



Using Alphas for project titles

Description

Whether you are a digital scrapbooker, or a card maker or just someone who likes to create various projects, it is likely that you will want to add some text to your work. In the world of graphics, especially around the digital scrapbooking hobby, we often see alphas being created and distributed either alone or with other matching kits.

Using Alphas is a time saver

Designers often create alphas to match another product, whether it is a particular set of digital papers or a theme and will be associated with other elements. These alphas will save you time since they are already made with various fills, textures, bevels and decorations. They can be “printed” on a support like a bead, a piece of paper or an acrylic base. They might also be using special fonts that you don’t have access to otherwise.



Depending

on who created the alpha you are getting, the different characters might be individual files, or all on a single sheet. Occasionally, you can also find alphas that are on a single file but each on individual layers.

Single sheet alphas

Alphas on a single sheet have the advantage of having fewer files on your computer. It might take a little bit less disk space but usually, it is not that much. The inconvenient is that you have to select and cut each letter yourself, one by one. Some graphic programs might not allow that.

Individual files alphas

Alphas presented as individual files will simply require you to open the files you need and ignore the others. You only need to open 4 images if you want to write the word “June”. Some programs even let you open those characters directly onto your current work. If you are using PaintShop Pro, you can use the free script called [OpenAsLayer](#). If not, you just have to copy and paste them one by one, or maybe slide them onto your project.

Layered files alphas

The alphas that are offered as a single-layered file have the advantage of being useable with a PaintShop Pro script that will create a word for you by grabbing all the letters needed for it, in one operation. This script is called [Text Creator](#).

The biggest inconvenience of alphas is that the user is dependant on the characters the designer created and included. For example, if you want to add a date and the designer only included letters, or if you want to write a title in a language that requires some special characters, or if you want to add

some punctuation and the alpha does not include any. Luckily, designers are now aware of the various needs of users, so they tend to include upper case, lower case, numbers and punctuations, but it is not always the case.

Here is a layout that is using two alphas.



The date was written using an alpha where all the characters were on beads. It was from a Mega Kit from Elemental Scrap (that store is closed now). At the bottom, the cardboard text uses an alpha from a kit called "Little Forest Winter" by Kristin Aagard (Kristin has other fun and free alphas on her blog; check it out [here](#)). Although I added my own touch to that alpha to match the dirty socks, this was a great one to use, even straight out of the box.

Where to find alphas?

If you are a digital scrapbooker or a card maker, you know that various designers create kits with

matching alphas. Some designers also love to create interesting alphas that are either very versatile or have a certain style to them (like the alpha from Kristin in my layout). Good places to get started are the blogs with listing of various free products. Although some products listed there might not be free, most of them are. Check the [Resources section](#) of the Campus.

Learn how to use alphas

If you are new to digital scrapbooking, alphas are a really fun way to add pizzazz to a project while being very simple to use. There is a tutorial as part of the [Basic Scrap Course](#).

What do you think of using alphas? Do you use them? Why or why not? Show us some layouts you made using fun alphas.

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