

CLASS #1: Scrapbooking Everyday Life

- Capturing everyday life for the scrapbook page
- Putting everyday life onto the scrapbook page
- Organizing everyday life photos
- Sketch bundle for everyday life pages

CAPTURING EVERYDAY LIFE FOR THE SCRAPBOOK PAGE

The photos that go onto everyday life scrapbook pages have a great variety. Figuring out how you want to scrap them and organize them in your albums requires a different approach from that you might use to scrapbook photos from defined events like parties and holidays.

The challenge in everyday life scrapbooking is to decide how to present photos that can seem almost random in a way that reveals the fabric of your home and



life. Flipping through the stack of photos you wonder: Does that photo really merit its own page? Why does that one matter? How can I showcase this? Can I put those photos together? Do I need to write much for this one or is it obvious? How much context should I keep in the photo? As an everyday scrapbooker, you are photo diarist, historian, sociologist, and memoir writer all in one seeking to document and make sense of your personal world.

There are great benefits to be had from scrapbooking everyday life photos. When you view these pages later—as a part of a continuum—you can see patterns and meanings that you weren't aware of at the time the photos were taken—or even at the time you were getting them onto the scrapbook page.

In this lesson we take a look at the whole, big picture of scrapbooking everyday life, and in future lessons we zoom in and concentrate on distinct aspects of it.

what is the material of everyday life?

You may be scrapping just yourself or you may have children and loved ones for whom you're also scrapbooking. For any of your subjects, singly or together, consider these elements of everyday life—elements that correspond to the major elements in any good story.

- **character**

Who are the people in your "neighborhood?" Everyday life pages will include stories about your roommates,



your family, your coworkers, your neighbors, those you work with, those who provide you services, your friends, extended family, pets, acquaintances and any other "characters" who are a part of your daily life. "You've Been My Sunshine" is a page about "characters" in my life -- the group of 4th graders I tutored in math for the year my son was in 4th grade. This was a weekly outing for me that had an important place in my life. I pushed myself to take a camera in at the end of our year together, when everyone was comfortable with one another and had firmly established routines.

- **setting**

Where are your everyday life stories happening? And what is the "stuff" of your everyday life? Photos and stories about home (inside and outside), workplace, and play spots are materials for everyday life pages. Think always about the macro of a setting (i.e., home, work, hometown) and the micro within each macro spot (i.e., kitchen, closet, garden). When you're taking everyday life photos, be aware of the tools, toys, talismans, decorations, and other items that are relevant, and get them in the photos--perhaps even focusing on them.



“Little Messes Everywhere” shows the setting of my daily life -- my home, in all of its messy glory.

● **plot**

What are the routine activities of your daily life and what are the special stories—big and small—that you’d like to remember? What is the work that you and those close to you do? What are your hobbies? How do you play? In addition to daily routines, consider your traditions (i.e., routines that repeat seasonally or annually). Which routines are done out of necessity



[click here for journaling](#)

and which are a result of personality or even unquestioned habit? “Did You Say Allen Wrench?” is a layout that records an out-of-the-ordinary and fun story from a “day-in-the-life” of my family. “Hobos in March” is another simple story of imaginative play on a snowy day.



[click here for journaling](#)

how do you gather photos of everyday life?

While you may already have stacks of everyday photos waiting to be scrapped, everyday life isn't stopping until you get caught up. Here's a method for ongoing photography and documentation of everyday life.

- **take it as it comes**

Be open mentally to what's going on around you on a daily basis; take photos, and make notes. Keep your batteries charged, a little notebook in easy reach and your camera handy so that you're ready to shoot and record when you want to.



- **plan for it**

Make a regular date with yourself to photograph and write about everyday life at regular intervals. Depending on your life, this might be daily, weekly, or even monthly. Use the "materials" list above, as well as the prompts in upcoming classes to get ideas for subjects to scrapbook.

- **keep it in order**

Check out the recommendations in the next section of this class, for approaches on organizing your everyday life photos. Also see how to flag those photos so that you can easily see what you've got and scrap them up as you'd like.

PUTTING EVERYDAY LIFE ONTO THE SCRAPBOOK PAGE

The ways to scrapbook everyday life photos and pages are as wide-ranging as the subjects themselves. It helps to think about what your purpose or scope is with a page as you start. What I mean is: Is it simple record? Is it a look at a facet of everyday life over time? Do you want to find a deeper meaning in the everyday? Understanding your intention will help you decide how many photos and which photos to use, how much journaling to include, a page title, and the tone you want to set with your color, motif, and embellishment choices.

1. *leave a record*

Looking at the “materials of everyday life” above, you can see how many facets of your everyday life there are to scrapbook. “You’ve Been My Sunshine” on page 1 is an example of how you can leave a record of the people/characters in your everyday life. “Little Messes Everywhere,” (on page 2) is a record of a setting (i.e., my home!). “Today” is a day-in-the-life page and a record of activity.



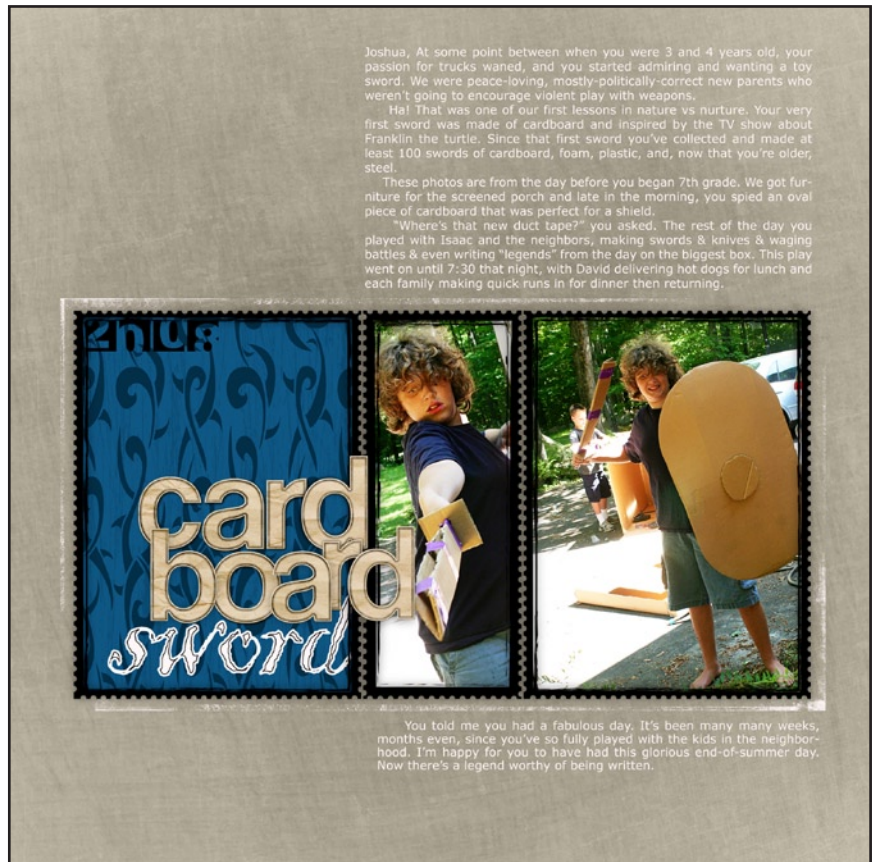
2. *chronicle an activity*

This kind of page uses photos and journaling to show something you did. “Seize the Day’s Puddles” records a day during April break when the children in our neighborhood played in the rain. Scrapbooking this kind of page is covered in more

depth in lesson #5 of this class: "The Incident Report."

3. make connections to greater meaning

On this kind of everyday life page, the journaling takes everyday photos beyond a simple record to a page with greater meaning. "Cardboard Sword" is this kind of page-beginning as a record of a day when my sons made cardboard swords with the neighbors and evolving into a celebration of our 12-year-old's undying love for swordplay.



4. tell a story

Some of the things you do will have memorable stories within. "Allen Wrench" and "Hobos in March" (both on page 4) are both layout that tell a stories. The stories of your everyday life don't always have photos, and you don't always realize their impact until later. They are, however, well worth recording. In lesson 5, I will cover the forms stories may take in more detail

[click here for journaling](#)

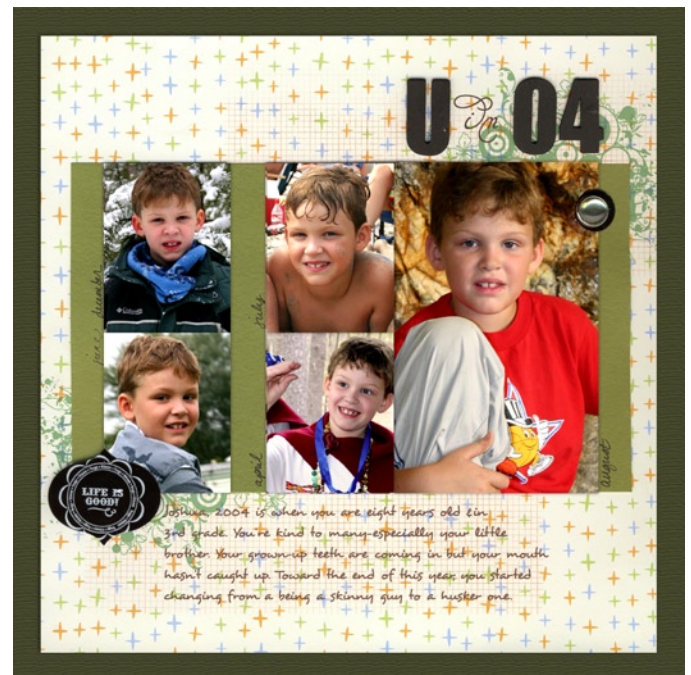
5. gather onesies and scrap "collections"

Look for ways to group photos taken at different times. In "World of Possibilities," (below) I found a home for several photos that were "onesies" (i.e., I had no other photos from that activity) and that I really didn't want to put on their own page. The photos here are connected around the theme of playing with cousins at Grandma and Grandpa's house and together they give a rich picture of this subject.

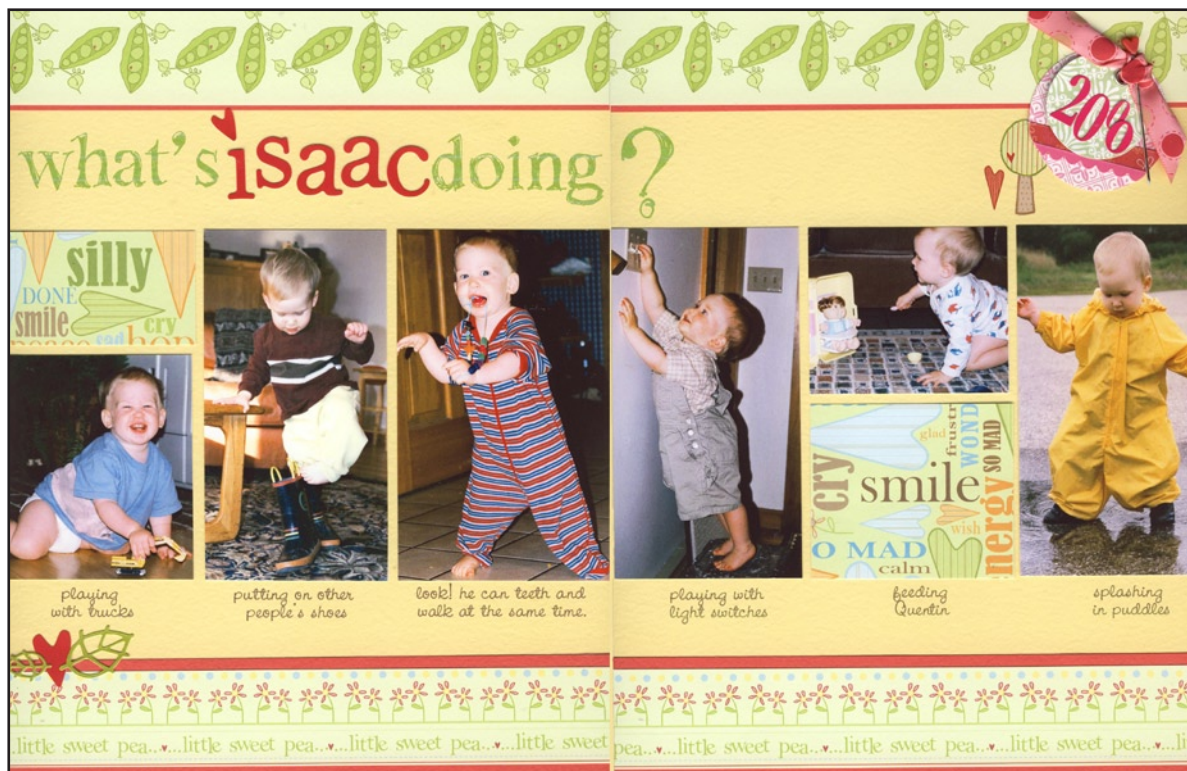
Shooting everyday-life photos can yield a lot of “onesies” – one or two photos from a shoot that don’t really merit their own page but that you want in your album. Grouping them with related photos is a great way to get them onto the page efficiently and, what’s more, within a greater context. Often times these photos have more power collected than when they’re alone. One photo of my Dad fishing is great, but when seven photos of him fishing in seven different spots span a two-page layout, the extent of his passion cannot be mistaken.



[click here for journaling](#)



The photo groups that you scrap are unique to your own life, and many of your best collection pages aren't going to be realized ahead of time, but, rather, months or years down the road since a trend isn't a trend until it's been happening for a while



ideas for collections

- a month- or year-in-review: gather the highlights from a specific time period, record progress and/or changes, perhaps on a house project, a garden's development, or even a baby's growth. "What's Isaac Doing" (above) and "August '07" (on page 10) are both examples of this kind of a page.
- everyday activities: hanging out, playing board games, sitting on the porch, watering the garden; think about what goes on in your home regularly, and you probably have some "onesies" to gather.

- local outings that recur: your favorite hiking spot, an apple orchard you go to in the fall, an antique shop you stop by whenever you're in the area.
- themed pairings/groupings: your child with his best friend at different times, you and your pet, a child with grandparents. "Joshua, 1999" and "U in 04" are both collections of photos of my oldest son from one particular year.



ORGANIZING EVERYDAY LIFE PHOTOS

While photos from events (parties, holidays, vacations) can be labeled as a group and filed for obvious retrieval and scrapbooking, everyday-life photos trickle in and can't always be given discrete labels. The following is : 1) a suggested method for keeping all of your photos organized; and then 2) suggestions specific to everyday-life photos.

organizing photos in general

Storing your photos in a chronological and hierarchical order will go a long way toward helping you know what you have and finding the photos you want when you want them. As you take photos, cull close duplicates, photos of low quality, and photos that just don't make sense. Store the rest of your photos with clear labels.

- **digital**

Create a system of file folders that lets you easily browse and find photos. I use a hierarchical and chronological method that starts with a folder for each year. Within each year folder, I create 12 month folders. Within the month folders, are subject folders.

Note that the year and month follow all the way down to the subject folder names. Note also that the year is first and the month is given in a two-digit number (i.e., August is "08"). This way, an alphabetical sort of folders will also result in a chronological sort.

- **prints**

Store prints in acid-free photo boxes and use tabbed index cards to identify groupings. Sort the photos by year, and within year by month, and within month by subject. Use a tabbed index card for each subject and on each tab identify all three of: year, month, and subject. For example:

- * Aug 2007 Beach
- * Aug 2007 Home Repairs

organizing everyday-life photos

- **storing**

When you're dealing with a few shots here and there, rather than dedicate a folder or index tab to every shoot (i.e., afternoon in the yard, funny wrestling shots) keep a folder just for everyday life photos. Depending on your life, you might keep one everyday-life folder for each month, each season, or each year. Long ago, I started keeping monthly folders called "YYYY MM At Home" (YYYY=year and MM=month) and that's where I drop mine. It works for me and I know where to find things. Your preference may be different.

- **scrapping**

Periodically go through your Everyday Life folders (or tabbed groupings of prints) to figure out what you'll scrap and how.

Find the everyday stories or incidents you want to scrap. For example: supper with the Johnsons, sick day, planting the garden. If you have prints, put the photos together in an envelope or behind a tab, labeled and ready to scrap. If you have digital photos, use photo organization software to "flag" photos or put them into digital "albums" labeled and ready to scrap.

Identify photos that you'll group with others for "collection" pages, and file them by their category in the box of prints or with your photo organization software. Examples of categories are: the boys together, playing with neighbors, the cat outside.

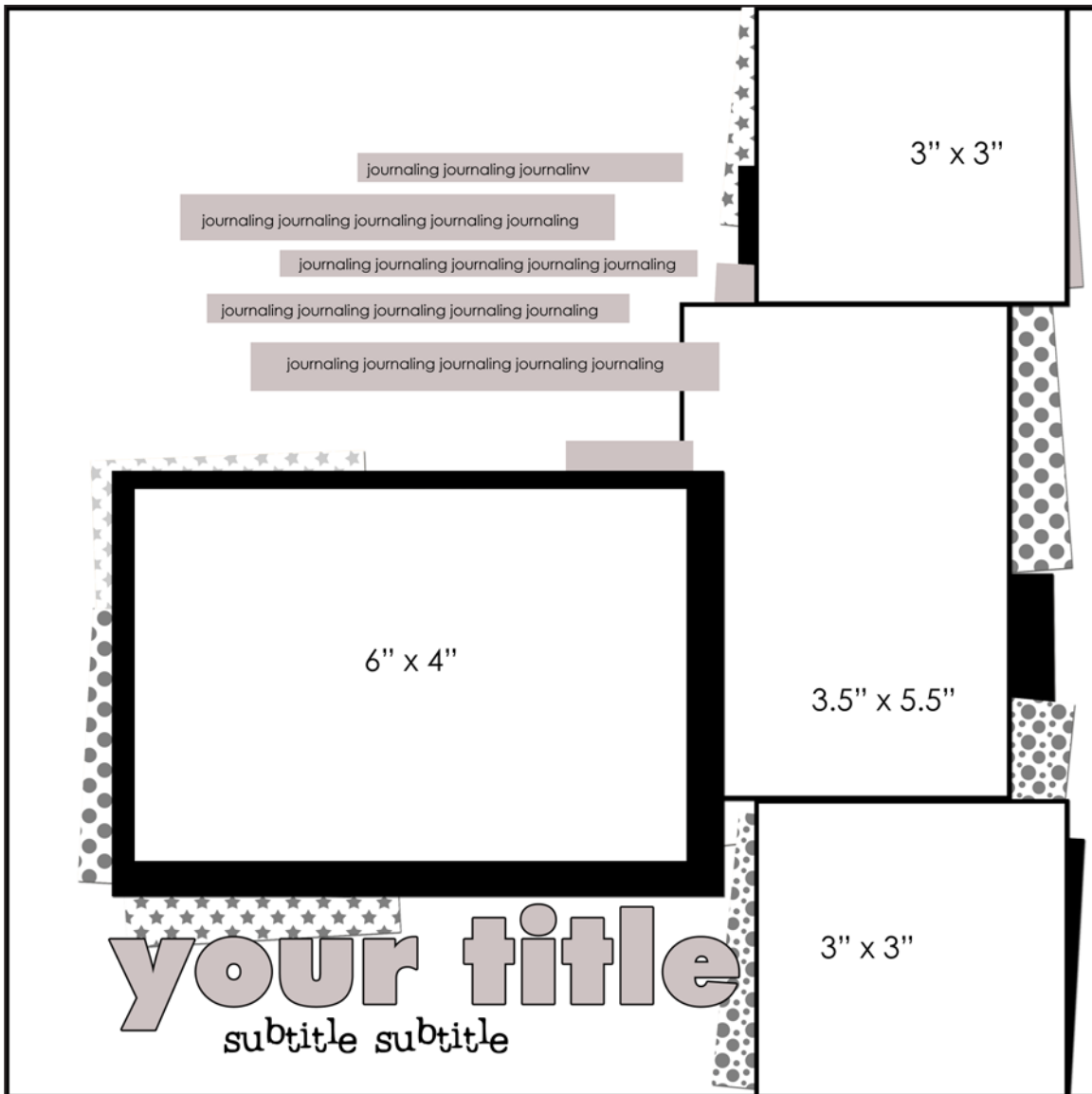
- **an ongoing approach**

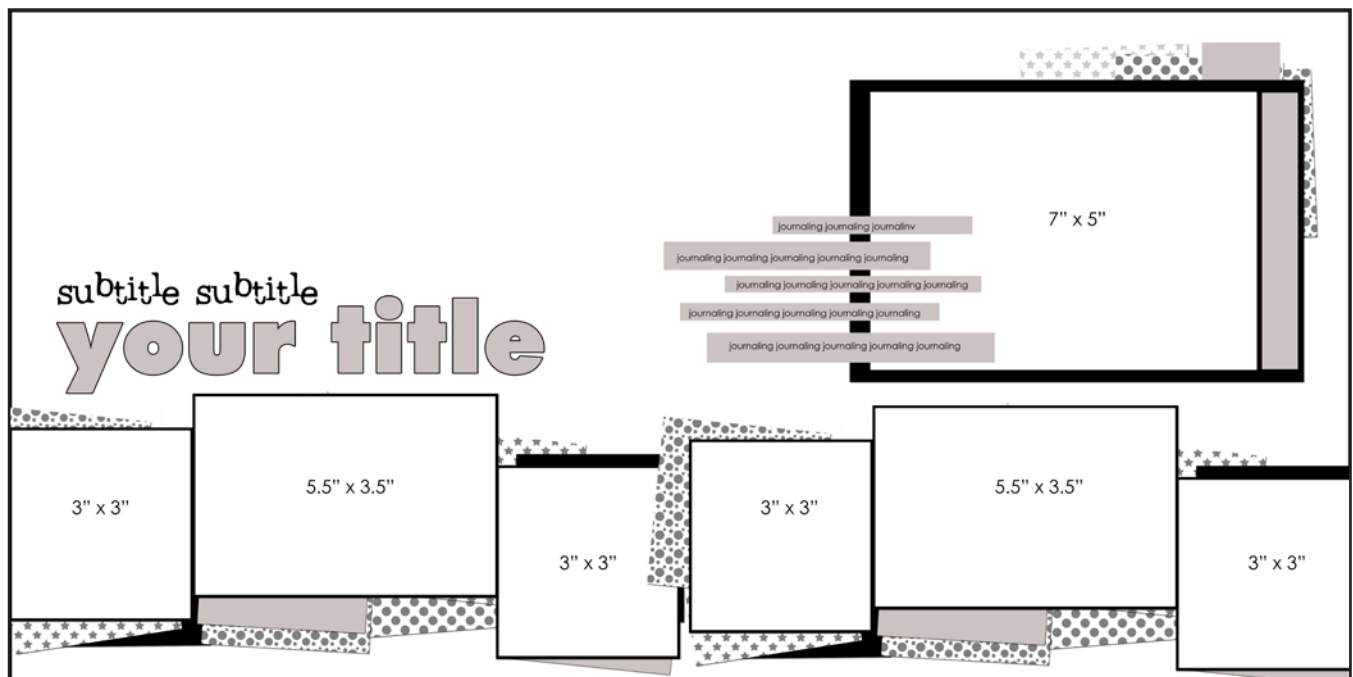
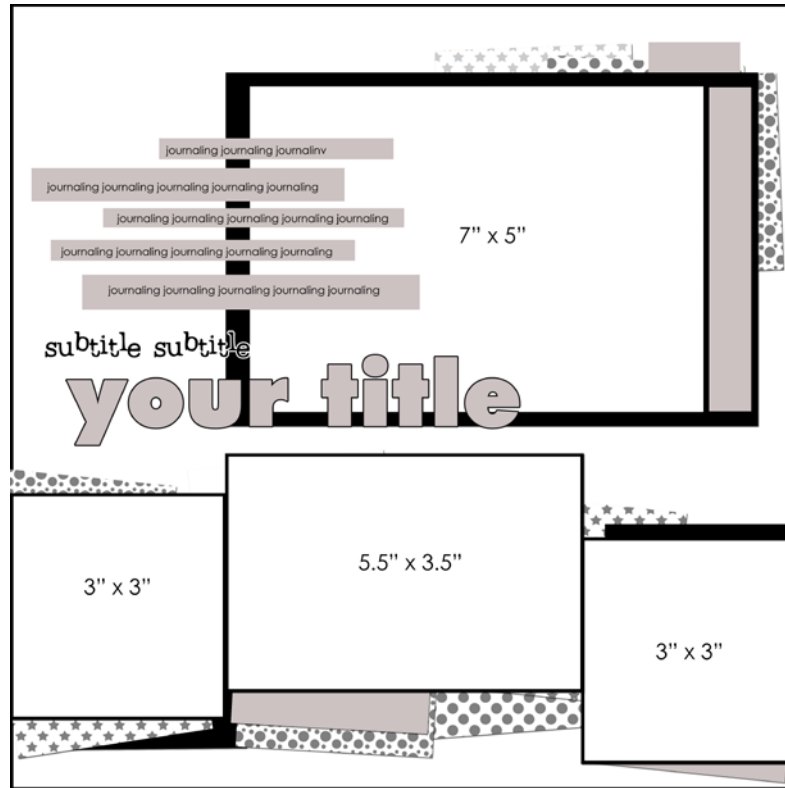
Available technology offers many opportunities to be an everyday-photo diarist. While I've never really kept a journal, I have come to think of keeping my blog up to date as an important part of my scrapbooking. Two and a half years ago, I began taking a photo almost everyday. What's more, I uploaded them to a blog calendar and added comments. A few months down the road, my children were looking at the blog and reading my comments and loving what I'd written and the memories these photos

triggered of just everyday stuff. Many of the details I capture if I journal soon after photos are taken, I would not remember a couple of months later. Many days now, when I want to scrapbook, I look through my blog, and see a photo that reminds me of something I want to scrap. Since the blog is dated, I know just where to find the rest of the photos (with my "YYYY MM At Home" system), AND, I often have ready-made journaling for the page. My photo blog. My blog. This same approach could be taken with a print-a-day inserted in a notebook and handwritten notes.

SKETCH BUNDLE FOR EVERYDAY LIFE PAGES

[click here to download layered templates.](#)





Journaling: Allen Wrench

On the last day of summer break, the 3 of us set up the new wicker furniture on the screened porch. The coffee table required assembly and, in the course of our work, one of us often said allen wrench. As in: “Do you have the allen wrench?” “Where’s the allen wrench?” “Give me the allen wrench.” This kept reminding us of the line in 42nd street: “ALLENtown? You’re going back to ALLENtown?” And so requests for the allen wrench were met with loud replies: “ALLEN wrench? You want the ALLEN wrench?” And it cracked us up a lot. *click here to go back to layout.*

Journaling: Cardboard Sword

Joshua, At some point between when you were 3 and 4 years old, your passion for trucks waned, and you started admiring and wanting a toy sword. We were peace-loving, mostly-politically-correct new parents who weren’t going to encourage violent play with weapons.

Ha! That was one of our first lessons in nature vs nurture. Your very first sword was made of cardboard and by the TV show about Franklin the turtle. Since that first sword you’ve collected and made at least 100 swords of cardboard, foam, plastic, and, now that you’re older, steel.

These photos are from the day before you began, 7th grade. We got furniture for the screened porch and late in the morning, you spied an oval piece of cardboard that was perfect for a shield.

“Where’s that new duct tape?” you asked. The rest of the day you played with Isaac and the neighbors, making swords & knives & waging battles & even writing “legends” from the day on the biggest box. This play went on until 7:30 that night, with David delivering hot dogs for lunch and each family making quick runs in for dinner then returning.

You told me you had a fabulous day. It’s been many many weeks, months even, since you’ve so fully played with the kids in the neighborhood. I’m happy for you to have had this glorious end-of-summer day. Now there’s a legend worthy of being written. *click here to go back to layout.*

Journaling: Hobos in March

After a very warm and melting weekend, we got snow on Monday--not enough to cancel school, but enough to get you out a half hour early. AND it was the 2nd day of the time change for daylight savings, so it was like a bonus afternoon in the snow. While your dads and other neighbors

snowblowed the driveways, you guys made a hobo home uder the pine bush at the top of the Kings's driveway. Joshua happily made his own fort in the snow by our driveway. When I came to visit you told me your hobo names. We are so fortunate you can play this way and then go home to houses with heat and food.

As for Dusty Joe: it seems every time I see him in the snow he's thinking about eating snow or he is eating snow. And that's not about being a hobo--that's about being a kid. *click here to go back to layout.*

Journaling: World of Possibilities

At Grandma & Grandpa's things are different. There are places to go and be and do and there are wondrous treasures everywhere. For a child, it presents a world of possibilities. *click here to go back to layout.*