

## How to Create A Heritage Album

A Heritage Scrapbook is a beautiful way to display your old family photographs and memorabilia safely. We will show you how, with a scrapbook and some basic supplies, you can design wonderful pages. By adding facts, family stories, or favorite recipes, your book will become a treasured pictorial family history which can be passed down for generations.

### Getting Started

- 1. Organizing your photographs is the first step** - Many Heritage albums are done in chronological order, either from past to present or present to past, so you will want to plan your book and arrange your photos accordingly. Place your photos in archival quality photo storage boxes or display sleeves until you are ready to begin your scrapbook.
- 2. Decide between using original pictures or scanned copies** - If you use originals you can not cut (crop) them. Old photos are usually brittle and can break if cut. Old Polaroid prints can be ruined if cut because the chemicals used in processing are between the layers, and may flake away.
- 3. Choose an album size** - 8.5” x 11” albums need fewer photographs to fill a page, and are easier to store. 12” x 12” albums allow more room for journaling and creativity.
- 4. Gather your basic supplies** – scrapbook album, page protectors, photos, acid and lignin-free plain and patterned papers, a photo-marking pencil, straight and decorative scissors, acid-free adhesive, acid-free photo corners, a paper cutter, a corner rounder, a journaling pen, a pencil, and a ruler or a journaling template for creating journaling boxes.
- 5. Decide on a journaling technique** – journaling is possibly the most important part of a heritage album, so plan on having plenty of space for it. How you choose to do the journaling will influence the number of pictures on a page and their placement. Hand written entries personalize your scrapbook, but journaling software programs are available for the computer. Whichever you choose, remember that you are telling your family’s story - you can’t write too much!

## Tips

Before actually constructing your pages, remember these important tips.

- ❖ Do not expose old photographs to prolonged periods of light.
- ❖ Wear white lint-free cotton gloves when handling old photos.
- ❖ Photographs can be cleaned by rubbing them gently with a soft cotton cloth.
- ❖ Take care with the corners of the photos – many are brittle and will break easily.

## Creating Layouts

1. Decide which photos you will be using and whether your layout will be one page or two. Choose your background and matting paper. If you are doing a two-page layout you may want to choose a patterned paper for the background of one page and a coordinating solid piece for the other. A solid mat should be placed under the pictures on the patterned background. You are not limited to dark colors, but let the photos guide your choice.
2. Place your paper(s) down in front of you, and lay the photos on top. Keep moving them around until you find the most pleasing arrangement. Remember to leave enough space for journaling boxes. You may even want to cut some paper boxes to help in planning. Journaling does not have to be done on both pages if the pictures are related.
3. To mat a photo, cut the mat slightly larger than the picture. If you are using square or rectangular mats you can round the corners, if desired. Also consider trying other mat shapes. **Use photo corners to mount the photo to the mat.** Place the matted photo on the page to check placement. If you are putting more than one photo on a page, place them all before adhering the mats to the page. **Use photo-safe adhesive to mount your matted picture(s) to the page.** For photos that will not be matted, use photo corners to place them on the page. **Adhesive should not be applied to the back of old photos.**
4. If you have photos with damaged corners you might want to use a ready-made frame, or make one. Larger photo corners work well here because you can adhere the frame to the photo corner and not cause damage your picture.
5. Create your journaling boxes using a ruler or a template. Write as much information as you know about the person or situation. Ask others to look at your pages and ask questions. This can help you to choose the information that should be included. Adhere the journaling boxes to your pages using acid-free adhesive.

## **Journaling**

Journaling on your scrapbook pages can be as simple as a caption telling the names of the people in the photograph, or as detailed as a biography or a short story. When you create a heritage album you should write as much information as you know in order to pass the history on to others. Some key questions to think about before you begin journaling are:

1. What are the names of the people in the photos?
2. What do you know about the people?
3. Where was the photo taken?
4. When was the photo taken?
5. What event was taking place? Was this a special occasion?

Answering these questions will give you enough information to begin your journaling. It is a good idea to write your information in detail. Always use first and last names so that readers in future generations will know who everyone is. Think of journaling as telling a story and use it to pass down family lore and traditions.

If you are not sure what information is important, show your layout to someone else. Use their questions about the photographs to guide you in your journaling.

## **Journaling Boxes**

You can use ready-made journaling boxes or create your own from the many scraps that you have. Use a ruler or a template to lightly line the paper. The size of your box will be determined by the amount of material that you wish to include, so plan ahead and leave plenty of space. Some people like to write directly on the page, but journaling on a separate piece of cardstock that is attached to the page is usually better at first. That way, if you make a mistake, you can correct it much more easily. Journaling boxes can be plain or ornate. The use of mats, embossing, stickers or rubber stamps can really enhance the box, and make your journaling stand out. Try to journal in your own handwriting, as it gives a more personal touch.

## Sources

Braun, Bev Kirschner. *Crafting Your Own Heritage Album*. Ohio. Betterway Books, 2000.

**D'Marie** ([www.dMarie.com](http://www.dMarie.com)) has an "Inspiration" section in which you will find the Poem Place – search for heritage poems.

**Family Matters** ([www.Scrapbooking.com](http://www.Scrapbooking.com)) offers informative articles and layouts in its Family History and Heritage Archives section.

*Family Tree Page Ideas for Scrapbookers*. Memory Makers Books. Denver, Colorado, 2004. Lots of ways to create a family tree.

*Making Heritage Scrapbook Pages*. Hot Off The Press. 1999. This book contains instructions, layout ideas, and papers for your Heritage album.

Slan, Joanna Campbell. *Scrapbook Storytelling*. Ohio. Betterway Books, 1999.

**Two Peas in a Bucket** ([www.twopeasinabucket.com](http://www.twopeasinabucket.com)) shows heritage pages submitted by contributors. You must be a member to access the layouts, but membership is free.

**Your Family Legacy** ([www.YFL.com](http://www.YFL.com)) – This site is very good for finding information about heritage scrapbooks. You will find sample layouts, journaling ideas, and informative articles. This is also a good resource for archival supplies.

*The Unwritten: Saving Your Photo Stories for the Future*. Think Quest. (<http://library.thinkquest.org/C001313/fmain1.htm>) - This site, created by three high school students who are also distant cousins, gives you lessons on interviewing family members, researching your photographs, and telling your family stories.