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Title: Scrapbooking. By: Kennelly, Patricia, Hobby Profile: Scrapbooking, 2015

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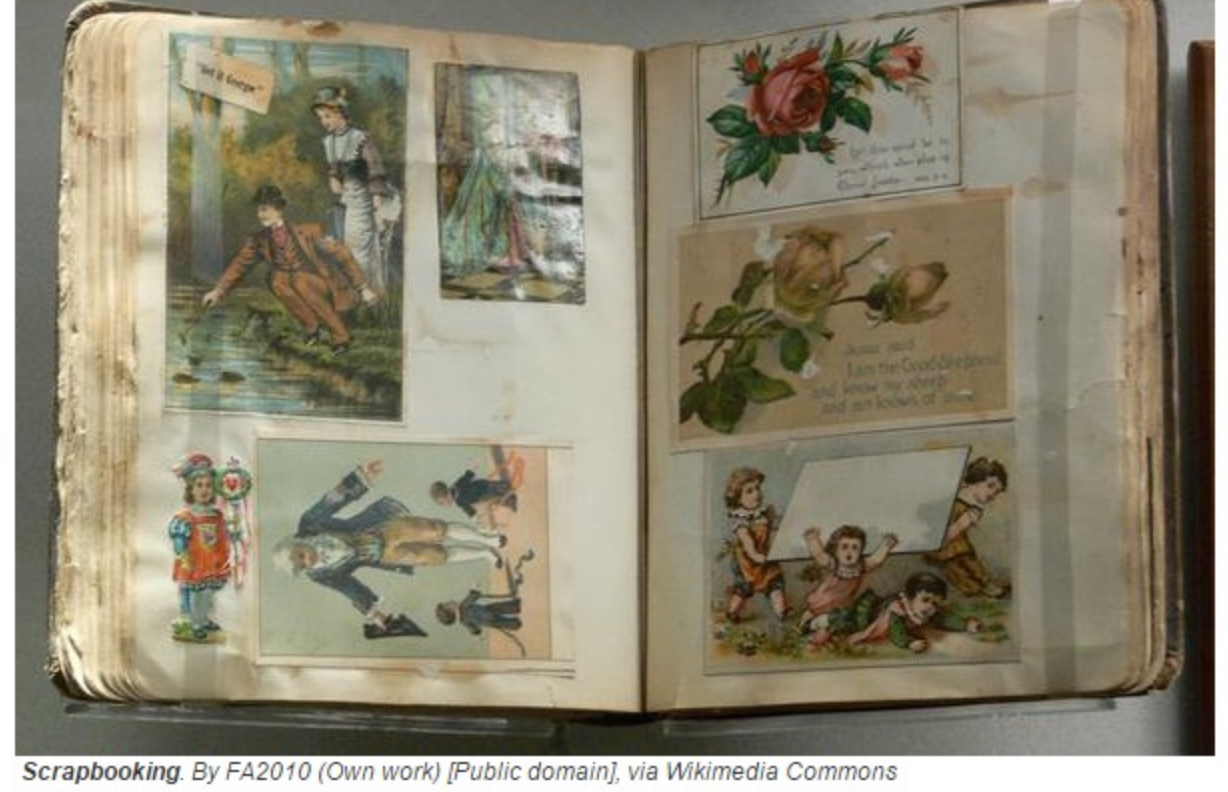
Scrapbooking

Contents: History, How to Get Started, Investment, Materials, Techniques, Trends, Time, Scrapbooking for Fun vs. Profit, Learning More, Organizations, Books, Fun Facts

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History

Scrapbooking is a fun hobby that involves saving photos, newspaper clippings, and other memorabilia in the pages of a decorated book, called a scrapbook. Making scrapbooks gives people an opportunity to document and safely preserve their family history in a creative way.



Scrapbooking. By FA2010 (Own work) [Public domain], via Wikimedia Commons

The movement toward saving both words and pictures in blank books probably began during the Renaissance. Artists from this period would regularly collect their drawings and prints in albums or notebooks.

In the late sixteenth century, the term "commonplace book" first enters the written record. Commonplace books were blank books in which people could copy poems, notes, anecdotes, and their favorite stories. These commonplace books are the ancestors of the modern journal.

Beginning in the late 1700s and during most of the Victorian era, scrapbooking gained popularity. William Granger published one of the first modern scrapbooks in 1769. His book, a history of England, also included blank pages where readers could add illustrations or text. This created a venue for creative expression, and the practice of adding words and pictures to books became more common.

One reason for the popularity of scrapbooking was the invention of chromolithography, a process for making color prints. Advertising cards that used chromolithography were often saved, as they were considered too beautiful to be simply thrown out. Postcards, calling cards, and religious cards were kept in ornate books next to newspaper articles, quotes, and poems.

In 1872, author Mark Twain, who was a scrapbook enthusiast patented a "self-pasting" scrapbook that made adding to scrapbooks easier and neater. Instead of glue, scrapbookers could just add water to the pages; Twain's scrapbook operated on the same principle as the adhesive envelope. He sold the popular scrapbooks through the Montgomery Ward catalog.

The mass marketing of cameras in the early 1900s also contributed to the rise of scrapbooking. People wanted to save their photographs, and scrapbooks offered an easy way to do so. At the same time, many magazines and books were published to take advantage of the growing hobby. Scrapbooking lost much of its prominence after 1940, however, as photography became more accessible and popular.

The rise of genealogy, the study of a family's history, in the late 1970s and early 1980s sparked a renewed interest in scrapbooking. Many specialized scrapbooking stores began opening, and people were encouraged to record their family histories in both words and images.

Interest in the scrapbooking hobby has continued to grow, thanks in large part to the Internet. Scrapbooking enthusiasts can take online classes and participate in clubs and other groups, where they can communicate instantly with other members. Scrapbooking supplies may also be purchased online, giving hobbyists access to a greater variety of materials and trends.

Advancements in technology have also given scrapbookers (or "scrappers") more tools and outlets for creativity. Devices such as digital cameras, scanners, and printers have improved the quality and diversity of scrapbooking.

How to Get Started

Starting a scrapbook is easy and inexpensive, and the hobby is suitable for all ages. As soon as a child can safely handle scissors, they can begin scrapbooking. Scrapbook pages, called layouts, are a creative way to preserve memorabilia for future generations.



Assembling a scrapbook of baby pictures.

200419193-001 - Copyright Getty Images

Modern, commercial scrapbooking supplies are specially formulated so that they will not degrade or damage paper, memorabilia, and photos. A product's packaging will usually indicate whether it is safe to use in scrapbooks. If conservation is a consideration, then any adhesives, stickers, and papers used in a scrapbook should be acid- and lignin-free. This will ensure that pictures and albums will last a lifetime.

Investment

The cost of creating a scrapbook depends on how much time and money the hobbyist is willing to spend, and how elaborate the scrapbook is intended to be. Basic scrapbooking materials (scissors, stickers, stamps, adhesives, paper, pens, markers) are widely available in office supply stores, discount stores, hobby stores and scrapbook specialty stores. Prices range from \$0.25 for a piece of specialty paper to \$15 for a pair of decorative scissors. Albums range from \$10 to \$50. Many craft stores offer classes for free at craft supply stores, or for a nominal fee of \$5 to \$15 to cover the cost of supplies.



Some scrapbooking supplies include decorative scissors, hole punches, pens, adhesives, and embellishments.

200339530-001 - Copyright Getty Images

Materials

As the name implies, virtually any material may be included in a scrapbook. However, there are certain materials that all scrapbookers should have available for any project. These include:

- Adhesives
Album
Card stock
Die cuts
Embellishments (beads, ribbons, glitter, charms, tags, paper flowers, buttons, brads)
Pens, markers, inks, pencils
Photos
Photo corners
Punches
Rubber stamps
Scissors
Sheet protectors
Specialty papers (decorative, patterned, vellum, corrugated, handmade, metallic, velveteen, stationary)
Stickers
Trimmers, cutters
Templates



Scrapbooking supplies. By Bastet985 (Own work) [GFDL, CC-BY-SA-3.0 or FAL], via Wikimedia Commons

Techniques

The first step in scrapbooking is to organize photos, memorabilia, newspaper clippings, and other personal papers. Next, a layout theme, such as a special birthday or other event, must be decided. There is no right way to do a scrapbook layout, but classes, books and magazines offer plenty of creative ideas and inspiration. Pictures are then cut or cropped with decorative scissors and/or punches and placed on decorative papers.



Scrapbook page of cat.

200419191-001 - Copyright Getty Images

In addition to pictures, text is often included on the pages. This process is called journaling, and it provides more information about the photos or other materials that the hobbyist would like to document for future generations. Scrapbook hobbyists often use different fonts, or styles of type, to make each page distinctive.

Embellishments, such as bits of ribbon, buttons, brads, and charms, may be added to create a more artistic look. Die cuts, which are shapes cut out of paper, are often added to highlight the layout. Scrapbookers use decorative pens, markers, pencils, and stickers to make each scrapbook page unique. Finished pages are placed into an album.

Special pens may be used to determine if the materials being added to a scrapbook are acidic. Since acid causes paper to break down over time, these materials, such as newspaper clippings, should be treated with special sprays to neutralize their acidity. Light and high humidity may damage photographs and papers, so scrapbooks should be stored in dark, temperature controlled areas.

Trends

Digital scrapbooking, also known as computer scrapbooking, has become popular in recent years. Programs such as Picasa and Adobe Photoshop have made photo layouts easier to accomplish. Using this software, photos can be cropped, colored, and tinted without destroying the original photo.

Scrapbooks may be shared online, sent via email, or saved on a disk. For many scrapbook hobbyists, the savings in paper, supplies, and time have made digital scrapbooking more popular.

Increased interest in scrapbooking has given rise to scrapbooking cruises, workshops, and themed vacations. These retreats combine the love of scrapbooking with the vacation time to work on the hobby and the opportunity to meet and socialize with fellow scrapbook hobbyists.

Prepackaged album kits, which bundle supplies such as coordinated paper, stickers and embellishments, have also become popular, especially among novice scrappers. Kits geared toward themes such as birthdays, weddings, graduation, holidays, special days, and anniversaries are widely available.

Time

A layout for a single scrapbook page can be put together in less than an hour. Organizing photos and memorabilia is the key to creating scrapbook pages quickly. More complicated pages can take several hours, depending on how much embellishment is added to the pages.

Albums, which contain many scrapbook pages that share a common theme, may take weeks to complete.

Many people get together at scrapbooking events to organize their photos, create their page layouts, and share inspiration. Scrappers often meet at conventions to share their albums with fellow hobbyists.

Scrapbooking for Fun vs. Profit

Scrapbooking is an easy hobby to start, and can be as simple as pasting photos onto a blank page and journaling. It offers many opportunities for creativity, so pages may be as simple or as complicated as the hobbyist likes. Many scrapbook hobbyists create custom scrapbooks for others, teach classes, or open a business as they become more involved with the hobby.

Learning More

Organizations: Scrapbook Expo <http://www.scrapbookexpo.com>

Books

Smedley, Wendy. The Complete Idiot's Guide to Scrapbooking. Indianapolis: Alpha Books, 2000.

Wines-Reed, Jeanne and Wines, Joan. Digital Scrapbooking for Dummies. Hoboken: Wiley Publishing, 2005

Making Memory Books and Journals by Hand. San Diego: Thunder Bay Press, 2001.

Fun Facts

Thomas Jefferson was an avid scrapper. He saved newspaper clippings, poetry, drawings, and memorabilia in many scrapbooks.

Scrapbooks became popular again in 1975, after Roots debuted on television. The movie sparked an increased interest in genealogical research and the importance of preserving family history.

Friendship books in the Victorian era included hair weavings. In Victorian England, it was popular to save a lock of hair as a way of remembering a friend. Hair weavings were often saved in "friendship books," which also included poems or other text about the friend.

By Patricia Kennelly

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