

Ways to Store Scrapbook Paper

A Practical Guide to Organizing Your Paper Collection by Size

12x12 · 8x8 · 6x6 · Cardstock

Your complete reference for protecting, sorting, and enjoying your paper stash

Contents

Introduction — Why Paper Storage Matters

Section 1 — General Paper Storage Principles

Section 2 — Storing 12x12 Scrapbook Paper

Section 3 — Storing 8x8 Scrapbook Paper

Section 4 — Storing 6x6 Scrapbook Paper

Section 5 — Storing Cardstock

Section 6 — Labeling Your Paper Storage

Section 7 — Organizing Tips & Best Practices

Closing — An Organized Craft Space, One Sheet at a Time

Introduction — Why Paper Storage Matters

There is something genuinely delightful about a well-organized paper collection. Rows of color-sorted sheets, neatly filed pads, and clearly labeled bins — it's the kind of setup that makes sitting down to craft feel like a treat rather than a chore.

But beyond the aesthetic satisfaction, good paper storage is one of the smartest investments a crafter can make.

Scrapbook paper is not just decoration — it is an investment of time, money, and creative energy. Without proper storage, even the most beautiful papers can fall victim to **warping, humidity damage, sun fading**, and the general chaos of a growing collection. A sheet that curls at the edges because it was stored at an angle, or a vibrant pattern that's faded from sitting near a window, is a small but genuine crafting heartbreak.

Good storage does more than protect paper — it also speeds up the creative process. When you know exactly where every sheet lives, you spend less time hunting through stacks and more time actually creating. The right system means you can grab the perfect piece of coral-pink cardstock or that floral 6x6 pad in seconds, not minutes.

One important thing to understand from the start: **different paper sizes have very different storage needs**. The solutions that work beautifully for large 12x12 sheets won't suit a stack of 6x6 pads, and cardstock behaves differently from decorative pattern paper. This guide addresses each size individually so you can build the right system for every part of your collection.

Whether you are just starting to build a paper stash or you're dealing with an overflowing craft room that needs a complete overhaul, this guide offers practical, tried-and-true solutions for every budget and every space. Let's dig in.

Section 1 — General Paper Storage Principles

Before exploring size-specific solutions, it's worth establishing a few universal rules that apply no matter what type of paper you're storing. These principles form the foundation of any good paper storage system and will serve you well regardless of which specific products or methods you choose.

Store Paper Flat or Perfectly Upright

This is the single most important rule in paper storage. Paper should be stored in one of two positions: completely flat (horizontal) or perfectly upright (vertical, like books on a shelf). **Never store paper at an angle.** Angled storage causes sheets to bow and bend under their own weight over time, leaving you with wavy, warped paper that won't lie flat on a project.

Keep Paper Away from Direct Sunlight

Ultraviolet light is paper's enemy. Even indirect sunlight over time can cause colors to fade, especially rich, saturated hues. Store your paper in a location that does not receive direct sun — inside a closet, cabinet, or opaque box is ideal. If your craft room has large windows, make sure paper containers are not in the path of direct afternoon light.

Choose a Cool, Dry Storage Location

Humidity causes paper to warp and buckle. Damp basements, garages, and bathrooms are poor choices for paper storage. If your home tends to run humid — particularly in summer — consider using a dehumidifier in your craft space, or include silica gel packets inside storage boxes to absorb moisture. Aim for a consistently cool, dry environment.

Use Acid-Free Storage Materials When Possible

Acidic materials break down paper over time, causing yellowing and brittleness. When investing in bins, boxes, page protectors, or dividers, look for **acid-free** labels. This is especially important for archival-quality papers, specialty prints, or collections you plan to keep for many years.

Label Everything

An unlabeled storage system is only marginally better than no system at all. Labeling every container, bin, drawer, and divider ensures that the system remains usable over time — especially as your collection grows or when you're in a hurry mid-project. Labels can be simple handwritten tags, printed stickers, or elegant chalkboard labels. What matters is that they're there and they're readable.

Sort Before You Store

Before filing a new batch of paper away, decide on your sorting method and apply it consistently. Common approaches include:

- **By color** — Sort into rainbow order (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) plus neutrals. Great for cardstock and solid papers.
- **By brand or collection** — Keep all papers from the same product line together. Ideal for coordinated pattern paper packs.
- **By theme** — Group papers by subject (travel, florals, holidays, children, etc.). Works well for themed scrapbooking.
- **By pattern type** — Stripes with stripes, florals with florals, geometrics together. A useful system for mixed collections.

Pick one method per paper size and stick to it. Mixing systems within a single storage unit creates confusion and makes the collection harder to use.

Keep Current Favorites Accessible

Not all papers are created equal in terms of how often they get reached for. Keep your most-loved and most-used papers at the front, top, or most easily accessible position in your storage. Archive older collections, limited-edition papers you're saving, or seasonal papers further back or higher up. This simple habit makes everyday crafting much faster.

★ Pro Tip

Before storing any new paper, flip through the pack and remove any sheets that arrived damaged, bent, or creased. Filing damaged paper away with good paper makes the whole collection feel messier. A clean, curated collection is far easier to maintain — and much more inspiring to work with.

Section 2 — Storing 12x12 Scrapbook Paper

12x12 inches is the most common scrapbook paper size and the largest standard format. These big, beautiful sheets form the backbone of most crafters' collections — and they need dedicated, purpose-built (or appropriately sized) storage to stay flat, protected, and organized.

Why 12x12 Storage Matters

Because of their size, 12x12 sheets are especially prone to warping when stored improperly. A single large sheet stored at even a slight angle can develop a pronounced bow within weeks. Given that 12x12 paper is often the most plentiful and most expensive part of a collection, it deserves thoughtful, dedicated storage. The good news is that there are more great options for 12x12 paper than for any other size.

Storage Options for 12x12 Scrapbook Paper

1. **12x12 Paper Storage Cases** — Purpose-built plastic cases with snap-close lids designed specifically for 12x12 paper. Many models hold 500 or more sheets and come with interior dividers for sorting. Ideal for large collections. Popular brands include **Iris**, **Cropper Hopper**, and **We R Memory Keepers**. These cases stack neatly and protect paper from light and dust.
2. **Vertical File Crates / 12x12 File Boxes** — Open-top or lidded crates that allow 12x12 paper to stand upright like hanging files. Use tabbed cardboard dividers to separate sections by color, brand, or theme. These are particularly satisfying to use because papers are easy to flip through and the system is immediately visible.
3. **Rolling Craft Carts with Wide Flat Drawers** — Wide, flat drawers are perfect for storing 12x12 paper completely flat. The **IKEA ALEX** unit is a long-time crafter favorite, as are **Recollections rolling craft carts**.

Dedicate one drawer per collection, color family, or theme. Label the front of each drawer clearly.

4. **Cube Storage with Paper Inserts** — Cube-style shelving units such as the **IKEA Kallax** (or similar cube shelving) combined with 12x12-compatible divider inserts or fabric bins. Stand paper upright inside the cubes, divided by tabbed separators. This approach is both functional and visually appealing — especially when paper is sorted by color.
5. **Oversized Magazine Holders / Upright File Holders** — Standard magazine holders are slightly too narrow for 12x12 paper, but scrapbook-specific oversized versions work well for keeping full packs upright and grouped by collection. Label the front of each holder with the collection name or color.
6. **Dedicated Scrapbook Paper Racks** — Freestanding wire or wooden racks with slots designed to hold multiple 12x12 paper packs standing upright. These racks are great for displaying and quickly accessing frequently used paper — like a paper library you can browse at a glance.
7. **Hanging File Folders in a Large File Crate** — Use a large open-top file crate with hanging folders sized or adapted for 12x12 paper. Label each tab by color, theme, or collection name. This method provides excellent organization and makes individual sheets very easy to retrieve.
8. **Under-Bed Rolling Storage** — Flat, low-profile rolling bins that slide under a bed or large table are an excellent solution for storing 12x12 paper flat in small craft rooms. Label the front panel of each bin and group by collection or color. Keep less-used collections here and more active paper at your desk.
9. **Repurposed Pizza Boxes** — A beloved crafting hack! Standard large pizza boxes are nearly a perfect fit for 12x12 paper. Collect them from your local pizzeria (usually free or very inexpensive), stack them on a shelf, and label the open edge of each box. A budget-friendly and surprisingly effective solution.

10. Wall-Mounted Vertical Shelving — Mount shallow open shelves directly on the wall and use them to display 12x12 paper standing upright, sorted by color for a visually striking and functional display. This approach turns your paper collection into part of the room's decor while keeping everything accessible.

★ **Pro Tip**

When storing 12x12 paper upright, never overfill the container. Too much pressure from overcrowding causes sheets to warp, curl at the edges, and lose their flat quality — exactly the damage you're trying to prevent. Leave a little breathing room in each section. If a container is getting too full, it's time to expand the system, not compress the paper.

Section 3 — Storing 8x8 Scrapbook Paper

8x8 inches paper pads are a popular mid-size format, often sold as beautifully coordinated collections. Their square dimensions make them a unique challenge — they don't fit standard letter-size solutions, and they're smaller than 12x12 systems are designed for. But with a little creativity, they're very manageable.

Why 8x8 Storage Matters

8x8 pads and loose sheets are often the most overlooked size in storage planning. Because they sit in an awkward middle ground between small and large, crafters sometimes end up just stacking them wherever there's room — which leads to bent corners, missing sheets, and frustrated searching. A dedicated 8x8 system, even a simple one, makes a significant difference.

Storage Options for 8x8 Scrapbook Paper

11. **Dedicated 8x8 Paper Cases** — Some craft storage brands offer cases specifically designed for 8x8 pads and loose sheets. Check brands such as **Cropper Hopper** and **We R Memory Keepers** for options that snap closed and stack neatly on a shelf. A proper-fitting case is always the safest option for protecting paper.
12. **Shallow Flat Drawers** — Store 8x8 sheets completely flat in shallow craft drawers. Because of the smaller size, two stacks can often fit comfortably side by side in a standard drawer. Sort by collection or color and use simple paper labels on the drawer front.
13. **Large Ziplock Bags or Clear Poly Bags** — Slip entire 8x8 pads or groups of loose sheets into large clear zip-top bags, label each bag clearly on the outside, and store the bags upright in an open bin or lidded box. This is an excellent, budget-friendly solution that keeps each collection together and protected.
14. **Magazine Holders** — Standard magazine file holders work surprisingly well for 8x8 pads stored upright. The pads sit snugly and are easy to flip through. Label the spine of each holder with the collection name or color group.
15. **Photo Storage Boxes (8x8)** — Photo storage boxes designed for 8x8 prints (a common photo size) are a near-perfect fit for 8x8 paper pads. Stack them on a shelf and label the front of each box. These are widely available, inexpensive, and come in attractive designs.
16. **Binders with Page Protectors** — Use large binders loaded with 8x8-compatible page protectors to file individual loose 8x8 sheets so they're visible from both sides. Organize binder tabs by color, theme, or collection name. This approach is excellent for collectors who want to browse their paper like a catalog.
17. **Fabric Bins on a Shelf** — Group 8x8 pads by collection or color family and store them upright in small fabric or wicker bins on a shelf. This is a

charming, low-cost option that keeps the craft room looking tidy and welcoming. Label the front of each bin.

18. **Small Cardboard Boxes or Shoebox Lids** — Use shallow cardboard box lids as open trays to group 8x8 pads by collection. The slight lip of the tray keeps pads from sliding around. Stack the trays on shelves for a simple, free, or nearly-free storage system.

★ Pro Tip

Resist the urge to break up 8x8 coordinating pads and file the sheets by color. These pads are designed to work together as a cohesive collection, and the coordinated designs are most useful — and easiest to work with — when all sheets of a set are stored together. Keep the pad intact and file the whole thing as a unit.

Section 4 — Storing 6x6 Scrapbook Paper

6x6 inches paper is usually sold in pads of coordinated designs and is one of the most beloved sizes among card makers and mini album creators. Its small, charming size makes it delightful to collect — and deceptively easy to lose track of without the right system.

Why 6x6 Storage Matters

Small pads and loose 6x6 sheets can easily get mixed up with other supplies, shoved to the back of a drawer, or bent and dog-eared without dedicated storage. Because 6x6 paper is often collected in large quantities across many different

collections and themes, a solid organizational system is especially valuable. With the right setup, your entire 6x6 library becomes instantly browsable and accessible.

Storage Options for 6x6 Scrapbook Paper

19. **6x6 Paper Storage Cases** — Purpose-built plastic cases specifically designed for 6x6 paper pads. **Iris** and other craft storage brands offer snap-close cases that hold multiple pads securely. These cases stack neatly and protect the pads from bending, moisture, and dust. An excellent choice for large 6x6 collections.
20. **Photo Storage Boxes (6x6)** — Photo boxes designed for 6x6 prints are an ideal fit for 6x6 paper pads. Stack them on a shelf and label the front clearly. These boxes are widely available, affordable, and come in many decorative styles that suit a craft room beautifully.
21. **Card Making Storage Boxes** — Shallow cardboard or plastic boxes designed for card making supplies often accommodate 6x6 pads perfectly. These can frequently be found in the card making or papercrafting section of craft stores.
22. **Desktop Letter Trays / Desktop File Organizers** — Stand 6x6 pads upright in desktop file organizers or tiered letter trays for quick, at-a-glance access during a project. Divide sections by collection or color using small cardstock divider tabs.
23. **Binders with 6x6 Page Protectors** — File individual 6x6 sheets in 6x6 scrapbook page protectors inside a binder. This allows you to view both sides of each sheet easily, and you can organize binder tabs by theme, color, or collection name. One of the best options for those who love to browse their paper visually before choosing.
24. **Small Fabric Bins or Baskets** — Group 6x6 pads in small labeled fabric bins, wire baskets, or wicker baskets arranged on a shelf. Sort by color family or brand collection. This approach is highly decorative and keeps the craft room looking warm and inviting.

25. **Ziplock Bag + Bin System** — Place each 6x6 pad in an individual labeled zip-top bag, then store all bags upright together in an open bin on the shelf. The clear bags let you see the paper inside instantly, while the labels help with quick identification. Simple, inexpensive, and very effective.
26. **Drawer Dividers in a Shallow Drawer** — Use adjustable drawer dividers to create distinct pockets within a shallow craft drawer. Assign each pocket to a specific 6x6 pad or color group. This works especially well in a dedicated craft chest or tabletop organizer.
27. **Recipe Card Box or Index Card Box** — A decorative recipe card box is almost exactly the right interior size for 6x6 paper stored flat. These charming little boxes can often be found at thrift stores or home goods shops, and they look lovely on a craft desk. A delightfully repurposed option.
28. **Small Accordion File Folder** — A mini accordion folder can hold 6x6 sheets sorted by color or theme in separate pockets. These are lightweight, compact, and portable — great for crafters who take their paper to classes, crops, or craft events.

★ Pro Tip

Before filing a 6x6 pad away, write the collection name and brand name on the edge of the pad (the side you'll see when it's stored upright) using a fine-tip marker. This small step makes it instantly possible to identify any pad at a glance without pulling it out. When you have dozens of pads, this habit alone will save significant time.

Section 5 — Storing Cardstock

Cardstock is the workhorse of paper crafting — a heavier, sturdier paper used for card bases, die cutting, layering, and structure. It typically comes in **8.5x11** and **12x12** sizes and is often collected in large quantities spanning many colors. It deserves its own dedicated, organized system.

Why Cardstock Storage Matters

Cardstock is heavier than standard pattern paper, which means it needs sturdier storage that won't buckle or sag under the weight of a large collection. It's also far more likely to be organized by color than by collection or theme — after all, when you need a specific shade of navy blue or warm coral for a project, you need to find it fast. A well-designed cardstock system is built around color accessibility above all else.

Storage Options for Cardstock

29. **Rainbow Color Sorting System** — The gold standard for cardstock organization. Sort all cardstock by color family (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) in rainbow order, followed by a section for neutrals (white, cream, kraft, gray, black). Store in a file box, paper case, or divided unit. This makes color selection fast, intuitive, and even joyful. A visual rainbow of cardstock is also one of the most satisfying sights in a craft room.
30. **Dedicated Cardstock Storage Cases** — Purpose-built plastic cases designed for large quantities of cardstock. Brands like **Cropper Hopper** and **Iris** offer cases in both 8.5x11 and 12x12 sizes that hold sheets flat and protect them from damage. These are sturdy enough to handle the weight of a full cardstock collection.
31. **Hanging File Folders in a File Cabinet or Crate** — For 8.5x11 cardstock, a standard office file cabinet with hanging folders is a superb solution. Label each folder by color and load it with the corresponding cardstock. This method holds a large volume, keeps sheets perfectly flat, and makes retrieval

very easy. A large open-top file crate works well if a full cabinet isn't available.

32. **Wide Flat Drawers** — Wide, shallow drawers sized to fit cardstock flat are one of the most satisfying storage solutions available. The **IKEA ALEX** unit is a long-time favorite among crafters for this exact purpose. Dedicate one drawer per color family, label the front, and enjoy frictionless access to every sheet.
33. **Upright File Organizers** — Stand cardstock upright in a desktop file organizer or oversized magazine holder for quick, grab-and-go access to the most frequently used colors. Best suited for a smaller "working" collection kept at the desk, while the larger archive is stored elsewhere.
34. **Three-Ring Binder with Page Protectors** — For smaller cardstock collections, slip individual sheets into clear page protectors inside a binder sorted by color. Binders stack on a shelf, are portable, and make it easy to see exactly what colors are available. A great option for crafters with a focused, curated cardstock collection.
35. **Paper Trays / Letter Trays (Stacked)** — Stack tiered letter trays on the desktop, dedicating one tray per color group. This keeps frequently used cardstock within arm's reach during active projects. Best for a current working selection rather than an entire archive.
36. **Cube Shelving + Labeled Bins** — Use labeled fabric or plastic bins inside cube shelving units — one bin per color family. This works especially well for 12x12 cardstock, which is too large for file cabinets. The **IKEA Kallax** paired with fabric insert boxes is a popular and affordable setup for this approach.
37. **Shoebox System** — A simple, budget-friendly option: use one shoebox per color family, labeled clearly on the end. Stack on a shelf or store under a worktable. Not the most elegant solution, but highly functional and virtually free.
38. **Cardstock Swatchbook / Ring System** — Keep a small swatch of each cardstock color punched with a hole and stored on a binder ring or in a small

album. Use this swatchbook as a quick color reference without pulling full sheets out of storage. Especially useful when ordering new cardstock or planning a color palette.

★ Pro Tip

Sort your neutral cardstock — white, cream, black, gray, and kraft — into their own clearly labeled, highly accessible section. Neutrals are by far the most-used cardstock colors in most crafters' collections. They serve as card bases, backgrounds, and matting layers constantly. Making them the easiest-to-reach group in the system saves time every single time you sit down to create.

Section 6 — Labeling Your Paper Storage

Even the most beautifully organized storage system falls apart without good labels. Labeling is the final step that turns a physical organization system into a truly functional one — and it's one of the most satisfying parts of the whole process. Here are the best labeling approaches for paper storage:

- **Label Maker** — A label maker produces clean, uniform, professional-looking labels that hold up well over time. Brother P-touch and Dymo label makers are popular choices in the crafting community. Use a consistent label size and font throughout for a polished, cohesive look.
- **Washi Tape + Marker** — Apply a strip of washi tape to a bin, box, or drawer front and write on it with a fine-tip permanent marker or paint pen. This method has a charming, handmade quality and is easy to remove and redo if the contents change.
- **Color-Coded Dot Stickers** — Stick a colored dot sticker (matching the paper inside) on the edge or front of each container. This allows for at-a-

glance color identification without even reading the label text. Excellent for color-sorted systems.

- **Spine Labeling for Pads** — For pads stored upright, write the collection name and brand directly on the spine or edge of the pad using a fine-tip marker before filing. This makes individual pads instantly identifiable without removing them from storage.
- **Photo Labels** — Photograph the paper or pad inside the container, print the photo at a small size, and tape or clip it to the outside of the container. This is especially useful for pattern paper bins — the photo shows exactly what's inside at a glance, even before reading any text.
- **Chalkboard Labels** — Adhesive chalkboard labels (available in a variety of shapes and sizes) allow for flexible, rewritable labeling on bins, boxes, and jars. Write with chalk or chalk markers, and erase and rewrite whenever contents change. A popular choice for decorative craft storage.

★ Pro Tip

Choose ONE labeling method and apply it consistently across your entire storage system. A mix of label styles can make a collection feel visually chaotic even when the underlying organization is sound. Consistency in labels is what transforms a "good enough" system into one that feels genuinely satisfying to use every day.

Section 7 — Organizing Tips & Best Practices

With your storage solutions selected and your labels ready, here are the organizing habits and practices that keep a paper collection working beautifully over the long term — not just on the day it gets sorted, but week after week and year after year.

Commit to One Sorting Method Per Size

Decide on a single sorting method for each paper size (color, brand, theme, or pattern type) and apply it consistently across that entire category. Mixing methods within a single storage unit creates confusion and slows down the retrieval process. Once you've chosen a system, document it — even a simple sticky note inside the lid of a storage box is enough to keep you on track.

Do a Paper Audit Twice a Year

Set a recurring date — perhaps at the start of spring and the start of fall — to go through your entire paper collection and remove anything you no longer love or use. Paper tastes evolve, and collections from five years ago may no longer reflect your current style. Donate surplus paper to local schools, community art programs, or other crafters. A leaner, more curated collection is always easier to use than a vast, unfocused one.

Maintain a Small Working Stash

Keep a small, rotating selection of your current favorite papers right at your workspace — in a desktop organizer, a nearby bin, or a dedicated drawer. This "working stash" should contain the papers you reach for most during active projects. Archive everything else in your main storage. This two-tier approach keeps your workspace uncluttered while still giving you access to your full collection when needed.

Store Newest Additions at the Back

When adding new paper to an existing section, place the new additions at the back or bottom. This "first in, first out" approach ensures that older papers get used before they're forgotten, and helps prevent you from always reaching for the newest, shiniest addition while the rest of the collection sits untouched.

Keep Coordinating Collections Together

When storing pattern paper, keep all the sheets from a single coordinating collection grouped together rather than separated by color. This makes it easy to pull a complete, cohesive kit for a project without hunting through different

sections. A small paper or card divider between collections within a storage bin helps maintain clear boundaries.

Never Stack Paper Too High

When storing paper flat, resist the temptation to pile too many sheets in one stack. Paper stored under excessive weight can develop warped or wavy edges over time, especially in humid conditions. Keep flat stacks to a manageable height — generally no more than two to three inches of paper per stack is a good rule of thumb.

Use Silica Gel in Humid Environments

If your home or craft space tends toward humidity — particularly in summer months — tuck a few silica gel packets into your storage boxes and cases. These small packets absorb moisture from the air inside enclosed containers and help prevent the warping and buckling that humidity causes. Replace them every few months or when they become saturated.

Quick Reference: Paper Storage Comparison

Paper Size	Best Storage Method	Best Sorting Method	Key Concern
12x12 Scrapbook Paper	Purpose-built cases, cube shelving, flat drawers	Color or collection	Warping from angled storage; overfilling
8x8 Scrapbook Paper	Photo boxes, magazine holders, fabric bins	By collection (keep intact)	Losing pads; separating coordinated sets
6x6 Scrapbook Paper	6x6 cases, photo boxes, binders with protectors	By collection or color	Pads getting mixed up; unlabeled edges
Cardstock (8.5x11 & 12x12)	File cabinet, flat drawers, dedicated cases	Rainbow color order + neutrals	Weight; quickly finding specific colors

Closing — An Organized Craft Space, One Sheet at a Time

An organized paper collection is one of the greatest gifts a crafter can give themselves. When every sheet has a home and every home has a label, the creative process becomes lighter, faster, and far more enjoyable. Instead of spending the first twenty minutes of a crafting session hunting for the right piece of paper, the right piece finds you — right where you expect it to be.

It's worth remembering that even a simple system is infinitely better than no system at all. A stack of clearly labeled shoeboxes is more useful than an elaborate storage solution that's too complicated to maintain. The best paper storage system is always the one that actually gets used — the one that makes it easy to put paper away after a project just as easily as it makes it easy to find paper before one.

If the idea of organizing an entire collection at once feels overwhelming, start with the size you have the most of. Build that system first, get comfortable with it, and then tackle the next size. Small, consistent progress adds up quickly, and even one well-organized section of the craft room has a way of making the whole space feel more functional and inspiring.

Paper was collected to be used and loved — not buried in an unorganized pile. A great storage system makes sure every sheet gets its moment. Happy organizing, and even happier crafting!