

# BUILDING PAGES



workshop taught by Debbie Hodge

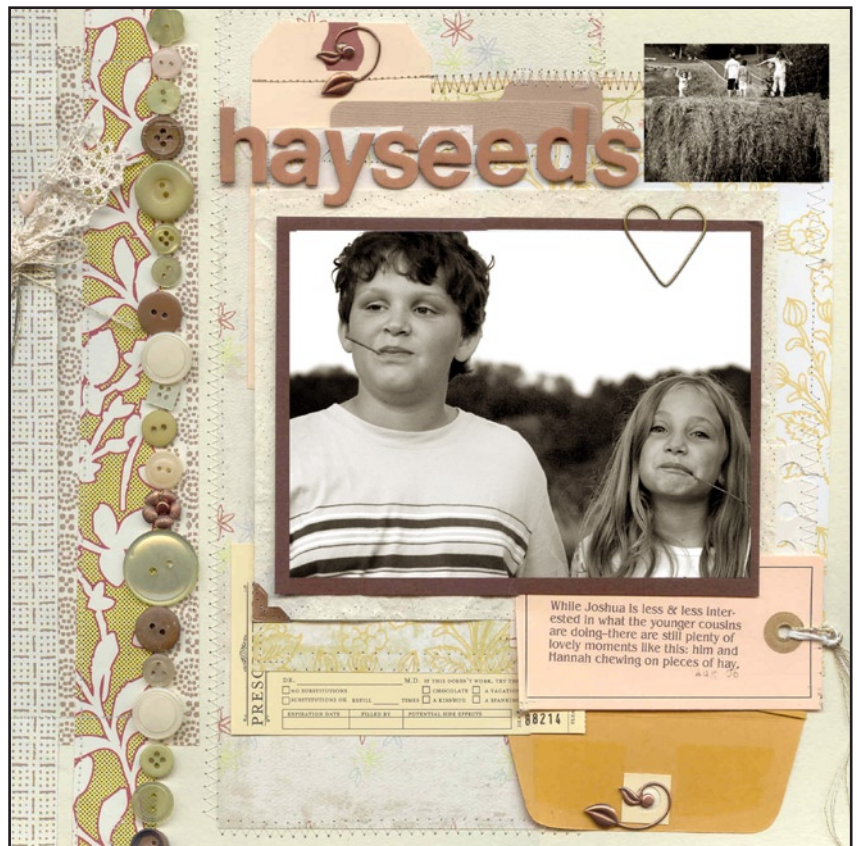
## Lesson 6: Layers

- The Design
- Sketches
- Variations
- Your Turn

### THE DESIGN

Layered—and even collaged— backgrounds for your photos are yet another starting point for scrapbook page design.

The terms “layered” and “collaged” are sometimes used interchangeably in scrapbooking jargon, but, for me, there is a difference that has to do with the amount of meaning conveyed by the elements other than photos, title, and journaling. I love it when I pull off a “collaged” page, but the majority of my pages are what I consider “layered.” That said, I don’t believe the differences are black and white or that you should fret on whether you’re “layering” or “collaging.” I’ll be calling our work “layering” and sharing techniques that may be used for both layered and collaged pages. Again, these are not hard set rules -- they are ideas that you may or may not use.



**layered**

I consider "Hayseeds" a layered page. I incorporated papers, motifs, tags, envelopes, fibers and embellishments that support my photos in tone and style. They don't, however, convey connections that have to do with deeper meaning. The page itself is not a deeply meaningful page—it is a moment in time that I love having captured and want preserved

**collaged**

"Awesome View" is a collaged page for me. The images of birds and plants along with the clipped words are all chosen to create an environment for presenting my father that is in addition to that shown in the photos. He is a man of the outdoors, and, now that he's ill and unable to move freely, the time he can spend outdoors on his porch, looking at the land he grew up on and farmed recharges his body and keeps him living on. I've tried to play up that meaning with these images and words.





**why use layering?**

Layering and/or collaging are great ways to:

1. add texture and dimension
2. create interesting white space (this would be the area around a collaged inner canvas)
3. incorporate meaningful images and motifs that will influence how a viewer will see your page and, what's more, understand your relationship to the subject being scrap-booked
4. explore and better understand what meaning the page has for you
5. reveal your personal style and ideas about the page subject
6. just have fun and play with interesting patterns, textures, and images



Let's take a look at the degree to which these layering benefits are incorporated into "Much 2 Admire."

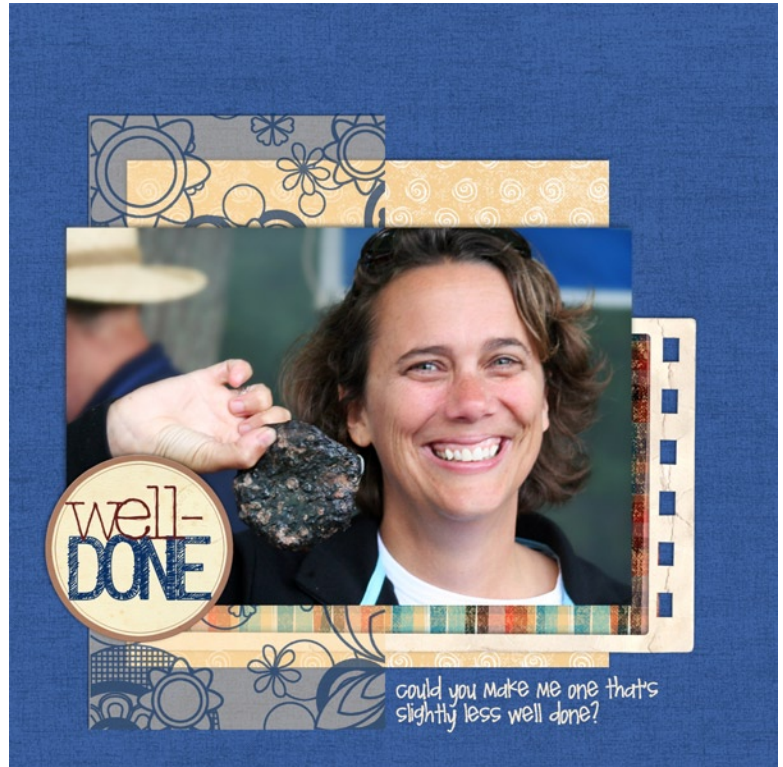
- 1) There's texture and dimension in the several layers which have scalloped, sewn, torn, and distressed edges.
- 2) The "white" space here is the patterned paper of the background canvas. The inner canvas (with its layers) creates asymmetrical surrounding white space.
- 3 and 4) Dragons and little boy princes support the idea of my growing son still being a little boy at heart.
- 5 and 6) I love layering. I love the sweet colors and youthful images for scrapbooking my son.

**approaches for layering**

I can't tell you HOW to add layering to your pages as well as I can tell you the considerations that you should be holding and balancing in your mind as you choose, add, and place elements. It's not a science. It's art and it's personal and it should be pleasurable.

Ask yourself the following as you work:

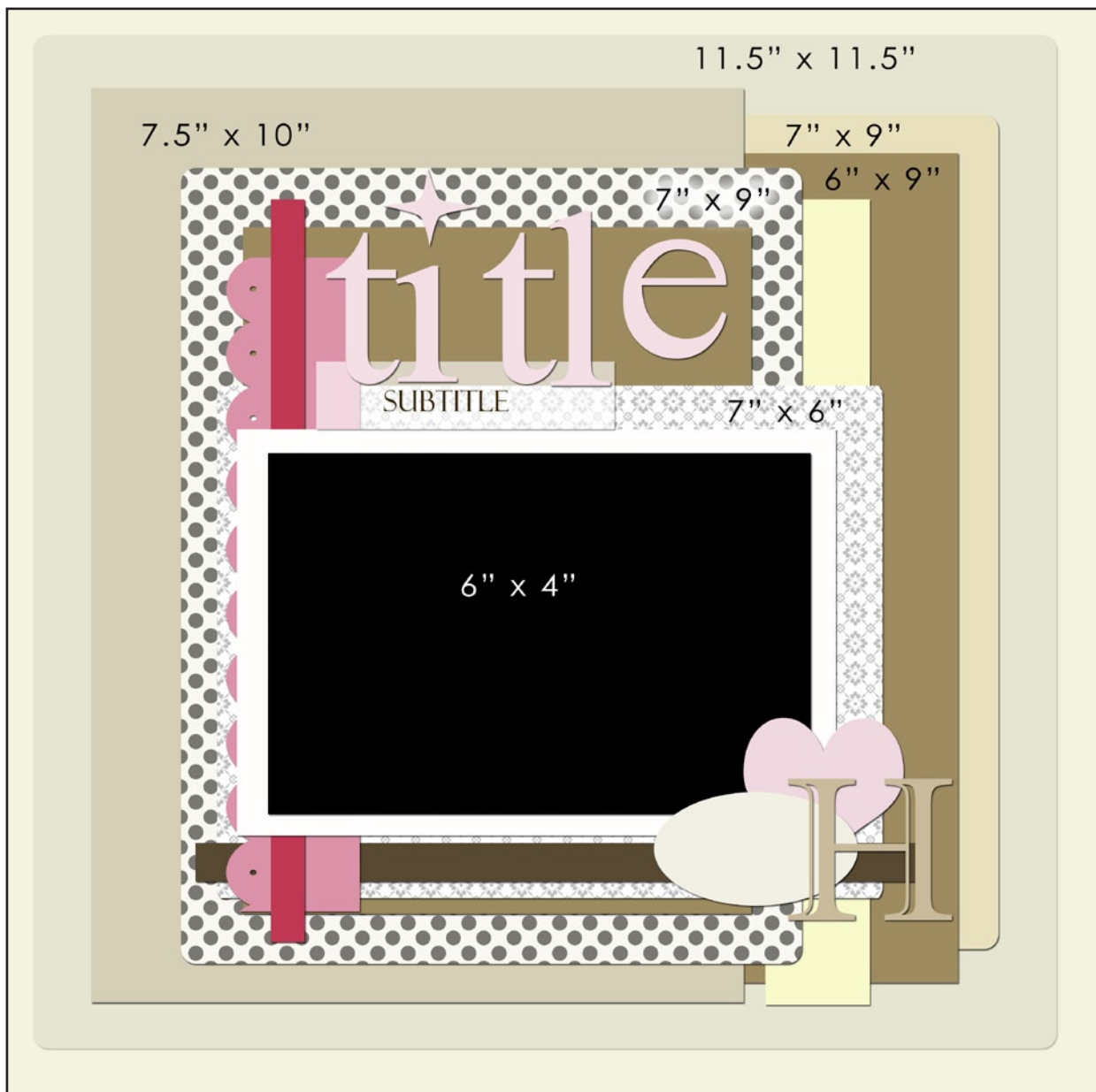
1. What is your desired focal point? Is it a photo? Journaling? Something else? How will you emphasize it? With size, matting, dimension, contrast, embellishments? (Next week's lesson on emphasis will give you a stronger grounding in this).
2. What space do you plan to fill? How will you use/include white space? (Refer to Lessons 1, 2, and 3).
3. What's your foundation piece? Choose it while keeping in mind the answers to the questions above. (Refer to Lesson 4.)
4. What kind of balance will you incorporate? (Refer to Lesson 5.)
5. What is the tone or mood you'd like to create? How will you use color and pattern? How much contrast will you incorporate?
6. What are the meanings you'd like to explore and, perhaps, reflect with element choices?



Even clean-looking pages can incorporate layers. The focal point on "Well-Done" is the photo of my friend with one of the burgers she'd just torched at a picnic. I emphasized it with size and placement -- in the center of the page and (almost) at the top of the stack of layers. I layered elements to make an inner canvas that holds papers, photo and title tag with surrounding asymmetrical white space. To me, there are two foundation pieces here: the gold patterned paper and the flower-printed vellum together provide the base my elements sit upon. The mood is upbeat and "blue-skies," and the meaning isn't deep--just fun.

**SKETCHES**

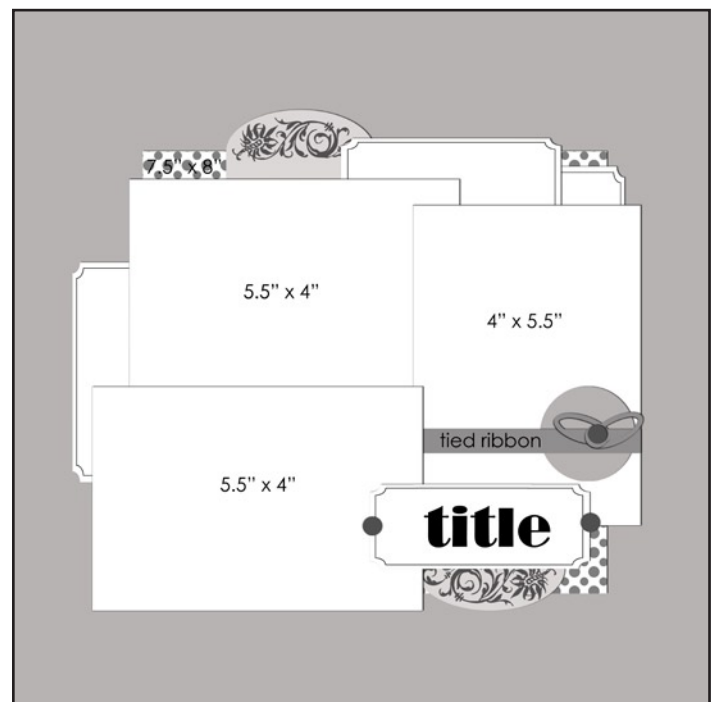
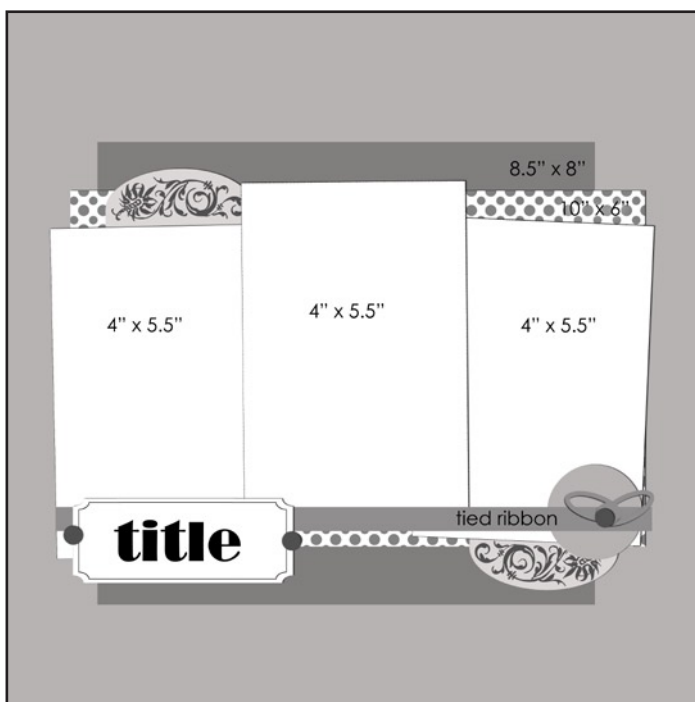
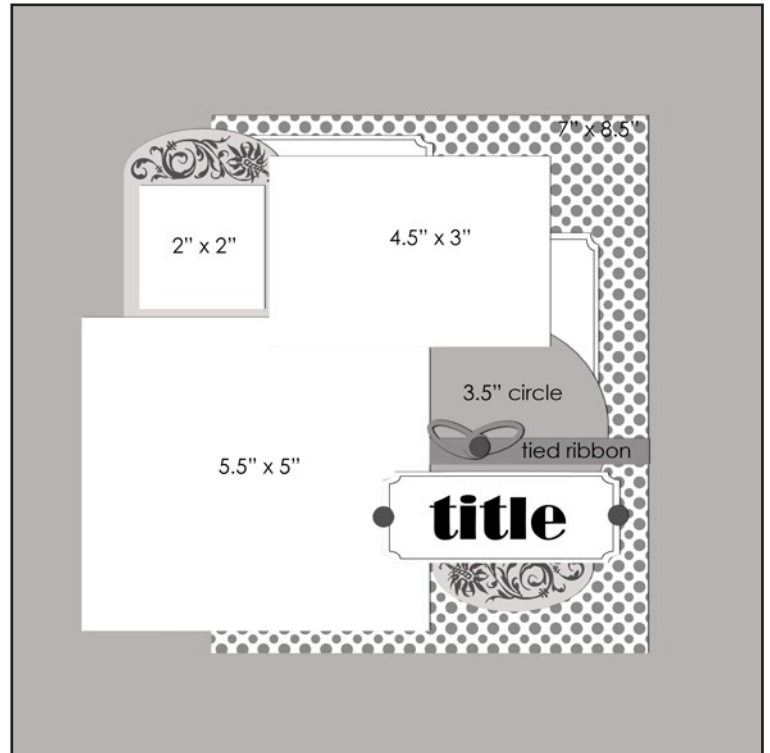
Here's a sketch with lots of big layers. Consider trying this with a tone-on-tone approach (lots of creams, whites, tans). If you have my ebook "Every Little Thing" from Designer Digitals, this sketch is based upon the layout "Family Portrait in PJs" on page 64. [Click to download layered psd file for digital pages.](#)





These are some additional sketches that use lots of layering. They're from the Get It Scrapped! Sketch gallery #32. If you have my ebook "Every Little Thing" from designer digitals, the top sketch is based upon the Thanksgiving layout on page 47.

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



## VARIATIONS

Layering is a topic that is huge—and we're going to come at it by looking at the pieces.

So: let's take a look at a variety of pages incorporating layers and get the mojo flowing. On this page, look at the layering going on in focused areas.



The bottom one-third of "Strike a Pose" holds journaling and a smaller photo. Behind and around these are a series of vertical strips that are all of the same height but of varying widths. This is a fun way to use coordinating paper lines to add interest. Several long and narrow strips of these same papers run beneath the focal-point photo.



While "Just Do It" layers photos, papers, chipboard flourishes and embellishments throughout, I want to call your eye to the strip of papers running through the center. Several strips of coordinating papers in varying widths are layered and sewn together. Again, this is an easy way to get detailed layering and several patterns onto your page quickly and in a way that doesn't overwhelm the photos.

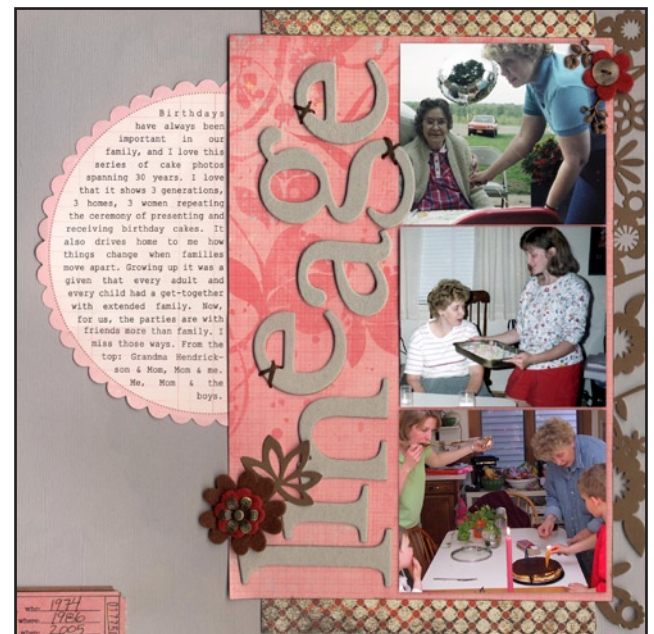


The possibilities for what you can layer onto your page are numerous. To begin, consider: paper, tags, journaling blocks, photos, embellishments, alphas, labels, paint, ink, rub-ons, and text.

Additionally, you have lots of options for adding interest to the edges of your layers with techniques like inking, sewing, sanding, and tearing. And, then, yet another aspect to think about is how you might visibly “fasten” the layers for even more interest. You could hand or machine sew, staple, pin, tie, and clip.



“You Come Too” incorporates an angel I printed to t-shirt iron-on paper and then ironed onto the page. “Stockings” includes papers, botanicals, ribbon, and felt. All photo edges are sanded for definition, The layering on “Legacy” is simple—using two patterned papers, a strip of diecut flower paper, and a journaling spot—but it still adds lots of interest.





Mixing patterned papers is another topic that could fill many more pages than we have here. Here are some quick tips:

- Using coordinated lines is the quickest and easiest way to mix papers.
- When you're mixing papers from different manufacturers, unify by color or theme.
- Use a common technique like inking or sanding edges to unify patterns.
- Use ribbon, paper strips, or stitching to separate different patterns on the page.
- Mix scales. Pair an oversized motif with a smaller pattern.



"Greatest Show on Our Road" successfully mixes a small geometric pattern—peeking out from beneath each side of the photo block—with a larger old-fashioned floral motif.

Five different patterned papers are used on "Dadz in the Hood." To successfully incorporate this many patterns, I used papers from a coordinated line, and I used them in small doses.



## **YOUR TURN**

Now it's your turn to create a layered design. Use the sketches on page 5 and 6 or set yourself the task of making a layered "inner canvas" with asymmetrical surrounding white space as on "Awesome Sight" on page 2 or "Much 2 Admire" on page 3.