

**STEP ONE:** Naturally, **get all your pictures and memorabilia together.** Figure out about how many photos will fit in the album you wish to complete, and get them in chronological order.

**STEP TWO: Crop your photos.** And I don't mean just the ones for the first page – I'm talking about the **WHOLE STACK.** Just sit down in front of the TV one night, or maybe at your child's next sporting event, and crop away.

Done with that? Good!



**STEP THREE: Arranging.** This is fun. Allow yourself a little extra space at your workstation so you can actually lay several pages out at once. What you're doing in this step, is deciding what pictures will go on what page, then loosely tacking them down to keep them temporarily in place. The reason I love this step is because it gives me the freedom to get an idea of what the final layout of the album will look like, before I actually commit to anything.

For example, I really like working with two page spreads. Let's say I'm working on Easter pictures. As I'm going along, I realize that they will all fit on the left-hand page. Problem is, I want my next group of photos to make a two-page spread. I have a couple of options.

I can either spread my Easter photos out onto a two-page spread, or I can insert some miscellaneous photos onto the facing page. Either way, the result is that my next set of pictures will end up on facing pages as well.

Or, I may find that after I've laid everything out, I have one extra photo remaining. I still have the flexibility to squeeze it in somewhere, or eliminate something else.

All of these little problems would be big problems if I were completing my album page by page. I wouldn't be able to make the little changes, because I'd already be locked into my layouts. But when you're working assembly line, you can make corrections as you go.

So are you still with me? First, we selected and cropped all our photos. Then, we arranged and tacked them down with just a touch of adhesive, to the page.

*FYI: Some scrappers prefer to combine steps 2 and 3. It helps them to actually see their layouts as they are deciding how much to crop from their photos.*

Moving right along...

**STEP FOUR: Decorate and Embellish.** Once you have all your pages laid out, you're finally ready to decorate and embellish. And you'll be surprised when you see how fast this step actually goes, when you're able to concentrate on just one thing, and are able to really get on a roll.

Another tip that will make this step move more quickly for you, is to, whenever possible, think in terms

of two-page spreads. For one thing, they look nice. Your eye flows right across the pages, and they flow better than if you go with something completely clashing from the left page to the right.

Also, and this is what I really like about them, two-page spreads are **TWICE AS EASY TO COMPLETE!** Think about it: the thing that takes the longest to complete as you're going along, is **DECIDING HOW TO DECORATE YOUR PAGE!** If you decorate each page individually, it takes you **TWICE** as long, as if you think of your two pages as **ONE BIG LAYOUT.**

Now that's a good tip, if I do say so myself. You're going to thank me for that one later, I just know it.

OK, now our pages are all decorated and we're moving into the home stretch... Imagine That!  
Scrapbooks & Gifts 317 N Main St. Roswell, NM 88201 575/622-5252 Open Mon-Fri 9-530 pm Sat 10-6pm 2



**STEP FIVE: Journaling.** This may not be the case for you, but I find that I have trouble journaling when I'm cropping with my friends. I just can't concentrate the way I want to. So I usually save this step for a time when I'm by myself. I make a nice cup of coffee or tea; sometimes I even light a candle to really set the mood. Then I start journaling.

I can get an entire album done in a couple of nights, when I'm just focused on the writing.

Again, if you're traveling or waiting for your kids to finish an activity, this is a great project to bring along. All you need are your album and pens!

You finish that last paragraph of writing on that last page, and guess what. You my friend are done. You have finished an album!

It's beautiful, it's satisfying, and it's done. Now you and your family actually get to enjoy looking through the photos and remembering the fun times you shared.

And it won't take long at all. I am not exaggerating when I say that with this approach, working only one night a week, if you are willing to do simple layouts, you can complete an entire album in two months or less.

How's that for motivation!

Working in this style is satisfying to me, because I can really see myself "getting somewhere!" It makes sense in my orderly little head. I also find that I actually work a lot faster, because I'm not constantly switching gears from choosing photos, laying them out, to being creative and decorating my pages, to being verbal and journaling. It's just too hard to keep that many parts of my brain going, all at once!

With the assembly line, I only have to use one part of my brain at a time, and the arranging, decorating and journaling steps go SO MUCH more quickly, because I can get on a roll.

Another side benefit is that when you come to crops you won't have to carry so much stuff! If you're just cropping and arranging one night, you won't need to bring your papers and embellishments, and if all you're doing is decorating your pages, you won't need your cropping tools. OH, IT'S SO LIBERATING!