

Scrap Your Day

Photo Fact Sheet #01 :: April 2008

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Each month as we near the 25th, there will be a new photo fact sheet to download. We're all starting this project with different amounts of experience, different tools and different talents -- but I think we can all share the goals that we would like to a) finish a year-long project and b) gain a little creative confidence along the way. The photo fact sheets are created with both those goals in mind -- and if you are already an amazing photographer you may find a few things here old hat, but remember you discovered those tricks for the first time once too! And hopefully there will be something to inspire something a little different from all of us. Now, enough explanation! Let's get on with the project!

The first rule of Scrap your Day is **Charge your Camera**. In fact, the second rule of Scrap your Day is **Charge your Camera!** And the third rule is probably something like 'don't lose your memory card', which isn't quite as snappy. But seriously, this is the only time I have ever brought out the idea of a rule for a class, but it has happened to most of us, hasn't it? Something amazing that you really wanted to take pictures of...camera in hand...and no juice! The battery's flat. So I'm going to say it over and over again and hopefully we can all remember and there won't be any sad stories about having a brilliant day on the 25th, all except for the dead battery. Got it? Them's the rules. Everything else is merely a suggestion.

Consistent shots: there are a few shots we're going to try to take every month so we can see changes through the year. Here's the basic checklist you can customise:

- * alarm clock when you wake in the morning
- * each meal during the day
- * the view from a window at home
- * one arm's length self-portrait or family portrait
- * your watch or the clock when you go to bed

Having a set of shots in common for each month will show changes or similarities in your daily routine, the seasons and makes sure you include one shot of your or your family each month for an entire year.

Unique shots: of course there are things that will be completely different on the 25th of each month as well. This Friday, you might be coming home from work to scrapbook if you're taking part in the cyber-crop at UKS. If you were born on the 25th of a month, you might have a day of celebrations to record. Or the 25th might just be a day when you go to work, come home, eat dinner and read a book. That's okay too! Whether we admit it or not, the calm days make the exciting days what they are -- I do love a good birthday party but every day would be a bit much. Over the course of a year, we'll see a little of the special and a little of the ordinary, and that's exactly what we're after. So whether your unique shots come from meeting a friend for coffee, writing a report for work, winning the lottery or stopping to pick up some vegetables on the way home, just snap away. (Well, if you win the lottery the local press may take care of the photos for you!) The first day of photographing pretty much everything will feel the most awkward, and once you've done it once and survived (you will!) it will be much easier in month two. If you already carry a camera with you most of the time, you've got a head start.

Technique to try: On Friday you can download the album prompt that shows you a sample page for the first month along with a sketch. Now you can always deviate from this, but if it helps, then all the better to get something done. With all our backgrounds in place, each layout will be made unique by what we do with the photos and this month it comes from the way we will be cropping them. So this month I'm going to tell you to do the opposite of the usual advice, and that is to step back. Instead of filling the entire frame with your cup of coffee, step back and show the whole table. Instead of a close up of your son or daughter that fills the entire picture, step back and snap a shot that shows head to feet. There's still room for a few closer shots in the sketch, but you'll find it easier to create this layout if you step back for most of your shots. This month's shots also have a landscape bias -- meaning you want most of your photos to be horizontal shots, with just a few vertical (portrait) shots. Of course if you take dozens of photos, you'll have plenty to choose from!

Get ready: Thursday evening, double check your batteries and put the camera beside the bed. Don't worry -- you don't need a bed head photo!! But you want to snap your alarm clock straight away. From then on, try to snap a few shots of each major part of your day to create about twenty unique shots. If you end up with more, that's great too! Then just stop back on Friday to download the album prompt.