



Organizing your scrapbooking supplies

Description

A large part of the projects in this Campus is about digital scrapbooking. Although you can learn how to create your own supplies, you might have already collected some, or might find great deals on ready-made papers, elements, templates, kits. You might not realize it, but those supplies you gather tend to add up very quickly. If you don't have a reasonable organization, you will waste a lot of time looking for the perfect paper, ribbon, button, etc. So, let's make it simpler and faster for you.

Unzip your files quickly

It can be tempting to save all those zip files to be unzipped later, but you can forget to do so. This has several drawbacks:

- you might forget you bought it and see it again in a site and buy it a second time (it has happened to everyone!)
- you might unzip the file later and find out it is corrupt. The problem is that the kit is no longer available in the store, or worse, you can't remember where you got it
- when you unzip the file later, you may find it is missing one part and again, it might no longer be available

So don't delay. You can do that within a few days, but don't wait months.

Sorting by store

Some digital scrapbookers will sort their supplies by the store or the site they got them from. The main advantage of this type of sorting is for challenges. If the site has some forum activities, they might require you to use only supplies from the particular store. However, if that is not a need for you, keeping your files based on the store might be a little inconvenient. Designers will often move from store to store, so that will affect your sorting. You might end up with kits from the same designer in two different store folders. Or you might have to move the kits as the designers move (and sometimes they happen to sell in multiple stores simultaneously, so it adds to the confusion).

Sorting by designer

This might be the simplest method of organizing your kits. Everything being together, the colors and style would match, making it easier for you to find coordinating elements and papers. If a designer changes store, you won't have to move things around. You can create large folders with the designer's name or you can keep the zip file name as a category, since most of the time, the designer's name will be there for you to identify them. It will save you one click instead of making a single folder for the designer and then subfolders for the different kits. Your system could then look like this:

- DesignerA-Summer_Breeze
- DesignerA-Beach_Party
- DesignerA-Fall_Fun
- DesignerB-TV-Night
- DesignerB-Baby-Fever
- DesignerC-Holiday_Cheers

However, you might run into a little issue if you happen to get some of those collaboration kits, or blog train kits. They are usually created by multiple designers. Will you sort the individual parts inside each designer's folder, or will you create another folder for the store or the site where the collab or the blog train are from? Ideally, you would want to keep all those parts together as they should complement each other and would work well together.

- BlogTrainA
 - DesignerA-MyPart
 - DesignerB-MyPart
 - DesignerC-MyPart
- BlogTrainB
 - DesignerB-MyPart
 - DesignerC-MyPart
 - DesignerD-MyPart

Sorting by type of element

Some people might like to sort elements by categories. They will go through every kit they purchase and separate the buttons, the ribbons, the frames, the paper clips, the flowers, etc. to put them in their

own sub-folders. This allows one to select one folder to search for buttons, or a different folder for ribbons, etc. It is great if you only need a handful of elements for your project, but if you end up needing an alpha for the title, 3 buttons, and 4 flowers for a cluster, a string, a ribbon, 2 frames, etc., then it can become tedious to find them all. Furthermore, you might end up with a large folder with 100 flowers and 80 buttons to go through. Another challenge with this method of sorting is if you need to credit the designer, or if you want to contact them for any reason. You might not know who it is unless they have a memorable prefix on their files.

On the other hand, this sorting method can serve its purpose for you in many other situations. You might get some supplies that are not parts of kits. They can be a set of frames, a series of buttons, or a whole pack of ribbons. In that case, it would make sense to start with large categories (like Fasteners, Plants, Ribbons) and then use sub-folders. So your system could look like this:

- Fasteners
 - Brads
 - Buttons
 - Paperclips
 - Rivets
 - Staples
- Plants
 - Branches
 - Flowers
 - Leaves
- Ribbons
 - Bows
 - Curly
 - Folded
 - Knots
 - Straight

You can also add an "Other" inside those categories if needed (sometimes, some things just don't fit well anywhere else). You can also consider adding one sub-category of "Greyscale". This would be for elements that you will be able to colorize to suit your needs. You don't necessarily want to have them mixed inside the other sub-categories.

Renaming files

Although most designers will name their files in a logical and meaningful way, occasionally, you might find some files that simply state Button1.png or worse, Element01.png. Such files names might be ok if they are parts of a kit, and you use the content of the kit together. However, if you can spare some time, it might be good if you were to add some meaningful information in the name, by adding the designer's prefix (or name) to the files, adding some descriptive for the elements (like maybe a color) or a definite name to replace a generic "element".

In order to add a prefix to a lot of files, you can do that using the Batch Rename command in PaintShop Pro. If you need to change files individually to add a word or a descriptive for each element, you will have to do it manually. It can be tedious but worth it in the end.

Whether you already have a lot of supplies or you are just starting, it is time to get organized.

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