



An Eye For Design

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Rules Compiled

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Proportions: Rules

- **Photos Come First** - keep the elements and other items sized in such a way that they do not distract from the photos.
- **IRL - In Real Life** - keep the elements sized like they would be in real life on a paper scrapbook page.
- **When in Doubt, Make it Smaller** - whenever you're unsure if something is too large, just make it smaller.

Placement: Rules

- **White Space is Okay** - leaving room for white or empty space on your layouts is okay. You don't have to fill every square inch of a page for it to be finished or complete.
- **Follow the Flow** - This rule goes hand in hand with White Space is Okay. When you follow the flow of a layout, this will almost always leave some white space. So whether you pick a straight, zig-zag, or any other flow, placing your page items within the flow allows for better design.
- **When in Doubt, Use Edges and Intersections** - Place items along edges of the document, photos, or paper pieces. Or place items where two things intersect like two photos or a photo and a paper piece.
- **Avoid Trapped Space** - Avoid small areas of white space that are trapped by the items on your page.

Color: Rules

- **Avoid Colors that Clash** - Make sure the color balance of your photos does not clash with the overall color balance of the page.
- **Avoid Overly Saturated Backgrounds** - Save the highly saturated papers for small accents on the page. If you use them for the whole background, they will take the focus away from the photos.
- **Recolor Text Layers to Coordinate** - Recoloring your text layers to coordinate with your pages is one of the easiest ways you can give your page a designer look.
- **When in Doubt, Use a Neutral Color** - If you ever have doubts about using an item due to it's color, use a neutral instead.

Drop Shadows: Rules

- **Use the Layers Panel to Guide You** - Items higher in the Layers panel will often need a larger shadow than items lower in the Layers panel. Some items just above the background paper may not need a shadow if they are a flat object (as opposed to a 3D object).
- **IRL - In Real Life** - Keep your shadows as close to real life as possible. Do not place flat items such as type over top of a shadowed or 3D object. Do not give a staple a large shadow or a large 3D paper flower a small shadow.
- **Do a Double Take** - Go back through the Layers panel and double check your shadows before you finish. This is a great time to consider adding custom shadows.

Type: Rules

- **Use Correct Alignment to Avoid Trapped Space** - When adding a type layer (especially for journaling), make sure to use the correct alignment to avoid small pockets of trapped space.
- **Don't Always Use Pure Black Type Layers** - Unless other parts of your page design contain pure black, don't use pure black type layers on your layouts. Recolor your type to coordinate with your pages.
- **Don't Place Flat Type Layers On Top of 3D Objects** - Make sure flat layers are below anything with a shadow because in real life, you can't put a dimensional paper flower into a type writer or printer and put words on it.
- **Don't Give Flat Type Layers a Drop Shadow** - In real life, you cannot type or write onto a piece of paper and then expect that writing or typed information to have a drop shadow. Those things sit directly on top of the paper they were added to. So in digital scrapbooking, we should avoid doing the same thing.
- **Make Sure Script Letters Connect** - If when using a script font the tails of the letters aren't connecting, fix it by adjusting the Tracking of the letters.
- **Never Use All Caps with a Script Font** - If All Caps is needed, change the font to something other than a script font.

- **Don't Use Vertical Text** - Instead, rotate your type layer -90° and place it on the layout this way. It will be easier to read and it will avoid alignment and trapped space issues.

When Dealing with Type Layer Readability Issues, Keep the Following in Mind:

- Don't add a drop shadow or other layer style to the type layer in an effort to make it more readable.
- Instead, if needed, give the type layer a sticker look.
- If the type layers are hard to read, consider changing the background paper to something more neutral or less busy.
- If the type layers are hard to read, consider changing the font and/or the font size.
- If needed, place your type layers on top of a journal card, paper piece, or other paper element in order to make your type layers more readable. Use the item(s) to make the type layers look like they are part of the design instead of added as an afterthought.