
Planners 101: Creative Ideas for Choosing and Using a Planner with Stephanie Fleming

Chapter 1 - Chapter 1

Overview

(upbeat music) - Hi, my name is Stephanie Fleming and I am co-founder of me & my BIG ideas, and we're the creators of The Happy Planner. Now if you're new to The Happy Planner, The Happy Planner is a customizable, disc-bound planner system that combines your love for creativity with your need for organization. Who doesn't need that? There are so many options, and that's a good thing but it can also be a little overwhelming. So in this class, I'm gonna walk you through everything you need to know to make your planner work for you because that's what's most important. I'll help you pick which planner is best for you, and then we'll walk you through how to customize. And then the most fun, accessorizing. So we're gonna dive right on in and show you how to make the most of your planner experience. (upbeat music)

Choosing your planner

- Teaching someone to plan is like teaching someone to dress. There are so many different styles that you really have to get into it and decide what works for you. So one of the first places to start is asking yourself what is it that you want your planner to do for you? There are a lot of different options. Say you want to use it to be more productive and to set goals. There's different ways of tracking wellness and budget, you might wanna use it as a memory keeper, you may want to use it as a journal. A gratitude journal or there's a lot of people using them as faith journaling. You may want to use it as a way to, let's say, organize your home documents or your work documents. The options are really endless, so the way to get started is to decide what it is that you want. So asking yourself that question, that very basic question, what do you want your planner to do for you will guide you. And if you don't know and you're just starting that's okay too, we'll start from the very beginning on which size to choose. The Happy Planner comes in three different sizes. Mini, classic, and then big, which is an 8 1/2 by 11. So if you're wanting to have a planner on the go a mini might be a really good option for you to throw in your purse and take with you on the go. Classic, which is the most popular size, it's kind of obviously a little step right in between and gives you a little bit of room to write things down, but it's not too bulky. And then the beauty of the 8 1/2 by 11 big planner is you can punch just regular pieces of paper and add them to the planner, so that you can customize all of the contents inside. So the little baby bear of the Happy Planner collection is the mini. And you'll see that the mini has seven disks and it's perfect for on the go. And let me just show you what it looks like on the inside. Pretty much every Happy Planner will come with this intro page right here and an at a glance calendar for usually the year that you're in and we're already jumping to 2020, and then we have what we call a dashboard. And the dashboard comes before the divider. And usually it's a place where you can jot down birthdays, important dates, and things that you need to know for that month. And we love incorporating really uplifting quotes on the dividers. Then you'll have a monthly view and then a weekly view. The minis come with a horizontal weekly layout, perfect for journaling, really great if you want to do any kind of bible journaling or gratitude journaling, and other people even take them as a travel companion if you wanna take notes while you're traveling. So minis are awesome on the go. And you'll notice that we kind of repeat the same dashboard divider, monthly view, and weekly view in each planner that we have. Something to take note of is that our months start on a Sunday, end on a Saturday, and then the weeks start on

Monday and end on Sunday. And you'll see when we go to a vertical layout why that's important, 'cause we like to see Saturday and Sunday within the same week, because I know that if I have plans on Sunday and I'm not looking at it on my weekly view I'm gonna forget about those plans on Sunday. So that's just a classic look at the mini. Now let's look at the actual classic planner. You'll have the same type of a layout. Here is your intro page, your at a glance calendar, and a dashboard, and a divider. And you'll also notice that we tailor the inside design of our planners to look like the covers. So that it's not just a standard inside planner layout. That's really awesome, because what you're gonna wanna do too is you're going to wanna take a look at what style of artwork you love. So here is the monthly in the classic size. You have a little bit more room. If you have more appointments or more things that you need to write down this is great for you. And then this is a vertical layout. So you'll see that your weekly view will go down vertically. And you can just use it to take notes if you like. I, for some reason, will see this as the day progressing. So things that take place in the morning for me will go up here, in the afternoon, and in the evening. You don't have to do that, that's just how my brain works. And then up here I like to put my top priorities. So this is one of those examples where you see Monday start and then Saturday and Sunday you have the weekends here, so that you can see what your plans are for the entire weekend. And then we just kind of go through the rest of the year like that. Let's take a look at a big planner. And this is an example of a themed planner. Obviously this is for a teacher. And we have teacher editions, student editions, there are so many options that you can choose from. But you'll see this size, 8 1/2 by 11, I'll show you a little bit later on that we have a punch and you can take your regular paper and punch that in. So if you're kind of on the go and have a lot that you don't wanna resize this is the perfect planner for you. In the teacher planner we have August tasks and then you have your regular monthly view, and then it's designed a little bit differently. So you have the days over here of the week, and then at the top is where you can label your class subjects. I have even seen a lot of people who would use this as a planner to either homeschool or use to organize their family. Some do by child or by activity. They get really creative with it, which is really fun. Once you've decided which size is best for you and what layout you prefer, then you're gonna wanna decide if you wanna use a theme. Now we have so many themes and so many different styles of artwork. It's really going to be what works for you. So let's take a look at what some of your options might be. Here are just a few of the themes that we have just to give you an idea of some of your choices. So up here at the top would be your regular calendars. So this is just what I showed you before, a regular calendar with monthly and weekly layouts. And we have it in two different beautiful styles, but you can see that you can decide on what you like based on artwork. So this one is obviously really whimsical and colorful and this is a really pretty neutral planner. So we have a lot of different options for you to choose from there. Down here are two of my favorites. This is a fitness and wellness edition. So you can see here that the goals section, your dashboard section over here is going to be more geared towards fitness and wellness goals. How I'm strengthening my mind, my body, and myself. So you're setting different goals in this planner. Your monthly would be the same. And then you can tell that the weekly layout is a little bit different. So you can set a goal for the week, you have a water tracker, you can put your tasks up here, your focus, your food log, your exercise, and you can customize this however you'd like to track your wellness goals. So if that is really a focus for you this would be a great planner. This is the faith-based planner. If you are tracking faith-based activities this planner would be very specified for your needs and may fit you better than a regular calendar type of a planner. If budgeting is what you're focusing on this is in one of the mini planners that's budget, but it also comes in a classic size. You can see that there's a savings goal, so you can track

what you're saving for the year. And then every month on the dashboard here there's a place for you to track your monthly budget, your expenditures, and your expenses, and then kind of balance it out here. And then you can see that this actually has the same kind of planner layout, the calendar layout, as the other planners. So you can go on and add your regular schedule to your calendar and then just every month there's a place for you to focus on your budget. And obviously if you get bigger and you go into a classic size it'll give you a little bit more space to track some of those items. Other option are just notebooks. These are called Happy Notes and it's just a disk bound note system. So what's great about that we've got a couple different dividers in here and this one is grid paper, but it also comes in dot grid and lined paper. And this is what I love about the planner. You can take this out and if you had a mini over here you can just use the same paper if you're taking notes over here and you wanna incorporate it into our other mini planner. And it also comes over here in classic size and big as well. So once you've chosen your size, your layout, and the theme that you want you are ready to customize.

Customizing your planner

- To give you an idea of what I mean by customizing I thought I would share with you two of the planners that I use on a daily basis. And the first one is my command central. And this planner is a little bit of everything. It was what I was talking about before, how you can take different parts of your planner and section them off so that you only have to really carry around one thing with you. And that is how I do that with my wellness planner, and I combine that with my daily calendar. So this is my baby. This is the master plan, the command central that comes with me everywhere. Let me just show you inside. These are the elastic bands. And most people put them across this way for some reason, I like to put it that way. Just marching to the beat of my own drummer. And okay, so what I do is I have set some wellness goals, and you'll see for the last year, from the beginning of the year I have used our wellness extension packs to track my journey to health and wellness. And as you can see I don't want to take this around with me everywhere every day. But I do wanna keep track and archive so I can take a look back at my journey. So I put in one month at the beginning of my regular planner with some motivational photos in here that I put in the page protectors. And then I have kept one month here where I'm tracking my health and my wellness. One month at a time is easy. You can take that with you, it's no problem. I use this divider as a way to separate and also mark my page. So I've got set up for the rest of this month. And then my divider here would be my regular, here's the intro page. My regular weekly monthly planner that I take with me pretty much everywhere. And punch all sorts of things in there. With me, and this is my weekly. So I also have usually about six months at a time in my planner. Then another divider here, dashboard/divider, where I have note paper because right now since I was traveling I didn't put too much in. But this is where I have note paper. I take it with me to meetings. And then in the back I have a pocket holder where I've taken out some of my favorite stickers so that I can then just have this on the go. I put appointment cards. And then I have this little pen holder. And then it is all ready to go. So I have everything I need in one handy place. Some people ask me, what do you do with the pages when they're done? I archive them and I keep them on this separate sheet. So I can go through and I have since January everything that I have done on this wellness journey, and I kind of write down everything. And it's kind of like a scrapbook almost of that journey. So if it's a focus of mine, which right now this is, I want to keep it. And I can't tell you how many times I go back and look at it. Now let's put together your command central. Starting with a regular 12 month planner what I'm gonna do is keep six months of this planner in at a time. So let's go, there's four, five, six.

And from there we are going to take the rest of the months out and archive them over here. I just have this hardcover on a set of discs that I have ready just to set aside and hold the months that I'm not using yet. The way to take paper out, and this is a really important question that we get asked all the time is you grab up here at the top by the discs and pull towards you. That way you won't compromise this binding, this punched edge here, and your pages will be able to be taken in and out over and over again without messing them up. And then to put them back in you just put your fingers on either side and push right onto the discs. You'll be able to do this really really quickly. Getting started we suggest taking a month at a time and no more. So you go to the next divider. Grabbing at the top, and then you kind of steady it over here, pull it towards you. And then before I put it here I'm gonna set it aside upside down. And you'll just continue... Through the rest of the months. Setting them aside. And it actually starts to go pretty quick. Gonna get rid of those six months because I don't know what I'm doing a year from now. So I don't need to be taking them with me on the go. Okay, so I set them aside. We can just pop them back on. They're really not that hard to set back on. So you do the same type of a thing going back. You're gonna line them up against the discs and then press down one month at a time. Onto this little extra set of discs. You can see how easy this makes customizing your planners. I change my mind all the time. I want this section in the front, I want it in the back. And it doesn't matter, you can change any time you want. Okay, I have these now on these extra set of discs. Like that. So when I finish a month over here, say I finish January, I will take January out, put it on this side of the divider, pass this over. And I'll take July and then add it to the back. So I will always have six months in my command central. And then this just gets set aside. Okay. The next part, you're going to want to take a dashboard/divider, whichever you prefer to call it. And we're going to add that in here. And this is going to separate your sections of your planner. So you can add a sticker up here if you want. I usually kind of just know where I'm at and flip through, plus I change it all the time. I am going to add a wellness extension pack. And again I'm only going to add I think maybe a couple months. Because this is a 12-month planner. I can add a couple months of this themed planner here. And what I mean by extension pack is it is a pack of pages, not contained in discs, not in a binding system at all, that you can add to any planner that you want. You can add the whole thing. You can create your own planner. This one comes six months, so you could actually buy two of them, stick them on some discs, and then add a cover, and you have your own planner. But today we're going to show you how to add them into command central. Let's add three months here. The last one because I love this divider. Pop those on the discs, and there you have your three months. And if you want you can always add this to that extra set of months that you have on the other end as well. So we'll set that aside. And before we go back and date this, because it is undated, we're going to take the next step. Add this divider/dashboard to separate your note paper. Now note paper comes in dot grid, lined or graph paper. And I love the dot grid, so if you're a bullet journaler, this would be a great addition to the back of your planner, or all on its own. So let's add these. And I would add about no more than 10 at a time. And you'll notice if it starts to feel like you're really pushing them down on the discs, that's too many. Because then you're going to start to compromise that punched edge, and that's when people say that their edges are getting a little worn. It's because of improperly taking them in and out of your discs. Pop those on there. And it's fun to just have, you know, just that little bit of extra color. That's what the happy planner is all about is positivity and just something that makes you feel good. Okay, we'll add that last little bit here. And you can see how quickly you can customize. It's actually just the decision part that's the hardest. Then the last part, another dashboard. Snapped on. And I'm going to add a pocket folder. And this is where I will put

receipts or reminder cards for appointments or bills, other good stuff like that. And then in the back I'll add a sheet of sticky notes because they are great on the go. And perfect for those appointments that you have that are going to change around. And let me add one more thing in the middle. So in the wellness section, I am going to just walk you through a little bit. The pack comes with these in the center. And you're gonna wanna shift these to the front. These are really awesome little exercises, little prompted pages, to help you figure out how to fall in love with taking care of yourself. A little bit of prompted worksheets here for, well, self care means what is that kind of a lifestyle mean to you? And then writing a love note to yourself basically so that you're good to yourself. Extension packs come undated to give you the flexibility to start whenever you'd like. So one of the helpful tips I think might be good to share today is how to date an undated planner. Each extension pack comes with two sheets of stickers to help you date your undated extension pack. Feel free to write down if you love your writing, you can just add those numbers in. But if you want a little help, you can use these stickers. So let me show you just really quickly what those are for. The big numbered stickers are meant for the weekly layouts. Of course you can use them wherever you want, but that's how they were designed. And then these stickers right here that come after are for the front and back of your dividers for the months. The small numbers are meant for the monthly layout. And then the months down here are also for the monthly layout. Let me show you what that looks like. We'll start off with January. Put this here, gonna turn it a little bit. So, they're clear stickers so you can just put them on just like that. Front and back. It's pretty easy. We go here. We're just going to assume that January starts on a Sunday. And I like to take my X-Acto knife and put... The sticker right on the tip right here, to place it down there. I don't need to be perfect. But it just helps me a little bit to know where I'm going. Here is another little tip. Sometimes right here on the edges, if you're a righty, can be hard to kind of get up against when you're writing or working. One of the great things about the happy planner is we can just take that off. And you can work on your page off the discs. And that really helps. If you're a lefty the opposite would be true. You could take off that right side. A lot of people tend to like to lay their layout with their pages like this. That way you're working without the discs. And then they can just pop them back in when they're done. So that is how you would use the little mini numbers. Here's the monthly, so we'll go ahead and add this January sticker. And it doesn't need to be perfect. This is creative, so let's just put it tilt a little. You can add a little sticker here if you'd like. And then we'll move on to the weekly. So, make sure that when you are starting, you take a look. Right here if January is starting on a Sunday, always make sure, this is a Monday start, so you're gonna start on the 2nd. And that is one thing that, as much as I love this layout, that's the one little thing that you need to make sure you take note of when you're doing your stickers for an undated. It's the old saying that you measure twice and cut once. Here are the large stickers. And these large number stickers are meant to go right above the date. And again you can do whatever you want. You could use a colored pen and write a beautiful letter if you'd like. This is just one of the ways to make it easy for you, if that's what you're looking for. You could use the small stickers here if you'd like. But that's just how you'll go ahead and finish dating the rest of your planner. The other thing to note is we have given you five sheets in each month. Five weekly layouts. And you may not need that for each one. And this last page has the dashboard on the back that you're gonna wanna keep. So before you go ahead and stick all your stickers down, up at the top make sure you count out to see where it ends. And you may need to take out one sheet. Some people like to just see a blank week without anything in the middle, and that is fine. But another thing that you may wanna do is add some inserts into the planner, like a meal planner or a monthly habit tracker. And that sometimes helps wrap up your week so you can

see everything in one section. You can add so many different inserts to the weekly section of your planner, and that will really help guide some of the things that you need to do, and have it all in one place for you. If you find yourself wanting to add more paper to your planner and more sections, that's starting to make it look bulky, you may want to upgrade to the bigger size expander discs. As you can see here, they hold a lot of paper. So it's important to note that disc size is not dependent on the size of your planner, rather how much paper you have in the planner. So this is an expander disc with a lot of pages in it. This would be the same size classic planner with medium discs. This is what they come with. And then this one has the mini discs, using fewer pages. And it's important to find the right size disc for your planner capacity because that's what's really going to give it its steady binding. So if you have too few pages on a disc, you'll find that the binding gets a little wobbly. And if there are too many, you'll start to see that it's kind of busting at the seams, you're gonna wanna make an adjustment to your disc size. And the process is just the same as we just showed you. Taking pages off one month at a time, setting them aside, and then adding them to the appropriate size discs. At its very basic level all planning needs to be is your planner and a pen. It really can be as simple as that. But I love to take my happy planner and get really creative. I mean after all that's what this planner does. It combines your love for creativity and your need for organization. There are so many options for setting up your command central, and I think now we've got this segmented section where you can choose your themes and what you wanna focus on, and it will set you up for success.

Accessorizing your planner

- Planners tend to fall into two different categories: either very creative planners or very functional planners. But the truth is that there's always that in-between. And I'm a little bit more on the functional side, but like a little sticker here and there and there's also a before the pen and after the pen option, so those are just some general guidelines as to where you might fall when you find yourself accessorizing your Happy Planner which, to be honest, is the real fun part of this whole planning journey. So, what I mean by before the pen or after the pen is some people really like to get down and decorate with stickers or washi before they do anything, really getting that page all decorated and ready to go for the week and some people, more like me, are really trying to balance this huge, busy schedule and I don't know where things are gonna fall so I'm a plan as you go, functional planner. Sometimes I put a few stickers down, but I really just wanna know if I have a doctor's appointment at two o'clock and where that falls in my day, and then I kind of put in a spattering of fun stickers. So, let me walk you through what I mean. This'll be just like a sample of how I might set up a hybrid functional/creative planner spread. Here is a sample weekly layout and I am a vertical planner, so we'll work with this one and I'm lovin' the new lines we have here and as I mentioned before, some people really like to take their pages out of the planner while they work on it and you kind of eliminate working around the discs. So, I'll place that aside and we'll be working right here with this planner spread. And stickers are probably my favorite go-to planner item of all, actually just in life, I love stickers, so we're gonna start there and I'm gonna show you how I just customize my page just a little bit before I actually put everything in. One of the things I'm really loving is sort of a ROYGBIV rainbow theme and you can still achieve that when you're not looking at your regular old red, orange, yellow, blue, so I am going to take this sticker and I'm gonna place this up at the top of my week and again, I love using my Exacto or craft knife for that. Then we got with the next color and see, it doesn't have to be orange, it can be this really pretty coral. And I'm putting these up at the top and it will really help as I choose some of my stickers for this week that

I'm actually gonna follow that same kind of color pattern all the way down each weekly spread. I think green is next. And choosing colorways for your spreads, if you are looking to try and make some sort of a cohesive statement, that seems to really work well and it's got a good design element to it. If you don't want to, don't worry about it, there's no problem. So, that's how I'm gonna set up this part. I think I'm gonna leave the weekend for a little weekend banner and, or I might leave it blank, you just never know. And flipping through the stickers sometimes is where you get your best ideas from. I think I'm gonna use this hello weekend. This is a nice little clear sticker and I'm just gonna eyeball this one. Don't take this too seriously, it's just planning, so it doesn't have to be perfect. So, okay, here you've got the planner with the headers up at the top and, like I said, I've gone through and given this a little bit of a rainbow color and I think I'm gonna add some quote down here. One of the things that I love is just to have something that seems to be speaking to you and, again, flipping through a planner sticker pack that has, like, you never know what's gonna speak to you. Let's do live life in color. I think that one, I like that one for this layout. I like it for that week in my life. I think I'm just gonna put it right down here. Just adds a little bit of pizzazz to this page. Okay, now normally when I go through and do my planning, I will put in some of the standing meetings that I have and I tend to have a lot more meetings than many people, so I'm not gonna bore you with a lot of those, but I'll show you what I mean. I'm gonna choose this coral box sticker and place it right down here on Tuesday in the sort of orange column because I have a meeting on that day and then I have another one later, so I'm gonna go with a smaller one 'cause I think this is gonna be a quick call. Put it right about there. And then I use, in the yellow, I like to use gold because the yellow stickers, we didn't actually do them because they didn't show up as well, so I like to use gold in that section. So I'll take a gold box here and this is gonna be a morning meeting, so I'll put that there. And down at the bottom, we'll use this and we're just gonna wing it and this is date night. Wednesday date night. So, we're gonna put that big block down here and then I have a couple on Friday. So this is an example of if you are going and planning ahead of time. This might not happen all in one sitting, this might happen over a week's period of time or some time that month if you find that you have a lunch meeting on Friday, then you can take your sticker and put it down here and then write down as you go. Color coordinating is just a really great way to make your pages come together and it looks on purpose, that's a big design thing, it looks intentional. So, I'm gonna put these little asterisk stickers right in the box for meetings and appointments that I have and obviously these are stickers, so they're really easy to use, there's not a whole lot of how-to. You just get in and play with them, that's really the most important part is just layer and play with the stickers and it will start to really make your pages come to life. So, you'd find yourself saying: Okay, on this day I have a 10:30 manager's meeting and then I have a call here with Teri and then a 1:30 marketing meeting. And I will spare you all every single meeting, but you get the idea. You can actually put quotes in these as well, you don't have to have meetings. For those of you who say I don't have a whole lot of stuff going on in my life, then use the space for something that you do want to track down, it doesn't have to be meetings and tasks, it can be to-dos, it can be a cleaning schedule, it can be journaling, anything you want, these are just starting places. I'm also going to add little shoes in here where I want to work in my exercise. Again, I'm color coordinating this little ROYGBIV. And we're gonna do Friday, as well. All these before work. And then I can just add walk before work. Color coding is a great way to have things jump off that page at you so you don't have to really go searching for them. Stickers are a great way to color code and so are highlighters. Mildliners from Zebra are my favorite just because the colors are amazing and seem to go really well with the Happy Planner. I like to highlight right here. So if this is in the blue column, again, I'm gonna

highlight it in blue. And what I like to do is sometimes I will go through and highlight a few things that I need to really have come off the page at me, but the other thing I like to do is just to write a lot of different tasks. So, if on this day, on Friday I need to answer my emails and then maybe I need to call Patty and maybe I have to clean out my Roomba because you all know we have to clean out our Roomba or else she's not gonna do the work for us. So, if I have those things on my task list for Friday what I'll do is, as I go through and when I'm working on them or I know what needs to be drawn attention, I will highlight that thing as I go through and then that way I know I'm either working on it or in the middle of it and then when I'm done, I cross it off. Go through and just cross everything off. That way I know if it has not been highlighted and crossed off, it's something that needs to go on to the next week with me. Now, a lot of people freak out because they love their planner spreads to look beautiful and as a piece of art, but since mine are functional, that's how I operate. That's idea of how I would start a basic spread, but I also love to add things like invitations and photos to my planner using the Happy Planner punch. Sometimes I have flights that I need to have worked in here and that I need to remember, but I also really, really love showing photos and including photos because nothing helps you through a busy week better than your cute, little family so let me show you how to punch this picture, or anything else for that matter, to put in your planner. So, this punch is actually for not like a regular hole punch, but for the Happy Planner binding specifically and it will fit in just perfect. So I'm gonna do it this way and the best way I know how to do, I'm you're not doing something that's being lined up that's the exact size of the classic or big size, which is right here on these lines, is you kinda take a look down here where those punches are and I just center it. It really isn't that hard and it's not that big of a deal, but you just punch it. Now you have the punched edge here and just as easy as that, these little guys are now going to come around with me all week long. And if you have a photo or if you have something that you don't want to punch or you'd rather just do something different, you can also use these adhesive snap-in tabs. They're self-adhesive on this side and sticky so you just put it on the back sheet of a piece of a paper. I've already done that here with, this is a airline confirmation. We'll just put this behind these cuties. You snap them in. I'll put my car rental information in there as well and this kind of layering technique is really great for your weekly section and what I love the most about it is that in that week all those things that I need to reference are right here. I know I have them in emails, I know it's on my computer, but it's so nice having them right in my planner right in the week where I need to reference them. This is basically the beginning part of my week, so it's the beginning part of how you would get started. At the end of my week, it's gonna look a lot different. For example, this is a week that I was actually very productive, but you can see how I've highlighted and crossed off items that I've gotten completed and there are a few things that are just kind of lingering that I had to go back and add to the next week. I have places where I can reschedule and of course we have a sticker for that. There are habit trackers where I can track my supplements and also some cute, little food stickers. This would be what a normal week would like like for me and I still think it's pretty. So for me, the creativity comes with the color and the sticker and actually just getting stuff done and having fun while I was doing it. Now, for the monthly view, we get a lot of questions when people say: I'm putting all of this effort and all of the time into my weekly spread, do I have to duplicate that on the monthly spread? And the answer is, no you don't have to. I look at the monthly view as a place where it's kind of at-a-glance what's happening in your month all in one little visual piece here. This is a place where I like to incorporate washi and everybody loves washi tape. One of the ways that I use it is to block off when I'm going to be out of town. So, I can look really quickly, like I said, at-a-glance and see that from the 24th to the 27th, and this is how I tear my washi, I just line my

Exacto knife up and pull. So, from the 24th to the 27th, I will be out of town and I will also put that over here on the seventh and eighth, which I have a short trip there. Give that little washi. Washi is so forgiving, you really can do so much with it. One of the things I love about it when you're paper crafting is that you can stick it down on this paper and bring it back up again and it won't tear the paper, so it's pretty forgiving. And I love how on this month I can see what I have going on and for me, when I'm gonna be out of town. I'll also put some washi when I have an event or something at work, we have some designers that will be in town here and so let me get my Exacto and that I can notate there. So you can really tell when I look at April what's going on, I know the weekends that I have that are available and you can use stickers for this as well, but if I just write that I'm going to Hudson, Ohio on a sales trip and then this one we're gonna be in Texas. We'll have our artists in town. So that way, I know really quickly when I have time. I can add stickers to this and I can show you a couple different examples of what a spread might look like and here's a couple examples of some spreads that have been a little bit more creative. This designer, this is April, she's one of our design team members. April has used this little black and white photo that she's cut out into the shape of a circle, she's added a cute, little washi tape up at the top and this little washi tape cake is adorable to show a birthday. She's just layered the tape on different designs and then just added this little pen stand. So cute. And you can tell hers is very clean. April is the queen of color coordination, so she's picked this pink, teal, and then gone with a black and white theme and it comes together so well where she has looked and I think taken a cue here from some of the artwork that's already included in the planner. She's used sticky notes here as a way to move things around if she needs to, that's always giving you a little flexibility. And the washi tape, as well, for her for different things that she wants to jump off at the monthly view for her. Here's what that might look like on a big planner. So this is one of the eight-and-a-half by 11 planners and if you have a lot that you want to do or you really just want it to stand out and be real clear, this is awesome for that. Washi tape, again. This one looks a little decorative. Adding stickers here really brings in some of the artwork. Sticky notes. And this one can be clean. Don't feel like you need to fill everything unless you have stuff that needs to be filled, it's okay to have white space. White space is your friend. This is the monthly and this is an example of how that same kind of look would look on a weekly spread. Same flower theme, the same colorway pretty much. I think she's incorporated purple. But I believe that April is really keen on picking either two or three colors, so you can tell. She's picked the pick, purple and maybe this yellow and gone through and found stickers and sticky notes that have that same color palette and it really ties this together. In fact, it looks kind of like a piece of art which is beautiful and also functional and even brings in a little bit of memories here with her boys at baseball. So, another idea, when you're talking about doing colors is very, very simple. These are sticky notes and you can see here that the white space is working really well and not everything is filled and there's not, there doesn't have to be stickers everywhere. The stickers are really working for her and the colors are there as well enough to make you feel like not only is this beautiful, but it's also functional, as well. And on the flip side here, this one is a little bit of a busier, more functional but a real spread. It's not all about making it look like a piece of art, you also want it to be functional and that's okay too. So, if you want stickers, go ahead and add them. If you need to put in more things that you've got going on, go ahead and do that. And layering is your friend, always bringing some extra depth to where your sticker story is here. Don't be afraid to just do what feels right for you. The possibilities are endless and if I had two pieces of advice to give you, the first one would be just start. I know sometimes a blank piece of paper can be a little intimidating and you don't wanna mess up, but this is just paper and you can flip the page as soon as you want to, so just start.

I promise you, you will find your way and you'll find your style and you're gonna love it. And the second is to just be yourself. Find your style, don't compare it to anybody else's. This is your place to be creative. This is your permission slip to be creative, be organized, really combine that whole process of becoming productive and also being creative. So, I hope that you really dive in there and get it and have fun with it and as we always say at the Happy Planner, live creatively and plan a happy life.