

THE SIMPLE SCRAPER PERFECT-FIT GUIDE TO

Combining Layouts and Pockets in a Scrapbook Album



*Do you have trouble finishing albums?
This solution makes the creative process
more fun and adds a new level of ease.*

PERFECT-FIT SOLUTION

The Divided Album



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Scrapbooking has evolved over the past decade, with recent years seeing a dramatic shift towards the documentation of everyday details. Notably, the Project Life system of products created by Becky Higgins introduced mainstream and widespread usage of pocket pages and corresponding products for scrapbooking.

I love how pocket pages make it easy to create an album without adhesive or trimmers. However, I've seen too many scrapbookers get frustrated, even bored, and give up scrapbooking using only the pocket page approach.

During the spring of 2012 I thought about how I might be able to adapt the pocket page approach for my own needs. With a new baby to document, I was in the perfect season of life to figure out a simple approach that could capture her story and be something doable for the average, busy memory keeper like me.

I knew that purely chronological accounting of life was not a good fit for me (and I suspected, not for many scrapbookers like me.) What I wanted was an organized method to include pocket pages with traditional layouts, and one where I'd never feel behind.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

I thought and browsed and thought some more. The lightbulb finally went off when I saw the plain plastic Project Life dividers on Amazon.

For years I had been organizing my layouts in albums corresponding to the Library of Memories categories developed by Stacy Julian and described in her book *Photo Freedom: People We Love, Places We Go, Things We Do, and All About Us*. At its most basic, the system uses categories instead of chronology to help you make sense of your scrapbooking.

I loved Stacy's approach to organizing photos and stories, as well as her mantra of "do something with some of your photos". For me scrapbooking is a wonderful, rich layer to the photos we take, adding depth and color to the stories of life.



What if, I thought, I used the dividers to create Library of Memories categories within a single album? This would allow me tell stories over the album's span of time, but simultaneously escape the day-to-day documentation. I could capture life right now, when I am interested and able, without worry that I'll get behind by days or weeks.

I wasn't sure if it would work – if my album would really come together – but it did. I've been using this approach for five years now and I'm ready to suggest that divided albums could work for you.

WHERE TO BEGIN

At its most basic, to create a divided album you take an album and add dividers, possibly four. Then, insert memories and feel contented that you've customized your album. Here's a more step-by-step approach:

Step 1. Designate an album for a specific time period and a specific subject. The time period could be a year or multiple years and the subject could be your whole family, just you, just a child etc.

Step 2. Inside of that album, use four dividers to create sections for Things We Do, Places We

Go, People We Love, All About Us. Alternately, create your own sections based on the stories you want to tell in this album. You get to design the album you want.

Step 3. Decide which sections will have pocket pages and which ones will have layouts (or both). This is up to you. Consider how many photos you take, the stories you like to scrap, and the amount of time you have. And remember, your choices inside of one album have no bearing on how you will personalize the next.

MY PERFECT-FIT

In the five years practicing this approach, I've observed how to take what has worked well from year to year, and solve the challenges it also presented. With each new album, I looked for ways to lean on the structure without it feeling forced. And of course, I looked for ways to simplify even further.

One of my personal lightbulb moments involves taking a monthly perspective on pocket pages. If you look at how Project Life is approached, it's a documenting of what's happening in life right now.

This is also what the "Things We Do" section is all about. By using a monthly interval I could focus on the meaningful over the minutia. Since 2014, I've created a two-page spread each month that highlights what's going on

in our lives.

I also take a simplified approach of adding some sup-

plies, photos and memorabilia in the moment, while setting the intention to finish off each spread with more documentation and pretty products in one single sit-

When you let go of perfection, you can find freedom to scrapbook the stories that matter most, using the products that makes the most sense for the job.

ting. More importantly, having a clear chronological home for some of my favorite photos and even some of my favorite products makes it easier to keep up. I can slip a few items into pockets, even when I'm not ready to sit down and finish.

Thinking about album-building as a design process as much as a documentation process rekindled my excitement for it. But that doesn't mean I spend a lot of time on complicated embellishing. My focus is on the photos, the words, and using products in a simplified way.

WHY THIS WORKS

Combining layouts and pocket pages in one album helps you leverage the best of both worlds, creating a true flexibility to follow your creative mood and help you get more pages completed. It's an excellent example of a rule-breaking, personalized solution for scrapbooking.

The divided album approach is semi-chronological. The album is for a fixed time period, but the content inside focuses more on what's important than what happened. The categories help to illustrate themes and connections that might otherwise go unnoticed, while the dividers add a clear structure to satisfy the need for order.

Ultimately, uniting formats in a single album is simple.

Consistency and continuity is introduced in the form of your design aesthetic, your handwriting or favorite font, and the subjects of your photographs, leaving you able to choose the best documentation approach for the story at hand. No longer do you need to worry about maintaining separate albums.

Finally, it's important to underscore how much weight is lifted by the divided album approach. When the emphasis is on the precious memories added to each category, gaps are minimized and you can finally feel caught up, no matter where you are.

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START TODAY

Think about an album you're just starting or one that you've had trouble finishing. Consider whether using dividers and/or varying the page formats would improve the project. Focus on what fills you up and what best fits your life.

You can begin making a plan for this album using the tips on the next few pages as well as the bonus worksheet on the last page.





LABEL THE FRONT OF A DIVIDER

Use dimensional letter stickers, such as Thickers, to label the dividers with a category.

LABEL THE TOP OF A DIVIDER

Use small phrase stickers to label the top of a divider. You can also use a permanent marker.



CREATE A DIVIDER PAGE

Can't find dividers? Use 8.5x11 or 6x12 pages within your album to make a visual division.





LEAN ON WHITES AND NEUTRALS

White, cream, and kraft cardstock helps to visually unify pages of an album, even if the other products used are quite different in color or style.

TRUST YOUR DESIGN STYLE

You naturally select products with similar colors. Rely on these instincts to let go of being matchy-matchy and trust that it will coordinate well.



MAKE PATTERNED PAPER THE STAR

Insert patterned paper on the back side of a pocket page to better complement a single-page layout. Just trim a 12x12 paper into pocket-sized pieces.





FINISH THAT BABY BOOK

Scrapbook baby's first year easily by organizing photos by theme instead of chronologically. Then use pocket pages to get even more photos in the album.

TELL YOUR OWN STORY

Use a divided album to capture the highlights of your own life from birth to adulthood using both pocket pages and traditional scrapbook layouts.



INSERT MEMORABILIA

Use pockets or smaller insert pages to incorporate the "stuff of life" into your albums, even making it a design element with a starring role.

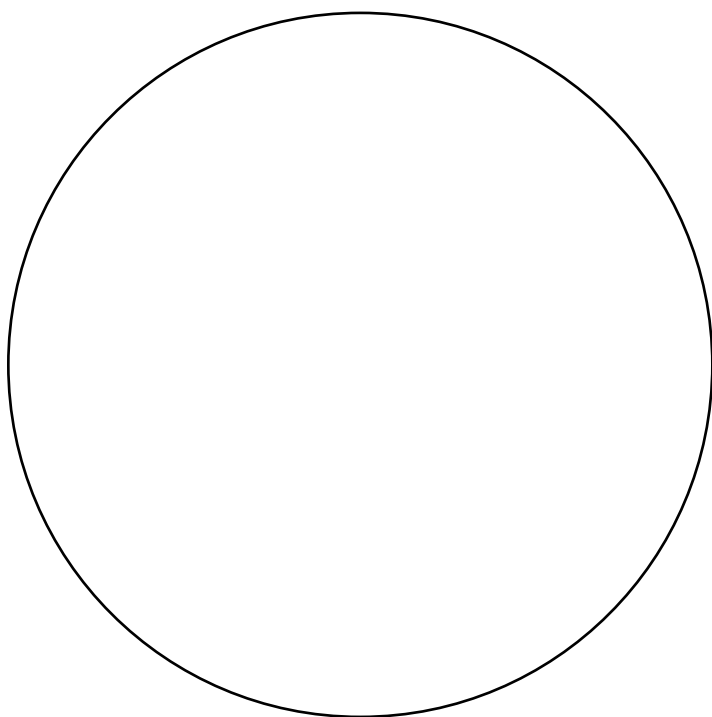




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BONUS WORKSHEET

Print out the worksheet on the next page to create a plan for your next scrapbook album.

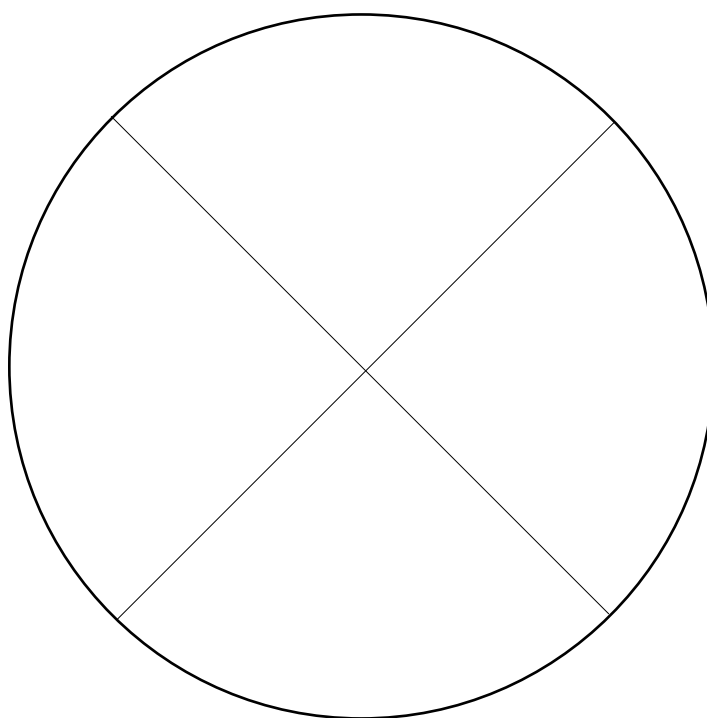


STEP #1 - DEFINE THE BOUNDARIES

Designate an album for a specific time period and/or a specific subject.

STEP #2 - IDENTIFY YOUR SECTIONS

Choose category sections based on the stories you want to include in this album. Create dividers.



STEP #3 - ROUGH OUT YOUR APPROACH

Decide which sections will have pocket pages and which ones will have layouts (or both).

