

Creative Photo Matting

With all of the beautifully designed papers and embellishments that we use now in scrapbooking, it is sometimes easy for the photos or memorabilia we're trying to showcase to get lost on the page. Matting is a great way to draw attention to those photos or memorabilia.. In a previous article we dealt with traditional matting, but keeping in mind that anything that borders a photo or piece of memorabilia is a mat, we can move away from the traditional idea of a mat, in little or in big ways. Here are a few of our suggestions:

- Make a traditional rectangular mat from cardstock an inch (or your preferred width) larger than the item but extend the bottom, or on any of the sides, an extra inch or two to feature journaling or a special embellishments.
- Instead of using cardstock, or other paper, surround the photo or memorabilia with stickers, creating a fun, themed mat that lends organization to the page with unconventional style. You can do this as well with ribbon or textured fabric rather than traditional cardstock or paper.
- If the photo or memorabilia is from a special event, you can use a ribbon, napkin, or other decorative materials from that event. If you wish (or if the napkin, etc. is too thin to work with as a mat) you can cover a traditional cardstock frame with the napkin or decorative material. You can even combine items such as weaving a ribbon through or wrapping it around a special napkin, wrapping paper, paper streamer, etc.
- Glitter can even be used as a mat. Simple use a glue stick to encircle or frame the edges of the item, then sprinkle with glitter. The leftover glitter will spill easily into a trash basket before or after the glue dries. The glue lines don't have to be perfect. The sparkle of the glitter makes up for any lack of symmetry.
- Use smaller photos (scan photos into your computer to create small, same sized photos) to mat a larger photo. This is particularly fun with a photo of a parent or grandparent, surrounded by their children or grandchildren.

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- Allow children to color or decorate a plain mat, or use a page they've colored as a background mat, or crop it into the shape you prefer to surround their photos on your scrapbook page.
- A popular mat is one that covers and hides the photo or item. Simple cut a rectangle of cardstock or scrapbook paper 1/4" wider and twice as long as the photo or item, attach the rectangle to the page, glue or tape the photo inside (you can even use photo corners or squares) then fold the paper over to hide the item inside with the flap. A similar technique is a matchbook style mat which is created in the same manner, except the rectangle is extended 1/2" longer and the rectangle is folded up 1/2" from the bottom edge. The top flap can be folded into this bottom fold and brads can be added to the bottom edge to hold it closed if you wish.

Whatever materials, texture or design you choose to mat your photos and memorabilia, be creative and allow the mats to reflect the creativity that is uniquely you.

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