

## Week 1

- **Rethink Your Scraps**
- Repurpose Your Books, Envelopes and Folders.
- Research Multi-Purpose Punching Tools
- Reinventing the Wheel: Make Your Own Smash Journal



### Got Scraps?

The very nature of scrapbooking implies that most, if not all of us, would answer “yes” to the question...“Got Scraps?” So I guess the real question should be: “What do you do with your scraps?” Do you keep them...or do you throw them away? Do you organize them by size and color... or do you throw them in a pile and vow to someday revisit them? Do you make use of your scraps...or do they sit and collect dust?

I’ll admit that I used to keep each and every scrap of paper, every piece of leftover ribbon and each tiny remnant of fabric that was generated from my crafting. And after a while my “scrap pile” began to look more like a “scrap yard.” I began to wonder what I was saving it all for. I rarely used my scraps, mostly because every time I looked to them, I was quickly overwhelmed by their disarray. That was when I knew I needed an organizational system that aimed to organize my scraps as diligently as the system I used to organize the rest of my supplies.

I realized that once my scraps were organized, not only was I more likely to use them, but that I could actually train myself to reach for my scraps before cutting into that brand new piece of paper--well most of the time!





There are countless ways you can use your scraps on your layouts and projects. This is where the organization of your scraps can be a huge help. I find it useful to not only separate my scraps by color, but also by size. Typically, I try to separate them into three different size groupings, based largely on what I might use them for on a layout: strips, mats, and pieces.

I use an assortment of containers such as folders, office trays, glass jars and even shoe boxes to keep my scraps easily accessible and visible to me at all times. Here are a few tips to help you on your way:

1. Remove overly jagged pieces from your scraps to help make them easier to store.
2. Keep your scraps from the project or kits you are currently working with close by so that you can incorporate them into other pages using the same product.
3. It's ok to throw away what you know you won't use--if you look at something and can't conceive a possible use, then by all means give it a toss.

These are just a few ideas for you to consider in your quest to find an organizational system that works for you! The goal is to stop your scraps from piling up on you and to start using them today! Good Luck!

## Rethink Your Scraps

Once you've given organizing your scraps a solid effort, you should begin to see almost immediately how much more accessible and easy it becomes to use your scraps in your layouts and projects. However, here are a few fun ideas and techniques to help you get the ball rolling!



### Using Your Strips

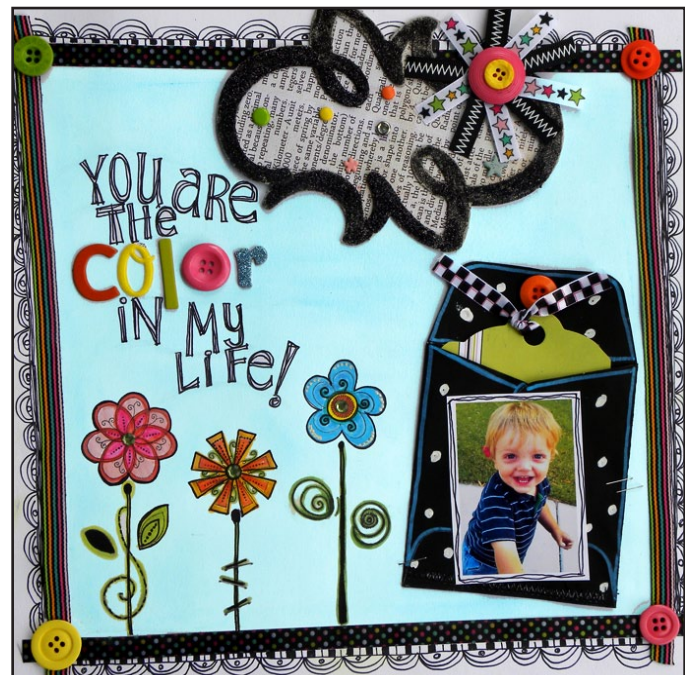
Strips of scrap materials are perfect for borders, trim, ruffles, and even frames, with which you can create definition and boundaries, not to mention help draw attention to important elements on your pages. The tips below can help you use your strips of scrap paper, ribbon and fabric to direct your viewer's eye and create a stage on which your key elements can shine.

### Use strips of ribbon to create a frame around a photo or layout.

Frames can help to bring a finished look to our photos and layouts, while establishing specific boundaries. In my layout "You Are the Color in My Life" I've used a ribbon frame to draw the eye in towards the scene I've created with the elements on my page and allowed the frame to set the boundaries for that same scene.

Here are some ideas for using your ribbon as a frame:

1. Try gathering or folding a ribbon along the edge of your photo to create a ruffled frame. Adhere with hot glue, tacky tape or by stitching the gathers directly to your project.
2. Create a floating frame by using four separate lengths of ribbon which overlap at the ends, placed a half-inch or so from the edge of your photo or inside the edge of your paper. Secure your strips of ribbon using brads, staples, or stitches.
3. Try threading a ribbon in and out of holes or slats punched just inside the edge of a photo or the edge of your paper to create a laced frame.



## Create a fun, messy look by layering some distressed paper strips.

The texture created by layering and distressing a few paper strips can take your scraps from completely ordinary to wonderfully extraordinary. In this example I've layered some basic torn paper strips along the edge of my mat and stitched them down. I've then gone back and ruffled and creased those same strips to make them appear a little less tidy and add texture.



## Try using a gathered strip of frayed fabric behind a border.

In my layout, "Sweet Dreams" I've tucked a gathered piece of sheer white fabric behind a whimsical paper border. This brings a soft yet dimensional look to an already eye-catching border and adds to the whimsy of the page.

To get this look:

1. Using a needle and thread, take a large running stitch down the center of your fabric strip, which should be at least 2 to 3" longer than your anticipated finished length.
2. Pull gently until you've achieved soft, even gathers in your fabric.
3. Then knot the unfinished end and clip your thread.
4. Now use an adhesive tape or glue, or even a machine or hand stitch, to adhere the gathers to your layout or border.

Here are few other ways to go about distressing your paper strips for added interest:

1. Try sanding the edges of your strips. For a look that is bold yet confined primarily to the edges, use sand paper or use steel wool for an overall transparent effect.
2. Create a torn edge on your strips. Long continuous tears create a more subtle wave-type effect, while short choppy tears have a sharper, more jagged look. If you like that contrasting white edge on your tear, then pull towards your body as you tear, and make sure the side of the paper you intend to use is face up.
3. Crumple your strips, lightly for a mere ruffled appearance or for a more dramatic impression, crumple the strip into a tight ball and then carefully unfold it to reveal beautiful crinkles. Press it out using a heavy book, or even a warm iron.





## Making Mats from Your Scraps

*Mats can act as the perfect foundation for your layouts and can be used to ground the elements on your page. Mats can be created by bringing together several smaller pieces or strips to create clean grids, abstract collages, or by working with your larger whole scraps. They create texture by way of layering and are a fun way to bring in color and patterns to add interest to your layouts.*

Photo mats offer a great way to help your photos stand out on the page. In my layout "Cute," I have created a fun mat for my photo consisting of a variety of lengths and widths of ribbon strips. This helps to ground my photo, while adding some visual interest by way of colors and patterns to an otherwise simple page.

### Create a mat with an assortment of ribbon strips.

Here are a few other things you could try to create a mat with your leftover ribbon strips:

1. Try out an argyle design by overlapping varying sizes of diagonally positioned ribbon strips behind your photo.
2. Tic-tac-toe anyone? Create a large open grid with spaces for embellishments, photos or patterned squares.
3. Use a piece of Heat N Bond behind a woven mat of ribbons and cut the mat into your favorite shape to help accent your photo and reinforce your theme.



## Make a ruffled mat from your fabric scraps, by overlapping a series of coordinating gathered fabric strips.

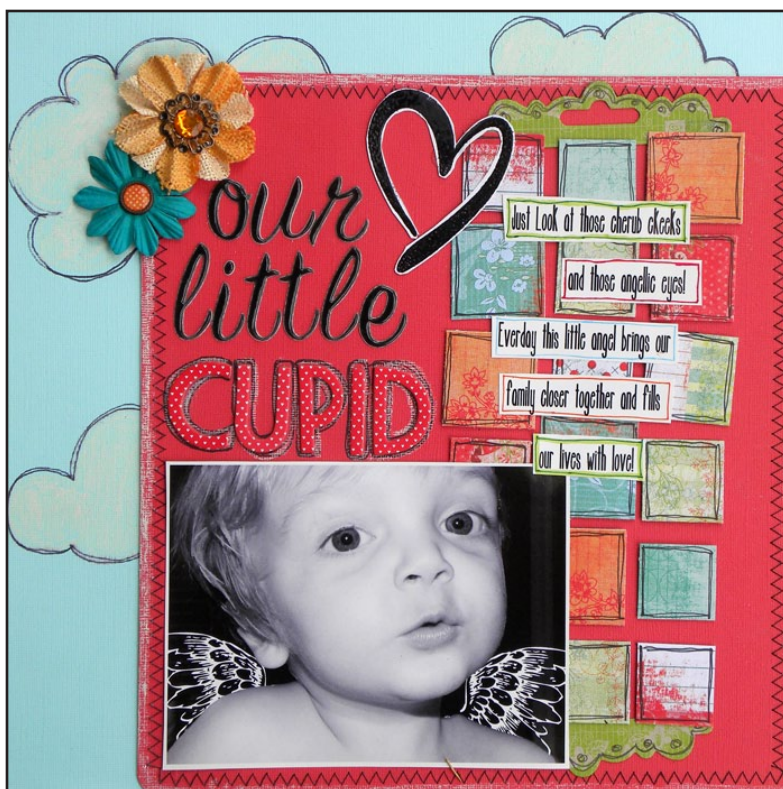
The ruffled mat on "You're Why I Love Being a Dad" was inspired by a ruffled messenger bag by Donna Downey. I aimed to capture its essence in my page. I pulled together leftover fabric strips from a recent sewing project and created this focal mat from a bunch of coordinating prints. This just goes to show you that inspiration truly is everywhere!



You could also try:

1. pleating your mat-sized fabric scraps for a bit of texture and homespun goodness.
2. adding a piece of fusible batting behind your fabric mat for dimension and tufting it with brads or buttons.
3. dressing up your solid fabric mat with doodles, stamps, stitching or misting.

## Layer small patterned pieces on top of your mat-sized neutrals for a mosaic effect.



On my page "Our Little Cupid" I used a collection of punched squares layered on top of my solid cardstock mat to create a fun mosaic effect. I used pop dots to add texture and then doodled around the edges to help the mosaic effect really stand out. This is a fun way to use several patterned papers on your layout without it being overpowering.

To get this look:

1. Choose a neutral, solid or subtle-patterned mat-sized paper as a foundation for your mosaic.
2. Then choose a coordinating array of scrap pieces to layer over top of it.
3. Depending on whether you are going for a clean or more chaotic look, you can use clean punched squares or random polygons to piece together your mosaic.
4. Use pop dots or ink around the edges to give the mosaic effect more dimension and to help your pieces stand out from their background.

## Adding Details with Your Leftover Bits and Pieces

*Pieces--though the smallest scraps in the pile--are probably the most versatile of all and can be used for anything from hand-made embellishments to die cuts to collages and more. Pieces of scrap material offer the perfect opportunity to bring stunning accents and details to your pages, giving them a polished and completed look.*



## Create a quilted fabric title or embellishment to add a touch of charm.

In "Cute and Cuddly", I created this charming quilted alpha by printing out my title in a favorite font and then using the printed letters as a pattern for cutting each letter from pieces of my scrap fabric. I think this quilted effect adds a nice soft quality to the page.



I used some thick felt scraps to get the quilted look I was looking for, but you can get this same look with lighter-weight scraps as well. Simply cut two pieces for each alpha and then use fusible batting between them before quilting them together.

And you don't have to stick to letters. You could also try:

1. using fusible interfacing to piece together your fabric scraps to create a quilted applique image.
2. piecing together your own quilt block designs to create charming foundations and backgrounds for your page.
3. creating cute little puffy embellishments to add character to your layouts.

## Turn your bits of ribbon into stylish tabs.

In my layout "Just Be You" I used a series of ribbon tabs—each a different pattern, color and width—to create visual interest within a cluster. This may be a small detail—but it's a simple one that can add a great deal of charm to your page.

All you'll need to make your own ribbon tab is:

1. an inch of your favorite ribbon doubled in half or finished off at the end.
2. a pair of scissors to v-cut or slant cut the end of your ribbon so it doesn't fray.
3. glue, brads, staples or a sewing machine to secure your tab(s) to your mat, photo, etc.



## Use your small scrap pieces to create miniature paper creations.



These types of embellishments can add a bit of novelty to your layouts, while also reinforcing your theme and adding dimension. In my layout "Everyday" I used these paper pinwheels to bring a playful feel to a page about the everyday adventures of being a mother.

I used a tutorial from Tania Willis' blog to make my notebook paper pinwheels. Searching for online tutorials is a great place to start when looking for inspiration to make your own handmade paper creations. Here are a just few of the things that you could make out of your paper bits and pieces.

1. Paper Pinwheels
2. Paper Posies
3. Swirl Flowers
4. Origami Animals and Flowers
5. Paper Chains





As I said before, there are countless ways to use your scraps on your pages. And my hope is that these ideas and techniques will not only inspire you to save and use more of your scraps, but that they will also help to jump-start your creativity when it comes to working with your leftovers.

While I understand the urge to use that new piece of paper you just bought or those perfectly beautiful embellishments that came with your latest monthly kit, I am certain that by rethinking your current scraps you will be able to find many exciting ways to bring together the old and the new to create stunning layouts and projects!

### **Your Assignment:**

#### **In the forums:**

Stop by and join the conversation about your current "scrap situation."

#### **In the gallery:**

Choose your favorite technique presented in this lesson and incorporate some of those left-over bits and pieces into one of your scrapbook pages. Don't forget to upload it to the gallery so your classmates and I can leave you lots of love!