



Make today's moments
tomorrow's family treasure
with scrapbooking.



Abundant Forests Alliance
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Getting Started on Your Family Scrapbook

Photos are the heart of most scrapbooks, but they are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the hundreds of items you can include to tell the story of your family. Using a variety of materials helps to make your scrapbook more interesting. And since so many of these materials are made of paper, it's good to know they come from a sustainable resource — our forests. Using all kinds of papers will not harm or diminish North America's forests, especially when you make maximum use of each piece and recycle all of your scraps.

Scrapbooks can be very complex, with fancy fonts, embellishments and hours of painstaking hand-crafting. But, a simple design that starts with just a few pages of paper, some photos and handwritten words can be just as meaningful. That's the great thing about scrapbooking — there is no wrong way to do it. Whatever style suits you is just fine.



A family scrapbook is a vivid, living document that connects one generation to the next.

So, where do you begin? At the beginning, of course, by gathering the photos, letters, objects, and memorabilia that have meaning to you and the members of your family.

Step 1: Gathering Photos and Mementos

Gather as many photographs as possible. Sort them so they relate to one another and to the album's theme. You can affix the original photos in your album. Or, if you want to use them for other purposes, scan your photos into a computer and print them out on a color printer (burn your photos to a CD while you're at it). Be careful about photocopying pictures, as some copiers are not acid free. And if the photo was taken professionally, be sure that it's not copyrighted before making copies. If you decide to use the original photos, consider securing them to the scrapbook pages with photo corners, instead of permanently adhering them to a page.

Collect everything.

Save small items that relate to your theme, such as old letters, awards, certificates, ribbons, calling cards, a lock of hair, menus, placemats, brochures, business cards, newspaper and magazine articles, programs, announcements, matchbooks, and food wrappers. These items add interest to the pages — and to your family's history. Save your mementos in a box or folder so that you remember where they are when you want to work on your page.



Think beyond photos! This scrapbook page includes hospital bracelets from Mom and baby. For bulky objects — like Aunt Jane's favorite brooch — take a photo of it to include on her page.



Every great scrapbook boils down to one thing: a story told in words, pictures, and, in some cases, objects. Embellishments add to the visual appeal, but are no substitute for the items they frame.

Include notes of what happened at the event so that you will be able to do your journaling with ease.

Objects from nature make interesting mementos. Leaves, flower petals, acorns and more can be creative additions to your scrapbook. Use a pH tester pen to determine the acidity or alkalinity of such items. If you are worried about using them in your scrapbook, avoid having them touch your photos. An easy and safe solution is to use photos of these objects. Heirlooms, such as a brooch, pocket watch, or even a large quilt, are family keepsakes worth preserving. To enjoy these items, photograph or copy them and include them in your heirloom scrapbook.

Step 2: Materials, and Techniques

A local scrapbook shop can help you find the right materials and supplies. Make your scrapbook special with the imaginative use (or reuse) of a variety of materials — photos, cards, ribbons, wrappers, stickers — whatever is meaningful. A scrapbook is all about re-purposing these things into a family treasure that will connect multiple generations.

It's important that you feel good about the resources used in a scrapbook project. Because when you scrapbook, you're not just preserving mementos. You're also doing something good for the environment by reusing and recycling all manner of objects. It's good to know that when you use and reuse paper scrapbooking materials, you are actually helping to keep our forests abundant. For every tree harvested to make paper and wood products, two more are planted. And harvesting trees thins out the forest, allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor. This helps trees to grow and gives many species of wildlife a renewed source of food and shelter.

Material Options

Albums

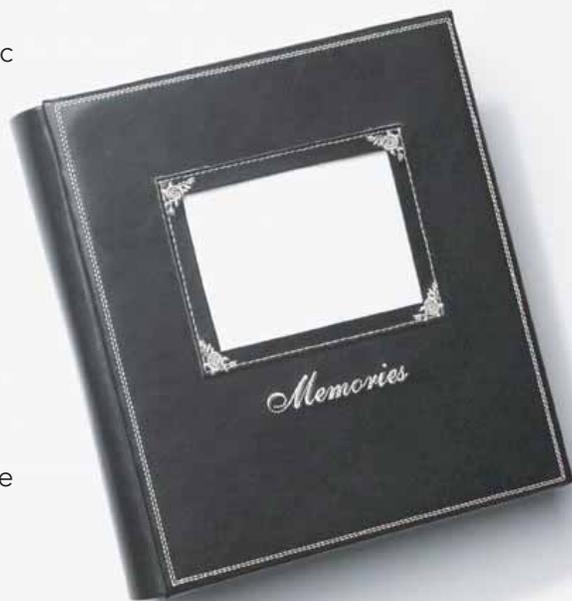
Photo-friendly, acid-free albums are available in standard 8-1/2 x 11-inch, 12 x 12-inch, and 5 x 7-inch sizes. Most will let you insert plastic page protectors. The most popular types of scrapbooking albums are:

- Three-ring: These familiar favorites have rings that snap apart for easy page insertion and removal.
- Spiral-Bound: This type of wire bound album has permanently attached pages that are ideal for one-topic and themed scrapbooks.
- Strap-style: Albums that use plastic straps allow the pages to lie completely flat when the album is opened.

Adhesives

There are a lot of different scrapbooking adhesives available, but some will work better than others for particular applications. You can choose from adhesives that set up instantly as well as repositionable types that let you safely lift and rearrange elements (wet bonds usually are permanent while dry bonds usually are repositionable). Here are the most popular types of adhesives and the best applications for each:

- Double-sided tape and dots: Usually sold in plastic dispensers, and available in both permanent and repositionable adhesives. Adhesive dots are great for adhering smaller items to layouts and are available in permanent and repositionable forms.
- Photo corners and sleeves: Photo corners with a peel-away backing come in sheets or rolls and in a variety of colors. Photo sleeves are made of clear plastic and have adhesive backing; they simply slip over your photos. Corners are ideal for attaching photos directly to layouts; sleeves work best for displaying photos that you may want to change later.



- **Spray Adhesives:** Aerosol spray adhesives provide an even layer of glue that can cover large surfaces quickly. Sprays work well for adhering background papers or photo mats, and the dried adhesive won't show through transparent papers, such as vellum. Use spray adhesives only in well-ventilated areas and away from flames; never let children use them without adult supervision.
- **Liquid Adhesives:** These come in a bottle, stick, pen, and wand applicators, and with thick or thin tips. The adhesive itself may be permanent or repositionable and fast — or slow-drying. Liquid adhesives work best for attaching small items such as punches or die-cut letters, or for tacking down dimensional items such as beads and buttons.
- **Adhesive Tabs:** White and transparent double-sided adhesive tabs come in roll form and in refillable dispensers. They're great for adhering both small and large items with minimal mess.
- **Adhesive Foam:** Use double-sided adhesive foam, dots, squares, and roll tape to secure items to your page and add dimension at the same time. They'll lift die cuts, letters, and cropped photos up to a 1/2-inch from the page surface.

Embellishments

Use embellishments to personalize and enhance your scrapbook pages by highlighting photos, drawing attention to journaling, or helping to set a theme. Although nearly anything can work as an embellishment, these three are amongst the most popular:

- **Punches:** Available in a variety of shapes and sizes, decorative paper punches let you create custom accents by punching shapes from whatever papers complement your layout.
- **Die Cuts:** These pre-made paper shapes are available at most scrapbook and crafts stores and come in many shapes, sizes and colors. For a fee, some stores will let you use their die-cutting machine with your own papers to create shapes and perfectly coordinate with your layout.
- **Stickers:** Acid-free, photo-safe stickers come in thousands of different themes and sizes and are widely available in sheets and rolls.



Pens and Pencils

Lots of different writing utensils are safe to use on scrapbook pages, but look especially for those labeled "acid-free" or "photo-safe." Also choose products that will resist bleeding and fading. All come in a plethora of colors and sizes.

- **Gel Pens:** These medium-line pens are ideal for journaling or outlining letters and embellishments, and they come in about every color imaginable.
- **Colored Pencils:** Available in hundreds of hues, colored pencils are a scrapbooker's staple, ideal for shading and adding highlights to lettering and creating embellishments. Use them with a blender — a clear, colorless pencil or pen — to smooth and soften your colors.

Felt-tip Markers: Besides giving you a range of color choices, felt-tip markers also come in several different tip styles. Here are the four most common tips you'll find:

- **Chisel Point:** This versatile marker has a tip with both broad and narrow edges and can produce distinctive decorative lettering and designs.
- **Monoline:** These all-purpose pens have tips that range from very fine to thick (usually specified in millimeters). The round, tapered nibs can be used to create smooth lines for basic lettering techniques, captions, borders, line art, and illustrations, as well as to add details to letters made with other types of markers.
- **Scroll Point:** This notched-tip marker produces a double line with just a single stroke. Use it to make basic block letters, design detailed borders, or draw straight double lines.
- **Brush Point:** This marker has a flexible paintbrush-style tip, which is useful for adding ink to rubber stamps and for filling in shapes and letters.

Templates

Take advantage of many shapes and sizes of templates to crop your photos, create embellishments and do dry embossing. Lettering templates also come in a range of sizes and type styles.

Scissors and Cutters

Most cutting implements you'll find for sale will work fine for scrapbooking. Here are a few of the handiest and how best to use them.

- **Scissors:** They come in straight — and decorative-edge styles. Long straight-edge scissors are useful for cutting large sheets of card stock and paper for freehand cropping photos. Small scissors work best for cutting out detailed embellishments. Decorative-edge scissors are ideal for cutting photo mats or anything to which you'd like to give a dressier look.
- **Crafts and Swivel Knives:** Craft knives are perfect for making straight cuts on paper and card stock and for cropping photos. Swivel knives are similar to craft knives, but their rotating blade makes them better for cutting along curves or cutting out letters and template shapes. Use these sharp tools with a self-healing or glass cutting mat.
- **Rotary Cutters:** Often used to cut fabric, rotary cutters are also handy for cutting large sheets of paper and card stock or trimming photos.
- **Paper Trimmers:** This tool is handy for making square cuts and straight edges. The larger sizes are capable of handling even oversize sheets of paper and card stock.



A day in nature may inspire a great scrapbook page. It's also an opportunity to teach your children about the value of trees in our lives. While you are hiking in nature, ask your kids how many things made of wood and paper they can think of, and how many times a day your family depends on something that comes from the forest.

Techniques

Journaling

Handwritten or printed journaling — the art of telling a story in print — separates scrapbooks from photo albums. As you plan journaling for a scrapbook page, keep these tips in mind: Try to let your journaling connect the page viewer with the actual event. Record more than just titles, dates, and names. Describe your reactions to what was happening, tell what the subject was doing, and why, share how you feel when you look at the photos, or point out what you notice now that you didn't when the photo was taken. Let someone else proofread a draft of your journaling before you add it to the page. Check for spelling and grammatical errors, or use the tools in your word processing program.

Practice hand-journaling to perfect your penmanship. Try writing your text in pencil before going over it in pen. Also experiment with different styles of script and a variety of writing instruments. Use computer type to record large amounts of journaling or create custom page titles. Try recording your journaling in shapes such as circles or hearts, or in a wavy or diagonal line for variety and interest.



Cropping

Cropping involves a variety of techniques and tools. Make multiple prints or photocopies before cropping your photos, and crop only small areas at a time. Don't crop Polaroids — the chemicals in the paper will damage your photos. There's not one right way to crop. You can use a craft knife and ruler to trim off a portion of the photo and retain its square or rectangular shape. Or use a pair of small sharp scissors to silhouette an image, cutting away the background. You can also use circle cutters and templates to create interesting photo shapes or simply crop the photo freehand. Here are some tips:

- Carefully compose your photos in the camera viewfinder before shooting to avoid excessive cropping later.
- Let the natural composition of your photo determine the final cropping. For example, a wide group of people will appear better cropped as a horizontal oval than as a circle. Let the photo remain the focus. Don't let elaborate cropping detract from the subject.

Matting

Use matting to make your photos, journaling, and memorabilia stand out on the page. Coordinate matting colors and textures with your photographs and memorabilia rather than detract from the subjects. Use a solid-color mat to blend in with the layout or a patterned mat to stand out. To create a simple photo mat, use a background paper or card stock that's slightly larger than your photo. Position the photo on the mat, and adhere it with archival-quality adhesive. Then trim the mat with straight- or decorative-edge scissors, a craft knife, or a paper trimmer.

Supply Smarts

Scrapbooking doesn't always involve buying lots of fancy supplies. Here are some valuable ways to help you use art supplies wisely.

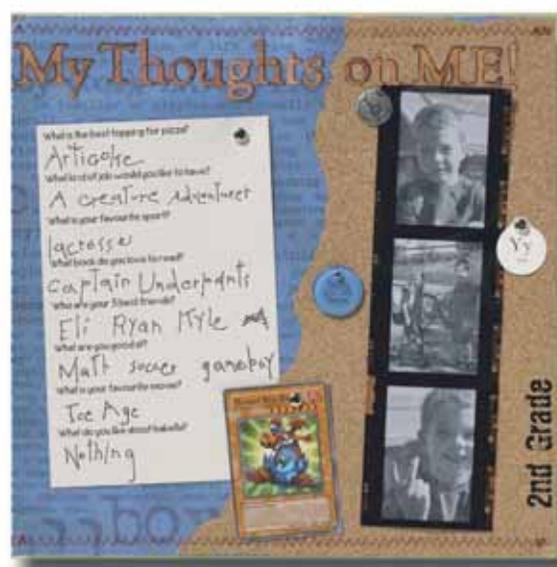
Scrapbook with scraps. Save paper scraps from one scrapbook project and re-use as decorations or accents on other pages. Scraps can be cut into smaller pieces, shapes or borders and used in various places.

Stock up on patterned paper. Just one sheet can provide accents to multiple pages of your scrapbook.

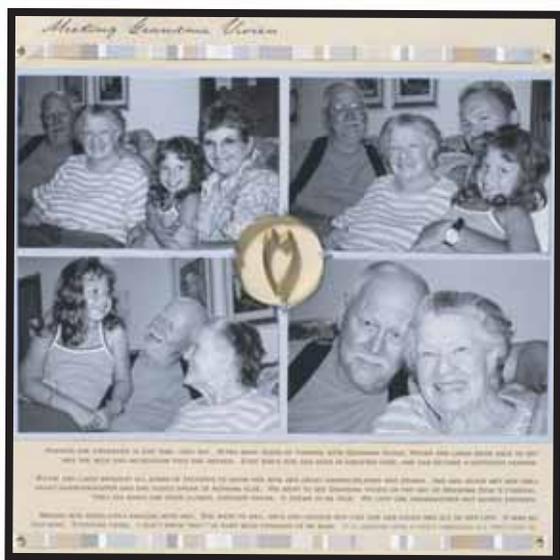
Save card stock scraps for printing. Don't think you can run small pieces of card stock through your printer? Think again. First, print on a full sheet of printer paper. Then temporarily adhere your piece of card stock over the printed text and run it through the printer again. Remove the adhesive and voila!

Recycle your magazines. Save pages with large lettering in interesting fonts and colors and cut out letters to spell names, places and more in your scrapbook. You can get creative with lettering, too. For instance, a "p" can be turned upside down to be a "d".

Use your book smarts. Pages pulled from an old dictionary or other old/damaged book make the perfect backdrop for a heritage page. Don't be afraid to put a colorful paint wash over the book pages to change their look completely.



Work on scrapbook pages with your children. As you are surrounded by paper trims, pages, stickers and photos, take a moment to tell your kids how important it is to use natural, renewable materials like these. Remind them that reusing and recycling wood and paper products is a great way for everyone in your family to respect the environment and help keep our forests abundant.



Remember that not everyone who looks at your photos will be as familiar with the faces as you are. Be sure everyone in the photo is fully identified so that generations to come won't be left guessing.

Scour the house. With a little imagination it is easy to fill your scrapbook with things you already have throughout your home (inside and out). By reusing materials and re-purposing mementos, you'll save time and money, and make your scrapbook truly unique. Be sure to recycle all trash and scraps — they are all reusable.

Office supplies = scrapbooking supplies. Everything you keep at your desk, from paperclips to scissors, can help put spare paper to creative use. Round edges of a border with a circle cutter. Use a hole-puncher to create openings to tie strings or bows through.

Use your imagination. Just about every leftover piece of paper, extra button and bit of ribbon can be used to accent your scrapbook. Think outside the box and put your supplies to good use.

Step 3: Creating Your Scrapbook A Family Generations Photo Archive

Here are some tips for making good use of precious artifacts.

Identify as many people in your photos as possible, and add specific places and dates whenever possible. Ask older family members for help and take your photos to family reunions and get-togethers for help in identification.

Be sure to wash your hands before handling old photos. The dirt and oils from your skin could damage them. The same is true for handling photo negatives.

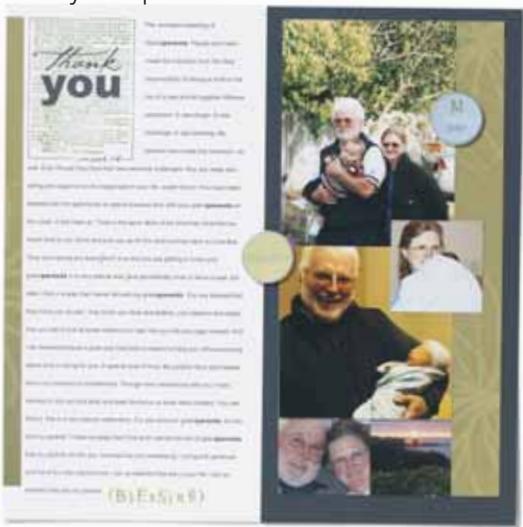
Store your pictures in archival quality boxes and envelopes. Acid and other chemicals are very damaging to photos, but particularly to older ones. Use only acid-free paper products and storage products designed for archiving. You'll find suitable choices at most stores that carry scrapbook, photography, or stationery supplies.



You need not make your photo archive as elaborate as this one, but you should keep it visually interesting by using photos of different sizes. Grouping smaller photos helps them hold their own against large photos.

Telling Your Family's Story

Your scrapbook page won't be complete until you tell the story behind the photos. The materials you gather for your scrapbook gain meaning from the stories that lie behind them. Ticket stubs from Woodstock, for example, won't mean much to anyone born after 1980. But relate your experience at Woodstock (or, at least, as much as you're willing to tell) and you have completed the link from your generation to those before and after. Here are some ways to use words to fill in the stories behind the objects in your family scrapbook:



Leave plenty of room for words on your scrapbook pages. If handwriting is not your forte, use a computer and some creative fonts to craft the story behind the objects on the page.

Add names, dates, words, or phrases, perhaps written on a stamped scroll or banner. Use acid-free pens and markers, available in a variety of colors, to handwrite the information. Or purchase rubber stamp alphabets in a style to suit your theme.

Include your recollections. Your memories may seem trivial at the time — the weather, what you ate, a travel situation, something funny that happened — but these details will prove fascinating to those who read your scrapbook years from now.

Make journaling your thoughts a family affair. Ask your spouse and your children about their favorite remembrances of holidays, vacations, birthdays, and family traditions, then record them. Identify as many people in your photos as possible, and add specific places and dates whenever possible. Ask older family members for help.

Add a personal touch. When recording the information in your family album, use your own handwriting. The warmth of penned notes and labels will give your album a personal touch that can't be generated with computer type.

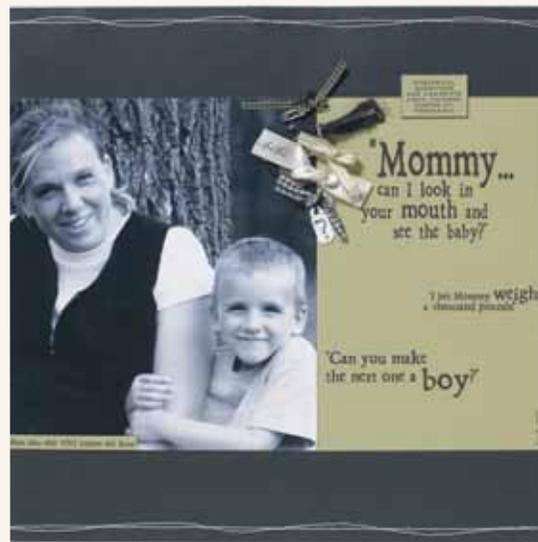
Cherishing Everyday Things

We all have small items (postcards, letters etc...) that we don't want to throw out. They can find a natural home in scrapbooks.

Record your child's school year. Include artwork she brought home, tests she "aced," handwriting practice and doodles. What a wonderful treasure to look back on years from now when your child is grown.

Save birthday party items. It's a great idea to include greeting cards that were received as part of your scrapbook page (or cut them up and use as accents). Any wrapping papers, tissue papers, bows, etc. are easy ways to give your pages extra meaning.

Make your most recent trip timeless. Items such as brochures, business cards and ticket stubs from your vacation can be used as main elements and decorative accents for your pages. Don't forget to save a map...it can be cut up and used as the background paper.



Ask your children to contribute their own words to a photo. Often, kids provide a special insight into a photo that you would never dream of.



Make romantic treasures. Love notes, greeting cards, bouquet cards...keep these invaluable gifts from your sweetheart in your scrapbook pages. Why buy paper when you already have the makings of a wonderful page right at your fingertips?

"These are a few of my favorite things." What better way to identify yourself and your favorite things than to include them (or packages or labels) in your scrapbook. Generations to come will enjoy looking at what a candy bar package or beverage label looked like.

For more scrapbooking ideas, go to www.abundantforests.org