

{LESSON TWO} layering elements

In this lesson we'll open by looking at two important aspects of any visual design: 1) focal points and 2) incorporating texture and dimension. You will understand what they are, why they are important and get an introduction to using them.

You'll then see lots of ideas for layering your **page elements**, including: photos, title, journaling, as well as the little bits of memorabilia, ephemera, tags, labels and more that you might include. As we work through these ideas, we will pay attention to the work of creating focal points and including texture and dimension.

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focal points

The focal point is the center of a design. This doesn't necessarily mean that it's the vertical and/or horizontal center (although it could be) but, rather, that it is the most important part (or parts) of a piece.

why a focal point is good to have

Without some variation in emphasis among the elements on your page, everything takes on the same level of importance, and the viewer has to find some way into your page on their own.

When emphasis exists, though, the viewer's eye is drawn to a starting point and then (with some good "flow management") knows where to continue. The result is the viewer "gets" what your page is about.

Without a focal point, a viewer has to figure out on their own where to look first and what part of the page is the most important.

The focal point on "What I Wouldn't Give" is the largest photo - a group shot of my sons and nieces the morning after a camp out.



What I Wouldn't Give by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Darling Dear Kit by Creashens; File Box 3 by Paula Kesselring; Pull-out Journaling by Lynn Grieveson; The Daily Details by Digi Chick Collaborative; The Maple Origins, Nobile fonts.

- create visual hierarchy and, thus, flow with focal point and design



When visitors come to our home, I don't want their first view to be into the bathroom next to the front door. I want them to look straight into my house--to the big windows overlooking the river. So I keep the bathroom door shut (or at least I try to), and I have spots of color leading the eye right over to those windows. Right now it's a series of yellows: a large planter, a yellow vase, and a wide bowl.

You can take viewers of your scrapbook pages on just such a guided tour by establishing a focal point and then lesser eye-catching points.

The focal point on "Too Fun" is the cluster of two photos which grab the eye because of contrast (the white borders and sepia tones of the photos). As they're taking in the photos, they move onto the title, placed right next to the photos and, in fact, a part of a grouping. The next eye-catching point is either the flower mounted on a milk-cap or the cut-out butterfly. Either way, the trip to the third point leads them right through and to the journaling.

Too Fun by Lisa Dickinson | supplies: kit (Jenni Bowlin Mercantile, August 2011) + cardstock (Bazzill Basics) + patterned paper (Basic Grey, Fancy Pants) + decorative papers (Fancy Pants, Bazzill Basics) + tag (American Tag) + stamp, ink (Jenni Bowlin Studio) + letter stickers (Prima) + stickers (Studio Calico) + flower, chipboard (Fancy Pants) + punch (EK Success) + die cut machine (Silhouette by QuicKutz) + acrylic template (Jenni Bowlin Mercantile) + pen (Staedtler)

how to create a focal point

Create a focal point by making an element stand out through one or more of the following. We all routinely scan our surroundings - even when we focus on a spot, we eventually change our field of vision. Here are three ways to catch the eye on a scrapbook page.



1. appeal

A subject making eye contact, a stunning floral arrangement, or a must-touch embellishment are the kinds of elements that grab the eye.



2. contrast

Contrast is one of the biggest draws of the human eye. By using it properly, it is the most effective way to create a focal point. Contrasts are all about differences -- and the bigger the differences, the more noticeable and eye-catching.



3. structure

A more subtle way of drawing the eye to a point is through structure. The human eye (and mind) will follow the natural order of things.

use “appeal” to create a focal point

3 ways to use “appeal” to create a focal point

1. engaging photo

A photo of a subject making eye contact, a dramatic cathedral or stunning floral arrangement, are the kinds of shots that grab the eye.

2. appealing element

A must-touch, must-see embellishment (that also stands out because of contrast or structure as described on the following pages) can serve as focal point.

3. decoration

When you decorate your focal point with charming and unique elements you’ll distinguish it from the other pieces of your page.

The photo of Lisa’s daughter looking right at us in her pretty outfit and standing in front of daffodils is an appealing subject that catches the eye.



This Girl by Lisa Dickinson | supplies: Bazzill cardstock in kraft & white + Jenni Bowlin paints (Cough Syrup, Chewing Gum, Lemon Drops, Seed Packet, Soap Powder, Chicken Feed) + Jenni Bowlin inks (Cough Syrup, Chewing Gum, Lemon Drops, Seed Packet, Soap Powder, Chicken Feed) + butterfly stamp (Studio Calico) + buttons + stick pins + border punch + JBS letter stickers

The three photos on Cookie Walk are all sized similarly, and they are busy, full photos. The large, red poinsettia, though, is different and appealing. What’s more t’s connected to the title which cues the page subject.



Cookie Walk by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Christmas Village Kit, Krafty Canvas no 1, Chipboard Alpha White by Katie Pertiet; Masana Script font.

use contrast to create a focal point



We all routinely scan our surroundings - even when we focus on a spot, we eventually change our field of vision.

As we make this change, we do a quick scan of the environment, unconsciously looking for elements that stand out—elements that contrast. Think of the hunting lion looking for that movement or bit of color that identifies prey.

Contrasts are all about differences -- and the bigger the differences, the more noticeable and eye-catching. These are commonly used ways to get contrast on your page.

The single large photo stands out in contrast to the cluster of three smaller photos.

Memorial Day by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Retrouvailles by One Little Bird and Vinnie Pearce; Rimmed Framers No 1, Academic Sanded Alpha by Katie Pertiet; Artplay Palette Rockstar by Anna Aspnes

3 ways to use contrast to create a focal point

1. value

Lighter values and whites are more likely to draw the eye than darker values -- however remember contrast is about the thing that stands out and a darker value can be a focal point.

2. color

Some color schemes have more inherent contrast than others. Complementary colors (those that sit directly across from one another on the color wheel) will contrast more strongly than “analogous” colors (those that sit next to one another on the color wheel).

You can take advantage of “value” differences to make shades of the same color contrast.

3. size

When one element is an obviously different size from the others, it stands out. Two things to note:

- 1) It's not always about being BIGGER . . . it's about being DIFFERENT. Thus, an element smaller than the rest can stand out as much as an element that's bigger.
- 2) Make the difference OBVIOUS. Don't go just part way.

use structure to create a focal point

Another way of getting the eye to a point is through structure that guides the eye. The eye will follow lines, a sequential pattern, the eyes of the people in your photos, and even implied motion in your photo.

On this symmetrical composition, Dina placed her photo at page center AND at the intersection of vertical and horizontal bands of patterned paper—cementing its position as page focal point.



My 3 Fellas by Dina Wakley (Masterful Scrapbook Design Canvas Issue) | Supplies: Supply list: Patterned paper: Jenni Bowlin Paint: Liquitex Cardstock: Bazzill Journaling Card: Jenni Bowlin Alphabet: Jenni Bowlin

3 ways to use structure to create a focal point

1. line

The human eye (and mind) will follow the natural order of things. The eye will follow: a sequential pattern, the eyes of the people in your photos, a line of perspective, or implied motion in your photo.

2. white space

Using whitespace is one of the simplest ways to draw the eye to specific area of the page without use of visible elements.

3. balance

Symmetry can strengthen a focal point, forcing the viewer's eye to the center. An asymmetrical design can soften or muddy focalization.

liftable layers: texture and dimension

Add liftable layers to your page with texture and dimension.



Click on these thumbnails, and check out the texture of the ribbon on Doris' pride and the dimension of the tied rickrack on my "What I Wouldn't Give."

Texture refers to the surface characteristics of a material.

touchable (physical) texture: Get touchable texture on your pages with the use of products like textured papers, fabric, fibers, and chipboard.

visual texture: Visual texture is understood from the patterns of light and dark values on a surface. Rough surfaces reflect light unevenly. Smooth textures reflect light evenly. Matte surfaces reflect soft, dull light. Shiny surfaces reflect bright light.

Artists create visual texture by working with reflections of light, color, and values. Because lighter values appear to be closer and darker values tend to recede, combinations of the two side-by-side create the illusion of texture.

Dimension (or depth) refers to the measurable extent to which something lifts off the page.

touchable (physical) dimension: Layer, stack, curl, and pop-dot your elements to achieve actual depth on your page.

visual dimension: Create the illusion of depth with the use of shadows, light, scaling, overlaps, perspective, and even photos with a sharp foreground with fuzzy background.

incorporate texture to evoke memories and feelings

Texture is a powerful art element because it can quickly evoke memories and emotions. Artists use both visual and physical textures to trigger your memories of previous texture experiences. This is a way for an artist to convey feelings about his or her subjects. What does velvet connote to you? Do worn wood, corduroy, or slate trigger memories?

incorporate texture and dimension to engage a viewer's tactile nature

Texture is tactile: it appeals to our sense of touch. It is an essential design element for visual artists, because it engages another sense in addition to sight. When you can incorporate texture on your pages, you draw your viewer in on another level.

The felt snowflake and alphas on "Star Wars" snowflakes remind me of handcrafted projects and of the Christmas ornaments I've made of felt over the years.



Darling Dear by Creashens; Felty Flakes, Yuletide Felt Alpha by Pattie Knox; Retrouvailles by One Little Bird and Vinnie Pearce; Stitched Circles No 2, Stitched Frames No 1 by Anna Aspnes; Digital Date Stamps No 15; Nobile and StarVader fonts

use page elements + products + technique to get texture and dimension

Combine: 1) page elements (photos, journaling, titles, embellishments), 2) scrapbooking products, and 3) technique to get texture and dimension onto your page. Below are ideas corresponding to the 4 layering lessons we're covering: foundational layering, elements layering, canvas layering, and embellishment layering. Keep an eye out for these techniques on the pages throughout this and the other three lessons.

ideas for foundational texture and dimension

- openings: Anything that has an opening reveals parts of the elements beneath and, thus, adds immediate dimension to a page: lace, open alphas, empty frames, and scalloped strips with eyelet punches are a few elements with openings
- lots of layers
- brushwork. Both paper and digital scrapbookers can create a foundation of brushwork that adds visual and/or physical texture
- curl, distress, tear, stitch and modify edges

ideas for adding texture and dimension to page elements

- add matting and framing
- look for texture in your photos
- paper and digital alphabets are available in a wide range of materials, including paper, chipboard, fabric, acrylic and metal.
- overlap your alphas for quick dimension.
- layer with tags, memorabilia, and ephemera

ideas for background texture and dimension

- use textured cardstock
- apply paint, mist, gesso and other texture-adding mediums
- crumple, fold, distress
- use patterns that add texture (i.e., text prints, tone-on-tone prints, small prints)
- collage or piece together a base

ideas for embellishment texture and dimension

- buttons, stickers, chipboard and foam-dots
- stack
- use fibers. fabric, ribbon, string, yarn
- add stitching and fibers
- realistic embellishments add visual texture and dimension
- vellum and transparencies let the lower layers show through
- punch and layer tone-on-tone elements
- fussy-cut and curl
- cluster

layering photos

Photos are the element most frequently presented as scrapbook page focal point.

“Oh Happy Day’s” focal point is the single photo on the page. Its size and appeal are part of the reason it catches the eye first, but layering also plays a part here. The frame and bird layered over it, as well as the fern and papers layered behind it, all combine to create contrast and interest.

On “Too Fun,” the focal point is a cluster of two photos. Again, white framing (or matting) helps set the photos off against the foundational blocked layers.

Read on for more ideas for layering photos.



Oh Happy Day by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: supplies: Collage-ables No. 04 and No 1, Thin Chip Alphabet: Red, Basic Paper Alphabet: Beige, Basic Paper Alphabet: Yellow, Coastal Element Pack, Flossy Stitches: Red, Journaling Strip Masks, Vintage Photo Frames No. 24 by Katie Pertiet; Summer Sunset Distressed Add-on Paper Pack, Glitter Thread Stitches by Lynn Grieson

Too Fun by Lisa Dickinson | supplies: kit (Jenni Bowlin Mercantile, August 2011) + cardstock (Bazzill Basics) + patterned paper (Basic Grey, Fancy Pants) + decorative papers (Fancy Pants, Bazzill Basics) + tag (American Tag) + stamp, ink (Jenni Bowlin Studio) + letter stickers (Prima) + stickers (Studio Calico) + flower, chipboard (Fancy Pants) + punch (EK Success) + die cut machine (Silhouette by QuicKutz) + acrylic template (Jenni Bowlin Mercantile) + pen (Staedtler)

layer photos with mats and frames

Frames and mats are layers that can be used subtly (think tone-on-tone) or built up for extra dimension (think multiple mats in varying widths and high contrast values and colors).

The largest photo on “Moments & Memories becomes part of foundation showing off the smaller photo which is actually the focal point.

See how frames and mats of solid cardstock and patterned papers are combined. Notice the inked mat edges and the first foundational layers of the page which are stamped directly to the canvas.



Moments & Memories by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Layered FotoBlendz Clipping Masks No. 06, ArtsyClocks No. 03 ElementSet, Stitched by Anna Borders Brown No. 01 by Anna Aspnes; The Story Titles Brushes and Stamps Vol. 02 by Ali Edwards; Patterns Petite No. 04, Backyard Expedition Kit by Lynn Grieveson; Fasten Its! No. 03, Beaded Strings by Pattie Knox; Colbie Solids Paper Pack by Michelle Martin; Sacked Solids: Neutrals Paper Pack, Rimmed Framers No. 01, Stamped Edgers Brushes and Stamps No. 01, My Family Genealogy Clippings No. 03, Cut Outs Bird Collection, Date Dots No. 01, Basic Paper Alphabet: White by Katie Pertiet

ideas for mats and frames

- mat your photo in the center of cardstock or patterned paper; double mat and use variations in border width, color, and/or pattern
- place your mat offset behind your photo
- use mat or foundational layer of lace paper
- use a frame larger than your photo
- layer your photo on top of the frame instead of beneath
- frame only a portion of the photo -- layer a small decorative frame or label plate over a larger photo to highlight a part of the photo
- make a frame out of ribbon, paper strips, or tape for fun texture and dimension
- use a large frame as a foundation and layer smaller photos within the frame or spilling outside of it

more frames and mats

The focal photo here is presented in a wide, cream frame. The accent photos are matted on two journaling tags. The photos are bigger than the journalers but that bit of white behind the photos adds interest and helps them “pop” against the grey canvas.



What I Wouldn't Give by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Darling Dear Kit by Creashens; File Box 3 by Paula Kesselring; Pull-out Journaling by Lynn Grieveson; The Daily Details by Digi Chick Collaborative; The Maple Origins, Nobile fonts.

What could you make a frame out of? Paper strips, ribbon, and tape are all good candidates. The largest photo on Angry Birds sits on top of an orange tape frame.



From My Bookshelf Cardstock, Framed With Tape #2, Big Tags Boys #1, On the Edge Grunge No 1, Tag Frames No. 01, Flossy Stitches: Red, Flossy Stitches No. 02, Little Fly Aways Stickers, Junkyard Garden: Blooms, Grunged Up Alphabet No. 02 Brushes and Stamps, Brushed Alphabet No. 03 by Katie Per-tiet; 12x12 Distressed Edges #9 by Anna Aspnes; Smallest Airman Kit, Farmer Joe Mini Kit, Forecast Kit by Lynn Grieveson; Felt Board Friends: Tot Transport No. 01, rad Bonanza No. 01: Digital Fasteners, Felt Board Friends: Cagey Little Birds by Pat-tie Knox

more frames and mats

The three photos on “Stroll” are each presented in a slightly different way. The group shot under the title is framed. The photo of buildings in Portsmouth is mounted directly on the canvas, and the shot below that is double matted. The first, very narrow mat is white cardstock and the next is a low-contrast chevron print. The frames and mats add low-key dimension and interest to the page.



Stroll by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Krafty Canvas 1, Oiselet Rouge Element Pack, Double Decker Kit, Fall Fun Element Pack, Basic Paper Alpha: Blue, Thankful Memories by Katie Pertiet; DIY Board Games by ViVa Artistry; Check It Cards by One Little Bird; Eilon Kit by Maplebrook Studios; Brad Bonanza No 3 by Pattie Knox; Mellow by Lynn-Marie; For the Love of Chevrons by Ali Edwards

The two accent photos on “Church Fair Day” are matted on tags turned 90 degrees and edge stitched. Each of the three photos sits on a block of gold-on-white patterned paper that extends behind one of 4 corners.



Church Fair Day by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Woodsy Trees No 1, Stitched Journaling Labels Holiday, Pine Letter Box Collages, On the Edge Grunge No 1, Krafty Canvas No 1, Flossy Stitches No 1, Postage Strips Words Holiday No 1, Christmas Village Kit by Katie Pertiet; Holiday Cheer Kit by Lynn Grieson

more frames and mats

A frame can be a great uniting element. The three smaller photos on “Memorial Day” are clustered within a circle frame cut from patterned paper.

Think about using a larger, rectangular frame as your foundation for uniting a collection of larger photos.



Memorial Day by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Retrouvailles by One Little Bird and Vinnie Pearce; Rimm Framers No 1, Academic Sanded Alpha by Katie Pertiet; Artplay Palette Rockstar by Anna Aspnes

Frame and stack up several photos, tilting each at a different angle and revealing corners of the photos beneath. You could use the same photo over and over as I’ve done on the middle shot on “One Way to Tend a Fire.”



Thankful for You by Jenn Barrette and Zoe Pern; Slab Alpha by Cathy Zielske; Brad Bonanza 3 by Pattie Knox; Metal Monogram Alpha 2, Clipped Stacks No 4 by Katie Pertiet; Multilayered Foto-blendz 1 by Anna Aspnes

layering multiple photos

Overlapping, and layering photos on top of one another is a great way to create clusters that work for your design.

On “Winter Carnival,” I’ve grouped photos into two clusters. The largest, landscape photo isn’t a great shot, but I included it for context. Layering two smaller photos on top of it, keeps this larger photo from dominating the page.

Two smaller photos are clustered with page title and journaling layered on top of stamped journaling line.



Winter Carnival by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Retrouvailles by One Little Bird and Vinnie Pearce, Antoinette by Shannon Hegarty; Vintage Pointsettia by Krista Sahlin, Touch of Magic Sweet Awaits by Kitty Designs; Restoration by Gina Cabrera; Handcut Snowflakes by Valerie Wibbins; Woodcut Alpha by Crystal Wilkerson

ideas for arranging and layering multiple photos

- overlap photos in a cluster or series
- create a “faux” photostrip with multiple same-sized photos on white mat
- stack up several photos, revealing corners of the photos beneath
- cut smaller, accent photos in circles and group in an overlapping cluster
- duplicate a photo, apply a treatment to the copy and layer just PART of the treated photo on the original
- “stickerize” part of a photo and layer it on another photo

layering photos with tilts and photo strips



other grid base -- this one a 6 x 3 grid of circles. Again, her tilts and white mats set the photos off from an appealing and rich foundation. Note also her use of photo treatments on each page.

Making your own photo strips is easy. Mount multiple same-sized photos on white cardstock with narrow borders. Don't have enough photos? Mount patterned paper or embellishments in one spot as shown in the strip here.



Spring Break by Lisa Dickinson | Supplies: cardstock (Bazzil Basics) + patterned paper (Webster's Pages, American Crafts, Jenni Bowlin Studio) + stamps, ink (Jenni Bowlin Studio) + stickers (Sassafras Lass) + label (Studio Calcio) + die cuts (Pink Paislee) + tag (American Crafts) + circle cutter (Creative Memories) + buttons (Maya Road) + ribbon (May Arts) + border punch (Fiskars) + twine (Coats & Clark) + font (Teicester)

Lisa often scrapbooks multiple similar photos on her pages and arranges them in clusters with overlaps and tilts. See how she's done that on "Too Fun," tilting both of her photos and mounting them on a tidy and linear blocked foundation.

Now take a look at "Spring Break." Here Lisa has mounted two tilted photo strips on top of an-

layering photos with clusters and stacks

When your accent photos are for zooming in on details, the circle crop is a great way to do this. Combine several circle crops in an overlapping cluster as I've done on "StarWars Flakes."

Circle photos are also great for stacking. Here I've layered the photos on patterned paper, vellum, and a scalloped journaler for great repetitions of the shape with variety in texture, color, and pattern.



Darling Dear by Creashens; Felt Flakes, Yuletide Felt Alpha by Pattie Knox; Retrouvailles by One Little Bird and Vinnie Pearce; Stitched Circles No 2, Stitched Frames No 1 by Anna Aspnnes; Digital Date Stamps No 15; Nobile and StarVader fonts

A couple of day before Christmas, Joshua found how-tos for handcut "star wars" snowflakes online. Isaac and Josh both became ENGROSSED in making these, producing Boba Fett, Stormtrooper, Clonetrooper, Yoda, C3Po, and a Scouttrooper.

On "Here," I've stacked two of the same photo, framing both of them and rotating the one beneath 45 degrees to create a diagonal that adds energy and grounds the focal point photo to the smaller one on its left.



Here by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: The Daily Details by The Digi Chick Collaboration; Restoration by Gina Cabrera; Speech by Paula Kesselring; Flossy Stitches Brown, Journaling Strip Masks, Art Time Elements, In Words Brushes by Katie Pertiet; A Very Small Alpha by Allyson Pennington; Traveling Type-writer font.

layering photo content

When I got off the hayride shown on “1 More Time” to restore a fallen bale, my smart-alec brother took off without me--and I got this great shot of the group driving away with my parents' farm in the distance.

I cropped and mounted the original photo in color. I mounted a second black-and-white copy of *a part* of the photo over the original for an interesting look that features *both* the group in the photo and the landscape behind them.



1 More Time by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Etc by Polka Dot Pixel; Krafty Cuts Leaves, Flossy Stitches Orange, Cold Spring Element Pack, Artistry Del Sol, Krafty Canvas No 1 by Katie Pertiet, Little Bits Alpha; Interlude by One Little Bird; The Daily Details by Digi Chick Collaborative; Metamorphosis by Leora Sanford; Ransom Words by Vicky Stegall; An Additional Very Small Alpha by Allison Pennington; Artplay Palette Chevron Sweet Baby by Anna Aspnes; Build Your Own Borders by Amy Wolff

The party I recorded on “Our Shelby” took place in our neighbor’s beautiful back yard, but the group shot here was backed up by less-beautiful driveway and garage. I cut out the group and “stickerized” the cutout by adding a white digital border. I then mounted the grouping on another shot of greenery taken at the party.



Our Shelby by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Title+Journal Photo Overlays No 01 by Ali Edwards; French Summer kit by Lynn Grieveson; 12x12 Scratched Edge Overlays No 01 by Anna Aspnes

layers on top of your photos

There are times your photos present space and context for the layering of other elements.

On “Awesome Sight,” I not only found room for my journaling on the largest photo, I also layered a cluster of bird embellishments over it at bottom right. Because of their bigger size and placement on the photo, they become a part of the scene, a part of my dad’s experience on the front porch being recorded here.



Awesome Sight by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Madras Kit, Journaling Spots and Strips, Worn Photo Edges No. 04; Golden Years by Lynn Grieveson; Collage-ables No. 02, Cut Outs Bird Collection, Vintage Photo Frames No. 16, Filed Photo Frames No. 4, Ledger Paper Pieces: Leaves No. 03, Jouets Collection, Classic Cardstock: Natural Beauty, Paper Bobbins by Katie Pertiet; Bedazzled! Layout Jewelry, Brad Bonanza No. 03; Digital Fasteners by Pattie Knox; Stitched by Anna White No. 02, Distressed Edge Overlays No. 05 12 X 12 by Anna Aspnes; Felix Titling, Pea Shirley fonts

ideas for layers on top of your photos

- use clear space on your photo for journaling or page title
- layer transparent or semitransparent elements like rub-ons, transparencies, or vellum that let the photos show through
- add a doodled or rub-on border directly to the photo
- put your photo, or part of it, in a clear pocket
- tie or wrap your photo
- layer representational embellishments so that they’re introduced into the scene of the photo (see Awesome Sight).

more layers on top of your photos

Doris layered a red rub-on border on one of the photos on “Run Home.” Lisa took advantage of the space on her large photo on “This Girl” to layer a colorful grid of butterfly topped circles.



Run Home by Doris Sander | Supplies - patterned paper by Basic Grey, transparency by My Mind's Eye, flowers by Fancy Pants, tag by Avery, metal trim by 7 Gypsies, brads by My Mind's Eye



This Girl by Lisa Dickinson | supplies: Bazzill cardstock in kraft & white + Jenni Bowlin paints (Cough Syrup, Chewing Gum, Lemon Drops, Seed Packet, Soap Powder, Chicken Feed) + Jenni Bowlin inks (Cough Syrup, Chewing Gum, Lemon Drops, Seed Packet, Soap Powder, Chicken Feed) + butterfly stamp (Studio Calico) + buttons + stick pins + border punch + JBS letter stickers

layering titles

Whether your title is the page focal point, one of the eye-catching points guiding the eye around the page, or a low-key description of page subject, there are layering opportunities.

The title on “Friends” is clustered with the larger photo and part of an appealing and rich cluster that runs beneath both photos. Notice the little touches like the rickrack leading the eye to the title and the “punctuating” flower at the end. The openings of several of the characters are filled with patterned paper. The “f” and “d” overlap the photo above and the lace below, grounding the elements to one another.



Friends by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Pure Happiness by Designs by Anita; Stitch Medley by Quirky Twerp; Oh Joy by Paislee Press; Storyteller Alpha by Amanda Heimann; Holiday Trim, Vintage Blendables 5 by Katie Pertiet; Oldies Bundle by Paula Kesselring; White Paint by Anna Aspnes; Antoinette by Shannon Hegarty

ideas for layering titles

- start with the arrangement of the alphas in your title, mixing the alphas, jiggling their placement, and overlapping some of the characters
- “punctuate” your title, leading in with a line of stitching or trim and ending with a period-like embellishment
- fill the centers of closed parts of characters (the middle of the “a” or the loop of script “d”)
- cover your alpha with patterned paper or even a confined collage
- put part of your title on a tag or label and layer it with the alphas for the rest of the title
- put part of your title on vellum or transparency and label over the rest of the title
- punch title from your canvas and layer patterned paper behind it
- mask your title then mist or paint; remove masks to reveal title
- outline alphas for the title then paint them in messily
- frame part of the title
- wrap or weave fibers around or through the title alphas

handcut and wrapped with lots of dimension



Check out the two-part title on Doris' "Beaming with Pride." A low-key, handwritten label ("Beaming with") leads into an eye-catching handcut "Pride."

Doris handwrote the word "pride" then handcut around it. Extra dimension and is added with the "gold-ribbon" treatment.

Don't want to go that big with your ribbon? Tie a bow around one of your alphas or run narrow ribbon in and out of the openings of your page's alphas.

Beaming with Pride by Doris Sander | Supplies: Patterned paper by Basic Grey, Scrapworks, Fancy Pants, 7 Gypsies, Amy Butler; Cardstock by Bazzill (title handcut); Label sticker and plastic ribbon by Jenni Bowlin Studio; Ribbon by May Arts; mist by Jenni Bowlin for Ranger.

mix, jiggle, and layer the alphas in your title

The title on “Oh Happy Day” is three words, and each of these is rendered with a different alpha. The alphas vary in color, texture, size, font, and in case.



Emily’s “2792” is a page that might have two titles. The “2792” are rendered with oversized black numbers that look like the numbers on a house. Woodgrain alphas in a mixed-case font are layered over photos and the “2792” to create an eye-catching title grouping.



Take a look at the title work on Lisa’s “Spring Break.” Every character sits flush with page bottom, and, thus, the tops of the letters create a jagged border. Lisa didn’t adhere every bit of the alphas and they lift an curl for a casual look.



punch or mask to reveal layers beneath your title

I created a layered but non-dimensional foundation for “Jammin’”, first with a circle-grid mask and digital mist, and secondly with a detailed overlay from Anna Aspnes of band in concert.

This layered foundation is emphasized by my titlework. The title was digitally “punched” from the photo (and the mat/frame beneath it) to reveal this foundation. I added drop shadows to the photo to emphasize the punch.



The title on Boston was created with alpha masks and digital blending. I used the photo-op font to make the “boston”

Jammin’ by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Krafty Canvas No 1, Words and Pictures Christmas, Pine Letter Box Brushes and Stamps, Vintage Frames No 1 by Katie Pertiet; December Dawn by Lauren Ried; Just Linens No 1 by Maplebrook Studios; Silver Glitter Alpha Number Set 1 by Anna Aspnes; Rustic Christmas by Fruit Loop Sally; Stitch Medley Borders by Quirky Twerp.

mask. Targeting the foundation/canvas, I selected the area filled by “boston,” and then selected its inverse. I duplicated this newly selected area and used blending modes on this new layer to darken the area around the title. Finally, I deleted the text layer that had originally created the “boston” mask.



A Day in Boston by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Generations by One Little Bird, Paislee Press, and Tracy Murphy; Count Your Blessings by ViVa Artistry; Duly Noted by Leora Sanford; PhotoOp, PeaOlson, Liberation fonts

transparent layers above and below your title

Use vellum, transparencies, and clear pockets for layering both above and below your titlework.

On “Favorites @ 15,” Emily layered a strip of vellum across her grouping of four photos and used it as the foundation for her title. The photos show through and the title doesn’t get lost on the darker background.



Favorites @ 15 by Emily Pitts | Supplies: Patterned paper: KI Memories; Ribbons: American Crafts and Maya Road; Buttons: My Mind's Eye; Chipboard butterfly: Jenni Bowlin Studios; Veneer star: Studio Calico; Label: Studio Calico; Alphabet: American Crafts (teal) and Doodlebug (red); Pen: Micron; Mist: Maya Road (teal) and Studio Calico (grey); Twine: livingroomfloor.etsy.com; Vellum: The Paper Company; Thread: Coats & Clark

The title on “Tech Camp” is a 2-parter with the “Tech” at top layered over gridwork rub-ons. The second part of the title is 4 letter stickers tucked into a clear pocket with embellishments.



Tech Camp by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Innovation by Sahlin Studio; Woodgrain Alpha by Crystal Wilkerson; Negative Sleeves No 2, Doodled ALpha 5 by Katie Pertiet; ArtPlay Palette Santa Nikolaus, ArtPlay Palette Play Out by Anna Aspnes

use embellishments and alphas together for layered titlework



My 3 Fellas by Dina Wakley (Masterful Scrapbook Design Canvas Issue) | Supplies: Supply list: Patterned paper: Jenni Bowlin Paint: Liquitex Cardstock: Bazzill Journaling Card: Jenni Bowlin Alphabet: Jenni Bowlin.

Dina layered small stickers on a die-cut star for the title on “My 3 Fellas.” I combined small alpha rubons and a little frame for the title on “1 More Time.”



1 More Time by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Etc by Polka Dot Pixel; Krafty Cuts Leaves, Flossy Stitches Orange, Cold Spring Element Pack, Artistry Del Sol, Krafty Canvas No 1 by Katie Pertiet, Little Bits Alpha; Interlude by One Little Bird; The Daily Details by Digi Chick Collaborative; Metamorphosis by Leora Sanford; Ransom Words by Vicky Stegall; An Additional Very Small Alpha by Allison Pennington; Artplay Palette Chevron Sweet Baby by Anna Aspnes; Build Your Own Borders by Amy Wolff

layering journaling

The journaling on Lisa's "This Girl" is combined with her beautifully layered grid of circles.

She's topped each circle with a stamped butterfly, buttons, and small journaling strips.

Notice how she's put one strip on three of the circles and two strips on the other three circles. Whiel everthing else on the page is placed with straight lines, these journaling strips add playful tilts topping everything off.



ideas for layering journaling

- make a journaling foundation of multiple labels and write across them as if they are one
- put journaling on strips; curl or ink or distress the strip edges
- make journaling lines with stamping, ruler and pen, digital brush, or even stitching.
- look for patterned paper with subtle lines that make for easy journaling
- use paint to make a journaling spot -- especially on patterned paper
- journal in multiple spots on one page
- put your journaling on a photo

journal on strips or bits

While the journaling strips on Lisa's "This Girl" on the previous page are a high-contrast white on color, the strips on "Spring Break" are white-on-white. Why? Why not print directly to the page? Using the strips adds subtle texture and gives the page a casual, homemade feel.



Spring Break by Lisa Dickinson | Supplies: cardstock (Bazzill Basics) + patterned paper (Webster's Pages, American Crafts, Jenni Bowlin Studio) + stamps, ink (Jenni Bowlin Studio) + stickers (Sassafras Lass) + label (Studio Calcio) + die cuts (Pink Paislee) + tag (American Crafts) + circle cutter (Creative Memories) + buttons (Maya Road) + ribbon (May Arts) + border punch (Fiskars) + twine (Coats & Clark) + font (Icicester)

Mix up your journaling with a combo of fonts or handwriting and alphas. Use the alphas to render the important words on the page as I've on my untitled page about new shoes.



Thankful for You by Jenn Barrette and Zoe Pern; Slab Alpha by Cathy Zielske; Brad Bonanza 3 by Pattie Knox; Metal Monogram Alpha 2, Clipped Stacks No 4 by Katie Pertiet; Multilayered Fotoblendz 1 by Anna Aspnes

layering journaling on busy and colorful backgrounds

When you're layering journaling over busy and/or colorful foundations, it can be a challenge to make sure it's easily read by your viewer.

Emily made a home for her journaling on "2792" with strips of white, semitransparent tape. The journaling is easy to read and the layers beneath still show through.



2792 by Emily Pitts |
Supplies: Cardstock: Bazzill; Patterned Papers: Studio Calico (graphic), Making Memories (map), Jenni Bowlin Studios (bracket and yellow); Alphabet: K& Co.; Metal numbers: Making Memories; Stamp: Studio Calico; Ink: Versamark; Paint: Claudine Hellmuth Studios; buttons: Studio Calico; Brad: Sassafras Lass; Ticket: Jenni Bowlin; Acetate phrase: unknown; Canvas strips: Studio Calico; Floss: DMC; Other: masking tape; Pen: Zig Millenium.

Another way to tone down your background without completely covering it is with paint. On "One Way to Tend a Fire," I used white brushstrokes to make an area for my small bit of journaling.



A Day in Boston by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Generations by One Little Bird, Paislee Press, and Tracy Murphy; Count Your Blessings by ViVa Artistry; Duly Noted by Leora Sanford; PhotoOp, PeaOlson, Liberation fonts

choose layers that make good journaling homes

Think about your journaling while your putting the page together and look for opportunities to incorporate it into the design.

Dina masked stars on tags and sprayed orange mist around them. When the stars were removed they left spots perfect for her journaling.

Photos with empty space also present journaling spots as shown on my “Awesome Sight.”



World Traveler by Dina Wakley | Supplies: Patterned Paper: Jenni Bowlin, vintage; Cardstock: Basic Grey, American Crafts; Alphabet: Jenni Bowlin; Tags: Xpress Tag; Ink: Tim Holtz Adirondack Color Wash; Star chipboard: Jenni Bowlin

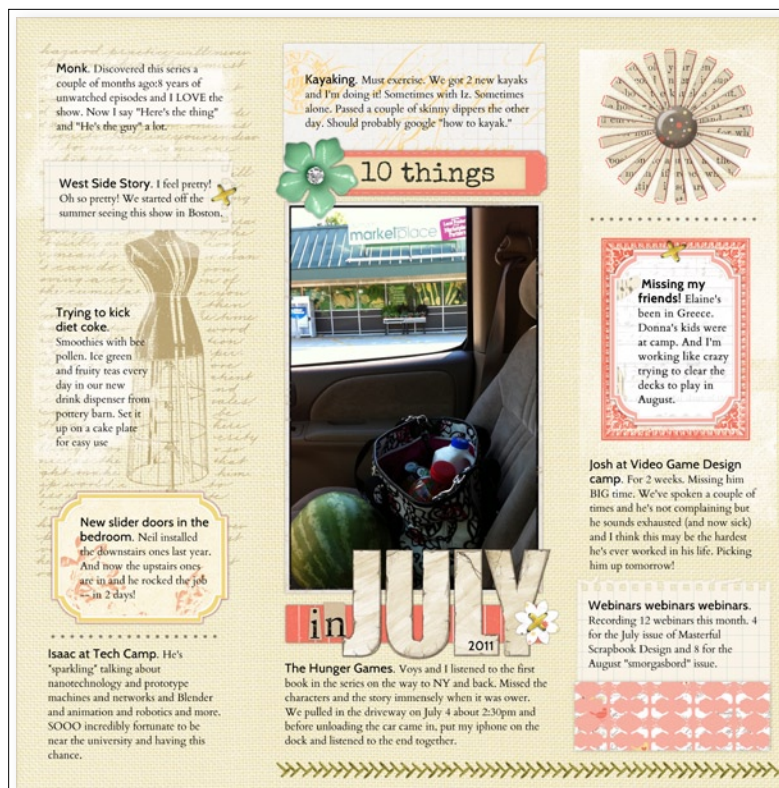


Awesome Sight by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Madras Kit, Journaling Spots and Strips, Worn Photo Edges No. 04: Golden Years by Lynn Grieveson; Collageables No. 02, Cut Outs Bird Collection, Vintage Photo Frames No. 16, Filed Photo Frames No. 4, Ledger Paper Pieces: Leaves No. 03, Jouets Collection, Classic Cardstock: Natural Beauty, Paper Bobbins by Katie Pertiet; Bedazzled! Layout Jewelry, Brad Bonanza No. 03: Digital Fasteners by Pattie Knox; Stitched by Anna White No. 02, Distressed Edge Overlays No. 05 12 X 12 by Anna Aspnnes; Felix Titling, Pea Shirley fonts

journal in multiple spots

The “list” journaling on “10 Things in July” lends itself to multiple journaling spots. The journaling became a big part of the page’s design. I used a combination of brush strokes tags and labels to create the alignments of the columns and to house my journaling.

The journaling on “Finding Your Way” is a story rather than a list. The story begins in a right-aligned block, continues on an oval journaler and completes at bottom right of the page.



10 Things in July by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Apple of My Eye Collection, Journey Back Collection by Vinnie Pearce; Krafty Bits Alpha, Flossy Stitches Yellow by Katie Pertiet ; Yesterday Alpha No 1 by Lynn Grieveson; Shutterbug Kit collaboration by The Digi Check designers; Artsy Fotoblendz by Anna Aspnes.



Finding Your Way by Debbie Hodge | Supplies: Around the Corner Paper Pack by Jesse Edwards; Spiced Jewel Elements, Torn N Tattered Scallop Strips by Anna Aspnes; King Me Kit, Thankful Kit, Flossy Stitches Yellow, Cold Springs Element Pack, Double Decker Element Pack, Hung Up Journalers, Naturally Krafty, Art Time Elements, Basci Paper Alpha by Katie Pertiet; Oval Journal Spots by Ali Edwards

layering with tags, ephemera, and more

Doris Sander likes layering vintage ephemera on her pages because it adds to page theme in a subtle way that draws the viewer in to look at and read the details.

Her “Run Home” is made with a technique she often uses, combining random pieces and fitting them together like a puzzle.



I like using ephemera for matting my photos as I've done on "Stroll."

The portrait oriented photo sits on an upside down “checklist” journaler. Another piece of ephemera, a vintage post card is layered beneath the photo at bottom right of my photo block.



Dina Wakley loves using manila tags and always has a stack on her table. She grabs them to blot up extra ink and paint from palette. She journals on them and even write notes on them. On “World Traveler,” they are foundation, embellishment, and journaler.

