

Scrapbooking Advice and Tips: Choosing Your Scrapbooking Supplies

Are you keen on getting started with scrapbooking, but need some scrapbooking advice to help you get started? Perhaps you have loads of photo albums stacked up in storage or boxes full of family photos, drawings, and other wonderful memories, and you're interested in heritage scrapbooking. With all the scrapbooking products available, it can be all too easy for scrapbooking beginners to either go crazy buying more than is needed, or become completely overwhelmed while in the scrapbooking aisle at the arts and crafts shop. Not to worry – to help keep you focused, here is a list of the essential supplies you'll need to start scrapbooking in no time, as well as some additional scrapbooking tips to help you decide what to select:

1. **An album.** While this may seem obvious, there is more to it than just buying any old album. Select the album size you want to work with – 8 ½ x 11 or 12x12. These are really the only two sizes you'll want to work with, as anything smaller won't be large enough. You'll want to select a color and/or theme that go with your scrapbook's theme, as well as choose the type of album to work with. Here are some scrapbooking tips to help you select an album:
 - *3-ring albums:* these are the easiest to use, because they allow you to remove and rearrange pages quickly; however, there's also a limited number of pages you can put into a 3-ring, depending the size of the rings. You may also want to think about whether you plan on creating any two-page spreads in your scrapbook, as pages in a 3-ring album will be separated by the rings.
 - *Post-bound albums:* although not as easy to work with as 3-ring albums, post-bound albums are probably the most versatile. They use the same page refills as 3-rings, and will lie flat when opened with no separation between pages (allowing for two-page spreads).
 - *Strap-bound albums:* this type has special "straps" that anchor the pages in to the album. Although the covers and pages lay flat and allow for two-page spreads without bending in the middle, strap-bound albums are probably the most difficult to work with because you would need to take the entire album apart in order to move pages.
2. **Album refill pages.** This is one of the biggest pieces of scrapbooking advice we can offer. The last thing you want is to have to hunt down refill pages that go with your specific album, so buy a few packs of these ahead of time to save time (and your sanity).
3. **A good pair of scissors.** Here's a scrapbooking tip that can't be emphasized enough. Buy a nice sharp pair that is comfortable to hold and has very fine tips (which will result in more accurate cuts). Don't use them for anything else, either – they'll stay sharper longer.
4. **Adhesive.** There are lots of different types of adhesives that can be used for scrapbooking, including mounting squares, tape, glue sticks, liquid adhesives, and even adhesive machines. It doesn't matter which type you choose, just so long as it's an acid-free adhesive that can be used on both cardstock and your photos.

5. **Cardstock and patterned papers.** This will be what your photos and embellishments are mounted on, so select your paper based on what will complement your photos or theme. You may want to bring a few of your photos along so you can match them against different colors. You don't have to use the same color or pattern for each page, so be creative! If you're looking for some inspiration, take a look at a few of our scrapbooking page ideas.
6. **Journal pens.** For scrapbooks that tell a story, journaling is a must. Choose journal pens that are acid-free, permanent, and are fine-tipped on one end and wide-tipped on the other (the added versatility will allow you to hand write everything from small photo captions to larger page titles). You should also choose several different colors so you can write on different backgrounds.
7. **Embellishments.** This is where you can have a lot of fun, because there are so many ways you can embellish your scrapbook pages. Stickers, buttons, ribbon, silk flowers, and hundreds of other things can be used to make your pages come to life – you're only limited by your imagination!

Scrapbooking is easy and fun, once you have all of your essential supplies. The next time you head to the scrapbook shop or the arts and crafts store, just print this list off and take it with you – it'll make shopping for your scrapbooking supplies a lot easier.