



It's that time of year again... what to create for those special handmade gifts, especially if you have a lot to make, AND you want to use some of your scrappy stuff in the process?

My first bit of advice is to be realistic. If you want to create handmade gifts for your whole family and a gob of friends, be realistic about how much time it will take for each item so that you don't over do it. Mini books are great gifts, but do you really have time to make a stack of them?

Mass produced gifts are fun and might just require a night of work, but will leave you with a whole stack of goodies to give. Things like homemade bath salts, packaged with coordinating paper crafted tags and ribbons, are quick but well-received gifts. One of my designers is making glass-etched casserole dishes for the women on her gift list. She's using her Silhouette to personalize each one, which cuts down the creating time considerably! Other quick and easy ideas include ornaments made using alcohol inks; digitally scrapped calendars that can be printed as many times as you have people on your gift list; and handmade gift card holders (these are especially great for the hard to buy for teens on your list).

At any rate, handcrafted gifts are fun to both create and give. I hope you have a crafty season!

Happy creating,
Paula



Welcome Back, Berta {November Guest Designer}

Since Berta has designed for us before, we thought we'd get to know her better by asking her some seasonal questions. Welcome back, Berta!

What is your favorite Thanksgiving memory from your childhood? I grew up in a large family and my dad had a large family all living fairly close. I remember the big gatherings and playing with my cousins. I was totally oblivious to all the work going on behind the scenes.

Does your family have any Thanksgiving traditions (food you always make, something cool you do, a show you always watch, etc.)? Tell us about it! We ALWAYS have turkey. It's the one time a year that I cook it so it's a treat.

Cranberry sauce and a fruit salad are always on the menu as well. Every year after everyone is done eating and settled down we watch "Miracle on 34th Street." It's been a tradition for many years. We always feel like since it starts with the Thanksgiving Day parade it is the start of our Holiday.

What is your favorite dish to eat at Thanksgiving? Since I was a child about the only time I had pumpkin pie was on Thanksgiving. Every year I look forward to that. Truth be known, I could eat a whole pie by myself in a couple of sittings. But I try to use restraint...LOL!

Layouts in 15 Minutes {or Less}

by Rochelle Spears

Pennants are the easiest and most trending design on layouts right now. I love using them because they add a flare to a simple layout. Here's a 15 minutes or less layout using the pennant design:

15 Minute Layout

Bazzill Nightmist Cardstock

Echo Park Seasons and Times 2 papers

Echo Park Seasons and Times chipboard pieces

- 1.) Cut 3 strips (9" by 3.5") with different patterned paper.
- 2.) To make the pennant, slightly bend the bottom and line up the edges. Cut at an angle starting from bottom. (see photos below)
- 3.) Glue down all three slightly overlapping each other.
- 4.) Mat photo and adhere on pennants.
- 5.) Adhere embellishments.



30 Minute Layout Additional Ingredients

Bazzill Nightmist Cardstock

Echo Park Seasons and Times 2 papers

Echo Park Seasons and Times chipboard pieces

ribbon

white pen

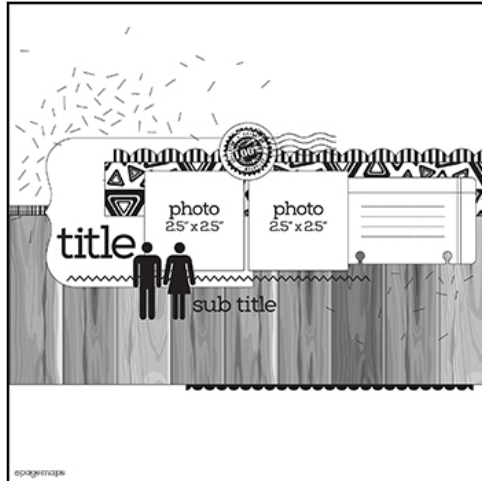
distressing tool

After following the steps above, continue creating the layout by following these steps:

- 1.) Distress the edges of pennants before adhering to layout
- 2.) Add ribbon to the bottom of the photo with a bow at the end.
- 3.) Frame the layout by doodling a line around the page.



{November Sketch}
selected from www.pagemaps.com



November Sketch



Rochelle Spears



Danielle Price



Berta {Guest Designer}



January Guest Designer Contest

Have you ever wanted to see what it's like to design for Back Porch Memories? This is your chance! We're looking for a Guest Designer for the month of January. Duties include: creating at least three layouts and one project (mini book, altered item, gift set, etc.) with your assigned January kit; creating a page using our monthly sketch for our newsletter; hosting a January challenge; and participating on our message board.

Does this sound like something you'd love to try? Check out the details of our January contest on our message board under "contests." Good luck!

Scrapbooking Our Gratefulness

by Danielle Price

While browsing around the internet, (I spend way too much time on that), I came across an older article on the Simple Scrappers website. It had some wonderful ideas on how to do gratitude pages and I would like to share them with you.

1. Focus your journaling and photos on connections between your friends and family. (Use your feelings toward them as your title).
2. If you don't want to journal, "I am grateful for..." try adding a quote! Your journaling will then stem off of that.
3. Another journaling option is to create a list. That is what I did for this layout. The journaling card was a great starting point. And if you don't want to do a list, consider writing a letter!

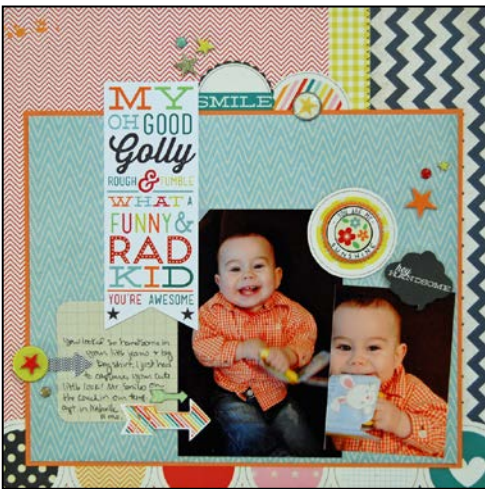


I hope you all try doing at least one grateful page this month. And I can't wait to see them so don't forget to upload them all to the gallery!



Making Feminine Papers Work for Dudes

by Alissa Trowbridge



If you've been following my work at all, it's probably pretty obvious by now that we have a little boy 😊 He's pretty much the main focus of my pages these days!

Before he was born, I always thought I'd use the more feminine papers in my collection to scrap me, my friends, etc., and keep the "manly" stuff (and little boy) papers set aside for his pages only. Ha. Yeah right! I still love to use those feminine lines and I don't save them for a rare page about me. I go ahead and use them, I just make the obvious prints work for my taste.

Now, some scrappers can totally work the flowers and things on their boy pages. More power to them! I'm not one of those people. I can use them here or there (even on my example one of the embellishments has a few flowers), but not as a major design element. So, I hide, cover or otherwise "make it work" when I have a super girly print.

On my page above, the right side of the background paper was a darling petite flower print. It was precious! I tried to use it as is and it just wasn't working. So I cut a piece of the chevron paper in the Carta Bella kit and covered it up. Bingo! Now it looks more masculine. Add in the arrows, stars and other details, and it's all boy, all the way.

I'm really happy with how this page turned out and think the bright colors suite my little man just perfectly! I'm certainly glad I used this cute line and didn't let it grow sad and lonely in my paper stash.