



The start of the New Year always gets me in the organizing mood. I think it's because I start by taking down our Christmas decorations and then the cleaning and organizing bug hits!

If you're looking for some fairly painless ways to organize your scrapbooking, here are my favorite things to tackle every January.

1. Put layouts away in albums. Since I really only do this once a year, it's fun to look back on what I completed the year before!
2. Go through your scraps and remove any that are too small, damaged or that you just won't use. Donate them to a teacher, senior citizens center or children's hospital. Or recycle them!
3. Make a list of any special layouts you want to be sure to create (before you forget about them!) to tackle throughout the year.
4. Delete any scrappy inspirational pins from Pinterest boards that either no longer inspire you or that you've already used. Do the same for any blogs, Instagram or Facebook groups you follow.
5. Complete a 2013 "year in review" or "favorite photos from 2013" page. It's a fun way to close the year and these are some of my family's favorite pages.

I'm looking forward to spending another great year with you here at Back Porch Memories. Happy 2014!

Paula



Welcome, Kristie {January Guest Designer}



Shortly after the first of my six beautiful children was born, I began my foray in the wide world of scrapbooking. That was back 16 years ago when it was all decorative scissors and stickers. I still love my early scrapbooks but I do fight off the desire to tear them apart and "update" them. I just keep reminding myself that their style is a reflection of the time, and that that too, deserves preservation.

I enjoy designing clean and graphic layouts as well as shabby layouts filled with flowers, inking and distressing. So, I guess my style is eclectic. I find inspiration everywhere: photos, family, magazines, menus, photography websites and of course in beautiful products. I love inspiring others to come along on this creative journey by sharing tutorials and inspiration on my blog, which I affectionately named Scrappy Days. I've also enjoyed designing for a variety of magazines and teams ranging from manufacturers to challenge blogs. I've been crafty for as long as I can remember but scrapbooking gives me that soul sustaining creative outlet while enabling me to create something of real value for my beloved family.

Layouts in 15 Minutes {or Less}

by Margy Eastman

The patterned papers in this month's Solo kit lent them selves perfectly to any layout, no matter what the topic! I flipped back through my PSE organizer and came upon the photos I used in this layout from the end of summer. The annual "North Pole Veterinary Hospital" summer gathering was held at the Salmon Bake at Pioneer Park – a family style buffet of salmon, crab and prime rib. Yum! This huge wooden salmon is a prominent landscape feature and is a huge child-magnet.

The Daily Grind papers were a nice blend of larger, bolder patterns and smaller more subdued ones, so you can combine them fearlessly as I did here. I'm sorry the photos are a little dark. The finished product has a lot of dimension so I couldn't scan it, and I made this layout on the shortest day of the year, which also happened to cloudy. Lordy, it's dark! But you get my gist. So have fun with this design and a kit that is SUPER easy to work with!



15 Minute Layout

Cardstock – Bazzill Basics "Simon"

Patterned Paper – Simple Stories "Daily Grind" - Everyday Hustle,

Busy Busy, Day In Day Out (my favorite)

Alphabet – American Crafts Thickers – "Macaw"

Die cut – Font "Classic Raw" and my Silhouette

Ribbon – Creative Impressions

Journaling Card – "Daily Grind"

Other – thread any my trusty Elna sewing machine

The Solo kit is full of great embellishments, and I couldn't live without the extras this month. So I just piled them on! To hold the twine in place on my journaling card, I took my Big Bite and punched half-a-hole on the top and bottom edges using the smaller setting.

30 Minute Layout Additional Ingredients

Chipboard – "Daily Grind" Chipboard Stickers

Flower – Prima

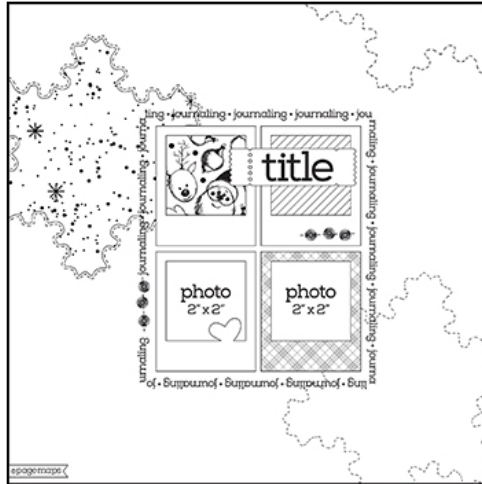
Paperclip – Maya Road

Small word stickers – My Mind's Eye "Collectable" Tiny Word Stickers

Spinner – "Daily Grind" Decorative Brads



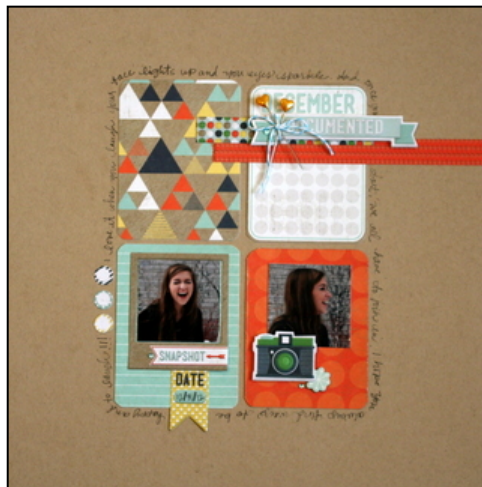
{January Sketch}
selected from www.pagemaps.com



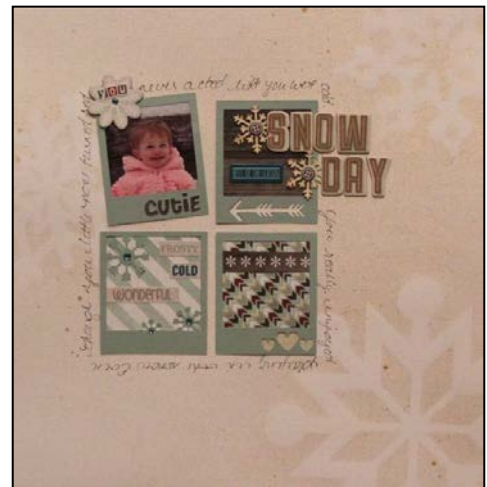
January Sketch



Margy Eastman



Danielle Price



Kristie {Guest Designer}



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Terrific Techniques {Masks & Stencils}

by Kristie Coleman {January Guest Designer}

After quite a long time resisting the misting movement I have finally climbed onto the bandwagon. Originally, misting messed with my sense of symmetry and love of clean lines but now I am enjoying the freedom to create a totally unique-to-me look, a fingerprint of sorts on my projects.

I like to use mist most with stencils or masks. I usually cut my own stencils and masks with either a Cricut or a Silhouette Cameo. For masks, I like either machine but for stencils I find the Cricut easier to use as aligning and copying shapes in Cricut Craft Room is a cinch. 'm sure the Cameo can probably do the same thing but I know how to use CCR in a couple simple clicks so that's what I'm sticking with for now.

For this layout I created 3 masks. Masks are basically covers used to prevent the surface beneath it from being covered with mist (or whatever medium you are using). For this layout, I cut 3 large snowflakes and placed them on my cardstock. I wanted them hanging off the edge a bit so I didn't place them all the way onto my cardstock. And, I did use a tiny bit of removable adhesive so they wouldn't move around when I sprayed mist over them. I used Heidi Swapp's Color Shine in Gold. I love this stuff! Can't say it enough, LOVE it!



Editor's note: To see Kristie's completed layout, check out our sketch, previous page. Didn't it turn out cute?!



Scrapbook Shortcuts {Upcycled Gift Bag}

by Alissa Trowbridge



I love the little glassine bags in which a lot of our kit goodies are packed. This month, I decided to make the bag into a decorated gift sack! I used the leftovers from the Fancy Pants Medley and embellishment kits. It came together pretty easily and I love the extra spunk the clothespin closure gives the bag.

The gift I'm giving in the bag is small (a little charm for my niece's birthday), so this project is the perfect size. It also needs to be mailed, but won't cost a fortune as I can use a small padded envelope.

Quick. Easy. And cute!

Designer Details {Patterned Papers}

by Danielle Calhoun



For this month's designer details, I want to focus on Patterned Papers. You know those patterned papers you love but it's hard to picture how you will use it? Or those patterned papers that have the cutest designs and details but you might think it's just too busy for your photos?

I absolutely loved the patterned paper with the circles and sayings that was featured in this month's Solo Kit. My first obvious choice for working with this paper was to cut out a few of the circles and use them for various embellishments (which I did on another layout). I just thought that the paper needed more than to just be cut out. One way to feature a "busier" pattern that you may love it to cut out a smaller shape (in this case I cut out a 4x4 shape to match the shape and size of my Instagram photo). I added some ink to the edges to make it pop out more on its own. I then cut out some of my favorite sayings and pictures from

the patterned paper and added pop dots to the back of them. I placed them in various places on and around the piece of patterned paper, as well as a few other various places around my layout. I find this is a great way to feature a patterned paper that you love, but you may not be able to use a large portion of it on your page.



Christmas Card Keepsake Album

by Danielle Price

Do you guys save all those wonderful cards you get at Christmas every year? I do, and have found a wonderful way to keep them around. Make them into an album. It doesn't have to be even or perfect, just a fun easy project. Here is what you do!



1. Gather all your supplies. I find as many things as I can. I usually don't use half of it!

2. Next, pick two colors of patterned paper for your front and back covers. Use random pieces of chipboard. I was lucky enough to find a piece with a tab on it! The front cover will be 6 x 6 and the back is 5 1/2 x 8. Have one patterned paper be for the outside of each piece and the other patterned paper for the inside. Attach your paper to the chipboard. Punch two holes in both pieces.





3. Gather your cards and place them randomly together. I tried to stagger them size--such as I didn't put the same size card by each other. Punch them according to the size of holes you placed in your chipboard covers. Put rings through the holes to hold them altogether.

4. Decorate your cover and tie ribbons around the rings. Make sure you include one of your cards! Mine is the very first one in the book. And include the year. You can't see mine but it is on a tab attached to one of the cards.



You now have a great keepsake to look at from year to year. Won't this be fun to look at in 10-15 years? I just love the idea and wish I had been doing this for years!