

Start a SWIPE File



For inspiration on demand...

Swipe files are a collection of excellent material that give you a great springboard for to come up with lots of ideas, whether you're a graphic designer, copywriter, author, or someone looking for inspiration for your own personal growth!

A swipe file can be a source of creativity triggers, it can help you mix and match—as well as recombine—old ideas in new ways, and it can help you learn from the best. Instead of starting with a blank page, you begin with a reservoir brimming with brilliant ideas and images.

Here's what to do:

You can use a notebook or binder; you can keep your findings in a box—a shoebox or a hat box if you have one – or you can create a digital swipe file by using a platform such as tumblr.com or an app like [OneNote](#).

ANYTHING THAT CATCHES YOUR ATTENTION CAN GO IN YOUR SWIPE FILE

Stuff your notebook/box/file with quotes, stories, images, poems, video URLs, pieces of fabric, and anything else that catches your fancy.

Fill the pages with random facts which may at some point prove useful: the human body has 210 bones; Elias Howe invented the lockstitch sewing machine—after struggling with his original design which did not work as it should, the answer came to him in a dream in which he was captured by a bunch of savages carrying spears with eye-shaped holes near the top.

Include the URL of YouTube videos you find inspirational, such as the Brene Brown on '[The Power of Vulnerability](#)' or '[Cowboys herding cats](#)' for when you need a good laugh; or anything from TED.com.

Create collages from images you cut out of magazines; add vintage postcards. Include images or sketches of faeries and other wee folk, as well as angels whispering in the ears of small children and genies imprisoned in colorful glass bottles – whatever takes your fancy!

Pick up pieces of paper you find with interesting messages scribbled on them and add them to your notebook; collect secrets from postsecret.com; even social media can be a source of good material for your notebook.

CREATING AN ELECTRONIC SWIPE FILE

One of the easiest ways to create a swipe file is to do it electronically. You can use social bookmarking services, or note-taking software, or even create a document you keep on your computer. With a digital swipe file, you can literally just cut and paste as you find interesting resources on the internet. A swipe file with Tumblr allows you to add any elements of the

Start a SWIPE file



webpage you are visiting simply by clicking a button on the toolbar. And, keeping an electronic swipe file can make it easier to share your findings with others, if you want to.

SO REMEMBER...

Your swipe file is personal and can contain anything that moves or inspires you. Whenever you need ideas for your writing or painting or creating, simply sit back in a comfortable chair, make yourself a cuppa, and wander through your swipe file, fully expecting to be inspired. Look through your swipe file at night right before going to bed so that the words and images can marinate in your mind as you sleep. In the morning when you wake up and apply yourself to your task, the ideas will explode like multicolored fireworks in the inner recesses of your mind.

And if you think it's stealing to use other people to inspire you, read Austin Kleon's book "Steal like an Artist", and watch his TED talk [HERE](#).

AND JOURNAL...

Keep journaling using your swipe file. Make a note next to the swipe...

What made you swipe that image or those words or that colour? Does it help your creativity to be inspired by others?

Enjoy, and go create something...



"Creativity is seeing what everyone else has seen, and thinking what no one else has thought."

~ Albert Einstein ~