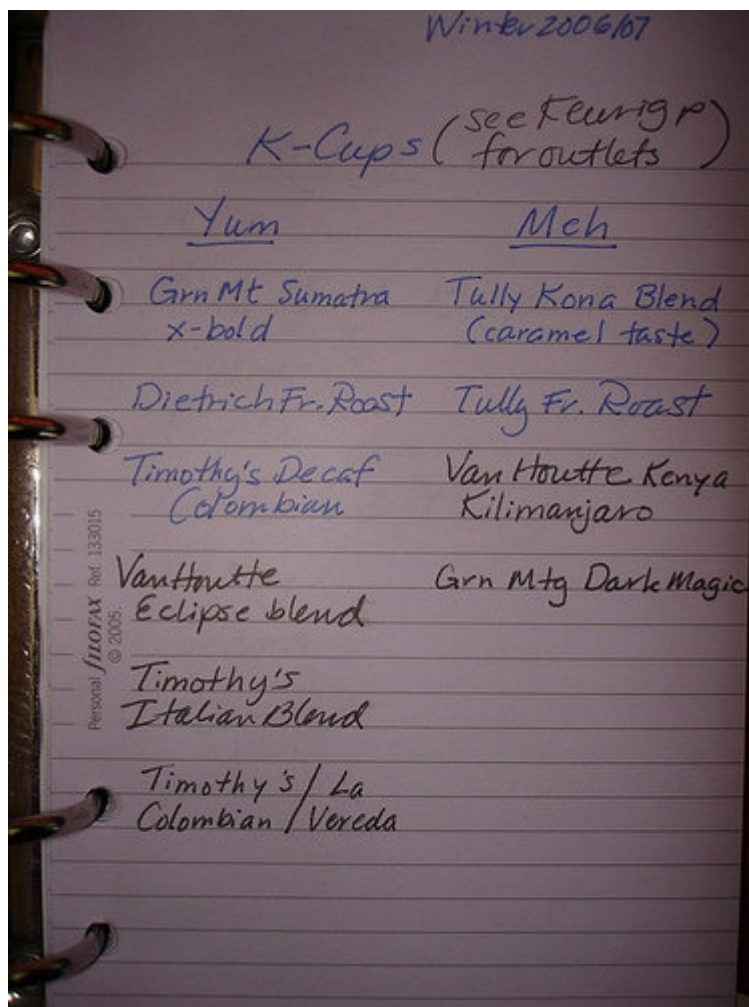
On the bright side, I did remember to get my taxes done.

Andrzej (2008-04-15 03:39:00)

This also works with car keys. Though I can see the sense of glasses; at least the note can then be read straight away.

Java Jive (2008-04-18 11:40) - Nan

Here's something I did in my Filo that seemed like a good idea at the time...but in retrospect I realize is incredibly goofy. You see, I got a Keurig coffee maker for Christmas one year, and it came with an assortment of sample K-cups (individual coffee charges). As I drank them, I made a list of which ones I did and didn't like, so I'd know which ones to buy when the samples ran out. You can see the result here:

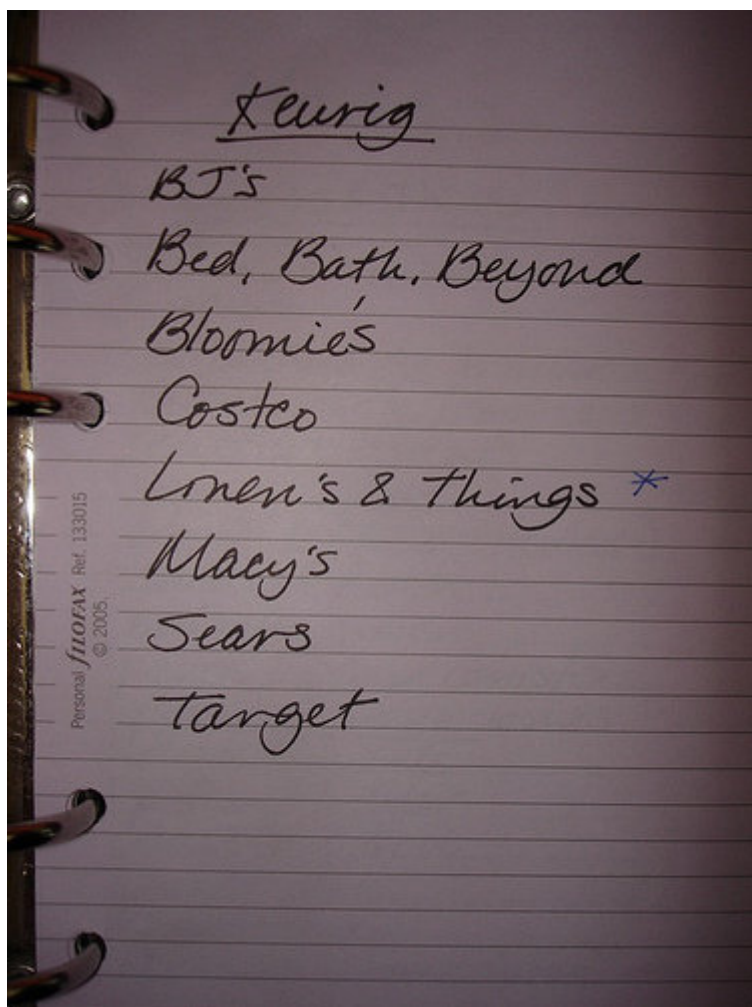


[1]

Other things to note in this photo: You can see how I date my pages by year in the upper-right corner. Since this is a list, I keep it behind the List tab; also, lavender paper is my default color for lists. (But I've ended up with other colors mixed in as well.)

What brought up this topic today? I found my local supermarket now carries the K-cups! As I raised my eyes to see them on the top shelf, I swear the heavens opened with a Hallelujah!

Which means I get to throw away *this* page!



[2]

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2422718319/>
2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2423532446/in/photostream/>

Nan (2008-04-18 12:00:00)

OMG - Did I really put an incorrect apostrophe in Linens? Oh well, my apostrophe abuse is now out there for all the world to see.

It's my bag, baby (2008-04-18 21:05) - Nan



[1] Some Philofaxers are into taking pictures of what's in their bags; i.e. pocketbook, briefcase, backpack, messenger bag, or whatever bag we carry through our day. I've been promising for a while to do my own. And now I have. Please add yours to the Philofaxy pool!

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2423638055/>

How sick am I? (2008-04-22 22:41) - Nan



[1] I like to frequent a local restaurant because it has delicious, freshly prepared appetizers and I can usually get a seat at the bar in front of a TV where I can satisfy my obsessions with CNN, Law & Order, and the Red Sox. The restaurant has a satellite TV system whose channel numbers are completely different from our cable TV channels at home.

If you've read this far, you can probably see where I'm going with this. Yes, I have a page in my Personal Filofax, behind the Lists tab and in alphabetical order by the name of the restaurant, with the numbers for my favorite channels on the bar TV.

So, I got there the other night, and another solitarily dining woman was watching public TV and had taken dibs on the remote. When she was getting ready to leave, she offered me the opportunity to change the channel, and said she was looking for CNN. I whipped out my Filo and gave her the channel number. She was grateful, but gave me a seriously funny look. In the end, she and I had a lovely conversation

and made a good connection. I find that pulling out my Filo frequently turns out to be a conversation starter, usually beginning with someone remarking, "my, what a long to-do list you have." I'd appreciate hearing, in the comments, if anyone else has experienced this phenomenon. And of course, feel free to tell me what a sick puppy I am for using my Filo to keep track of my favorite TV channels at the bar.

1. http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SA6lX33MhCI/AAAAAAAAAEs/WRTFhVD18s0/s1600-h/Red_Wine_Glas.jpg

Andrzej (2008-04-23 07:37:00)

The common quip is "I didn't think you were the sort to have a Filofax".

Also what's wrong with recording channel numbers? You can have 40, 46, 43 and 50 (Gloucestershire) and 22, 28, 25, 32 and 35 (Herefordshire) from my Notes section. Try fixing an aerial and tuning a TV without them.

Red wine is drunk by the best people.

lovely-rose (2008-04-23 12:07:00)

here the thing people say to me is: so you have a busy life!! because my filofax is full of things that i have to do and appointments. but my life isn't that busy. I just write everything down. like on every day that my son has to do his baby exercises and that i have to do the dishes and some shopping.

Rose

notare (2008-04-23 15:16:00)

I giggled. It's true. But SICK isn't the word I'd apply here - the word efficient seems much more appropriate! What's wrong with keeping a list in a place where you can find it? I've got all sorts of bits in my book that are there more for convenience than anything else - like hockey schedules (so I can know without checking what days the spouse is most definitely not available).

Leen Groeneveld (2008-04-24 07:15:00)

Hi Inky,

Sorry that you hear again from me (since I use my Palm again) but this is a nice topic.

And it's this kind of lists that I carry (lots of them!) with me in my Palm.

And whether we use a Philofax or a Palm, having dinner in a restaurant and drinking red wine is always great!

Nan (2008-04-24 22:21:00)

@andrzej, @lovely-rose, @notare: Thanks for helping me remember that what's important to record in a Filofax is indeed the information that we need, without judgement. I really enjoyed reading how you use your Filos. Thanks so much for your comments.

@leen: When I used a Palm all the time, I actually had more lists than I have now. I loved the idea that I had so much information with me in such a small place. When I switched to Filo, I didn't bring all the lists with me. They live in Chronos Notes. Please keep reading!

Iwan Andringa (2008-04-26 01:45:00)

Hi Inky,

It was a great posting to read as well a comforting thought that I've not come to this stage yet :-). However consider it as something that is comforting you and it even supported creating new social contact. At the end of the day every human being will have some behavior that someone else might consider at least remarkable. I've switched from lists on gadgets or web 2.0 apps to filofax and ehm... moleskine lately...(so I'm on the way getting into a certain stage).. and I just love it...no more stress of failing equipment, webconnections...if only my ehm...Mega Inkblood...wouldn't skip so often... Do you think I need help? :-)

Nan (2008-04-26 12:16:00)

@iwan - Welcome to Philofaxy! Lots of use Moleskines or other notebooks sometimes, too. It is indeed comforting to be in like company. You sound pretty normal to me! ;)

I raise another glass of red wine to all of you!

Order placed (2008-04-24 22:22) - Nan

I just placed an order for Filofax refills with [1]The Daily Planner.

For my work A5, I ordered a horizontal format week-per-two-pages. Since these are 2008 calendars and we're well into 2008 now, The Daily Planner has them on sale now. My work life is driven by deadlines, reminders, and occasional appointments, rather than constant appointments every day, the horizontal format, rather than the vertical format that comes standard with the A5 filo, is better for me. More on that in a later post.

I also ordered 1/5" grid paper that I use for my food journal, and everyday items like ruled paper and To Do pages. I ordered a couple of items – Personal Computer Paper (3 Personal pages to one 8.5 x 11 inch sheet) and an erasable single sheet (\$6) – that I wouldn't normally order. All in the line of duty. I'll report on how well these items worked for me. As a Filofax blogger, I feel it's incumbent upon me to test these items.

I didn't bite the bullet and buy the \$50 A5 hole punch – more on that later. But I ordered almost \$90 worth of Filofax paper. I'll let you know how it goes.

1. <http://www.thedailyplanner.com/>

Andrzej (2008-04-25 06:37:00)

When I bought my Filofax I thought I'd need the high octane hole-punch. In the event I settled on the bargain basement folding plastic shed confetti everywhere model.

Perhaps because of this I don't punch much.

Lovely Rose (2008-04-26 05:37:00)

I want the portable hole punch....

My husband tells me all the time: You use your expensive Filofax paper as draft paper. (I hope i wrote this good, because i speak english very wel but i didn't know the english word for 'kladpapier'.So i translated it with help from babelfish.altavista.com. shame on me.) So if i have the hole punch, i can use some cheap paper in my Filofax as draft paper.

Greetz,

Rose

Nan (2008-04-26 12:12:00)

@andrzej - I think the only people who need the high-octane punches are those who print their own forms and punch many sheets at once. I definitely want to get a portable one, so I can punch a couple of sheets a month. Usually, there's a schedule or Excel spreadsheet for work that I want to carry around. Right now, I either slip it in without punching, or use a single-hole punch!

@lovely - Yes, "draft paper" is correct. Thanks for the translation. You've reminded me of another great reason to get a punch – to punch cheap paper for drafts. Greetz!

Adirondack Explorer (2008-04-26 12:16:00)

I love this site!

Dean

lovely rose (2008-04-26 16:27:00)

Oh By The way kladpapier is dutch for draft paper....

Nan (2008-04-26 18:21:00)

Hi Dean - Thanks! My order came today and included several items of interest. I'll report on them soon!

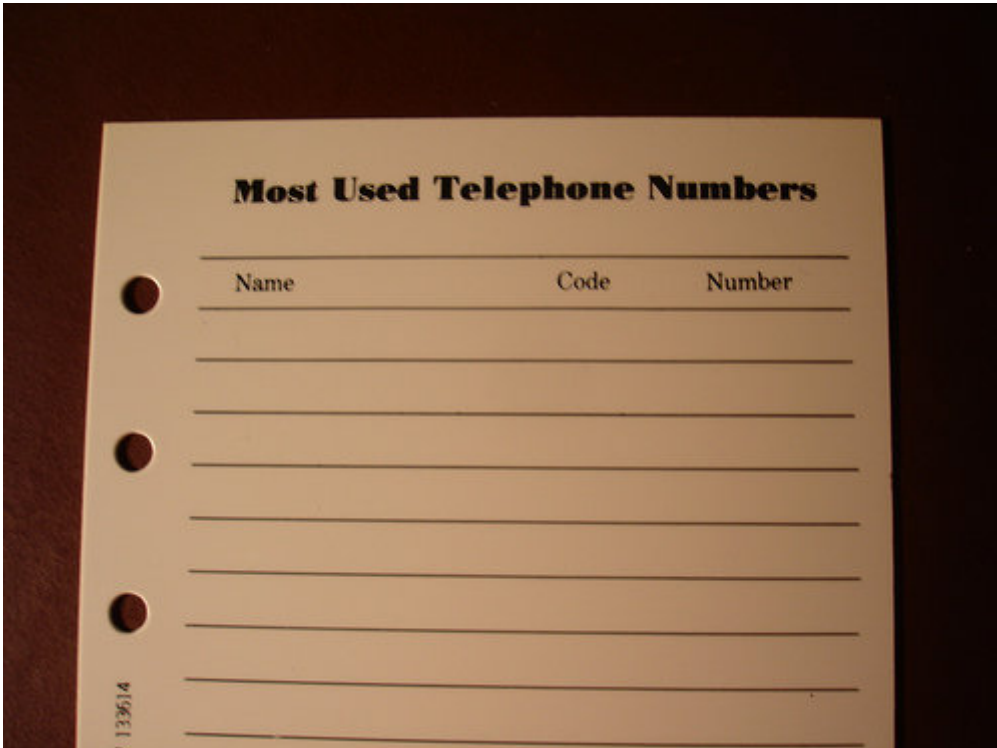
BusyMe (2008-04-27 20:19:00)

Do you know of any templates for the computer paper? I've been struggling to get it set up . . .

Nan (2008-04-27 20:59:00)

@busyme - Sorry, I don't. Actually, the computer paper didn't arrive; it's backordered, so I can't report on that this time. Maybe another reader will know!

Order arrived! (2008-04-27 19:53) - Nan



Most Used Telephone Numbers

Name	Code	Number

4 133614



Recently, I ordered a bunch of refills from The Daily Planner. Along with the things I really needed (To Do pages in both A5 and Personal formats), I ordered several items I didn't need. Why? I wanted to experiment with Filofax products I'd never used before to round out my experience and collection, and to report to all of you on this blog. Today I'll start with an insert called "Erasedable Marker Memo" on the Web site and on the invoice, and "Most Used Telephone Numbers" on the package. It's a single sheet of plastic, about the same weight and flexibility as a dishwashing-liquid bottle. In other words, quite a bit thicker and stiffer than paper. The insert is ©1995, and the packaging seems to be from the same era. (The more recent packaging is mostly white with only a little dark blue.) Also, it was made in the UK, which makes it a rare find these days.

The front of the form reads "Most Used Telephone Numbers" (as shown), and the back says "Messages," with just a page of blank lines below.

The instructions read, "Write in pencil or non-permanent marker. Erase with rubber eraser or damp cloth."

Just testing it briefly, pencil marks look lighter than on paper, and erase easily. Marker also appeared fainter, and rubbed off easily with just a finger – no water needed! That leads me to believe just as I suspected – that marker would smudge more easily than pencil.

I would love to use a form like this as a To-Do list for ad-hoc tasks, or capturing temporary notes. But it would also be great for its intended purpose, since the numbers we call most often change from time to time, as family and friends' phone numbers (or relationships) change from time to time.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2447641432/in/photostream/>

2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2447641438/>

The Monkey (2008-04-27 22:42:00)

I would think that it would be possible to duplicate the functionality of this insert with some mylar drafting film, for those who can't find this product.

Steve (2008-04-28 01:35:00)

The range of refills and types of pages available from Filofax these days is somewhat reduced compared to what was available in the 1980's and 1990's. Of course the company has changed hands I think since then so it's not surprising that they have streamlined the product range.

Also back then there was only the Personal size and Deskfax size..

Nan (2008-04-28 22:41:00)

Oooh, Amper, what a great DIY idea! I have a feeling that a lot of our readers are going to pick up on it!

Thanks for your input, Steve. You're right that there are fewer types of refills available now. :(Placing orders like this, perhaps I'm doing my part to show there's still a market for more!

Kevin (2008-05-04 14:35:00)

To say that the range of refills today is reduced compared to the early 1990s doesn't really do it justice. The old Filofax catalogues used to have pages and pages of different refills ranging from papers for the military, the clergy, tourists/travellers as well as many specific business papers like the "Free Form" papers. Today the range of papers is fairly generic with task specific papers being almost completely absent.

I do recall Filofax having bibliographic papers, papers to plan TV and fitness schedules and even a paper to allow anglers to record their catches. How well they sold or how useful they ever were is something only the company itself probably knows. They were mostly obliterated the company's reorganisation in 1994.

The original Deskfax was an odd format in that it was really just a double width Filofax (personal) size page. It still had a decent range of papers and was much more interoperable with the standard Filofax than any of the current sizes are.

geew (2008-05-07 18:48:00)

I totally agree, inserts were much more interesting back then. I have and still use a birdwatchers life list by Filofax from the mid 1980's. Beat that!

Andrzej (2008-05-09 04:09:00)

Aside from not producing a bird watching insert Filofax have just invited me to "Step into Spring" with an Urban folder featuring "distressed leather trim" which changes to "distressed leather-look trim" on the click through. Didn't Spring start in March? http://www.filofax.co.uk/store/SEURLF/ASP/SFS/DISPLAY./SIZEID.3/RANGEID.114/DSIZEID.3/SFE/organiser.htm?MailoutID=130 &UserID=17029 &opt_in=-1 &DataTable=130 _1 &customerType=11

Nan (2008-05-09 21:31:00)

That's funny, Andrzej! Yes, someone at Filofax needs to use his or her Filofax to keep track of the seasons. At least, May isn't the time one "steps into" spring!

1.5 May

More UK items (2008-05-09 21:11) - Nan



[1]

My recent [2]order from The Daily Planner contained an interesting mix of leaves made in the UK and newer ones made in China. As I write this, world conditions are changing, and increased Chinese wages and petroleum/shipping costs may eventually make Chinese manufacture less economically advantageous than it has been in the early 21st century. But until then, UK-made leaves are a precious find to many of us Philofaxers.

Two of the items I ordered—pink lined paper and Cotton Cream to-do pages—were made in the UK. The pink leaves are marked ©1996, and the back of the package is marked "Made in England." This pink paper is both thinner and smoother than Chinese-made pink Filofax paper, which to me means that the English one is higher quality.

The Cotton Cream leaves were a mistake on my part—I clicked the wrong item. My everyday Personal Filo is red leather, and I prefer white leaves for my diary and to-do pages. But I've decided to keep the Cotton Cream ones. I want to experience using them. Also, if Cotton Cream is no longer being made, I want to have them. These leaves are marked ©2003, and the package reads "Made in the UK." I love the fact that it also says, "Manufactured by environmentally friendly paper mill."

Does anyone know whether the Cotton Cream paper is still being made in the UK?

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2478858855/>

2. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/04/order-arrived.html>

Andrzej (2008-05-13 02:35:00)

Hello Inky

I did an audit of my Filofax collection over a cup of tea last night. This included looking at my paper collection

(including Cotton Cream diary pages) and all associated packaging (that which I've kept). The only thing marked with a point of origin was the portable hole-punch. This was "Made in England", this may have fleetingly instilled a feeling of pride, if it wasn't for the fact that I live in Wales. Next time I'm in my favourite stationers I'll look for any Cotton Cream and report back if it says from whence it's from.

Nan (2008-05-13 09:24:00)

Thanks, Andrzej!

paulien (2008-05-14 16:05:00)

Hi. I also have a few different kinds of cotton cream papers. Where do I look for a place of manufacture? I could not find it on the packages.

Also, I want to tell you that I have bought a pocket organiser, the brown classic one. I had the blue piazza in personal, but I found it quite large and the dirty suede bothered me. I really like the pocket one, but it is quite small. Now I am torn between the two. Any advice on this?

Kevin (2008-05-16 12:21:00)

I had a look through my paper store and I found that older Cotton Cream papers are marked "Made in England" whilst ones bought in the last six months or so are not. I'm inclined to think that none of the papers are now made in England; I can't say they are of any lesser quality for it - they are 5p dearer than the Made in England papers were though!

I've posted comparison photos on Flickr for your entertainment: [1]<http://flickr.com/photos/biscuitsinthehouse/2497505862/>

1. <http://flickr.com/photos/biscuitsinthehouse/2497505862/>

Nan (2008-05-16 22:30:00)

Thank you for giving us the comment and pictures, Kevin! I really appreciate your doing that. Interesting that the made-in-China leaves are more dear.

Nan (2008-05-16 22:31:00)

@Paulien - Usually the place of manufacture is near the bottom of the packet, either on the front or the back, or near the bar code.

Andrzej (2008-05-19 12:12:00)

Alas my trawl of the shelves in W H Smith yielded no indication of 'country of origin' on any Filofax paper packaging. In another shop I was tempted into buying a Moleskine notebook.

Nan (2008-05-20 20:50:00)

Thanks for checking, Andrzej! I've noticed that, in the U.S., the A5 refills usually show the country of origin. The Personal refills do not, unless the country of origin is the U.K.

I believe that in the U.S., laws require showing country of origin over a certain dollar amount, and the Personal ones are below that amount. So the made in China ones don't brag about where they're from!

paulien (2008-05-23 05:15:00)

Hi. I checked my packages again and found no place of manufacture on any of them, cream or other. But my cotton cream pages are also marked 2003 for the ruled and blank and todo. My diary is marked 2007, but I think this is because the first dutch ruled diary is for 2008 and made in 2007. I don't have the package of this anymore.

Slim my Filo (2008-05-13 20:22) - Nan



[1] A reader recently asked me about the capacity of the Slimline Filofax – the same paper size as Personal but with a smaller ring size (7/16”) for a thinner, flatter shape. I’ve never used a Slimline – I don’t think I’ve ever bought a smaller ring size of anything!

Has anyone who has used a Slimline fill us in (sorry) on his or her experience? Did you come up with any tricks to deal with the reduced capacity, or did you find it simply inadequate for a daily organizer? How many leaves does it hold compared to the usual Personal 7/8” rings? Does it come with tabs?

1. http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SCo0j3zKiVI/AAAAAAAAAFE/c9XjE4A8_C4/s1600-h/img10523586806.jpeg

Lawrence (2008-05-14 03:56:00)

I have been using a slimline Filofax as my main daily organizer for the past 25 years. My present model is a 10-year-old Kensington. Today it has in it diary inserts for May to September (2 weeks to a page), ruler/placemaker, sheet of blotting paper (I’m a fan of fountain pens), 30 sheets of ruled cotton cream notepaper, fold-out Filofax maps of central Glasgow and a credit-card insert (to take library and donor cards) – more than enough for day-to-day use.

I have a 7/8” Filofax as well, but that tends to live on my desk. It is simply too big to carry around conveniently (by which I mean you can’t put in a jacket pocket without doing permanent damage to the jacker).

Silver_Elixir (2008-05-15 05:45:00)

Hi. I am new to this site and I think it is great. I have used a slimline filofax in the past, but i used it mostly for recording events that had happened or were upcoming. I lived in the UK at the time and worked as a live in nanny so my time didn’t need a lot of planning. I found it great to have a small organizer i could slip into my bag and use while on the tube or waiting in the car. My handwriting can be on the large side so I had to make it a bit smaller to fit the pages. I kept a two-week to an opening diary format that was easy to view. I also had an address section and a section for notes/journal/ideas. A slim line filo uses the same size as the personal filo so there are plenty of pages to choose from. My slim line came with address tabs that don’t protrude past the edge of the page. I don’t think I used tabs, just diff coloured paper to show different sections. I had around 80 - 100 pages plus 8 address tabs. You could fit more pages in as the filofax paper is thinner than the Debdon pages, some of which i used for notes etc. I now use an A5 filo as I seem to need more info with me!

Anonymous (2008-05-23 12:03:00)

Hi. I have never responded to anything on line before but just had to comment on this. I have a lovely orange personal Dorset Filofax which contains not only my life but my family’s as well. So in case I leave it somewhere, drop it out of my bag etc. I took to carrying a red Belgrave pocket Filofax which quickly also filled up with my entire life’s passwords etc., and I had the hassle of remembering to transfer it all into my trusty Dorset, so now I carry a classic slimline with about six weeks of diary and a year planner, together with sheets for notes, expenses and the address sheets, once a month or so I take out the used week to view and add in the future six weeks, I don’t have to duplicate and my overflowing Dorset sits on my desk, safe at home. At the moment this is working really well - until I’m tempted to reorganise.....!

It’s so great to find like minded people out there – love the site.

john (2008-05-27 16:44:00)

I use my slimline Filofax mostly for travel. I keep notes of restaurants, reviews, city maps, etc in the slimline for the city I’m in. It fits conveniently in the outer pocket of my briefcase or I just carry it around with me. I’m always on the road; so this makes more sense than carrying the larger one.

Crookster (2008-06-12 01:34:00)

I use a slimline Kensington Filofax to carry business cards and telephone numbers; it also carries a foldout filofax maps of London and about 10 sheets of white paper.

I also have a slimline Finsbury which I use to transfer my diary to if I'm going somewhere that needs something a little smarter than my day to day filofax.

Richard (2008-06-17 08:20:00)

Since 1993, I have used a black slimline Filofax for daily life. I love the slimline version because I can slip it into a jacket or back trouser pocket as well as into any day bag. It goes with me everywhere-it's even a veteran of the conflict in Bosnia and a few other places from my Army days- and has proved light and durable enough to live in my backpack (enclosed in a re-sealable waterproof sandwich bag) during some lengthy recreational 'walks'. (Interestingly, I read that Filofax field cases used to be issued to British Army staff officers pre-WWII.) Over the years, I've refined the contents of mine to a Horizontal Year Planner, 12 weeks of week-to-page diary notes, address pages, a daily to-do-list, a daily expenses list, an exercise logsheet and 3-4 lined note-pages, one of which is my daily 'mind map.' I keep a few business cards, blank index cards, first-class stamps and about ten sticky notes in the inside cover pocket. On a daily basis, I 'weed' the contents, transferring anything I want to keep permanently into a leather bound A5 journal I picked up for a song in Changmai, Thailand earlier this year. I find this great self-discipline: one of the advantages of the slimline to my thinking is that it almost forces me to 'house clean' my actions, thoughts and intentions on a daily basis. A glass of shiraz plus 15 minutes of reflection equals bliss. About once a month, I run some conditioner over its increasingly worn cover. One disadvantage is that my version does not have a pen holder. For Christmas this year, I will treat myself to a new Finsbury in brown grained leather plus a mini Barley pen and pencil. I may even put my monogram on the spine. I'll give the current one an honourable discharge and perhaps continue to use it as an ideas & fact index while researching my next book. By the way, I love this site!

PhotoDiva (2008-06-22 06:38:00)

Richard, This is a great post! Could you elaborate on what your "daily mindmap" is? This post was a big inspiration to me!

Claudia

chrishorlick (2010-01-10 15:38:49)

Help! Please, please, please can anyone tell me if there is such a thing as a SLIMLINE A5 filofax/organiser. Thanks, Pippa

Laurie (2010-01-11 03:16:51)

Hi Pippa, I wish there were a slimline A5!! People have been asking Filofax to make one for awhile now. I don't know if other brands have an equivalent of what would be a slimline A5.

Sorry!

Savannah (2010-02-01 22:05:16)

Pippa,

You can buy a leather binder with 1/2" rings (1/16" larger than a filofax personal slimline) at pledesigns.com for only \$55. You will need to use plannerstore, Day Timer, Day Runner, or Franklin Covey fills because Filofax won't fit. I recommend the plannerstore refills because you can get them three hole punched (the binder is 3 ring, so it would look better). Hope this helps.

DJ (2010-09-17 10:58:24)

Richard, we are interested in your book! Title, please?

Tempta-a-a-tion (2008-05-20 20:50) - Nan



[1]

Sung to the tune of "Anticipation," of course.

This is the time of year, when the new 18-month Moleskine diaries come out, that I'm tempted to stock up before they sell out, in case I have a change of heart later this year. In fact, in 2007, I bought 1 large and 2 pocket Moleskine diaries, in various weekly/daily configurations. It was my first full year of using Filofax, and it was important to me to have the Moleskines there for me in case of emergency, despite the expense. I didn't end up using them at all.

These days, I think using Moleskines sounds more difficult and tedious than using the loose-leaf Filofax, but I'm still tempted by the likes of this, from the excellent Moleskine supplier, Ship the Web: [2]<http://tinyurl.com/6fmua5>.

This year, anyway, at the risk of getting set in my Filofax ways, I think I'll resist.

1. http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SDNzwXzKiWI/AAAAAAAAAFM/j22Fmzrf5Pg/s1600-h/CHR-MB518W.jpg

2. <http://tinyurl.com/6fmua5>

Andrzej (2008-05-21 03:28:00)

Hi Inky

Your Moleskine diversion is timely. I can report that (contrary to what we are told in the business news) the Dollar is mighty. The notebook I bought last weekend was the same price in Stirling as your link to supplier shows in USD!

Thank you for the price/country of origin explanation in your previous post. Here "Made in the UK" is sometimes frowned upon because some prefer "Made in the EU" is used so as not to disadvantage manufacturers in poorer European regions.

kevin (2008-05-21 14:53:00)

I've had a few Moleskines and frankly I have never understood what all the fuss is about. It doesn't matter which way you slice it, they're just basic diaries or notebooks. Rarely does a product succeed this well purely on the strength of hyperbole. I particularly dislike the paper they use which is too thin - if you use a fountain or gel pen they'll bleed through and as I hate ball-points I always have this problem. Given they're a fad they'll probably vanish as quickly as they arrived.

Laurie (2008-05-21 18:25:00)

Funny you should mention this! I've been already thinking about what page-per-day book to get for 2009. I am currently using a Moleskine large page-per-day diary for a journal, recording daily happenings, etc. I use my Filo for forward planning and my dairy for recording, which is working pretty well for me. I think for next year I will get what I had last year, which is a Cavallini leather diary. Link: <http://jennibick.com/2005-moderno-planner.html> The leather on these is smooth and soft. And, you can get your initials or whatever you want embossed on the front, which is a huge plus. The only drawback is that it doesn't stay open and doesn't lay flat when writing.

I've also been looking at the Quo Vadis ABP1, which has a nifty page layout of appointments down the left side of the page and then the rest of the page open for notes: <http://www.quovadisplanners.com/catalog/abp1>

I used a Quo Vadis one year and the paper was so thin that anything written shows right through. Even the printed days and dates are visible through to the other side, which I don't like.

My ultimate fantasy diary is this purple leather one by Aspinal, but it's crazy-expensive: <http://www.aspinaloflondon.com/details.asp?CategoryID=5 &RangeID=5>

&StyleID=283 &ProductID=341 &DesignID=1825

Paperblanks has some gorgeous ones:

http://www.paperblanks.com/dayplanners/dayplanners_mini_week_2009_1.htm

I was recently discussing with my sister why I am so fascinated with day-per-page books, even though I have tried to use them several times in the past as my main calendar and they completely fail every time at forward-planning. I think because they represent my alternative fantasy-life where my life is simple and all I have to think about is what I have to do that day. Meanwhile my fabulous A5 Finsbury is fulfilling my every planning need, while I am going through yet another insanely busy time in my life!

paulien (2008-05-23 05:22:00)

I have seen them as well in stores around here. And of course I am tempted again. Last year I bought a soft cover one, but I didn't like it and used it for only one week. Later in december I bought a paperblanks one which I did like, but also started missing my filo again after two weeks and put it aside. Now I have seen hardcover weekly diary/notebooks from moleskine, and I want one. But I should not buy it, considering the 30 euros I wasted last year. That money would have bought me a bag full of groceries, three movietickets, a nice book, a set of coloured pencils or something else nice.

And also I have to say that I now own two filoes, my blue personal piazza and a chocolate pocked classic. Used and loved the pocket for a few weeks and it is indeed easier to carry, but not enough space and I missed the projects tab. Any ideas on how to use the pocket, or should I stay with my personal? I like them both. This is like laurie's problem with choosing between A5 and personal, so the solution may not be found easily for me as well, but any ideas are welcome.

Lovely-Rose (2008-05-23 12:19:00)

Hoi Paulien,

Why don't you use a moleskine as a small notebook and when you're at home you write it again in your A5 Filo. that's how i do it. and sometimes i take my A5 with me.

Groetjes

Lovely-Rose

paulien (2008-05-27 04:15:00)

Hi Rose,

Thanks for your comment. I do not have an a5 filo, only a personal and pocket. My problem is choosing between these two. At the moment I am using the personal again. I carry mine with me to work, but not everywhere else. I leave it when shopping, and take it on longer train trips and such.

My moleskine is a large softcover planner. This is larger than the personal filo, so there is no real reason to carry this instead of the filo. Except the fact that I have trouble choosing and sticking to one planner. I did not have these problems until about two years ago, when I started surfing more and seeing all these filo's and moleskines and other planners. I should get back to that point and stop looking at planner websites (except this one of course!).

En ben jij echt een andere hollandse? Gebeurt niet vaak dat je die ziet op forums. Nog filo-winkels die ik echt moet zien?

Groetjes,

Paulien

Lovely-Rose (2008-05-27 11:15:00)

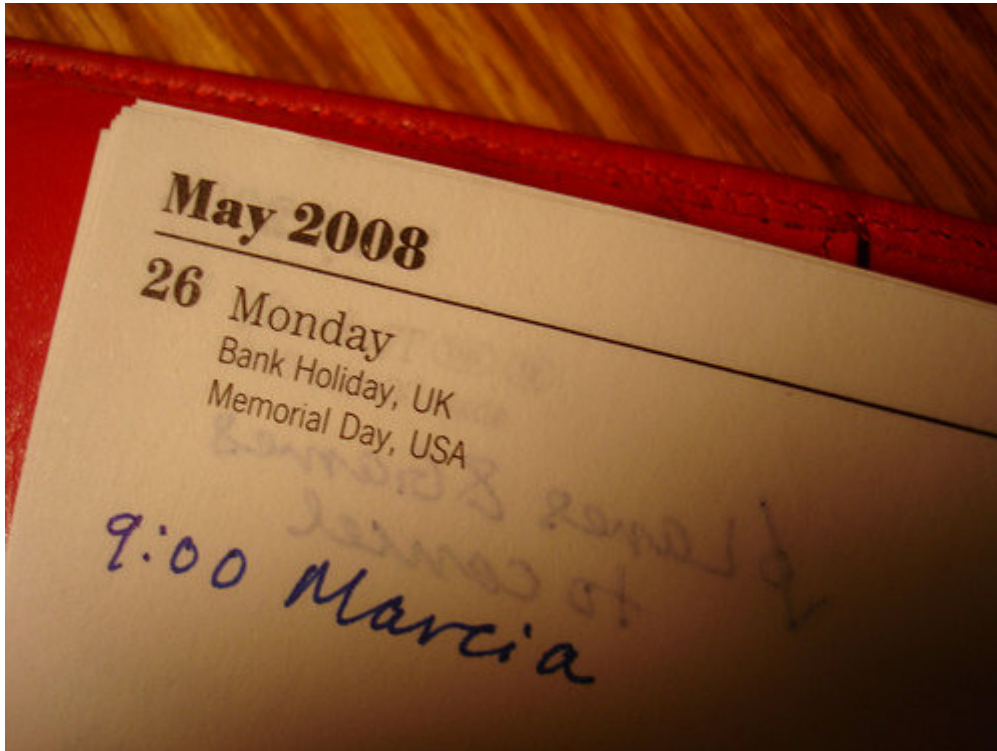
Hoi Paulien,

Ja, ik zie er niet echt hollands uit (ben hindoestaanse en mijn familie komt uit Suriname). Johan mijn man heeft de mijne hier in een boekhandel gekocht hier in Oss. (daar hebben ze meer Succes dan Filofax. En ik wil Alleen Filofax), maar op www.agendaland.com kun je vanalles van Filofax bestellen.

And now an english translation:

Yes, i am dutch, but i don't look like i dutch woman. My husband bought my Filo here at a bookstore. (the have more stuff from Succes than from Filifax, But I want Only Filofax) On www.agendaland.com you can order a lot filofax stuff. (in dutch)

Memorial Day Holiday (2008-05-26 19:12) - Nan



[1] Memorial Day is an American holiday, one of the few days that most Americans don't have to go to work (although those in the retail and restaurant industries have to work, but get higher pay). The TV news carries images of soldiers paying Taps, which I think are heart-wrenching no matter what side of the political spectrum you're on. Local neighborhoods often have parades.

Americans are also expected to place flowers on graves that they've neglected throughout the year. Was today an important day in your culture? What did you do in remembrance?

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2525395513/>

Andrzej (2008-05-27 15:04:00)

It appears that Memorial Day is equivalent to our Remembrance Day which is held on November 11 in memory of those who died in The Great War which ended in an armistice at 11 o'clock on that day in 1918. I understand this war triggered the expansion of Memorial Day "to include casualties of any war or military action" http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Memorial_Day.

Coincidentally May 26 was also a Bank Holiday in the UK though my 'week on two pages cotton cream diary' doesn't give it a name. There is no Bank Holiday associated with Remembrance Day though traditionally we stop work at eleven and hold a minute's silence. In my old job we used to walk to our old company's memorial (reconstructed after the War) and our Chaplain would say a prayer to those recorded as killed in action on the tablet: Old fashioned but moving.

Lovely-Rose (2008-05-27 16:42:00)

Here in the Netherlands we have on may 4th a day of remembering the people who died at The second Worldwar. And on may 5th we celebrate the day that on may 5th 1945 the war was over in the Netherlands...

Lovely-Rose

Kerowyn (2008-06-04 09:22:00)

Inky - I am posting here because I don't see another option to contact you. I am about to join the Filofax ranks. Two items:

- 1) I just got a beautiful new print catalog from Filofax that includes new items that are not yet up on the U.S. website. Several of these are open-flat personal planners (an issue, I know).
- 2) I was wondering whether you would consider doing what they do at Notebookism, which is to post an open thread once a week where folks could carry on the Philofaxy conversation while you are too busy to post. Just a thought.

Love this blog.

1.6 June

Free For All Friday (2008-06-06 19:22) - Nan

A recent commenter, Kerowyn (thank you!), had a suggestion that confirmed something I've been thinking about for a while: Do a weekly open post, giving our readers the chance to speak out.

With apologies to the [1]Notebookism blog, which is perhaps the most popular implementer of this concept, I've decided to give all of you a forum for your Filofax-related thoughts and feelings.

Just leave a comment to this post. Who knows what it may grow into? ;)

1. <http://notebookism.net/>

Kerowyn (2008-06-07 00:09:00)

Yay! Thanks, Inky. It's midnight here (yawn), so I'll leave a longer post tomorrow.

lovely-rose (2008-06-07 04:05:00)

ooh that,s nice. a perfect combination. i love filofax and i love forums!

lovely-rose (2008-06-07 04:07:00)

i forgot to tell: i have enough questions for other filofax users

Anonymous (2008-06-07 15:10:00)

When I realised that it's not just the paper that I write upon that can be moved about, I had a bit of a filofax light bulb moment. Let me explain... for years I have had the Tabs in traditional order i.e. Diary, Notes, Projects, Information, Financial & Addresses.

My most used tab was the Notes, followed closely by the projects section. But I never really liked opening the diary & having the bulk of the filofax under my right hand. Then my lightbulb sparked into life one day & I moved the Notes section to the front, followed by the Projects. The diary is now in the middle & information is behind that. I have ditched the Financial & Addresses tabs.

I still have the addresses in the A-Z index, at last my diary lays open equally. My most used sections are at the front and the little used but vital Information Tab, containing the filofax pages of Religious Festivals, Shoes sizes etc, is not so prominent.

It's quite ridiculous how much happier I am with this layout!

Treet (2008-06-07 21:54:00)

Perfect idea, thanks!

Treet

Eeny Meeny Miney (2008-06-11 20:31) - Nan



[1] One of the wonderful things about Filofax is the variety of yearly calendars (diaries to you Brits). Everything from one day to a page, to one week to a page, to one year on one large fold-out sheet. You can see your time in as much or as little detail as you need. You can implement any time management solution with the right format.

Or if you're like me, you switch. For example, for my work Filo, this year alone I've tried using one-day-per-page, one-week-per-2-pages (vertical format, as pictured here; the one that usually comes with the A5), and one-week-per-2-pages in horizontal format, just like what comes with Personal organizers, but larger, for the A5. Since my work revolves around deadlines and tasks, not appointments, the horizontal format seemed to be the perfect solution. The vertical didn't give me enough room to write per day, and the day-per-page didn't let me see enough time at once.

Well, it *seemed* to be the perfect solution, until I read about time-striping on the Lifehacks blog, which should sound familiar to many of you reading this blog. Here's a link to Lifehacks' time-striping article: [2]<http://tinyurl.com/5jp2cp> (complete with a really helpful illustration).

It kind of reminds me of a school schedule: First period (hour) of the day: Subject 1. Second period: Subject 2, except the "subjects" become projects. Recently, with a greater number of projects to juggle, I need a solution like time-striping to keep me from jumping from one task to another and taking 2-3 tries to complete any single task. I need a set amount of time blocked off to immerse myself in one subject and nothing else.

And I think I'm going to be switching back again to my vertical-format pages—with stripes drawn across them this time.

1. http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SFBzA6JnDBI/AAAAAAAAAFU/JZBikWq9P-A/s1600-h/68514x.jpg

2. <http://tinyurl.com/5jp2cp>

Laurie (2008-06-12 04:26:00)

Wow thanks for that, that is a really good way to add structure to an otherwise open schedule and focus on one thing at a time.

Tur Tur (2008-06-13 05:07:00)

I always wonder why Filofax offers such a vertical one-week-per-2-pages diary for the most countries only in A5 and not in the personal format. I think it's a good view on the whole week, but strangely enough, they offer such a diary only in France (<http://www.filofax.fr/images/products/refills/line/68443x.jpg>) and in Denmark (<http://www.filofax.dk/images/products/refills/line/38780x.jpg>). And in Finland, but the Finns doesn't seem to have any appointments after 4.00 pm, not very practical for me (<http://www.filofax.fi/images/products/refills/line/25210x.jpg>). National differences in the Filofax universe may be a good issue for another Friday discussion.

Estelle (2010-02-22 19:31:19)

Thank you Tur Tur.

I have wondered the exact same thing, because to me that seems like the most natural thing to do. But it never occurred to me that it would be available in other languages. I have seen a knock-off from german manufacturer bsb opacher and nearly bought it but if there's a filofax original then I'd rather have that. Why it's available in one language and not the other is beyond me.

The remark about the fins made me giggle because it reminded me of a finnish friends remarks about the fins

drinking. However, this is probably a diary intended mainly for 9-5 work days and you can use the free lines below each day or the white space next to it to schedule your private life?

Free For All Friday No. 2 (2008-06-13 08:45) - Nan

This week, a propos of my[1] June 11 post, a reader suggested weighing in on what types of calendars are available in different countries. For instance, the vertical week format is available in the Personal size in France. In other countries, it's only available in larger sizes.

What day does the week start in your country - Sunday or Monday?

When does your Filofax indicate your workday should begin and end?

1. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/06/eeny-meeny-miney.html>

Tur Tur (2008-06-13 10:20:00)

My (German) day per page diary is from 8am to 8pm, I think that is common for this style (and it's fine for my requirements). I just noticed that the day per page diary in A5 business style they sell in the UK is from 7am to 7pm, but I don't know what kind of business that is for. Anyway: If you need some diary refills for 2007 (Personal size), they are still offered at the Filofax website in the Netherlands.

<http://www.filofax.nl/distributor/store/SEURLF/ASP/SFS/SIZEID.3/SFE/diaryrefills.htm>

Laurie (2008-06-13 10:44:00)

I'm in Albania and I don't know if they even have Filofax here (*gasp!!*). People here, like they did in Russia, use a page-per-day book as a diary/planner and for taking notes in. I wish I could look inside people's books to see what they write in there all the time!

I bought my A5 weekly Filo refill in the US, it is the vertical style (which keeps me organized w/ its hourly lines) and starts on Monday, which I like because it keeps the weekend together.

Hey, a side note: the Filofax.co.uk website has lists of national holidays for almost every country in the world. You have to register, but it's free. Then you go to the home page and click on the holidays and you can choose what country to view. Very useful for people who travel a lot, for students doing projects on other countries, or just for those who are interested!

The Monkey (2008-06-13 13:37:00)

I would much prefer my calendar to run from Sunday through Saturday, rather than the common Monday through Sunday format. I remember that Filofax formerly offered both formats, at least in certain calendars. I also prefer an "untimed" format, because as a musician with a day job, I frequently have commitments after hours, and I also tend to have social commitments that I like to keep in my Filofax that also take place after normal working hours. Currently, I'm using the "Month on Two Pages" and "Week on One Page" calendars, as my iPhone ends up being my primary calendar, so that I only need references in my Filofax rather than minute details.

I would still prefer Su-Sa, and guidelines in each day block.

tur tur (2008-06-13 14:16:00)

Filofax UK offers a week on two pages diary which starts on Sunday.

paulien (2008-07-01 11:42:00)

I currently have a cotton cream week on two page diary. It is the dutch version, and the good thing about it is that it is lined. The lines are quite subtle, much more so than the whit english week on two page diary. The layout is the same as for the english cotton cream one, with the notes box, except for the lines. It starts on monday, as all diaries do around here. I have never understood why they taught us at school that the week officially starts on sunday, because starting on monday feels so natural. Does anyone know? Some leftover from the christian calendar?

Random musings (2008-06-19 19:33) - Nan

I don't think I've ever done a "random musings" post on this blog. Either I have a concrete idea to develop, or I don't write at all. But with the new Free-for-all Fridays, it would look really bad if I went from Friday to Friday without a post. So although I thought I had nothing to write about...I realize I do. Just nothing completely organized.

I can promise that I do have a new post coming, and when. It will be this Sunday, and it will be about makeup kits in organizer form. Something for the girls (and some of the guys).

If I'm not posting frequently, it's because I'm not currently in Filofax angst. When everything's going smoothly, there's less to write about. I'm happily keeping all the information I need on Personal and A5 pages.

And, to be honest, Filofaxes are a fairly limited subject. For a blog like, say, Notebookism, there are lots of different kinds of notebooks to write about. Filofaxes are a smaller subject, and they work so well, there's not always much to discuss.

And yet there is a lot going on. For example:

- Everybody, please check out [1]Richard's comment about his beautiful Slimline Filofax and how much it enhances his life.
- I can post about how I label my tabs with a Brother labelmaker.
- The A5 binders from Empire Imports in the U.S., or how I might just repunch my A5 pages like standard U.S. 3-ring 5.25 x 8.5 pages.
- The running list I keep of things to look up on the Web, so I can just jot things down and get back to work.
- What's going on with Franklin Covey, Day Runner, and DayTimer, anyway? No reason not to write about these other systems.
- Should we have contests and polls on Philofaxy? Giveaways to drum up more interest?
- Should we have more guest blogs?
- More holiday-related posts? For example, in the Filofax's front matter, it states that summer is from the vernal solstice to the vernal equinox. But it doesn't say when that is. It took my husband – a non-Filofax user – to explain to me that the empty circle on June 18 signified a full moon, and thus the vernal solstice. Should Filofax do a better job clarifying the lunar cycles and seasons on the diary pages?
- Should we branch out more and discuss which pens, pencils, sticky notes, papers, and other accessories work with Filofaxes? Is being too purist limiting this blog's activity?

1. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=2904547213873683575>

Anonymous (2008-06-20 11:09:00)

The solstice happens when the sun is at its greatest distance from the equator i.e. when it's over either the tropic of Capricorn (southern hemisphere) or Cancer (northern).

The equinox is the time when the sun crosses the earth's equator, making night and day of approximately equal length all over the earth. I don't think it has anything to do with moons, full or otherwise.

Laurie (2008-06-21 00:57:00)

Anonymous is correct, the cycles of the moon are independent of the solstice/ equinox, which depends on the orbit of the earth around the sun.

I would love to talk more about holidays, especially international ones and other holidays that are different from the ones we have in the US. I like learning how different countries celebrate their holidays.

Laurie (2008-06-21 07:22:00)

Hey does anyone know of any blogs or websites similar to this one about page-per-day diary books? This format is very popular in Europe and I am very curious about how people use these types of books. They seem to use them as a planner, diary/ journal, notebook and doodle pad all in one. Some online photos would be great, maybe on Flickr (did I spell that right?)

Andrzej (2008-06-23 04:47:00)

"...Should Filofax do a better job clarifying the lunar cycles and seasons on the diary pages?"

'Surprise and delight' is good. What I would like is a sheet of blotting paper included with each new diary pack so my pages don't look like one of Gerald Scarfe's cartoons. Keep up the good work!

Andrzej (2008-06-23 04:52:00)

laurie

The next holiday in England is Bank Holiday Monday on August 25 (See Notable Dates 2008). This used to be known as Late Summer Bank Holiday.

Laurie (2008-06-23 07:41:00)

Thanks andrzej! Does anyone do anything that day or is it just a nice day off from work?

Andrzej (2008-06-24 02:54:00)

Hi lauri

Late Summer Bank Holiday used to be the day to go to the beach. In later years, with the advent of more paid vacations (holidays in England), many would combine Bank Holiday Monday with leave days so as to get seven days in the sun for the cost of four.

I guess Labor Day is the equivalent USA 'Notable Date'?

Laurie (2008-06-24 13:37:00)

Yeah I think you could equate the two. School starts back again in August though so people don't usually go anywhere for Labor Day. They normally have a cookout or something to mark the "official end of summer." In the US we generally consider summer to be from Memorial Day (the last Monday in May) to Labor Day (the first Monday in September) although school goes until early (or sometimes even mid) June and starts back again in mid to late August.

Andrzej (2008-06-25 04:11:00)

Hi lauri

Across the Atlantic there seems to be a shift in the seasons; at least so far as school is concerned. We seem to be a month later than you. I think I heard once that university started a month later still in October so students could help with the harvest. Certainly the countryside echoes to the mechanical drone of all night harvesting at August/September time. In days of old we had an official summer that ran from June 21 till September 21. We also sometimes hear of quarter days * Lady Day (25 March) * Midsummer Day (24 June) * Michaelmas (29 September) * Christmas (25 December) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irish_quarter_days which often pervade a popular UK radio drama called 'The Archers'. Filofax has seasons (Summer – June, July, August) though unlike some diaries no quarter days.

paulien (2008-07-01 11:51:00)

If your post is random, can the comments be random too? I ask this because I have two unrelated comments.

Yes, please do contests and such? What about "the best holiday picture of your filo"? Or a haiku on filofax?

And does anyone know of a six-part index for pocket filofaxes? I have a six-subject one in my personal, but my pocket came with a five-subject index. I would like six tabs for the pocket, either labeled or blank, white or coloured. Does this exist?

Free for All Friday No. 3 (2008-06-20 04:10) - Nan

My [1]previous post may give you some ideas this week.

Let's get really creative!

Think outside the ... binder?

1. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/06/random-musings.html>

Lovely-Rose (2008-06-20 08:39:00)

"Should we branch out more and discuss which pens, pencils, sticky notes, papers, and other accessories work with Filofaxes? Is being too purist limiting this blog's activity?"

This is a great idea!!! Everyone uses accessories with their Filo's Right?

Lovely-Rose

Dan (2008-06-20 09:17:00)

Actually, Day Runner just launched a new line of products last month, and Franklin Covey split up their product and training division recently. A lot going on in their worlds.

Laurie (2008-06-20 12:57:00)

Happy Solstice! We are having a cookout tomorrow to celebrate. Anyone else doing anything for solstice? We always do something for the equinoxes and solstices, usually have friends over. This time we have just moved so it will be a combined solstice/ housewarming. And wow, did anyone see how huge the full moon was Wednesday night? I make a special effort to pay attention to things like this, because living in the city makes it harder to notice nature. Now we are in a much smaller city than we have been for the previous 3 years, but still I like to try to notice this stuff.

I would love to talk about pens, accessories, etc. I like the idea of expanding the discussions "outside the binder!"

Anonymous (2008-06-23 08:20:00)

"What's going on with Franklin Covey, Day Runner, and DayTimer, anyway? No reason not to write about these other systems."

Just noticed that Franklin Covey has teamed up with Design-Her Gals and they plan on introducing a new planner design for 2009. Check out their site if you get a chance. You start by designing a character, choosing hair color, eye color, clothing, etc. You can then print out all sorts of paper products including letterhead, invitations, calling cards and many other personalized items. It's a lot of fun!

paulien (2008-07-01 11:36:00)

Please let us branch out, into all kinds of accessories for filofax, other brands and kinds of planners, for what (not) to use filofax or what systems or tools to complement filofax. I can understand that it is getting harder to find new subjects to post about, and branching out might help. And of course most people who love filofax also love other kinds of stationery and office supplies.

Laurie (2008-07-03 13:08:00)

For those interested

Women's purse for A5 size Filofax:

When I upgraded from a Personal size Filo to A5 earlier this year, I suddenly realized I needed a different handbag. I wanted to be able to carry my Filofax with me everywhere I go without feeling like I was toting luggage around with me. I have a few large leather bags that my mom gave me when she was clearing out her closet. They are nice, but since they are leather they are heavier than I want my bag to be, especially when it is carrying a book that is already pretty heavy. Also, I have two small children so I can't carry a nice leather bag without it getting dirt or jelly or sunscreen all over it. So I went searching for a bag that I could carry everywhere, that's not too big, but that will hold my Filo as well as all my other stuff. I fell in love with this:

REI Annie shoulder bag:

<http://www.rei.com/product/763410>

This purse looks deceptively small. Yet, it holds everything I need. Let me make this clear: I am not a minimalist, and I don't pack light. This is a normal-sized purse (see dimensions). It is not big enough for a laptop or any 8 1/2 by 11 papers. My A5 Filofax fits into the main compartment perfectly. And, there are so many pockets that I still have plenty of room for my wallet, sunglasses, lip balms, hand cream, extra sunscreen, tissues, hand wipes, etc. you get the idea. On the outside of the bag there is a pocket on one end for my cellphone for easy accessibility. On the other end of the bag is an ingenious zip-expanding pocket to hold a small water bottle. The interior pockets hold my wallet and sunglasses up near the opening so I don't have to fish for them under my Filofax. And the

exterior pockets hold everything else. The strap is adjustable to wear long and across your body, which is how I wear it, or shorter under your arm. I abuse this thing and it still looks great. And, the price is good—it cost much less than my Filfax did! So if you are looking for a sporty yet pretty, functional yet cool-looking purse to carry around your Filofax with you, I highly recommend this one!

Cosmetic Organizer (2008-06-22 10:49) - Nan



[1]

[2]



A few years ago, I got a "free" Trish McEvoy makeover and makeup lesson, in exchange for which I had to spend a certain amount of money on products. As a planner fiend, I bought this case and a single lipstick to meet the requirement.

Trish McEvoy's philosophy "stay simple, stay organized." And indeed, the makeup lesson was based on simple, yet effective techniques for applying eyeshadow colors, blush, and so on. Mnemonics were used to help you remember the shapes and hand motions to use when applying the makeup at home – "windshield wiper" technique, for example.

Her makeup cases have rings like a planner, and she sells makeup colors in the form of "pages" that fit on the rings. Shu Uemura is another designer who is now using a ring-binder format.

At the end of the makeup lesson, I was given a sheet to remind me how to put the makeup on. It had a picture of a woman's face with the makeup on it, and the names of all the products to use. I'd probably still be using it today if the sheet weren't a jumbo 8.5 x 11!!! It didn't fit in the case! Cards, Trish, cards!

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2600822840/>

2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2600822764/>

PhotoDiva (2008-06-23 05:56:00)

Love this! I have a slightly larger black case from Nuskin (my company) and it too uses rings. The inserts are plastic trays with squares and rectangles for different products (eye shadows, blush, etc.) It's great for travel! I never made the connection to a planner, so thanks! And I love Trish's philosophy.

Claudia

Laurie (2008-06-23 07:39:00)

Oooh, this would be the perfect way to merge my loves of makeup AND planners! Wow! Going to check this out. And you are right, they should definitely have the how-to cards sized to fit in the binder so you can keep your look along with the makeup. That would be really convenient. Hopefully they will figure that out soon!

Dan (2008-06-23 10:44:00)

Cosmetics and their receptacles not my bag (!) but perhaps JogLab.com could help in creating a mnemonic for order of processes- is there an order? Ie foundation, blusher, eyeshadow? Oh dear; I have probably exposed my cosmetic ignorance completely.

D

Filofaxes on Sale (2008-06-24 10:50) - Nan

Everybody, [1]The Daily Planner is offering good discounts on lots of different Filofaxes, mostly Minis and Slimlines, but other sizes, too. Here's a direct link to the on-sale planners: [2]<http://tinyurl.com/3qncq2>. 2008 dated refills are also on sale. Just navigate to the [3]usual refill page for your size.

1. <http://www.thedailyplanner.com/>

2. <http://tinyurl.com/3qncq2>

3. http://www.thedailyplanner.com/filofax-filofax-refills-c-115_103_101.html

Laurie (2008-06-24 15:06:00)

Thank you for this! This is great for any mid-year Filofax needs. Good excuse for me to suddenly "need" something!

Guest Blog - Diary Musings (2008-06-25 19:41) - Nan

Another fine essay from Laurie Huff, sharing an international perspective from where she's currently living in Albania. I think this is my favorite one yet!

Many people here in Albania use a day-per-page diary for planning and writing notes. In fact, the people in my husband's office gave him one as a welcoming gift! He brought it home for me, since I am the one

who is nuts over calendars and he is more of an Outlook man. I was really hoping it would be in English and Albanian so I could learn the days of the week and the months, but it is Italian. Which is no big surprise since Albania is only 60 miles across the water from Italy and we get a lot of Italian products here. The diary has the days and months in Italian, English, French, German, and Spanish. In the back is a great map of Italy, and I'm sure we'll be going there sooner or later so it will help plan our trip. (Did you know that Naples is on the WEST coast of Italy? Well now you do. For some reason I always thought it was on the EAST coast. But this map set me straight!)

This Italian diary is an interesting glimpse into some aspects of Italian culture. One feature is that every day has a corresponding saint. For example, the saint for today is Saint Luigi Gonzaga, whoever that is. Of course that is in Italian, so I might recognize the name if it were in English. The saint on my birthday is Saint Edoardo (Saint Edward I'm assuming). I think this is a pretty neat feature, and I can picture people celebrating their town's patron saint, or whichever saint has particular meaning for them.

There is a page for every work day. Saturday and Sunday are together on one page, Saturday at the top half and Sunday on the bottom half. Work days have the time printed on the lines from 8 to 20 (8am to 8pm). And interestingly, days during the week that are a holiday get a little less than a half page rather than their own full page. Which seems like it would screw up the layout for the weekends but somehow does not. And for much of August, regular weekdays have only a half page each. Which is telling because apparently most things shut down in Italy during August because that is when most people go on vacation.

It is interesting to me the sense of national identity that can be drawn from using a book like this. Holidays, vacations, festival days and the geography of the country are all here. By following the dates in this book I feel like I have tapped into the national happenings. I can imagine people in Italy having a certain sense of synchronization with everyone else, aware of when things are happening.

I own day per page diary books from two other countries where I have lived, Russia and Nepal, and they also give a glimpse into local culture. For example, in the front of the Russian diary along with conversion charts and the zodiac signs, there is a chart for a person's weight and alcohol intake, and the number of hours it takes to metabolize the alcohol and become sober (and safe to drive, since Russia has a zero-tolerance drunk-driving law).

For some reason I feel more connected to the people around me when I look at the same information in my diary as they are looking at in theirs. I wish I knew people here well enough to ask to look through their book and see what they have written there. The joining of personal identity within the framework of the national identity. Hey, I think I just came up with an idea for a PhD thesis!

kanalt (2008-07-08 18:56:00)

I have to say that every time I see someone with a planner or calendar or sorts, I always want to ask them how they use it, what they have in it, how it's organized, etc. But I tend to think that strangers would not appreciate my love for planners. =)

Thanks for the great post!

Free for all Friday No. 4 (2008-06-26 22:33) - Nan

How do you love your Filofax?

You may be the next guest blogger!

Simon (2008-06-27 06:01:00)

Ahh Filofax...

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height

My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight

For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.

I love thee to the level of everyday's

*Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with a passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints, — I love thee with the breath,
Smiles, tears, of all my life! — and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.
Elizabeth Barrett Browning
To paraphrase WH Auden...*

[It] is my North, my South, my East and West, My working week and Sunday rest.
With a passion that has my wife shaking her head in disbelief.
Actually, with a passion that has me shaking my head in disbelief!
Simon

Nan (2008-06-27 16:34:00)

Thank you, Simon, for sharing the full text of this beautiful poem, that we too rarely have the pleasure of reading. The Auden quote reminds me of my own experience with the Filo...I'd be lost without it!

Laurie (2008-06-30 10:17:00)

My love for my Filofax is more like a symbiotic relationship, or maybe better described as codependency. After several years of using Filofax I have now discovered that I can't NOT use it. I have so much information in mine that I can't write it all over again every year. In fact, this year I upgraded to an A5 from the Personal size, and re-writing all of my information took so long that I don't plan to do that again any time soon! A single-year bound diary book doesn't give me nearly enough space for all of my lists and information, nor the flexibility of rings and loose leaf pages to move things around. I feel limited and constrained within the bound pages. I can hardly function without my Filofax and all the information it contains. My lists, my numbers, my maps, contacts, plans, records. I need it all. And it needs me. My Filo lives on a hearty diet of ink and paper, with regular feedings and occasional feasts. Now and then I put it on a diet to reduce its bulk, only to fill it up again with new and exciting stuff. The times when I have strayed to a different planner to "simplify" my life have left me confused and scattered. Only when I am using my Filofax do I feel secure in knowing that nothing is slipping through the cracks. All of my plans are right there in front of me, my information easily accessed by a flip of a tab. It settles my mind to know my trusty Filofax has it all organized for me.

Nan (2008-06-30 23:43:00)

Laurie, thanks for the inspiration. Couldn't have said it better myself. I've used Moleskines pretty well, but I always spent more time flipping pages, looking for where I wrote something, thinking about how to make things work, than just using the thing. My Filos, I just...use. I so agree with the feeling that Filofaxes make it easier to keep things from slipping through the cracks. It just doesn't happen very often!

paulien (2008-07-01 11:32:00)

To be short: I don't know. Long answer below.

What I do love: looking at filofaxes on flickr, in stores, when I see other people using them at work or on the train, writing in my filofax, reorganizing it, buying new refills for it.

What I don't love: the way I keep looking at other planners and then not being able to use them because I miss my filofax, the fact that I bought a pocket brown classic filofax and that it lies in my drawer unused because I miss my personal blue piazza, the way the suede strip gets dirty and the rings are not perfectly aligned in my piazza. But still I can't leave it at home to go to work. I only leave it at home when I go to the supermarket, but else it is always with me.

Is this love? Is it love if you keep thinking about it all the time, instead of focussing on doing the things written inside your filofax? Is it love that every time I buy another planner or notebook I can't use it because I miss my

filofax? And why do I only love my blue filofax, and not my pocket one, while I loved it looking at it on flickr and in the store?
Can anyone please tell me?

Lovely-Rose (2008-07-01 11:54:00)

Hey Paulien,

i think this is love.. it's okay that you just love your piazza filofax.

I love reading about other filofaxes watching them in stores, watching all the refills that are available.

And i only love my metropol A5 because it has the right ringsize and my husband gave it to me as a christmas present.

Everyone has his own way of using his filofax. i think you need to grow in using your Filo. Just start using it and you will find a way to use it. and than you can change what you don't like.

I love mine bacoause it keeps everything what is in my mind.

Groetjes Rosita

ps ik hoop dat je iets aan mijn antwoord hebt.

kanalt (2008-07-08 19:22:00)

Paulien, I agree 100 % with everything you said! There's nothing more for me to add to it.

As for my Filofax usage...for years I wouldn't even consider a ring binder type planner. The spiral bound was what it was all about...until the day I discovered the Filofax website. I asked for the personal sized domino for my birthday and while I have bought other binder covers, I've stuck with the personal sized refills for over a year now (that's a big deal for me, since I was always switching planners). Since then I've bought a blue Finsbury, a teal Miami from ebay, a mini domino for smaller usage and I even tried the Slimline classic. I loved that one, but it just couldn't hold everything I needed to carry. But I loved the chocolate classic look so I bullied my husband into buying the personal size for me for my 30th birthday - he did and I LOVE it. It smells so nice and is so pretty. I have read that people have been using the same binder for many years and that it has lasted while taking on a used, loved look. That's what I'm striving for with my personal classic filo. I will never go back to spiral bound planners again because they just don't offer the flexibility and personalization I've come to love about the filo. It holds everything I need and I pretty much take it everywhere with me (you never know when and where you will need to write something down). I think my craziest moment was at about 3 in the morning during a blackout when I just HAD to write down to buy more batteries. My husband only laughs at me and shakes his head whenever I so much as look at other planners (but hey, I'm just looking...). I've even gotten some of my friends using Filos now. It's great to know there are others out there who share my passion! Love your blog!!

1.7 July

Happy Canada Day (2008-07-01 19:43) - Nan

OK, all of us Filofaxers have this date in our planners, but many of us who are not ourselves Canadian, don't know what it's all about. Although I believe that embedding a YouTube video is an incredibly lazy, gratuitous way of doing a blog post, I know of no better way to communicate the true essence of Canada Day.

So with no further ado...

[EMBED]

Free for All Friday No. 5 (2008-07-04 07:00) - Nan

Although it's a new week, I'd like to take a moment to direct your attention to Laurie's comment on [1]"Free for All Friday No. 3" about a fabulous bag she found that works perfectly for carrying her A5

Filofax.

Since picnic season is in full swing (especially in the U.S. and especially today!!), let's talk about how we carry our Filos around through all the places our work and play take us. For example, Laurie's REI shoulder bag comes from a sporting goods store and has lots of pockets to help segregate the Filo from the hazards of sunscreen, water bottles, and so on.

I know I choose my everyday handbags so they can carry a Personal Filo. And since I don't like big bags, I usually can't carry much else. I usually can't carry my digital camera, which kills me when I miss a photo op. I guess I need a smaller digicam.

1. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/06/free-for-all-friday-no-3.html>

paulien (2008-07-08 02:57:00)

Hi all. I never have a problem with carrying my filo. To work I carry my laptop bag and a large handbag if I need my laptop, or another large bag that fits A4 documents. The filo is only one of many things I carry: a book to read on the train, an A4 writing pad, lunch and a water bottle, many papers and/or files. So I always have room for it. If I go shopping or to the movies or something like that, my filo stays at home and I only take out the shopping list.

Lovely-Rose (2008-07-08 03:51:00)

I also use my laptopbag or diaperbag, shoulderbag or in the basket of my stroller.

most of the time my filo stays at home and i take out what i need.

My 1,5 year old son has ripped out some pages :-(Het pulled it from the small table on the ground and ripped some pages out. that reminds me i need paper!

kanalt (2008-07-08 19:28:00)

In addition to my planner addiction, I also have a bag addiction. I have different bags for different seasons for different reasons (work, weekend, special events/evening, beach, etc). Usually when I buy a bag for anything other than special events/evening, I can put my personal Filo inside. For the special events/evening occasions, my mini domino works well. For that I just keep appointments and important phone numbers. It doesn't get used nearly as often as the personal size.

Andrzej (2008-07-10 03:23:00)

I almost feel I have to inject some rough house perspective here. My best bag for now is an Animal branded clear/white plastic bag (we call them carrier bags). It is light and waterproof (important as the bike panniers aren't). My Filofax stays pristine and my ink doodlings haven't smeared.

Free for all Friday No. 6 (2008-07-10 17:05) - Nan

Well, here's something I never wanted to do – let a week go by without a post!

I'm going out of town on short notice. It's going to be fun, but travel always means a lot of work. It seems like an equal and opposite amount of work to the amount of pleasure! The word "travel" comes from the French word for "work" – "travail."

When I get back, I promise more posts next week, including some interesting purchases I made while gift shopping for the upcoming trip – on which I'm leaving in 1/2 hour, so really must go now!

Talk amongst yourselves, especially if you have any tales of how your Filo has helped you plan or operate on a trip.

Laurie (2008-07-11 06:17:00)

I have discovered that I cannot live without my Filofax when I travel. From the planning stages to when I am on the trip, my Filo is absolutely essential. For packing, I start a list in my Filo days or weeks ahead and when I think of something I need to pack, I write it on my list. That way when packing time comes, I don't forget all those little

things and then later wish I had packed them. I have already thought of it all, it's on my list. I also keep a list of logistics like accommodation, flights, car rental, etc. that I have reserved or need to reserve. I write the phone numbers and reservation numbers on the list too, so if I need to change a reservation I have the info right there. I also put maps in my Filo so that I can get around when I get there. And, I have a page with all of my frequent flyer miles numbers, hotel membership numbers, etc. We travel a lot so I keep all of this in its own section (Travel tab). Once we are on the road/ in the air/ on a different continent, I inevitably need loads of information that I never expected I needed (like our doctor/ dentists' phone numbers, addresses of relatives, records of whatever, etc.) Luckily I have it all with me in my Filo! About a year and a half ago I took an international trip without my Filo, and it was a complete disaster! What was I thinking?? Now my policy is, "never leave home without it!" Have a great trip Inky!

kanalt (2008-07-11 13:31:00)

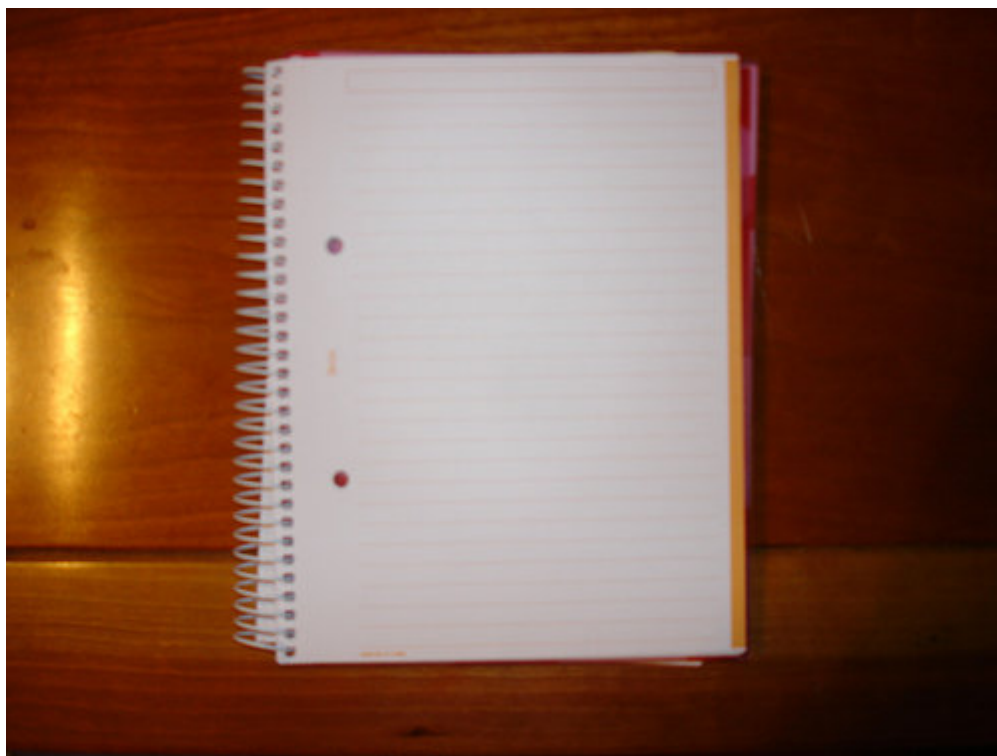
I don't travel much, especially by air. Most of the limited traveling we do is by car. Still, I plan and prepare with my Filo much in the same way, with lists and contact information. When I travel to visit family, everyone is always impressed with the information I keep with me - if we want to call an aunt we haven't seen in a while and no one has the number, that's where my Filo comes in handy! Since I use it on a daily basis, I couldn't leave home without it anytime, let alone for a trip.

neowagnerite (2008-07-11 19:40:00)

I always keep my travel info (confirmation numbers, etc.) in my Filofax. I know that info I need will be in my Filofax- one of the many reasons while it's an essential part of my life.

Taking note of notebooks (2008-07-16 19:07) - Nan





[2]

Although many of

us have tried, you can't write *everything* in a Filofax. If you keep a journal or commonplace book, or write prose or fiction for business or pleasure, sooner or later you need to use bound notebooks. But which one to choose? The question is in the air. I was already considering a post like this when a reader emailed me to suggest it! I've noticed more notebook-related activity on other blogs as well.

When I made my all-Filofax, all-the-time commitment a couple years ago, I found I also had to choose a type of notebook I could use on the side. My first Filofax was an A5, so I knew right away I'd need an A5 notebook, since the Filofax refill paper is so expensive. And I wanted detachable pages, since I definitely wanted to be able to move pages back and forth. For example, my A5 Filo is for work. If I kept my personal journal in an A5 notebook, then when I had a work-related inspiration while writing in my journal, I could simply start a new page and then punch Filo holes in it. And vice-versa – I could slip Filofax pages into the A5 notebook.

I decided on the A5 Miquelrius pictured here. I chose it for the following reasons:

- It comes in the A5 size and is readily available in the U.S. (Online from [3]The Daily Planner and on the shelf in The Container Store and Borders bookstores.) A5 notebooks are hard to find here, so this is a big plus!
- The pages are pre-punched with standard 2 holes for A5 binders. If I want to, I can take the pages out and recategorize them in binders. (For that reason, I start a new page for every day's journal entry and when I write about a different subject.)
- The pages are perforated. See above.
- Bright colored covers. Not a requirement, but a nice benefit. I prefer bright colors to gray, beige, and so on.
- Another benefit that wasn't a requirement: color-coding on the edges of the pages. You can see orange-bordered pages in the right-hand picture above. You can use different colors for different subjects, although I haven't done that yet.
- The paper stands up to my favorite everyday pens without bleed-through. It's not good enough for heavier nibs or fountain pens, though. *[Update: Your mileage may vary: A reader has reported good performance with fine-point fountain pens.]*
- High page count - 140 leaves. Since the A5 size is small, I'll fill a lot of pages, and I don't want to generate lots of little books. Also, I just like thick books!

So with all these advantages, why am I having second thoughts about Miquelrius?

- As it turns out, I actually do very little moving pages between the notebook and the Filofax. Since January, I've only slipped in 3 Filofax pages. I don't think I've ever moved a notebook page into the

Filofax. In fact, I haven't even bought the hole punch to do so. So the A5 size isn't as much of a necessity as I predicted, and I've started looking longingly at a variety of other kinds of notebooks, especially large Moleskines!

- I haven't ended up taking pages out of the notebook and putting them in binders, at least not yet. Furthermore, A5 ring binders are even harder to find in the U.S. than A5 notebooks, and I haven't even found any that I like!

- I'm unhappy with the single-wire spiral binding, since it isn't as durable as a sewn binding. With use, the spiral twists, which you can also see in the above-right picture. The book doesn't lie flat for writing when folded back. The holes at the top and bottom of the page start to tear and pull away from the binding.

- Also, with a spiral binding, there's no spine to label for shelf display! If I'm going to be keeping the pages in the notebooks rather than rebinding them, that's a big concern.

- The ruling is wider than I like. It means I go through a lot of pages! With only a little information on each page, it takes a lot of flipping to find something specific that I wrote.

All that said, I still like writing in these notebooks, and I'll be writing in them tonight and tomorrow and the day after. But it feels good to get these thoughts off my chest.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2675730466/in/photostream/>

2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2674911275/in/photostream/>

3. <http://www.thedailyplanner.com/>

Silver_Elixir (2008-07-16 21:57:00)

For years I have been keeping a Commonplace book without even knowing what it was. I found that having a bound notebook meant set pages and sections that weren't expandable if needed to be. I also love my A5 Filofax but I have too much info to put into it - not all of which I need to carry around. So I came up with the perfect solution for me. I am not sure if you have them in the States but here in Oz we have lever arch folders. These are A4 in size with D shaped rings that open and close with a lever - hence the name. They come in two ring sizes, the large being 75mm and the smaller ones being around 25 or 35mm. This gives a lot of space for lots of pages. But A4 is too big to carry around. So I cut my folder down to an A5 size, using my filo as the template. The first time I stuffed up because the rings of the filo are in the spine but the rings of the folder sit on the back, therefore it was too small - not enough folder edge to protect the pages or allow for dividers. Second time around I got it right, with lots of measuring I now have a lever arch fold of A5 size that can take the pages from my Filo and vice versa. Although the folder has only two rings this makes hole punching easy and cutting paper to A5 size isn't too hard. I have also been able to customize my section dividers by cutting A4 ones down to size. I hope this all makes sense. I have some pictures if you would like to see what I mean.

Nan (2008-07-17 02:03:00)

Wow - that's what I call creative problem solving! I'd love to see some pictures! Can you post them on Flickr?

Andrzej (2008-07-17 03:51:00)

[Inky] "...I'm unhappy with the single-wire spiral binding, since it isn't as durable as a sewn binding..."

My A4 notebook has hard covers and coated double wire rings. I haven't noticed any spiral twisting even after 100 pages work stained pages. That said I concur that wire ring spines are never going to look good on a shelf.

I can see myself adopting an element Silver_Elixir's D ring solution for neatness.

Silver_Elixir (2008-07-17 05:52:00)

I have some pictures on flickr. One is titled 'My Creation' and is the front cover of my folder. Another is called 'Word Section Divider'. I will take some more over the next day or two to show more detail.

paulien (2008-07-17 07:42:00)

Hi.

I know these notebooks, and have had a few of them. Also some in A4 for lecture notes and such. The paper is actually great for my fountain pens, but I have fine nibbed pens.

What bothered me a bit about them is that I could not write comfortably on the left side. This is actually a problem of most spiral-bound books, only Clairefontaine has this problem solved.

This is the same problem that left-handed people complain about, but I think right-handed people have the same problem only concerning the other side of the page.

How cool would it be if Filofax would make notebooks with detachable pages that are already punched for the binder? Not pads, but real bound books, kind of like the Moleskine watercolour books. Could we suggest this to Filofax? Will they listen?

Laurie (2008-07-18 06:13:00)

I love notebooks almost as much as I love planners. I usually have several notebooks going at once as journals, records-keeping, etc. My favorite notebooks for general purpose are Clairefontaine, because I love the paper, colorful covers, and various sizes/ formats (ring bound, hard cover, etc.) I have used various Moleskine notebooks over the years, and they are good, but Quo Vadis now has notebooks that could give Moleskine a run for their money. Their Robert le heros and Habana notebooks have nicer-looking covers than Moleskine's, and they have that smooth Clairefontaine paper. Link:

<http://www.quovadisplanners.com/notebooks>

They also have various formats of planners with the same covers and paper.

Another notebook that I love is Cavallini & Co. Moderno leather journals. The leather is gorgeous, smooth and soft, and comes in several colors. You can have whatever you want embossed on the front, which makes them especially great as gifts. These also come in day-per-page planners, which are also really nice. Link:

<http://jennibick.com/moderno-journals.html>

My newest obsession is the Dodo Pad. I stumbled across this while searching Amazon.com, and was pleasantly surprised at the clever designs. Apparently Dodo Pads are very popular in Britain (where they are made) and are just starting to make their way across the pond. They have planners in calendar and academic years, desk or wall format, as well as a blank notebook, household binder, Christmas organizer, book for cooks, garden organizer, etc. The website is funny and entertaining. The Dodo Pad looks like a fun way to stay organized. In fact, one reviewer writes, "Dodo-phenalia make great presents as well as being hugely practical and they are so much more fun than a Filofax." Ouch, for those of us who love Filofax, but this statement definitely peaked my interest. Here is the website:

<http://www.dodopad.com/pages/produce.htm>

Be sure to click on "What is a Dodo Pad?" at the top to learn more about how these work. I'm fascinated by the weekly format, the quotes, dates of interest, space to doodle, etc. Here is a review that sums it up nicely:

http://www.dodopad.com/pressrel/mail_on_sunday1.htm

I love the idea of combining powerful organizing with clever humor and creativity. I have already ordered a wall calendar and I can't wait to get it and check it out!

Nan (2008-07-18 11:13:00)

Thanks, Laurie! I love the Dodo stuff!

Laurie (2008-07-18 12:43:00)

Yeah, when I saw the cover (which you can see in the link below) and saw that they call it "a combined memo-doodle-engage-diary-message-ment book," I had to find out more! I'm strangely fascinated by these. They somehow appeal to my desire to be organized, but not TOO organized!

http://www.amazon.com/Dodo-Pad-Desk-Diary-2009/dp/1903001471/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1216399119&sr=1-2



[1]

A reader, Silver Elixir, has graciously let me share the link to photos of her commonplace books made with A4 and A5 Filofax paper, A4 and A5 notebooks, and lever arch binders.

Did you know you can cut an A4 lever arch binder [2]down to A5 size?

Have you thought about letting your imagination run wild with collages and words? [3]Click here for inspiration!

Here's the link to Silver Elixir's photostream: [4]Click here.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/25983610@N07/2540169933/>
2. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=1976367314860257522>
3. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/25983610@N07/sets/72157605364432618/>
4. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/25983610@N07/>

Lovely-Rose (2008-07-18 03:44:00)

Oh That is nice! i love it! Your costum made Filofax looks so bright
All the happy words are making me happy. My Filo looks so boring.
Rose

Silver_Elixir (2008-07-19 06:31:00)

Thanks Rose. I found that the idea of decorating my didivers was a way to define the section it represented and and it also makes it fun to use. I have lots of magazines that I cut out words a picutres that appeal and I use some scrapbooking stickers and papers. I love my filo and I want to get into scrapbooking (I have HEAPS of stuff!!) so I figured why not combine the two???

lovely-rose (2008-07-19 15:41:00)

i am going to try it. First on plane white paper. and if it turns out well i'm going to decorate my tabs. I want to use some pictures of me, my husband and my son.

Silver_Elixir (2008-07-19 20:40:00)

I couldn't find any A5 size dividers so I cut down some small tabbed A4 ones. This worked out well as I ended up with an extra divider. In the folder I made I have 14 dividers altogether - 2 layers of 7. (I have heaps of info I want to keep) I have used a photo of my son to decorate my divider that has ideas on parenting and family things to do. He was stoked when I showed it to him. :-)

lovely-rose (2008-07-20 05:11:00)

I will use the A5 dividers from Filofax.

Free for all Friday No. 7 (2008-07-18 05:16) - Nan

TGIF. Thank Goodness It's Friday...Thank Goodness It's Filofax!

Time for you readers to speak your minds.

My A5 household Filofax had a little adventure this week, helping me get through a project. I needed to find an electrician and get some wiring fixed in our house. A page behind my Projects tab gave me a place to list the symptoms to report to the electrician, his name and phone number for next time, a list of problems he found (including those to be fixed in the future), and my notes on the work he did so I could explain the process to my husband later.

- *Inky*

Laurie (2008-07-22 03:12:00)

You know, this makes me think of what it means to be "organized." Really organization is just putting something in a logical place where you can easily access it again. When I read your post I thought, "Wow I wish I could be that organized." But really it's not that difficult, if I would just file things right away in a place where I consistently store information. My Filo is great for day to day stuff, but for information that I use less often I can't decide where to store it: Binder? File folders? Stacked randomly on my desk (where it usually ends up)? I guess I just need to decide on how I will store my info that I need to access less often, and then be consistent about putting it there.



[1]

One of the advantages of using the small-but-popular 6-ring Personal-size Filofax is that lots of other companies make diary pages for it. Case in point: The Kate Spade designer refill that I found last week. I was shopping for a gift for my mom in the same local gift shop/stationer where I sometimes buy Filofax refills, when I came upon a markdown shelf. And there, discounted to 20 % of its original \$24 price was a 2008 Kate Spade diary!

I decided to buy it if only to be able to review it here. But now I've decided to use it, and recopy my somewhat messy year-so-far into it. (This will be the second time I've recopied the year – the first was due to a format change, but who's counting?) I find this rewriting serves as a pleasant taking stock and renewal at the same time.

The diary features an illustrated title page at the beginning of each calendar month, and an inspiring quote. It has a week-per-2-pages with a Monday start and a notes section at the end. Weekend days get equal space to weekdays, which may be a nod to the diary's primarily female audience. Most women have more to do on the weekends besides "Take Nap."

The paper is much thicker and stiffer than standard Filofax paper. It almost feels like card stock. I like that, although it makes for a thicker Filofax to carry around.

(You can see a couple different views, as well as more Filofax pics, by clicking the picture above.)

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2697773998/in/set-72157594177080225/>

Free for all Friday No. 8 (2008-07-25 01:00) - Nan

Once a week, Philofaxy hosts an open comments thread.

That's not to say that we don't get a lot of great comments all the time – we do! If you haven't checked out the wonderful comments on [1]Taking note of notebooks, please do so! Our readers have great ideas. Ideas? Suggestions? Complaints?

Let's have them!

- *Inky*

1. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/07/taking-note-of-notebooks.html>

Tangerine (2008-07-27 20:45:00)

Would any Philofaxers like to describe how they use multiple Filofax, such as a personal and an A5. I have both and systems are falling apart. I don't know what goes where. The one thing that's working is all my logins and passwords are stored in the Financial section of the Personal. Don't ask me why - an artifact of when I had just one Filofax, but it seems to work. And this recopying the year into Kate Spade - are we destined to always try new calendars mid-year? We do love them we can't wait until the next year? It's true for me too!

Laurie (2008-07-28 07:36:00)

I'm definitely guilty of changing calendars during the year. Often what happens is that my needs suddenly change, and a different calendar format works better for me. Other times it's just boredom or wanting to try something new that compels me to switch. I don't use multiple Filofaxes, but several people here do. Some options: A5 for work and Personal for, well, personal. A5 as the main book and Personal as the "satellite" to carry around with you. Inky uses multiple Filos so she might have more insight.

Laurie (2008-07-29 07:20:00)

Hey this is off topic, but I just discovered the Filofax Professional system on Filofax.co.uk. Link:
http://www.filofax.co.uk/timemanagement/SEURLF/ASP/SFS/SFE/pro_sys.htm
Is anyone familiar with this system?

Glenda (2008-07-29 16:35:00)

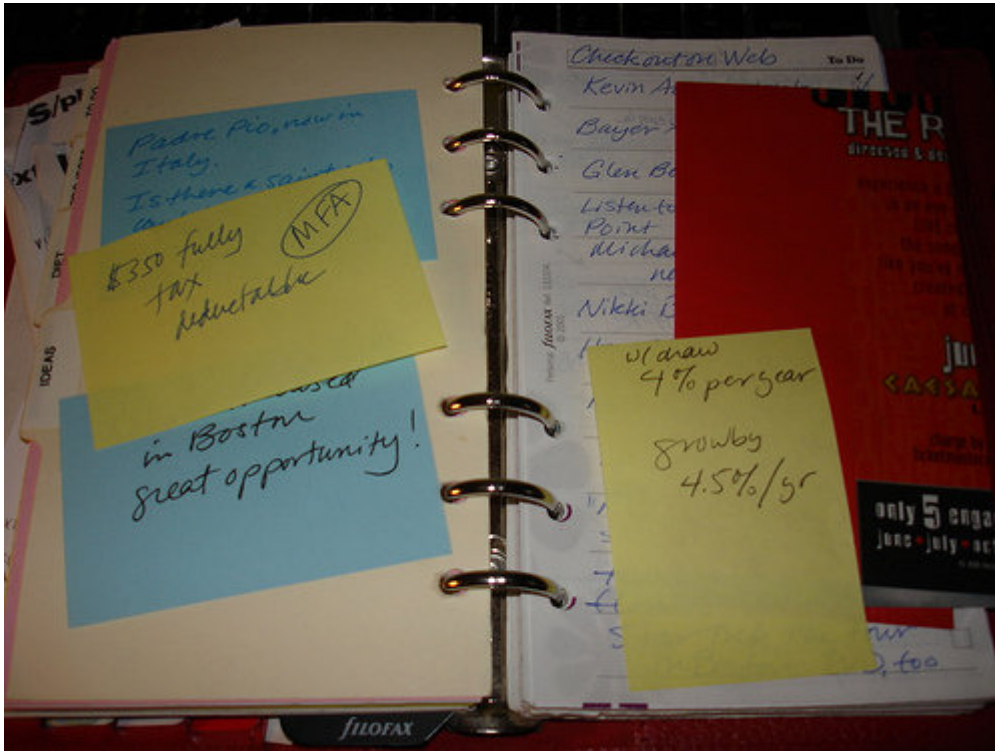
Wonder if it will be available for 2009 here in the US? It looks like a new system. I'd like to see it. The fold-over yearly and monthly overviews remind me of some of the TimeDesign forms.

Nan (2008-07-30 20:09:00)

I noticed the Time Management system a year or so ago. It seems to be tied in with training seminars and aimed at businesses.

I hope it comes to the States someday, too. I think it would do well. Americans are nuts about time management, although David Allen's GTD book and Web sites like [1]Lifehack.org seem to have saturated the market a bit. Currently, I'm hanging on with a really minimalist "system" myself: TMI (=three most important) things. I give myself 3 at home and 3 at work, although I'll add a couple more during the day. It's not perfect, but like all simple enough things, it works.

1. <http://www.lifehack.org/>



[1]

Post-it + itis...get it?

I've noticed this trend for about a month or so. When I want to remember something, instead of writing it on one of the many beautiful lists in my Filofax—behind To Do, Ideas, and Lists tabs—I grab a Post-it note. Then I'll slap the note either on a diary page, behind one of the tabs, or (cringe) along the edge of my monitor.

OK, I've admitted the problem. And I've at least gathered up the Post-its and placed them behind the relevant tabs.

Now, it's time to take a look at why this is happening. It must be because, on some level, I'm losing trust in my system. Do I mistrust the lists because they're getting so long that I may not see everything on them? Because the things on the lists aren't getting done?

I haven't reviewed my lists in a while. I used to do it almost every day, like sitting down to chat with a friend. I think that's why this reluctance to add anything to them.

Time to get chummy with my Filo again. Hi, friend...

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2717529801/>

lovely-rose (2008-07-31 04:30:00)

Hi Inky,

in my Filo-system, i use post it's i like it. i use it to write things down that i need to remember. if a new week begins, i just take the post its from the previous week en stick it to the next week.

Rose

kanalt (2008-07-31 14:45:00)

I use various Post-its too (Love 'em! Can't get enough of 'em!). It's more for quick reminders or a portable list though - some quick thing that needs to get done that day or a list for the store, something to do at work (I use a separate system for work since I don't have the kind of career where I take work home or the kind where I have tons of meetings or lead a team - my Filofax is devoted to my personal life although I do list meetings and days off and programs that I do at work, more like scheduling things from work, as well as lists of all kinds). And of course I use a variety of Post-its - colors, the regular sized squares, the smaller squares, designs, ones with photos on them, etc. Post-its are yet another obsession of mine that my husband doesn't understand... =) (You would think that not adding things for work would limit my use of the Filo, but not at all! I write down all of my daily

to-dos in there, any household things, any reminders and list upon list upon list of things I want to get back to at a later date. I love it - couldn't live without it!)

worldwide (2008-08-04 14:53:00)

When I start using too many post-its it means that my system is starting to break down. I have to tweak some of my systems to get back on track again.

onigiri (2008-09-10 12:07:00)

I must confess:

I am in love with your handwriting!

oh, and I like Post Its, too. I use them the way lovely-rose does.

Time Management (2008-07-31 21:37) - Nan



[1] While we're on the subject of [2]time management, I think it's timely to invite everyone to view one of the all-time classic treatments of the subject.

Randy Pausch, who ultimately became well-known for his Last Lecture, the treatise on making your childhood dreams come true that he intended for his children, but ended up being relevant to a wider audience, always said that he had always thought he'd be well-known for his lecture on time management. So I'll let Randy speak for himself, through the magic of digital video. Here's his one-hour time-management lecture on YouTube, provided by his beloved employer, Carnegie Mellon University: [3]<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTugjssqOT0>.

And, like any good professor, he's made his [4]PowerPoint slides free from charge. Please don't be evil. Disclaimer: Randy and I have the same alma mater as undergraduates (Brown University). He was a year ahead of me. He was my TA when I took the university's CS1 ("Computers for Poets") class. He described my work as "mega-neat," although my program blew up at the end.

That course ultimately led to the job I have now...editing computer books.

Thank you, Randy.

1. http://bp1.blogger.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SJJsXnpvpOI/AAAAAAAAAFc/i63_2KmRu4c/s1600-h/randyPausch_236x236.jpg
2. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=8975582843969462417>
3. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oTugjssqOT0>
4. <http://download.srv.cs.cmu.edu/~pausch/Randy/Randy/pauschlastlecture.ppt>

1.8 August

Free for All Friday No. 9 (2008-08-01 05:17) - Nan

New to Philofaxy? Introduce yourself!

Do you have any suggestions for future posts? Every Friday, we give our readers a chance for free discussion.

Enjoy.

- *Inky*

joffreyca (2008-08-01 07:14:00)

Hello. I'm joffreyca and I'm a frequent reader of this site for about 2 years now.

I own 2 Filofaxes: a personal Sport and a personal Bromley.

I've been using a Filofax for less than a year although I've been using paper organisers for several years.

I'm from the Philippines but am now living in Canada. There are no Filofax organisers in the Philippines. Even DayRunners and FranklinCovey binders are hard to come by.

Your previous post on time management gave me 2 surprises. First, I had no idea that I was in contact with someone who personally knew one of my heroes. I keep a personal "heroes list" and Randy Pausch is on that list. Second, you are the first web celebrity I know who both admits to using a Filofax and is directly involved with computer technology.

Nan (2008-08-01 08:18:00)

Hi Joffrey! Thanks for de-lurking and telling us your Filofax story!

Web celebrity!? Well, that's the first time I've had the honor of that title! Frankly, I don't think Randy would have remembered me, though.

Three cheers for the back-to-paper movement! Maybe some other readers will confess they've joined.

Cin (2008-08-01 10:27:00)

Hi! I'm Cin, and I've been lurking for a while. I'm pretty devoted to setting pen to paper, and have really enjoyed your posts.

I'm also one of those people who are constantly trying to find the perfect match, and have tried everything from the Levenger Circa system to Filofax to (my current) Moleskine.

I've recently started to devote more time to the creative part of my life, so I'm actually really interested to see how other creatives use their filofaxes.

Jeff Abbott (2008-08-03 10:54:00)

Cin:

I'm a professional writer of suspense novels who uses a Filofax. I did write an article for the blog (at Inky's request) a while back on how I used my Filofax to organize my novel writing and how I thought it could be of use to creatives. Do a search on Abbott in the archives and it should pop up.

I recently finished a two-week book tour in the US and the UK but I didn't take my A5 Filofax with me—I took my iPhone. I still love my Filofax but it would have been unwieldy to carry around. Now that I'm back at my desk, hopefully I'll rely on it more now.

David (2008-08-10 08:37:00)

Hi! I'm David, and I keep coming back to my lovely A5 Filofax after trying every other system under the sun. Last year, I wrote a series of articles on my productivity blog about my Filofax love, and about how I've set up my system. The series starts here: [1]Why a Filofax?.

Very pleased to have found some more online Filofax love!

1. <http://organisedlife.com/article/14/why-a-filofax>

Laurie (2008-08-10 08:50:00)

Wow David, thanks for the link to your website about how you use your Filo for your GTD system. I use my Filo in similar ways, and I like to see how other people use theirs to get ideas.

Jeff Abbott (2008-08-10 10:44:00)

Hi David:

I found your postings on Organised Life a while back and they were helpful to me in refining (simplifying) my own approach to using Filofax. Thanks!

Best,

Jeff Abbott

Vidya (2008-08-12 00:20:00)

My people! I've found my people!! Until I found this blog, I figured I was the only person in the world devoted to her pen and paper organizing system!

I have used day planners since design school decades ago. I used my original Day Timer binder until last year. It still worked fine, but was looking quite shabby. I splurged on a new Filofax and felt so guilty I have kept my old Day Timer as an archive binder.

Friends refer to my red Personal Finchley Filofax as my "Brain" or "Bible". I use the Finchley for scheduling and time and project management for work and "real life". It stays on my desk all day at work and then I keep it close at home in the evenings.

Then I have a small planner/wallet I got from Lizell years ago. The rings weren't a standard setting, so I cannibalized a small notebook so I could utilize different paper inserts. Except for that, the Lizell works so perfectly as a wallet and planner that I bought two more for when the first one falls apart.

The intensity of my commitment to my planning system waxes and wanes. But I find that I am more satisfied with my life and progress when I spend a certain amount of time working on time management.

Keep up the good work!

PYOP - Print Your Own Pages (2008-08-02 13:10) - Nan

Lately a couple of blogs have revived (by linking to) a 2-year-old blog post on [1]Lifehacker.com on the subject of notetaking.

So forgive me for jumping on the bandwagon here, but I'd like to call your attention as Philofaxers to the bottom half of the Lifehacker post, which has a list of links to printable note-taking forms, including Dr. Walter Pauk's [2]Cornell note-taking method.

Filofaxes come filled with a year's diary and various forms, and the company still sells some refill forms, though not nearly as many as in the pre-PC era. Furthermore, these forms and even Filofax's lined and plain notepaper can be expensive. Since it *is* the PC era, and desktop printers are readily available, we can print our own forms, even notepaper.

Here's another classic blog entry, [3]from PigPog, showing how it costs less to use plain A5 paper in a Filofax rather than large Moleskines.

I haven't printed my own forms or notepaper yet, but I'm getting close. (All I've done so far is print information typed into word processing docs on my computer onto Filofax paper.) I'm running low on lined white A5 notepaper, and rather than buying more, I'm thinking about buying a ream of A5 paper and printing my own guidelines, so the Lifehacker blog entry is of particular interest to me.

By the way, I really like Dr. Pauk's [4]How to Study in College. It's actually more of a manual for life than a study guide. I've met Dr. Pauk. He wrote books for my parents' educational publishing company (but not about the note taking method; that was already copyrighted by Houghton Mifflin). He and his wife came to stay with our family one summer. TMI alert: They slept in my bed.

1. <http://lifehacker.com/software/note-taking/geek-to-live-take-great-notes-167307.php>

2. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cornell_Notes

3. <http://pigpog.com/node/1490>

4. http://www.amazon.com/Study-College-Seventh-Walter-Pauk/dp/0618046720/ref=sr_1_3?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1217698648&sr=1-3

Steve (2008-08-03 04:03:00)

I've been successfully creating my own pages for my A5 filofax for a couple of years now. I tend to print them on to A4 using booklet mode on my printer and then cut the page in two and punch the two pages.

If you do them in multiples of four it works out very cheap.

I similarly print out my calendar and contacts from within Outlook 2003 on to A4 in booklet mode giving me A5 pages.

I realise that obtaining European size paper in the US isn't so easy as it is over here, but it might still work out cheaper in the long run

worldwide (2008-08-03 14:11:00)

The other issue might be formatting a US printer to print true to size on A4 paper. Has anyone figured out how to do this? I have easy access to A4 paper where I am, and would love to print for my A5 Filofax. But my printer and computer are American. I know it's easy to change the side margins of the page, but what about the length?

worldwide (2008-08-04 14:40:00)

Never mind, I just looked around on my Microsoft word and saw I could choose various sizes of paper, including A4, A3, legal, etc. Huh. Never even looked for that before. I'll have to try printing on A4 and cutting it down to A5 sometime!

Speaking of European sizes of paper, is there some size that is between A5 and A4 size?

David (2008-08-10 08:38:00)

I've also started creating my own task pages, and printing my contact pages out of outlook straight to A5 paper in my desktop laser printer. It works a treat and means I can customise the layout to exactly what I want. I haven't tried doing calendar pages, though, and for those I'm happy to keep using Filofax's Business Day to a Page layout.

Worldwide, the only size I can think of between A5 and A4 is B5, which is wider than A5 ...

neowagnerite (2008-08-11 20:15:00)

Stupid question, I know- but is there any site for downloading forms for the personal size?

chrystine (2008-08-11 23:16:00)

Wow, you are ALL after my own heart! I had no idea there were others out there with the same passion for planners as I do - the same desire to switch yet only to find upon doing so, that the yearning for the same-old same-old planner is THE ONLY WAY!

I was a Franklin Covey person until two years ago when my book was taken from my car (along with my Exa-Compta diary!). Well it was August and do you know how hard it is to find the same year at that time of year? Everything was switched over!!! So as I made do with an old planner and some "fill in the date" pages (oh how i do HATE them!!!) I made up my mind to FINALLY get THE book that I have ALWAYS craved - a REAL filofax. So I was ranting about this to a friend of mine who had recently gone paperless and she said: I have one - it's orange - would you like it? LIKE IT??? LIKE IT??? Heck YES!!! One of my favorite colors and the alternative color to the intended Pink (or brown, or - if I could EVER manage it - black embossed alligator!!) I was eyeing online.

That was the start of a beautiful and devout relationship. it got me through my pregnancy and all the gestational diabetic numbers and all the food listings, etc. When the baby was born, we decided I could stay home with him! Well, that's ok but stunts my free-wheeling purchasing abilities since our budget got really tight...

SO...This past February, my husband got a new job, paying much more. My first MANDATE was that, as a gift for being such a wonderful wife, I was going to get a new Filofax of my VERY own... and which one did I get? I found a Black Leather Embossed Alligator (personal size) online for half of what it would have cost me here in the store (at GoldSpot).

Anyway, I have never been happier. I can't get enough of it and don't even bother looking at others anymore. I only look forward to researching and getting new pages this winter. YAY!!!
Thanks for reading. I love you guys. sorry if that was too long!

Anonymous (2008-08-13 12:21:00)

@Neowagnerite—DIY Planner has lots of forms, many in personal. [1]This is a link to the DIY Planner template directory, filtered to the Other page size. There are a variety of pages there, so you'll have to look for the Personal size templates.

Good luck!

—GG

1. http://www.diyplanner.com/templates/directory?filter0=Other&filter1=**ALL**

Stefano Ricciardi (2008-08-14 06:27:00)

@neowagnerite: yes, there are also Personal sized pages on the DIY site.

I have created a few forms based on the GTD tweaking the DIY basic template (e.g. Next Actions, Waiting For, etc...) Let me know if you are interested in the PDF, I'll be glad to share.

Anonymous (2008-09-09 15:50:00)

I recently purchased a new software program on the Filofax website that lets me print anything on my PC to fit my Filo.

Free for All Friday No. 10 (2008-08-15 08:48) - Nan

OK, so we skipped a week in there.

Thank you for all your great comments on recent posts.

What's new in your Philofaxy lives?

—*Inky*

DIYSara (2008-08-15 11:04:00)

Happy Friday! I'm really itching to pick up a Filo! I currently have a compact sized circa planner (newly re-vamped) and found a nice lot of refills I want to purchase that are 3-3/4 by 6-3/4 which happens to be the personal sized filofax (i think) too. I could switch between the two and not be SOL :)

Any one want to fuel my filofax fire? lol ...

Vidya (2008-08-15 19:20:00)

This afternoon I stopped by the local paperie and checked out the Mini Finchley. I still have two Lizells for when my current one dies, but for a brief, mad moment, I contemplated buying the Mini so it would match my Personal Finchley. Such temptation!

I made a more involved version of the FC Weekly Compass this week and I swear it helped me accomplish quite a bit in an otherwise low energy week.

How is everyone else doing?

David (2008-08-15 22:38:00)

I finally received the Filofax hole punch for my A5 Hampstead that I've had on order for a while, and it's fantastic. Because I use the day-to-a-page layout, I can print my travel itineraries/conference programs/etc on A5 paper straight out of Outlook or Word, punch them, and slip them into the appropriate spot in the planner.

I've also made my own templates for task lists and project tracking which I can print as needed, and it's made updating my address book very straightforward, by printing straight from Outlook.

I'll be posting my templates shortly on [1]Organised Life for anyone who's interested.

1. <http://organisedlife.com/>

Lovely-Rose (2008-08-16 14:52:00)

Hi,

I'm so happy today! My husband, my baby and I were downtown for some shopping. We went to the local book and office supply store. And they have already had refills for 2009! I've made an appointment with the store that I'll buy it half of October. They are saving it for me. I want the same refill for next year. It's a 1 week on 2 pages in 5 languages. I like that one because there is equal space for every day and an extra 'box' for the entire week. And they don't have paper refills in stock because they sell them sometimes. But they can order everything I want from Filofax!!!

Greetings from a tired and happy Rose. (Yes my English sucks now because I'm tired.)

Laurie (2008-08-18 14:03:00)

I am extremely excited because I have ordered a purple A5 Filofax! Earlier this year I switched from Personal to A5, and got a green Filofax because I wanted some color, and none of the other colors appealed to me. But, purple is my favorite color, so I was thrilled when recently the A5 Filofax came out in purple! I ordered it as an early birthday present to myself, along with my 2009 refills, a 2010 vertical year planner, and a new Europe map (mine is so old it still has Yugoslavia on it!). So I will be very excited to get my new purple Filo and get it all decked out!

gmax (2008-08-18 14:39:00)

I have a couple of questions about paper size compatibility.

Do the "personal" pages also fit the "A5" binders?

And will "mini" pages fit into "personal" binders?

I have found that some "pocket" pages can fit the "personal" size binders. The ones that do have elongated holes at the top and bottom two locations.

I'd also be interested to hear how other people manage to work with different sizes and interchanging leaves.

The fact that smaller sized leaves would also fit into the larger sized binders used to be cited years ago as one of the benefits of using the Filofax systems, but it seems like the degree of compatibility has gone down a bit.

Nan (2008-08-18 19:48:00)

Hi Sara! There are so many Circa refills now, I'm tempted myself. I love Levenson stuff anyway.

Welcome Vidya!

David, I'll be sure to check out your site!

Lovely Rose, congratulations on your purchase! Sounds like you're happy.

Hi Laurie! Congrats on your purchase, too!

Gmax, welcome! The Personal pages will fit in the A5 binder, but you have to fold down the lower-left corner. I do it all the time! The mini, I'm not sure. I've never gone as small as the mini! I do love the fact that the Pocket pages fit in the Personal.

Nan (2008-08-18 19:50:00)

Oh, Sara, by the way, you are correct that the 3-3/4 by 6-3/4 Circa is the same page size as the Personal-sized Filofax.

Spencer (2008-08-19 06:40:00)

Hi Philofaxy, I'm in the UK doing a project on filofaxes for college and how people seem to be coming back to them or using them alongside electronic media, is it possible to email you some questions about the role it plays in your life.

s_j_tilley(at)yahoo.com

kanalt (2008-08-19 18:01:00)

I recently purchased my 2009 refills - monthly format, lined week on two pages and daily, all personal sized. I use both the monthly and weekly formats on a daily basis and sometimes the daily format depending on what I have going on that particular day - mostly if I have a lot of scheduled appointments or if the weekly space is too small for all of the to-dos that day (I don't keep a running list of to-dos, but rather put them in the specific day that

they need to get done).

I also have coming my 2009 refills for my mini filo - I use this one to carry in small bags or when I don't need to carry my life with me. My personal size is the one that has everything I need and the one I use on a daily basis but the mini I just write down appointments so that I know what I'm doing without having to lug around my tons of lists. I don't really move papers from one to the other, although I can tell you that the mini papers do fit in the personal size binders. You may have to fold a corner, but otherwise they do fit.

I have also ordered the 2009 week on one page with notes section to see if that would lighten my load - I end up moving many to-dos from one day to the other, making things more complicated than they need to be. So I'm going to try this to see if it helps.

I was at the Container Store this weekend - they carry a small variety of Filos. The pocket size caught my eye and for a brief moment I contemplated buying one thinking that this would eliminate the back and forth use between the personal and the mini. But I had to talk myself out of it since most of what I own is for the personal size and especially since I just ordered the 2009 refills in the personal size. Plus, I spend way too much money on Filos to begin with. I did look at what was on eBay and didn't find any particular bargains. I might reconsider the pocket size for 2010 though. But if I'm honest, I'll probably end up buying the pocket size before then just to make sure I'm not missing a good thing. ;)

Laurie (2008-08-20 14:26:00)

You can put the Personal size pages into an A5 binder, you just trim off the bottom corner. I do this for maps that don't come in A5 size.

Tur_Tur (2008-08-20 14:48:00)

I am going through a similar experience as kanalt: Every year when I just have bought my new refills (day per page, personal size), I think about a change. From Personal to A5 (but I think it's too heavy for me, and looks a little bit too serious), from day per page to week on two pages (more clearly arranged and better for a prospective view, but on busy days not enough space to write). However, I stay loyal to my day per page Personal size (since 1997), but it is a seducement every year.

gg (2008-08-21 21:31:00)

Laurie's purple Finsbury does look lovely. It calls to me to give that lovely purple binder a home. I'd love to get one, but I'm wondering how portable it is. Can you get it in your purse, or do you leave it home, or carry it separately, or instead of a purse, or in a briefcase? It seems so bulky that I'd be tempted to leave it at home - maybe sitting on a desk or on a bookshelf. How do you actually use the A5 Filo's? I've admired them many times but shied away because they look so big. I always avoided Franklin Covey binders because they seem so overbuilt - like they're made to last for a hundred years, but I'd want a new one every once in a while so wouldn't want to waste the remaining life. And that's something I wonder about with the Filofaxes. I have a slimline personal and a pocket filofax, but haven't summoned up the courage and the money to get an A5.

Laurie (2008-08-23 07:07:00)

Hi gg,

I use this purse for my A5 Filo:

<http://www.rei.com/product/763410>

The A5 JUST fits into the main compartment, and the rest of my stuff goes into the pockets. This bag holds a surprising amount of stuff, but is very streamlined. When I moved up to A5 from Personal size I thought I would have to carry a huge bag, but I've been very pleased with this bag and its compact size. I carry my A5 with me everywhere, and I travel a lot so I have to have a lot of information with me wherever I go. For me the size of the A5 is well worth the usefulness. I had constant problems with my weekly calendar not being big enough in my Personal size. The A5 solved that issue nicely, and also gives me plenty of space to write on my other pages too. I recently ordered the week + notes calendar refill to replace my week to view. I love seeing the days as columns across the page, but there is not nearly enough space to write all of my lists that I use each week. If I write my lists in my tabbed sections, they get neglected when I can't see them all the time-I'm very "out of sight, out of mind." And if I use sticky notes and stick them to my weekly pages, they obscure my daily agenda. These days I have more lists than appointments each week, so hopefully this format will allow me to keep all of my lists in

view during the week and see my appointments too.

I love the flexibility of Filofax: when I have more appointments I can switch back to the column view. If I get really busy I can add daily diary pages. I can change the format mid-year, for one week or several, and back again. Filo freedom!

kanalt (2008-08-23 09:31:00)

Has anyone switched from the personal sized to the pocket sized? I'm thinking of making the switch, but I'm not sure it's practical with all the lists I keep, yet sometimes I feel that the personal sized is too big to carry everywhere...

gg (2008-08-23 16:06:00)

Thanks, Laurie, for that info. Maybe I can manage one of those beautiful purple A5's. I have to admit it would be nice to be able to carry all that info with me every day.

@Kanalt-

My husband found a pocket Filo at a garage sale and brought it home for me, and I carried it around in my purse for a while. I wasn't actually trying to use it for lists or appointments, but as a capture device as recommended for GTD, so didn't have quite the experience you're considering. I do think it might be fine for a one page per day agenda and for limited notes. It was hard for me to open and close the rings because everything is so tiny, so it depends on your finger size, too. Also, my pocket filo is actually a wallet -cum-binder, so it's a bit more bulky than I like. But it was nice having reference calendars and paper for notes, etc, all so easy to grab from my purse. Am thinking of getting it out and going back to it.

You might try getting a similar sized notebook at WalMart or a drugstore or office supply store. Use that for a while and then you would have an idea of how that size page would work for you.

kanalt (2008-08-23 18:13:00)

Hmmm, thanks for the info, gg. That's one of the problems I had with the Slimline - the rings were too small. I can deal with paring down my pages and notes (if I have to), but if I can't open the rings, it's no good, although I know that the pocket version has bigger rings than the Slimline.

joffreyca (2008-08-24 08:55:00)

On Pocket Size Filofaxes:

I've used pocket size organisers before. I've tried using it as my "hub" but the attempt failed. Its simply too small for my needs.

I once thought that the perfect pocket size Filofax would be the one that can hold the most pages. But then, having too much pages doesn't make it "pocketable". If I wanted to bring it with me everywhere, I either needed to put it in a bag or constantly hold it. Doing that eliminates its advantage over the personal size, in my opinion. I also realized that the reason the pocket size did not work for me is because I was forcing it to be my hub, projects planner and mobile capture/reference device at the same time.

If all you need for any given day is a list of frequently used contacts, calendar reminders and notes then the you can migrate from personal to pocket size without a problem. You will gain the advantage of having a more portable system and being able to use your Filo with custom-printed 3 x 5 notepads or index cards as refills.

On A5 vs. Personal Size:

I use the personal size most of the time. But lately, I've been tempted to switch to an A5 for two reasons: (1)Laurie's posts convinced me that an A5 can be as portable as a personal size and (2)one of the local office supply shops in my neighborhood is having a sale on A5 Filofax.

I've seen an A5 Finsbury for \$69, an A5 Classic for around \$75 and an A5 Topaz for \$99.

So now, parts of my brain are having a session conducting hearings on the advantages/disadvantages of "to buy or not to buy".

I've never used an A5 Filofax before. And I'm afraid it might end up like some of my old 3-ring or 7-ring binders - kept in a cabinet, seldomly used.

Jeff Abbott (2008-08-24 11:44:00)

I use an A5 Classic, but I'm also not constantly on the go. I like that it lays flat and the pages are big enough for me to write as large as I please, plenty of room for notes or lists or mad scribbles or what have you. Having it open all day is key to using it and keeping what I'm trying to get done that day front and center.

On a two-week business trip recently (book tour) I didn't take the A5, I just dumped all the pertinent info for calendar, etc. into my iPhone. I have carted my A5 around my home town when I need to, but I often take just a page or two out if needed to take into the store, etc.

Just my take, good luck with your decision.

gg (2008-08-24 11:58:00)

@Laurie and tur _tur – Re the vertical layout – there's a template on the DIY Planner site

<http://tinyurl.com/6f5dng>

It's a two-page spread with the vertical view of the week and spaces for notes and lists. I'm trying to modify it to print as a Classic size, as it's set up for A5 and doesn't take up the entire sheet of letter paper as is. But it's close.

I guess the trade-off is that the space for appointments is just about one third of the height of the two pages. I'd like to try it for a week or so to see how it would fit with my fairly light needs – no more than two or three appointments per day, if that.

If you're in the UK then it might be perfect for you. It's editable – Open office spreadsheet.

lovely-rose (2008-08-24 16:28:00)

I'm using my A5 Filofax the same way as Jeff Abbott. only instead i'm not using an iphone, but i'm using y Lg Viewty.

Vidya (2008-08-25 22:28:00)

I have the Personal size I use for planning, with my yearly, monthly, weekly and daily goals all noted and updated regularly. I use a wallet/planner that I got from Lizell to note events that come up or keep track of any interesting book titles, DVDs, quotes, etc. Then on a regular basis I transfer that info into the appropriate spot.

I also have printed plastic Japanese folders that I keep for each project as well as one that I throw interesting articles, coupons, pictures, etc. I try to weed through that one regularly, either acting on stuff, filing items away or pasting into my commonplace book. It's a modified element of GTD and I find it works well for me IF (and it's a big IF) I keep on top of the system. At least twice a year I fall off the wagon and have to start all over again.

How is everyone else doing?

gg (2008-08-26 00:02:00)

Hi, Vidya– I'd like to know more about your commonplace book. What kind of journal or notebook do you use for it? I've read about them before, but haven't set one up yet.

onigiri (2008-08-26 09:00:00)

Hi everyone!

I've been a lurker for so long, that I think it's time I stepped up :)

I am very new to Filofax (since may this year), but have grown quite fond of it.

At first, I wasn't sure which size to get. I wanted it small, yet big enough to write all stuff I could think of. And I wanted it to be as portable as possible, since I'm not keen on large bags. Which is why I opted for the Pocket size.

I must confess that when I was taking the measurements shown on the web for the binder, I got them confused and thought that was the size of the pages. So when my Pocket finally arrived, I found the sheets rather small (I have the week per two pages). I thought about exchanging it for another size, but realised that since the pocket binder size was indeed perfect for me, the personal and the A5 would be much too big.

I have in the time being, grown really fond of my Pocket Finsbury. I have gotten used to the page sizes, and the rings aren't too small for me. It's even starting to lay flatter than before due to its constant use.

The only thing I'd like on it? a second pen loop, but I'm already thinking on making one myself :)

@ laurie: Really great choice on the purple Finsbury! Mine's a purple Finsbury, too, and it looks fabulous!!

Does anybody else prefer the Pocket?

Vidya (2008-08-26 11:39:00)

"gg said...

Hi, Vidya- I'd like to know more about your commonplace book. What kind of journal or notebook do you use for it? I've read about them before, but haven't set one up yet.

August 26, 2008 12:02 AM"

I use an unlined journal a friend gave me. I either paste things in or copy good quotes. Every few months I like to flip through it and get inspiration.

Anonymous (2008-08-27 08:49:00)

I just love my Filo. Right now I would give almost anything if I could buy a new personal size organizer <http://tinyurl.com/5n8xaw>

Alas, there is no way to I could justify a \$ 120 purchaase when my good ole organizer is just fine.

I have 300 personal size blank filofax paper just waiting to be used. I am curious to know if any of you has made your own filofax template? I have browsed www.diyplanner.com but found nothing that would plase me at the moment.

Sirpa

from Finland, Europe

Anonymous (2008-08-27 09:15:00)

Sorry about double posting. Nan, could you delete it?

I have a personal size hole punch. Can I use the same hole punch if I switch to A5 size?

Sirpa

from Finland, Europe

Nan (2008-08-27 09:43:00)

Hi Sirpa - I deleted the duplicate post.

As for the hole punch, no, the Personal hole punch won't work for A5 pages. You have to buy the A5 punch. >(I just ordered my first A5 metal punch! It's the beginning of a whole (hole?) new era in my A5 life. I'll blog about this soon.

Vidya (2008-08-27 11:57:00)

"I just love my Filo. Right now I would give almost anything if I could buy a new personal size organizer <http://tinyurl.com/5n8xaw>

Alas, there is no way to I could justify a \$ 120 purchaase when my good ole organizer is just fine.

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Sirpa

from Finland, Europe"

I'm playing with building my own template. I've been wanting a day on two pages with one side being my agenda and to do list and the other page being tracking various items such as exercise, meals, expenses, progress on goals. I've been having a heck of a time finding bulk personal size paper, what Filofax has on offer is really expensive.

joffreyca (2008-08-27 13:20:00)

I sometimes substitute Filofax paper with those of generic personal size notebooks.

I can usually find them in the office supply section of most dollar stores. They're mostly made in China. The paper quality is not great but good enough for daily use... Well, they're good enough for me.

The paper fits perfectly with personal size Filofax organisers. I make my own pages using a one-hole punch and a pair of scissors. Sometimes I just tear the paper by hand, draw some guide dots and punch the paper.

The process may seem time consuming but I find that I can make a lot of pages in only a few minutes. I think I'm able to produce 20-25 pages within 3 mins.

lovely-rose (2008-08-28 03:53:00)

Joffreyca, i use those too. I use them as my groceryshoppinglist (i hope i wrote it well) and as an extra notes page in my A5 Filofax. I use tape to stick it on the page. But then i can't move the list anymore. That's why i want a hole punch. it is funny to read how you make holes in your paper. It's a lot of work! LOL

gg (2008-08-28 12:54:00)

About the personal and pocket-size forms, that's one reason I use classic – it's so reasonably-priced to buy a ream of letter paper and take it to the print shop for one cut. I still have my personal and pocket Filofaxes, but I don't use them very much, and I buy forms for them wherever I can find them, like at office supply stores and WalMart. I did find a nice set of tabs for the pocket binder at a Japanese supermarket (six pastel tabs for \$1.69!), and they had an assortment of forms in that size, so will be going back to pick up some more. At prices like that I may start using the pocket binder a lot more.

But basically if you want to print your own forms in a smaller size, you really need to get a guillotine and the appropriate hole punch. Which brings the investment up to about \$100 additional, here in the US. With a bit more diligence I might be able to use scissors, as Joffreyca does. But my scissor cuts never look good – my pages would be annoyingly uneven.

And another issue is that the actual holes on the pocket (and I believe also on the personal) forms are smaller in diameter than on the hole punches that are available here. I tried moving the punches (dies?) from one three-hole punch over to another one, so I could make six holes, and the dies were so crowded I couldn't actually get them to work for pocket size, and for personal they didn't look right and took up too much of the page. Also they leave a bigger margin (between the edge of the paper and the holes) and that takes away a bit more of the writing surface. So it gets complicated.

laurie (2008-08-29 07:35:00)

My purple Finsbury arrived yesterday! I love it! It is a great color of purple, I'm so glad I got it. Now once my new week + notes calendar format arrives I can really get it set up to my liking.

Included in my new binder were some note pages of various colors, one of which is purple! Purple note pages are not available in A5 size on the Filofax USA website, but I will email them and ask if they will be soon!

Silver_Elixir (2008-08-30 06:34:00)

Hi everyone,

I have just been reading through what everyone had written and I wanted to add a few comments. I have made my own filo personal and A5 size pages, mostly using Excel spreadsheets and then printing them out - and it's great now that I have figured out how to print them double sided. I print them on to A4 paper and then using an old filo page the size I want, I mark out the borders on my printed pages and then using my scrapbooking page trimmer I cut them to size. I then line up the old filo page to the new one and then trace the holes and punch them out one by one. It sounds tedious, but I find that I have now got the hang of it and can have new pages ready to go quite quickly. The pages I have made include - week on one page with notes opposite; address page; personal information page; weekly page with goal boxes to tick off; monthly calendar; notes pages... and I am sure there are more. Also To Vidya, do you have sections in your commonplace book? I have 14 and counting. I have recently started (and maintained the use of) a personal pink domino filofax, but am not sure if I want to start carrying my City A5 around instead... will think about it...

Iwan Andringa (2008-09-05 13:06:00)

I'm ready for a refreshment...as often as I picked up my filo at the beginning and visited this site...as only few times I open it now and visit this site.... And I know I'm doing some things wrong. I had my GTD in place as well and now it's out of place. Not that I'm doing nottin....it's just that I don't discipline myself enough. I made a sticky recently writing: Get GTD Done! That's my comment for today's friday. Cheers.

Vidya (2008-09-06 13:03:00)

In response to Silver Elixir, I just have one commonplace book and I write in any quotes that catch my eye. I also put in photos that I like. It's a treat to leaf through it when I'm feeling blue and in need of inspiration.

I got my 2009 daily pages yesterday! I really like Preference/Sun Graphix's daily pages layout (http://www.pensandgifts.com/cgi/display.cgi?item_num=SunGraphixDP646W). I also bought the project pages to make my project tracking look a bit neater.
How is everyone else doing?

Anonymous (2008-09-07 08:53:00)

Happy New Year to everyone! Oh, it's not that time yet, but am in that mood because I got a 2009 planner the other day.

I had already completed my template for 2009 with birthdays and holidays incorporated into the pages, and then the thought of printing them out and getting them bound just seemed too much. So with the new planners out at Borders, I got a Gallery Leather (tho this was pleather) pink planner, two page per week, 5x8 planner. I liked the nice bright pink color. There were also purple ones, but the pink appealed to me.

I like that it has eight monthly mini-calendars along the bottom of the pages.

So all my work on my template was for nought! Oh well, I've started some lists in the new planner, hoping to integrate it into my life already. Maybe I'll keep this one all year and won't end up buying two or three more as my moods change. It's still a long time til the new year – plenty of time to get several more by then.

I really like the Filofax week to a page with the facing page for notes, but an A5/Classic binder is too bulky to carry around and the personal pages don't give me enough space, and I like the week to a page view, not the one page per day views. Otherwise I'd get Filofax pages, as I really like the faint print and the uncluttered look.

–GG

Laurie (2008-09-07 13:23:00)

This week I received my week + notes pages for 2009 and also for the remainder of 2008 so I can start using the format right away. Actually they were sold out of the week + notes for 2008 so I bought the week per page, and inserted a note page between each week. So my week/ notes pages reverse sides every week, but only until the end of this year.

I am really hoping this format will solve my issues of needing space for lists each week. To be honest, for the last few weeks I have been using my full-size Uncalendar because there is so much room each week for lists. Now that my week + notes pages are here, I hope they will satisfy my listing needs.

kanalt (2008-09-07 14:42:00)

I too ordered and received both 2008 and 2009 weekly + notes refills (though, like Laurie had to get the week per page and regular notes pages for the remainder of 2008). I was really hoping that the layout would be better for me (less writing), but I could tell as soon as I set it up that it would not cut it for me. I need to see everything in it's own day (I write down all appointments plus various things that need to be done on specific days). But I set up a household filo using the weekly + notes and while I have yet to use it, it's all set to go. I'm trying to get my husband to use it too so that we're aware of each other's schedule (he rarely looks at calendars) and to keep track of household projects that we'd like to do. We'll see how that goes...

chrystine@cwgcopypwriting.com (2008-09-08 23:01:00)

Anyone else concerned that we haven't heard from Inky since August? I miss her and wish she'd come back and blog for us some more!!!

lovely-rose (2008-09-09 03:57:00)

I have a few questions:

My personal info and incase of emergency page is messed up, where can i get a new one?

Where do you write your appointments for the next year if you don't have a refill for next year yet?

Inky??? Where are you? and is everything ok?

greet's Rose

joffreyca (2008-09-09 09:03:00)

Just wanted to verify this: is Inky and GoNanB (<http://flickr.com/people/gonanb/>) the same person?

Wow. I didn't know GoNanB works for O'Reilly Media.

I love O'Reilly books.
Most of the books I request for work are published by O'Reilly.
Hope you're doing well, Inky.

joffreyca (2008-09-09 09:08:00)

Nevermind. I just confirmed that Inky and GoNanB are one and the same.
I didn't notice this at first but GoNanB's email uses the name "nanbarber" and Inky keeps another blog named "nanbarber.blogspot.com".

onigiri (2008-09-09 17:12:00)

Yes, I also agree with Chrystine:
Inky/Nan: WE MISS YOU!!! Post back soon, please.
:)

MadlyWriting (2008-09-10 10:23:00)

Um, I'm thinking of moving from my Filofax to Entourage. I haven't tried an electronic solution in a long time, but I realized:

- my days tend to be very similar in how I use the blocks of time (I work alone, self-employed) and I got tired of re-entering said blocks of time in my Filo

- I really like having an electronic alert to move me to the next phase of my day/remind me of what I need to do now (and yes, I could feel like Pavlov's dogs, but it does tend to keep me on track)

- I can carry my calendar more easily with me on my phone than lugging my Filo around.

- the MyDay feature is kind of like having a Filo page up on your screen

I've been doing this for a week, and it's working okay, but it's sort of weird not to be using a paper system. I don't know if I'll stick with it or not. If I do I will probably keep my Filo as a notebook.

Laurie (2008-09-10 14:34:00)

Hi Rose,
The diary inserts have a new Personal Information page each year, so when you get your refill you'll get a new page.
Inky, I hope you are okay!

1.9 September

Where's Inky? (2008-09-10 17:20) - Nan



[1] Dear readers, I'm sorry for making you worry about me. I'm fine! I've just been thinking about what I want to do with this blog. I didn't want to

come back without a plan. I find that the fall is a better time for me to make fresh starts and resolutions than January. I think it's a combination of the academic year that I grew up with, and the fact that the change of weather from the humid dog days of August to crisp, sunny September feels more like a new year than January's nondescript dead of winter.

Let me start by thanking all of you for your recent great posts on [2]Free for All Friday No. 10. It's much more activity than I deserve with my recent absence. Your systems and ideas are truly inspirational!! I mean that to every single one of you.

One commenter, Joffrey CA, raised the issue of my real identity. Yes, you've figured it out. I work for O'Reilly Media, and my name is Nan Barber. I didn't go to any great lengths to hide my identity, since I have no compelling reason to. I was mainly concerned about what my family and coworkers would think, and it turns out that none of them have any interest in the fact that I'm doing this blog.

However, I want this blog to be about Filofaxes, not about me, so I created the pseudonym. As some of you may know, I inherited this blog from its original creator, a person who went by the pseudonym "Philofaxer" and who really did want to remain anonymous. In gratitude for his kind decision to add me to the blog, there are certain principles that he set up that I will always honor:

- The blog will not be personality-based; hence, my use of a pseudonym.
- The blog will not attempt to generate revenue via Google AdSense or other advertisements. (Although I'm not opposed to doing product reviews ... unfortunately I haven't had to deal with that issue yet!)
- Good writing and constructive comments will be top priority. I'm proud to say during my tenure (going back to 2006) I've only had to delete one nasty comment.

So, here's the plan. I will do one "Free for All Friday" post and two other posts per week; usually on Sunday and Wednesday. I'll report all the news in my own Filofax life, including the following:

- I'm up to a 4 Filo life: An A5 for work, another A5 for the kitchen counter, a Personal, and a Pocket for fitness records. I bought a 2008-09 academic year week-per-2-pages for this Filo.
- The A5 for work is working better than ever (finally, after 2 years!). So I've bought a metal A5 punch, and plan to get a ream of A5 paper and create my own pages.
- I'm loving the Pocket size again, and considering eliminating the Personal. Something about those 3 x 5 inch pages feels so good.
- My "Ideas" section always seems to be the canary in the coal mine. It's currently stuffed with Post-Its and confusion even worse than [3]here. (But thank you, Onigiri-sama, for the compliment on my handwriting! I like to, and often have to, write fast. It looks better when I can write more slowly.)
- But I am loving the illustrations in the Kate Spade Personal week-per-2-pages and would like to use it next year if I stay with this size. (Ur-hrm ... as I said ... product reviews??)

Thanks again for all your support, and for drawing me back!

— *Inky*

1. http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SMhCtgVzXdI/AAAAAAAAAFk/GFqK9EcIkZs/s1600-h/DSC03830.JPG
2. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/08/free-for-all-friday-no-10.html>
3. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/07/post-itis.html>

Adirondack Explorer (2008-09-10 21:12:00)

Glad you're back!

Vidya (2008-09-11 09:30:00)

Good to see you, Inky! I hear you about feeling a fresh start in September— it must harken back to getting those nice fresh pencils and clean, crisp notebooks back in grade school!

I really geeked out and got a copy of "The Advanced Day Planner User's Guide" on Amazon Marketplace. It's out of print, but there are a zillion used copies available.

I can't say I got any huge new insights into using my beloved Filofax, but there were some good tips and it was just fun to wallow in planner-love.

kanalt (2008-09-11 09:55:00)

Vidya - Great title (Advanced Day Planner User's Guide). I checked it out on Amazon and can't wait to get one! I'm also going to get one for a friend for Christmas.

Inky - glad you're back - I always look forward to new posts - I have the blog marked as a favorite in Google Reader and always check that one first to see if there's a new post (but no pressure!). ;) Also, I see you're thinking about moving from a personal to a pocket planner - is there a great deal of difference as far as writing room?

Nan (2008-09-11 10:18:00)

Thank you for the warm welcome back, everyone.

Would one of you like to write a book review of "The Advanced Day Planner User's Guide" for Philofaxy? Let me know.

Kanalt, I know what you mean about Google Reader. I use it, too, and the bloggers I love to read the most seem to write least often!

The pages on the Pocket Organizer are significantly smaller than the Personal. I'll post a picture on Flickr. But for information that you want to carry with you everywhere, they're perfect. They're also easier to turn than the tall, narrow Personal pages.

paulien (2008-09-11 10:28:00)

Hi,

Good to see you're back. I also enjoyed the comments on the last thread. I also have something new to share with you: a new filofax, a brown personal classic!

I had the piazza personal, and loved the size but not the dirty suede and the misaligned rings, and I had a classic pocket one which was nice but too small. So now I have it all in one.

I still feel a bit bad about leaving the other two covers lying in a drawer. I use my new one for both personal and work, so I don't have a good purpose for them. Maybe I can sell one of them on ebay or something. Any other ideas for what to do with them are welcome.

Nan (2008-09-11 10:46:00)

OK, here's the picture comparing the Personal and Pocket pages:: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2848-608352/>

kanalt (2008-09-11 10:57:00)

Pauw13 - I too have the personal classic in brown - I LOVE it! Enjoy!

Inky - thanks for posting the photo of the personal vs. pocket. In theory, I'd like to use the pocket (probably easier to carry around) but don't think it would be practical for all of the information I deem "necessary." Although, I probably do carry more than I actually need to. =)

Vidya (2008-09-11 11:48:00)

I would be delighted to write a review on "The Advanced Day Planner User's Guide"- I'll put it on my to do list for the weekend! :-)

gg (2008-09-11 12:18:00)

Nice to see you back, Inky!

The user's guide sounds interesting. A review would be great. And a sampling of tips.

BTW, I've already succumbed to the planner displays at Borders and bought an appointment book, but...does anyone use a pocket Filo for appointments? I have one but use it only for notes and lists. It would be great to also use it for my appointments, but it seems so cramped. And it wouldn't hold letter-size miscellaneous sheets of paper I carry about. Or so it seems. I'd love to get everything into that little format but it seems impractical. Does anyone use the Pocket for everything? Do you carry page-per-day pages? Do you miss having a view of the week at a glance when setting up an appointment? Or do you get used to just flipping through the pages to look for an open spot? How does that feel? The week to a page seems so practical, but in the pocket size it wouldn't give me enough space for my notes about the appointment, plus phone number, address, and tasks completed for later reference. Or maybe there's a work-around I haven't thought of. I need to carry about a month's pages around at all times, so I can refer back for invoicing, and really need about another month of future pages, so I don't really see how the little rings would hold enough pages for me. But would love for it to be possible.

Thx, GG

geew67 (2008-09-11 16:50:00)

Hi gg

I use a pocket pimlico for everyday personal use. It goes everywhere with me. I use a week to two pages as i don't have many appointments. Any that I do have, I write the time to the left followed by the info. The only gripe I do have, is that the space for weekends is a lot less and I do a lot at weekends! I have a full year in there but might try 6 months as it is bit of a tight fit with everything else. I also have a notes section for...notes, a to do list, an information section for important info to keep including birthday pages (which i transfer to the diary at the beginning of each month) and finally an address section. At the front i have a clear pocket with photos of the family and a number of jot pads for extra notes in the diary or to do's with a deadline. In the back of the filo i have a zipped pocket for stamps and small things. Theres is also a pocket right across the back of the filo for small envelopes, receipts and loose papers etc. I prefer the pocket as it is more portable than the personal (which I also own), it takes up less room in my pannier or shoulder bag. It even fits in my jeans back pocket.

gg (2008-09-11 20:25:00)

Thanks,geew67-

It sounds like your Filofax rings are bigger than mine-I guess mine are about half an inch. I got my pocket sterling at a garage sale, and haven't been able to find it listed on the Filofax site, so don't know what the official description is. I couldn't find the pimlico on the website, either, so don't know exactly what the difference is. And the rings don't seem to be the same dimension wide as they are tall-mine seem to be about three quarters of an inch wide but about half an inch tall. Seems pretty weird, and I don't know how they would be listed. I wonder if I'd be able to get that much in there. But I think I'll try-Filofax paper is pretty thin. This one makes a nice wallet as it has a zipper pocket on the outside and several vertical pockets plus horizontal pockets for cards, etc, so I really want to make it work. And it's a bit bulky for my medium-large purse, but it works, but no way would it fit in a pocket. It's handy to carry around without a purse, tho.

They sure have all the bases covered, with so many sizes and materials for us to covet and collect. It's probably unreasonable to hope to find another garage sale like the one where I got this one!

Does anyone know if there's a list somewhere of all the various versions of Filofaxes that have been produced in the last ten or twenty years? My garage sale find seems pretty recent - microfiber, never used, but haven't been able to find it listed anywhere. But it has the Filofax rings with Filofax engraved on them, and a leather badge on the outside with the script "F" and on the inside there's a leather badge that says "Filofax Pocket Sterling." I'd like to know how old it is, etc.

Thanks,

-GG

onigiri-sama (2008-09-12 04:59:00)

Hi gg,

I also have a pocket, and I must say that for the time being, it works perfectly handling appointments and other info.

I use the week per two pages format, where I write down all possible appointments. I must say that I do not have too many appointments, but am considering getting a day per page format in order to have more space.

The Notes section is the second one I use the most: I write down thoughts, jot down new stuff I want to check out later, i.e. a certain writer I read about in a mag, etc. I make my own pages, simply using a scissor, a ruler and a mini one-hole punch. A A4 page will give you 5 pocket-size pages ;)

Then comes the To Do list, which keeps reminding me that I still must go get my driver's license reissued or finish sewing those darn curtains!! I want to make new pages where to keep track of regular to do tasks, such as paying the rent, cleaning the kittybox, doing the laundry, eating...

But that task is currently sitting on my to do list..

Anyway, what i'm trying to say is that i don't find it to be too crammed up, but then again, I'm only carrying 2008 from may to december. Oh, I also have the address/phone sheets, but have simplified them to just carry maybe 8 sheets of them. I'll tell you more about it later if you wish.

oh, and if there's something very important, i just jot it down on the post-its I carry inside and stick it on the corresponding day.

I normally try to check it a few times a day, but these past two weeks which have been a bit busy for me, I've just been looking at it before bedtime. That's also when I've been writing all the upcoming appointments, editing my to do list, keeping track of my exercises, etc.

I hope this is useful for you and that you finally succumb to using your Filo ;)

onigiri-sama (2008-09-12 05:01:00)

Inky,

it's great to have you back. And if you need any inspiration in order to keep this blog updated, please let us know. I'm sure we can come up with different Filo related topics.

:)

Nan (2008-09-12 09:33:00)

Hi Vidya – Thanks for deciding to do the review! Please email the text to me at nanbarber at gmail dot com.

Laurie (2008-09-12 09:35:00)

Glad you are back Inky! As you can see, we missed you a lot!

Looking forward to the upcoming posts!

geew67 (2008-09-13 15:57:00)

gg- the pimlico is a discontinued Filofax but can still be picked up at some stores including the www. Google will find it. The rings are 3/4" and do hold a fair amount. I am trying a rolling 6 month diary instead of a full year to create space - this is the previous month (in case I need to look back) and the following 5 months. Hope you have fun finding the right system and are inspired to continue to use the Pocket.

Free for All Friday No. 11 (2008-09-12 02:25) - Nan

Feels good to be back in the old routine, doesn't it?

Have you changed planners or sizes for autumn?

Anything else you'd like to talk about?

—*Inky*

lovely-rose (2008-09-12 03:43:00)

I'm not changing my planner this fall or the next year. I've ordered the same planner for next year.

But i have to make a section for appointments and to dos for next year and my question is: how do you do that?

This morning i was watching my financial tab, my moving tab, my eating schedule tab and my lists tab and they are a mess. My finances aren't up to date anymore, i live here now for six months and i want to change the second tab into a renovation tab, ive neglected my eating schedule and some of the books in my lists i don't want to read anymore and i stopt visiting some websites that are behind my liststab.

but where do i start?

love Rose

Vidya (2008-09-12 09:29:00)

I'm sticking with my personal Finchley for life planning and my little Lizell (which roughly corresponds to a Pocket) for now. The system works for me and I'm trying out a few little tweaks I learned from the "Advanced Day Planner Users' Guide".

I did have a minor organizational triumph in that I got the emails in my inbox down to 9 from over 20two weeks ago! I was inspired by "Inbox Zero" and had just gotten tired of being overwhelmed by emails. I set up a separate file for personal emails and then flagged the emails that require different actions. I'm hoping to end next week with zero emails in my inbox!!

Lovely-rose– when my system gets wooly, I like to start with a brain dump, in which I write down all the things that are on my mind. Then I spend about half an hour going through my planner, consolidating lists, eliminating

lists and notes that don't apply anymore and getting things reorganized. That tends to help refocus and re-energize me. Good luck!

MadlyWriting (2008-09-12 10:03:00)

I am in the middle of a huge project right now, and when I'm done I'm completely reorganizing my Filofax (an A5). I was thinking of going electronic but I know that's just fiddling. The change I am making is that I am dumping GTD—it is resulting in too many long lists for me. I think for next year I need to go back to the week on two pages calendar; I'm spending too much time flipping around (I use the business layout one day a page currently). I think it's not a bad thing to purge the Filofax now and then, just don't do it to procrastinate from real work.

I only have the one Filofax, but I have been thinking of getting a Mini Domino and using it as a) a front-pocket wallet (I'm a guy)—my current wallet is getting old and b) as a replacement for the pocket Moleskine I carry with me everywhere. I have to have something to take notes on everywhere I go and I like the Moleskine but would like to have removable pages.

So here's my question: are there enough pockets in the Mini Domino for credit cards, etc. and cash, and can you somehow manhandle a Mini page into an A5? I don't mind if I have to fold or alter the page, but if I want to stick something from the Domino into the A5 I would like to.

Thanks for any suggestions.

kanalt (2008-09-12 11:16:00)

I'm currently all set up for the remainder of this year and next. I use both the monthly view and the week on 2 pages lined. I have tried various other formats, but this is the one that I'm so used to that I can't work with anything else. I do occasionally use the daily pages if I need more room than the weekly block allows. I am using the brown classic personal binder. I have considered buying a few other binders so that I can swap them out occasional, mostly for different seasons. I'm hoping that this will eliminate the need I feel for changing planners altogether - I would only then have to swap out the pages rather than having to rewrite everything. I haven't made up my mind about buying the other binders though.

I also use a mini domino to carry when my personal is too big. I only put appointments and phone numbers in there though, as well as some occasional notes, which can easily be transferred and placed into my personal sized. Madlywriting - I believe (if I can remember correctly offhand), the mini domino has 3 or 4 pockets on the inside, so while you can carry some credit cards, I guess it would depend on how many you're looking to carry. There are inside pockets on both the front and back cover where you could possibly put your cash. I've never used it as a wallet, so I don't know how well that would work. I also have never used an A5 so I don't know how the mini pages would fit into it, but I know that mini pages can go into the personal, so maybe.

Lovely-Rose - I don't have a lot of appointments to move into a calendar several months ahead, but this is what I do: I keep a year's worth of calendar in my Filo at all times - Starting in January, it's a Jan - Dec version. Then in July, I buy my refills for the next year and I make my Filo July - June so that everything kind of overlaps. Then I keep one sheet of note paper specifically for upcoming events that don't require a specific date (like things I want to remember for a certain month or year, books to be released but don't have a publishing date beyond "Spring 2010," Defensive Driving for 2012, etc). I don't know that this method would work if you have many upcoming appointments that specifically need a place to be scheduled. And every once in a while (like the beginning of the year) I go through all of my lists and notes and update anything that needs it, write clean, fresh notes for anything that looks messy and unruly.

Hope this helps - Happy Organizing!

Penny (2008-09-12 11:39:00)

I'm going strong with my slim personal cross. i'm debating whether to buy filo refills for '09 or continue with muji and numbering everything myself.

I've reopened the A5 notreallyafilofax as the 'at home' planner for things I don't really need to schlep everywhere so i'm back in the A5 vs. personal conundrum.

Add to that I'm using the multi-ring (japanese style) A5 from muji for class stuff ...

I'm curious to see how it all plays out as 2008 draws to a close and what happens with the A5.

lovely-rose (2008-09-12 15:02:00)

Thanks for answering my questions. Now I know how to start organizing my filo.

gg (2008-09-12 22:26:00)

I bought a Classic size week on two pages Gallery Leather planner for 2009, but I'm also busily setting up some undated pages in my Pocket Filofax for the rest of the year to see how practical it is. I'm putting in a week to one page and a blank notes page between each agenda page, so I'll have a facing page for notes. I hate to change mid-year, tho. Probably will try to keep both my old and the Pocket Filo going for a while to see how I like it. I dread this time of year, but at the same time it's fun to re-think things.

takethekey (2008-09-13 15:21:00)

First time commenter here, by the way!

I've just made the move to an A5 Filofax, on the basis that I'll need more space for planning things in my upcoming rather fraught final year as an undergraduate. I'm still using the Pocket size one in my handbag, though. I'll also be making the change to cotton cream paper where possible, as I'm told it's much nicer, although I have no issues with the normal paper.

laurie (2008-09-14 03:57:00)

I recently resurrected my black Personal size Buckingham (out of production) and updated all of my contact and reference info in it to put into my emergency evacuation bag. I realized that if we had to get out of here immediately, I wouldn't have time to search for my A5, nor would I want to carry that much weight along with our other important stuff, emergency bags and 2 little kids. So I spent a couple of hours yesterday writing in all the info I'd need to take with us if we suddenly had to leave and not come back. Always good to be prepared!

I wrote about this in another post, but I recently got a new purple A5 Finsbury. I got a green one this spring, but never loved the color. Then when the purple ones came out I just had to have one because purple is my favorite color!

I also changed the format of my calendar pages for the rest of 2008 and also for 2009. I had been using the week view with days as columns across the page. I switched to the week + notes format to give myself more room to write my lists each week. I hope it works well for me. My new purple A5 came supplied with a 2009 week view with the days as columns, so if I decide to go back to that format for some or all of next year, I already have it. Rose, for future planning I love the fold-out year pages. I have ones for 2009 and also 2010 already, so that I can write in long-range things.

joffreyca (2008-09-14 08:49:00)

First of all, I would like to say: Yay! Inky's back. Everything's normal in the world again :-)

As for my Filofax life, I'm still using my brown personal Bromley as my central planner. But I am also thinking of purchasing a black Domino mini as a mobile reference and capture device.

If it wasn't so expensive, I would probably buy a pocket Guildford Extra Slim and make that my mobile device. I personally feel that other pocket Filofax models are too thick to be stored on a pocket.

My initial problem with the mini is the paper size - its hard to find generic paper of that size. Until I found out that you can actually fold a letter size paper in half 3 times to produce 8 rectangles of 2.75" x 4.25". That size is very close to the mini's paper size (2.625" x 4.25").

So if I do decide to get myself a mini, I can still easily make my own pages.

Nan (2008-09-14 15:27:00)

Gee, Joffrey, now that I'm responsible for "normal" I'll have to be a lot more careful! :)

Nan (2008-09-14 21:30:00)

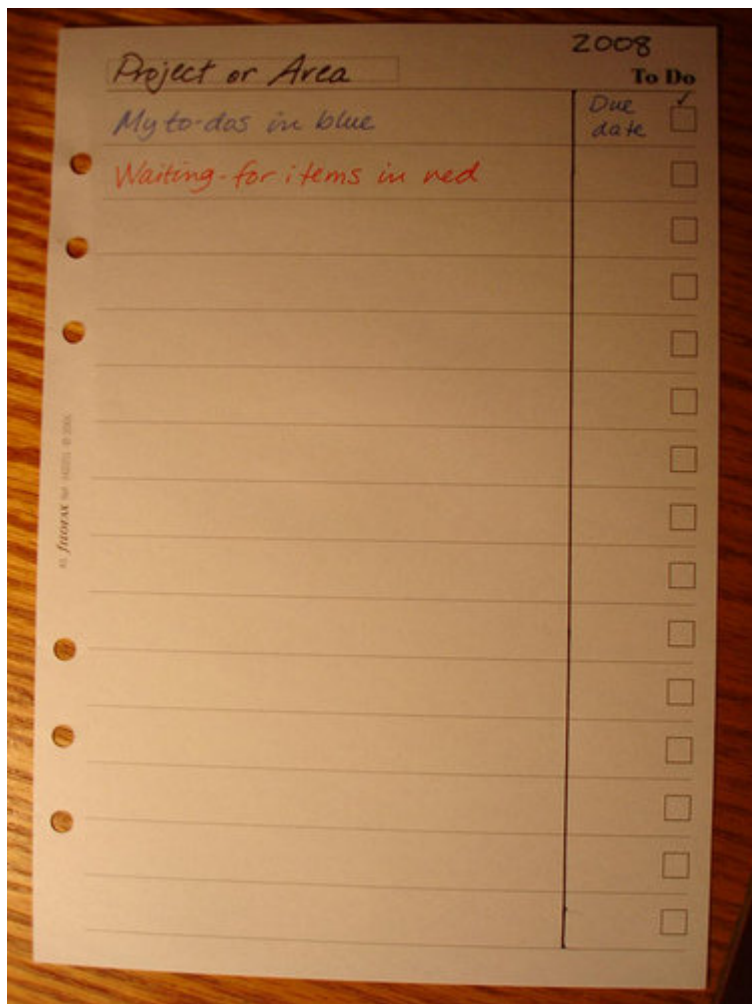
Thanks everybody for your great comments, and a big WELCOME to our new commenter Take the Key!

Nan (2008-09-14 21:34:00)

@Madly Writing - I've also tried the one-day-per-page and have had the same problem. I can't see enough at once.

I think you can put a Mini page into an A5. You may have to fold a bottom corner a little, as with the Personal pages. I know you can put Pocket pages into either a Personal or an A5 without a problem, because of the way they're punched.

To Do Page Hack (2008-09-14 14:26) - Nan



[1] Filofax's To Do pages are like no other. A nice wide space with room for one or two lines of writing—you can fit a lot of words in there if you write small. A simple checkbox to tick off completed items. And the most ingenious part - a subject box at the top.

I find a few modifications make these flexible forms even more helpful. Here's how I use the ones in the A5 Filo I use at work:

- I always write the year in the upper-right corner, for filing purposes. If a project or topic continues, I try to remember to start a new page for the new year.
- Using a ruler and black pen, I draw a line about a centimeter or 1/2" to the left of the checkbox, creating a new column. For items that have a clear due date, I write the date in this column.
- In the subject box, I write the name of the project, usually a book I'm editing. These pages go behind that book's tab. I also have a section simply labeled To Do for Admin task lists and projects too small to have their own tab.
- Every morning, I go through my email inbox and master checklists and write down tasks for everything I have to do. I don't even worry about due dates until later. I find it really helps to have *everything* written down, even the small stuff, making my To Do lists completely reliable when my brain isn't.
- When someone else has to do something, or something has to happen before I can act, I write that down in red. My own tasks are in blue. Using 2 different colors lets me focus on my own responsibilities. The due date column works great for "waiting-fors," since they help me keep other team members on track.

In my Personal Filofax, I also draw the lines, and I use these pages to list Web sites I want to visit, calls to make, errands to run, and maybe-dos, again labeling the page accordingly in the subject box. Listing Web sites I want to visit and things I want to look up on Wikipedia helps me get these distractions out of the way and get back to work! Most of the time, actually reading the stuff that was distracting me is anti-climactic.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2856234567/?rotated=1&cb=1221418009991>

MadlyWriting (2008-09-14 20:31:00)

Love the hack. I just gave up on GTD contexts and had decided to use the ToDo pages on a project basis (or on a all to be done in a week basis), this is very timely, thank you.

venetia (2008-09-15 14:09:00)

lovely idea! thank you inky for all your ideas. I find them very helpful!

Global360 (2008-09-16 17:50:00)

I've mentioned before that I have agenda with me at all times; and here's a couple of snaps of it in action. Please follow this link: <http://flickr.com/photos/global360/>

John

Nan (2008-09-16 20:34:00)

Thanks, John. I've made you a friend on Flickr! Please consider joining the Philofaxy Flickr Group.

Guest Book Review - The Advanced Day Planner User's Guide (2008-09-16 20:12) - Nan

We're pleased to present the following book review from our reader Vidya. Thank you for sharing this with us, Vidya!

The Advanced Day Planner User's Guide

Hyrum W. Smith

I stumbled upon this book on [1]Amazon Marketplace. Originally published in 1987, this is a compilation of users' tips and insights along with some fun stories of bullet proof planners and planners used as conversation starters.

I can't say I learned anything earth shattering, but I did get some good tips that I've started using such as the Yearly Event Reminder and priority codes. But for me, the best part was reading how other planner-geeks use some of the same strategies I get a lot of value from—I found myself furiously nodding in agreement as I leafed through the book.

There are lots of copies available on [2]Amazon Marketplace. I found it to be a great value and an addition to my collection—if nothing else it has allowed me to wallow in planner love. I will definitely consult it when I feel my system starts running off the rails.

[Ed. note: The author of this book, Hyrum W. Smith, is the creator of the [3]Franklin Planner system. He later founded FranklinCovey with [4]Stephen Covey.]

1. http://www.amazon.com/Advanced-Day-Planner-Users-Guide/dp/0939817012/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1221611102&sr=8-2

2. http://www.amazon.com/Advanced-Day-Planner-Users-Guide/dp/0939817012/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1221611102&sr=8-2

3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_Planner

4. <http://www.stephencovey.com/community/>

Free for All Friday No. 12 (2008-09-18 21:41) - Nan

Any Franklin Quest or FranklinCovey refugees out there?
Are you marking the change of seasons in your Filofax?
Does 12 posts make a tradition...our tradition of open Friday threads.
—*Inky*

WTT (2008-09-19 02:28:00)

Allo –

Your blog has been invaluable, in terms of helping me to make up my mind to get organized, and to figure out which systems and forms to use. Thank you!

Might I post a tale of one man's journey from darkness into light? I'd hate to bore everyone, but it's chock full of references to Filofax gear.

Regards,

WTT

Nan (2008-09-19 08:58:00)

WTT - thanks for your comment! Since it sounds like your story is long, please email it to me at nanbarber at gmail dot com and I will post it on the front page! - Inky

Anonymous (2008-09-19 09:44:00)

Hello. Finally settled in to a new Filo that gets the job done for me. Called Filofax customer service with this question: Are there REALLY two pen loops inside the Denim model? Answer: Yes. My concern? No mention of TWO pen loops on a few international Filo sites. She said, Hold on - I'll fetch one and check. She came back and said she had a red Denim model in hand and, yes, there are two loops. Here's what makes me happy: It's red, there are two loops, and it was on sale for, I think, \$18 bucks, and arrived complete with 2008 and 2009 calendar and all the standard inserts. It's perfect. I've been switching back and forth between my old Hampstead, a lovely Stratford, a pink Rio, and an ancient burgundy Kensington - all gorgeous, but, but...the Hampstead is too clunky, and the others force me to choose between pen or pencil. The red Denim does it all for me; I have it stuffed to the max and still it snaps shut easily. It stays flat on the table when opened. I can carry my flashdrive in the zip pocket. And instead of junking up my calendar space with a myriad of things to do and sticky notes, I simply keep a running list on the notepad in the back of the book, where there's a slot for a cardboard-backed notepad. Perfect. Now, when I look back over this year many years hence, I won't see cluttered entries for "take out the trash" and scribbled grocery lists and such. Those reminders will be tossed, thanks to the notepad list. Brain dump solved (nuisance items and day-to-day incidentals). So glad I found order, ease of writing, and efficiency in such a pretty red Denim Filo for under \$20. And so glad I'm not the only Filo nut in the world. By the way, for some weird reason, even though I have stuffed this personal Denim to the maximum (with several booklets, thumb-drives, extra keys, and so on) (and an additional set of 6 tabs for 6 separate projects), it's not clunky. How did that happen? Amazing.

Vidya (2008-09-19 10:36:00)

It's been a productive week and who knows, maybe the priority ranking tip I rediscovered in the "Advanced Day Planner User's Guide" helped. But today I've lost the will to work- it's a good thing it's Friday!

Anonymous, it is amazing how forgiving the Filofax can be. Mine is stuffed full of pages, but still manages to snap closed. I like your idea of keeping your flash drive in the zip pouch. I've been keeping mine on a keychain, but the pouch makes more sense.

gg (2008-09-19 13:08:00)

Does anyone here have a Circa notebook? Over at DIY Planner someone asked about Circas vs Filofax, and I think the Circas are heavier and I don't like the hole punch. Overall it's just too fussy.

I know Inky asked about Franklin Covey, but it reminded me of the Circa-Filofax choice. I prefer Filofax.

Laurie (2008-09-19 14:16:00)

I used Franklin Covey briefly a few years ago, and found I spent too much time fussing with it: "sharpening the saw," (which is a good idea in theory but just caused me to waste too much time getting sidetracked), writing things in multiple places, making lists on pages that were in places I wouldn't normally look. The system was not intuitive for me, so I dropped it. I like Filofax because there is no program, no particular way of doing things, nobody telling you how it should be done. I can just do what feels right!

Nan (2008-09-19 19:56:00)

gg - Don't worry! "Free for All Friday" really means free for all! This is the perfect place to talk about Circa. I may do a Circa post soon now that you've reminded me of it!

chrystine (2008-09-20 00:00:00)

Whew - I am just SO glad you are back and blogging away! I get SOOOO much out of your hacks and other ideas - there's only so much I can keep track of - it seems like everyone has ordered their new planner pages already - or new binders - and I am just happy with my black alligator embossed Topaz, that i can't bear to think of changing venues any more.

Today a friend called me and begged me to chat about my FAVORITE topic! How could I resist! So the last 3 months of my Julie Morgenstern pages from FC may FINALLY get used because she needs a new system since she is not being productive with her "funnel" type system, now. Telling her about my longstanding love affair with planners, productivity and challenging myself to be more organize today than i was yesterday just made me sooo happy and i am sure you can understand. So once again, Inky, really glad you are back. I enjoy everyone else's comments but there's a reason YOU are the writer of this blog - there's something about how you convey your ideas that makes it really enjoyable to me. THANK YOU!!!

kanalt (2008-09-20 10:19:00)

Just the other day, a friend of mine had gotten a Franklin Covey catalog in the mail. Of course I had to peruse it. I did find some things I liked and some things that got me thinking of how I might be more productive - not with my Filo per se, but with other notebooks for meetings at work, lists, etc. Of course, the more materials I buy, the more I have to use, which can become confusing for me. While I like the idea of different notebooks for different things, I need to keep things as simple as possible in order for them to work well - in order for me to use them, really. Since I started using Filofax about 18 months ago, I haven't looked back, which is funny since I refused to use a binder-type planner for the longest time - I only wanted to use spiral bound. But now that I am familiar with and used to the binder, which allows me to make it what I need it to be (rather than bending to a sprial's limits), I'd never go back.

I've never used the Circa system myself, but this same friend of mine used it for a while. I don't like the "rings" on it. I didn't even get to the functionality of the system because I couldn't get beyond the rings. It's the little things that get me. =)

Nan (2008-09-20 13:49:00)

@anonymous - Congratulations on your red Denim. Sounds like it's working great for you, and you're working great with it!

@laurie - I've used Franklin Covey in the past. I was never able to able to keep up with the Sharpen the Saw stuff either! I'll write more about those topics (with pics - I still have some of that stuff around) soon!

@chrystine - Aw, thanks for the compliment. Most of the time, when I'm not posting, it's because I don't think I have anything interesting to write about...I see now how many people are interested in these topics! Your black alligator sounds so beautiful!

@kanalt - I'm with you on the simplicity thing! As I said, I've tried Circa in the past and also found the rings uncomfortable, although I love the idea of its flexibility and compatibility.

Anonymous (2008-09-23 21:48:00)

I can't call myself a Franklin Covey refugee since I still have one. Actually, I have two - one classic and one compact. I have two Filofaxes as well, both personal size. Then there's my Time/Design and my Day-Timer. It should be fairly obvious that I have a problem with planners. The thing is, they're all good in certain respects

so that I've never been able to completely commit to just one. I'll use one for a while and then decide another is the "better" choice, so I'll start using that one – until I change my mind again. Thankfully I'm not like this in all areas of life. I guess I just like planners.

joffreyca (2008-09-24 04:33:00)

I like planners, too. That's one reason I'm a frequent reader of this blog :-)

And I think its perfectly alright to have several organisers and change to something else whenever you feel you need to or want to.

Leen Groeneveld (2008-09-24 11:24:00)

It seems that Anonymous has a problem when it comes to make a choice about which planner to use. I have the same problem. Sometimes I like using Outlook and Palm, other times I think textfiles are what I need. Or a paper binder like Philofax or Succes. Difficult to choose! At the moment I use Outlook. Works fine because my colleagues use that too so we can coöperate now. Out and about I have the Palm which is synchronized with Outlook. But everytime I read this blog (several times a week) I think about using a paper binder...

Nan (2008-09-24 11:57:00)

Hi Anonymous - As you can see by the next post, I've kept some of my old planners in case I want to go back to them someday. I think we have different needs at different times of our lives. For example, at one point I had several part-time jobs and needed to have everything with me everywhere I went. A big Franklin Covey system made that possible. It would probably be overkill for me now.

My Former Franklin Covey Life (2008-09-24 10:04) - Nan



We've been talking about our Franklin

Covey experiences lately, so I decided to dig up my old FC planners. I have three: two Classic (7-ring, half-letter size; similar in size to A5) and one Compact (same ring configuration as Filofax Personal, but with wider pages).

My first Classic Franklin Covey planner is still my favorite, and the only one of the three I'm going to save in the long run. It's all leather, and I bought it because of its small "footprint." Instead of being larger than the pages, the planner's zipper hugs them. It's barely bigger than the pages themselves, and also has a slim ring size. It's more suited to a weekly than a daily page format.

I'll take pictures of it soon, but today I'm starting with the last planner I was using before, in 2000, I switched full-time to a Palm Pilot. Actually, the full transition took about a year. When I finally abandoned this beautiful fabric and leather planner with its one-and-a-half-inch rings, it weighed three pounds and contained all of the notes I needed for my 4 part-time/freelance jobs and one volunteer job, as well as all my personal stuff: home repair and car records, Christmas card lists, wish lists, and so on. I even found a list of all NFL teams and their towns, and a list of poker hands in winning order. Hey, you never know when you're going to need that stuff!

Imagine going from carrying 3 pounds of leather and paper wherever I went to a Palm Pilot! But I did it.

I found this planner in the basement in virtually the same condition it was in when I stopped using it. It's like a snapshot of my life, frozen in time. I'm fascinated by the number and variety of pages FranklinCovey supplied, including about 20 pages of instructions on using the planner itself! I'll scan some of these forms one of these days, since it's hard to take clear photographs of them. There are a bunch of pictures on Flickr of some of the forms and how I used them.

[2]FranklinCovey still makes a lot of forms, but not nearly as many as they used to. They sell software for printing out the additional forms yourself.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2884365597/>

2. <http://www.franklincovey.com/>

dewanna (2008-09-24 13:22:00)

Ahh, the memories! Your post reminded me of my old Franklin Covey days. As in relationships, the things that drove me to FC in the first place, became the things that drove me away in the end – daily planning & prioritizing, mission statements, instruction manuals, etc. The two page per day format became too much to keep up with and I soon longed for the freedom of my old Filofax.

That said, I really miss the forms and inserts FC produced in the old days. Remember the compact classics that provided a brief description of classic books? There was also a loose leaf version of the Bible available. You could carry as many pages as you liked for those down times when you needed something to read or reflect upon. I also purchased the 'fun & games' packs that included puzzles and coloring pages that were great when I just needed a break.

They also used to print some lovely special edition planner pages licensed by Hallmark. I think they did that for a couple of years in a row and when they quit, I went back to Filofax. Silly I know, but I was not very impressed with the remaining selections available at the time.

Now I'm going back even a few more years, but do you remember the special inserts that Filofax used to produce? I once purchased an insert that was produced by Slimming magazine at the time. I'm not sure that magazine is in print anymore, but the insert contained some wonderful information about nutrition, calorie counting, exercise and tracking logs for eating, working out, etc.

It's a shame these items are no longer offered.

Anonymous (2008-09-25 08:09:00)

Yes, dewanna, I DO remember some of the old inserts available via Filofax. I have an ancient black leather insert with two zippers: one close to the outer edge, and the second, shorter zipper runs from the center of the leather to the edge. My guess is they designed the larger zip area for dollar bills, and the smaller zip area for coins. I've used it for many different things over the years - stamps, keys, "secret" stuff - basically, it functions as a "Junk Drawer" to carry inside my Filo. Alas, it's a bit thick, so I rarely use it. I do have an old personal Cavendish Filofax; that's one of the few models Filo made with extra large rings. When I put my Cavendish into use, it can

easily accomodate my black leather "Junk Drawer."

Question: Is anyone out there using the personal Siena? I've had my eye on it. That, and the Eton. Would love to hear which models other readers are using and what they think about their particular model.

Here's my Roving Filo Commentator summary:

My personal Stratford: by far the softest leather Filo I've owned. I can cram everything into it. And it feels wonderful in my hands. But only one pen loop, which bugs me.

Hampstead: Great for traveling, but too clunky for everyday use. The outside back pocket is darn handy, though, because it can handle a thick batch of booklets and pamphlets. And the Hampstead has two pen loops. It's a miniature office, but it makes my handbag so heavy, it kills my shoulder.

Rio: Very cute. I use it as a scrapbook: for memorabilia only.

Topaz: Now here's a book I wish worked for me. It has two pen loops (excellent). And a roomy back pocket with gusset. And yet...mine is red, and the leather is not soft, and it never felt right in my hands. I often wonder if the "ruggedness" of the leather on my particular Topaz was just a quirk. I've tried to soften the leather with saddle soap, etc., but, well, it does what it wants to do in spite of me. Just can't get comfortable with it.

Finchley: It can only take so much. I find it's not "stuffable" enough.

Kensington: It's old, it's worn in, and it's nearly the perfect Filo. I can almost hear it breathing, that's how responsive it is. If it only had an extra pen loop, it would never leave my hands. If I'm not mistaken, the current Stratford model is the update of the Kensington. Here's the very smart thing about both of these models: there's a zip pocket with gusset in the back, but they don't stop there - underneath it is another area for storing things. That's one thing that bothers me about the Topaz: the back zip pocket is stiched shut at the bottom. I hear that Filofax once made an insert with a loop to carry an extra pen or pencil. Wish I had one.

Remember the old onion skin paper inserts? Gosh, I miss those. Wafer thin paper reduced the thickness of the total pages by quite a bit.

Oh, and my personal microfiber Stirling: Day Runner did that style better - but Day Runner's rings are too tiny. And the Stirling is impossible to snap shut.

Is the perfect book out there? Siena? Eton? Yes? No?

As for the pocket size, my Finsbury is absolutely perfect. I carry an extra pen in the exterior full-width wallet: I just clip it on.

dewanna (2008-09-25 09:22:00)

Anonymous, I forgot about the onion skin leaves until reading your post. They were excellent and I really miss them. You can still find some onion skin in craft stores and cut to fit, but it's not quite the same.

I was also interested in the Siena because of the soft leather construction, but wasn't crazy about the little zip pocket on the outside. I have a personal size Eton. The leather couldn't be softer, it lies totally flat when open and there are two gusseted pockets and two pen loops which works great for me. I find it very 'stuffable' which usually leaves me cleaning it out often. I paired it with the bright color a-z address tabs and made matching color tabs for the subjects. It adds a nice punch of color to the boring old black planner. That's my only issue with this model, it's only available in black.

As for the pen loop situation - one of the tips in the Advanced Day Planner User Guide is to clip the existing pen loop in half to accomodate more than one pen. I tried that once and did not like the effect. It just didn't feel right.

As for my next investment - the personal Baroque. I can't decide between the fuschia or turquoise, but the leather looks soft and the print on the interior is fabulous.

Anonymous (2008-09-25 10:09:00)

Dewanna, Thanks for the "split pen loop" idea - I'm still trying to visualize it, though. One takes a scissor and...? Stitches an additional bit of elastic or leather to the loop? I'm sure the mechanics will come to me several hours from now. When I use my Kensington or Stratford, I slip a slender pen in the zip pocket and keep a mechanical pencil in the loop. That's why the gusset is so sensible: it expands the "stuffing" potential of the pocket. I just looked at the Baroque on the Filo website: lovely. The streamlined zipper compartment would be perfect for stashing a thumb-drive. Or an extra pen. Just went to Ebay, too, and I see a nicely broken-in old Kensington on sale for peanuts. Thank you for the "tour" of your Eton. As they say about visiting someone's home: I like what you've done with the place! They are like little homes, aren't they? Went to 43 Folders and the author of the blog

calls this fascination with our daybooks "productivity porn." Of course, he means that in the nicest possible way! My dream daybook? The one Jason Bourne kept in one of the Bourne movies. Sometimes I think I use my book in the same way he used his: to remind him of who he is, to remind me of who I am.

dewanna (2008-09-25 12:20:00)

'Productivity porn' – doesn't that sound exciting! I'll have to check out the Bourne movies. One of my favorites has always been 'Taking Care of Business' with Jim Belushi. It's hilarious and shows us just how dependent we can become on these little books.

As for the pen loop – it's a little tough to describe in words, but here goes... the pen loop is just over an inch long. Just snip the pen loop in half width wise so you have two little loops of equal size instead of one. Think long and hard about it though because if it doesn't work for you it's an expensive cut. It works pretty well except for the fact that the pens tend to flop a bit from side to side without the stability of the longer loop.

kanalt (2008-09-25 14:27:00)

Anonymous - I'd love to see pictures of all those planners, especially since some of them are no longer on the Filofax website (unless I missed them). I'm thinking about a red finchley - I don't tend to "stuff" mine though, so I'm not worried - I just need to decide if it's something I really want to spend my money on since I have the chocolate classic, which I love (just trying to build my collection...).

Anonymous (2008-09-25 15:19:00)

Dewanna, Thank you! I understand! And it's a terrific idea. I am contemplating my Filo collection and wondering which one will go under the knife first. I think I'll practice on my Domino...no, perhaps I'll do experimental surgery on an old Dayrunner or Franklin Covey before I disfigure one of my beloved Filos. Again, thank you! And to Kanalt: My black Finchley has the best, well, "action" of all my Filos - meaning: it stays perfectly flat when open, and the leather is just right, not too stiff, not too squishy. The leather they use for this model has a great, slightly textured feel. Maybe I'll revive my Finchley and split that pen loop in two; the loop is certainly long enough. All best...

gg (2008-09-25 16:52:00)

Here's a pen loop hack that won't require you to cut your Filofax pen loop. And it only takes a couple of minutes to do it, though the first time you might take a bit longer.

I've made several of these for various notebooks and binders. I make mine with Scotch transparent packing tape, tho, as I don't like the look of the duct tape. And for the last one, I've taped it to a clear plastic envelope, and it's really invisible. I have a pencil in the original loop, and a pen in the hack. I've even stuck these loops onto a piece of plastic page protector or similar plastic, like a slash pocket, or even a piece of card stock, and left them loose in the notebook, and the pressure of the pages in the binder holds it in, so no need to punch holes and it can be switched easily between notebooks or binders.

If I can get my daughter to help I'll upload a pic of my homemade pencil loops.

I still have a couple of those inserts from Day Runner or Franklin Covey, and they were nice, and one had a pocket or place for a notepad, but they do add weight. I'm trying to get my binders as light as possible, so I decided to try to get the same thing but without the weight.

<http://blog.azazil.net/399-moleskine-pen-loop-hack.html>

gg (2008-09-25 16:56:00)

Anonymous, you have a Sterling too?

I'd love to see a picture. I have a pocket Sterling, love the microfiber and the fold-over flap. Just wish it were bigger, preferably A5. When did you get yours? I don't even know when they were made, and haven't seen them on Ebay or anywhere else.

My husband got mine at a garage sale, like new condition, but no packaging or anything else that would tell me when they were made.

Anonymous (2008-09-25 20:51:00)

GG,

Thanks for the Scotch tape tip. I will try it. I spotted a set of pastel plastic slash/pocket inserts at Staples, in the display for Franklin Covey and Dayrunner. I will purchase a pack and try out your tape idea.

I really like the "idea" of my personal Sterling, but it simply will not snap shut because I stuff my Filo to the max. Dayrunner made a knock-off, with several improvements, including a full-length exterior wallet pocket. But the rings are too small; they used the smallest rings available. So, total defeat there. And total defeat with my personal Stirling because the snap closure is unforgiving.

I don't remember when I purchased it. Probably found it in an old stationery store in the backwoods of Florida. I regret tossing all my old Filofax catalogues into the trash. I did that last year during a desk drawer purge. Sometimes I wonder about old models...that bright orange microfiber number they made with big, fat zippers and lots of pouches...and I wonder about Filofax "urban myths" such as an old tri-fold book they made decades ago (a portable leather desk that did war-time duty).

They (Filofax) ought to come out with some commemorative models, something to celebrate the best of the decades.

It's nuts, I know, no surprise there. And yet, this daybook craziness...sometimes it pays off big time. My memory isn't what it once was. When my daybook works for me, there are fewer "lost chords" and my random jottings, insignificant as they may seem at the time, sometimes turn into something quite lovely, surprising.

Thank you for your very clear set of instructions for transforming my one-loop books into two loop books.

gg (2008-09-25 22:17:00)

I should have been more specific that I use the Scotch package mailing tape for my pen loops – it's about an inch and a half wide and nice and clear and strong. I don't know if regular Scotch tape like we use in the office would work, but you could try that to start with – I'm sure it's easier to work with.

Actually I used card stock the first time I made one of these, and stapled the loop onto a piece of card stock I'd punched to fit in the binder. But it's unsightly and the staples can catch your fingers and eventually work loose. I've seen some filo's from the 80's on flickr. Wish I could find a stash. I have to say my sterling is pretty limited in capacity, and the rings are pretty small, so that's a limitation. But I have other binders for other things, and am using this one for just jotting down notes and minimal appointment taking.

Anonymous (2008-09-26 07:39:00)

Thank you, Dewanna and GG, for your suggestions re: fabricating an extra pen loop. I sliced a pen loop on an old daybook from Target and, yes, it works! But I get your point, Dewanna, about the floppiness.

While chopping up my Target book, I came up with another idea: take an old book, one with a pen loop that would match the Filo I want to add it to, cut it off, and bring it to a shoemaker to stitch onto the inside front cover. Or I could buy a piece of leather and bring it to a seamstress to attach to the book.

All this got me laughing, though. If I haven't crossed over the line with my Filofax nuttiness, I'm darn close. One Filo owner said of her Personal Ostrich: I love that thing beyond reason.

Beyond reason - I'm almost there with my daybook.

Anonymous (2008-09-26 14:08:00)

Here's another pen loop hack – I use one loop for two pens. Rather than slip one pen through the loop, I use the pen clips to hook onto the loop itself. Works like a charm.

Vidya (2008-09-27 10:12:00)

I enjoyed all the nice comments about the Finchley. I have the red for my main "brain" and I have come to appreciate it. The only problem with it is that it is a bit too narrow to accommodate the Franklin-Covey inserts I used to use.

Anonymous (2008-10-21 19:59:00)

Here's an Ebay seller who has a decent selection of older Filofax models - including the Stirling and the Pak(which I suspect is the bright orange thing mentioned in a post above).

I recently got my pocket Henley from her, and the shopping experience was awesome all the way.

Anonymous (2008-10-21 19:59:00)

Here's an Ebay seller who has a decent selection of older Filofax models - including the Stirling and the Pak(which I suspect is the bright orange thing mentioned in a post above).

I recently got my pocket Henley from her, and the shopping experience was awesome all the way.

<http://stores.ebay.com/MARLIS-BEST-OF-BEST>

_FILOFAX

_W0QQcolZ4QQdirZQ2d1QQfsubZ4315275QQftidZ2QQtZkm

Free for All Friday No. 13 (2008-09-25 21:28) - Nan

Oh, my! Take a look at the conversation we've got going on the [1]previous post! Click if you've always wanted to know how to convert a single pen loop into 2 pens loops with a single snip!

Do you remember Filofax refills on onion skin paper?

What previous planners do you wax sentimental about?

—*Inky*

1. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=5747721822646901295>

Anonymous (2008-09-26 04:36:00)

Planners I'm sentimental about... ahh the Psion Series 5 PDA. I bought one of these in 1998 and ran my life from it for about 5 years. I did upgrade to the Series 5MX for no better reason than that I had the money to indulge myself.

This was a fully functional computer in the palm of your hand; much more than the Palm or the Windows devices ever were.

The Agenda programme needed nothing extra to enhance it. It was absolute perfection for me. Scheduling, reminding, To-doing, all perfect. Plus you good hack it about to make it look how you wanted it to look.

The Address Book was very good, plus it also had a fully functional (and moderately compatible) word processor, spreadsheet and a very good database programme. So good that a phd student I was worked with wrote his entire thesis & bibliography in it.

I used to run several drug research projects from it. Collecting & collating data; communicating via email or letters; calculating various functions i.e. functional lung capacities. It had an infra-red port through which I could print to any infra-red receiving printer. Plus I could synchronise my work with the main researcher I was working with because he had one too.

The third party software world was amazing. Personally, I ran an accounts programme, file manager, recipe database, web browser (with a dial-up modem (remember those?)) and email through it.

For well over a year I didn't possess a pc of any description, I thought it was that good. I still lust after the sub-laptop Psion NetBook or Series 7, but I'm married with children now, my life is not as complicated & I can't justify the cost. Shame because they are very good planners & computers... however, I wouldn't give up my filofax for it!

Simon

dewanna (2008-09-26 07:34:00)

What ever happened to the 'miniature laptop' product that Palm was supposed to unveil? I can't even remember what it was called now and there is no longer any mention of it on their site. It was larger than a Palm Pilot with an almost normal size keyboard, flip-top and larger screen. Just wondering if this ever got off the ground.

kanalt (2008-09-26 09:12:00)

I'm trying to remember when my addiction to planners began...I guess in high school - they gave out the free student planners to keep track of assignments and whatnot. Although not customizable or fancy in any way, I did use them and I guess it took off from there. Same in college, I bought the student planners at the school bookstore. But I guess it wasn't until I got into the working world that I really started to obsess - to find the perfect planner. There is a DayMinder one that I love (clean-looking, functional, roomy) - I believe they call it

the executive - monthly/weekly with a padded cover. I loved that planner. But as I began creating lists and using my planner for more than just appointments and meetings it became useless to me, not to mention too bulky to carry in my bag. I tried MANY different planners until I found Filofax. I haven't looked back since (although I always like to see what's new out there in the planner world). I have never used an electronic planning system. I like the idea and portability of them but I could never give up on the use of paper. I do use Google calendar in conjunction with my Filo.

Steve (2008-09-26 12:10:00)

Did you know there was a Filofax group on Yahoo Groups?

See: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/filofax/>

If email groups aren't your thing, then how about Facebook

See:

<http://www.new.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=6647946339>

or

<http://www.new.facebook.com/groups.php?id=701705570#/group.php?gid=2234028786>

Steve

onigiri-sama (2008-09-26 13:54:00)

Steve:

I'm also part of the Filofax Fan Club @ facebook! Unfortunately, it doesn't have as much activity as this blog and its flickr group does. Did you already check out philofaxy@flickr? Really lovely pictures!!

:-)

Vidya (2008-09-26 16:56:00)

My first Daytimer. Oh, how I love it still. It faithfully served me for years. I can't remember exactly when I got it, but I've had it for at least 15 years. The vinyl piping around the edges started to fray so last summer I upgraded to the Filofax Finchley. I wouldn't say this to many people, but I know this group will understand- I felt so guilty about retiring my beloved DayTimer that I named it "Planner Emeritus" and now keep old diary pages in it.

I first saw DayRunners back in 1985 at my college bookstore. I wanted one desperately, but for some reason I couldn't bring myself to buy one. And Filofaxes just seemed so hoity-toity that I didn't start appreciating them until about five years ago. :-)

gmax (2008-09-28 12:06:00)

The Filofax range available in the late 1980's was pretty wonderful. The range of leaves and binders was probably the biggest ever at that time.

I still use the black calf leather Winchester binder I got back then as my regular planner, and it would feel disloyal to change it now, unless it completely falls apart. The single pen loop on that one is quite worn, and the plastic casing of the snap fastener disintegrated several years ago, but apart from that it's still going strong. Those binders really were made to last a lifetime.

Anonymous (2008-09-29 11:40:00)

Hi, Anonymous, I also had a Psion, the 3c, and loved it. I'd still be using it but when I got another computer I couldn't re-install the software. You're right about the absolute perfection of the little things. There was a great little sound file editor. And it used AA batteries and had incredible battery life. I wish they still made them. Nowadays there are so many cell phones that do many of the same things, but the apps aren't nearly as good as Psion's were.

-GG



[1]

For a while, I went down to the Compact Size, which has the same page height and 6-ring layout as Filofax's Personal size, but a greater page width. It's an interesting size, proportioned more like an A5 sheet, but more portable. If the Personal's narrow page makes you feel cramped, you might like Franklin's Compact better. Franklin's also comes in bigger ring sizes than Filofax offers, which lets you carry many more pages!

Of course, these factors also make the Compact less portable than the Personal. I can toss the Personal into almost any bag I own, and not feel it's cumbersome. Carrying a Compact, although it's smaller than an A5, still feels like carrying a "big book" to me. Closed, it measures 6.25" (16 cm) wide, 7.5" (19 cm) tall, and it has 1.25" (inside diameter) rings.

I think I spent less time with the Compact than any other model or size because of this worst-of-both-worlds feeling it gave me. But I did—and still do—love this binder. Nice forest green leather (green's a hard color to find), and it feels and smells great.

You can't see it in the picture, but it has the Franklin Quest imprint—from before the acquisition of Stephen Covey's productivity training business.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2896713822/>

danniello (2008-09-29 03:32:00)

If you would like to implement some of Stephen Covey's best ideas, you can use this web application:

<http://www.Gtdagenda.com>

[1]<http://www.Gtdagenda.com>

You can use it to manage and prioritize your Goals (in each of your life's categories), projects and tasks, in an intuitive interface. It has a Checklists section, for the repetitive activities you have to do, important but not urgent (Quadrant II, for example your routines/habits). Also, it features a Schedules section and a Calendar, for scheduling you time, activities and for the weekly review.

Some features from GTD are also present, like Contexts and Next Actions.

And it's available on the mobile phone too, so you can access it wherever you are.

1. <http://www.Gtdagenda.com/>

Vidya (2008-09-29 09:30:00)

Inky, I totally hear you re: the Compact. That was the drawback to my Planner Emeritus— it just felt a bit too clunky, while my Personal Finchley still feels purse-friendly. But I do miss some of the FC forms, like the fitness tracker, but I don't like the additional 1/2" sticking out.

The element I keep from my days of using Franklin-Covey forms is the Weekly Compass. Every week I make a list of the big items that need to be accomplished and I tuck it into the Weekly Compass bookmark. It's a little thing, but it really helps to keep me on track with my goals!

Nan (2008-09-29 21:14:00)

@dannielo - Thanks for the great link! Gtdagenda looks like a neat online solution.

@vidya - Thanks for the sharing about the Weekly Compass. It's the missing element in my own Filofax system. When I was using the Franklin system, I think it encouraged me to "sign on" to too many roles in my life every week, and I never got all, or even most, of them done. But I really do need something to keep a few big tasks in front of my eyes every week or so.

Anonymous (2008-09-30 12:07:00)

Does anyone have a filofax personal cuban (unzipped)? I'd really like to know if it lies flat well. Absolutely love this site!

Anonymous (2008-10-07 06:59:00)

Anon, About the personal Cuban...here is my suggestion: call the Filofax toll-free customer service line. The woman who generally takes my calls is very helpful. Last time I phoned, I told her I wanted an organizer that was very soft, not stiff, very pliable in my hands. I said, I'm thinking about the Eton or the Cuban. She said, If you want soft, you don't want the Cuban. She'll give you the straight skinny, and, if you ask her for more subjective feedback regarding look, feel, touch...and so on...she'll give it to you. Piece of cake with regard to whether or not the Cuban lies flat - she'll tell you.

Anonymous (2008-10-07 09:44:00)

Thanks. I'll give that a try. Last time I called there to find out where an order was, I spoke with a woman with the most amazing New York accent and such a pleasant, warm, down to earth approach. I'd love to hear that voice again.

1.10 October

Free for All Friday No. 14 (2008-10-03 01:00) - Nan

The Franklin Covey system I posted about earlier this week has a special plastic page bookmark. Instead of being a single panel of plastic, it's two-layered. It lets you slip in a paper bookmark on which you list weekly goals. It helps keep the important things in front of your eyes whether you use a daily or weekly diary format.

I find during busy times of my life, I can forget the most important things first. Is anyone using a Franklin Covey bookmark (I believe it's called a Weekly Compass), or a similar idea of your own invention?

—Inky

Laurie (2008-10-03 02:34:00)

I don't use the bookmark style, but I do make designated lists on my weekly Notes page (I am using the week + notes format) to keep my eye on my goals. I have personal goals for the week (exercise 3x/week, what I want to read, etc). Also, long-term project goals that I want to continue working on, (which I tend to forget about if I don't see a reminder often) so I can chip away at them when I have a moment. I have to be careful about keeping these Goals lists short and manageable for the week, otherwise they seem like just more To Dos to try

to accomplish, and I get overwhelmed with all I have to do in the week. This was my downfall with the Franklin "sharpening the saw" tactic, I felt like I had to fill in several things for each category, which wound up to be more exhausting than rejuvenating like it's intended to be!

I have found my adaptation to be a great way of reminding myself of what is important and to make sure I get to do at least some of the things that I want to do for myself.

Lovely-Rose (2008-10-03 03:12:00)

Filofax has those plastic things too. i have one in my filo. i use it for things like memo's, money and other stuff.
greetings Rose

Anonymous (2008-10-03 07:30:00)

Hello, I went to the Filofax website and did not see one of those clear plastic weekly "compass" accessories. The best I can come up with is a clear plastic sleeve with top opening, for the insertion of a weekly goals list. Is this the slickest way to go, or am I missing an accessory? Thanks.

Oh, at the moment, I am using the notepad at the back of my Filo to keep a running list. I'm using the personal Denim, which has the back inside cover designed for the notepad. I can keep my daily diary pages fairly clean because my "brain dump" is happening on the notepad in back.

And yet, my "to do" list can get very clogged with mundane items. It would be nice to keep my current short-term goals in plain view, along with a list of clearly defined steps to achieve them. And this "goals device" should be movable, from week to week, since I regularly fail to get these things done during any one-week period.

Would appreciate hearing more ideas for making my Filo more Covey-like.

Thanks.

muse924 (2008-10-03 08:40:00)

I make a sticky note for my "important this week" to-do's and affix it to one side of my weekly calendar pages. I use the 2-page per week, so I just stick it on the side that doesn't cover up today's date. My trick is that it really has to be just items important for the current week.

Great site, and thanks to everyone for all the great ideas and thoughts.

Laurie (2008-10-03 08:54:00)

Hi Anonymous, about the goals: what works for me is to have a Goals tab in my Filo with my main big goals, divided into categories: Personal, Financial, Home, etc. Then I break those up into monthly goals (which you can either keep in your goals section or write onto your month-view calendar, which is what I do). Then when I am planning my week, I look at my monthly goals and decide what of those I can accomplish this week. This monthly breakdown and weekly selection process keeps me from getting overwhelmed seeing a big list of multi-step goals all at once. I hope this made sense!

Anonymous (2008-10-03 10:22:00)

Hi, I too use a Filofax and have a mechanism similar to Muse924's. I write a new post-it each week with my top 6 to-dos (3 for work, 3 personal) & then stick this to the ruler/bookmark. It is therefore at the forefront of my mind at all times. And it is very satisfying to see them being scored off one-by-one.

Anonymous (2008-10-03 10:47:00)

Thank you Anon and Laurie, I feel prompted to reorganize my Filo anew...fresh sheets, re-allocating tabbed sections, and a stash of post-it notes for goal-setting.

I sometimes wish I'd just leave my book alone, though, not fuss with it, and let it go for a whole year - organically, so to speak. I see old, tattered, well-worn books crammed with personal notes and I love the look.

I keep fussing with mine and editing things out, so by the end of the year, all the juicy tidbits are gone.

Here's the rub: one part of me wants to keep things sanitized in case I lose it and someone flips through it. The other part of me wants to personalize it to such an extent that I'd DIE if anyone ever picked it up and read it.

I'm a writer, and my crappy first drafts go into my Filo, causing me to be overly protective of it.

Honestly, even if I run to the Ladies room at work, I freak out if I leave my book on my desk.

What I wouldn't give for magical invisible ink that only I could read.

Thanks again.

Laurie (2008-10-03 12:02:00)

I solve your issue by using an archive binder throughout the year. When something is no longer relevant to my day to day life, I put it in that year's archive binder. That way I still get to keep all those "juicy tidbits" without worrying about anybody getting ahold of them or having to throw it away.

gg (2008-10-03 14:04:00)

I'm re-posting this question on this fresh thread – sorry this is a bit off topic.

Question—What free gift does Filofax provide for people who return a lost planner?

I registered my planner and have my name and phone number displayed prominently with "Reward for Return." I'm wondering what kind of incentive the free gift is, or if I should list a specific amount for a reward, like \$50 (or more? or less?).

I didn't use to carry my filofax around with me, but now that I do, I'd like to be sure there's an incentive to return it.

I have one of the Franklin compass bookmarks, too. I used to use it for reminders, like important recurring monthly dates, like bill due dates, but now I put those in my cell phone.

Nowadays I don't use it at all, but maybe this week I'll get some inspiration.

I can't figure out what to do with that vertical daily space at the left of the monthly calendars. I've thought of putting billable hours, or deposits, or minutes exercised, or blood sugar readings, or calories consumed, or steps walked. But I've never decided, so I just don't use it at all. Would anyone care to share what they do?

I like to use post-it notes for goals, appointments, notes about appointments, etc, because I use the pocket size filo and there's not much extra space. And I like to have post-its sticking out for important appointment or deadline reminders. I try to color code them too, but haven't really got myself trained on that yet.

Thx

Laurie (2008-10-03 14:49:00)

gg: Those vertical spaces on the monthly calendar—I gave up trying to use them as days, it felt redundant to me to have things written as days there and also on the calendar itself. Although I really like your idea of having it be a quick-reference for a daily summary of whatever—miles run, expenditures, etc. It would be great for that. I just use those lines as a list for things that come up annually or semi-annually that need to be done that month, like paying my car insurance, when I'm due for a doctor or dentist appointment, when my kids need vaccines, etc. I also have registered my Filos on the website but I have no idea what the "reward" is.

Nan (2008-10-03 17:08:00)

Hi everybody - Thanks for your wonderful comments!

@Laurie - I know you've commented about the Weekly Compass before. Once again, you were my inspiration! You have a simply elegant system for goal planning. (I had the same problem with the Weekly Compass, too...it caused me to plan TOO many things which would have been lovely to do in each category...which took me away from true prioritization!)

@anonymous - You didn't find the Weekly Compass on the Filofax website because it's specifically a Franklin Covey product. But it looks as if you've found something very similar from Filofax.

What I'm reading here is that most of us need to keep relevant short-term goals/projects/priorities in view, and that we're finding ways of doing it (or struggling to). Me, I'm a struggler!

Nan (2008-10-03 17:12:00)

@gg - I don't know what the free gift for returning a planner is. I would guess it's a lower-priced Filofax brand product - perhaps a pen or other accessory.

I've registered the Personal and A5 Filos that I'm currently using. I feel it increases my chances of getting it back if lost.

I don't think the reward is what motivates people to return Filofaxes. Most people do so out of a conscientious

desire to do the right thing. When I first began using a Filo, I always imagined someone reading it, and was accordingly careful about what I wrote. Over the course of many years, that feeling has diminished until now I don't really care. We're all human, I believe, and liable to write equally goofy things in our Filofaxes.

Vidya (2008-10-03 20:19:00)

I list the top five work and personal life goals for the week on my weekly compass. These are things I need to get done, they may not apply to specific roles or goals.

I had a less productive week, I've noticed they come in waves. I had about a month of serious productivity, then I finished a big project and am coasting a bit right now. I'm also still adjusting to having Dave around full time—I've been much less likely lately to come home and make phone calls or work on projects, we usually just cook dinner then watch a movie or read together.

I've gotten alot more philosophical about the downtimes because I can flip back through my Filo and see that it goes in cycles and within a week or two I'll be back to my usual productive self!

I'm debating retiring my red Lizell for one of the brown ones I bought a few years ago before Lizell discontinued them. I really want a Pocket Finchley to match my Personal, but I prefer the number of card slots in the Lizells and they have the coin pocket on the outside, not the inside. They're much bulkier than the Pocket Filos, but they fit my needs better and I'll use them until I've worn them out (or the temptation to have matching Filos overwhelms me!)

lovely-rose (2008-10-04 03:53:00)

Anonymous and Inky, I ment the plastic sleeve, i use it a lot.

I am not formiliar with Franklin Covey. What are the Pros and Cons of Franklin Covey end Filofax?

I'm trying to find a way to put grocery lists in my filo without using the expensive Filofax paper. Has anyone an idea?

I've noticed that Filofax doesn't update the dutch website www.filofax.nl

I even can't find the new refills for 2009.

greetns Rose

Anonymous (2008-10-04 06:36:00)

Lovely-rose, Here's what I do about the grocery list: I keep a stash of note paper (slightly taller than a business card, square) in the business card slots inside the front cover. So, when I make out my list of errands and things to pick up at the market, I pull out a blank note card and scribble away: post office, gas station, bank, paper towels, FedEx...and so on. Then I tuck it back in the slot. Throw Filo in my purse, pull out my list once I'm in the car, put it in my pocket once I'm in the market. A friend gave me a little box of small note paper (about the size of the standard sticky note) and it works just fine. Then I throw it away. I also use the business card slots for dry cleaning stubs, receipts (especially for something I might want to return)...little bits of paper that would otherwise clog up my wallet.

All best...

gg (2008-10-04 11:09:00)

The discussion of goals here has started me thinking. Whew, I'm glad it's the weekend and I have some free time. Do you ever feel like saying, "Don't ask me to think! I don't have time to stop and think!"

The Day Runner Pro series two page per month tabbed calendars used to come with planning calendars – there were three months per page, just blank blocks, for noting goals, and developing steps to achieving them. I especially liked them because the three-month-to-a-page layout accords with my business life, which is ruled by quarterly tasks. I got these for several years but then one year maybe I got the wrong one, or maybe they don't have the planning pages any more. They were nice, heavy paper, very pleasant to write on.

The blocks let me develop my goals, for instance I might have a goal of walking two miles per day. I might make a note that in January I would try to walk half a mile, and in February a mile, and finally in March would hopefully get to two miles per day. I like to be able to see lots of things laid out visibly like that, and also to have enough space to see how many things I'm trying to focus on at the same time.

I like to be able to see an entire week at once when setting appointments or planning my days, and I also like to see more than one month at a time, and with the three-months-per-page view, I can even see six months at a

time.

I'm thinking of setting up a landscape view of the year, three months to a column, four columns to a letter-size page, for setting goals and having a view of what I want to accomplish in the coming year. The only problem with this is that instead of having just the calendar year on one page, I'm going to want to re-print it every quarter to have the next 12 months on one page, so I have an ongoing scope of twelve months. I guess that's not so bad, but then I wouldn't be able to see how the past quarter went, which would reduce the usefulness. Any suggestions about this?

Anonymous (2008-10-04 12:08:00)

For grocery lists I use 4x6 index cards that I keep in the front pocket. I find these stiff enough for use in the grocery store where I pull it out and cross items off as I find them. I really like the idea of using the credit card slots though. I usually don't use them except to keep a couple of banadaids handy. I think I'll chop up some index cards today. Anyone go absolutely batty waiting for a new filofax order? I ordered a new filofax directly from filofax. Their delivery takes so long to Canada and I'm going nuts waiting for it.

Laurie (2008-10-04 13:04:00)

gg, I wonder if the Filofax vertical year calendar (link:

<http://www.filofaxusa.com/images/products/refills/line/68402x.jpg>

would fit your needs for this. The page folds out to see 6 months in one view with the other 6 months on the other side. I have these in this year's, next year's and also 2010 already for long-range planning. Depending on what size Filo you use, it might be enough room for long-range goals.

gg (2008-10-04 14:34:00)

Hi, Laurie—

Yes, I love the vertical year calendars for tracking progress towards my goals. But for planning what I'm going to try to do, and reminders of important dates, I also like the larger writing spaces on a block calendar.

Probably will use the larger block year calendar to plan out my goals and will use your idea for keeping the goals in view on my weekly notes page, and then also record my exercise, steps, etc in a vertical year calendar. Just am hoping I keep up with all those calendars!

neowagnerite (2008-10-04 19:56:00)

As a devoted Filofax-er who was (VERY briefly) seduced by Franklin-Covey, I have to remark that this wonderful blog is full proof that only Filofax, among its sad competitors, can inspire the devotion seen in this blog.

Thank God for Filofax!

Lovely-Rose (2008-10-06 18:46:00)

I've bought my 2009 Refill (A5 week on two pages, in 5 languages) and a small notepad which fits in the businesscard section in my binder.

Now I have november and december 2007, the year 2008 and the year 2009 in my filo. In January I will remove 2007 and 2008 and put them in a storage binder.

I also rewrote my personal info.

love, Rose

Jamie (2008-10-09 14:13:00)

I know I'm late to this post, but here's what I do: I'm a law student, and I use the Filofax JotPads to keep track of my daily assignments. I use the week-on-two-pages format, and I just use one JotPad paper per week. I stick it in just behind the bookmark/ruler, and then each day I record the class and the corresponding pages to read. I find it works really well to keep the assignments always visible, but not intrusive or taking up too much room.

Nan (2008-10-09 19:35:00)

I'm impressed by gg, Laurie, Lovely Rose, and those who do long-range planning. It's been beyond me lately!

@neo - Thanks for the compliment. I'll be writing about the various Franklin Covey products I still have from time to time.

@jamie - The jot pad is a great idea. I use those, too, but not as well as you do.

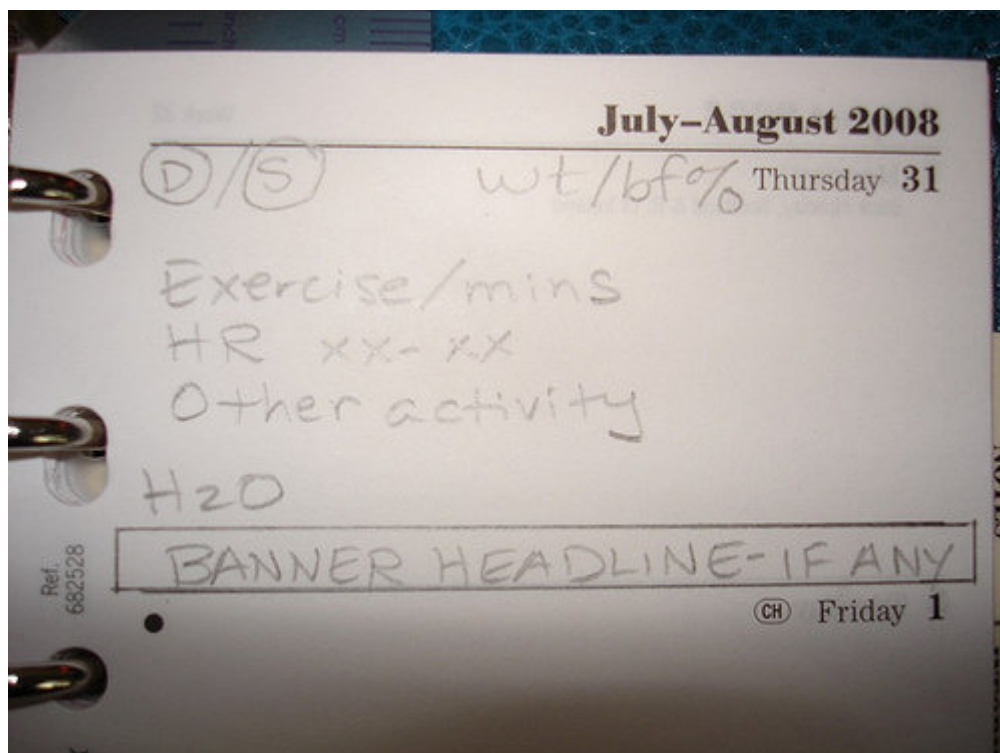
Often, you can just use a smaller Filofax page size, too, like a Pocket in an A5 or Personal, as a temporary priority list. It's been a challenge for me, though.

Y. (2008-10-10 09:37:00)

I have traditionally not been a FC fan because they smack a bit cultish to me, however I did order myself one of the compass page markers last night. Thanks for the tip!!

I just found this site yesterday...I confess I'm hooked!

Pocket Fitness (2008-10-08 08:43) - Nan



[1] For a few weeks now, I've been using a Pocket Filofax as a diet and fitness journal. For the curious, here's how I use it:

- 1) Week-per-2-page diary. Each day, I log exercise done (with heart rate), cups of water drunk, weight/body fat (on the days I weigh), and so on. The illustration here is a template page I made, to keep things clear by writing the same information in the same place on the page each time. The pages are cramped, so I did some planning before I started writing in ink all over them.
- 2) Eating journal. On yellow paper, one side of one leaf per day. I write down the day's plan the night before, and then...er...edit the next day based on what I actually ate.
- 3) Notes pages. Blue and pink paper for various kinds of notes and quotes from the program I'm using, [2]The Beck Diet Solution.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2923626623/>

2. <http://beckdietsolution.com/>

Laurie (2008-10-08 14:17:00)

Wow, you are way more disciplined than I am!!! I admire your willpower AND organizational skills!

Nan (2008-10-08 18:36:00)

Ah, Laurie, Laurie. Did you not wonder why I put up a sample page and not an actual one?

I'll take credit for coming up with a nifty one-book organizing system, but not for the willpower thing. I've been trying to get my act together in this regard for so long. I've been exercising twice a week for over a year now, but

it's time to work harder on the eating part.

Anyway, I'll post some actual, filled-in pages one of these days, so you can see the difference between plan and reality!

Miss Charlie (2009-01-06 06:26:00)

If you're interested in the psychology behind successful weight control, I strongly recommend Dr Stephen Gullo's stuff - his books are on Amazon, and he has a few articles online if you google him.

One of his books (The Thin Commandments) has a preview online in google books too, that was how I found out I liked his style. I won't post the link because it's humongous, but it's easy to find.

His theories work with any diet plan, and are about getting the right attitudes to lose weight healthily, and maintain it once you get there (the hardest bit!)

He talks about replacing willpower (which let's face it isn't a reliable resource for most of us, most of the time) with strategy - and tons of other good stuff.

I only heard of him by chance, and IMO he's The Man!

Free for All Friday No. 15 (2008-10-10 01:00) - Nan

We're getting deeper into a season that includes more holidays, charitable events, school obligations, and (in the U.S.) elections. A wonderful and busy time of year!

How are you using your Filofax to cope?

—*Inky*

paulien (2008-10-10 02:59:00)

The holiday season is still very far off for me. The first one will be on december 5, almost two months away.

I do have two other questions for you all:

Do you think the month on two pages calendar is really useful? I have a hard time finding one, only online and there they are twelve euros with shipping. Is that worth it?

And do you know of any good pens that also fit into the loop? My favourite pens don't fit.

thanks. Paulien

Laurie (2008-10-10 03:24:00)

I am using my vertical year planners (link to image: <http://www.filofax.co.uk/images/products-/refills/line/68402x.jpg>) like crazy. We have a lot of travel coming up later this year and early next year. I am using these pull-out calendars to visualize when we will be gone, and which holidays that coincides with (since my H has off work some US holidays and some local holidays, so it's not easy to keep track of what days are off and which are work). My week and month calendars are filling up quickly with multiple US and local holidays in October and November, Halloween and Thanksgiving, etc. We will be traveling over Christmas, so planning for that requires lists, reservations, flights, and car rental, info for which I keep in my Filo. I really don't know how people function without some kind of planner system!

Laurie (2008-10-10 03:25:00)

Hi paww13,

I get a lot of use out of my month on 2 pages calendar. It really helps me to visualize the month and do mid-range planning. For me it's a must-have. But, some people don't find they need it.

Lovely-Rose (2008-10-10 04:22:00)

Hey Paulien,

www.agendaland.com is a online webshop in dutch where you can buy Filofax.

I haven't orderd something yet. but i will when the busy period is over.

I am using my filo for our finances. Our couch will be deliverd in a week, our microwave oven is broken. (i've seen something nice!!!!!!) I will be 25 soon. and also my son will be 2 years soon and christmas is coming up

and "Sinterklaas" a typical dutch holiday for children on the 5th of december. I think i'm going to buy my new microwave oven in January.

Do you save your refills from Previous years? and how do you save them?

Love Rose

Laurie (2008-10-10 06:27:00)

I save my pages from past years (calendar pages as well as most of my other pages too) in ring binders. I don't like the post binders from Filofax, I prefer easy-to-open rings. Now that I use an A5, I just buy A5 binders and use a hole punch to punch the holes for the pages to fit in. When I used the Personal size Filofax, I bought 6 ring binders in that size at office supply stores. Several years ago these became really hard to find, so when I finally found them I bought several. I have never found these again. Does anyone know where these can be found now?

Y. (2008-10-10 09:30:00)

I too keep previous year's pages. I guess I'm low tech, because I just secure the contents of last year's Filo with a large rubber band, put a stickie note on the top with the year and keep them in a rubbermaid bin under my bed. Right now I use one Filo (A5) for both work and home, so literally everything I do is in it. I tend to write office things in black ink and home gets blue.

Inky, your post on the pocket fitness Filo is inspiring me to branch out and get more binders!!!

gg (2008-10-10 09:30:00)

Paulien, have you looked at the calendars on DIY Planner? I remember someone named Paulien who posted some comments there, not sure it was you. There are templates you can customise and a dynamic template that you download and can set to print out the range of dates you want. It's a pretty good solution for free calendars. You can set them to print the week starting on Monday or Sunday.

You could at least print the calendars off and use them for a while to see if they're useful to you.

kanalt (2008-10-10 13:44:00)

Pauw13 - I use a monthly view as well as a weekly view. It really helps to see what I have scheduled for the month so that I don't over schedule myself. I can see how many weekends I have free (if any). I only use it as an at-a-glance view, with the details written in the weekly view. I can't live without both views. As for pens - my favorite ones don't fit in the pen loop either, but Zebra makes a pen (it's ballpoint) that retracts to become compact and expands for easier writing. It's small enough to put in the pen loop of my Mini fillo as well as my personal fillo. Here is the link for the pen: <http://www.zebrapen.com/ball-f301compact.html>

Don't know if they're sold outside of the US though. I don't love this pen as a daily use pen (I prefer gel) but when I'm out and about it does come in handy.

Lovely-Rose - I do keep my past year's pages (but only the previous year's worth - I hate clutter). I do have the Filofax storage binders, which I use for the past year's since I don't refer to them often. But, for additional notes pages and upcoming pages (for 2009, let's say) I keep them in any other Filo that I'm not currently using. This is when having more than one binder comes in handy. =)

Laurie (2008-10-10 15:02:00)

Hi y mills,

Since you use your A5 for both work and personal, I'm curious what type of diary pages you use. Do you use a week or day to view? Would you care to describe a little bit how you keep track of so much in one book? Thanks!

paulien (2008-10-11 08:33:00)

Hi all,

I think I will just have to get over it and order the monthly refill online. I did not have it this year, but I would like to try it. I went to two other shops today, but they only had week on two pages and page per day layouts.

So Rose, not only do you live in the same country as me, but we are almost the same age. I am 25 now, and will be 26 soon. Not married yet, but my boyfriend proposed to me last summer so that will take less than a year now. Another big event to plan for next year!

I am also going to buy one of those four year planners. I am doing my Phd now, and this might be helpful in

planning out the whole process, not just the next paper or presentation.

About archiving: I keep the pages per year. I collect all notes, todo's an diary pages together and just thread a piece of string through the holes. Then I have a neat package to keep with my bank statements per year and such. Have a nice weekend all.

Vidya (2008-10-11 12:31:00)

I like the ideas for the simple corralling of past pages! Right now I use the Franklin Covey binders I bought a few years ago and keep the past five years of Filo pages. The rubber band idea is great and much less elaborate!

I find I refer to old pages less and less. When I remove pages from my Finchley, I go through them to capture any contact information or other details I want to keep handy. It is handy to keep a history, though. Just recently my manager asked me about a date a meeting took place months ago and I was able to provide the date and time from my Filofax.

Vidya (2008-10-11 12:38:00)

Oh, I forgot to mention, in response to Paulien, that I find the month on two pages format VERY helpful in big picture planning and well worth the investment. So I have both the monthly calendar and the daily pages.

I use the Day-Timer month on two pages calendar- it has space for notes and the month's goals. (<http://day-planner.daytimer.com/accessories/pages/Portable/2-Page-Per-Month-Recycled-Tabbed-Calendar-PORTABLE-SIZE/591F9675780A4CC2A28B574624D3C815/False/16027>)

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-11 20:52:00)

Hi All,

It is interesting to read everyone's comments. I was wondering about the use of next years planner pages and if it is ok to open them now and start using them now, as opposed to waiting til late december to get them organized. I am not an overly busy person, so there is no rush or not a lot of info to move around. I thought that i was kind of taboo to use a new calendar early... is this true? What does everyone else think/do?

Laurie (2008-10-12 10:07:00)

I keep at least 6-8 months ahead in my weekly pages and also a few months past, for reference. I also have all of 2009's month view pages in already (and have removed 2008 except for Aug-Dec). I also have vertical fold-out calendars for 2008, 2009 and 2010 in my Filo. I do a lot of planning-ahead, and I need to have my calendars in place and organized well in advance.

Laurie (2008-10-13 06:48:00)

Another Filo thing I do: I travel during the holidays, so I keep certain recipes with me in my Filofax to make for holiday dinners, cakes, etc. When I take out a recipe page to use it, I pop the page into a quart size Ziplock bag to keep the page clean while I'm using it to make my recipe. An A5 page fits into a quart size Ziplock, and even though you can't zip the bag the page is still entirely covered. A Personal size page fits in there very well. This way I can use the same recipe page over and over without getting it messy, and can just pop it back into my Filo when I'm done!

Kickin' it old skool (2008-10-13 23:02) - Nan

This past weekend, I found that my brother stumbled upon Philofaxy by googling my name (my real name, so I guess my pseudonym isn't terribly effective). He asked me, "so do you have an unhealthy obsession with Filofaxes?" He seemed especially concerned about the number of Filofax pictures I take. During the ensuing conversation, I learned a new (to me) phrase, "kickin' it old skool," in reference to people like us who are using paper in the digital age.

He used a DayRunner until he got an iPhone and never looked back to paper.

Just going by my family and friends, I'm noticing a combination of paper and electronics. My dad has an iPhone, but also carries Levenger cards in a leather case for writing things down. My mom has a Blackberry, and was never a big notetaker anyway; she's one of those people who can carry everything in

their head. They've both used various Palm handhelds in the past. My sister-in-law has an iPhone and a Moleskine.

I used to carry my entire life in a Palm handheld, even doing email and word processing on it, in lieu of a laptop, with the help of a portable keyboard and an IR link to my cell phone. When I went back to paper, I went all the way. I will carry a Filofax and a small cellphone in my handbag, and nothing more. Seems pretty healthy to me.

Laurie (2008-10-14 02:01:00)

I say, whatever works. I personally am a technophobe and have a deep mistrust of electronics. I want to have my important info right in front of me, written on a piece of paper that I can hold in my hands. I like turning pages, and writing on paper with a pen or pencil. Also, I remember things visually, such as where on the page something is written, or whether my 5 o'clock space is filled, even if I don't remember exactly what's in there. This doesn't work so well with a screen.

I like technology that makes life easier or more convenient. I couldn't do without the internet, because it is my main form of communication and news while I am overseas. I need my cell phone, mostly for safety purposes. But for the details of my life, I can't feel comfortable with them just floating around as electrons. I prefer them to be more tangible.

Vidya (2008-10-14 09:54:00)

I like tech toys just as much as the next girl, but I agree with Laurie- I want the details of my life to be more than bytes floating around. I also love the physical act of checking off a completed task. I also keep my Finchley open on my desk all day- I couldn't imagine doing that with an electronic PDA. Here's to kickin' it old skool!

Y. (2008-10-14 12:10:00)

I'm with Laurie & Vidya...I do carry a Palm Treo 700p smartphone for web use, but the only data I keep on it is relevant to using it as a phone (contact information). I don't like keeping that in my Filo because it changes so often and I am type capital A and so I have to re-copy address pages as soon as info changes because I can't stand scribbling stuff out.

Everything else goes into my Filo. There truly is something about the act of writing things down; the tactile factor, the artistic factor...I never did learn how to doodle on a PDA.

Somehow writing my life in my Filo validates it more (celebrates it more?) than merely "storing" the information digitally...

kanalt (2008-10-14 13:10:00)

I use Google calendar as an electronic version of my appointments (which are also in my Filo) - I share it with my best friend (and vice versa) so that it's easier for us to plan our get-togethers. I also share my work calendar with co-workers so they know when I'm in the building and when I'm not. That's as technological as I get with paper vs. digital. Everything else (and there is a lot!) goes into the Filo. The idea of digital is great, but I too love the act of actually writing things down. Plus it never has to be synched or recharged or upgraded unless I want to do those things - in other words, those things aren't needed for the piece of equipment to work. And most importantly, I just love looking at planners - the binders, the calendar types, the paper and accessories! The possibilities are endless!

Adirondack Explorer (2008-10-14 21:43:00)

I have a BlackBerry but love using my paper planner to keep calendar, tasks, and a lot of other information I need to carry with me. Old skool it is!

crofter (2008-10-15 10:19:00)

I too tried the electronic way, a Palm in which I would put everything in. On two occasions, the Palm blew up so it was rather simple to get another and sync it to the computer. Then on the last one, the computer blew up, and not doing backups as often as I should, lost a great deal of valuable information.

I went back to paper, and have not regretted it at all. The only thing I really miss are the books I had on the

Palm reader, have been thinking of getting a entry level Palm just for those, but I will stick with Filofax and various journals for the duration.

Crofter

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-15 20:22:00)

I use my phone for a few reminders, but I am finding that I am using my filo for more in depth records of calls and follow up actions. Something I have never done before, except on pieces of paper that always get lost. It is my birthday soon and I am thinking of treating myself to a new filo - the Ikon. Does anyone have one and if so how is it?

Anonymous (2008-10-16 09:24:00)

I have been going through an incredibly busy time of life when I'm mostly at the computer and I've been using Entourage and its MyDay feature to keep track of what I've got to do. But I'm going back to my Filofax, starting today. There is much to like about the electronic solutions, but I tend to find that with them I generate these very long lists of tasks and they seem to lose context. With Filofax I can keep those lists, but elsewhere from the daily calendar, and I can focus on what I need to get done that day. (It is also easier on paper to figure out how I spent my time during the day, rather than always entering that in.)

It's not the system's fault if I don't work it.

Penny (2008-10-16 18:48:00)

omein!

"my" law firm finds it hilarious that their IT manager relies on her filo & moleskine and kicked both her crackberry and palm (III) habit years ago. good luck getting me to use the phone. i'm intrigued by the iphone (I miss mobile rss reading) but monthly charges turn me off and i carry to much anyway.

i am a google calendar addict. COLOURS that don't run out or are left at home! (plus it can show me things my filo can't since i only buy the yearly and week-per-page)

i use them both and you'll have to pry them from my cold dead hands – oh wait, my hands are always cold hmm... ;)

Nan (2008-10-16 20:43:00)

Hi everybody – Thanks for your comments. You're making me nostalgic for when I used a Palm T3 as my laptop and connected to the Internet through a dialup connection on my cellphone and IR to my Palm.

But in those days I spent 1/2 day a week on synching, updating, and troubleshooting! I wanted so badly to get just the right calendar and to-do list out of iCal, Palm Desktop, or Entourage.

Penny, I agree Google calendar or something like that is much better for an overview, and indeed that's something I'm finding a challenge in my life right now. That's something I have to work on.

Claudia (2008-10-18 07:17:00)

I love that "kickin' it old skool" - I also love my MacBook Pro and my iPhone, but for me I still have to have paper, and not just a notebook like Moleskine (although I have used one ... but then, I think I've tried just about everything!). There's just something about having your month, week, day and lists and notes all together ON PAPER. Right now I'm using an A5 Filo, but with a trip coming up, I'm getting that "It's too bulky to carry" feeling. I don't know if I can ever really solve this dilemma!

Claudia

muse924 (2008-10-18 08:45:00)

Claudia - may I suggest for your travels with your A5 pages that you might pull out the most critical pages, such as next few upcoming calendar pages, project lists and some blank paper and carry those on your trip? It's not as ideal as having the whole beloved planner on hand, but it might be a helpful idea. If you already have an A5 notepad, you could just binder clip the sheets to the pad and have a "compact" for your trip.

HP Fuchs (2008-10-18 15:22:00)

I went back from a Palm Treo 680 to my old Filofax (Bridle Personal).

Treo is great for communication. But when it comes to time and task managements, my experience is:

- Electronic is good for C tasks.

- Paper is good for B tasks.

In other words: Filofax is the better choice for strategic planning.

Free for All Friday No. 16 (2008-10-17 01:00) - Nan

How is your autumn going? Do you have any long weekends planned? Are the leaves changing color? Are you in the middle of a busy academic year or, like me, in the middle of a busy holiday business season?

—*Inky*

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-17 08:10:00)

Hi all,

Over on this side of the world Spring has sprung and things are getting warmer and the storms are getting stronger. There is the feel of fun and light and happiness in the air at the approach of summer. I have a long weekend this weekend with my son and he has a student free day at school this monday. This will be the last day off before the Christmas holidays, when we have six weeks. (Most of our long weekends are in the first half of the year.) The school year here is coming to an end and things are hinting at getting busy with Christmas parties and end of year get togethers just around the corner. I only work part time so I am not too busy, but I think I have been bitten by the spring cleaning bug and will be busy planning and actioning lots of culling activities! In the spirit of spring cleaning and because I have just brought a new Filo, I have been spring cleaning my pages and tweaking my system. It feels good!!!

Anonymous (2008-10-17 09:36:00)

I am at the start of a very busy time and am trying to "revamp" my Filofax to handle a number of projects. I am changing my to-do lists from context-based to project-based, and making myself review project status every day. Otherwise I react to the day's pressures instead of determining how I should best spend my time.

So each day I'll look at projects, decide what I want to get done, and then put those tasks on the day's calendar. Hopefully that will keep me a) realistic and b) keep me moving ahead on the projects that matter the most.

venetia (2008-10-17 10:55:00)

the season seems to be very busy for me! last night was the first time I really HAD to look up my to do's for today!

I also decided that the personal size is a little small for me, so I ordered a Finsbury A5 (my first Filofax) which is on its way... I'm very excited!

Ans Inky, your posts are a true inspiration! thank you!

kanalt (2008-10-17 14:27:00)

Fall is my favorite time of year! All the color, the cool crisp air, the memories of school and hunkering down with notebooks and pencils. I haven't changed much in my Filo recently, but I am thinking about taking some continuing education classes for my profession come January, so I'm thinking about how my Filo will need to change a bit when that comes along - I'll use it more than ever! The questions remains to be seen, however, if a personal size can accommodate all the work.

I also would like to ask how people use their Filos for work - do you use one for work and one for personal or does one serve both purposes? Currently, my Filo is only for personal use, with appointments for work written in. But I don't list my work projects and to-dos there. My job isn't one that requires professional planning, per se - I don't have a lot of meetings (a couple a month), I am not a supervisor (hopefully, yet) and while I have projects that are my own, they aren't the kind that require a lot of planning steps and actions and whatnot. Currently, everyone I work with uses (if they use a calendar at all) the basic monthly format that is purchased for us by the

organization - DayMinder or At-a-Glance (we're a non-profit, so you can see where money is at a minimum) - no one uses a Filo-type planner for work. But I'm finding that the monthly isn't cutting it for all I have to do (what I do do ranges quite a bit from one area to another, so I have a lot of different type tasks). I've been thinking about what would work best for me - the monthly planner plus a to-do list notebook, or a different type planner altogether (which I would have to purchase on my own). I'd like to keep it as simple as possible, so using two different types of planning systems is a bit hefty...

Y. (2008-10-17 15:22:00)

Here in New England, the leaves are at peak color right now. Gorgeous!

As the year winds down, I have been contemplating shifting from a Finchley A5 to Personal, and so the requisite online shopping for binders ensues.

Kanalt, I use my Filo for both work and personal. My Finchley has 2 pen holders and I use different ink colors for work and home to keep things straight. I use daily on 1 page for appointments and have a To Do section tabbed in the back for work and another one for home. I use a lot of sticky notes for both places which comes in handy because I can move them around as I need to.

This time of year traditionally slows down for me at work but picks up at home with the holidays approaching, so I have never had too much of a conflict fitting "both lives" into one book.

Veneita, you will LOVE your A5 Finchley! What color did you get?

Vidya (2008-10-17 20:15:00)

This weekend we did a run to the Kinokuniya book store in LA and I found my personal size blank paper!!!! Woo hoo!!! I was soooo excited- it was 111 sheets for \$3.50 and I got two sets, so I'm set for a while.

Kanalt, I use my Finchley Personal for both personal and work. I put my work tasks at the top of the to do list and my personal tasks at the bottom. I also keep track of when various team members are out of the office and write little notes at the very bottom of the page. I find it very helpful to keep it all corralled together.

Adirondack Explorer (2008-10-17 21:13:00)

I was in New Hampshire on the 11th and the colors were brilliant and uniquely beautiful. My region of the world is amazing this time of year!

I placed my A5 on the shelf in October as I found that I needed a place to record my daily activities and the one page per day format didn't give me enough room to keep record of all those activities (phone calls, appointments, meeting notes, important emails, etc.). I moved, instead, to a Franklin-Covey classic format to help me.

Anyone else ever had to move from a one page per day in order to have enough room to record your activities? Or, how do you use your Filo and keep track of your daily record?

venetia (2008-10-18 13:39:00)

y mills: I ordered the pink one! the colour is so yummy I couldn't resist!

kanalt: I use a pocket size planner for work. Since I'm a teacher I only write down the hours I've worked and the given homework. For personal use I have a personal size planner, which will be upgraded to a A5 next week.

Laurie (2008-10-19 13:41:00)

Some of our leaves are turning, and the weather has been just gorgeous. Warm enough to play outside in short sleeves, which is great to be able to do so late in the year. We have several long weekends this fall, but so far no big plans. After such a tumultuous summer, we are happy to just enjoy some relaxation time!

In Filo news, I am still trying to get my week + notes to work for me. I now use a ruler to make boxes on my notes page to have designated lists like to email, to call, Home to do, expenditures, etc. This is working pretty well for me. Before, everything was such a jumble with information all over the page, so I couldn't even see what was going on. Now with this structure it's much easier for me to see what needs to be done as well as record things. I have to have my to dos visible alongside my schedule, otherwise they are "out of sight, out of mind!"

Anonymous (2008-10-19 15:42:00)

I am debating whether or not to stick with Filofax. If I do, I'm going to need to buy A5 paper, a Filofax hole punch, and a calendar, and that will be about \$70. Or I can buy a Moleskine planner for about \$20. I've used the

Moleskine before, and it was fine, I switched to Filofax because it had more room. But for some reason spending this extra money is grating on me. I've heard the hole punches are not that great (someone please tell me if that's wrong). I think the costs of refills is just bothering me right now. Sorry if I sound like a grump!

Anonymous (2008-10-19 16:16:00)

Hi, Anonymous—

It sounds like you don't really want to give up the flexibility of the Filofax.

I hear you on the cost issue. But if you already have the binder there are work-arounds. You could get two inexpensive three-hole punches —just make sure the dies are moveable, and combine the dies on one punch. That would be less than half the cost of a Filo hole punch.

Have you explored DIY Planner? There are lots of calendar templates there, and lots of ideas for customising them.

For me the binder is the big expense. I don't have an A5 Filofax binder and don't really want to get one and start having to punch six holes in my pages. Three holes work fine for me. I wish Filofax inserts came with 7 holes so they could be used with any binder. But I guess they really make their money on the binder sales.

—GG

Anonymous (2008-10-19 16:24:00)

GG: Thanks for the suggestions, I will think about them. I'm not a very DIY type when it comes to this stuff; I just want it to work. (smiling). I had not thought about jury-rigging another hole punch, I'll think about that. I do like my A5 but the cost of the refills has me down. I still have a couple of packs of ToDo lists and paper to work through and I guess I'll do that before I decide to change. I don't mean to be down on Filofax, it's a fantastic product. But I think the refills could be cheaper. Seriously.

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-19 19:39:00)

With regard to punching holes in pages for any size filo, I just use a two hole punch, and having marked the position of the holes with an original page, I just punch away, one hole at a time. This is a tedious way of doing it, but it is a solution. And with regard to the paper, it is possible to but just an ordinary notepa, with lines the width that suit you, and again using an existing page mark it up and cut it out. It is also a bit time consuming but it works and looks good.

One Page Miracle (2008-10-22 21:30) - Nan

I suppose everyone's noticed that my posting has been a little sparse—only one post in between Fridays instead of two. And I've been pretty absent from the comments.

I'm just finishing up a big deadline at work, so I'll be able to spend more time here. I have that pleasant "all the time in the world" feeling that one gets after finishing something big. (Of course, I most certainly *don't* have all the time in the world, especially not when it comes to Christmas shopping.)

Today's article is not about Filofaxes in the physical sense, but about something that you might do on a page in your Filofax. There's an exercise called the One Page Miracle, promoted by, among others, [1]Dr. Daniel Amen as a way to get your life in better focus—quick. And it only takes one page (like, perhaps, an A5 or Personal Filofax page).

What you do is take a single sheet of paper and, without overthinking, write down what you want in each area of your life. Here's one possible format:

One-Page Miracle

What Do I Want for My Life?

Name:

Date:

RELATIONSHIPS

Spouse/Lover:

Children:

Extended Family:

Friends:

WORK AND EDUCATION

I want to do:

I want to be:

I want to know:

MONEY (for needs, wants, and security)

Short term:

Long term:

MYSELF

Body:

Mind:

Spirit:

Emotions:

Too simple for the folks at Franklin Covey, perhaps, but sometimes the first words that come to mind are the real truth. And it fits in your Filofax!

1. http://www.amazon.com/Healing-Hardware-Soul-Enhance-Spiritual/dp/143910039X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&s=books&qid=1224726024&sr=8-1

Vidya (2008-10-23 12:35:00)

Great timing on that post, Inky!!! Thank you, this is just what I needed today. I printed out a copy and will fill it out– I have a feeling it will be very helpful for where I am today.

Nan (2008-10-23 18:14:00)

Glad to hear it, Vidya! Thanks for commenting.

Y. (2008-10-23 18:25:00)

Wow, amazing! I think I will have this be the opening page in my '09 Filo, to stay focused on the big picture. Thanks for posting this!!

Years ahead (2008-10-23 18:18) - Nan

On a recent [1]post, folks were talking about buying next year's refills, and how far forward it makes sense to carry. In my case, I carry as far forward as I can fit, which is usually less than I want. When I make, say, a dentist appointment 6 months into the future, I like to be able to write it down, once, on the actual day.

So it's ironic I haven't ordered my 2009 refills yet. If anyone else is in my predicament, you'll be interested to know that the [2]The Daily Planner has all kinds of 2009 diaries in stock, including 2-pages-per day (that's right, 2 PAGES per day), and cotton cream options. There's even a horizontal week-in-view with appointment lines (in this scheme, you'd turn the book so the rings are horizontal to you to see the entire week). I don't think I've seen that one before; it's offered in Personal only, which always has the most options.

If you like to plan ahead, yearly planners through 2010 are available. I've had good luck ordering from Daily Planner in the past. The online ordering system used to be a little glitchy on my Mac, but it's worked quite well the past couple of years.

And if you need a whole new planner, not just refills, The Daily Planner has a number of items [3]on sale.

1. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=3074866027884316220>

2. http://www.thedailyplanner.com/filofax-filofax-refills-c-115_103_101.html

3. http://www.thedailyplanner.com/index.php?cPath=1707_1714&sort=3a&filter_id=4

Free for all Friday, No. 17 (2008-10-24 01:00) - Nan

First of all, thanks everybody for your great comments [1]last week.

Good to see some of you coming back to commenting after a while away. I want to answer some of your questions, but have not yet done so.

When you comment, Blogger gives you a chance to sign up for email notification of anyone commenting on a post after you. Take advantage of it—it doesn't endanger your email address, and it ensures you don't miss out on the full discussion.

—*Inky*

1. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2008/10/free-for-all-friday-no-16.html>

Anonymous (2008-10-24 10:26:00)

I am a new poster.. but read this site regularly. I am from the UK (live in London) and came across this website because of my obsession with my filofax... I don't even use mine for work - just for me and I literally cannot live without it.

Anyway, I just wanted to say that I have decided to make a filofax-based New Year's Resolution come January... it's going to be to try to make an effort to be more neat in my filofax, cos my diary pages are a mess of colours, crossings out etc etc etc.

Laurie (2008-10-24 10:54:00)

I totally agree with you, I need to neaten up my handwriting and the layout of my daily spaces. Things are getting lost in the mess, and I'm starting to not notice things I've written in because of the jumble of what's written into each daily space. I am constantly trying to tweak my diary pages (using week + notes) to make things more visible and organized. My latest trick is to draw a line down the middle of my schedule page to separate each day into morning (left side) and afternoon/evening (right side). I was writing things in this general pattern anyway, but sometimes things lopped over onto the other side a little, adding to the confusion. Hopefully this method will keep things tidier and in better view!

joffreyca (2008-10-24 16:50:00)

Hello everyone. I'm Joffrey and I have a Filofax obsession :-)

I would like to share some of my views on being organised:

- Don't worry about being "disorganised". As long as you can make sense of your own system then that's good. Everyone processes information differently.
- Being too organised is a bad thing.
- Your system, like your life, will constantly evolve. A little disorganisation is ok and is normal.

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-25 03:31:00)

I find that I am constantly 'sorting' my filofax. I have just brought a new one, and I have decided that I wanted to emlininate the tabs I had at the top of my pages. I still need them, to define sections within sections, like in my list section I have four sections - movies to get, authors, books and wish list. I am going to add a music/song list and web list to this section, but Iam going to cut the pages themselves like what you get when you buy an a-z book, except I am going to put them across the top of the page. I think this will go a long way to making my filo sections neater.

Anonymous (2008-10-25 09:14:00)

I think I am going to move from the page a day calendar to the week on two pages calendar. I was worried about having enough room for to-do lists, but I am going to keep my todos on a ruled piece of paper and just move it from week to week. Rather than rewriting the todos I don't get done from day to day.

Laurie (2008-10-25 10:59:00)

I would really like to hear how this works for you. I am constantly battling with the issue of not enough space per day, but also needing to see more of a broad view than a page per day allows. I have moved up to an A5 size

and have tried various formats of week to view in an effort to balance the need to write lists and appointments, but still be able to see what is coming up later in the week.

Nan (2008-10-25 17:59:00)

I'm constantly battling with the same things Laurie is—do strikeouts make me feel disorganized? Can I keep an overview without seeing it in my Filo each day?

But I think Joffrey is on to something: "A little disorganization is OK and normal."

I just hate getting caught short when someone asks me a question or I don't get something done.

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-25 18:19:00)

Anonymous how do you use your filofax such that you can't live without it? What do you keep in it? does it go everywhere with you?

Anonymous (2008-10-25 23:29:00)

I'm back to a filofax after a summer affair with clairefontaine notebooks. I thought they'd look a little less stuffy than my filofax but really, they just don't work for me. I need to be able to separate things into sections and remove pages that I no longer need. I just spent the day getting everything back into my filofax and I'm feeling much more sane and together. Still need to make some dividers and add some personal touches. It's nice and neat now but I'm looking forward to it developing that nice well-used, slightly messy look and feel about it.

Lovely-Rose (2008-10-26 04:22:00)

My Filofax is a mess too, but i like it this way. it's like me, in my head it's messy too;-)

But i still need to reorganise my tabs and add lined and plaine white paper.

For a good overview in the diary section I use a red pen for appointments and blue for everything else. I also have a post-it sticking on the current week with things i want to buy, but will have to wait.

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-26 05:39:00)

I have a new leather filo and I am wondering if anyone has advice on how I can protect the leather. It is quite soft leather and lovely to touch. Over time I think it will absorb oils and such from being handled and used, which I think will add character to it. I have a leather conditioner that is a cleaner conditioner and waterproofer in one wipe on buff off cream. Can anyone advise me on this?

Anonymous (2008-10-26 06:32:00)

Silver _elixir - My filofax goes literally everywhere with me... to the shops, to work, to friends houses everywhere!! I've come to realise that I simply cannot remember anything unless it's written down in my filofax! My boyfriend also now relays on it as well before arranging anything!!

I've got lots in mine...it's a green Finchley (personal size), and in it is:

card section at the front with stamps, vouchers/tokens, loyalty cards, the local gym's exercise class timetable, a weight-loss chart(!), some old payslips. then i have a business card section with anything and everything that I pick up from restaurants, shops, people etc, then a tube map and central London map (INVALUABLE!!), then the info pages from filofax, then my messy diary (I sellotape or staple in tickets and invitations and stuff in here as well... and there is no colour scheme really - just whatever pen i've got to hand - although i want to change this to having one colour for work, one for appointments, one for personal, so it's easier to tell what i'm doing each day), oh and i also note down how much weight i've lost or put on each week (currently on a massive diet!) Then I have my 'projects' section which has timetables for work, a work to-do list, a personal to do list, an ongoing list of books brought and read,same with CDs, a wish list of stuff to do or get, reading lists for my counselling course, lists and addresses of lovely bars, pubs and restaurants i've been to and want to remember.

then my notes section which has: recipes, newspaper cuttings, general scribbles and doodles, the rules of poker from when i once played with someone, lists, directions, packing lists for festivals, camping and holidays, a list of my loan repayments, things that a fortune teller once told me, eating/food lists, general info, committee meeting notes.

then my address book where no one ever gets deleted,

then an info section with important codes, passwords, local hospitals, council, numbers, websites, emergency num-

bers

then a birthdays and anniversarys list, and finally, a compact mirror and USB in the back zip!!!

THAT is why I cannot live without it!!!

sorry for waffling on...

Anonymous (2008-10-26 10:38:00)

Laurie: I won't know how using a page of ruled paper for my todos in the middle of a week-view diary will go until next year (if I go this route, I haven't bought the 2009 diary yet) but will let you know.

I keep thinking, which is better, to have the week view but not enough room for todos, or the day view, with plenty of room for todos but you have to flip around a lot more.

Filofax might think of offering a compromise layout, like Planner Pads.

Laurie (2008-10-26 14:21:00)

I don't know how people manage WITHOUT a Filofax (or similar binder-organizer). Okay, I can see having an address book, and your daily planner in a different book. But what about lists? Financial info? Other reference? Where do people keep information like airline miles numbers, medical reference, insurance policy info, etc? I guess many people have a filing cabinet at home where they keep this stuff. I am on the move so much that I have to have these things with me along with maps, addresses and numbers of pretty much everyone I know, and basically my entire life, in my Filo! I have attempted to function without it and it always results in disaster.

Nan (2008-10-26 18:02:00)

Anonymous (the one in the 4th anonymous comment): Thanks for your detailed comment! I can just picture your beautiful, well-used Filo from your description. I keep my retail, club, and other cards in a little card case (from Levenger). I keep my driver's license, insurance, bank, and major credit cards in my Filo itself. If I had larger rings, I'd keep all cards in the Filo.

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-27 05:48:00)

Thanks annonymous for all the detail about how you use your filo. Mine is progressing to being a like yours, although I am currently streamlining it and updating all my old lists and info. I am hoping I will be able to use it as a way of making some necessary life changes in the coming year - things like money management and health improvement and getting projects off the ground by actually allocating time to do them!! thanks for the insight and inspiration!!!

kanalt (2008-10-27 17:19:00)

In regards to the week on 2 pages - this is what I use mostly. There are days when I wish there was more room for to-dos as well as appointments. I do use the lined version, which helps me to keep most of it organized. On the days when I have too much to write in the small space provided, I will then use a daily page and stick it in the middle of the week. It also helps to reorganize events and tasks - if a space gets too cluttered with things, I can then reorganize it on a daily page and I feel much better about it - it's not so cluttered, yet I can still see my week at a glance. I like the idea of the daily pages, with actual time slots for appointments, but I have to agree that it doesn't allow me the long-range view that I need - for the most part, I do weekly planning and the daily pages make that very difficult.

Laurie (2008-10-28 04:52:00)

kanalt, I have the exact same problems with needing the space and details of daily pages but the overview that the weekly pages provide. I moved up to the A5 size this year hoping it would solve this problem, but I am still battling with this issue. I have tried a couple of different formats and still don't feel like I have the perfect solution. I tried the week as columns, which was great when I had a lot of appointments but it left me no space for my weekly lists. Now I have the week + notes and am having the opposite problem: an entire page for lists, which is great, but not enough space each day! I'm considering getting the horizontal week format for 2009, because there is a space at the top of the left page for notes and more space per day than the week on one page gives. Does anyone use the horizontal week view format in the A5, and if so how is it working for you?

Laurie (2008-10-28 04:58:00)

I just realized that I actually have this format for the rest of 2008! My new A5 came loaded with the horizontal format for July-Dec 2008, and the vertical column format for 2009. So I can try out the horizontal format immediately, and if it works for me I'll get it for 2009. Yay!

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-28 05:56:00)

I am not overly busy so I use the week to a view with one page of notes. This allows me to note down any appointments and then I tend to fill in things retrospectively. I have an idea for those of you that are having trouble with the weekly overview but not enough room for notes or other info. I thought of using a bigger post it note to record any 'extra' info or whatever is needed. For example at the start of the week it could be stuck on the TH to SU pag, either over the days or to the edge of the page and folded over so that any info is still visible. It could then be moved to the MON to WED later in the week. It could be placed to the edge of the page to allow other info seen, or it could be used as a task list that does not need to be kept. I hope this idea makes sense! If not I could take some pics to demonstrate the idea.

muse924 (2008-10-28 09:32:00)

Hi, all. I use the vertical week/columns format, but I ignore the times that are printed on each day. I use mine along the lines of Planner Pads (mentioned by anonymous). Each week I divide off 3 sections by drawing 2 horizontal line across the Mon-Fri columns, leaving me with upper, middle and bottom sections.

- I don't have many appointments so I use the top/upper section for timed events and appointments,
- the middle section for things that have hard deadlines or require follow up that day, and
- the bottom section is flexible for various lists of related items or tasks.

I don't work on Saturdays and Sunday so I leave those 2 days as is, plus they don't have printed time slots so they are perfect as is. :)

For things relevant to the week but not pinned to a particular day, I adhere a large sticky note (like silver elixir says) which is 4"x6" with lines. I use a sharpie to write WEEK OF 10/27-11/2 across the top of the sticky note. That sticky note just gets placed on the page that isn't covering up today's column. This alleviates my "not enough room for my lists" feeling.

So, at the start of each week when I draw the lines and set up my new "this week's" sticky note, it gives me the time to plan for my week, and really see what's coming up.

I heart my Filofax and this site!

lovely-rose (2008-10-28 11:35:00)

Hi Laurie,

I have the one week on two pages the horizontal one too. I really like it. It has enough space for all my things.

Anonymous (2008-10-28 16:21:00)

I use a layout similar to the Filofax week with notes, A5 size. This gives me more than enough room for telephone calls and other notes that come up, although it wouldn't be enough if I listed tasks on that note page.

Then, since I have certain recurring tasks that are very important for my business, I have those on a monthly checklist. And I have extra lines on that to write in the miscellaneous tasks that come up during the month.

This keeps tasks completely separate from appointments, but I keep my task list in my planner as a bookmark for the weekly pages. During the month it gets moved to the next week and tasks are crossed off and dated as the month goes by.

This gives me a record of when I did something and I also can update my printable task lists so that if those miscellaneous tasks will need to be done again, they will be on the printed list the next time. For example, I'm adding "Get a Flu Shot" to my October list so it will be there next year.

It's taken me five years to work out a good way to keep up with all this and try different layouts and ways of organizing tasks and appointments. It's great that Philofaxy has these discussions so we can see how others manage and what alternatives there are out there. There are so many tradeoffs and considerations, and I want to make my life as simple as possible and not have to think about these things so much! On the other hand, it's also great fun!

Thanks so much to everyone and to Inky.

Nan (2008-10-28 19:07:00)

Laurie – I've switched to the horizontal week in my A5s. I'm all horizontal, all the time now. There's so much room to write! I put appointments and other announcements down the left side of each day, and to-dos down the right side. It's cool that you got 1/2 year's worth to try!

Anonymous (2008-10-28 19:18:00)

Muse924: I love your solution. Thanks to all for the great ideas.

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-29 01:41:00)

I had a brain wave last night that a sticky note could be stuck to the page finder ruler to use for extra writing space. Or a piece of paper could be stuck to the top of the current day/week pages and flipped up with notes on either side... Just some ideas...

Laurie (2008-10-29 09:09:00)

Inky I like your idea of appointments on the left and tasks on the right. Even though it's only been a couple of days, I am feeling very comfortable with the Horizontal format. Part of the comfort factor might be because this is the same format I used when I used my Personal size Filo. I moved up to A5 because I wanted more writing space and also specifically because I wanted the week with days as vertical columns. But then when I finally used that format I didn't like it because it seemed to "businesslike." The Horizontal unlined spaces seem friendlier. Ironical that I ditched this format for the vertical, didn't like it, and have now come back around full circle! Although I do have to say, the A5 size makes all the difference. I agree, there is so much more space to write, it's really nice. I'll be ordering the Horizontal week view for 2009. So now for 2009 I will have: Vertical (which came loaded in my new Filo), Week + Notes (which I have been using for the last few weeks without much success) and Horizontal! I guess whenever the mood strikes me to change my format, I'll be set for the entire year with whatever format I want!

Anonymous (2008-10-29 15:03:00)

I wonder if someone (Laurie, Inky) who is using the horizontal format in A5 could tell us how big each day's section is? I had not thought of using this format but it might fit my needs better.

Laurie (2008-10-30 02:04:00)

I measured the day spaces with my handy-dandy page marker/ruler. Each day space is about 14 cm wide (horizontal) and almost 5 cm tall (vertical). The "This Week" space at the top of the left page is the same size. Every day, including Saturday and Sunday, are the same size too. So the pages are symmetrical with four spaces per page: This Week at the top left with Monday-Wednesday below on the left page, and Thursday-Sunday on the right page. Hope this helps!

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-30 05:51:00)

Laurie, Can you please post a pic of your diary page on flickr? Would love to see it...

Laurie (2008-10-30 10:39:00)

Here is an image of the Horizontal Week on 2 pages diary page layout:

<http://www.filofaxusa.com/images/products/refills/line/68516x.jpg>

I'll spare you all my boring diary entries like "call maintenance man" and "peel grapes to make 'eyeballs' for haunted house!"

Anonymous (2008-10-30 11:17:00)

thanks Laurie, very helpful. I think I'm going to try that format for next year.

Nan (2008-10-30 22:24:00)

Well, I'm not putting any eyeballs in a jar this year, but my Filofax did help remind me to buy Halloween candy in advance this year!

An Even Better Sale (2008-10-25 18:00) - Nan

[1] Jenni Bick Bookbinding has a colorful selection of Filofaxes (like Piazza and Finsbury) on deep discount. Check it out soon; they appear to be going fast!

1. <http://www.jennibick.com/filofax.html>

Vidya (2008-10-25 20:53:00)

TEMPTING!!!! For the past few months I've been debating abandoning my Lizell pocket-size wallet/planner for a Mini Finchley to match my Personal Finchley. I had decided to stick with the Lizell, but these are SUCH a deal!!!

Agatha Ruiz de la Prada 2008 (2008-10-26 18:23) - Nan



[1] Today I made my semi-annual pilgrimage to The Container Store to pick up next year's Filofax refills and A5 Miquelrius notebooks.

I use these notebooks because they have the same size paper as an A5 Filo and are perforated, so I can punch individual sheets to carry in my Filo. They already have the standard European 2 holes punched, so they're also compatible with a 2-hole A5 lever arch binder.

Most of the time, I just write my journal in these notebooks, and don't do much transferring of pages. Having the option is important to me, though.

Every year, Miquelrius offers different colors and designs by Agatha Ruiz de la Prada, and I always buy a few at The Container Store. Last year, they looked [2]like this. This year, they're offering butterflies and green hearts. I love it.

Unfortunately, The Container Store, at least my local one, seems to have discontinued A5 Filos and their refills, so I can't get my work Filo and kitchen counter Filo refills there. I couldn't even get Personal week-per-2-pages without lines. All they had were the lined ones, which is fine, I just wanted unlined and wonder whether the fact that they only offer one is a sign that they're cutting down on Filofax stock further still. There were a lot of 2008 week-per-2-pages calendars on sale, which leads me to believe that

sales have slowed down.

Oh, well. It's time for me to place a Daily Planner order, and hope to keep the mail order end in business.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2976193218/>

2. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/2675730466/in/set-72157594177080225/>

Silver_Elixir (2008-10-29 03:59:00)

Inky, What do you keep in your kitchen counter filo? I am thinking of putting together a household book and am wondering how it works for you...

Nan (2008-10-29 06:27:00)

Well, it's still a work in progress, but a horizontal week-per-2-pages for both my husband and my schedules, A-Z tabs for contacts (repairmen, doctors, etc.), and a project section.

For example, if a project is "buy a washer and dryer," I'd keep all my notes on that page. Sometimes I staple receipts to the project page.

What I really need to add is emergency info, evacuation procedures, warranty numbers, etc.

Free for All Friday No. 18 (2008-10-30 22:27) - Nan

My Filofax helped me remember to buy Halloween candy in advance this year, as usual.

It's also time to buy our 2009 refills.

Is your Filofax part of your Halloween costume?

—*Inky*

Laurie (2008-10-31 03:00:00)

It SHOULD be. What a great idea! What could I go as and incorporate my Filofax into my costume?

Happy Halloween everybody!

Anonymous (2008-10-31 07:57:00)

A Filofax makes a perfect Witch's Grimoire!

gg (2008-10-31 09:25:00)

I had it in my Filo, but just didn't get around to buying any. Guess I'll leave the porch lights off tonight. Does anyone else have a problem like that, and how do you deal with it? I just have a monthly task list and cross things off as I do them.

Anonymous (2008-10-31 09:36:00)

Last week Anonymous posted a long list of all the things she has in her Filofax, and I printed it off and have it in mine to review once in a while. But my problem is that my one-inch binder is already so bulging with papers that it won't zip closed, and don't see how I could get anything else in there. And it's heavy too! I used to carry just a spiral planner that would fit into my purse, but now want the flexibility of a binder. But that binder has developed a mind of its own and is reaching out like an octopus and grabbing papers, all of which it thinks are useful, and getting fatter by the day. I keep going through it and looking for something to take out, but I want them all. And I added tabs, and pockets. And monthly calendars (I can do without those—I never look at them—but they make me feel better). I don't want to go to a bigger binder, just stay with this one.

What to do?

kanalt (2008-10-31 09:44:00)

My Filo helped me to get ready - I'm a saloon girl (no place for the Filo as part of my costume though). In my Filo I had a list of all the things I might want to incorporate in my costume. It ended up that I didn't need a big list after all, but lists help to get my mind clear, so for that it worked. Happy Halloween!

joffreyca (2008-10-31 12:45:00)

RE: Anonymous' "Octopus Filo"

I guess every Filo owner goes through that kind of problem once in a while. In my experience, the trick is learning to let go of some things and establishing hubs for different kinds of info.

For example, I use GMail's contacts as my master contacts list then I just list down some frequently used contacts in my Filo. I also remove old calendar pages (By "old", I mean older than 2 months. I still keep the previous month's calendar as a reference). Then I paste idea notes to a separate notebook.

It will take some time and it will be a bit frustrating at first but that's ok and normal. Let your system evolve until you become comfortable with what you have. Then, you can choose to change and evolve your system again and that's ok.

Anonymous (2008-10-31 15:36:00)

Thx, Joffrey-

I guess I was trying to get that one binder to cover every aspect of my life. Will start dividing it all up. Still would like to see how big Anonymous' binder is, that has all the contents that inspired me!

One of my favorite obsessions is to do a flickr search for Filofaxes and planners.

Paul Raposo (2008-10-31 18:31:00)

Hey all-I just started reading last week and I must say, I love this blog!

If I could post a question for readers; which Filofax's new and discontinued, have softer covers that lay flat easily? I know the Kensington was a great soft cover. Any others?

Anonymous (2008-11-01 11:26:00)

Dear Octopus Filo Owner:

No kidding. I have the same dilemma. So, a month ago, I got tough. I hauled all my Filos out from the closet, lined them up on the dining room table, and dedicated four binders for specific purposes.

One, my main Filo, a Topaz, which I carry everywhere. Two, a Finchley, for projects-in-progress. Three, an old Cavendish, which I use for all the old notes I don't ever want to throw away (but don't need to carry around). Four, a Sterling for the overflow.

Then there's a fifth one which I use as a scrapbook and memorabilia binder. (A Rio.)

I dedicated paper in specific colors for the projects. That way, I carry those colors in my daily Topaz. When I get around to it, I transfer them over to their main hub in the Finchley.

That's actually working out quite well. Each project in the Finchley has its own tab. So, all notes pertaining to a particular project are in one spot.

It took hours to do, but I'm happier with my day book than I've been in a long time. It's much sleeker and I can actually snap it shut.

Now I keep a basket on my desk with my Filos inside it, and reach for whichever one I need at the moment.

I had to do it. The reality is that the ring size, even the one-inch rings inside the personal Cavendish, makes the "one book only" idea a pipe dream. For me, anyway.

A packet or two of blank tabs helped tremendously with this project. Everything's labeled the way I need it to be for my brain.

Would love to see a picture of your out-of-control day book. As maddening as it must be to work with, I'm sure it looks great. All that creativity and all.

Anonymous (2008-11-01 11:31:00)

Paul,

The Stratford.

Silver_Elixir (2008-11-01 20:43:00)

Anonymous what do you keep in your Topaz? How many sections do you have now that you have streamlined your filo compared to before your overhaul? I am trying to work out what I do and don't need in my filo...

Anonymous (2008-11-02 10:36:00)

Topaz owner, I broke down Friday night and re-did my binder. It was really out of hand, and I was worried about it. So no pics. Have printed out this entire page and it's in my binder for inspiration. Love the image of your neat and tidy desk with the basket of binders.

I'd also like to see lots of pics and lists of people's binder contents. This is a be-deviling subject for me. I've got my octopus down to te minimum and am now trying to decide how to move things around into different binders. Looks like I'll have binders for work, recipes, household, gardening, decorating, and maybe a couple of more. Maybe one for spiritual/psychological inspiration. And a small notebook for my purse.

I believe that a couple of years ago I was carrying two binders around in my car and juggling them, deciding which one(s) to take inside at night, so I combined them. And the octopus took over. These things just don't take care of themselves – I guess I need a plan, a set of rules, perhaps, to govern my Filofaxes.

Anonymous (2008-11-02 10:42:00)

Silver Elixir:

Inside the personal Topaz:

Front inside pocket/flap: my work schedule; various loose notes I need to transfer elsewhere; two thin pamphlets (for downtime reading); a couple of things I need to fax to people (folded up).

Inside front cover business card slots: Index cards for random note taking or jotting things down to hand to people; a check I need to deposit; dry cleaning stubs; loose small pieces of paper I don't want to lose.

First insert in binder rings: The Filofax sticky note insert with brightly colored flags. This also serves as a hard surface so when I write on the left-hand side of the pages, it's smooth writing.

Next: January through December monthly view from Day Timer, which I prefer over the Filo version. I jot down when I pay a bill, when one is due, deadlines of all sorts, dates to remember.

Next: The Filofax diary, cotton cream version, week on two pages, which begins, not with a day of the week, but a section titled "This Week" for notes. In this diary version, Saturday and Sunday are the same size as the other days. Lots of space to write every day. The overflow goes on a sticky note, and the Filofax sticky notes are the perfect size to fit over top of the days of the week. Therefore, if I don't get something done (which is all the time), I remove the sticky note and carry it forward, or just leave it there and flip back and refer to it.

Notes: this is where I put blue paper. In my mind, blue is the Filofax color for all my notes. I've been doing that for many years. In my mind, "notes" are different from "information". Might be a quote, a thought, something interesting I want to follow through on. It's a personal section, not for work.

Project: The Filofax "To Do" inserts. This works well for me. These are things to do that don't belong on my diary week pages.

Information: This is the hardcore stuff: account info, business contacts, estimates, driving directions, the color of a paint by Benjamin Moore I want to check out. Stuff like that.

Financial.

After Financial, here's where I break routine with Filofax. In their order of things, Addresses comes next. But I've inserted their blank tabs, a set of five.

First section: my current main project. This is salmon colored paper. When it gets too bulging, I transfer into the Finchley, into a tabbed section with salmon paper also dedicated to the same project.

Second section: another project.

Third section: media information, website addresses, books, music, art. And so on.

Fourth section: everything pertaining to my daughter.

Fifth: miscellaneous. With an assortment of colors. Yellow is always for ideas, things that pop into my head that might turn out to be something. They usually don't get acted upon, but sometimes something works out. It's more of a brain aid: it's where I do that brain dump, mind-mapping stuff. I'm less anxious because at least I've captured the thought, made a record of it. Green paper for garden information, names of plants, etc. As for the pink, I've given up. I don't know how to allocate the pink paper. But I carry it, though. The pink paper makes me feel stupid. So I skip over it.

Then Addresses. Here is where I ordered the Slimline address pack. Best thing I've done to skinny down my Filo. Takes up far less room than the regular Addresses inserts.

Next: business card holders, which I stuff with business cards, bandaids, personal junk.

Last in the rings: A stiff pocket (access on both sides). From Staples. Day Timer, I think. Usually containing a

folded-up article I want to read.

And then, in the back of the book, a zippered compartment, where I cram thumbdrives, keys, change for the vending machines at work, other junk.

And it all snaps shut.

But only because I looked myself straight in the eye and said, "Honey, you DO NOT need to carry your entire life around in one book." This has the added advantage of making use of my old Filofax binders. Instead of choosing only one to use, I use them all, they are here on my desk right now, in a beautiful basket, and each one is dedicated to a separate project. They are like little leather-bound hubs of information.

But I've been down this organization road before, carrying a Filo for twenty-five years, and, well, let's see how long order is maintained. I might be singing the same tune as Octopus Filo Owner in another month or two.

All best...

Anonymous (2008-11-02 11:06:00)

Anon to Anon (Topaz to Octopus Owner):

Darn! I really wanted to see a picture of that out-of-control day book of yours!

The best out-of-control book I ever saw, an elderly lady, 70 maybe, with an ancient Ostrich Filofax, personal size, that she NEVER removed ANYTHING from. I swear, I stared at that thing with my mouth wide open for half an hour. She would NOT let me touch it, even though I begged her to let me hold it and flip through it. It was so beat up, it was one of those perfect objects you see once in a blue moon. That baby had EVERYTHING in it. She said she took it to a shoemaker decades ago and had him stretch it out somehow. I think with some sort of chemical that relaxes the construction. Anyway, I heard she died, and all I could wonder about was WHAT HAPPENED TO HER FILOFAX?

My daughter thinks I need an intervention. A rehab for day book nut cases.

Would like to share this: recently discovered mind-mapping. There are a few lovely mind maps on flickr, and Wikipedia has several excellent articles on this subject. This may become my newest favorite thing to do. Some mind maps are beautiful art objects. This is where I may make use of the pink paper...finally a use for pink.

kanalt (2008-11-02 12:42:00)

I would love to have seen the overstuffed Filofax of the 70-year-old. I always love to see how people organize, not just in how they set up their planners, but to see how they write appointments and to do lists and what all they carry around from day to day. It helps me to choose what's best for me, too.

One thing I do that helps to keep the Filo (partially) slim is to keep the not-needed-all-of-the-time information on the computer rather than in the Filo - my list of books to read (WAY too long to keep in the Filo), movies to check out (although new movies go on a list and the dates they come out so I can remember to make the time to see them), favorite quotes (I have separate lists for movie quotes, song quotes, book quotes, random quotes, and - believe it or not - quotes from this blog that I want to remember because they're just too great and because it makes me remember I'm not alone in my crazy obsession), car maintenance, health/doctor log, vet log, etc. These are things that I don't need to keep with me all the time but that are easy to print out when I do need them (Excel is my best friend when it comes to these lists). I had to let some things go, to take them out of the Filo - otherwise, it would get so stuffed that I wouldn't be able to carry with it me everywhere, which would defeat the purpose altogether.

Anonymous (2008-11-02 15:25:00)

Paul-

Just saw a mention on Flickr that the Bloomsbury has really soft leather.

Would that mean it would stay flat when open?

-anon.

Laurie (2008-11-03 10:08:00)

Oh man what I wouldn't do to see that old ostrich Filofax!!!! I love stuff like that. I am also very curious about what people write in their books, how they organize their diary pages and notes, what is important to them and how they arrange it all.

And I have definitely been in the position of Octo Filo. In fact, this problem caused me to abandon my overstuffed

Personal size Filo in 2005 and use it only as my at-home reference/address book. That year I used a day-per-page diary instead. That was an odd year for me. When 2006 rolled around I went back to my Filofax and have been tweaking ever since. Until recently, that is. This A5 week per 2 pages seems to have cured my planner angst!! Could it be true?? After years of casting about for the right planner format for me, have I finally found my solution??

Nan (2008-11-03 22:55:00)

Laurie – The horizontal A5 isn't perfect (it sure isn't for the busy work and personal day I have tomorrow, in that it doesn't have room to write out my day-long schedule). But it sounds like for you, like me, it's close enough to try it for a few months and see how it feels.

Laurie (2008-11-04 03:19:00)

Inky, I can definitely see how it wouldn't be enough space for a very full day. It's so hard to balance the space on the page: more room in the daily spaces, or more space for notes? This seems like a pretty good balance for my needs right now. I can always add a sticky note for occasional overflow.

Filofax_newbie (2008-11-04 06:41:00)

I'm a recent Filofax user and have really been enjoying this blog. Through everyone's comments, I've really been getting some ideas on how to maximize usage of my Filofax. I have a gorgeous Chocolate Pocket Finchley for carrying around and a blue Personal Domino for work.

Question - How do you use your A-Z tabs? I can't really figure out how to use them.

Laurie (2008-11-04 08:02:00)

I put everything in my A-Z tabs from people's addresses and phone numbers to websites and any other important information that can be alphabetized. Some people use them only for addresses/ phone numbers.

Anonymous (2008-11-04 18:17:00)

I saw a Pak Filo on EBay. It was weird—must be a special version for outdoors people. It is black and orange and looks like it has bumpers on the corners. Looks big and bulky. Sounds strange. Looks stranger.

Does anyone know of a Filofax museum with pics of all the Filofaxes ever made?

1.11 November

Turn the clock back, 2008 edition (2008-11-01 22:09) - Nan

I've written about Daylight Saving Time (European Summer Time) in the past, usually with a photo of the notation on the Filofax diary page. Tonight, I wasn't able to get a clear photo, but my Filo for Sunday, November 2 says "Daylight Saving Time ends, Canada & USA*," with the parenthetical "*information correct at time of going to print."

The parenthetical is necessary because Canada and the USA are currently out of sync with European Summer Time, which ended on October 26. The U.S. Congress decided that extended Daylight Saving Time would save more energy. That is arguable. I've heard the argument that it doesn't save energy because more light in the evening keeps people outside and driving in cars, instead of heading home and going to bed early.

What do you think?

Another parenthetical: (I'm writing this while watching "Are You Being Served AGAIN," so for this reason alone I feel I can speak with some authority on European Summer Time :)).

Steve (2008-11-02 03:58:00)

Are you free Mr Humphries... yes I'm free...

Laurie (2008-11-04 03:16:00)

Last weekend we rolled back our clocks for European summer time, and it was very depressing for it to suddenly be dark at 5pm! And it's still weeks until the shortest day! It was nice to have a week where the time difference between here and family in the US was an hour less, making it easier to make phone calls at reasonable times. This past Sunday they rolled back their clocks an hour so now we are back to 7 hours difference. Incidentally, I grew up in Indiana where we didn't observe Daylight Savings Time. We didn't change our clocks. Half the year we were on EST and the other half we were on Central time. It was pretty confusing. A couple of years ago, amid much controversy, Indiana began observing Daylight Savings Time. So now they are on EST all year round.

Anonymous (2008-11-05 10:04:00)

I think that the stititude to daylight savings time depends on how far north or south you live. If you live farther North it is good to wake up in the light for just a while longer but the dark evenings are a bit depressing. However by December it only feels as if its light between 10am and 2pm anyway so we are depressed all Winter. However Summer months with daylight all hours, now that is worth it.....
Superpooky (couldn't mind my password for blogger!)

Organizer Paper Sighting (2008-11-06 13:59) - Nan

In 1975, the late comedian George Carlin appeared on the Mike Douglas show. During his routine, he referred to notes that were placed on a low table in front of him, out of camera range. Notice how he's shot from mid-thigh up the whole time.

Eventually, however, Carlin revealed to the audience that he was using notes and made it part of the act. At the very end, he actually picks up the sheets and shuffles through them. Look what kind of paper it is! Looks to me like 6-hole punched pages that would be at home in an organizer book!

I always did like Carlin...

[1]George Carlin on YouTube

1. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h1GYPGF0PyQ&NR=1>

Free for All Friday No. 19 (2008-11-07 20:58) - Nan

Sorry I'm late posting this.

I've had a crazy week. What's new with y'all?

—*Inky*

Steve (2008-11-08 06:05:00)

Well I've put my 2009 diaries in to my two Filofax's a pocket and A5 sizes. 2009 is only a few weeks away and my schedule is working towards then so 'be prepared!'
Steve

Anonymous (2008-11-08 06:35:00)

I ordered a red Portobello A5 gently used Filo off EBay. (\$20) Now I'll have every size except the Mini, which I doubt I'll want, but who knows?

I'll use it for my personal notes like diet and health and my happiness journal (recording all the things I'm happy about as a counter to depression).

Will use it for my daily things but am assuming it's too heavy to take with me. I've stripped down my octopus filio (well, it's a 3-ring not a Filofax) for that purpose. It's lean and mean now and will try to keep it like that.

Anonymous (2008-11-08 08:52:00)

After thinking that I would switch to a week on two pages, I am thinking it would be difficult to give up the day on a page format. It's just too useful to have extra space, both to let me map out the day and to have a longer to-do list when needed. Can't believe how much time I have spent going back and forth; I am usually a decisive person. Guess it shows how important my planner is to my sanity. I still have not ordered my 2009 diary.

gg (2008-11-08 10:47:00)

The week to a page (or two pages) view is so efficient for quickly leafing through and finding something and for getting an overview of the week at a glance. But I do see your point about the space. It bedevils me, like the choice between personal/classic/letter size. All have their pros and cons.

I feel more at peace since I decided to plop for the weekly view and to ignore the siren calls of the day to a page view. It helps that I can limit myself to a couple of appointments per day, and my daughter is grown and on her own, so I really have only my own schedule to deal with. I have enough space on the two pages for notes about the day and telephone numbers and a few to-dos and have decided to keep my business task list on a separate page.

kanalt (2008-11-08 12:25:00)

I'm having issues with deciding what format would be best for me. I use the monthly view for a quick overview of appointments. Then I use the weekly for most everything else, but I also like the daily pages and use those sometimes. Usually for the daily, I rewrite what's in a specific day on the weekly format when I get to that day, allowing for more note-taking as the day goes on. But is this the best option - sometimes it's more trouble than it's worth. Maybe something more simple would do, like just using the dailies but I plan a week at a time...so many choices.

Silver_Elixir (2008-11-09 01:10:00)

I have been busy making pages for my Filo and sorting it out by rewriting info and updating other stuff. I don't know if anyone else ever has the problem of needing to 'align' all your pages when you close your Filo. I find it happens more with my personal than with my A5, but I need to hold all the pages and kind of pull them all into line or the ones at the end tend to get bent around the rings. I tried putting a piece of card that I covered and hole punched at the very back, but this only seemed to make it worse and added to the thickness of my Filo. So I have put a spare transparent flyleaf behind my last page - and it works really well. I still need to align the pages somewhat, but this makes it a lot easier. Does anyone else make their own pages?

gg (2008-11-09 11:32:00)

Hi, Kanalt—Can you separate your uses? Like putting the tasks on another page that could move forward each week?

Maybe cut an A5 page in half so you could move it from top to bottom rings? Maybe in a different color? I've snipped the paper from the ring holes to the edge of the page so I could easily move the pages around, like a circa. It worked well. The paper is thinner than Circa paper so I have to be extra careful when I move the paper. And I found that it worked better if I didn't cut the paper straight to the left (parallel to the top edge of the paper) but at an angle of 45 degrees or more.

That would give you an extra page you could insert into the weekly pages to hold notes about a particular day.

Or just have some plain lined paper in the binder and when you need extra room make a notation on the weekly page "See Notes" or a symbol and then date the note pages.

Let us know how you work it out.

Best wishes,

GG

Anonymous (2008-11-09 12:07:00)

Silver—

I made my own pages for the past three or four years, but had them spiral bound. For this year I have them in a 3-ring binder (the Filos are so heavy and I have a slim 3-ring 1-inch).

I don't bother with printing for any size other than A5/Classic—just don't want to go to the trouble of cutting down the paper and getting more hole punches. And can get a ream of letter paper cut in half at the office supply

store so easily.

I do need to have something at the back and front of my binder to keep the last and first few pages neat. Usually a business card holder or a photo holder—something plastic that will stay a little stiff, and is slippery enough for the pages to slide over. If you look at the letter-size 3-ring binders they often come with a page lifter that accomplishes the same thing. The purchased pages seem to do ok without it, but printer paper doesn't seem to. Maybe there's a finish on the pre-printed pages that makes them slippery. But even they seem to need something there to keep the holes from tearing.

kanalt (2008-11-09 13:12:00)

GG - I have thought about using a separate page for tasks or notes. I did try using the week + notes style, but I wasn't fond of it - not enough room then for the weekly appointments. I'm going to NYC next month (no place here on Long Island to buy Filo supplies) and am (hopefully) going to buy some jot pads, so that may help, using the paper for extra notes that I can move from week to week, top or bottom of the planner.

I have thought about doing my own pages, but it just seems so time consuming, time I don't often find myself with. But maybe one day I could actually get that into motion. Also, I did ask for a Filo hole punch for Christmas - it's not something that I would ever buy myself but if I had it, I'd definitely use it. So, if I get that too, then I can really start to make my own pages.

Thanks for the tip!

Vidya (2008-11-10 20:52:00)

I went shopping yesterday and bought the 2009 calendar for my little Lizell wallet/agenda. My dear friend Marcia was visiting from out of state and she also bought her calendar for her Pocket Filofax. We had a nice long discussion of our various organizational systems and how they work.

gmax (2008-11-11 15:40:00)

My 2009 week per page diary is all ready. You can see it [1]here.

I do make certain pages. Actually the transparent flyleaf is one of the easiest to make yourself, if you have some thin plastic, like a sheet of viewfoil material, a guillotine and a hole punch. I always put one at the front and rear the binder (or perhaps have a card holder or transparent envelope at the back). It certainly helps with the page alignment and closing.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/30775101@N04/3014233808/in/pool-40748476@N00>

Anonymous (2008-11-12 10:02:00)

My gently used A5 Portobello from Ebay arrived. I decided to give it to my daughter, who's starting her career next month. I printed off some weekly view pages for the balance of 2008, gave her the monthly tabs from a DayRunner set of pages for 2009, printed off some yearly planning pages for 2009, 2010, and 2011, and some notes pages. And some personal size pages for notes to supplement the weekly view pages. Will stop by the Container Store and see if they have A5 weekly view pages for 2009. Am hoping they will still have them and the shortages people have mentioned are local. Will cut down some plastic file folders for flyleaves. Reconfigured an Acco hole punch so she can punch papers if she prints any out or buys papers from other makers. Am hoping she will find it useful. I know she will need to track multiple projects and contacts and am warning her to make notes about what she accomplishes to be ready for her next job search. (It's a non-profit so I don't know how permanent it is).

So she'll be off to a good start with her Filofax-based life!

-GG

gg (2008-11-12 20:47:00)

Shoe repair for Filofax???

I just noticed that the gently used Filo's closure strap seems a bit loose, as if it would come off the back of the book. Has anyone had a Filofax repaired at a shoe repair shop?

The next time I bid on an Ebay Filo I will take the warnings more seriously, though I do like the binder—it lies flat when open and doesn't have the padding inside the cover that so many of them do now, which makes them so bulky.

Glenda

Anonymous (2008-11-14 07:49:00)

GMAX—I must say that the picture of your purple Filo is the most beautiful, luscious, purple goodness I've ever seen. The purple pen and the purple background—the purpleness is so inspirational. I must get a purple Filo. That is my favorite Filofax photo. I keep going back to it and it always soothes my nerves.

The pink Filofax is also nice.

Must post anonymously because I feel a bit silly, but at the same time I believe it's important to enjoy the things we use daily and to include in our lives as much beauty and happiness as possible. In the little things as well as the big.

Laurie (2008-11-14 14:36:00)

So I'm a week late on this post, but I need some advice. For about 3 months now I have been going back and forth between my A5 Filo (which is in that fabulous purple color, and I love it, but have issues with the weekly calendar formats), and my full-size Uncalendar (which you can check out at www.uncalendar.com for those of you who are unfamiliar). I upgraded to the A5 earlier this year for more space on the weekly calendar, but after trying 3 different formats I still am having issues. The Uncalendar pages are 8 1/2 by 11, so there is tons of room to write my schedule, lists etc. Problem is, I have to have all of my contacts, addresses, and reference info in my Filo. This results in me using 2 books, one for my weekly and monthly calendars and the other for everything else. It seems like I should just make it work with my Filo to have everything in one place. So then I go back to my Filo, but after a week or two of feeling constrained I go back to my Un again. I have so much more room to stretch out my thoughts and plans in my Un. Does anyone else have their calendar separate from their contacts and reference? Does anyone have any advice for me?

gg (2008-11-14 16:19:00)

Hi, Laurie—

My experience has been that I was mentally tortured and spent too much money going back and forth between formats. The only thing that helped was to firmly decide that I would use a particular one for my business things and other ones for other purposes. And they're all either Classic/A5 or personal size, and I firmly intend not to change my basic plan.

If you can maintain your life and it works for you like it is, then go ahead and keep using it as is. In a few months you may decide it doesn't really work for you. Maybe you could have a separate section in the A5 for lists? But if that doesn't work for you and you want to have everything on one page, then your thought process may just need that overview.

Could you take the Un pages and fold them in half and put them in the A5? Maybe in a slash pocket (I cut down some of the plastic full-size report folders from Office Depot so they'd be a little bit wider than classic size, and I fold letter size papers to fit in them and they work great.) And if they were loose, just put in a pocket, you'd still be able to get them out quickly. And you'd be able to spread several out on a table and see more than one week at once.

Or you might punch them on the short side and fold them in the middle so they would fit into your planner. Then you could just turn your planner 90 degrees to refer to them. And you could still take them out for planning.

Another possibility is to design your own pages incorporating the uncaldendar features you like most. You could design them so that one view would incorporate two landscape letter-size pages that could both be unfolded out to present two letter size pages at once. The Time System pages are a bit like this—they have monthly pages that are designed like that, and they fold around weekly pages so as to make little packages of the month. I don't describe it too well, but if you explore timesystem.us and look at their A5 Business forms, you'll find several examples.

gmax (2008-11-14 16:42:00)

Anonymous of 14th Nov...

So glad you enjoyed the photo.

In fact I think the purpleness in that shot must be more of an optical illusion, but I agree it is quite a soothing image.

I'm sure you're right that finding beauty in everyday things is something we should embrace.

Laurie (2008-11-16 03:11:00)

Hi GG, thanks for the advice. I am realizing that no matter how enticing a separate calendar system is, I need to keep my calendar in my Filofax with everything else. I do a lot of long-term planning, which I just can't do with a bound book. I like to have a perpetual calendar, where I keep a couple of months past for reference and at least 6 months future for planning. Also the monthly calendar for the entire upcoming year, and pull-out calendars for the upcoming two years. No bound system has the flexibility yet permanence of my Filofax. When my pages are done, I take them out and put them into my archival binder at home, so my Filo binder always has my current, relevant calendar. I always get annoyed toward the end of the year in a bound book when I have to spill over into next year's book for planning.

Also, the writing and re-writing was getting to be too much. Every time I changed my book over, I had to scan through the upcoming pages of my book and write all my entries into my other book. Doing this every couple of weeks was getting very tedious, and I kept feeling like something was slipping through the cracks! If I can commit to using only the calendar in my Filo, I'll write it in once and it's done.

A few months ago a Philofaxy poster had a very good point: Filofax might not be the very most efficient system, but the aesthetics of the leather, nice paper, and customization win out. I really do love the purple leather of my binder, and using it is very pleasing. And to be perfectly honest, my life is not so busy that I have to have such a complicated weekly page. Bottom line for me is, I need to make it work with my Filo, for my sanity's sake, to have everything together in one place so I don't feel scattered.

Thank you for your words of encouragement, I will absolutely incorporate aspects of my Uncalendar that I like so much into my Filo pages. And I will use my tabs system more efficiently, and refer to them more often. I think if I can make it a habit to refer to my tab sections while I am planning my week, I won't need to have everything in front of me on my weekly page. This will also keep me from re-writing my lists from week to week, which I was doing much of the time!

gg (2008-11-16 10:09:00)

Laurie, that problem with bound pages has bedeviled me, too. I've been through the same thing—I used to get my calendar pages spiral bound and then at the end of the year had the same annoyance. But at least we experimented and tried variations—otherwise we'd still wonder from time to time if that other solution wouldn't be better.

On the other hand, someone somewhere is sure to come out with something new that will tempt us! I guess that's good, even tho it may torment us!

And on another note, must say it's so annoying that the A5 calendar choices are so much more limited than the Personal ones are.

Laurie (2008-11-16 12:00:00)

That's very true, GG, now at least I know that I gave the other system a try and my Filofax works better for me. At least that aspect of my curiosity has been satisfied!

And I have to agree, I wish the A5 diary layouts came in more varieties. With the larger page sizes than the Personal, it seems they could get even more creative with the layout options. Filofax, are you listening??

Nan (2008-11-16 15:05:00)

I know what you mean, Laurie and GG. I keep being tempted by Moleskines and Plannerpad!
<https://plannerpads.com/index.asp>

I've purchased an undated Plannerpad, but never made it beyond the first page spread.

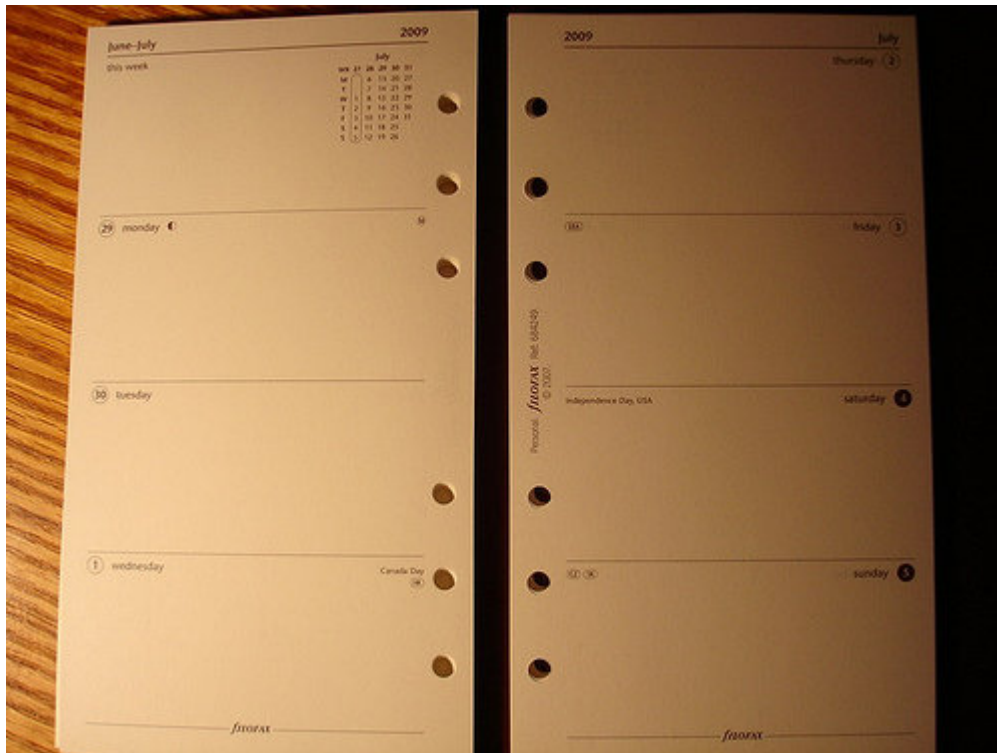
I've explored the uncalendar Web site, too. It seems like a cool company.

You can read about my recent adventures in my new post

Laurie (2008-11-17 15:10:00)

Today my 2009 A5 horizontal week on 2 pages arrived, and it was perfect timing since it coincided so well with my new commitment to my Filofax. I gleefully wrote in all the holidays and birthdays this afternoon. I am suffering from over-tweakage, and am fatigued of writing and re-writing things from book to book. I am hoping that I will be able to stay with this format for all of 2009! A big task, since every year for the past several years I have gone back and forth between several different formats. Here's hoping I can find Filofax Nirvana in 2009!

To Market to Market (2008-11-08 13:34) - Nan



[1]

Since the Container Store no longer carries A5 Filofaxes, I decided to try my local [2]Stationer/Gift Shop, which used to have a really good selection, before resorting to placing an online order. Sadly, I found they've also cut down their selection. They have no A5 organizers, and just a few refills; notably, the A5 vertical week-per-2-pages (which I don't want), month-per-2-pages, addresses, and to-dos.

But I was able to get my Personal week-per-2-pages. I decided to get Cotton Cream for a change, since I also have some Cotton Cream to-dos. I think I'm going to like it! They also had Finchley organizers with complete Cotton Cream insides – very luxurious! I think I'd like to go all-Cotton-Cream someday. Other items of note:

- They still have the Kate Spade in both Personal and Pocket sizes for 2009. If you look back, you'll see I'm using Kate Spade for my 2008 diary, but I bought it during the year when it was marked down to \$8. The full price for the Personal is \$24 – twice the price of even the Cotton Cream!

- This particular store has just as many Mini organizers and refills as Pocket! The Minis are usually hard to find.

- They have the small 6-ring Mead binders and filler paper. It's the same size as Personal Filofax, but thinner and cheaper. You can't get this size at the big chains like Staples anymore. Small shops like this one are more likely to have these specialty items, but they're more expensive. A Mead composition book is \$4!

- New this year, the store now stocks Moleskine diaries. They've spread from Barnes and Noble to college bookstores, now to little gift shops in the 'burbs!

- Also new: Myndology notebooks and paper. These have the flat plastic rings like Levenger Circa. Another item I'm surprised to find in a plain old gift shop.

- I also saw a Cross journal (made by the Cross pen company) with a leather cover and built-in Cross mini pen. Pretty cool!

Gee, can you tell I love stationery stores?

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/3012725923/>

2. <http://www.insiderpages.com/b/3715591415>

Anonymous (2008-11-08 23:56:00)

So what's the main difference with the cream? Just nicer paper than the standard Filo refill?

Nan (2008-11-09 20:36:00)

Hi Anon – The cotton cream paper is made from cotton instead of wood pulp fiber, so it's higher quality from the start. It's smoother than the standard paper, and a little thicker. Don't worry – I'll report on my results as I start using it!

D (2008-11-10 01:24:00)

I use the cotton cream paper exclusively in my Filofax. I like it a lot better than the standard paper. I use fountain pens a lot and there is very little if any bleed through with the cream paper, compared to lots of bleed through with the standard.

Silver_Elixir (2008-11-10 02:20:00)

Is this paper more expensive than the other Filofax paper available? Is it available in Australia?

D (2008-11-10 14:37:00)

The cotton cream is a little more pricey but to me it's worth it. I order mine online from Filofax USA so I don't know about availability.

Laurie (2008-11-11 14:50:00)

I took a trip out to the stationery stores today too. Today was an American holiday (Veterans' Day) so my husband had the day off and took care of the kids while I went out and about in town looking for a day-per-page book for 2009. I decided I wanted an Albanian/ Italian day per page diary for 2009, like I have now for 2008. I like having the day per page book to bust into when I have a really busy day. And I like to carry it in my purse as a satellite when I don't need or want to carry my A5 Filo, to write down expenditures (if I can make myself), random things to remember, grocery lists, etc.

What I really wanted was a diary that is in Albanian and English so I could learn the days and months. But after walking around for an hour and visiting 4 different stores, I started to believe people when they told me they just don't make them. So I decided to get another Italian multilingual one like I have this year. The pages are in Italian, English, French, German, Spanish, and I think Portuguese. It's made in Italy and has maps in the back of Italy, Europe and the world.

One of the most exciting features of my new diary is that in the back, after December 31 and before the address section, there is a chart over 4 pages, with the months as columns, 3 months per page, and the days numbered 1-31 down the left side of the page making a grid. For each month there is a column for money in (a black plus sign) and a column for money out (a red minus sign). So for each day of every month I can write in the daily total of money in and money spent. Then the next page is an "Annual Report," with monthly totals of money in and money out, with the year's totals for each at the bottom of the page. So I can see how much I spent vs. how much was earned, broken down by day, month and year. Hopefully this will inspire me to keep track of expenditures again, since I have been slacking on that so much lately.

Other features of my new diary: Calling codes for Italy, international dialing codes for Europe and the US (very useful), chart of international holidays (but Albania is not on there), an excellent world time zones map, and annual calendars for 2009 and 2010 (although not the column-format planning calendars I like so much a la Moleskine). Each daily page has the saint for that day, the week number, the number of that day in the year (for example, June 5 is day 156 with 209 days left in the year, printed 156-209). I especially like the layout of the daily page. There are lines for the hours numbered 7-13, then 4 empty lines below that, and then an empty space. Then there are lines numbered 14-20 with 4 empty lines below that, and an empty space at the bottom of the page. Very convenient to write in lunch and evening plans. It is perfectly designed for how I will use the empty lines and spaces: things to do while the kids are taking their afternoon nap and after they go to bed in the evening. In the space at the bottom of the page are country abbreviations for countries that have a holiday on that day. US holidays are included so that is convenient for me. I will need to write in the Albanian holidays. And to make an excellent diary purchase even better, it only cost me \$4. For a very good quality book!

Today must have been "buy your 2009 diary day." Everyplace I went, there was a line of people getting their

diaries too. So, we were all checking them out together, perusing the various sizes and formats, handing diaries to each other. It was pretty fun! In the stores here you don't go in and browse. There is a person standing at a desk near the entrance that blocks the rest of the store. You tell the person what you want and they bring it to you. I prefer to be able to browse, but when I know exactly what I want I don't mind interacting with the sales person about it. So they were bringing all of us the diaries they have in stock and we were all flipping through the pages, looking over each other's shoulders, asking questions. A fun planner experience!

Anonymous (2008-11-11 18:00:00)

Laurie, I loved your post! It reminds me of my years in Egypt. The planners are about the same (but the Arabic planners start at the end—they write right to left and books are opposite to ours). And they use the Hejra calendar and years. But usually have corresponding Western dates.

Thanks, and I hope you are having a wonderful time there.

—GG

Anonymous (2008-11-12 12:25:00)

I'm taking the rest of the day off – I just solved the pen vs. pencil conundrum.

I slipped my mechanical pencil into the pen loop on my Filo. Then someone called me away from my desk. I picked up my Filo, and – quite by accident – clipped my retractable Zebra pen to the (what do you call it? strap?) – to the piece of leather that closes the book. And it snapped shut!

(I clipped it to the inside of the leather strap, so it doesn't dangle. It's snug inside the book.)

I once heard Bill Maher refer to Bill Clinton as a “policy wonk.” Meaning: Clinton loves the nitty-gritty details of politics, fine print and all.

I feel like a Filofax wonk.

Words cannot express how happy I am at this moment.

Tur Tur (2008-11-12 16:05:00)

Pencil, pen or ballpen – that would be a good issue for a Friday discussion. I am always undecided : Using a pen looks best, but it is difficult to delete appointments. And the danger of leakage is always there. Using a pencil makes changes easier, but I don't like the pale typeface. A ballpen seems to be a good compromise, but it shares the demerit of the other alternatives.

gg (2008-11-12 20:39:00)

Tur Tur's comment brings to mind the erasable pens. Has anyone tried them?

KimStroet (2008-11-13 11:32:00)

I use pens that can be erased with an ink eraser. I have not found one that fits into my filofax yet though. Erasable rollerballs are less prone to leaking than erasable fountain pens, I think. The pens with the eraser on top I do not use, because I do not like the way they write.

Anonymous (2008-11-28 10:31:00)

My question is very simple: how can I ship filofaxes from us to Europe. Because the range in US is much more better. Thomas

Thomas (2008-11-28 10:33:00)

How can I get filofaxes from the US in Europe. The range in Europe is much better. Thomas

The sweetest reunion (2008-11-13 19:50) - Nan

[1]Gretchen Rubin writes eloquently about the return of her lost Filofax. (No surprise, she's the author of a forthcoming book called *The Happiness Project*.)

Here's an excerpt:

I'm old-fashioned when it comes to keeping my calendar, and I carry around a worn, fat Filofax that contains every piece of information I need to live my life: my calendar, addresses and phone numbers, class lists for both girls, business cards for doctors, repairmen, etc., a list of important birthdays, a subway map of Manhattan, and a few precious mementos, like the Valentine heart the Big Girl made for me when she was in kindergarten.

But it's worth [2]clicking for the illustration alone.

1. http://www.happiness-project.com/happiness_project/2008/11/gratitude-ecsta.html

2. http://www.happiness-project.com/happiness_project/2008/11/gratitude-ecsta.html

chrys (2008-11-13 23:17:00)

oh my -that reminded me of 2 augusts ago when my car was broken into and my two canvas (beloved canvas, that is) bags were taken, in the belief that they held anything valuable (to anyone else but me). and inside was my dear, precious target fc calendar book... what a searing pain it did cause in my world. i had to take a half a day to protect myself, and recoup my MIND - which had, after all, been lost! Others did not quite get it. my boss tried to be kind about it but i was at a complete loss when she asked me what projects i had worked on the day before - it was all recorded THERE. GONE. LOST.

Nowadays, with my oh-so-revered black alligator-stamped Filofax, I don't even go into a restaurant without it. sometimes i think it's a pathology, the way i hang onto it like i do... i don't even leave it in the kitchen while i sleep - i usually have it in a purse next to my bed or on my bedside table, open. i get breathless at the sight of another well-used filo, laying open on a cafe table or someone's desk. i am compelled to glance at their handwriting, their priorities, their scheduled activities, as tho i am doing it all wrong but maybe THEY have the key to getting it ALL done... oh i do so love my filo. bury me with it, when the time comes.

Laurie (2008-11-14 07:08:00)

As she says on the website, when your Filo is lost you think, if only I could have it back again I'd be happy, then when you do get it back you are happy for about two minutes and then you are right back where you were before. But if you DON'T get your Filo back, the misery lasts a LONG, long time!!!

Thanks for this website Inky, I have bookmarked it!!

Free for All Friday No. 20 (2008-11-14 01:00) - Nan



[1] We've got a request for today's topic!
What do you write with in your Filofax? Pen? Fountain Pen? Pencil?

—Inky

P.S. Check out the [2]comments on this post for some great pen/pencil carrying ideas. Why not cut your pen loop in half and carry 2 pens?

1. http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_H4Rx8LSaPk/SRzdMWuyERI/AAAAAAAAAFs/2pzKGhx Cz0w/s1600-h/1194984437330746720pen_pencil_darkon_01.svg.med.png

2. <https://www.blogger.com/comment.g?blogID=18497333&postID=5747721822646901295>

kanalt (2008-11-13 20:47:00)

For anything suggested and not yet confirmed, I use pencil.

When it is confirmed, I change it to pen, using the color designated for a particular subject. Anything work related goes in red; personal items go in purple; due dates (for library materials and bills and such) gets green; notes (such as any reminders for my husband's whereabouts and birthdays/anniversaries/arrival and departure dates for family) go in orange. All tasks and to-dos are in my "normal" everyday blue or black ink, depending on what's available to me, although truth be told, I don't like switching from one to the other - I prefer to use either black or blue but not both, however I have more blue pens at work and more black at home.

The colored pens are gel ink, which sometimes bleeds through the regular Filofax paper, but not so much that it's a problem for me.

gg (2008-11-14 00:12:00)

Well, Kanalt, you've almost answered my question, which is - is there a gel pen that fits in the Filofax pen holders? Do yours? And do you carry them about with you? I'd like to get a couple of nice but thin gel pens that will fit in the pen holders for lists, etc. I like the G2 pens but they are so fat that they don't fit. Am wondering about taking the ink cartridges out and using them in another pen.

But my schedule changes so frequently that I never write in an appointment with any kind of pen, unless it's erasable. Which I've just started thinking about trying-maybe an Erasermate. I use 2B mechanical pencils for appointments.

And I like to color in monthly view day blocks in red for special occasions and holidays and draw in Christmas trees and pumpkins, etc on the monthly pages, too, just to liven them up a bit. I use colored pencils for that, and keep them at home next to the sofa and do that doodling while I watch tv at night.

-GG

Laurie (2008-11-14 03:32:00)

GG I like your idea of drawing seasonal doodles on your calendar pages. I might have to do that, since I miss all the seasonal cues that we don't have here (like Halloween, Thanksgiving, etc.)

I use a Bic 4 color pen. The pen is too fat to put into the pen holder, so I slide the clip into it and it stays attached just fine. Black ink is for most things, blue is for my kids' activities or my husband's travel. Green is for money in and red is for money out/ bills due. Red is also important items. I use a mechanical pencil in my Financial section for numbers that I am likely to mess up and need to erase. I also use pencil in my Goals section to change/revise as needed. I use an A5 Finsbury which has 2 pen loops, so I can carry my 4 color pen and mechanical pencil around at all times.

Tur Tur (2008-11-14 03:44:00)

Dear Kanalt:

■> For anything suggested and not yet confirmed, I use pencil. When it is confirmed, I change it to pen, using the color designated for a particular subject.

Does this mean that you erase your pencil notes after confirmation? And do you carry all that colors with you all the time?

Dear Laurie:

I am a little bit jealous of your two loops. In my older Filofax, a Personal Cavendish, there have been two loops, too, but now I have a Bromley with only one.

My problem with pencil notes is that they are so pale, especially when you write things down with pens, too. Generally, I like diversity, but in my Filofax, unity looks better.

Anonymous (2008-11-14 05:02:00)

God I wish I had an organised system with colours and pens and pencils - but I don't AT ALL!!

I literally use whatever i have to hand. occasionally i'll search out a different colour just to ring the changes, but it's all a big shambles of colours, pens and pencil!!

I do draw holly on christmas day, and use stars to highlight important stuff...

it's my new year's resolution to be more organised in terms of pens in my filofax!!

Laurie (2008-11-14 07:14:00)

tur tur, I feel your pain with the one pen loop. Back when I used my Personal size, it also had only one pen loop. I found a multi-purpose Bic pen with black ink, red ink, and mechanical pencil all built in. At the time that one writing instrument fulfilled all my needs. When the ink ran out I went in search of a new one, and never did find one again!! I was very disappointed.

hatza (2008-11-14 08:34:00)

Pencils don't work for me. I'd prefer softer lead that writes darker, but anything that soft thinner than 1mm cracks too easily - and erasing just makes a smudge.

So instead I carry a fountain pen with low viscosity fast flowing colourful ink - and a sharp <0.5mm black waterproof rollerball. I regularly change the fountain pen ink so that my journal entries change colour ever few weeks. It helps that my calendar and list of committed outcomes are electronic so most of the things I write on my Filofaxes just gather more information until they expire. It's rather rare that I decide to completely rephrase (=rewrite) a task in the Pocket Filofax.

I backup my Filofax with digital camera on (bi)weekly basis.

Anonymous (2008-11-14 11:22:00)

I alternate between a Pilot Birdie fountain pen with a fine nib and blue Noodlers Ink or a Stainless Steel Parker jotter with a fine blue ink ballpoint.

The Birdie is a great pen that writes really smoothly & fits in the filofax pen loop, but has been discontinued by Pilot.

I've tried various gel pens, like the legendary Pilot G2, but I really don't like the feel of them.

Simon

Vidya (2008-11-14 11:34:00)

I use a pen/highlighter hybrid. I use the highlighter on those list items that pertain to my goals- a way to show them at a glance as a higher priority. It took me a while to find this type of pen when my last one ran out of ink, but when I did find them, I stocked up so I should be set for at least the remainder of the decade...

Anonymous (2008-11-14 12:16:00)

I use a uniball deluxe micro pen in black for most entries. It is waterproof so I use this pen for sketching and watercolours as well. I keep sketch paper and watercolour paper in my filofax so it helps to have all my tools together. I use a blue uniball onyx pen (it is not waterproof) for my work schedule and for important things. I use pencil on my monthly calendar to mark down which days I'd be available to work if they called me and to note how many shifts/pay I'm scheduled so I know how many shifts I want to pick up. I use a green uniball onyx for important things that I really must see. I only have the one green pen and I don't know where I'll get another one when it runs out.

Laurie (2008-11-14 13:55:00)

vidya, where DID you find the pen/ highlighter hybrid?? I bought some Papermate ones a year or so ago and have been unable to find them ever since. Why do my favorite pens keep getting discontinued??

gmax (2008-11-14 16:50:00)

There was some recent discussion about writing implements on the associated [1]Flickr site.

I generally use biro to write in my filo - usually black, but also red for special purposes.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/groups/40748476@N00/discuss/72157608699896191/>

Silver_Elixir (2008-11-14 17:59:00)

I just use a Bic blue ink round barrel pen. My personal Filo has 2 pen loops so I can carry another pen if I have to. I use Staedtler Triplus Fineliners to 'decorate' my pages or to write with. These pens don't bleed thru but you can see them on the other side of the Filo pages given how thin they are.

I also use stickers to denote re-occurring things - little round circles of different colours to note when to pay bills or

staff meeting at work etc. I also use stickers to highlight birthdays and special events or anything I need to. Next year I am thinking of looking around for a nice pen to use - something with blue ink, heavy but not too thick in the barrel.

kanalt (2008-11-15 09:57:00)

GG - In my planner (in the pen loop) I carry a small Zebra pen that expands - so it's a short stubby pen when pushed together, but expands to a normal, comfortable writing size. I use this mostly as an on-the-go pen. When home, I use a different pen simply because the Zebra isn't my favorite, but it fits into the pen loop and so carry it with me.

As for the colored pens - I have a pencil bag that I carry with me in my work bag that contains everything I need - colored pens, pencils, a small white out stick. (Plus, I have all the colors I need at work and at home on my desk.) So when I need a color, it's there. If in the event I need a color at a time when I don't have it (which isn't often), I will write the information on a post-it, which I have a small supply of in my Filo. Then, I will rewrite it in the appropriate color later.

My favorite pen, which is blue or black, is the Uniball Jetstream - it's gel but writes like a ball point, it's smooth and has good, solid color, doesn't smudge or bleed through the Filo papers. They also make a red, but sorry to say, no other colors. I wish they did. I use these pens (the blue and black) for task lists, to-do lists, any other list, and all of my daily work and writing.

Tur Tur - Yeah, I will erase the pencil notations and change them to the specific color when something is confirmed. I plan as I go, but also go through my entire planner every week for this purpose - to update anything that might need it. So this is also a time I might switch from pencil to pen. I like the flexibility of pencil, but don't like that it's hard to read.

Vidya (2008-11-15 13:09:00)

Not to post off-topic, but the timing seems appropriate. I live in the Central Coast of California and yesterday many of my colleagues were either evacuated or preparing to evacuate because of the wildfires. People were trying to figure out what they should take in a very short time.

Earlier this year, I started a list in my Filofax of what I would want most in case I ever need to evacuate. My Filo is almost always with me, both at home and out, so I know it will be close at hand if/when the situation arises. I know that if I didn't have a list handy, I would stand in the middle of my house, in a panic, grabbing nonsensical items. It gave me a sense of peace knowing that I am prepared in one small way. In this part of the world, evacuation isn't a theory, it's an eventual likelihood.

So far, friends and colleagues are all safe, although my beloved Mt. Calvary Monastery/Retreat House was burned to the ground. The Montecito fire seems to be contained, but now there is another fire, to the east, in Los Angeles County and I am hoping it gets contained quickly.

gg (2008-11-16 14:48:00)

20 % Off Coupon from the Container Store!

Paste this into your browser's address bar and you'll get a page with a link for a coupon for in-store use and a code for use on internet orders etc.

Good only through November 19.

www.oprah.com/slideshow/oprahshow/20081029_tows_messyhouse/21

Looks like they don't carry A5 Filofax inserts or binders any more, but I'm going to get some Personal calendars, etc.

-GG

Miss Charlie (2009-01-06 03:02:00)

I use a Faber-Castell propelling pencil, with 0.7 HB lead. It's beautiful as an object, it looks very classy for the price (£5), and has a satisfying chunky barrel. I like the flexibility of pencils, combined with the precision of propelling leads.

I keep a vintage Parker ballpen in the pen loop, and the pencil tucks in nicely behind the fastener. If/when I upgrade to A5, I may rethink this, and maybe even move to using colours, but for now that cute fat little pencil does the job!

Prayers and wishes for wildfire victims (2008-11-15 14:47) - Nan

With apologies to reader Vidya (I couldn't contact you directly), I'm pulling this comment to the front because of the urgency and danger of the topic: the recent wildfires in California. A new fire started last night in the San Fernando Valley, which isn't a forested area...it's an area where millions of people live. Whether where you live is prone to earthquakes, fires, tornadoes, or hurricanes, evacuation info is one of the most important things we can carry in our Filofaxes. That makes Vidya's comment more timely than ever:

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Silver_Elixir (2008-11-15 18:22:00)

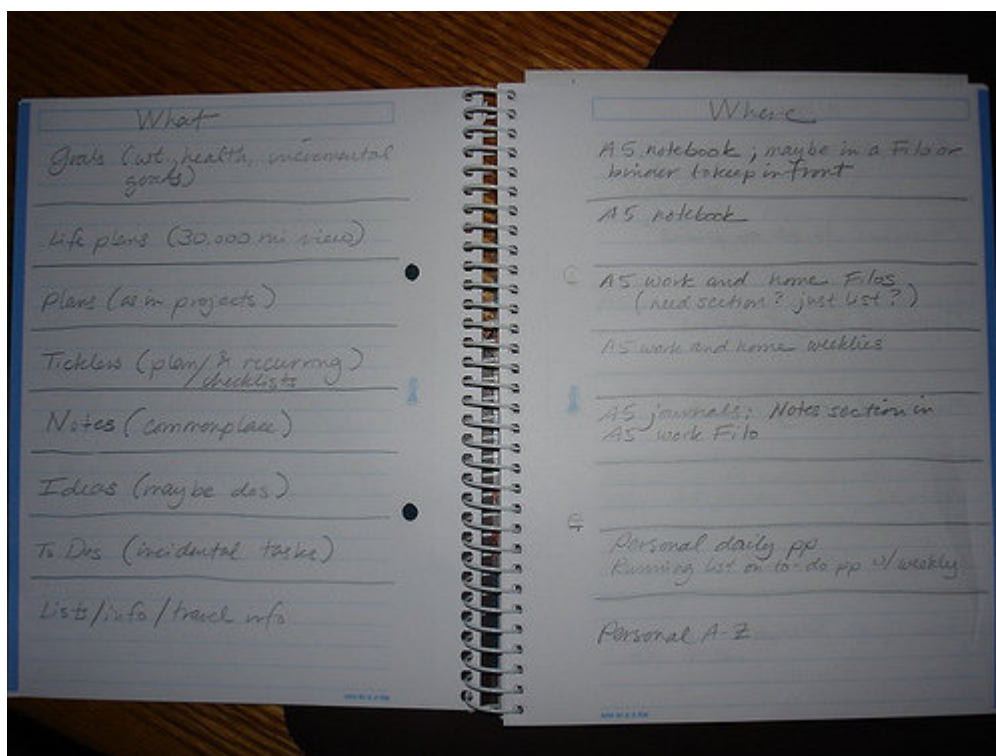
My thoughts are with those threatened by the fires. I have to say that Vidya's idea is brilliant. I have often thought about what things I would grab if there were a flood or fire at my house... Some fave photos of my son, insurance info... I am not really sure what I should take... I have insurance on my stuff but despite that some of it is irreplaceable. I heard of an idea that people have a box of the important stuff near an exit that they would pick up when the left. Knowing myself I would have a lot of stuff to take, but the most important thing of all would be my son and myself and my brother getting out alive.

Laurie (2008-11-16 02:42:00)

How terrible about the fires, I feel so badly for those people who are losing their homes and everything they own. Finally this year I got around to creating an evacuation bag, in case we have to get out quickly. I put into it clothes, toiletries, a compact but extensive first-aid kit, and a few other necessities that we would need if we had to leave everything behind. I also put into the bag my Personal size Filofax that I no longer use. I keep it updated with all of my contact, reference, and other important information, including all our insurance policies. Worst-case scenario, I grab the bag and go out the door and I have everything I really need.

I keep the bag downstairs in my office near my fire-proof file box, so I can scoop out the contents and throw it in the bag. Also nearby are a few of my favorite family photos that I would not be able to replace. And my A5 Filo is nearby too. So depending on how much time I have, I can either just grab the bag, or take a few more minutes to throw in other items too.

A scary thought, but you never know when you will be faced with an emergency situation. This is my favorite thing about my Filofax, and Filofaxes in general—it's a place to have all of my important information together on the go. When I travel, I feel comfortable knowing that everything I need is there in my Filo. When something goes wrong, my Filo is the first place I turn for information. And in an emergency situation, I would definitely want it with me.



[1] As the year is drawing to a close, I've begun to think about what I'm going to do next year in my Filofax, and how well what I'm doing now is working for me. Today I took out the 2008 pages (I've been using Kate Spade, Personal size), except for November and December, and put in my 2009 diary (week per 2-pages, cotton cream - delicious!). It's scary how thin the rest of this year is, in terms of paper!

I'm reevaluating what I've been doing. This year, it's been a week-per-2-pages, followed by tabs marked To do, Projects, Ideas, Lists, and Tel.

To do - It's been ages since I wrote in or looked at this section. I guess I've been so busy that I only have time for must-dos, which get written on the weekly pages, like paying bills, renewing licenses, and so on. Things like getting a new cell phone or getting my car detailed are just sitting there on aging paper.

Projects - This once-active section, with one yellow lined page per project, has also become just bulky, unused paper. I've planned trips and special evenings in this section. Now it's just undone termite inspections and insurance reviews. Can I keep track of projects in a way that doesn't require as many leaves in my book?

Ideas - A couple of years ago, I had so many ideas I could spend hours writing them down. Now? I guess I've finished writing down that backlog of ideas and don't have any new ones. Maybe I'm also too busy to speculate about things. But will I ever see Elton John in Las Vegas? Will I ever get kayaks for my husband and I? Who knows - but do I really need to carry these dreams everywhere I go?

Lists - The only page in this section that sees much action is my grocery shopping list. This section has various lists in alphabetical order (A5 paper sources, Bare Essentials makeup I want to order, Beau Ties neckties to order for my father, books to read or to send to people, Christmas gift lists, etc.).

I've been thinking lately, what might work better is one-day-per-page plus A-Z pages, not all these other tabs. But one-day-per-page doesn't come in cotton cream, which I love! One thing's for sure, a lot of what I'm currently carrying can be pulled out and stored away.

When I reevaluate my system, I take some notebook pages and write "What" on the left side, and "Where" on the right side. This arrangement helps me figure out where I might put certain kinds of information. It helps clear my head. Then I build my Filofax system from the ground up.

The other night, I did this in my Miquelrius A5 notebook, using pencil and drawing lines between the different subjects, as shown in the picture. This is only one out of 3 page spreads.

I placed a Daily Planner order this weekend. They're having a sale, and I indulged in a personal Finchley with a chocolate cover and cotton cream filler inside!!! I also bought horizontal week-per-2-pages for my

work and kitchen A5 Filos.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/3035295117/>

gg (2008-11-16 17:45:00)

Am re-posting this in case it can help someone else stock up on their Filofax needs for the new year – seems relevant to this new posting.

20 % Off Coupon from the Container Store!

Paste this into your browser's address bar and you'll get a page with a link for a coupon for in-store use and a code for use on internet orders etc.

Good only through November 19.

www.oprah.com/slideshow/oprahshow/20081029_tows_messyhouse/21

Looks like the Container Store doesn't carry A5 Filofax inserts or binders any more, but I'm going to get some Personal calendars, etc.

Anonymous (2008-11-17 08:55:00)

i too have a chocolate finchley (personal) with cotton cream pages. i love the look and feel of the pages against the leather.

Anonymous (2008-11-18 11:06:00)

I have a green leather finchley with cotton cream paper - it's GORGEOUS!!!

gg (2008-11-21 13:08:00)

Re New Year things-How do you clean your planner? Would like to get mine a bit cleaned up for the new year. There's a little ink mark on it and I don't want to do something that will mess up the dye on the leather (it's a nice red color). I googled "how to clean leather" last night and saw a recommendation for rubbing alcohol to remove the ink and to rub it with moisturized soap and water for general cleaning. Does that sound right?

And do you recommend anything in particular to condition the leather? Keep it nice? I'd like this binder to last forever!

I didn't see anything on the Filofax website about care instructions.

Thx, GG

Laurie (2008-11-24 07:58:00)

Inky, I'll be very curious to find out if you wind up going with the page-per-day after all. I have used this format during times when my days are very busy and/or I have a lot to record each day. For me the biggest issue with the page per day is forward planning, but there are ways to deal with that. Maybe in your Projects section you can have your projects broken down into steps/ tasks, that you would then write on your daily pages on the day they need to get done, in order for you to stay on track with your timeline. What always helps me when I use a day per page (and even a week view to be honest) is to have a monthly calendar in a very visible place, usually on the wall next to my desk/ computer, where I can write all the upcoming deadlines, events, bills due, whatever for the month. That way I can reference my monthly calendar for upcoming things, and use my daily page for the day's tasks, lists and appointments.

Let us know what you wind up going with!

Laurie (2008-11-24 08:00:00)

Oh and I forgot, another thing I have done when using a day per page format, rather than re-writing tasks that don't get done from day to day, I keep a post-it with the week's tasks that travels along page to page. That works well for me for things that I don't have to do on a particular day, but that I need to keep visible to take care of sometime that week.

Mathew J (2008-12-29 14:51:00)

So I just recieved a Filofax for Christmas, it is a Personal size classic cross from Goldspot, however I am wondering if I should have gone with the A5 size? any thoughts on the versitility of either would be great...it will be for office

use and reside in a briefcase most of the time.

Laurie (2009-01-13 05:15:00)

Hi Mathew J,

Congratulations on your new Filofax! I know a lot of people use the A5 size for office use, due to the larger page layout and more room to write each day. But, the Personal size can work for office use as well, it just depends on how much you need to write each day. If you have a lot to write you can use a day per page, or even day over 2 pages layout. If you need more of an overview, they have a variety of weekly layouts to choose from. They also have pull-out year calendars to get a long-term overview. And there is a 4 year planner for longer-term planning, projects, etc.

You can buy blank tabs to have sections for individual projects, directories, or topics. I like to use removable tape flags to label my tabs so I can move them around as needed.

The Personal size is the most popular size, and so it has the widest selection of calendar formats, inserts and accessories.

Since you plan to carry your Filofax in your briefcase, I think you will be pleased with the portability of the Personal size. The A5 size is nice if it will be sitting on a desk most of the time, but it can be heavy and bulky to carry around every day.

Filofax is a very flexible system, but (as you can see from many of these posts) it can take some experimentation to figure out what works best for you. Good luck, and enjoy your new Filofax!

20% Off at The Container Store (2008-11-16 18:27) - Nan

Courtesy of reader GG, here's an online 20 % Off coupon from The Container Store. The store has some Filofax refills, as well as Miquelrius and other notebooks, files, filing boxes, and other organizing supplies. [1]<http://tinyurl.com/6a3ad9>

1. <http://tinyurl.com/6a3ad9>

Anonymous (2008-11-20 09:33:00)

Here is a suggestion. FastCommerce. It is a super ecommerce platform that is completely free for fifty products. For 2000 products it's only 29.95. Really impressive! You can try out [1]<http://www.fastcommerce.com>

1. <http://system.fastcommerce.com/>

gg (2008-11-22 11:50:00)

The Container Store coupon has been extended through Nov 30.

Go to containerstore.com and you should see the big red Christmas ornament with the 20 % off offer.

I got several Christmas gifts the other day and was wishing I'd gotten more, so will stock up some more today.

-GG

Free for All Friday No. 21 (2008-11-21 16:18) - Nan

Wow, was I late posting this week!

—*Inky*

Anonymous (2008-11-21 20:06:00)

I hope it's ok to post this again—maybe someone will be more likely to see it here and answer.

Re New Year things—How do you clean your planner? Would like to get mine a bit cleaned up for the new year. There's a little ink mark on it and I don't want to do something that will mess up the dye on the leather (it's a nice red color). I googled "how to clean leather" last night and saw a recommendation for rubbing alcohol to remove the ink and to rub it with moisturized soap and water for general cleaning. Does that sound right?

And do you recommend anything in particular to condition the leather? Keep it nice? I'd like this binder to last forever!

I didn't see anything on the Filofax website about care instructions.

Thx, GG

Silver_Elixir (2008-11-25 04:37:00)

GG I would suggest emailing the people at Filofax directly. They helped me with my protection enquiries.

Has anyone had problems with lined and plain filofax personal paper not being the same size? I was trying to modify some pages but found out that the plain paper was 1mm longer and the holes were off set...

gg (2008-11-25 07:45:00)

Thanks, Silver. I'm going to try them.

And my plain and lined paper is the same size, and the holes are the same.

Nan (2008-11-25 07:59:00)

GG, also you can try a local shoe store or leather shop. They know a lot about how to treat leather.

Silver, I think there is some variation depending on when and where the pages were manufactured. I agree it's awkward when the pages are off.

Free for All Friday No. 22 (2008-11-28 08:47) - Nan

I've got some Thanksgiving and other holiday stuff to post, but in the spirit of keeping Fridays truly free for all, I'll let you readers take over.

Laurie (2008-11-28 10:28:00)

I'm getting excited to start my new 2009 calendars! It will be the Chinese Year of the Ox, which indicates stability. I hope so, it has been an extremely unstable year for me this year and I could use some stability!

So anyway, my 2009 calendars. I love calendars in general, and I have come to terms with the fact that I just like to have a lot of calendars going at once. For 2009 I will have:

My Filofax A5 week on two pages, month view, and pull-out year.

Two day per page books. One of them is the Italian one I keep in my purse as a satellite to my A5. The other is a Moleskine large page per day that I use as a journal. I have one this year too, and I have loved using it as a journal, so I'm looking forward to the exact same thing for next year. Extremely rare that I use any type of calendar or journal two years in a row! Or even for one entire year!

Another calendar that I have used all year this year and have another one on deck for next year is the Lunaria wall calendar, which follows the phases of the moon. The "month" starts on the new moon, and the full moon is mid month. I like being able to follow the phases of the moon throughout each month.

Also for my wall next to the phone I have a Dodo wall pad, which is a weekly, with boxes for each family member to write in their comings and goings. Each week has funny quotes, dates of interest, and space to doodle. www.dodopad.com

I will also have a 2009 Scotland wall calendar, to see pictures of Scotland all year long. My favorite place!

Yes, a lot of calendars to have going at once! I don't write and re-write everything onto every calendar. In fact the only one I will keep updated with everything will be my A5 weekly. I write certain things on certain calendars, where I need to see them (family stuff on the weekly wall calendar for example) and on some calendars, like the Lunaria one, I don't write at all. Hard to explain how I use each calendar differently, but I have a use for each one. It's not that I have any kind of complicated system, it's just that I really like calendars and I use each type in different ways. Each one is good for what it's good for.

gg (2008-11-28 10:57:00)

Laurie, it's interesting to hear how you keep all those calendars going. I'm trying to manage two calendars and wondering how it will work.

I just got a personal Portland off Ebay and it's so smooth and soft and flexible, from around 1990. And it has maps of the UK and the world map in it from back then—how the world has changed around us. My daughter used to complain that all the interesting things happened in the mid-twentieth century, but in just the past decade so much has happened, and she's had the chance to witness some major historical events.

By the way, the Portland came with shopping lists, bank account form, and personal expense forms. Am wondering what other interesting forms were available back then. Will get the daughter to help me with uploading some pics to Flickr.

Laurie (2008-11-29 02:03:00)

I've heard there were lots of different forms available then that are unfortunately no longer available. I guess they expect us to create our own forms using their printer-ready paper, although I've never done that. I have written my own forms by hand for things like medical/ vaccine records and directories. I have to say, I'm very disappointed at their limited map selection these days. I still have my personal size map of Europe from so long ago that it has Yugoslavia. I went online to find a new Europe map and could not find one of any size. I have a world map but even the A5 size is not large enough to really see the small countries. Does anyone know if Filofax is planning to bring back the Europe map?

gg (2008-12-01 15:40:00)

Re the map of Europe—they may be waiting to see if things settle down politically. After all, for a while this year it looked as if Georgia might become a Russian state!

And Filofax contacted me about my cleaning question. They recommend using saddle soap for cleaning and conditioning.

Meanwhile I came across one of those silicone sponges for shoes and have been using it. Hope it hasn't done any damage—but it has made the binder look smooth and glossy. I buffed the binder inside and out with an old soft cotton sock after using the sponge.

gg (2008-12-01 15:46:00)

One thing I like about the Filofax calendars is the moon phases. I don't use them for anything, but it makes me feel a little bit connected to my remote ancestors. Likewise I don't observe the solstices and the equinoxes, but an awareness of them gives me a more connected feeling, like we're not just plopped down here but are a continuation of those who came before.

Laurie (2008-12-03 15:02:00)

Hey, this is completely off topic, but the thought just occurred to me to share with you other A5 users my tab labels: I use the colored tape flags that are on the Filofax "Assorted Sticky Notes" accessory page. I trim them to fit on the tabs, and they are perfect. They stick to the tabs really well and I've never had one fall off. I can color code my tabs. They are easy to write on. And the best part, of course, is that whenever I rearrange my tabbed sections, I just take off the label and stick it onto the tab in the new location. I used to write directly onto tabs with a permanent marker, so of course every time I wanted to rearrange my tab sections I either had to use all new tab dividers, or use my already-written on ones and have my tabs not line up in succession down the side of the page, which got ugly.

I was just looking back at some old Philofaxy posts and saw a discussion on A5 tabs, and thought I would throw this tip out there.

Miss Charlie (2009-01-06 03:09:00)

Laurie, I use lots of calendars too! I like to have the month on view on the pin board near my desk, usually tropical scenes (a bit of escapism for those grey London mornings) and rather than scrawl all over it, I write things that happen weekly or monthly onto coloured mini Post-It notes, then transfer them to the next month once the date's passed. I like your idea for tabs - will have a think about that and see if I can borrow it - hope you don't mind!;)

1.12 December

Streetwise (2008-12-04 17:52) - Nan



[1] Not much happening in my Filofax life these days, but there's been some talk about maps lately, so I thought I'd share a map I bought from The Daily Planner earlier this year.

[Aside: One reason there's not much going on is that I'm still waiting for the current Daily Planner order I placed a couple weeks ago. My two emails asking to track the package have gone unanswered. I have no 2009 calendars yet. Grrrr.] **UPDATE:** I just got the Daily Planner package...by FedEx! They must have felt bad about the delay and expedited it. Thank you for good service as always, Daily Planner!

Anyway, I bought a Boston map, and got this. It's made of stiff, shiny paperboard. It's printed in Canada and updated as of 2005, although the outer packaging says "Made in U.S.A." Streetwise ([2]www.streetwisemaps.com), which bills itself as "Originators of the laminated accordion-fold map," also makes larger maps that fold up the same way, without the Filofax holes.

I wish they didn't waste so much map space on their logo.

The reverse of the map has a street index and subway map.

1. <http://flickr.com/photos/gonanb/3083457868/in/photostream/>

2. <http://www.streetwisemaps.com/>

Laurie (2008-12-05 02:08:00)

I have the Washington DC street map from Filofax (Personal size) and it is excellent. It is older, last updated 1996 it says, but I bought it in 2002 or 2003. It is also made by Streetwise, but doesn't have the ridiculously huge logo taking up the front page. I like the heavy-duty laminated fold-out card. When I lived in DC I used the map constantly. When people would ask me for directions on the street I would whip out my Filofax and pull out the map, and they were always amazed—and also happy to find where they wanted to go!

kanalt (2008-12-05 11:47:00)

This is slightly off topic, but relates to geography - I'm curious as to where in the world everyone is commenting from. I find it interesting how Filofax products differ so much from region to region. Here on the east end of Long Island (NY), there aren't any stores that carry Filofax refills, etc. We don't have any Container Stores, so unless one happens to stumble on an independent store that carries something (I have yet to do so, and according

to Filofax's website, there aren't any), we're out of luck here, although there are several places in NYC that do. There's also a Container Store in New Jersey where my family is originally from, so I have to get my Filo fix where I can.

Speaking of which, I am very tempted by the Pocket Sized Cuban. Because I have been using the Personal size for quite a while though, I have to really look at the pocket size and see if it would do for my purposes - I don't know if I'll be able to downsize. Good thing I'm headed to NYC tomorrow! I'll let you all know if I come home with something new...

Laurie (2008-12-05 15:56:00)

I usually order my stuff from the Filofax US or UK websites. The UK website ships to US addresses, so I get things from there that aren't available on the US website.

Speaking of ordering things, INKY, tell all about your recent arrivals!!! And if I recall, you recently got a new Personal size binder, which one was it? How are you using it? We can hardly wait to hear all the details!

Kim (2008-12-05 18:15:00)

I bought my first Filofax this summer. I love it, as well as this blog! I live in the Netherlands, but here very little Filofax is available.

I decided to buy a Filofax when I was in on holiday in Germany; I actually spend several hours in this gigantic Filofax store they had there. Then I ordered my Filofax online from an English shop and I bought my diary for 2009 when I was on a holiday in Belgium.

Tur Tur (2008-12-08 07:19:00)

■ I'm curious as to where in the world everyone is commenting from.

Dear kanalt

Zurich, Switzerland. Around 12 stationaries with filofax refills for roughly speaking 360'000 inhabitants (just to make you a little jealous). But normally I buy my refills in Germany, because they are much cheaper there.

paulien (2008-12-08 14:48:00)

Hi Kim and others,

I am from the netherlands too. But around here there are quite some shops selling filofax. Try Akkerman in Amsterdam or Hoogstins. Especially Akkerman is very nice, they also order things for you if they don't have it in stock but most binders and inserts they just always keep in stock.

I don't think there are any specific filo products for our country, only diaries. No maps or anything. We do have a brand here called succes that has many things compatible with filofax. This is a Dutch brand so very widely available here.

Kim (2008-12-08 16:50:00)

@Pauline: I will try Akkerman when I am in Amsterdam! I live in Groningen and here only is one small shop that sells Filofax. In all the other shops they try to talk me into Succes..

Free for All Friday No. 23 (2008-12-05 16:53) - Nan

Don't worry, I'll soon post about my new Chocolate Finchley, of which I'm in awe. I've already taken pictures of it!

For now, hold forth!

—*Inky*

Vidya (2008-12-06 13:52:00)

Congratulations on your "blessed event"! :->

I have a red Finchley and I just love it. My boyfriend refers to it as The Brick.

Nan (2008-12-06 19:35:00)

LOL Thanks Vidya!

Laurie (2008-12-07 03:09:00)

Inky I can hardly wait! Not to be demanding, but there are some things I want to know, like:

Will you use this instead of, or somehow in addition to, your current Personal size Filo? Do you plan to retire your red one, or switch the binders out occasionally? (Or have you even thought about all that yet?)

I am very curious about how you will use your new addition!

Anonymous (2008-12-07 06:36:00)

I have a 'soft jade' personal Finchley, and I LOVE iT!

It already comes with cotton-cream paper as well which is beautiful.

Laurie (2008-12-09 02:38:00)

While we are waiting for Inky's full disclosure of her latest addition, I thought I would share with those interested a new use for my semi-retired Personal Filo.

The other day while I was doing my Christmas cards, I realized that there are several people on my list who have moved in the last year. So I got out my black Personal Buckingham (which I keep in my grab-and-go emergency bag) to update the addresses. I keep my addresses in my A5 Finsbury, but I like to have all the addresses up to date in my emergency Filo too.

As I was entering the new addresses and handling the Buckingham, I noticed how soft and smooth the leather is (which is not the case with my bumpy Finsbury). I have a lot of fond memories with my Personal size Filo. I have traveled with it a lot and it has been my lifeline for years. I remember sitting at an outdoor café in Munich drinking a beer and using my Filo to plan my trip around Europe, consulting the fold-out Europe map, calendar for travel dates, and list of contacts in each city. I thought of all the changes in my life since then, and how much my Buckingham and I have been through together. It made me sad that it's relegated to retirement in my emergency bag.

I like my A5 for home use, but the Personal size is definitely easier to carry around. We have a trip to Scotland coming up next week—we go every year for Christmas and New Year. I was thinking of bringing my Personal along so I don't have to lug the A5 in my carry-on bag. Then I had (what I think is) a brilliant idea! I thought of the Moleskine City Books, where you design your own guide book of London, Berlin, New York or whichever city you want. I decided to do that with my Personal Filo for Scotland! We go at least once a year, and this year will be the 4th year in a row we've gone. I have notes scattered in various notebooks of places we have stayed, contacts, things to do there (this year or someday), etc. I decided to put it all together in my Personal Filo, and then every year when we go I have all the information together in the book, which I can build on from year to year. Everything from the phone number for the Indian take-out in Fort William, to potential accommodation in the Borders. Every time I come across a bit of information, into the book it goes.

Yesterday I redid the tabs and started putting in information. I have a section for emergency, medical and insurance. Then there's a section for our travel information like frequent flier numbers, accommodation contacts and the like. I have a tab for trips we have already taken to have a record of where we stayed, what flights we took, what the exchange rate was that year, etc. There is a section for maps including world, Europe, Scotland, and small city maps for Glasgow and Edinburgh. Then I have tabbed sections for regions such as Borders, Islands, Highlands, East Coast, Glasgow and Edinburgh. I am excited to start adding in information as I acquire it! Over the years the book will build into a very informative guide. I am very happy that I have discovered a way to actively use my Personal Buckingham. Now it can continue to be my loyal travel companion!

Anonymous (2008-12-09 05:19:00)

Oh My God Laurie!! That sounds absolutely amazing!!!!

I am really jealous!! I want another filo now so that I can do the same thing! I've been thinking of excuses to get a second filo... I might well get one in the new year for my own travels... i don't return to places year on year, but i do go away round Britain at least twice a year... I'm very excited by the idea!

gg (2008-12-09 06:47:00)

Wow, that is a great idea, Laurie.

Now I'll lay awake all night trying to think of something like that for my extras.

By the way, where did you get all the maps?

I got a couple of soft used Filofax binders off Ebay and am trying to think what to do with them—this is great inspiration.

Laurie (2008-12-09 09:36:00)

Thanks everybody, I'm glad you are excited about the idea!

The world and Europe maps are from Filofax (although it seems they aren't making the Europe map anymore, which is too bad because I really want an updated one!). The Scotland map is from the British Isles map package from Filofax.co.uk.

The Glasgow and Edinburgh maps I cut out of the pocket size Scotland 2008 diary that came free with The Scotsman newspaper early this year. It's a really cool little diary, although I never actually used it as a diary. It has a list of notable Scottish dates for 2008 as well as events happening around the country all year. I hope they do another one for 2009!

Years and years ago, (okay, 1995), I was turned on to the glory of a Filofax-style planner by a friend/ coworker of mine. She had a Cambridge personal-size zip-around binder, and I was fascinated with it. I asked her, "What do you put in there?" And her answer was, "Oh, EVERYTHING! My whole life!" Up until that point I had been using whatever planner had the prettiest pictures, usually Sierra Club or something like that. So a binder was a whole new thing for me. I ran out and bought myself a Cambridge zip-around and decked it out with all kinds of inserts. I even splurged on the calculator that fits on the rings (which I still use to this day, in my Filofax). She and I both happened to be moving to Hawaii, although to different islands. She had the great idea of photocopying a map of Hawaii and her particular island and sizing them down to fit into her Cambridge. I did the same, and I really got a lot of use out of those maps while I was there. I still do that wherever I am or will travel. In my A5 I have a map of Albania that I copied out of a guidebook, and also a map of Tirana. When I lived in DC I used my fold-out map all the time, because it has such a confusing street layout. There was a time when I visited Paris somewhat regularly, and I always kept a Paris rail map in my Filo. Now with the internet it's pretty easy to print out maps to put in, although sizing them might be tricky depending on resolution. I love having maps in my Filofax. They are inevitably useful, and they really add to the personality of my book.

Anonymous (2008-12-09 11:55:00)

Laurie's Filo sounds really fun. I am just starting—bought my first—a personal Lyndhurst—still getting it set up for 09—but the main hurdle is remembering to carry it and write in it! I have never kept a diary or a journal and have used the computer for appts. I hope the Filo turns out to be a better system.

Pamela (2008-12-10 01:24:00)

After a couple of years failing to decide whether I prefer paper or electronic, I've resolved to use my red A5 Finchley as my main diary/notebook/goals and ideas book for the whole of 2009. The weight is a bit daunting for everyday, but that should be more motivation to cycle everywhere rather than walk.

Inky - I saw the pictures of your chocolate Finchley on Flickr and in one it shows the cotton cream diary but it's 2008 and not 2009. Also, I see it came in the older-style black box packaging not the newer colour slipcase. Has the newer style packaging made its way over to the USA yet?

Nan (2008-12-10 16:44:00)

Laurie - I'll address your questions in my next post. Thank you for the wonderful stories and "City Filo" ideas. I'm drooling!

Pamela - The place I ordered the Finchley from (<http://www.dailyplanner.com>) seems to have a mixture of old and new product in its inventory. The Finchley came with a 2008 diary inside and an unwrapped 2009 diary tucked into the box. I went to the site recently to get more Cotton Cream paper for it, and found they have some "new" old forms, so of course I ordered some. I'll report back.

I think you'll like using the A5 for everything. I find having the additional space to write helps me generate more and better ideas.

Anonymous (2008-12-11 01:16:00)

My answer to a question posted on this blog a *very* long time ago ...

"How to turn a mini Filo into a wallet."

Warning* - severe hacking of innocent filo to make it thin and protrusionless below ...

1. Basis: Mini Domino - it has a less puffy cover than leather Filos.

2. Make a billfold: unpeel adhesive tape that secures elastic closure to the Filo's spine. Cut and remove elastic (tape should come off too).

Slot bills between the metal binder mechanism and the Filo's cover, with one end of the bills tucked into one of the pockets.

4. Store small pen: undo stitching that secures one side of the pen loop. Cut the other side of the pen loop. This exposes a slit where the pen loop used to be. The slit is in one of the two layers of the fabric laminate that comprises the inside cover. Use a ballpoint pen refill to make a 'pouch', with the top of the pouch being the bottom of the slit. You do this by easing the two layers of fabric apart to create a space to keep your pen refill (your new pen).

You end up with a thin mini filo with no elastic closure, and no pen loop (instead, you have a small pouch in which to keep your small pen).

The advantage of this filo is that, like a wallet, it can be carried constantly on one's person.

My 'filowallet' contains my calendar and diary, next action items by context, project lists, someday/maybe list and a notes section to record 'open loops' at the time they enter my puny brain (which I even put into the next action section at the same time).

Note: I also carry an a5 in my satchel for more creative work.

A Blessed Event (2008-12-10 16:49) - Nan



[1] In the comments for last Friday's post, a reader came up with the brilliant phrase above, comparing the acquisition of a new Filofax to the birth of a baby. (It's not the first time I've been accused to treating my Filo like a family member.)

A lot of people have been asking how I'm going to use this new organizer. Yes, I'm going to use it as my personal Filo in 2009. (The Daily Planner gave me both 2008 and 2009 diary refills.) I'm going to leave my current red Finsbury as is, and just copy any necessary information into the new Finchley. Well,

except the phone number pages. Those, I'll probably just stick right into the new book. I'm not doing a good job using my current tabs (To Do, Projects, Ideas, Lists, and Tel), so I'm not going to use the same set up in the Finchley. I'm going to stick with the built-in tabs and see what needs come up. So I guess I'm using the Finchley as an opportunity to make a clean break. The red Finsbury will be all set to go when I'm ready to go back to it. I may do so for the summer, when I prefer brighter colors to brown. For now, I think we're going to get along just fine.

1. <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gonanb/3094738938/>

kanalt (2008-12-10 20:27:00)

Congratulations! It's beautiful. I'm thinking about the Finchly in the Soft Jade for spring use. I wish I could see it first hand though so that I can tell how bright or dark the color is. We shall see. Enjoy the newest member of your family. =)

Laurie (2008-12-11 02:18:00)

Congratulations Inky!! How exciting!

Steve (2008-12-12 01:03:00)

Hmm nice, I can almost smell the newness of the leather from here!

Anonymous (2008-12-12 07:33:00)

I have a soft jade personal Finchley, Kanalt.

It's lovely. It's not too bright - a kind of muted green. I think 'soft jade' is an accurate description actually - the color is 'soft' if you see what I mean. anyway - it's not too bright!! would be good for spring definitely. I'm hoping to use mine until it falls apart...

I love the finchleys!

Free for All Friday No. 24 (2008-12-12 16:06) - Nan

Time to talk about new organizers and formats for 2009, or anything else that comes to mind!

—Inky

muse924 (2008-12-13 08:37:00)

Hello and Happy Holidays to all. I just saw a new A5 calendar refill for 2009 available on the FilofaxUSA website. It's called the A5 Family Calendar and from the photo it looks to have a new weekly format and all kinds of neat forms for home and family life. It's good to see new offerings like this :)

Vidya (2008-12-13 12:22:00)

I wandered into the local stationery store at lunch and lusted over the Filos, including the Finchley Mini. I even took a look at one of the A5s, but it just seemed so big. I know it would be easier to find paper and refills on an A5, but it just doesn't have the right handfeel. It's like dating a guy who, on paper, has all the right attributes, but is lacking an essential chemistry.

I'm starting to work on my 2009 goals and my Finchley plays a key role in that process. For months I've been taking notes (in my Filo, natch!) on things I'd like to accomplish in '09. When I get them all formatted properly, I print out a copy and tuck it into a clear envelope that I keep in my monthly section so I can refer to my goals frequently. I usually make an event out of goal writing— I go out to dinner, do a reflection on the old year and then start writing my hopes for the upcoming year. It's one of my highlights of the holiday season.

Lovely-Rose (2008-12-13 12:52:00)

hi, i need some advice: last year my husband gave my my filo as a christmasgift. i love it. it's a A5 black metropol. but now he wants to divorce me and we're getting divorced now. he has already left me and lives with his parents again.

i'm thinking about getting a new filofax binder because this one reminds me of my husband. but i love my binder and those A5 binders are pretty expensive...
what would you do if you where me?
love Rose

Anonymous (2008-12-13 13:49:00)

Lovely Rose, that's so sad, and I really feel for you. I'm sure you will find happiness again, even though right now you're feeling so bad.

But the time you've spent with your ex has surely influenced your life and who you are in many ways, and you've learned things from this relationship that are useful and valuable. You certainly will want to think about this experience and gain from it, although you may be feeling right now that you'd like to just cut him, and everything that reminds you of him, out of your life and your memory for ever. But you'll be a smarter and wiser person, and you'll be able to reflect on what went wrong, if you move carefully.

You might put the Filo away for a few months. You could always get a less expensive three-ring binder, or one of the less expensive Filos, to fill in the gap. You will be able to take out the Metropol and use it again, and remember the good times and use it to plan better times. You might start making notes of all the things you have to be happy about—your family and what makes them so valuable to you, the wonderful weather—even the freezing weather in the Northeast creates beautiful photos of the ice on the trees and the lovely snowy landscapes. Try to find something every day that makes you happy or grateful for life. If you write those things down every day for a month, then you'll have something to look back through and think about. That's what I did when I was depressed, and I still do it. I still take my anti-depressants, but my happiness journal is a blessing.

You might try using the Metropol for your happiness journal and see if the happiness that builds up in it doesn't wipe out the sadness you associate with it. And if that doesn't work, just put it away until you can use it again. I've sure many of us here will be thinking of you and wishing you the best as you go through this part of your life. And you surely have many more people in your life who love you and will be with you in this.

Good luck in the new year!

Anonymous (2008-12-13 14:01:00)

Lovely Rose—

I just thought of something else that might help.

I've bought a couple of used ("vintage") filofaxes on Ebay recently. A5's don't come up often—they're mostly Personals, but I did get one for my daughter that was A5. I really like these binders—they're soft leather, stay open, and I love the feeling of their being older and love thinking of the people who've used them for the past twenty years before they fall into my hands. Go to flickr and look at the vintage filofaxes that someone has posted pics of there. It's a different take on filofax obsession.

So you might look at Ebay—do a search for Vintage Filofax and eventually an A5 will come up.

Also, go to your local Goodwill and/or Salvation Army resale shop. Or other consignment shops. They sometimes have used binders that are practically unblemished. I'm going to start looking there myself.

Another possibility is to get a three-ring address book at Borders or an office supply store—they can be nice, less bulky than filox, and are cheaper. I got one at Office Depot that had gold-tone rings and a leatherette cover for about \$20. I love it. Of course the pages aren't filofax-compatible, but you can always get a paper punch with adjustable punches and punch the pages when you're ready to move them into the filofax.

Good luck, and keep your chin up. The best is yet to come!

Laurie (2008-12-13 14:17:00)

Lovely-Rose, I'm so terribly sorry to hear about your divorce. Others here have given you some good advice on getting a different binder. I would definitely replace your binder. I was using a green A5 earlier this year during a difficult time in my life, and had to replace it because I couldn't even look at it later. I wish you the best of luck during this difficult transition.

Muse, thank you so much for the heads-up on the family calendar packet from Filofax, I have been looking for something like this!

Nan (2008-12-14 18:24:00)

Lovely-Rose, I'm sorry to hear your news, too. Definitely get yourself a new Filofax! You deserve it!

Steve (2008-12-30 13:46:00)

I will be using my A5 for my journal to record key events and notes on information to remember.
And I will be using my Pocket size Finchley to keep a check on my appointments and reminders
Steve

MissCharlie (2009-01-06 02:02:00)

First off, I LOVE your blog - finally, people as obsessed as me! :)

I've bookmarked it for further archive reading...

Second thing (since it's a free-for-all) I love the proper Filofax inserts, but I've just spent a ridiculous number of hours making my own 2page/day A5 inserts.

I'll give them a 30 day trial (I'm a fan of Steve Pavlina's time management theories too!) in a cheapo A5 two-hole basic ring binder, test drive the design, then if I can't find anywhere that prints customised Ffx-punched sheets (and I strongly suspect I won't) I'm going to get them printed up on A5 fliers, buy the A5 six-hole punch, and get busy.

I'll need to pick up a binder once I've decided too of course - but that's the best bit, so I'm saving that to last!

This is my first venture into A5, I've been devoted to the Personal size for 14 years now, but with self-employment, a new fitness plan and some shift-work on my plate, the standard "week to view" diary just isn't cutting it for size and detail.

Sections I've added to the two pages (I made them as jpgs in Photoshop, and then printed a bunch 2/sheet, using Word) include:

Schedule, with 21 lines for the days when I have to plan by the hour;

Work, just for the donkey-work stuff, like calls or tasks to complete that day;

Goals, so that I can make sure each day I have something that will progress me towards my long term plans;

Memo, for any thoughts I need to keep in mind constantly;

Gratitude, because I like to list 3 things I'm grateful for at the close of each day.

Having these on a day-to-view DIY insert means I can meld 2 notebooks, a folder, and my usual diary planner all into one place - BLISS!

(Any comments or suggestions on all this idea are much appreciated btw!)

Finally, Lovely-Rose, I am sorry to hear about your break-up - you've probably decided what to do now, and I hope your choice is working for you.

I know my Filofax is a major part of my life, it's like an annexe of my brain (and often heart) and I can completely understand why you were thinking of a change there. Good luck for a great 2009, anyway!

Laurie (2009-01-11 15:14:00)

MissCharlie, I love hearing about how you use your custom pages! Sounds like a very useful and comprehensive system. I like the idea of having so much space each day to record thoughts, plans, and goals. Keep us posted on it as things progress!

Family Affair (2008-12-14 18:29) - Nan

A couple of readers have mentioned a new A5-size family calendar, so I had to check it out for myself. To find it at [1]Filofax USA, click here, then scroll all the way to the bottom of the back and click Family Organizer Pack. (I assume it's available in the UK, too, but I wasn't able to find it on their Web site.) When you click a new window opens listing everything that comes in the pack, plus an offer to get \$10 off and free shipping on an A5 organizer. Presumably, the offer targets mothers who want the Family Pack but don't already have an A5 binder.

And the contents of the pack are yummy: Pages for school and sports info, shopping lists, emergency info, travel and party planning, budgeting, and (my favorite), a chore organizer! It also includes a 2009 week-per-2-pages calendar that has slots for different family members.

I can imagine you don't need to have a family to find this pack useful.

1. <http://www.filofaxusa.com/store/diaryrefills.asp?control=processrequest&SizeId=5>

Laurie (2008-12-15 02:17:00)

I am very excited about this! For awhile I tried to use a Go Mom organizer because it had these features, but the planner/ binder itself was not nice. My husband called it the "Mom jeans" of planners, and he's right! It's great that now we can have all the function of a family/ home organizer and the style of a Filofax!

Kim (2008-12-15 06:54:00)

I really like the idea for this calendar. But why is it advertised on the Filofax website as being for moms? What about dads?

Paige Paigen (2008-12-15 12:44:00)

That looks quite a lot like the "MomAgenda" product, which I think is a great idea. Aside from the blurb on the product page, it doesn't seem like it's only usable by mothers (unless you count the listing of "Mom's Cellphone" first as a bias).

MomAgenda used to have a preview of their main pages on their web site, but I can't find it right now.

I liked the concept so much, I developed custom pages like the MomAgenda stuff. Maybe now I won't have to bother anymore!

Laurie (2008-12-16 13:40:00)

Kim I agree, I think this would be very useful for everyone in the family. But let's face it, in most families it's usually the mom who manages the details! I know I do, and I don't mind it. I like being the details/ logistics person.

lovely rose (2008-12-19 13:13:00)

i like the idea too. too bad it isn't available in the netherlands.

megn (2009-01-07 23:27:00)

I showed this to my sister and she ordered it straight away. She said it arrived two days later and it's awesome. She's really getting into it. She took advantage of their \$10 off and free shipping offers and walked away with a complete package for \$65. I checked the other Filofax sites and it looks like it's only available on their US site. Here's the best link [1]Filofax Family Organizer

1. <http://www.filofaxusa.com/store/organiserdetails.asp?display=&sizeId=5&rangeId=126&dsizeId=5>

mincostflow (2009-01-09 12:33:00)

I agree with Kim. Maybe because I'm Canadian, I find this type of stereotyping a bit unacceptable.

Laurie (2009-01-13 02:17:00)

I don't understand why the pack comes with A-Z index tabs, since the binders already come with these. Seems like it would be more useful to include blank tabs instead to label as needed.

Megn I'd love to hear more about how your sister is using hers! I am still on the fence about whether I need all of this or not. I think it might be more relevant for me next year when my oldest starts school.

Anonymous (2009-01-14 13:20:00)

I've had the following as a reply from filofax UK about the Family organiser:

However, we are in the process of launching a new "Family Organiser" diary pack in A5 and personal sizes. This pack will include pages such as birthdays and anniversaries, babysitting information, shopping lists, meal planners etc.

We think that this will prove to be really helpful for busy families, and hope to launch around June/July time this year. The first pack will have an 18 month diary due to the time of the launch, but after that it will be a normal yearly diary.

So it looks like it's coming the UK.
Simon

Laurie (2009-01-15 09:58:00)

Thanks Simon! So the UK will have it in Personal size too, the US one is only in A5, at least for now. Interesting.

megn (2009-01-21 21:31:00)

Update on my sister Danielle. She really loves her Filofax family organizer. She thinks the calendar layout is brilliant because it really helps her to keep track of everyone in her family (2 kids, 1 dog and a husband). She also likes all of the different topic pages like the kids sports information, pet care, party planner and home repairs. She's becoming a real "Filofax fanatic", and has begun showing off her new calendar to anyone who will stand still. So far the only thing she doesn't like is that she chose a black binder. She wishes she had chosen a nice pink one instead!

Laurie (2009-01-28 16:09:00)

Thanks Megn!! I keep telling myself I can get through this year with the calendar setup I already have, but I am still tempted by the family organizer. I hope they make it for 2010 because it will definitely be useful for me next year.

So funny your sister is becoming a Filofax enthusiast, it certainly has that effect on people!!

A Glimpse into History (2008-12-23 11:28) - Nan

On one of this blog's most popular old posts, [1]A Rock, a Hard Place, and Some Complaints about Each, we recently got a comment from someone who worked at the Filofax Head Office when the organizers were still lovingly handmade in England. The writer tells us eloquently what it was like to work for the company in those years, including visits from [2]Grace Scurr, the woman who recreated the company's information from her personal Filofax when the original headquarters was bombed in 1940.

I urge all of you to light the fireplace, pour a snifter of brandy, and take a look at the post, which has a rich, lively comment thread as well as this exciting new addition.

For further reading pleasure, here's a [3]New York Times article from Filofax's American heyday in the late 1980's when celebrities like Woody Allen and Diane Keaton were seen carrying their organizers everywhere.

1. <http://philofaxy.blogspot.com/2006/07/rock-hard-place-and-some-complaints.html>

2. http://www.univie.ac.at/Schroedinger/3_96/time24.htm

3.

<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9B0DEFD81E3FF93BA35757C0A961948260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=all>

gg (2008-12-23 17:30:00)

I enjoyed reading the Rock... post and the comments. It was interesting to see Kevin Hall's comment, as I've really enjoyed the photos of his collection on Flickr. Unfortunately the link to his Filofax chronology doesn't work. Does anyone know if the chronology is available elsewhere?

Thx!

And Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all...

-GG

kanalt (2008-12-23 18:32:00)

I too enjoyed the post and comments and was also disappointed that the link to the Filofax Chronology is a dead one. I would have loved to have seen that. As for Kevin Hall's Flickr collection - was there a link to this? I couldn't find one...I'd love to see that too.

Happy holidays!

gg (2008-12-24 11:27:00)

Kanalt, Kevin's Flickr pics are posted under the name Biscuits in the House-go to flickr.com and do a search for "vintage filofax" and you'll find the pics.

There's also a user named gmax who has some nice pics.

But looking at the Flickr pics just made me yearn for more!

-GG

gg (2008-12-24 14:23:00)

Here is Kevin Hall's Chronology of Filofax.

[1]Link

1. <http://web.archive.org/web/20070702203228/http://ukcoldwar.simplenet.com/documents/filofax/chronology/>

Anonymous (2008-12-27 19:55:00)

Okay. First, forget the official holepunch. Fiskars makes a single hole punch in an array of sizes. If like me, you are allured by the "six punch at one time" hole punch, you may be relieved to know that it is not necessary. It is a quite appealing thought to completely reinvent the wheel, but it is not necessary. Buy the the white sheets. No lines, completely blank. Use your imagination. Getting caught up in the notion of making your Filofax perfect is ridiculous. It can't happen. Work with what is provided, save your money and make it your own. By the way, using more than one, quite frankly, defeats the purpose. Have one. Only one. Leave the tabs as they are. Assume they mean anything you want. How many subjects do we need anyway? Add art. Add comments. Anything. The Filofax is the most versatile instrument I have ever known. I have used one for twenty two years. In that time, I have tried to improve upon it. Can't be done. There were days when I couldn't live without it - and days, months when I could not stand to look at it. Try as I might, I cannot let it go.

Has anyone else ever thought that way? Don't be shy. You know you are out there. . .

Miss Charlie (2009-01-06 03:34:00)

Not really, Anonymous! :)

Firstly, I'm a "recovering perfectionist" so need one area to let my insanity run wild and free... the day in 2006 when I meticulously hand-made tabbed dividers printed onto parchment-coloured card for my Personal Ffx comes to mind, but it was all time well spent because I enjoy them to this day.

I added my own names for the sections and put photos of things that have meaning to me on both sides... suffice to say that me, Word and Photoshop had a long day of it! :)

Secondly, I think our Filofaxes reflect our minds - so you use yours one way, and get what you need from it and have methods that work for your life - I do things differently, and I suspect that no two people who are serious users have the same systems, or aspirations.

I bought the Personal sized hole-punch because it looks smart, I had the cash at the time, and I can just stamp and go, and while it's not a cheap item the pleasure of making my own inserts meant it was good value: if/when I move to A5 I'll do the same, despite the cost.

Periodically tweaking my system is relaxing for me (I appreciate that other people might feel VERY differently!) and so I don't just enjoy the end results, but also the journey and experiments to get there.

The world would be very dull if we all thought alike! ;)

Kevin Hall (2009-01-06 08:44:00)

They were very interesting comments by the person who used to work for Filofax. It's quite reassuring to know that the people who worked inside the company felt it's change of direction in the early 90s wasn't a positive one. Personally I shouldn't have to ask myself why I carry a 15 years old Filofax binder but they don't make anything I would choose to buy now.

When I closed down my web site unfortunately the chronology was a document that was removed as well. I do intend to put it back on the web complete with full references that my original lacked.

Miss Charlie (2009-01-06 12:37:00)

Kevin & folks, if you input [http://ukcoldwar.simplenet.com/documents /filofax/chronology/](http://ukcoldwar.simplenet.com/documents/filofax/chronology/) into the internet archive at <http://www.archive.org/index.php> and select the page starred for Feb 18 2007, you can still read it!

Miss Charlie (2009-01-06 12:39:00)

Oops - my link got chopped, but it's on the post here so hope y'all can find your way there if you're interested! As a matter of interest, filofax.co.uk has pages in the internet archive too - useful if you're thinking of buying a recent second-hand Ffx off e-Bay, that the official site no longer lists.

Kevin Hall (2009-01-07 04:23:00)

Thanks - I know the original chronology is in the Internet Archive but it does need some improvement and I hope to publish the improved one soon :-)

Laurie (2009-01-10 14:00:00)

I think Anonymous and Miss Charlie's posts both reflect just why the Filofax has become such an enduring (and endearing!) tool for so many people. It can be whatever you want it to be. Its flexibility is unmatched, and it always has the classic, cool, classy look that Filofax is known for. Really, what's not to like? However you use it, it's great.

Anonymous, I would LOVE to hear how you have used, modified, and evolved your Filofax during your 22 years of usage. Anything you would like to discuss would have a welcome audience here!

gmax (2009-01-25 17:39:00)

Kevin - I'd love to see that updated version of your fine chronology document when you get round to it.

