

Ways to Store Scrapbook Paper Scraps

✂ *Organized, Inspired & Ready to Create* ✂

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Scrapbook paper scraps organized in a craft room

A well-organized scrap storage system keeps creativity flowing and crafting spaces tidy.

Introduction

Every scrapbooker knows the feeling: you finish a layout, and there it is — a small mountain of leftover paper pieces sitting on the craft table. Half-sheets in every color, strips of patterned cardstock, tiny confetti-sized trimmings, and everything in between. What do you do with it all?

The answer is simple: **save it, sort it, and store it!** Scrapbook paper scraps are far too valuable — and too beautiful — to toss in the recycling bin. From large half-sheets that can anchor an entirely new layout, to tiny punch-sized bits perfect for card making and collage, every scrap has potential waiting to be unlocked.

A good storage system does more than just tidy up the craft space. It **reduces waste**, helps you **save money** by getting the most out of every sheet of paper you buy, and actively **sparks creativity** — because flipping through a rainbow of organized scraps is one of the best ways to get inspired for your next project. And of course, a sorted scrap stash means a **cleaner, calmer workspace**, so you can focus on what matters most: making something wonderful.

Scrapbook paper scraps come in all shapes and sizes — from generous large half-sheets to medium quarter-sheets, small index-card snippets, and even the tiniest confetti-like trimmings. The good news is that there is a storage solution perfectly suited to every scrap size, every budget, and every type of craft space. This guide walks through everything you need to know to build a system that truly works for you.

Section 1: Why Save Paper Scraps?

Before diving into the how, it helps to remember the why. Here are some very good reasons to resist the urge to throw away those leftover pieces:

- **Paper is an investment.** Quality scrapbook paper — especially from popular brands and specialty collections — is not cheap. Every scrap represents a portion of money already spent. Saving and using those scraps means getting the very most out of every pack purchased.
- **Small pieces still have enormous creative life.** Even the smallest scraps are perfect for layering behind focal photos, punching shapes, creating die-cuts, making handmade envelopes and gift tags, building card backgrounds, and adding accents to layouts. Nothing is truly too small to use.
- **Sorting scraps encourages creativity and color play.** Digging through a well-organized scrap collection often leads to unexpected color combinations and design ideas that would never have emerged from a fresh pack of paper. Happy accidents happen in the scrap bin!
- **Saving scraps is an eco-friendly choice.** Crafting generates more material waste than most people realize. Building a habit of saving and reusing paper scraps meaningfully reduces crafting waste and keeps beautiful paper out of the landfill.

- **Scraps are perfect for experimenting.** Want to try a new technique — alcohol inks, distress edges, faux watercolor? Use scraps first, so no precious full sheets are wasted on experimentation.
- **They make generous gifts.** Sorted scrap collections can be shared with fellow crafters, donated to schools, libraries, children's programs, and art teachers — spreading the crafting joy further.



Did You Know?

Many crafters find that their most beloved layouts were built primarily — or even entirely — from scraps. Constraints breed creativity, and working with what you already have often produces the most original, heartfelt results.

Section 2: Sorting & Categorizing Your Scraps

Before any storage system can truly work, the scraps need to be sorted. Taking a little time upfront to categorize scraps pays dividends every time you sit down to create — no more digging through a chaotic pile looking for that one piece of blue paper!

There is no single "right" way to sort paper scraps. The best method is the one that matches the way you naturally think when you craft. Here are the most popular and effective categorization approaches:

By Color Family

Group scraps by their dominant color — all reds together, all blues, all greens, neutrals, and so on. This is the most intuitive system for quick creative decisions because crafters almost always reach for a color before anything else when starting a project.

By Size

Separate scraps into size tiers: large half-sheets, medium quarter-sheets, small index-card-sized pieces, and tiny bits. Storing by size makes it easy to grab exactly the piece you need for a specific purpose without sorting through mismatched scraps.

By Pattern Type

Sort by the visual character of the paper: **solids, stripes, plaids, florals, geometrics, kraft, and themed or novelty prints**. This works especially well for mixed-media crafters and card makers who often select paper based on visual texture.

By Theme or Season

Group scraps by subject or season: Christmas, Halloween, birthday, travel, baby, nature, graduation, wedding, etc. This system is ideal for dedicated scrapbookers who build themed albums and want all relevant papers together at once.

By Paper Brand or Collection

For collectors of specific brands (Crate Paper, Simple Stories, Carta Bella, etc.), sorting by brand or collection keeps coordinating papers together so scraps can continue to be mixed and matched as they were designed.

A Hybrid Approach

Many experienced crafters combine methods — for example, sorting *first* by size and then *within* each size by color. Start simple and refine the system over time as the collection grows.

✨ Pro Tip: Start with Color

If you are not sure where to begin, **sort by color family first**. It is the most universally intuitive method, works beautifully for all types of crafting, and makes grabbing exactly the right paper feel almost effortless. Color sorting

also makes the storage system visually gorgeous — an inspiration in itself every time the storage area is opened.

Section 3: Container & Storage Solutions

The options for storing scrapbook paper scraps are wonderfully varied — from purpose-built craft organizers to clever repurposed household items. Here are 15 tried-and-true storage solutions, from budget-friendly basics to dedicated craft storage systems:

Paper scraps organized in labeled containers

Labeled containers make it easy to find the perfect scrap at a glance.

Stand large scraps upright just like files in a desktop organizer. Use tabbed dividers to separate by color or theme. Scraps are easy to flip through quickly without removing them from the organizer, making this one of the most accessible and satisfying systems for active crafters.

Slip scraps into clear pocket pages — 12×12 scrapbook page protectors, or standard letter-size sheet protectors for smaller pieces. Label binder spine tabs by color or theme. This system is excellent for **flat storage and full visibility**: every scrap can be seen at a glance without touching anything. Binders stack neatly on shelves.

Expandable accordion-style file folders with multiple interior pockets work beautifully for organizing scraps by size or color. Many accordion folders are **portable and compact**, making them great for crafters who take their supplies to crops, retreats, or a friend's house.

Wide, shallow flat drawers — like those from IKEA ALEX units, Craft Storage rolling carts, or similar drawer systems — are ideal for storing large scraps flat.

Label each drawer clearly. Smaller scraps can be stored in divided sections or smaller containers within the drawer, keeping everything tidy in one unit.

A classic, beautifully budget-friendly solution. Dedicate one shoebox per color family or per theme. Label the outside clearly with a marker or printed label. Stack boxes on a shelf for a low-cost scrap storage library. This is an ideal starting point for crafters new to scrap organization.

Hanging folders in a portable file crate or standard filing cabinet keep large scraps upright, flat, and organized by color, brand, or theme. Label each folder tab clearly. File crates can be stacked or stored under a craft table when not in use — keeping the surface clear.

Sort scraps into labeled large envelopes grouped by color or theme, then store the envelopes in a box, bin, or upright in a magazine holder. This is one of the most **flexible and budget-friendly options** available — envelopes are inexpensive, widely available, and endlessly reconfigurable as the collection changes.

Labeled clear bins on open shelving let you **see your scraps at a glance** without opening anything. Use shallow bins for large flat scraps and smaller bins for medium and small pieces sorted by color. Stackable designs maximize vertical space in the craft room.

Purpose-built storage cases designed specifically for 12×12 scrapbook paper come with interior dividers and can hold hundreds of sheets and scraps neatly. These are a premium option for serious scrapbookers with large collections, offering a dedicated, protected home for every piece of paper.

A beloved crafter's trick! Pizza boxes are naturally close to 12×12 in size, making them a perfect — and completely free — storage solution for 12×12 scrapbook paper scraps. Stack them, label the outside edges, and store them on a shelf or under the craft table. A wonderfully creative and eco-friendly option.

Stand scraps upright in open-front magazine holders placed on a shelf, organized by color or theme. Inexpensive, widely available in both cardboard and plastic versions, and visually tidy on a shelf. Label the front panel of each holder clearly for fast visual navigation.

Sort scraps into labeled zip-top bags by color or size, then drop the bags into a labeled bin or basket. One of the most **flexible and reconfigurable systems** available — bags can be rearranged, consolidated, or expanded at any time. Gallon-size bags work well for medium and large scraps; quart bags are ideal for small pieces.

Mount a pegboard on the craft room wall and hang small wire baskets, clips, or fabric pockets to slot in scraps sorted by color or size. Keeps all surfaces clear and adds a visually pleasing, functional display to the craft room. Particularly effective for very active crafters who want scraps within arm's reach at all times.

Install tension rods inside a cabinet door, between two shelves, or across a small closet opening, then hang fabric organizer pockets or over-door shoe pockets to slot scraps in by color or size. This is an excellent **space-saving solution** that turns otherwise unused vertical space into functional scrap storage.

Stack a set of tiered letter trays on the craft desk, dedicating one tier per color or size category. Keeps the most-used scraps immediately accessible during active projects without taking up excessive desk space. This desktop solution works beautifully in combination with a larger off-desk storage system.

✨ **Pro Tip: Mix and Match Systems**

There is no rule that says only one storage method is allowed! Many successful scrap storage systems combine a primary solution (like a rolling cart or filing system for large scraps) with a secondary solution (like zip bags or small bins for smaller pieces). Let the system evolve naturally with the collection.

Section 4: Storing by Scrap Size

Different scrap sizes benefit from different storage approaches. Here is a breakdown of tailored strategies for every size of scrap in the collection:



Paper scraps sorted by size into storage containers

Sorting scraps by size before storing makes retrieval fast and frustration-free.

Scrap Size	Approximate Dimensions	Best Storage Options
Large Scraps	Half-sheet (6×12) and bigger	Vertical file organizers, hanging folders, 12×12 paper cases, flat drawers
Medium Scraps	Quarter-sheet to half-sheet (3×6 to 6×12)	Binder page protectors, accordion folders, labeled envelopes, magazine holders
Small Scraps	Business card to index card (2×3 to 3×5)	Small open bins, clear zip bags, small compartment boxes sorted by color
Tiny Bits & Pieces	Smaller than a business card	A shallow "bits box" — an open tray or container kept near the work surface

Large Scraps (Half-Sheets and Bigger)

Large scraps are the most versatile and are worth protecting carefully. Store them **flat or perfectly upright** — never bent or folded — in file folders, vertical organizers, or 12×12 paper cases. Grouping large scraps by color makes it easy to pull a near-full sheet in exactly the right hue when needed for a background or large design element.

Medium Scraps (Quarter-Sheet to Half-Sheet)

Medium scraps are the workhorse of any scrap collection. They are large enough to mat photos, create card panels, and build layered backgrounds, but small enough to tuck neatly into page protectors, accordion folders, or labeled envelopes. Sort by color for the quickest access during a crafting session.

Small Scraps (Business Card to Index Card Size)

Small scraps are perfect for card making accents, punched shapes, and die-cutting. Collect them in small open bins, clear zip bags, or small compartment boxes (like those sold for beading or sewing notions) sorted by color. Keeping small scraps accessible on or near the desk during projects encourages spontaneous use.

Tiny Bits & Pieces (Smaller Than a Business Card)

The tiniest scraps — those confetti-like cuttings and narrow strips — deserve their own dedicated spot. Keep a **"bits box"**: a shallow open container or tray placed right on the craft surface. Tiny bits are perfect for punching out the smallest accent shapes, filling backgrounds, adding color to mixed-media projects, or creating handmade paper filler and packaging material.

Pro Tip: Save Every Last Piece!

Do not throw away even the smallest scraps! Tiny pieces can be punched into mini shapes (hearts, stars, circles) using small punches, used as confetti-style embellishments, incorporated into gel plate printing, or even run through a paper shredder to create handmade paper filler for gift boxes and packaging. There is truly no scrap too small to have a second life.

Section 5: Labeling Your Storage

A storage system is only as good as its labels. Clear, consistent labeling is the single most important thing that separates a system that gets used from one that slowly descends back into chaos. Here are the best labeling approaches for a scrap storage setup:

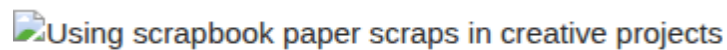
- **Label Maker Labels** — A handheld label maker produces clean, uniform, professional-looking labels that adhere well to bins, boxes, binder spines, and folder tabs. Ideal for those who prefer a tidy, consistent aesthetic throughout the craft space.
- **Washi Tape + Marker Labels** — Tear a strip of washi tape, press it onto the container, and write the label in permanent marker. The result is a charming, handmade look that adds personality to the storage system. Washi tape is also easy to remove and replace when reorganizing.
- **Color-Coded Dot Labels** — Use colored adhesive dot stickers that match the color family of paper inside each container. A green dot = green scraps, a red dot = red scraps. This system works even faster than reading text labels and is especially intuitive for children sharing the craft space.
- **Photo Labels** — Photograph the scraps inside a bin or folder, print the photo in a small size, and tape it to the outside of the container. Instantly communicates not only the color but the patterns and textures inside without opening anything.
- **Chalkboard Labels** — Adhesive chalkboard labels can be written on with chalk markers and easily wiped clean for rewriting. Perfect for systems that may evolve or change frequently as the collection grows and reorganizes.
- **Index Card + Tape Labels** — Write the category on an index card and tape it to the front of the container. A simple, free option that is easy to update without any special supplies.

✨ **Pro Tip: Label Front AND Spine**

Always label both the **front AND the spine** of binders, boxes, and stacked containers. When containers are stored on shelves, only the spines may be visible. Labeling both sides means the right container can be identified from any angle — no pulling out boxes just to check what's inside.

Section 6: Creative Ways to Use Up Scraps

The best storage system is one that keeps supplies actively flowing in and out — not one that simply accumulates more and more paper over the years. Here are wonderful creative ideas for putting those scraps to work:



Scraps in active use — the most beautiful kind of organization.

Layout & Scrapbooking Uses

- **Die-cutting shapes and letters** from scraps — get maximum use from every piece by running even small scraps through a die-cutting machine.
- **Creating layered backgrounds** — tear, cut, and overlap scraps to build rich, textured background layers on layouts and art journal pages.
- **Photo matting** — use medium scraps as single or double mats behind photos for a polished, layered look.
- **Punching shapes** — heart, star, circle, and flower punches work beautifully on small and medium scraps to create instant embellishments.
- **Confetti accents** — tiny bits and punched circles make gorgeous scatter embellishments across a layout or card.

Paper Crafting Projects

- **Handmade envelopes and gift tags** — use medium and large scraps to fold custom envelopes, hang tags, and gift card holders. Templates are widely available online and in craft books.
- **Greeting cards** — scraps are absolutely ideal for building card panels, layered card fronts, and inset panels. A single card might use four or five different scrap pieces beautifully.
- **Paper flowers** — rolled, twisted, and layered paper scraps create gorgeous dimensional paper flower embellishments for layouts, wreaths, and home décor.
- **Seasonal shapes for card toppers** — punch or die-cut seasonal shapes (trees, pumpkins, snowflakes, hearts) from themed scraps for instant holiday card-making supplies.

Special Scrap Projects

- **Create a "Rainbow Scrap Mini Album"** — build a small, pocket-sized mini album made entirely from scraps, arranged by color. A stunning keepsake project and a wonderful way to use up a large variety of scraps at once.
- **Paper weaving** — cut scraps into strips and weave them together to create patterned paper backgrounds for cards, layouts, and gift wrapping.
- **Collage and mixed-media art** — scraps are a natural fit for collage work. Tear, layer, and adhere them to create abstract backgrounds, art journal pages, and framed mixed-media art pieces.
- **Gift wrap and tissue paper alternative** — layer colorful scraps inside a gift bag in place of tissue paper for a beautiful, personalized look.



Inspiration Note

Hosting or attending a craft night? Bring a bag or box of scraps to share! Many crafters love having access to a wider variety of papers than their own collection offers, and sharing scraps is a wonderful way to connect with the creative community. What feels like a leftover to one crafter may be exactly the perfect piece for another.

Section 7: Tips & Best Practices

A great storage system is built on a foundation of good habits. These practical tips will keep the scrap collection organized, protected, and always ready for creative action:

- **Designate a "Scrap Sorting Day."** Set aside a short block of time — even just 20–30 minutes — once a month to sort accumulated scraps into their proper homes. A regular routine prevents the dreaded "pile-up" and keeps the system current and functional.
- **Trim ragged edges before filing.** Always trim any torn, irregular, or frayed edges from scraps before filing them away. Trimmed scraps stack and store much more neatly, take up less space, and are immediately ready to use on the next project without extra prep work.
- **Protect paper from direct sunlight.** Store paper scraps away from windows and direct sunlight. UV light causes paper to fade, yellow, and become brittle over time — even high-quality, acid-free papers are vulnerable to prolonged sun exposure. Store scraps in closed containers or in a shaded area of the craft room.
- **Keep a small "grab bin" on the desk.** During active projects, keep a small open bin or tray of ready-to-use scraps right on the craft surface.

This encourages spontaneous use of scraps as the project develops rather than stopping to dig through storage containers mid-project.

- **Do a seasonal purge.** Two to four times a year, review the scrap collection and donate papers that no longer feel exciting or relevant. Schools, libraries, children's programs, art teachers, and fellow crafters are almost always grateful for scrap donations. A leaner collection is easier to navigate and more inspiring.
- **Store paper flat or perfectly upright — never bent or rolled.** Improper storage leads to warped, creased, and curled paper that is difficult to use. Always keep paper either completely flat (horizontal) or standing straight upright (vertical) with support. Never allow stacks to lean or sag.
- **Use acid-free storage materials whenever possible.** When using boxes, envelopes, or folders to store paper, look for materials labeled acid-free or archival-quality. This is especially important for preserving special or irreplaceable papers, as acidic storage materials can cause discoloration and deterioration over time.
- **Keep the system visible.** If the scrap storage system is hidden away in a closet or cabinet that rarely gets opened, scraps will not get used. Keep at least some scraps visible and accessible — on an open shelf, in clear bins, or in a desktop organizer — to serve as a constant, inspiring reminder that beautiful paper is ready and waiting.
- **Start simple.** If building a new system from scratch, begin with just two or three categories (for example: large scraps, medium scraps, and small scraps) and add more refined categories as the collection and workflow become clearer. An overly complex system is harder to maintain than a simple one.

✨ **Pro Tip: Make It Beautiful**

A storage system that looks attractive is a storage system that actually gets used. Take a little time to choose containers in coordinating colors, add decorative labels, or arrange storage by rainbow order on the shelf. When the craft space is beautiful and inviting, creativity flows more naturally — and organizing feels more like a pleasure than a chore.

Quick Reference: Storage Solutions at a Glance

Use this table as a handy reference when deciding which storage solution best fits a particular need or space:

Storage Solution	Best For	Budget Level	Space Needed
Vertical File Organizer	Large scraps, quick access	Low-Medium	Desktop
3-Ring Binder + Page Protectors	All sizes, full visibility	Low-Medium	Shelf
Accordion File Folder	Medium scraps, portable use	Low	Desktop/Bag
Flat Drawers / Rolling Cart	Large flat scraps	Medium-High	Floor
Shoebox System	Any size, beginners	Free-Low	Shelf
Hanging File Folders	Large scraps, color sorting	Low	Shelf/Cabinet
Kraft Envelopes	Any size, flexible sorting	Very Low	Bin or Box
Clear Plastic Bins	All sizes, visible storage	Low-Medium	Shelf

Storage Solution	Best For	Budget Level	Space Needed
12×12 Paper Cases	Large scraps, large collections	Medium-High	Shelf/Floor
Pizza Boxes	12×12 scraps, eco-friendly	Free	Shelf
Magazine Holders	Large scraps, tidy shelf display	Low	Shelf
Zip-Lock Bags in a Bin	Any size, flexible	Very Low	Bin/Shelf
Pegboard + Baskets	Small-medium scraps, active use	Medium	Wall
Tension Rod + Pockets	Small-medium, space-saving	Low	Cabinet Door
Tiered Desktop Trays	Active projects, quick access	Low-Medium	Desktop

Closing: Every Scrap Is a Future Project

 Beautifully organized scrapbook paper scraps ready to use

When scraps are organized and accessible, every crafting session can begin with inspiration rather than frustration.

Building a system for storing scrapbook paper scraps does not have to be complicated, expensive, or perfect. The most important thing to remember is this: **any system is better than no system.** Whether it is a single shoebox sorted loosely by color, or an elaborate rolling cart with labeled drawers and tabbed binders, a system that is used and maintained consistently will always serve far better than a more elaborate one that feels too overwhelming to stick with.

Start where it makes sense. Sort what is already on hand. Choose one or two storage solutions that feel right for the space, the budget, and the way creativity naturally flows. Refine and grow the system over time as the collection evolves.

And above all, remember why these scraps are worth keeping in the first place: **every single piece is a future project waiting to happen.** That strip of floral paper is a future card front. That tiny piece of kraft cardstock is a future gift tag. That half-sheet of deep navy blue is the perfect background for a layout not yet imagined. The scrap bin is not a leftovers drawer — it is a treasure chest.

The goal of a great storage system is simple: spend more time *creating* and less time *searching*. With an organized, accessible, and inspiring scrap collection, every crafting session can begin not with frustration, but with the pure joy of possibility.

Happy crafting — and happy saving every last beautiful scrap! ✂️ 🎨

