

## Lesson 9: Divided

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### THE DESIGN

This is another lesson in which I'm asking you to give yourselves a very specific design challenge. The goal is not only to put your design skills to work, but, also, to give you a seed that will (hopefully) result in designs you wouldn't otherwise have created.

Today's starting point is a "divide." You should divide most or all of your page either horizontally or vertically and then **(this is important)** make that dividing line key to your design balance and impact.

*Note: Don't confuse this with dividing a background in half for interest or as a way to delineate areas to fill. Rather, make everything depend upon and come out of this divide.*

"To School '09" is built around one very obvious horizontal divide and a weaker vertical divide.

The horizontal divide is created with several layered ribbons that don't quite reach to each side of the canvas. The two larger photos sit diagonal from one another above and below the divide as do the two smaller photos.

The vertical divide is created with alignments—alignments of the photos on each side and of the journaling that is left justified on the left and left-justified on the right.

The entire grouping is placed at approximately canvas center. The result is a composition with interesting tension and energy.



**DETAILS**

Make your “dividing” line with:

- a physical line of something (paper strips, ribbon, a series of buttons or tags or stitching or even paper clips!)
- alignments
- white space

In “Busy Bees” Doris Sander used a line of crumpled and stitched-down ribbon which she topped with yellow buttons. It’s a strong and eye-catching line. The photos and paper blocks that are positioned above and below it are all placed with equally-size gutters.

Her balance is fabulous. Above the line, she uses blocks of equal height. Below the line, the blocks have progressively shorter heights. Two journaling areas sit diagonal from one another and above and below their respective photos.

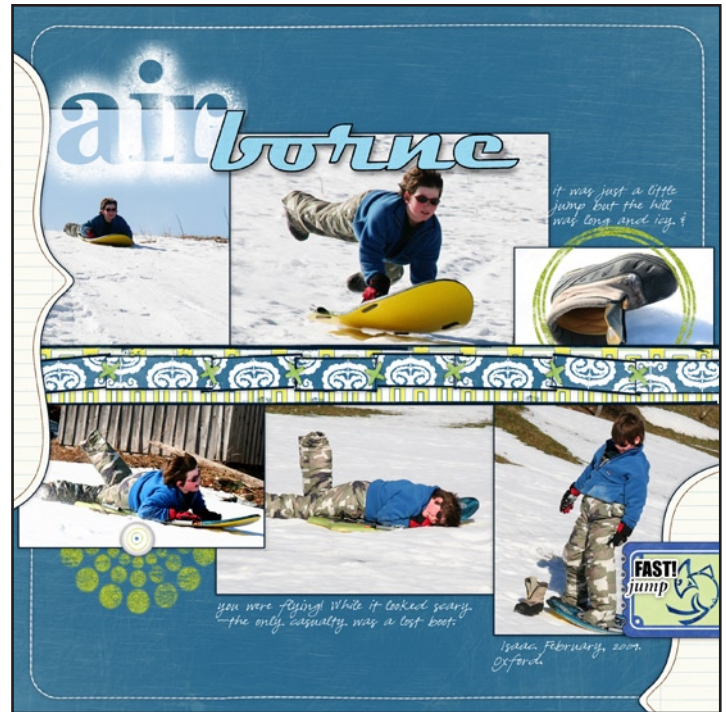
Note how this page has a strong alignments and, yet, a casual and loose feel. Check out the alignments of: the top journaling block, the two far-left photos; the patterned paper block and the photo below it. These strong alignments are softened by the curved stitching and the “messy” ribbon.



page design by DORIS SANDER



"Airborne" is a digital page that I made inspired by Doris' "Busy Bees" on the previous page. I began with a "messy" and interesting horizontal dividing line and I continued by using her approach of progressively shorter photos. The divider here goes off each side of the page, and the photos overlap.



"Do It" uses several layers of patterned paper to make an obvious and interesting dividing line which stops an inch in from page sides. I have diagonally balanced elements of similar weights above and below the divide. The most prominent elements creating this balance are the two photos and the chipboard scrolls.



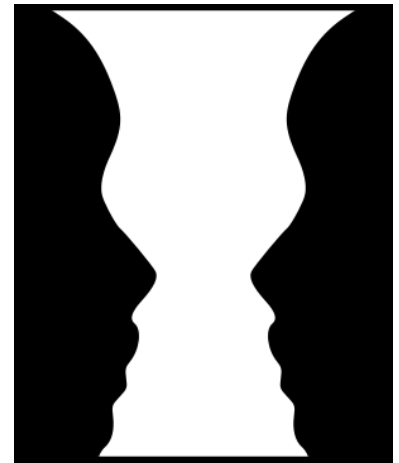
These pages are all built around a vertical divide positioned smack dab in the middle of the canvas. The divides on "Day's End" and "Fast Forward" are of ribbon and paper strips and both stop short of running to page top or page bottom.

The divide on "Autumn Outing" is created with white space. Notice the strength of this divide. If you take this approach, be sure the break is clear. Good contrast and strong alignments make this an effective divide upon which the composition depends.





What do you see in the black and white image here? A vase or two faces in profile? During visual perception, our brain simplifies things into a figure that we look at and a ground that forms the background. As you look at the image you will at first perceive either the vase or the faces as foreground—and then after a bit of time you’ll see the other as foreground. And then you will be able switch back and forth between the two.



SOURCE: Wikipedia

The implications of this for design are that people are accustomed to seeing the background as passive and unimportant. If you can create figure/ground tension, you can add visual energy to your page. When you run substantial and interestingly-shaped white space through the middle of your page, you will create a subtle ambiguity between figure and ground that’s interesting. The space on Doris Sanders’ “Shutterfly” has angles and curves. Elements on each side bleed off the page. White space surrounds three sides of the elements on the left. This all creates wonderful energy. See a similar approach on my page “Bright Spot.”

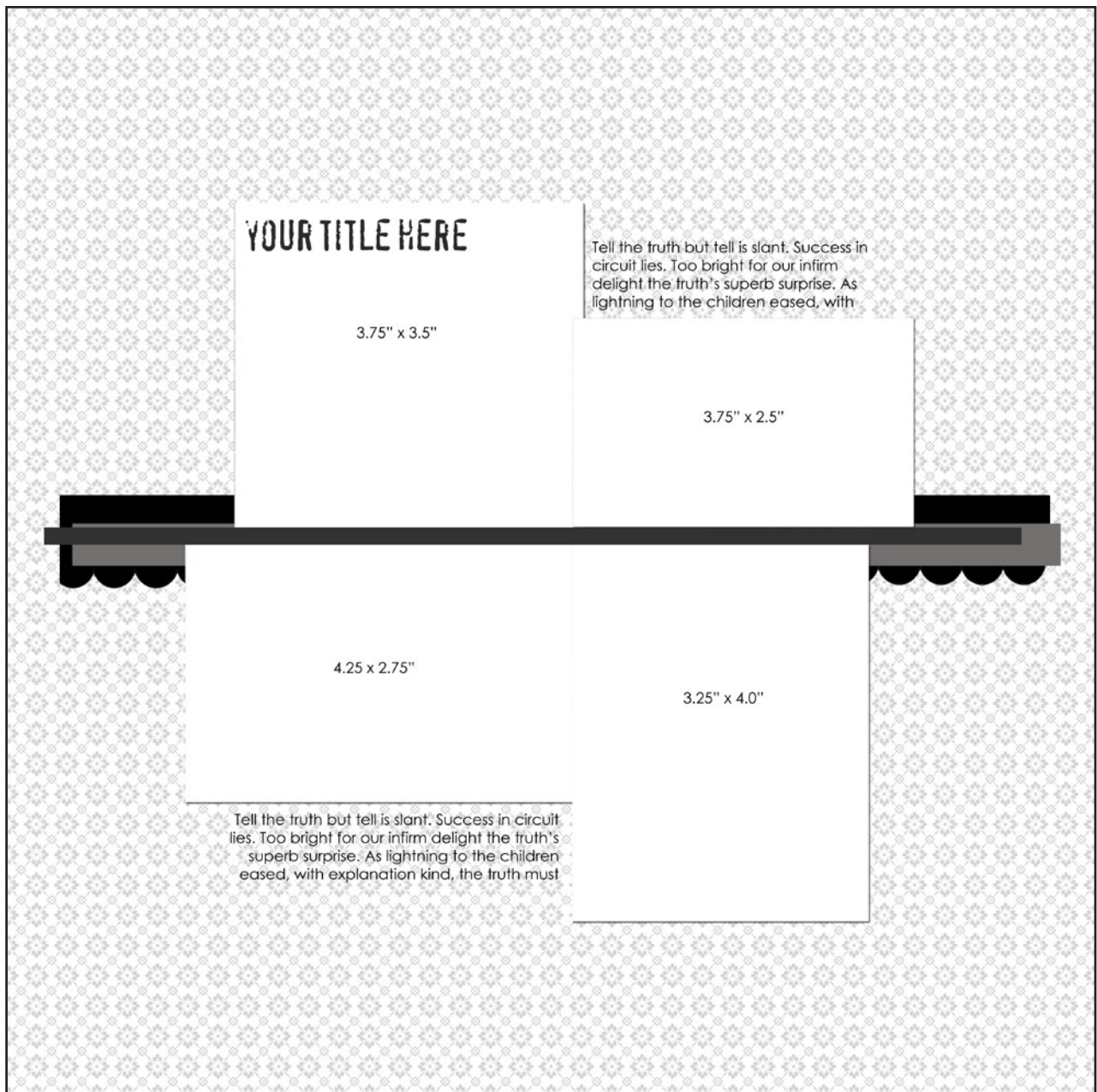


page design by DORIS SANDER



**SKETCH AND VARIATIONS**

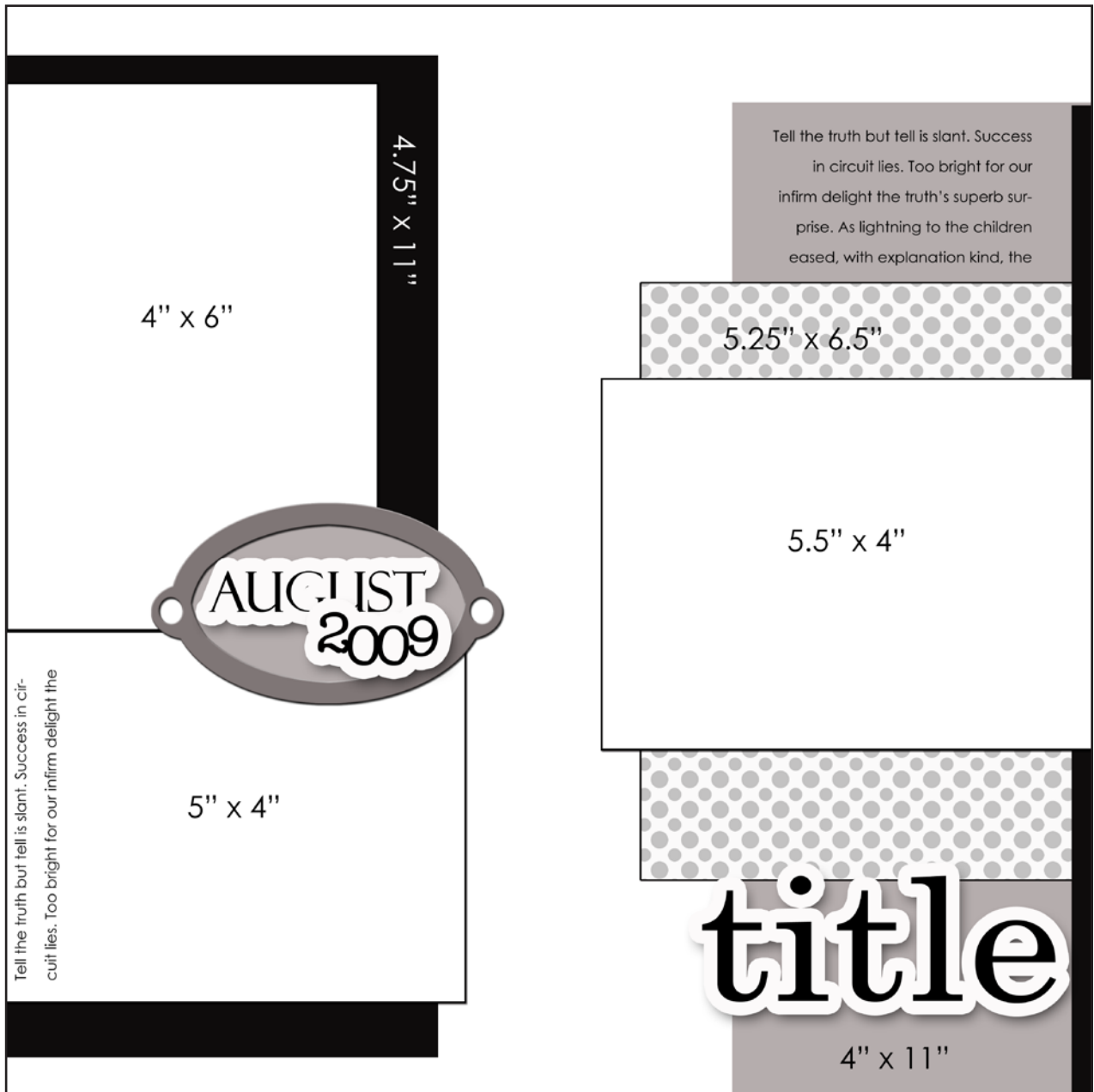
This new sketch incorporates a strong horizontal divide and a weaker vertical divide as described in the caption for "To School '09" on page 1. [Download layered psd of this sketch.](#)



This sketch from the Get It Scrapped gallery uses white space to create a vertical divide. [Download layered psd for this sketch.](#) (This is sketch #27 in our gallery and you'll be downloading a bundle of three coordinated sketches).



The divide on this page is not a narrow strip, but, rather, substantial and interesting white space. [Download layered psd for this sketch](#) (This is sketch #2 in our gallery, and you'll be downloading a bundle of three coordinated sketches).





## **YOUR TURN**

Take one (or all) of these challenges to make a scrapbook page:

- Build your page on either side of a line created from elements—paper, ribbon, buttons or something else. The divide could be vertical or horizontal.
- Build your page on either side of a strong line of white space (again, vertical or horizontal).
- Build interesting and substantial white space **THROUGH** the middle of your page as your divider (again, vertical or horizontal).