

JANUARY 2021 | Design: The Basics

Hello, friends! I am so excited to be back here in the SCT Delivered classroom with you again for another year long class! If you don't know me from my first SCT class, SCT365 Inside the Pocket, my name is Meghann Andrew, and I love scrapbooking. Not only do I love the pretty paper and shiny embellishments, but I also love the process that goes into creating it—deciding how I will lay out the page design, what photos I will document, and adding just the right elements to make that layout *just right.* That is why I wanted to teach this class in 2021. I want you to walk away at the end of the year understanding a little bit more about how certain decisions you make while creating your page can help you love it just a little bit more, and take some of the creative struggle out of this craft for you. My training and background is interior design, and I have found good design works if you follow certain guidelines and principles, no matter if you are designing a hotel room, or a scrapbook layout!

During the length of this course, I will create two layouts a month that illustrate the points I am making in my lesson, and one of those will always be a double-pager. I will be creating with product that I already have in my stash, because I know a lot of us try to use what we have on hand first, and some of us need that little boost to do so! However, if you love to see the latest and greatest product put to work on a layout, our monthly contributor will be working with the newest releases to inspire you. It's the best of both worlds in one class!

Speaking of monthly contributors, take a look at this amazing lineup creating for us with the following topics in 2021:



January | Design: The Basics with Raquel Bowman
 February | Photography with Jen Schow
 March | Colour with Victoria Calvin
 April | Pattern with Paige Evans
 May | Titles with Sophie Delorme
 June | Story with Jess Forster
 July | Embellishment with Steffi Ried
 August | Working with Sketches & Inspiration with Erica Thompson
 September | Design: Deep Dive with Lisa Dickinson
 October | Stamping with Patricia Roebuck
 November | Mixed Media with Nathalie DeSousa
 December | Presentation with Shimelle Laine

Click this icon to stop by our Scrapbook 101 exclusive Facebook page to share your thoughts about this month's lesson, post your layouts and connect with Meghann and this month's contributor!



Our guest this month is the talented Raquel Bowman. I have followed Raquel for many years now, and her keen eye for good design is why I selected her to share her perspective and work with you this month as we discuss the basics of designing a scrapbook page. Before we introduce Raquel, let's discuss three of the principles of design that you should consider when creating a layout. These three principles can guide major design decisions, and when executed well, can make the difference between a visually successful page, and one that may feel "off." They are balance, contrast and emphasis.

BALANCE

After I decide what story I want to tell on a page and print my photos, balance is the first principle of design that I consider before cutting into paper. Balance is how visual elements are arranged so that their visual weight works in harmony together, and appears that all elements are distributed evenly. Balance may seem like a difficult task to achieve, but there are a few things to consider when creating. First, what type of balance will you begin with? There are three: radial, symmetrical and asymmetrical.



Connect with Meghann through our class Facebook group, and don't miss what else she is creating outside of the classroom.

Follow her at these links:



In radial balance, all elements radiate from a central focal point, similar to a wagon wheel. This type of balance on a layout can be quite fun, with a photograph or journaling as your center point and elements, like embellishments, radiating out from it.

Symmetrical balance is what I consider the easiest and fastest way to achieve balance, as both sides on an axis are balanced equally, as on a layout with a vertical axis running down the center of the page. This does not mean that if you folded the layout in half it would be identical on both sides, just balanced equally on both sides.



Asymmetrical balance takes a bit more time to achieve, but when you know a few tricks, you can create using it just as easily as the other two. All elements on your page have a visual weight and they carry this weight with size, colour and texture. Groups of elements clustered together take on the weight of a large object, so you could use one large thing, such as a photo mat to balance out a cluster of embellishments on a page. Color makes a difference in weight. Darker objects, or elements that are more vibrant in colour will hold more weight than lighter objects of the exact same size. The same goes for texture. Heavily patterned or textured objects carry more visual weight.

CONTRAST

Contrast is the best way to achieve an interesting page design, and it simply means that you're using elements that are visually different on your page. You can do this with color, pattern, size, colour and shape.

Choosing contrasting colours is one of the easiest ways to use contrast on a page in a successful way. Choose two colors across from each other on the colour wheel to begin your page and you'll see a definite "pop!" We'll discuss choosing colour much more in depth in March's lesson.

When selecting paper, you can be sure to add contrast not only with colour, but also with pattern and texture. Different sizes of patterns, from small to large, as well as the type of patterns you choose, like polka dots or florals, can add contrast to your page design.

Using a single collection on your project is a great way to easily add contrast to your layout. Manufacturers will often create different patterns across the collection that coordinate, like a wood grain, a floral and a dot. Their colour choices also typically follow rules of colour theory, making it easy to pair multiple colours together on the same page.



If all elements on your page were the same size, your layout may look quite strange! Choosing elements that are as small as enamel dots to ones as large as die cuts help to add contrast to a design. The same goes for shape. When you create a layout with a lot of circular elements on it, and top them with a square photo, that adds contrast and helps the photo to visually stand out from the other elements on the page.

EMPHASIS

Emphasis is SO incredibly important, and one of the first things that you should decide when you sit down to create. Ask yourself, "What is the most important part of this layout?" More often than not, it may be the photo. But sometimes, it's the story, or the title that says it all. Emphasis establishes your focal point, the place where you want the viewers' eye to go first, and you can emphasize that most important element with placement or contrast.

On a layout with multiple photos, choose the one that you want to emphasize the most, as I did on my "This is Where We Shine" layout. There are many ways to do this, but my go-to methods are with colourful photo mats, frames, arrows and embellishments.



With placement, the most important element is placed along a line that the eye is traveling on, like a diagonal. If you arrange a diagonal line of embellishments, and place a photo in the center, that photo will become your focal point. Alternatively, you could use contrast by matting your photo using a contrasting colour of cardstock to the colour that you have used on your background to give it emphasis.



Each month, I'll not only share layouts with you, but explain how they relate to the subject we're discussing, similar to the Design 101 column in Scrapbook & Cards Today Magazine. I hope these call-outs are helpful to see why I made the design decisions I made! You'll also be able to see the full-size image at the project pages at the end of each lesson, too.

a colourful frame starts out a balanced spread on all four sides

a diagonal line of the same starburst shape falls across the spread, distributing visual weight

my favourite photo of the page is emphasized with a brightly-coloured frame

a horizontal band across the page helps to spread visual weight evenly

banners and arrows lead your eye across the page from left to right, emphasizing the heirarchy of the elements on the page

elements are split across pages, so as not to break up the line that they create

a large grouping of smaller photos on the right balances out a larger photo with a big title on the left



On my single page layout, I used a technique that I go to often when creating: a triangular design. When one part of my triangle, essentially just an element on the page, is heavy, the other two smaller elements are placed opposite to balance that weight. See below how I used balance, contrast and emphasis on this page.

a heavy, contrasting frame with pattern starts out the page by evenly distributing weight

my photo mat is the heaviest part of my triangle with photos, journaling, patterned paper and some embellishment

my triangle is made up of the photo mat area, the elements on the top left corner and bottom right corner

contrasting fonts and letter colours create a visually interesting title

contrasting textures, with shiny, matte, and sparkly finishes add lots of interest to the page

a horizontal band of pattern helps to evenly distribute the weight across the page, and also creates a shelf for my large title, which also helps to add weight to the left side of the page

stitching in a contrasting colour adds texture and interest to both of the embellishment groupings



contrasting colors and patterns help to make this photo mat pop and emphasize its importance on the page



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CLICK HERE to watch this month's process video to see me create this wintry, fun layout, and please do not share this video link with those outside of the class.



Supplies | American Crafts Shimelle Sparkle City Collection: Spring in the City paper (purple frame), Stay Super paper (teal geometric), Grab and Go paper (yellow dot), Sparkly Sky (fireworks), Perfect Day paper (camera border), cardstock and lenticular shapes, cardstock stickers, embossed puffy stickers, sparkly alphabet stickers, foam and cardstock Thickers, foil foam phrase Thickers, rub-ons, sticker and washi book, chipboard stickers, enamel stickers



Supplies | American Crafts Shimelle Sparkle City Collection: Spring in the City paper (purple frame), Stay Super paper (teal geometric), Grab and Go paper (yellow dot), Sparkly Sky (fireworks), Perfect Day paper (camera border), cardstock and lenticular shapes, cardstock stickers, embossed puffy stickers, sparkly alphabet stickers, foam and cardstock Thickers, foil foam phrase Thickers, rub-ons, sticker and washi book, chipboard stickers, enamel stickers; Other: sewing machine, thread



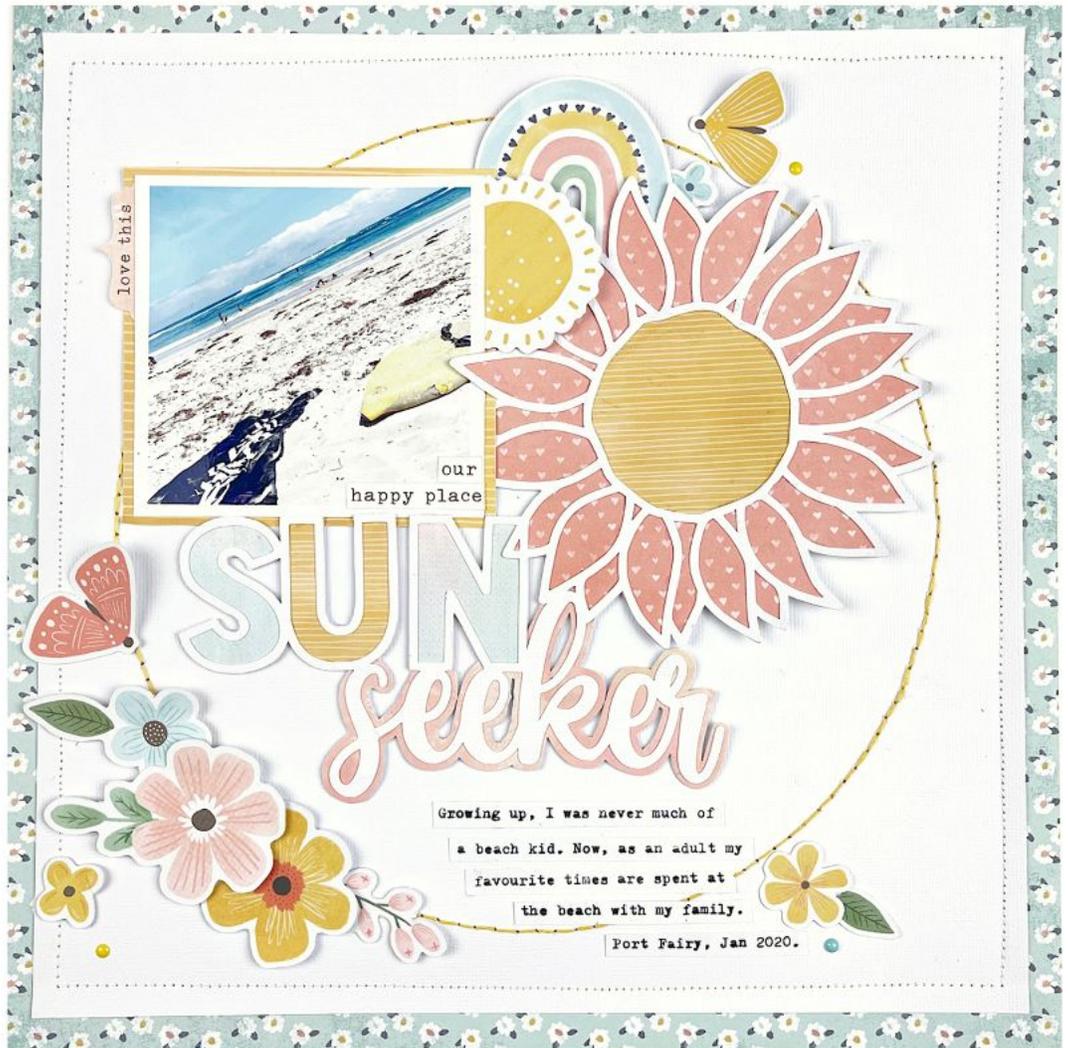
JANUARY 2021 | Design: The Basics

Hey everyone! I am so pleased and honoured to be a contributor to this year long class hosted by Meghann Andrew for Scrapbook & Cards Today. Our Scrapbook 101 theme for this month is Design: The Basics. If you have seen my scrapbooking layouts you may know that my style focuses heavily on incorporating layers, clusters of embellishments and including cut files; all the while keeping my layouts balanced and clean. This can be a challenging process at times; but principles of design such as balance, contrast and emphasis help to create a layout.

MEET RAQUEL:

Hello! My name is Raquel Bowman. I am a 30-something primary school teacher, mummy to two kiddies (Jack, 6 and Charlotte, 8) and wife to Clint, living in a coastal town in Australia. I admit, I am pretty obsessed with scrapbooking and crafts and love nothing more than playing with a variety of papers and embellishments while making pretty stuff. I have been crafting for around fifteen years now and embrace my love of layers, cut files and clusters and adding those little details while still maintaining white space, balance and a cleanliness to my layouts and craft projects. I am so grateful and honoured to be able to represent some amazing brands and companies I love through this craft.

Find more of Raquel's creations at these links:



Supplies | Patterned paper, die cuts, enamel dots: Cocoa Vanilla Studio's Daydream collection; Cut file: Cut to You

To help explain and model how I design and create my layouts I will address each of the design principles discussed in this month's lesson with visual examples for each.

BALANCE

Balance is the overarching 'go to' design principle that I refer to when creating all my layouts. This is because my layouts will always contain clusters of embellishments, large titles/cut file images, photos and journaling. These are a lot of elements to add to a page; therefore achieving balance always needs to be in the forefront of my mind while creating.



All of Raquel's elements on the page are balanced around her stitched circle, which helps to ground everything on the design, and adds a contrasting texture to her page.

As you can see from the layout image above, the cut file and the title make a large statement on this layout. This meant that I needed to ensure that my photo remained a focal point and that embellishment did not overpower it.

While creating, imagine that your layout is sitting on a set of balance scales; if it is heavy in one area of the page, we need to balance it out by adding embellishments or a photo, journaling, etc. to the opposite side. On my "Sun Seeker" layout, the sunflower and surrounding cluster of embellishments are heavy in the right corner, so I added an embellishment cluster to the bottom left.



Using this tip of an imaginary set of balance scales can be helpful when creating all layouts. However, it is important to note that this does not mean that we need to cover every area of a layout with an embellishment of some sort. Maintaining 'white space' is also very important when achieving balance and allows your eyes some visual breathing space.

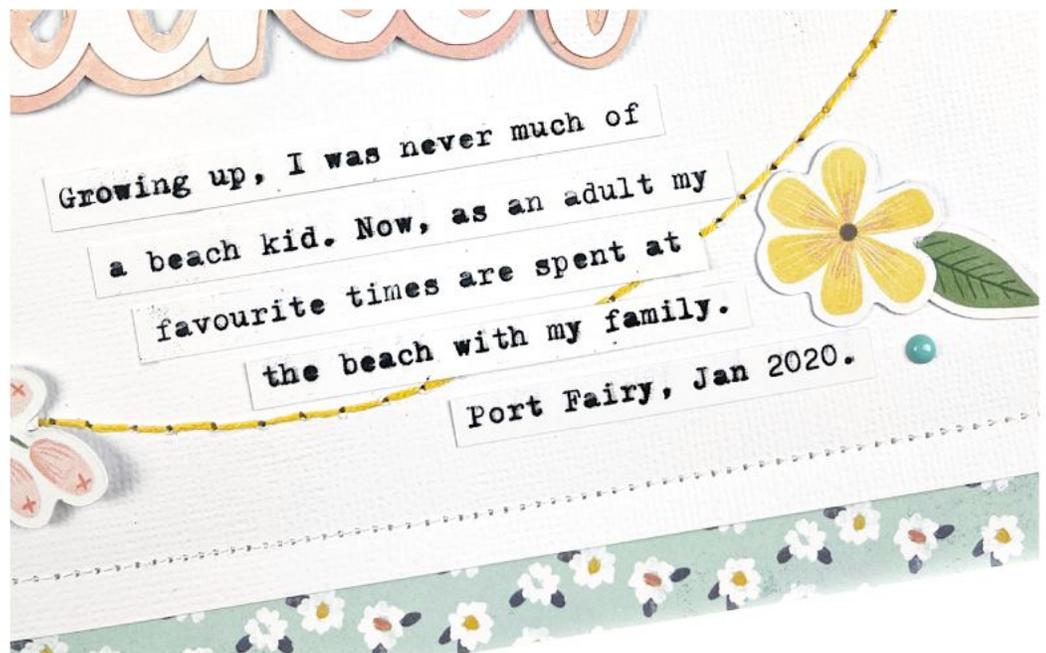
CONTRAST

Adding contrasting elements to a page is also very important. This is why our layouts are visually appealing. In the image following, you will see that I have used a variety of ways to add contrast to this page. One way to add contrast is to choose a bright colour to 'pop' elements off the page. Here, I have used a yellow patterned paper to add contrast against the white background and incorporated yellow behind the photo so that it remains a focal point, as well as in the sunflower and in the backing of part of the title. I also added a hand-stitched yellow circle to this layout. I chose yellow to add contrast, but also used the circular element to achieve balance and repeat the circular design of the sunflower; tying the whole layout design together.

Raquel created a frame of patterned paper like on Meghann's layout, featuring a floral design. Adding similar florals with her embellishments helps to tie the frame to the center of the page using repetitive shapes.



I always print my photos with a white border due to the contrast the border gives. I want to be able to mat my photos in any patterned paper or colour in which I would like. If I did not have a white border around my photos I would be limited to what style of print or colour I could use as there is nothing separating the photo to the print I am backing it with.



Remember that journaling also carries visual weight. Raquel chose to print her journaling on white cardstock and adhere to her background so that only her small font was visible, helping to keep this area lighter and the layout balanced.

EMPHASIS

The final area of design that I will touch on today is emphasis; another key principle that I focus on when creating. To do this I always ask myself "How do I want the viewer's eyes to travel on my layout?" and "What do I want to be the key feature?" The majority of the time, for me, the emphasis is placed on my photo. The photo is my focal point and reason that I am creating a layout. I also love to create layouts which document moments in time and share my families stories via my journaling that is included on the page. It is rare for me to create a page without some kind of journaling.



On this "Sun Seeker" layout I used all three principles to ensure that the emphasis is on my photo, then the viewer's eye travels to the story, my journaling. The contrast of the yellow photo matting against the white of the background makes the photo pop and stand out, creating emphasis.

You can also play with dimension as a way to add emphasis to individual elements on your layouts. I do this by using a variety of adhesives, creating varying depths and dimensions to my page. On this layout I used liquid adhesive, thin foam adhesive, thick foam adhesive and dimensional dots. All of these adhesives emphasise certain elements of my layout. In the bottom left floral cluster the pink flower is emphasised as it has a thicker foam adhesive than the others, causing it to pop off the page that little bit more and attracting the viewers eyes first.

I hope you have learnt some new tips and tricks in my contribution to this month's lesson on Design: the Basics. I have loved being a part of this class and I am looking forward to seeing what you create following this lesson in our Facebook Group. Thank you so much for having me Scrapbook & Cards Today!

Each month, our contributors will share a project that they created that relates to our monthly topic. These projects will provide extra inspiration and insight from our talented contributors at the end of each lesson!



NATHALIE DESOUSA

A well-balanced scrapbook layout combines story, photo and design in a simple way. In this case, guiding lines bring the attention to the photo; repetition makes it all cohesive, and matching colors tie it all together.

This is a perfect example of a symmetrically-balanced layout with all elements focused at the center of the page.

PAIGE EVANS

On this layout, I focused on the idea of a single basic shape: stars. Small stars, medium stars, big stars—all combine together to create a layout filled with color and contrast. A black and white photo helps it pop off the page from the background.



LISA DICKINSON

Lots of circles make this layout full of motion and movement, and the contrast of two rectangular photos in the sea of circles makes them a focal point. I also cut my title from a paper with strong horizontal lines to help provide stability in the energetic design.





JEN SCHOW

Balance and contrast are super important elements of each layout I create and sometimes they work together. In my "Lemonade" layout, I used bright and happy colors with a pop of black for contrast. When adding a visually heavy color like black, distributing the color in a triangular pattern helps to draw the eye to areas of importance. The black wood phrases (anchored by circles) draw your eye through the title, photo, and journaling of this page.

PATRICIA ROEBUCK

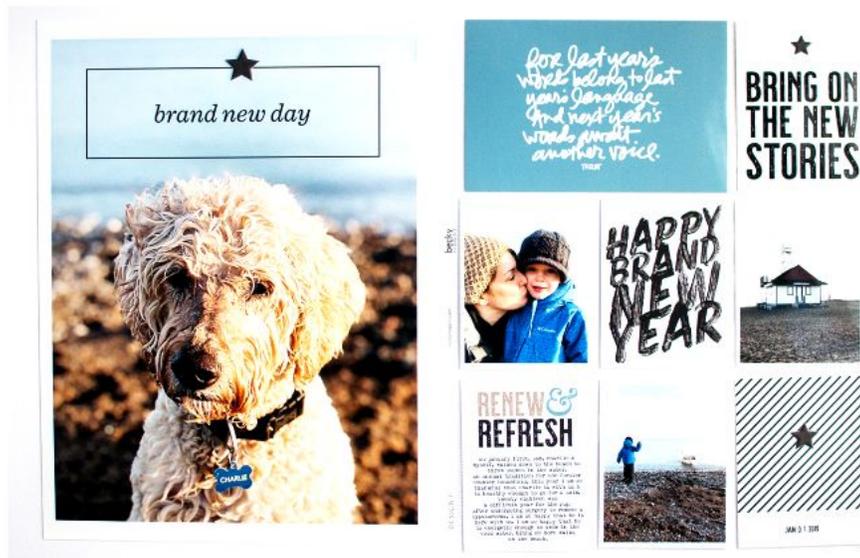
Giving myself room to type journaling to go in between my diagonal design created with the stamping and stitching helped the design flow while still documenting this special memory. The left side balances and complements the right side not by being identical, but by using similar colors, a



ERICA THOMPSON

I created a diagonal design using colorful framed circles. I really wanted the yellow to pop just like the yellow on my daughter's shirt to help tie everything together on this page.

JESS FORSTER



★
BRING ON THE NEW STORIES

In this 9" x 12" double pocket page layout, I use two design principles: emphasis and contrast. As the viewer, it is hard not to focus on the enlarged photo of my dog, Charlie, on the beach and the "pops" of the colour blue scattered throughout my page. Simple and modern, I hope my example shows that you can translate the basics in a variety of ways, across a variety of different mediums.

SHIMELLE LAINE

I love working with dozens of layers and details on a page, while still allowing a photo and its story to grab your attention first. While there are so, so many pieces on this page, almost everything keeps a straight line rather than angling this way and that. A lovely thing to remember with design is that you can push one thing at a time and still keep your focus, just not everything all at once, so I push the number of pieces and colours and motifs I include, but I keep my focus by grounding them all in a grid and placing a strong photo in a strong position on the page.



SOPHIE DELORME

On this page, I created a vertical design with three central frames to create a symmetrical design balanced on the center of the page. To keep the focus on this column, I created a folder under my photo to add hidden journaling.



VICTORIA CALVIN

A grid design offers a seamless and simple way to achieve balance on a scrapbook layout. The grid elements (photos, paper, and embellishments) can be positioned in a variety of ways: rows and columns, collage, or as a block design, just to name a few.

STEFFI REID

I often use white cardstock as a base. It serves as a blank canvas and I think it is important for the layout to be harmonious to the eye. Balance is created by the forest grouped in the centre with the repetitive shapes of the trees. The contrast comes from the white cardstock against the brightly coloured trees. This also emphasis in the centre, due to the contrast of those colourful trees, and this is where I chose to place my photo.

