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What is Scrapbooking?

Do you remember those days as a kid pasting newspaper clippings onto paper and bundling dozens of papers together with some fancy ribbon or a string? Do you also remember all of your hard work falling apart two months later?

Now there's a grown up way to save and preserve your treasures: Scrapbooking.

The concept behind scrapbooking hasn't changed since grade school. You can still place photographs, newspaper clippings, poems, and tickets into your scrapbook to display and preserve your memories.

However, scrapbooking techniques and tools have matured substantially since you were a kid. Scrapbooking albums have replaced the messy bundles of paper. These albums are generally bound or placed in a three-ring binder. In this way, your hard work won't fall apart. Furthermore, new specialized covers allow protection from the outside elements.

Paste is also a thing of the past. Specialized glue dots and two-sided tape makes mounting your treasures simple and mess free. Many of these products are so strong that you can now decorate your scrapbook pages with ribbons, feathers, flowers, or even metal charms.

Due to these new techniques and tools, the uses of scrapbooking have expanded drastically. Scrapbooking is still used to hold personal keepsakes and for gift giving.

However, now scrapbooking techniques can be used to make baby announcements, grandparent books, gift cards, artwork for kid's rooms, recipe books, and even educational tools.

What Do I Need to Start Scrapbooking?

The best thing about scrapbooking is that although there are a plethora of scrapbooking supplies available on the market, you really don't need a lot to make your very first scrapbook. Basically, all you need to scrapbook is an album, some glue, a pair of scissors, and some photographs or newspaper clippings. Any fabric, ribbon, or bits of leftovers from other projects can be used to embellish your scrapbook.

As you get more acquainted with scrapbooking, you will find products that save you time and frustration. Many of these products are well worth the extra cost. At the top of this list is an exacto knife. This strong and versatile blade allows you to cut almost anything into any shape. When the blade is dull, the end is simply broken off to reveal another sharp tip. Just be sure to place the object you plan to cut onto a mat or wad or newspaper before using the exacto knife. Otherwise, the knife will cut right through your picture and into your scrapbook page or dining room table.

The next best tool is a pair of tweezers. Trying to pick up and place small gluey pieces is a hassle. Tweezers, though not very high tech, allow you to move pieces without touching them.

Speaking of gluey pieces, various glues and affixing options are available. These quick and less messy options include glue dots, two-sided tape, Xyron, acid free photo tabs, and polypropylene corners.

To increase the preservation of your scrapbook and your treasures, look for albums with acid free, lignin free pages. Both acid and lignin accelerate photo fading and general deterioration. Lignin is a chemical found naturally in the cell walls of plants. If the lignin is not removed in the paper manufacturing process, the chemical will cause the paper product to gradually yellow and crumble. Lignin and acid free products come in virtually any color and texture.

What Next?

The rest of this book is dedicated to the how-tos of scrapbooking. For your convenience and easy reference, each how-to is divided into easy to understand tips. As the name of this book suggests, there are a total of 101 tips. The first fifteen tips focus on the basics of how to do scrapbooking.

The remaining tips discuss various techniques and additions that you can use to make your scrapbook page even better. These tips gradually lead you from simple and easy beginner tips to more complex and advanced scrapbooking techniques.

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Theme

The theme of your scrapbook can be simple or complex. Your theme could be a special event such as a birthday, a baby shower, a wedding, Christmas, or Halloween. Themes can also be personalized to the scrapbook recipient's special interests. Special interests themes include favorite colors, sports, favorite television programs, music, the outdoors, or cultural influences.

What is the overall purpose for your scrapbook?

Who is the scrapbook for?

Who is the scrapbook about?

The answers to these three questions are all factors in selecting an appropriate theme. For instance, the scrapbook you are giving your nephew as he graduates from medical school is probably completely different than the grandparent book you send your mother. Your nephew will probably appreciate a scrapbook with photographs, poems, journals, and more masculine embellishments. Perhaps, the theme of the scrapbook could be medicine. You could create embellishments that looked like scalpels and tweezers around various pictures of your nephew during his college years.

Your mother, on the other hand, will love a multitude of baby pictures fancifully embellished with flowers, ribbon, and baby fingerprints. The theme of this book will probably be your baby. Photographs could include baby and grandma with the baby. A nice journal about your baby's day could also add a nice touch

Title

Don't forget to create a title for your scrapbook page. Though adding a title might seem to be obvious or unimportant, a title defines the whole basis of your scrapbook. The title instantly tells the viewer what your page is all about. In one word or one short phrase, the title tells the reader the theme and purpose of your scrapbook.

Titles can be as basic as the date of an event, the name of an individual, or a specific event.

Titles can also be more interesting and exciting. These can include quotes, sayings, fillers, or simple phrases. The best places to look for title inspiration are in greeting cards, advertisements, and commercials.

Color

Color coordination and contrast will highlight and accent your scrapbook. A well thought out color scheme can help define the theme of a page, attract attention to specific items, or detract away from mistakes. Poorly chosen color schemes, on the other hand, can cause your scrapbook page to look gaudy or mismatched.

Background colors can either be matched, coordinated, or contrasted with the colors in your photographs, mementos, or embellishments. Matching colors add to the continuity of the color scheme. Coordinated colors add depth to scrapbook pages. Contrasted colors focus the eye. In this way, color can be used to create the effect you desire.

A great way to see how colors look together is to collect and compare color wheels from your local paint or hardware store. Paint wheels are usually available free for the taking in nearly any paint department.

Photographs

Most scrapbooks will contain photographs. Even the most disinterested reader of your scrapbook will glance at the photographs. Pictures really are worth a thousand words. Therefore, it is important to choose photographs that are of good quality and clearly illustrate your scrapbook theme.

Any photograph can be used in a scrapbook. Even instant photographs can be used in scrapbooking. Just be careful that the chemicals within the photograph do not spill out on the rest of your scrapbook. Digital pictures can easily be printed right onto lignin-free and acid -free paper.

Always keep in mind that scrapbooking is permanent. Therefore, it is probably preferable to use copies of your only picture of Great Grandma rather than risk ruining the photograph forever. Simply scan the picture on

your computer scanner and print the image on lignin free and acid free paper.

Cutting and Cropping

Often photographs aren't quite the right shape and size or the photographic image is improperly centered. Having oversized or off centered photographs creates an air of unprofessionalism. Carefully cropped and sized photographs, on the other hand, enhances the overall look and feel of your scrapbook.

There are two ways to solve these problems. The low tech way to solve these problems are to manually crop and shape the photograph using a pair of scissors or an exacto knife. If you are manually cropping and cutting pictures, make sure that you mark the outline you want with chalk (or eye shadow if you don't have chalk) before you cut. Remember the old saying, measure twice and cut once.

To manually change a distracting or cluttered background simply cut out the background and replace it with a new paper background. This allows the eye to focus on the people instead of the clutter behind them.

The high tech solution to your photograph woes is to use modern computer programs such as Photo Editor. Using these programs, photographs can be magically darkened, brightened, sharpened, enlarged, and cropped without ruining your original photograph. Some programs even allow you to change the background of the photograph.

Order

There are no specific rules stating that all photographs or mementos must be placed in chronological order. Therefore, it is completely up you the order you wish to place your items and embellishments. You can place your items in a formal chronological order. You can also group items into formal or informal categories such as similar colors, events, activities, individuals, or families. Items can also be placed into random, abstract, or collages.

Be A Scrapbooking Pro

Each order has its own place in scrapbooking. For instance, chronological order might be useful for an anniversary scrapbook. Pictures and mementos of the couple's years together could be placed from the first day they met through the wedding day to the present day with each time period on a different page. This presents a feel of as time goes by.

However, a scrapbook for a parent might just have a collage of pictures and drawings. In this case, a collage lends to a feeling of overwhelmingly being loved.

Text

You may or may not want to add text to your scrapbook page. You may want to just write captions below the pictures. You may want to add your own stories or poems. You may want to add journals describing the day to day life of your baby or your child's accomplishments. Text can be used as either a focal point or simply as a supporting piece.

Text may be hand written. Alternately, computer fonts, letters, text, or three-dimensional images can also be printed or cut and pasted onto the page. In this way, various styles, colors, textures, and visual text effects are possible.

Tags

Tags are a little added touch of professionalism that adds to the overall well thought out look to your scrapbook. Tags can be used for accents, captions, and thought bubbles as well as dedications. The design of your tags will depend entirely on your personal needs and desires.

Thus, tags can be big or small, square or specially shaped, white or colored, plain or textured.

Furthermore, tags need not be made of paper. Some of the most interesting tags are made from fabric, wood, and furniture odds and ends found around the house. Be creative.

Pre-made tags are available at most craft or office supply stores.

Embellishments

Your own unique embellishments add a special personal touch to your scrapbook pages. Embellishments can be used as the main focus of your page, to highlight items, or as borders. Embellishments can range from simple items such as stickers and ribbon to more complex techniques such as adding faux beads and silver accenting. Use your imagination and creativity.

Embellishments need not be expensive. Odds and ends that you have from other craft projects work just fine. Be on the lookout for sales on fabric, plastic flowers, lace, beads, and whatever else takes your fancy. These items will no doubt come in handy on your next scrapbook project. Also keep a sharp eye out for deals in second hand stores and garage sales. Often used items can be ripped apart and the pieces reused literally for only pennies.

Patterning

How can you arrange your scrapbook page to best show off your mementos and embellishments? You can place everything in the center of your page, place a single focus item in the center, or divide the page into sections adding items to each section. You may also choose to lay the items out in a standard recipe or calendar layout.

Shapes also make interesting placement patterns. Common shapes include circles, squares, hearts, and stars. However, you can also place items in object patterns such as mountains, trains, or Christmas trees.

The shape you choose for your scrapbook will depend entirely on your theme. For instance, a logical shape for a wedding or Valentines Day scrapbook is a heart. A nice shape for a Christmas scrapbook is a Christmas tree. You might make a cake pattern for you niece the pastry cook. Let your imagination and creativity be your guide.

Various ready made patterning templates are available on the market.

Spacing

Spacing is a difficult matter. There is a fine line between having a balanced scrapbook page and a gaudy mess. If items are too closely spaced your reader will feel overwhelmed. If your items are spaced to far apart your viewer will feel short changed.

Look at your page.

Close your eyes.

Open them again.

Does your page look cluttered?

Does your page have more photographs than background?

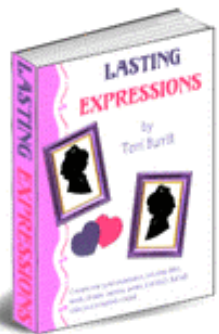
Are your embellishments drawing the focus away from your mementos?

Then, you need to simplify your page a bit and increase the spacing between objects. Remember you can always add more pages.

Is your page bare?

Is your page uninteresting and colorless?

Then, think about adding some more mementos and colorful embellishments. In this way, you can decrease the spacing between objects making your page more energetic.



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alive by using the hottest
product of all time:
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Mounting

Once your scrapbooking page is laid out to your liking you can begin attaching and gluing your various mementos, text, and titles. Never glue as you go! Not only will glue end up all over the place but you will no doubt find out too late that the title doesn't go well with the photograph or that the spacing is too tight.

There are several ways to attach items to your scrapbook page. Some of the best sanity savers include glue dots, glue pens, Xyron adhesives, and two-sided tape. Glue dots and glue are fairly mess free and stick to almost anything made of paper or fiber. Mini glue dots are great for those very small items. Xyron adhesives and two-sided tape works for those larger jobs and work on almost any item type.

Getting Rid of Messes and Mistakes

No matter how careful you are, you will undoubtedly find a mistake, mark, or mess on your finished scrapbook page. If you find a mistake, mark, or glue bits on your scrapbook page, just rub it off using a soft white eraser.

Alternately, make the mark into an interesting squiggle or doodle.

For mistakes in journal text, cover the mistake with a sticker the same color as the journal page. Then, just write over the sticker. White out can also be used for white pages.

Fingerprint smudges on your photographs can be removed by rubbing the fingerprints with a piece of flannel or a dry baby wipe.

Excess powder or glitter can be brushed away. This is time consuming and frustrating. The best solution is to reduce static electricity before you add the powder or glitter. Just place a dryer sheet on top of the page before you work.

Preservation

You put a great deal of time, thought, and effort into your scrapbook pages. Therefore, you should try to protect and preserve your work.

Be A Scrapbooking Pro

The most important way to protect your pages is by using lignin free and acid free products. Lignin free and acid free protects will reduce yellowing and crumbling. Also, use colored paper or ink that is resistant to fading due to age, exposure to light, heat, and other unfavorable conditions.

To protect your page from the outside world, use Mylar or page protectors. Special page protectors for three-dimensional pages are also available at most craft stores. These protection pages not only protect your objects but also reduce indentations caused by three-dimensional objects.

Making Copies

The great thing about modern technology is that you can make copies of your baby announces, recipes, and calendars without a great deal of hassle. This reduces time and money. Furthermore, the ability to copy scrapbook pages allows more scrapbooking uses.

Simply scan and print pictures onto paper or vellum. Then, paste your pictures onto cardstock and add a ribbon or other embellishment. Quickly and easily you have another copy of your baby announcement, recipe, or calendar.

Newspaper Clippings

A popular addition to scrapbook pages is newspaper clippings. Newspaper clippings of birth announcements, team photographs, or favorite celebrities add a personal touch to scrapbook pages.

Newspaper contains about 4% lignin. Therefore, yellowing and brittleness of the newspaper paper will eventually occur. However, since the percentage of lignin is low, newspaper will preserve for many years before this deterioration process begins to occur. To further slow this process, use Mylar or page protectors to protect the newspaper from the outside elements.

Graphics and Clipart

Various graphics and clip art are available on the Internet. Many of these items can be downloaded or printed for free. Downloading and printing images is a good way to find pictures or photographs of your child's favorite

television character or band for a unique personalized touch. Print these graphics or clipart directly onto lignin-free and acid-free paper.

Kid's Art

Kids bring home the greatest creations of macaroni, glitter, and finger paint. Unfortunately, the macaroni bits and glitter is soon all over the floor or eaten by the dog.

To save these creations, without the macaroni and glitter mess, simply scan and print your child's creations for use in your next scrapbook.

Kid's art is great for use for kid's rooms, grandparent scrapbooks, and kid's scrapbooks. These pictures can be used as backgrounds, as focus items, or as embellishments.

Weaving Photographs

For more dramatic results from your photographs, trying weaving two copies of the same photograph together. This technique creates a three-dimensional artist look. This technique would look great on a scrapbook for a graduating art student or a scrapbook for a friend who is quite artist and creative. This technique might also look good on a child's scrapbook with a kid's art background giving the whole page an abstract look.

To achieve this technique, first you need two copies of the same photo. On one photograph, draw evenly spaced vertical lines on the back of the picture. Cut along these lines with scissors or an exacto knife. On the other photograph draw and cut along evenly spaced horizontal lines.

Next, using alternate strips, from photograph one and then photograph two, weave the pieces together. To preserve the rectangular shape of the photographs, start your weaving in the center of the piece and work outwards.

Collage

Collages are congregations of photographs or news clippings. These items can be placed in any order or pattern. Collages can have a theme such as a single individual or an entire family group combined.

Collages create great funky scrapbook pages. This method is especially useful for surprise scrapbooks meant to overwhelm the reader either with all of their accomplishments or all those that care for them.

In addition to photographs and news clippings, collages can also contain blocks of text or embellishment. These additions can be used to increase the busyness and overwhelming nature of the collage or reduce the effect slightly by distracting the focus away from the collage.

To reduce shifting of the photographs as you select an appropriate collage design, place temporary tape on each photograph or newspaper clipping. Once the display is set, start permanently attaching the collage to the background.

Photograph Mosaics

An attractive technique for placing photographs into scrapbooks is the photograph mosaic. Mosaics stretch photographs into an artistic rendition of the original photograph. Maps can also be stretched in this way. This method might be employed to create a funky look for a friend scrapbook or as a background for someone who likes computers, GIS, or geography.

A basic cropping technique is used to create a photographic mosaic. Simply cut a photograph into evenly spaced squares. Then, glue the squares onto the background leaving an equal space between each square.

A white background or a background matching the background color of the photograph will add to the effect. A background of a contrasting color will reduce the spaced out effect of the photograph.

Markers

A marker is a seeming obvious tool for writing and embellishing on scrapbook pages. Markers are easy to draw with and can be used to color in portions of lettering, in borders, or to create accents. Unfortunately, regular markers tend to smudge and bleed through scrapbook pages.

Nonetheless, there are a few brands of markers (Markers Pigma and Color Workshop Blo Pens) available in craft and office supply stores that do not

smudge or bleed. These markers are also acid free, fade resistant, waterproof, and available in a variety of colors.

Wax Pencils

Another important writing implement for scrapbooking is a wax pencil. Wax pencils are soft pencils designed to write on glass, plastic and photographs. These pencils are easy to draw with and can be used to color in portions of lettering, in borders, or to create accents.

The unique thing about wax pencils is that if they are used on the front of a photograph, the ink will rub off. However, when used on the back of a photograph, the ink will become permanent. Wax pencil ink is acid free and available in a variety of colors.



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Stickers

Stickers are fun and easy to stick to scrapbook pages. Stickers can be used for captions, thought bubbles, to hide mistakes, or as embellishments. Stickers of your child's favorite cartoon or television program can add a personal accent to your scrapbook page.

However, not all stickers are suitable for scrapbooking. Check to see if the stickers are lignin free and acid free. Furthermore, be careful that the sticker adhesive does not dry out or seep around the edges. Never place a sticker on a photograph as the adhesive may cause irreversible damage to the photograph.

Rubber Stamping

Rubber stamps dipped in acid free ink can be used to create various embellishments. Rubber stamps can be used to create cute images for children's and grandparents scrapbooks. They can also be simple flowers or leaves to create elegant looks for gift scrapbooks.

Furthermore, these embellishments can be used to focus on a certain photograph or memento. Alternately, these embellishments can be used to soften the look of a busy or sharp image.

One low cost alternative to the rubber stamp is a cotton ball. This creates a shadowy effect.

Another alternative is to buy the pads and attach them to furniture castors. The thick caster allows you to position the stamp in exactly the right place. Moreover, attaching the stamp to a wider base allows you to press more evenly on the stamp. This creates a complete and evenly balanced stamp every time.

Faux Wax Seals

A good way to make your own personal seals is with Crayola Model Magic. Simply, roll out a small ball of the clay. Then, imprint this ball with a small rubber stamp or a brass seal. In this way, you can create whatever stamp impressions you can imagine.

Tearing

As the word suggests, tearing is the ripping of paper or tissue paper into various shapes or abstract forms. Tearing creates an artist look to backgrounds, borders, and embellishments.

Be aware however, because tearing does not comply well with all themes. In some more formal themes tearing appears unprofessional.

Fraying

Fraying can create extremely interesting and artist border accents. Fraying looks especially good in children's scrapbooks, as well as pages for your more creative and imaginative friends. Be careful, fraying does not comply well with all themes. In some more formal themes fraying creates an unprofessional appearance.

Just cut your paper border about an inch larger than you need. Then, dampen this border by dipping only the edges of the paper into a shallow dish of water. Then, the edges of the paper can then be easily pulled off.

Curled Edges

For a unique look to your background and borders, curl the edges of your border and background pages. Curled edges give depth to a scrapbook page. Furthermore, curled edges can soften and reduce the focus of a busy scrapbook page by directing the eye outwards.

To create a curled look, simply wet one edge of the border or background paper. Next, using your fingers, manipulate the paper into a curl. This curled edge can then be left as is, chalked, or inked for a more dramatic effect.

Antique Look

An antique look can increase the dramatic impact of your theme or add a feeling of wisdom and age to your scrapbooking page. Adding an antique look to your background or journals can be accomplished in several ways.

One way is to simply wrinkle cardstock. Another way is to scratch the paper with an emery board or sandpaper. Your antique page can then be left as is, chalked, or inked for an even more dramatic effect.

Leather Look

A leather look can add elegance to your scrapbooking page.

To create a unique leather look, simply distress cardstock. To do this, grip the cardstock in your hands. Then, with a gentle circular motion, rub the cardstock together as if you were pre-treating a laundry stain. Gradually, work your way around the cardstock until you get the desired effect.

Accents

Simple accents can be added to your pictures, borders, and backgrounds to create an air of softness and elegance. Simply rub chalk (or eye shadow) along the edges of the paper. The color of chalk chosen can be either a similar color to the background, a contrasting color, or an outlining color such as black or grey depending on the result you want.

Punching

Basically punching is the cutting out of an image or piece of text using a cookie cutter like tool. Most punches are made of die cast steel. They come in various shapes and sizes. Photographs and text blocks can be punched into virtually any shapes or sizes. These shapes can add to the impact of the themes.

For instance, pictures of your sweetheart can be punched into heart shapes to add to the romantic type of love. Alternately, small doves can be punched and placed along the borders to add a romantic touch to a wedding scrapbook. Titles and text can also be punched to create professional looking scrapbook pages.

When punching out and gluing small pieces of paper, place a strip of double-sided tape on the paper before punching out the shape. Next, just punch the tape into shape. Then, the piece is immediately ready to place.

Colored Paper

Additional color can be easily added to your scrapbook page through different colored backgrounds, borders, and embellishments. A light colored background creates a soft, farther away feeling; while a darker background sharpens the focus. Complimentary colors can be slightly lighter or darker than the background to direct the focus towards or away from portions of the page. Contrasting colors can also be used to create a more dramatic or focusing effect away from or towards various photographs or mementos.

Simply add, fold, or paste additional sheets of paper into your design for the desired effect.

Vellum

Vellum is a transparent, translucent material. Vellum can be used to create a slight shadow or shade change to background or embellishment colors. This can be used as a softening agent for baby scrapbooks, as a touch of elegance to gift scrapbooks, or to create dimension in a boring flat page.

To reduce the cloudiness effect caused by gluing, apply only a thin line of glue along the edges of the vellum. In this way, you will see a slight shadow only along the very edge. This will look like a border to the vellum. Vellum is available in both acidic and non-acidic forms.

Shadow Boxes

A great way to add depth to your scrapbook page is to add shadow boxes. Basically shadow boxes add a shadow to your images. Shadow boxes are also a great way to make your most important photographs or text boxes stand out from the rest of the page. Shadow boxes can also be to emphasis dedications.

To make a shadow box, simply cut a box shape out of paper. Next, put your embellishment on a larger square of cardstock. Then, add glue to all four sides of the cardstock square and attach it to the back of your paper. The embellishment will show through, adding greater dimension to your page.

Patterned Paper

Patterned paper can be used for backgrounds, borders, and embellishments. Often plain white backgrounds look rather boring and dull. Patterned backgrounds add a touch of excitement to your page. The right pattern tailored to your theme and purpose can also increase that professional look.

Colors and patterns can be used to coordinate with your photographs or to add dramatic effects. Paper with various themes and patterns is widely available. For instance, a birthday scrapbook could have a background made of your favorite gift wrap. This could add a touch of elegance or a touch of humor depending upon the patterned paper you choose.

Textured Paper

Textured paper can add extra dimension to your scrapbooking page. Textured paper can be used to highlight focus items on your scrapbook page. Textured paper can also be used as a background or border to give your page an interesting fresh look.

Textured paper is available in a variety of textures and colors and is available in most craft and office supply stores.

Book Jacket Backgrounds

For an added personal touch and artist flair use a book jacket as a background. This scrapbook technique looks especially nice when the book jacket is the reader's favorite book or author, adding a wonderful personalized touch.

Be aware, however, that the glossy coating on the book jacket creates an added challenge to sticking objects to this background. Alternative attachment methods include sewing and eyelets.

Adding Dimension

One good way to add dimension to images is to use double stick foam tape. Double stick foam tape literally allows items to pop out at your reader adding realism to items. This technique is especially useful in children's art and educational scrapbooks.

Simply, cut the foam tape into whatever shape and size you want. Then, attach to shape onto your scrapbook page. Double stick foam tape is available at most craft stores in various colors and thicknesses.

Ribbons and Lace

Ribbon and lace are by far the most common, and most beautiful, border embellishment. The flowing nature of both materials encourages a touch of softness and elegance. Ribbon and lace are especially popular in gift and memory scrapbooks.

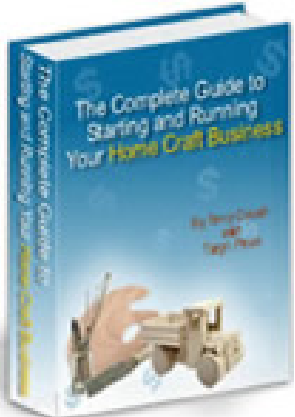
Moreover, ribbon is easy to glue and attach. Lace requires a bit more patience.

For an interesting change from ribbon and lace, try using jute or raffia.

Embroidery Cotton

Embroidery cotton can be used in a number of interesting scrapbooking ways. Individual fibers can be used to highlight focus items or used to add dimension to artwork or drawings.

Embroidery fibers can also be twisted or braided for use in artwork or as imaginative borders. Moreover, embroidery cotton can even be used as to tie down other items in a beautiful and creative way.



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Hemp

Hemp can be used for a number of purposes in scrapbooking. Single, twisted, or braided fibers can be used to accentuate focus objects, as picture frames, or along the edges of the scrapbook page as borders. Hemp looks especially good in western themed scrapbooks. However, hemp can also be used to make a scrapbook appear more masculine.

Hemp glues quite easily and hides glue messes well. To increase the likelihood that a piece of hemp will stay in place while the glue is drying, place a piece of scotch tape over the rope until the piece dries fully.

Puzzle Pieces

Puzzle pieces make playful embellishments and borders. Puzzle pieces give a creative and playful look to children's art and educational scrapbooks.

Since, the bottom of the puzzle pieces is flat, gluing and placing puzzle pieces is simple. Be aware, however, that puzzle pieces are generally not lignin free and acid free. This could drastically reduce the life of your scrapbook page.

Sequins

Sequins can add a creative flair and a dash of color to scrapbook pages as embellishments. If placed randomly in a variety of colors, sequins cause a dramatic, abstract, playful attraction to items and pages. This might be good for a young adult or college student scrapbook.

However, if the sequins are placed in specific patterns and colors the effects can be elegant and dainty. This might be appropriate for scrapbooks for older individuals.

Simply glue and place individual sequins using tweezers.

Sequins come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colors. Sequins are available at any local craft store.

Rhine Stones

Body art rhinestones can also be added to embellish scrapbook pages in a creative and colorful way. Rhinestones add color and shine to your scrapbook pages making any dull page more exciting.

Unlike regular rhinestones, body art rhinestones have an adhesive backing. Thus, body art rhinestones are easy to place directly onto scrapbook pages.

Rhinestones and body art rhinestones come in many different shapes and colors. Both types are available at most craft stores.

Feathers

Feathers make exotic and interesting embellishments and borders. Feathers add an air of softness. Feathers may be useful in scrapbooks with a freedom, peace, or quiet theme.

However, colored or exotic feathers may add a touch of adventure or a feeling of a far away land to a scrapbook page.

When gluing feathers, place a thin line of glue along the center of the feather. Alternately, use embroidery cotton to tie the feather in place.

Keep in mind, however, that feathers are not acid free. This will reduce the life of your scrapbook page.

Dried Flowers

Dried flowers make elegant embellishments and accents in scrapbooks. Flowers can be placed whole, in bunches with other flowers, as petals, or punched into various shapes. Flowers can be used to add a homey touch to photographs or to draw the eye away from cluttered scrapbooks. Flowers can also be used to add to an outdoor or elegant theme.

When gluing flowers, place a thin line of glue along the stem or directly on each petal. Alternately, use embroidery cotton to tie the flower or a bunch of flowers into the appropriate place on your scrapbook.

Remember that flowers are not lignin free and acid free. This will reduce the life of your scrapbook page.

Natural Objects

Various natural objects can be used as interesting and creative embellishments for your scrapbook page. Choose items that will add to your theme of outdoors or personal hobbies.

Keep in mind that objects such as shells, pine cones, leaves, and twigs become quite brittle and messy. These items are not appropriate for long lasting scrapbooks.

Popcorn Garlands

Add popcorn garlands to your Christmas scrapbook pages.

Just use a cloud punch to create the individual popcorns from regular paper. Next, crinkle the individual popcorns and roll them into tight balls. Then, glue individual popcorns together to make garlands. Add a red punch cranberry for additional color.

Fur

Fake fur can be used to add details to drawings and embellishments on your scrapbook page. Fake fur is fun on children's artwork, to create animal embellishments, or to create wild designs.

To attach fur, simply cut out the desired shape. Then, paste the fake fur onto your scrapbooking page or onto an object.

To reduce static electricity, place a drying sheet over the fake fur before you glue it into place.

Glitter

Glitter can add a wonderful sparkle to your borders and fonts. This creates an artistic look to your child's artwork.

Glitter can also create a huge mess if you don't apply it properly. The best solution is to reduce static electricity before you add the glitter. Just place a dryer sheet on top of the page before you work.

Next, place the glue in the areas that you want glittered. For even better results, Xyron the objects use want glittered. Then, using an eyedropper, apply the glitter. The eyedropper allows better control of the glitter and reduces mess. To clean up, simply brush away the remaining glitter once the object is completely dried.

Wax Resist

You probably experimented with the technique of wax resist in elementary school. You take a clear or white crayon, draw a pattern, write words, create a background, and then color over the design element with acrylic paints, Lumiere, walnut ink, etc.

The wax will resist the paint and show through, resulting in a great design. Wax resist makes a creative background for children's artwork as well as children's scrapbooks.

Acrylic Paint

Acrylic paint can be use to draw and paint embellishments or create accents around focus objects. These embellishments and accents can be as simple or as fancy as you desire and your talent allows. Furthermore, acrylics are opaque so you won't be able to see the text underneath the paint as long as you go over it a few times.

For more control, use a dry marker as a paintbrush. To clean these markers paintbrushes, simply wipe with a damp cloth.

Acrylic paints come in every imaginable color and is available at most craft and office supply stores.

Liquid Appliqué

Liquid appliqué can be use to draw and paint embellishments or create accents around focus objects. These embellishments and accents can be as simple or as fancy as you desire and your creativity allows.

Liquid appliqué is fairly easy to use. Just gently squeeze the liquid onto or around the desired image or form.

Best of all (or worse should you happen to mess up), the liquid is quick drying.

Fabric

Fabric can be used in many ways to enhance scrapbook pages. Fabric can be used as a background or as a border to enhance dimension and texture to your scrapbook. Various shapes and sizes can also be cut or punched out of fabric. These items can then be glued onto your background or borders.

The various colors, textures, and weaves of fabric allow a great deal of creativity and imagination.

Kool Aid Dye

Kool Aid makes a fabulous paper and fabric dye. This dye can be used to create a funky pattern on fabric.

Just mix a packet of Kool Aid with about twelve ounces of water and stir until the mix dissolves. Next, place the paper or fabric you want dyed into the Kool Aid for a few minutes. Then, rinse the material under cool water and set to dry before use.

Pockets

Sometimes, you may want to temporarily store objects in a pocket. Pockets allow you take out and put back items or journals as you see fit and replace them without damage to your scrapbook page.

The easiest pocket is simply an envelope. However, pockets can also quickly and easily made by folding a piece of paper in half and then gluing three of the side edges.

Pockets can also be made of fabric sewn together. In this way, pockets can be virtually any texture, color, and weave to suit your required needs.

Eyelets

Eyelets are round stub-like pieces of metal. These items are generally used as a way to anchor difficult or heavy objects to your scrapbook pages. Eyelets can either be attached by pushing the eyelet prongs through the

background or attaching them with glue dots. Some types of eyelets also make elegant accents.

Eyelets are available in a variety of colors and shapes. These significant items are available in virtually all craft stores.

Pop Up Windows

Sometimes, you may want to temporarily hide photographs or objects behind a window. These Pop up windows allow these items to be viewed and then hidden once again. This is a great technique for educational scrapbooks where text outside the window asks a question and the answer is contained inside the window.

To make a pop up window, divide a piece of paper into three sections. This paper can either match, compliment, or contrast your background color. Next, paste the middle section of your pop up window to your background. Place your object or photograph on top of this middle section. Then, simply close the window.

A nice bow or other embellishment can also be added onto the outside of these windows to add an elegant touch to the window.

Hinges

Hinges are used to make pop up windows. However, by using hinges, you can make more permanent and stronger pop up windows made of wood. Generally the hinges are anchored to eyelets for increased support.

Hinges are available at any local hardware store.

Moldable Foam

Moldable foam allows you to create anything your imagination and talent allow. You can create three-dimensional object or you can create three-dimensional borders or backgrounds. This technique looks great on children's artwork and in educational scrapbooks.

Moldable foam can also be made into three-dimensional hearts or doves for wedding scrapbooks or personalized items for graduation scrapbooks. You can even use moldable foam to make your own rubber stamps.

Moldable foam is available at most craft stores in a variety of different colors.

Buttons

Buttons can be added to pop up windows for effect or to educational scrapbooks as a learning device. Adding buttons to a scrapbook page can be as simple as adding a ready-made button. However, you can also create customized buttons that match your background or general color scheme.

Bazzill paper is great for this purpose. Simply wrap a ready-made button with the paper. These buttons can then be glued or tied onto your scrapbook page with thread or embroidery cotton.

Charms

Metal charms add a unique personalized element to scrapbook pages. Charms are available in all sorts of sizes and shapes to fit nearly any theme. In this way, charms can be added to memento, graduation, or gift scrapbooks to create a personalized feeling to the page.

There are several ways to attach charms to your page. One way to attach metal charms is by sewing the charms directly onto your page with thread or embroidery cotton. This method works well on scrapbooks with fabric backgrounds.

Another method is to string wire through the charm and attach both ends of the wire to secure eyelets. The ends of the wire are then pushed into the background where it is hidden from view.

A third method is to glue the charm directly onto the scrapbook page. Most regular glues do not work on metal. However, check out your local hardware store for metal glues or contact cement. These specialty products will work just fine.

Homemade Paper

For a unique background, try using homemade paper. This will add a wild look to your scrapbook page and is especially nice for children's books and artwork.

You can make your own customized paper of any color and texture you want. This takes a bit of time and effort.

Alternately, soak a piece of cardstock. After a few minutes, crumple the paper a bit and then iron it flat again. This will closely approximate the appearance of homemade paper.

Homemade paper is also available at most crafts stores.

Homemade Paper Embellishments

Candy and soap molds can be used to make embellishments with that homemade paper look. These embellishments can be used as an added touch for baby announcements, children's artwork, or elegant gift books depending on the shape and size.

Simply, mix water and cardstock in a blender. Then, squeeze the excess water out of the paper and press the mixture in any candy or soap mold. To make a thicker item, just add more pulp to each mold. Allow the mixture to dry overnight before use.



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Other Types of Paper

There are various types of paper that can be used for backgrounds or journal entries for various effects. For instance, rice paper is a fine paper that can add elegance to a scrapbook page. Conversely, papyrus is a coarse almost wood like paper creating an exotic feel to a scrapbook page.

Be aware, however, that some of these paper alternates are extremely difficult to work with, break easily, and may not preserve well.

Woven Backgrounds

A woven background can create a natural feel or color to your scrapbook page. Weaving can be done using fabric, yarn, straw, or reeds. This adds a handicraft or outdoor feeling to your scrapbook.

Simply alternate horizontal and vertical threads over and under.

If you are using straw, bark, or reeds, be aware that these materials do not preserve well.

Wood Backgrounds

Use your imagination and creativity to explore new materials for backgrounds. Some interesting wood like materials include bamboo, pop sickle sticks, and pieces of wood. These can add a playful, exotic, or outdoor feel to your scrapbook.

Be aware, however, that some of these media alternates are extremely difficult to work with, break easily, and may not preserve well.

Magnetic Sheets

Magnetic sheets and magnetized photo albums can be used as backgrounds. Often these sheets have an adhesive strip on one side to promote adherence to even nonmetal objects. Magnetic sheets are best used in children's educational scrapbooks or other scrapbooks that will be used and reused several times.

Magnetic sheets and magnetized photo albums can be found at your local craft or office supplies store.

Scrap Backgrounds

Use your scrap bits to create great funky backgrounds. These items add texture and color to your work. Some interesting scrap material suitable for backgrounds include furniture casters, bits of linoleum, and carpet swatches.

Be aware, however, that some of these media alternates are extremely difficult to work with, break easily, and may not preserve well.

Shrink Paper

Shrink art can add an abstract or child like feel to your photographs or scrapbook pages.

Shrink art is easy to use. First, print a photograph directly onto shrink plastic. Next, punch a small hole into the top of the photograph. You will use this hole to later attach your photograph to your scrapbook. Then, cook the photograph until it shrinks.

Shrink art paper is available at your local craft store.

Smudging

Smudging by accident is an easy task, smudging for effect is quite another. Using a marker, add color to a paper towel or make up sponge. Then, smudge the color onto the page. With a little practice, smudging can create a hazy or smoky effect. This effect can be used to create a relaxed, outdoorsy feel to your scrapbook page.

Tinting

Tinting is a great way to add a touch of color to black-and-white photos. Tinting can be used to draw focus to a certain portion of a photograph or add color to a dull black and white page.

Be A Scrapbooking Pro

A special product called Photo Twin pens is useful for tinting. The basic idea is to draw on the photograph with these pens to create custom tints. For example, you can add a health blush to Grandma's cheeks.

In real-life, however, this is much easier said than done. A great deal of practice is required to get these pens to create the desired results, and in the beginning, you're probably better off practicing on pictures that you never plan on using in your scrapbook.

Photo Twin is available at most local scrapbooking supply stores.

Crystal Lacquer

Crystal lacquer adds shine and protection to your photographs. This shine adds a soft elegance to any scrapbook page. However, crystal lacquer looks especially nice on more formal gift scrapbooks.

Basically paint your photograph with the crystal lacquer and let it dry. Be especially careful not to let the lacquer spill over the edge and ruin other parts of your scrapbook pages.

Crystal lacquer is available at most hardware and paint stores.

Drybrushing

Dry brushing is a technique used to highlight or shade objects or areas of a scrapbook page. Drybrushing gives the appearance of weathered wood. This can be used to increase focus to a certain photograph or to add a little energy to dull scrapbook pages. Drybrushing is a great technique for that old fashioned look.

To create this effect, dip a dry paint brush into acrylic paint. Next, wipe the brush back and forth on a paper towel. Then, lightly brush the item you want drybrushed. Set the item aside to dry.

Embossing

Embossing is basically painting using heat. Embossing adds color and metallic shine to items. Embossing can be used to add a metallic feel to a

truck or train in a children's book or add a masculine touch to a graduation scrapbook.

To emboss an item, sprinkle the embossing powder over the surface you want embossed. Then, heat the powder until it melts. Aluminum foil placed over the object can be used to quicken the heating process. To reduce static cling and a mess afterwards, just place a dryer sheet on top of the item before you work. To clean up, simply brush away the remaining powder.

Embossing powder is available at most craft stores in a wide variety of colors and tints.

Scrap Metal

An interesting alternative to regular paper tags is using scrap metal. This adds a masculine touch that is great for those interested in cars, trains, airplanes, or metalworking.

Any bits of metal can be used. Using a metallic Rub on you can change or enhance the color of the metal to add a dramatic touch to your scrapbook page.

Simply, rub the product on the metal. Then cover the item in a clear embossing powder and heat. Optionally, you can stamp the item with black ink before you emboss for an even more dramatic result.

Beading

Beads can add color and design to a scrapbook. Beading can be as simple as gluing a few beads onto a scrapbook page or as complex as a sewn beaded design. Beads can be added abstractly to a children's scrapbook for a child-like look or carefully placed to make homey titles or artistic designs.

Beads, microbeads, and necklaces can be attached using two-sided tape or Xyron adhesive.

Beads are available at your local craft store in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors.

Quilling

Quilling can be as simple as gluing a few precut strips onto a scrapbook page or as complex as artful designs. The design you create depends only upon your creativity and talent. Quilling creates an exotic handicraft look to scrapbooks.

Quills are available in specialty craft stores.

Embroidery

If you enjoy sewing and embroidery, you can use these skills to create amazing embellishments. These designs create great focus pieces for elegant gift scrapbooks.

Patterns can be either sewn directly into the scrapbook page or onto a piece of fabric. This fabric can then either be used as a background or pasted on the page.

Painted Tissue Paper

Painted tissue paper can add a colorful flair to your children's artwork or scrapbook page.

To paint tissue paper, punch or tear bits of tissue paper into various shapes.

Next, using watercolor pencils and a wet paintbrush thoroughly coat the tissue paper.

Then, dip the painted tissue paper in a mixture of Scrappy Glue and water and place it on white cardstock. Let the pieces dry completely. Use the dry colored tissue paper as a background, a border, or as a fancy embellishment.

Faux Painting

Faux painting can be created primarily with various colored sheets of paper. This can be used to add color and a dramatic flare to a dull scrapbook page.

Creating this effect is easy. Basically, tear the edges of three papers (a dark, a light, and a medium shade of the same color). Your middle shade of paper will be the base for your design, while the darker shade will be used as the shadow. Lighter shades act as highlights.

Faux Chalk Designs

To give a chalked accent to your items without the mess of the chalk, print images directly onto vellum. Next, color the back of the vellum with a marker. When you cut the letters out and turn them over, the letters have a very pretty, muted, chalk-like appearance.

This appearance creates a softening effect to loud scrapbook pages or adds an air of freedom and peace to an outdoorsy themed scrapbook.

Faux Metal Designs

To give a metal look to your scrapbook page, print the items directly onto vellum. Color the back of the vellum with a soft color of ink. Emboss clear. Repeat this process until the vellum has a shiny look.

This appearance creates a hardening or masculine effect to scrapbook pages. It may also be used to highlight a mechanical or metal working theme.

Faux Metal Rusting

Get the rusted metal look without the rusted metal. Coat a red or burgundy colored cardstock with brown chalk. Next, add tan chalk for a powdery finish. Then, using a sponge-tip applicator, apply bronze or rusty color metallic rub on. Finally, add black and tan chalk on top of the rub on to shadow and highlight the item.

This appearance creates a hardening or masculine effect to scrapbook pages. It may also be used to highlight a mechanical or metal working theme.

Frosting Charms

Frosting adds a unique touch to all of your metal charms. This creates a softened look suitable for baby and grandparent scrapbooks.

To create this frosted charm look, sprinkle embossing powder and glitter on the metal charms and heat. Repeat this process again, before the item has a chance to cool. Attach the charms to your scrapbook once they cool completely.

Faux Typewriter Keys

Typewriter keys add a learned look to a scrapbook page. Typewriter keys create an added personal touch to scrapbooks for secretaries, writers, and students.

Unfortunately, typewriter keys are very expensive to buy. The alternative is to make faux typewriter keys.

To make faux typewriter keys, stamp a letter onto your background. Next, set a circle concho over the letters. Then, fill the concho with diamond glaze. Once this hardens it will look just like a typewriter key.

Concho and glaze are available at most craft stores.

Faux ABC Beads

ABC beads look great on children's artwork and baby scrapbooks. Now you can make faux beads too. Simply print out your word in a large straight font, with several spaces between each letter. Next, use a hole punch to punch out each individual letter. Then, peel one side of a piece of wax paper using a glue dot. Stick your circle with the letter on it to the top of this waxed dot.

Once set, simply string the beads together with thread, wire, or embroidery cotton.

Magnifying Marbles

Glass marbles add a unique magnifying effect to letters or photographs under them. This is a great elegant touch for favorite relatives or gift scrapbooks. Glass marbles can also be used to create artistic children's art and scientific looking scrapbooks for young scientists.

To create this look, you will need glass marbles with one flat side. Alternately, you will have to cut your glass marbles in half. Then, paste these marbles, using clear drying glue, on top of writing or an embellishment that you want magnified.

Wax Paper Ink Dye

Be A Scrapbooking Pro

Wax paper ink dye has an effect resembling tie-dye. This creates a great children's art background or a funky scrapbook for a close friend.

To do the wax paper technique cut a piece of wax paper slightly larger than the area you are working with. Next, crumple the wax paper up and then unfold. Then, lay the wax paper onto the glossy paper and cover the wax paper with a sheet of paper. Iron the papers, using the hottest setting, for no more than 5 seconds. Peel off the wax paper and then apply dye ink. The wax acts as a resistant to the ink forming a textured look.

Embossed Foil

Embossed foil creates unique elegant accents and highlights on photographs. This adds a touch of age and antiqueness to scrapbook pages.

To make embossed foil, place a piece of carbon paper on top of the foil. Next, place a picture on top of the foil. Then, trace around the picture using an embossing tool. You can also use a rubber stamp. Ready made embossed foil is also available at your local craft store.

Silver and Gold Accents

Beautiful silver and gold accents make a wonderful touch to lettering or tags on your scrapbook page. This is a very elegant touch on gift scrapbooks or invitations.

To make these accents, stamp a piece of vellum with embossing ink and heat and stick powder. Next, Heat the item. Then, using a small paintbrush, paint this piece of vellum with gold leaf. Brush off the excess powder with a brush.

Tarnishing and Untarnishing Copper

Copper, tarnish or untarnished, adds a unique metallic look to your scrapbook page. Furthermore, copper is fairly easy to work with and cut into various shapes. In this way, copper can be used to create an elegant antique look or a more masculine look.

Be A Scrapbooking Pro

You can tarnish copper tooling foil by either heating it. This gives the copper red, orange, and purple tones. Alternately, you can use Liver of Sulpher to make the copper look old and blackened.

Tarnish can be easily removed by rubbing Tabasco sauce on the tarnish.

Fabric Flowers

Fabric flowers make great embellishments on scrapbook pages. Unlike plastic flowers, fabric flowers look more realistic. Further, unlike real flowers, fabric flowers have a long life span. Flowers are made with fabric and wire. Make a wire loop. This will be one petal. Next, apply glue to the petal, and place fabric on top. Alternately, stretch a piece of an old nylon over the loop and secure with tape. Continue making loops until you have enough to make a flower. Then, twist the wires together. Fold out your flower and secure to your scrapbook page.

Traditional Hawaiian Lei Borders

Leis can be used to make fancy three-dimensional borders. Leis add an exotic touch to holiday scrapbooks.

A traditional Lei is made using paper orchids, roses, rounded mums, and cup and saucer flowers with punched shapes and then gluing them together. To add a richer texture, cut these follows from velveteen paper. You can use ready-made leis or make your own.



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Hawaiian Beaded Lei Borders

Leis can be used to make fancy three-dimensional borders. Leis add an exotic touch to holiday scrapbooks.

A beaded Lei is made by stringing large and small beads onto a string of embroidery cotton. Small yellow flowers and red berries can be added to create an even greater effect. You can use ready-made leis or make your own.

Hawaiian Shell Lei Borders

Leis can be used to make fancy three-dimensional borders. Leis add an exotic touch to holiday scrapbooks.

Gluing shells together and placing them directly on the scrapbook page makes a shell Lei. You can use ready-made leis or make your own.

Polymer Molds

To create great three-dimensional items of any shape and size use polymer molds. Polymer molds can be used to make virtually any shape. These shapes can range from animals and characters for children's artwork or elegant bells for weddings or wedding showers.

To make shapes, polymer clay is placed into molds and baked. Alternately, shape the clay into beads or other freehand items that can also be baked. Once set, these items can be painted with acrylic paint.

Hand Prints

The sweetest accents to a child's scrapbook page are handprints. Handprints are especially appreciated in baby or grandparent scrapbooks.

To make prints, prepare a flat surface. Next, put acrylic paint into a paper plate. Then, have your child place his or her hands in the paint and then on your scrapbook surface, one at a time. After the paint dries, you will have a permanent record of your child's handprints.

Stained Glass Mosaics

Be A Scrapbooking Pro

Stained glass mosaics are an elegant, regal touch to any scrapbook page. Stained glass is especially pretty in the most formal or heavily religiously themed scrapbooks.

Stained glass is available at most craft stores. As are pattern shears, required to cut the stained glass panes.

In Conclusion...

Over the years, scrapbooking has matured into an art. No longer is scrapbooking about pasting newspaper clippings into messy bundles of paper. Today, scrapbooks have evolved into long lasting, beautiful mementos containing everything from news clippings to three-dimensional objects.

Furthermore, scrapbooks are no longer just for special occasions. Today's scrapbooks make great baby announcements, grandparent books, gift cards, artwork for kid's rooms, recipe books, and educational tools.

The greatest thing about scrapbooking is that there are no rules. Creativity and imagination are your only limits. Now armed with a few helpful hints, ideas, and techniques...it's time to let your creativity and imagination take over.

Happy Scrapbooking!

Liz Tomey

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