

Lesson 2: Golden

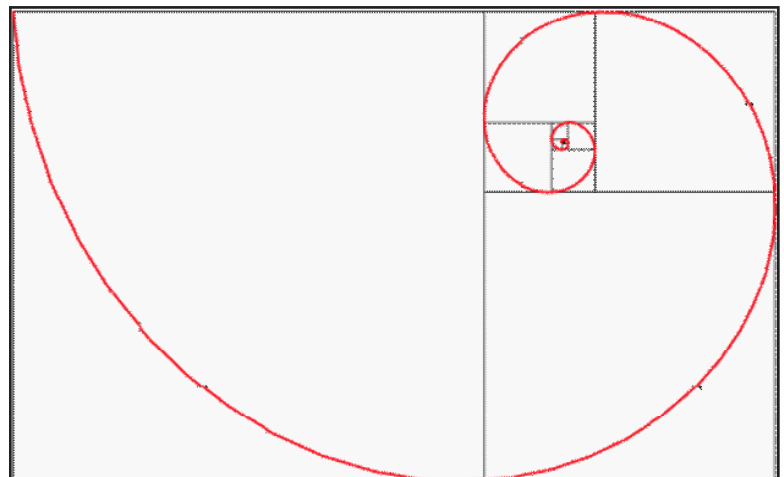
- The Design
- Sketch & Variations
- Details
- Your Turn

THE DESIGN

The ratio of 1 to 1.618 (approximately) is referred to as the "golden ratio." You can find this ratio occurring in nature, art and architecture. Ancient Greek and Egyptian artists and architects understood that elements incorporating this ratio are pleasing to the eye.



Let's take a look at how you can use the golden ratio on your scrapbook pages beginning with this illustration showing the "golden spiral." It begins with a large landscape-oriented rectangle with a height-to-width ratio of 1 to 1.618. When a line is drawn to define a square within this rectangle, a new rectangle is also defined—a rectangle with the same "golden" proportions as the first (but this one has a portrait orientation). As each rectangle is divided into a smaller square and rectangle, successive division points lie on a logarithmic spiral as shown.



This is the very spiral present in so many aspects of nature, including the shell of a nautilus.

Image sources: Mathworld.wolfram.com and Istockphoto.com

While it might be difficult to understand the golden ratio's relevance to page design by looking at the "golden spiral" of a shell, these "golden rectangles" should do the trick. A look at the facades of the Parthenon in Athens and this current sketch of a Georgian-style house both reveal the presence of golden rectangles.

using rectangles on the square canvas

Now it's time to talk about ways you can use the golden ratio (and rectangle) on your square scrapbook pages.

All of "On the River's" elements sit on a rectangular block which, itself, sits upon a square canvas. This vertical block goes from the top edge

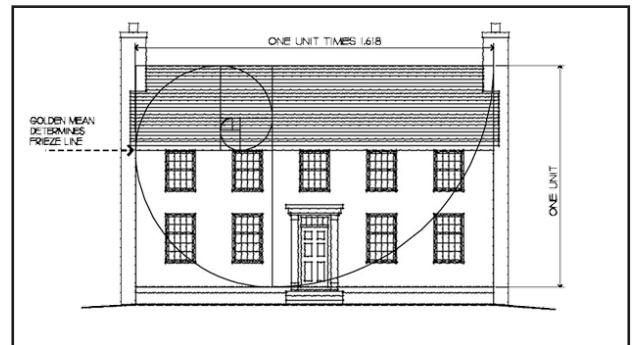
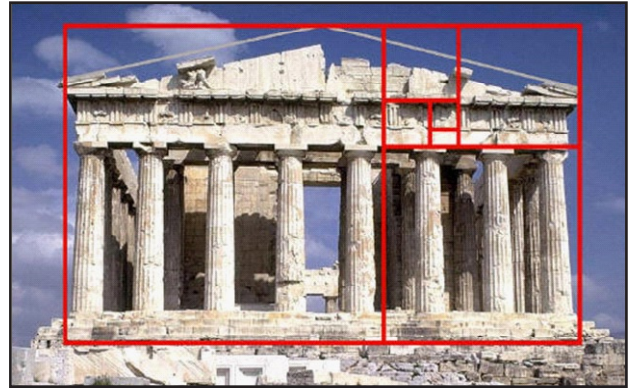


image sources: World-Mysteries.com and DesigningYourPerfectHouse.com) by Bill Hirsch

of the page to the bottom edge. There are wide margins on each side.

The result is an inner rectangular canvas with embellishments spilling off the right and left edges in a few spots. Note that the goal is not just to have an obvious rectangle on your page, but also to take the opportunity to design within a rectangular canvas, which offers different opportunities and challenges from the square canvas.



SKETCH & VARIATIONS

This lesson's sketch incorporates a rectangle matted asymmetrically on a square canvas. See "Christmas Joy" on page 6. As you use this sketch, think about how you'll handle the various "details" described in the final section of this lesson. Think about how you'll use the 12" x 12" background. Will you place other elements—perhaps your title or embellish-

ings—on it or will you keep it explicitly separate?

[Click to download layered psd file for digital pages.](#)

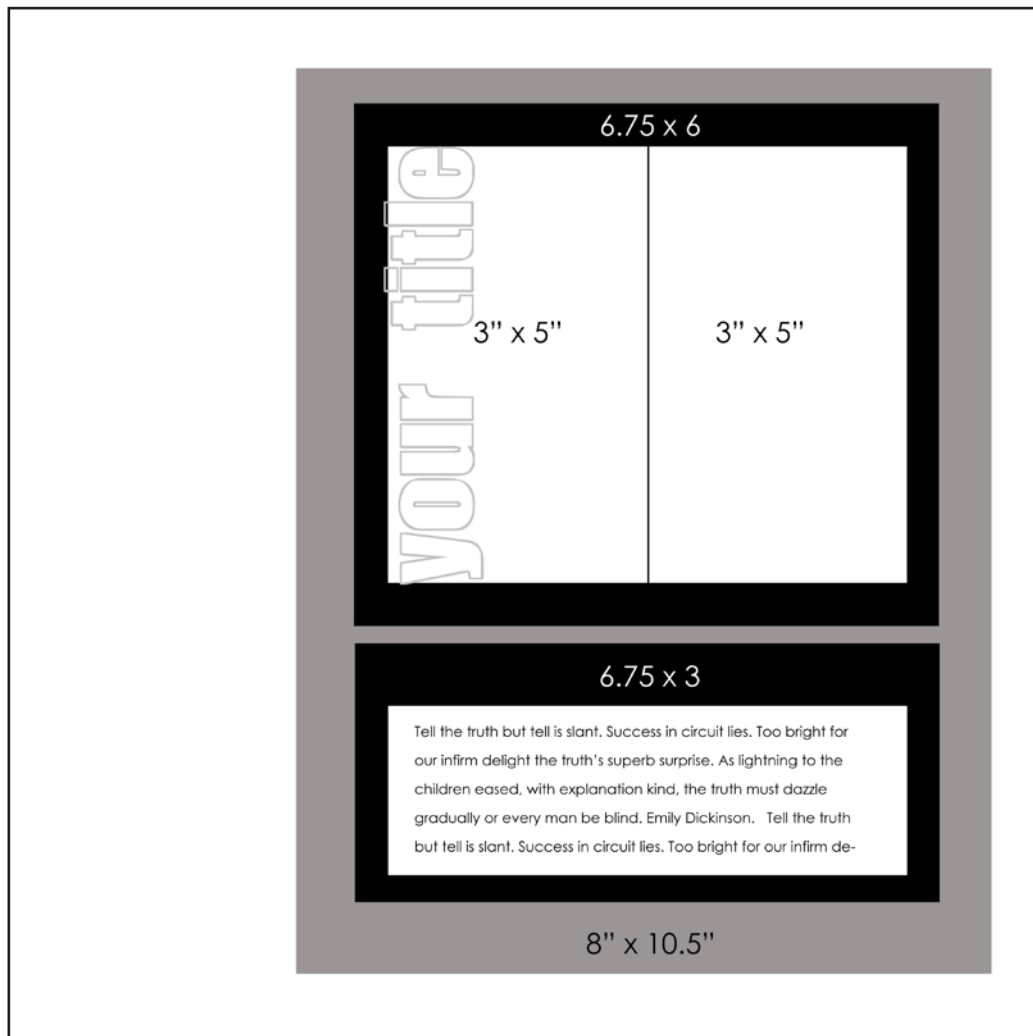
I'm not recommending measuring your papers to conform precisely to the golden ratio. Use your eye or use the easier ratio of 1 to 1.5.

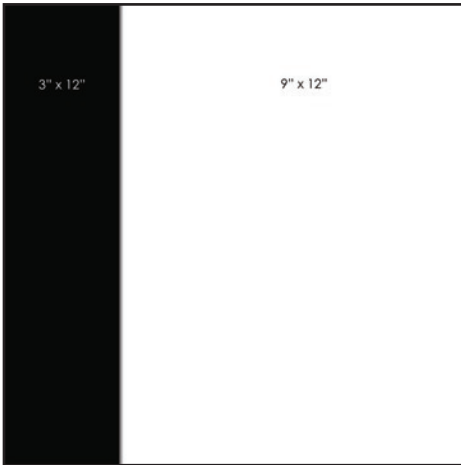
with a 1: 1.5 ratio:

width = w

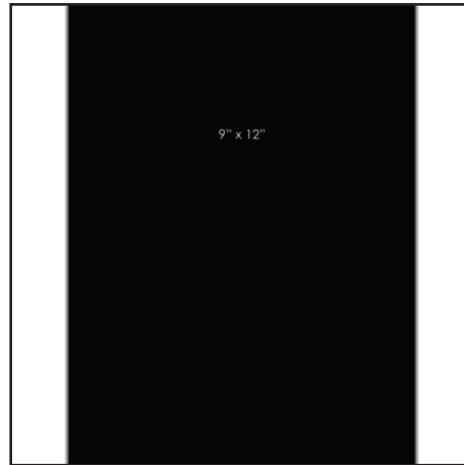
height = w + 1/2w

An 8" wide rectangle would have a height of $8 + 1/2(8)$ or 12.

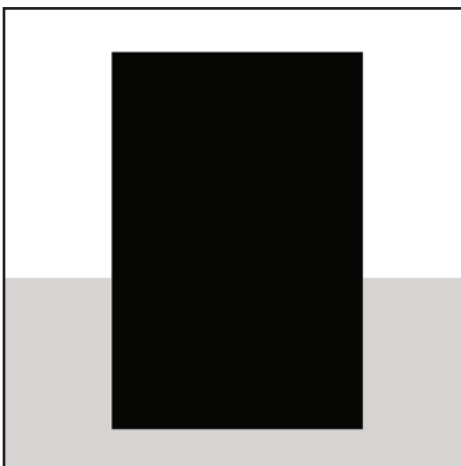
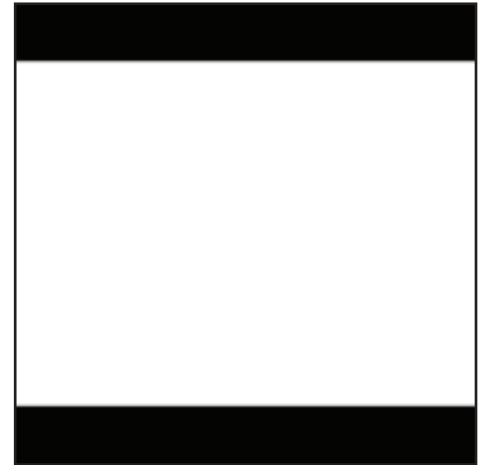




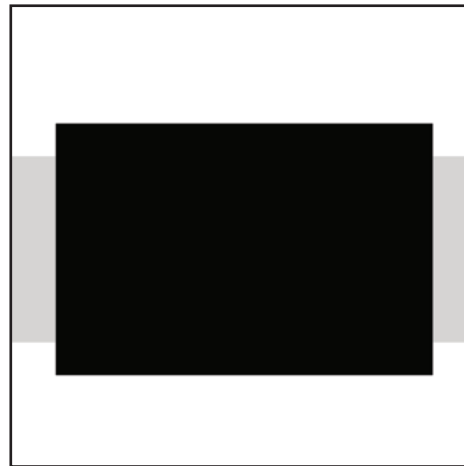
A. Use a wide margin on one side of the page (or one end) and lay out your page elements in the larger rectangular area. See examples on page 5.



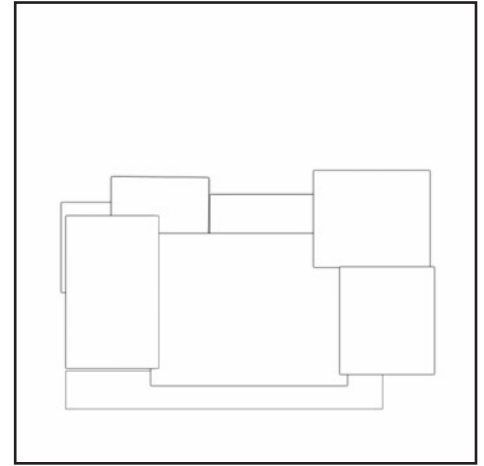
B. C. Mount a vertical or horizontal band that bleeds off opposite page edges and use that area to hold your page elements. See examples of this on page 7. Think about the possibilities for varying foreground and background. What I mean by this is: you could mount the rectangle ON the background OR you could mount margin strips ON TOP OF each side of your rectangle. You could even mount things like blinds that lie sequentially—one on top of the next.



D. Center a portrait-orientated, rectangular inner canvas for a formal look. Think about dividing your background into rectangles. See examples on page 6.



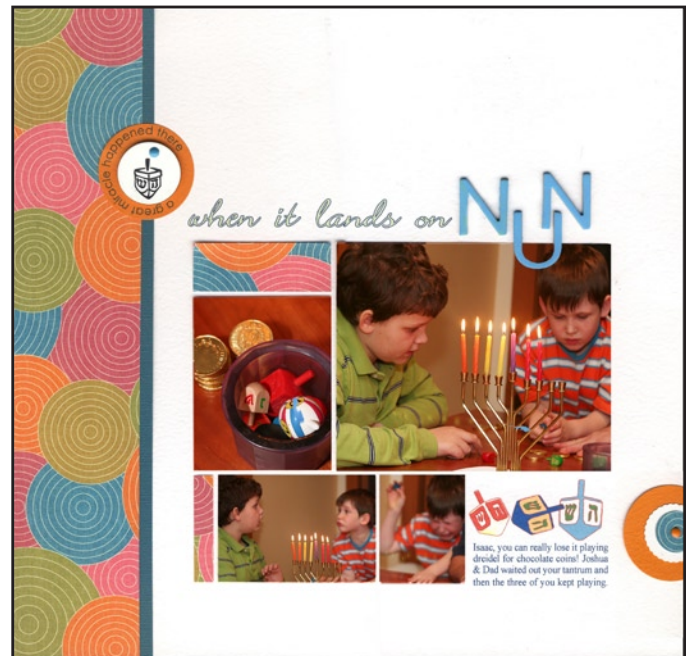
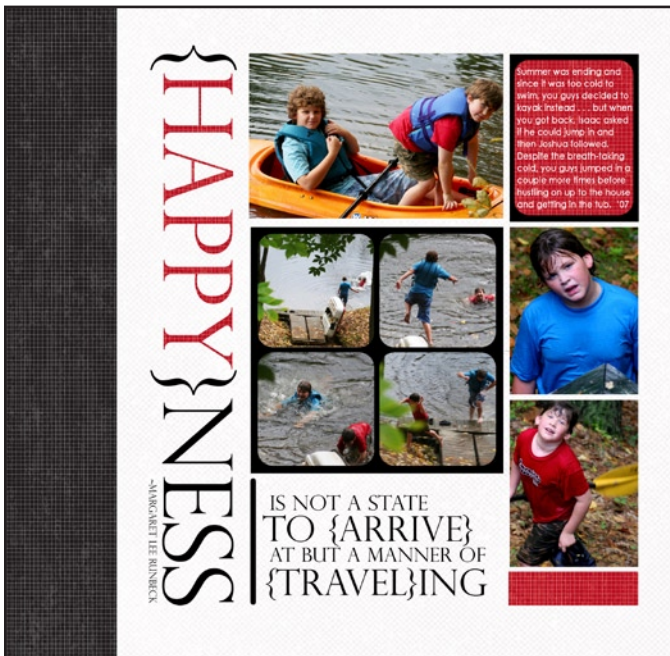
E. Use a landscape-oriented inner canvas for a calm or restful tone. In this suggestion, the mat is horizontally centered, but placed a bit lower than vertical center.



G. Fill a rectangular area with items that suggest the shape of a rectangle while not completely filling it. Rely upon the principle of closure or "gestalt" in which the eye will complete a suggested and familiar shape. See examples on page 8.

DETAILS

On the following pages we'll look at the details that take rough sketches beyond the basics for original and pleasing designs.



These three layouts use Variation A from page 4. While the wide margin strip is on the left in these examples, the right certainly works, too!

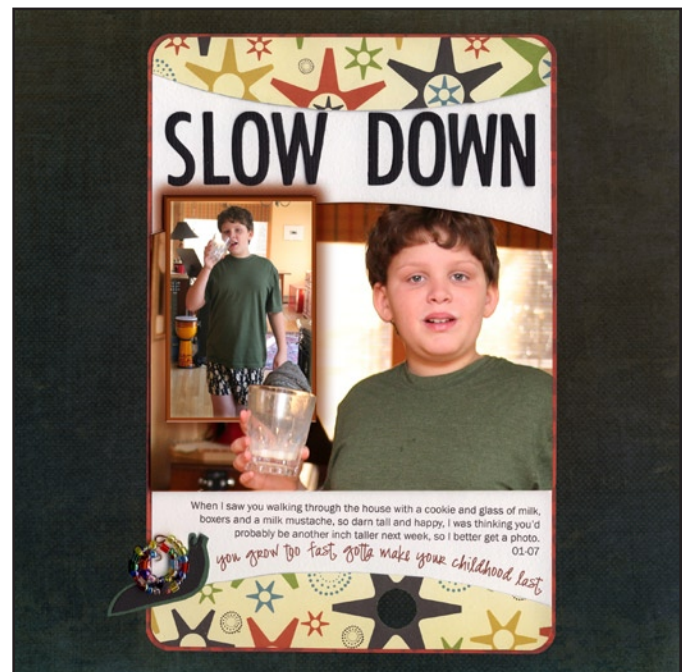
Note that no embellishments touch the margin strip on "{Happy}ness." The other two layouts, however, use circle embellishments to connect and ground the margin to the rectangular canvas. On all of these pages, all of the photos sit within the rectangular canvas. The margin strip on "Glass" holds journaling, and is, thus, a more integral part of the design than is the strip on "{Happy}ness" or even "When It Lands on Nun."





These pages all include a rectangular canvas mounted on a 12" x 12" background with side, top, and bottom margins. The top two pages ("Christmas Joy" and "Seize the Day's Puddles") include rectangles that sit off-center, to the right, while "Slow Down" has a centered block.

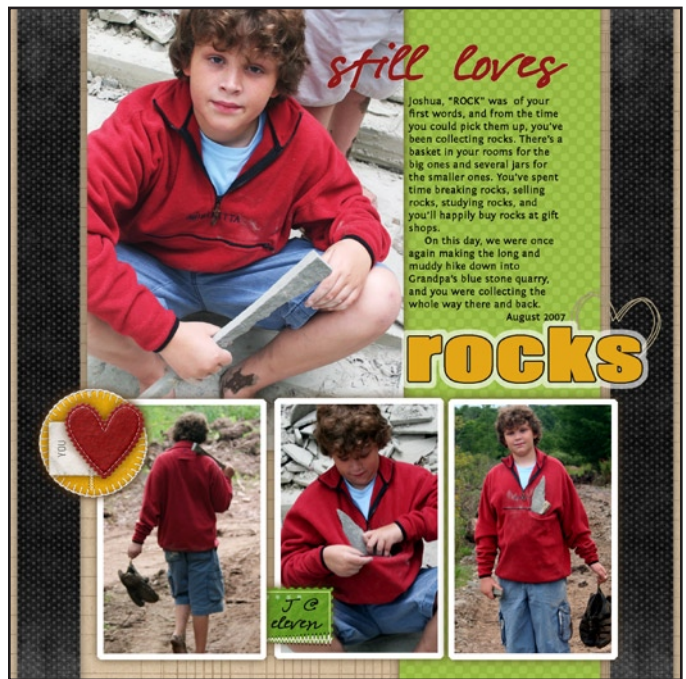
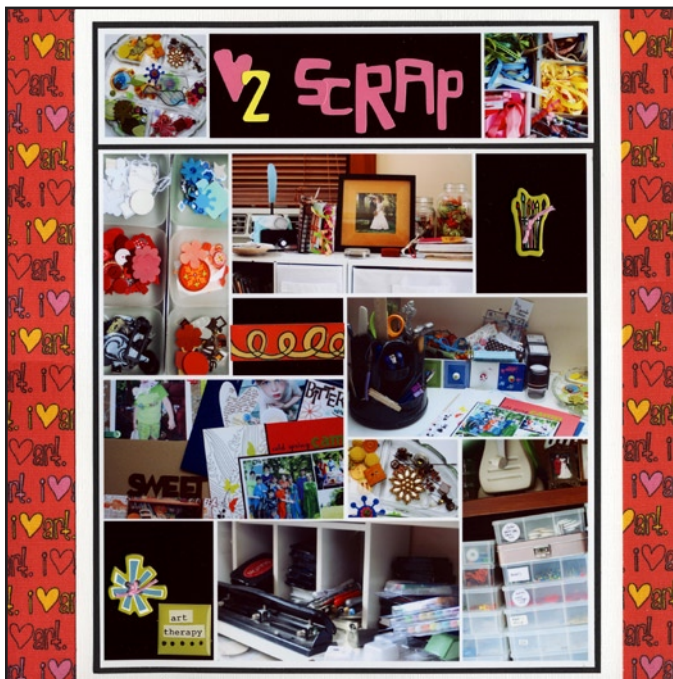
Note how the background canvas space is used on each page. On "Slow Down," there is just one point of grounding or overlap at the snail embellishment. In contrast, embellishments bleed off the top edge to decorate "Christmas Joy," and on "Seize the Day's Puddles" they bleed off at bottom left. "Seize the Day's Puddles" title and journaling sit on the background canvas, and, yet, they are also a part of the inner rectangular canvas. Be aware of all the possibilities available.



These layouts are based upon Variations B and C on page 4. They all have a rectangular block bleeding off opposite edges of the page. "Driveway" uses a horizontal block while "Love to Scrap" and "Still Loves Rocks" use vertical blocks.

Take a look at the relationships between the background and the inner rectangular canvases on these pages. On "Love to Scrap," there is no overlap or connection between the inner canvas and background. The strong contrast of a white mat against boldly patterned red paper reinforces this separation.

The backdrops for "Driveway" and "Still Loves Rocks" are more integral parts of their compositions because of embellishments spilling onto them and because of the extra background detailing. Note the stitched border on "Driveway," and the layered papers in the margins of "Still Loves Rocks."





Finally, let's take a look at two pages that infer a rectangular inner canvas rather than defining it explicitly.

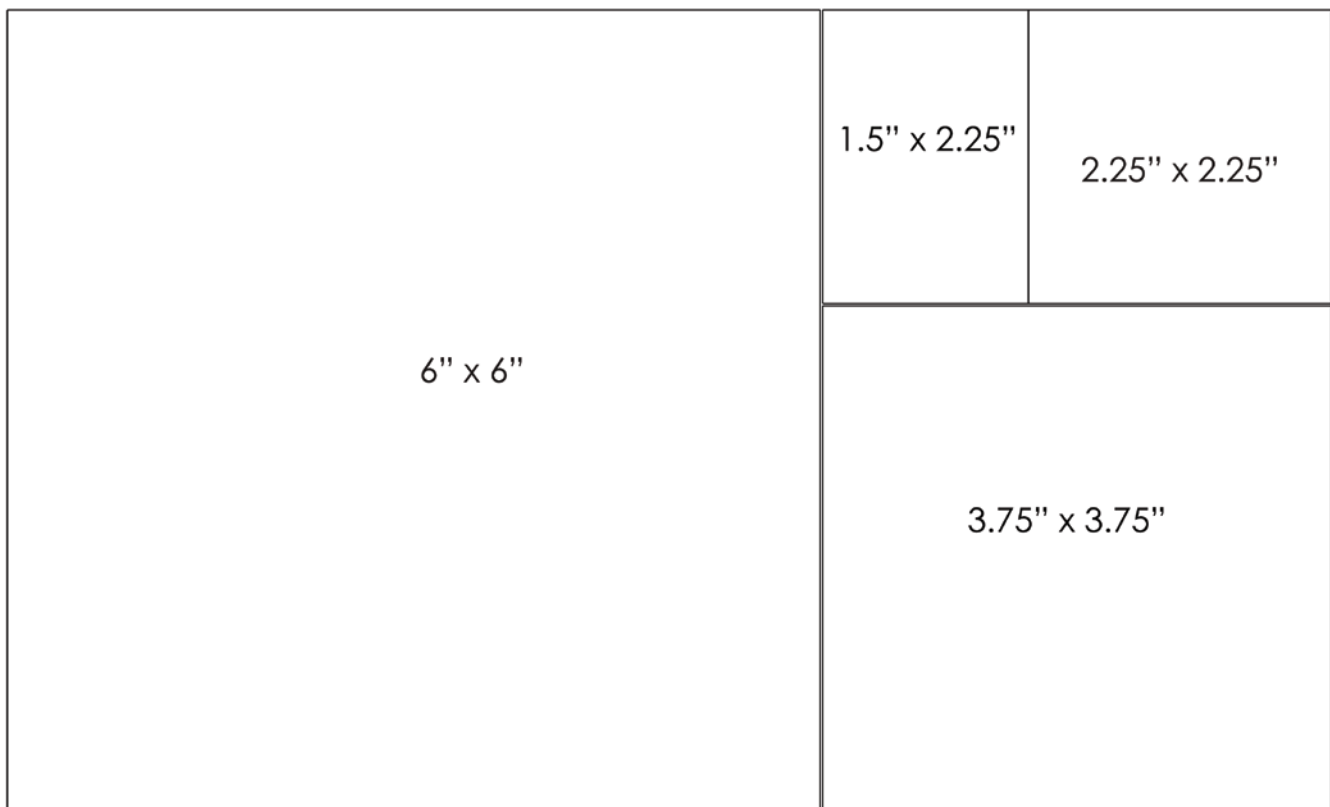
The elements on each "row" of "Making Your Acquaintance" use "full" justification. In other words—everything on the left and right sides line up. The result is that the viewer perceives a rectangular block without the existence of an actual rectangular outline or mat.

The rectangular inner canvas on "Stockings" is even less explicit than that on "Making Your Acquaintance." There are jigs and jags to the edges of this block. And, yet, we perceive a rectangular area, and the result is pleasing to the eye.

YOUR TURN

Now it's your turn to use a "golden rectangle" as a layout starting point. You may use the measurements below, or print off a full-sized version from the next page of this document to use as a cutting or layout guide, or you may [download a layered template of these blocks](#), or you may simply keep this sketch in your mind as you work.

Use this as your layout starting point. You don't need to stick to these measurements or this shape or this arrangement. This is a starting point—a guide for those first pushes of pieces around the page. See where it takes you.



6" x 6"

1.5" x 2.25"

2.25" x 2.25"

3.75" x 3.75"