



How to Set Up Your scrap central binder!

Congratulations! By deciding to use a *scrap central binder*, you're taking your scrapbook organizing to the next level! A *scrap central binder* will help you organize your scrapbook ideas and supplies, keeping everything you need to design beautiful and inspired scrapbook pages right at your finger tips!

The six steps below walk you through the process of setting up your *scrap central binder*. The beauty of the *scrap central binder* system is its simplicity. You can customize your binder to suit *your* needs. So use the suggestions on what to put in your binder (and which categories to use) as just that – suggestions. Then, make the system yours. Keep in it what makes sense to you and whatever will help you be more organized and fit more scrapping into your life! Good luck!

Step one: collect your supplies

Listed below is everything to collect so you can set up your *scrap central binder*.

core elements. The core elements are the basic supplies you'll need to set up your *scrap central binder*. These items are readily available from an office supply store and items with an asterisk are available from www.simplify101.com.

- **3-ring binder*** – look for a durable, functional and attractive 3-ring binder, such as the russell + hazel® signature three-ring binder. This binder is perfect for scrapbookers because its front cover is a blank canvas — just waiting for you to decorate and customize using all your scrapbook supplies. Who knew organizing could be so much fun?
- **binder tabs*** – will keep you super organized by grouping your ideas and other items into categories. This will make it quick and easy to get your hands on all your scrapping ideas and goodies.
- **magazine holders** – if you can't bear to tear pages out of your scrapbook magazines and idea books, then magazine holders are just for you. Simply slide your magazines and idea books into the holder and snap into your binder. Instantly you've got a handy, portable reference library.
- **paper pocket*** – a paper pocket is great for stashing ideas, notes, project lists, scrap paper, or even embellishments for your scrapbook projects.

- **page protectors** – page protectors make it a breeze to slide your magazine clippings and other ideas into your *scrap central* system. Keep your important scrap info safe, plus see everything at a glance. The page protectors are also great for collecting leftover paper scraps when you go to off-site crops.
- **marking pen** – use to label your binder tabs.

additional tools. Besides all the fabulous core elements you may find these items handy for setting up your *scrap central* system:

- 3-hole punch
- blank paper
- glue stick
- paper clips
- collection box or bin
- loose-leaf notebook paper
- grid paper

ideas, inspiration, supplies and scrapbooking tools. Now that you've gathered the basic supplies for setting up your binder, it's time to collect the heart of the system—your ideas, inspirations, supplies, and tools. Think about how you'll use your binder. Will it be for ideas only? Or would you like a one-stop shop for all your scrapbook ideas, inspirations and supplies? (Including supplies is a great strategy if you crop on the go.)

Head into your scrapbook workspace or storage area with your collection bin in hand. Gather up any of the following goodies you'd like to store in your *scrap central binder*:

- **scrapbook magazines + idea books** – scrapbook magazines are a tremendous source of ideas and inspiration – from design ideas to articles on photography, page layout, color schemes, and journaling – you're sure to find great ideas to include on your scrapbook pages. Whether you've got complete magazines and idea books, or just a few clippings and articles, put them in your collection bin. You may decide to store the whole book or magazine in your *scrap central binder*, or pare down to fewer, very special and important ideas. For now ... let's keep collecting.
- **marketing materials** – if you've been a collector of scrapbook ideas for a while, you may have a stash of marketing materials like print ads, direct mail pieces, postcards, and catalogs that caught your eye. Pull out your stash and add it to your bin. If you don't yet have a collection, start looking at your junk mail with fresh eyes. You just never know when "free" scrapbook inspiration will land in your mailbox.
- **greeting cards, invitations, stationary** – again, pull from your existing compilation or start a new collection of designs or color schemes you'd love to try out in your scrapbooks.

- **ideas from the internet** – if surfing the net for scrapbooking ideas and inspiration is one of your favorite past-times, you probably have print-outs of all sorts of concepts for your albums. Gather these print-outs, three-hole punch them and corral them into your collection bin.
- **sketches** – do you find yourself sketching scrapbook layouts on the back of napkins and envelopes? If so, gather 'em up and load them into your bin. Remember to include any sketches you've clipped from scrapbook magazines and idea books, as well.
- **lists** – Are you a list maker? Lists are one of my favorite organizing tools and there are many fine lists you can make to keep your scrapbook projects organized. If you already have some lists going, gather your checklists, scrapbook project plans, lists of albums and pages to make, goals lists, to-do lists, shopping lists and so on. Keeping all of your lists together in your *scrap central binder* will help you stay super organized and super productive!

(If you're feeling left out and want to make some lists for *your* scrapbooking, be sure to check out [The Happy Scrapper](#). It's loaded with ideas and lists to keep your scrapbook projects organized and moving forward.)

- **embellishments** – gather any flat embellishments that don't have a good home in your scrapbook organizing system. Here's a hint: if you forget you have a certain embellishment when you're designing your pages, that embellishment needs a better home. Give your *scrap central binder* a try.

Not sure which embellishments to store in your binder? Here are some ideas:

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| ▪ acrylic stamps | ▪ pre-printed accents |
| ▪ CD's – font, clip art, etc. | ▪ rubber stamps* |
| ▪ die cuts | ▪ rub-on letters and sayings |
| ▪ fabric swatches | ▪ stickers |
| ▪ paper – 8 ½ x 11 or smaller (or scraps) | ▪ templates |
| ▪ paper frames | ▪ title cards |

* OK – I haven't lost my mind. It's true, you can't really store rubber stamps in a 3-ring binder. BUT you can stamp a sample image of all your stamps onto paper and store the sample sheet(s) in your binder. This will help you remember all the embellishment options you already have on hand when you're designing a scrapbook album or page.

Step two: sort and purge

You've collected the heart and soul of your *scrap central binder* system and have all the needed tools and supplies on hand. Now it's time to get organized by purging unnecessary items and sorting everything else into categories that will make your ideas and inspirations easy to find.

Go through each item in your collection bin, deciding if it's a keeper or a goner. Keepers are ideas or items you absolutely love and apply to a current or future scrapbook project. Goners are items that 1) don't inspire you, 2) are dated and the design, color scheme or concept doesn't suit your tastes or current projects, or 3) you simply don't like. For more ideas on sorting and purging scrapbook supplies, refer to *The Happy Scrapper* section called "overcome disorganization: organize + store your gear."

Sort the items you're holding onto by topic or use. Select categories from the ideas below in "Step three: create categories," or come up with categories that make sense to you and your unique collection of ideas, inspirations, supplies and projects.

To help categorize items as you sort, ask yourself these three questions:

Question 1: *what* is this?

Ask the question and then pay close attention to your answer. Your answer could be "It's a magazine clipping of a layout I love." This answer (as silly as it may sound) gives you clues about why you saved the clipping – it's a layout idea. This tells you what you want to use the idea for, which is key to getting your fingers on ideas when you need them.

Question 2: *why* do I love this?

The second question forces you to dig a little deeper. Why do you love the item? What do you find inspiring about it? Is it the layout itself (how the photos and other elements are grouped on the page) or is it something else like color scheme, topic, how journaling was incorporated, or the fonts and lettering. Sort your items based on your answers.

Question 3: is this idea relevant?

Does this idea support a specific project you're working on? Does it help you address a challenge or obstacle in your scrapbook process? Is the idea *truly* inspiring? If so, it passes the relevance test. If not, consider pitching and moving on to bigger and better ideas.

Step three: create categories

Now, using your tabs and a permanent marker (or label maker), label your binder tabs. If you're not confident about the categories you came up with while you were sorting, use Post-it® notes to create temporary tab labels. Give your binder a test drive for a few weeks to see how it works for you. After you've

lived with it for a while, tweak your categories if needed. Once you've got categories that work for you, take the plunge and create permanent binder labels.

Here are ideas for categorizing the stuff in your *scrap central binder*:

- **album topic or theme** – group ideas and inspiration appropriate to the various albums you are working on (or plan to start real soon.) For example, you could have a tab for Christmas (or Holidays), one for wedding, baby, seasons, vacations, etc. Store everything for a single album together in one section of your binder — your embellishments, page layout concepts, title ideas, stickers, die cuts, patterned paper, templates, journaling notes and so on. Include a sample of your appropriate punches, stamps, and ink pad colors for each theme.
- **alphabets + lettering ideas** – keep all your alphabets and lettering ideas together in your binder. Include fonts from CD's and internet sites, rub-on letters and phrases, rubber stamps, letter templates, and alphabet stickers. For your fonts, print out a sample of each font you own (see example and instructions below.) If you have alphabet stamps, why not stamp a sample sheet of each alphabet and store it with the rest of your lettering ideas? Keeping your entire alphabet and lettering options together will make page design a snap, helping you find just the right lettering to carry out your design concept.

To create a font sample page, in your word processing program, type the alphabet once. Then, copy and paste the alphabet for each new font, changing the font and title (font name) at the front of each alphabet sample. Including the name will make it easy to find the font you like when you're in your word processing program. If you have fonts that aren't installed on your computer, include the source, such as the CD or web site where you found the font.

example:

Arial: Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Book Antiqua : Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

Comic Sans MS : Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz

- **color schemes / color selection** – consider keeping all your color inspiration together. Items like paint chips, magazine and catalog clippings, clothing tags, wrapping paper, and greeting cards can help you pick the perfect color combos for your scrapbook pages.
- **design style** – collect and store examples of design styles you'd like to include in your scrapbooks.
- **handwriting tips** – if you're not a fan of your handwriting, collect ideas and inspirations to either practice your handwriting or learn to love it just the way it is. If you incorporate your own writing in your books it will put more "you" into it ... and isn't that the whole idea of scrapbooking?

- **journaling ideas** – group all journaling ideas, quotes and inspirations in one section of your binder.
- **layout ideas / sketches** – consider grouping your layout ideas and page sketches by the number of photos per layout. That way, when you have five pictures for a layout and are stumped for ideas, you can flip right to a bunch of page layouts you adore! Keep extra grid paper in your binder to easily add new sketches to your collection.
- **lists** – consider dedicating a whole section of your binder to lists (see above for list ideas.) Keep extra loose-leaf paper in your binder for spontaneous list making whenever the mood strikes!
- **organizing ideas** – are you dreaming of a scrapbook space of your very own? If so, why not collect ideas and inspirations for organizing your space and creating the creative space of your dreams?
- **people** – if you're making scrapbooks for different people (an album for your son, one for your husband, another for your best friend, etc.) store all embellishments, page ideas, titles and quotes you'd like to include in that album in one section of your *scrap central binder*.
- **photography ideas and tips** – scrapbook magazines often feature tips and ideas for taking great photos. Plus, if you come across a photo you love in a magazine, include this in your *scrap central binder* as well. You may also wish to create a list of photos to take — so you can fill in with photos you need to complete scrapbook projects. Next time you're in need of some photo inspiration, you'll know right where to go.
- **spending plan** – if you've read the e-book [The Happy Scrapper](#), you've developed a plan for stretching your scrapbooking buck. Keeping your plan in your *scrap central binder* will allow you to always know where it is and help you plan your shopping trips for ultimate shopping enjoyment!
- **titles** – if you like collecting and coming up with clever titles, create a section in your binder to collect all your ideas. Put in some blank loose leaf paper in this section to capture title ideas on the fly.

Step four: assemble

You've been busy ... you've collected, sorted, purged and grouped your items into meaningful categories. Now all you have to do is put your binder together and you can get back to scrapping!

For small items and clippings, use your blank paper and paper clips or glue stick to attach multiple ideas to a single sheet. Then, either slip the paper into a sheet protector or three-hole punch it.

Slide full sheet ideas and articles into the sheet protectors, and put idea books and magazines in the magazine sleeves included in your *scrap central binder* kit.

In no time at all your binder will be up and running!

Step five: customize and add on

The core elements of your *scrap central binder* gives you the basic tools and supplies you need to gain control over your paperwork. Once you're up and running, you may find you want to expand the system and customize it further. Here are some ideas:

- **Decorate Your Binder** – The russell + hazel® binder is a blank canvas for your creativity! Use your rubber stamps, patterned paper, markers, and other scrapbook supplies to customize your *scrap central binder*!
- **Pencil Case** – keep your scrapping essentials like your black marker, pencils, Post-it® Notes, and an art gum eraser tucked inside a pencil case in your *scrap central binder*. You'll have a few less things to pack next time you head off for a crop!
- **Customized Forms** – create your own custom forms or checklists to help you plan your scrapbook pages. Or keep copies of forms like the "formula sheet" from *Simple Scrapbooks* magazine or forms from the simplify 101 e-book [The Happy Scrapper!](#)
- **CD sleeves** – if you have a collection of CDs for scrapbooking, pick up some three ring binder CD sleeves from an office supply store and keep all your CD's in your *scrap central binder*.

Step six: maintain

You've done a lot of work to set up your *scrap central binder*. Good job! Now, with a few simple strategies, you can keep your system organized and functional for years to come. Here are some quick tips:

- **Maintain as you go.** When you're finished with a specific project, eliminate ideas relevant to that project or divvy them up into new, more appropriate categories for future projects.
- **Keep it fresh.** As you're browsing through your binder, pull out ideas that no longer inspire you. Your tastes will change as you're exposed to new design styles and products. Make sure your *scrap central binder* reflects your current tastes and style.
- **Divide + Conquer.** If your collection grows and you start bursting out of your *scrap central binder* consider investing in a second (or third) system. Divide your topics based on projects you're working on (keeping current and in-process projects and ideas together.) This strategy is very effective if you'll be cropping offsite because you won't have to take your whole idea library with you when you go!

Good luck with all your scrapbooking projects and endeavors! If you'd like more information on organizing your scrapbook space, supplies or life, visit <http://www.simplify101.com/scrapbooking-organization.php>.

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