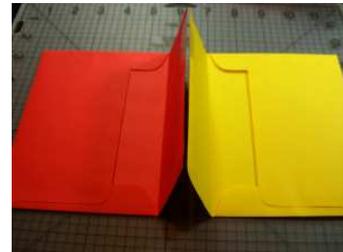


Think Outside the Trash Can: Envelope Mini Album by Alissa Trowbridge

My two biggest hurdles when making gifts for our far flung family and friends are packaging the items and paying to have them shipped. I almost never have the right size boxes or I end up spending twice as much to ship them than I budgeted. I've often wished I could pop my gift in a regular card envelope and apply just one \$0.41 stamp. Recently, it hit me. Why can't I do just that? I came up with this simple, photo ready gift album that's a cinch to make and mail!

I started with three small envelopes approximately 5" by 3 1/2". These were extras leftover from my wedding response cards, but any unused note card envelopes will do. Note, the actual envelopes I used to make my album were cream colored, but I used multicolored ones in my photographs to better illustrate how to assemble the album.

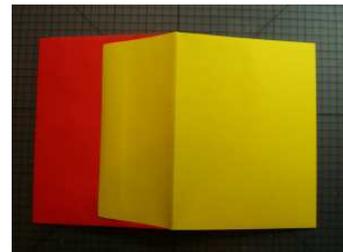
1. Place two envelopes side by side, with flaps facing each other.



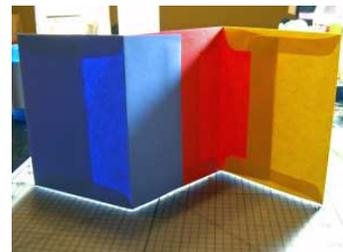
2. Slide the flap of the left (red) envelope into the opening of the one on the right (yellow).



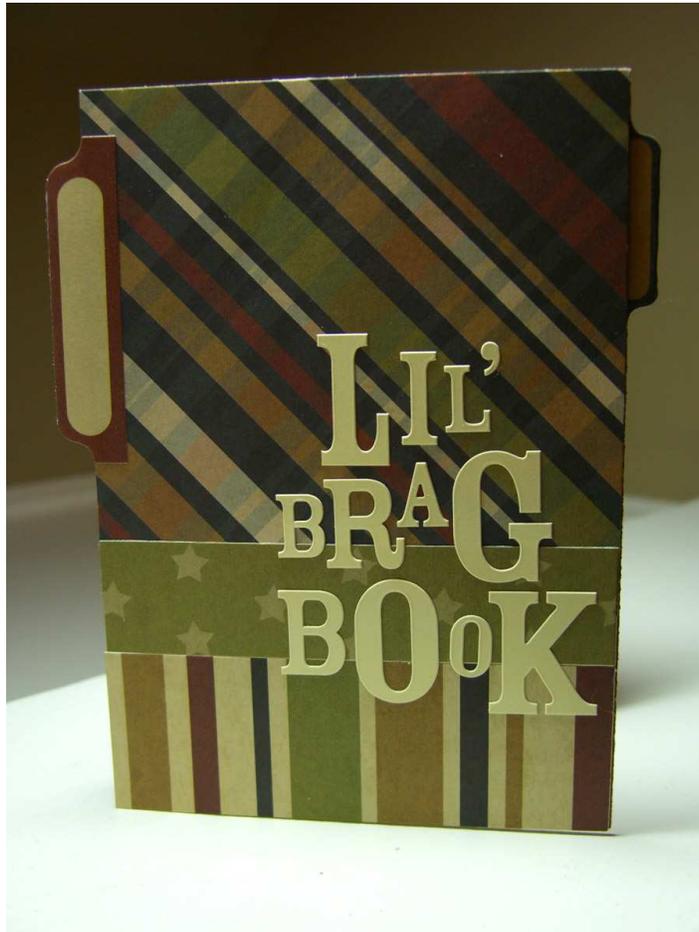
3. Next, without undoing step two, lick the seal on the right (yellow) envelope and paste it to the front of the left (red) envelope to keep the album together. If your envelope seals aren't holding, feel free to use a bit of adhesive instead. If you flip the two pieces over, this is what they should look like now:



4. Now it's time to add the third (blue) envelope. Simply lick and paste the remaining (blue) envelope to the left (red) envelope. The point is to make an accordion. When stood upright, your album should now look like this:



5. You can now start decorating your album! I used scraps from June's Solo Kit to embellish mine. Just be sure not to cover the inner folds of your envelopes with paper or embellishments so your album will open and close freely. Here are a few photos of my completed album.



I love this project because it's quick, inexpensive and a superb way to use up scraps. My favorite part of this gift idea is that the whole thing fits in a normal store-bought card envelope. Although you might want to check the weight of your album prior to mailing, mine required just one first class stamp!