

The Art Journal



The Art Journal FAQ

Creativity Badge

Cut it out and pin it on— it suits you!



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The Art Journal FAQ

Legal Stuff

Be Safe!

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The Art Journal FAQ

Why an FAQ?

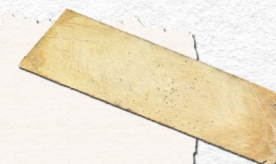
There are other resources on art journaling, so why an FAQ? Art journaling is sometimes seen as a complex and difficult activity that only “artists” can engage in. I want art, creativity and self-expression to be available to everyone so created this FAQ to help demystify the process. After all, it’s not a secret society with a special handshake.

This is my personal experience and opinion. You are encouraged, expected even, to use your own judgment and good sense. Also, while I may refer to some of my own products and designs (and would be thrilled if you purchased a few) don’t overuse them. Everything here is meant to be a starting point for your own creativity and experience. Oh, and please read and follow all the instructions with any materials you use.

To-Do:
Make Stuff!



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In General

What is an Art Journal?

Well, I'm not exactly sure because it's such an individual and personal creation, but I can say what it's NOT. It's not perfect or perfectly orderly. It's not just a diary or only text or only images. It doesn't have to be original in any way nor does it have to be an exact copy of anything. It isn't made with a special pen, ink, paint or glue. It's not any particular shape or size nor does it have to have special paper for the pages; it may not even be a book. But, most of all, it is NOT for other people's eyes, opinions or entertainment.

What if I'm not an Artist?

So what? You are a human being with thoughts, emotions and experiences and that's what fuels an art journal. Record those things in whatever way you feel best expresses them; that's all you need to do.

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In General, Cont.

Why would I want to keep an Art Journal?

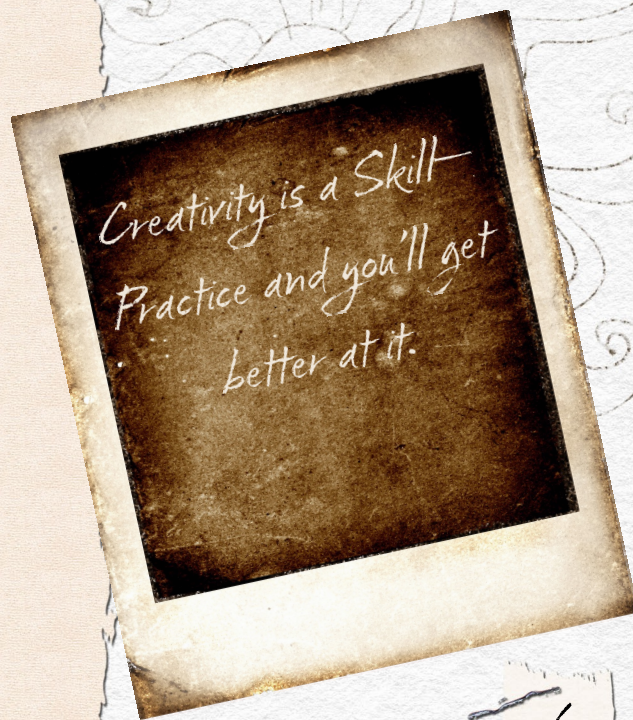
For the same reason you would talk with a close friend – to gain personal perspective and sort out your feelings and thoughts.

OK, I've tried this and it feels weird – what's up with that?

Yeah, that can happen. Starting to journal in any form can feel unnatural at first. Some people say it feels too indulgent or frivolous. It's the feeling of giving yourself time and space to do something for your own well-being that may be unfamiliar – try thinking of it like taking time to brush your teeth.

I'm not creative – how can I do this?

You're creative enough to start, that's all it takes. Creativity is a skill – practice and you'll get better at it.



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Materials and Supplies

Does it have to be a book?

Nope! As long as you're able to express what you want, it's an art journal. A popular and flexible way to journal is to create journal cards and keep them in a box, attach the card to the pages of a book or connect them with a binder ring. You can keep loose pages and collect them into a binder or other container as well.

What kind of materials do I need?

Anything and everything! It's helpful to have a basic assortment of your favorite materials and supplies on hand – an art journal tool-kit. A minimum kit might include pencils, erasers, pens (archival ink is a good idea,) scissors and glue stick for adding items to a page, stencils in basic shapes, fun stickers, colored paper or stock to cut shapes from and glitter. I like glitter glue – it comes in lots of colors and is glue and glitter in one container. Take a trip to the craft store and see what art, craft and scrapbook supplies are available that you'd like to try.

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Different Types of Journals

Type	What Works	Not So Much
<u>Index Cards</u>	Quick thoughts and notes, quotes, lyrics, poems, sketches, multimedia, collage	Long entries, stories that continue, double page spreads, work that must be sequential
<u>Wire-Bound Books</u>	Writing, sketching, colored pencil, stamping, some inks	Double page spreads, acrylic paints, heavy pastes, bulky pages
<u>Traditionally Bound Books</u>	Writing, sketching, stamping	Bulky pages and elements
<u>Loose Pages</u>	Use a variety of paper and media, individual pages are portable	Take care not to lose pages, binders can be bulky
<u>Up-cycle Old Books</u>	Many choices at used and thrift stores, inexpensive	Pages may require preparation

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How-To

Do I have to have a theme for my journal?

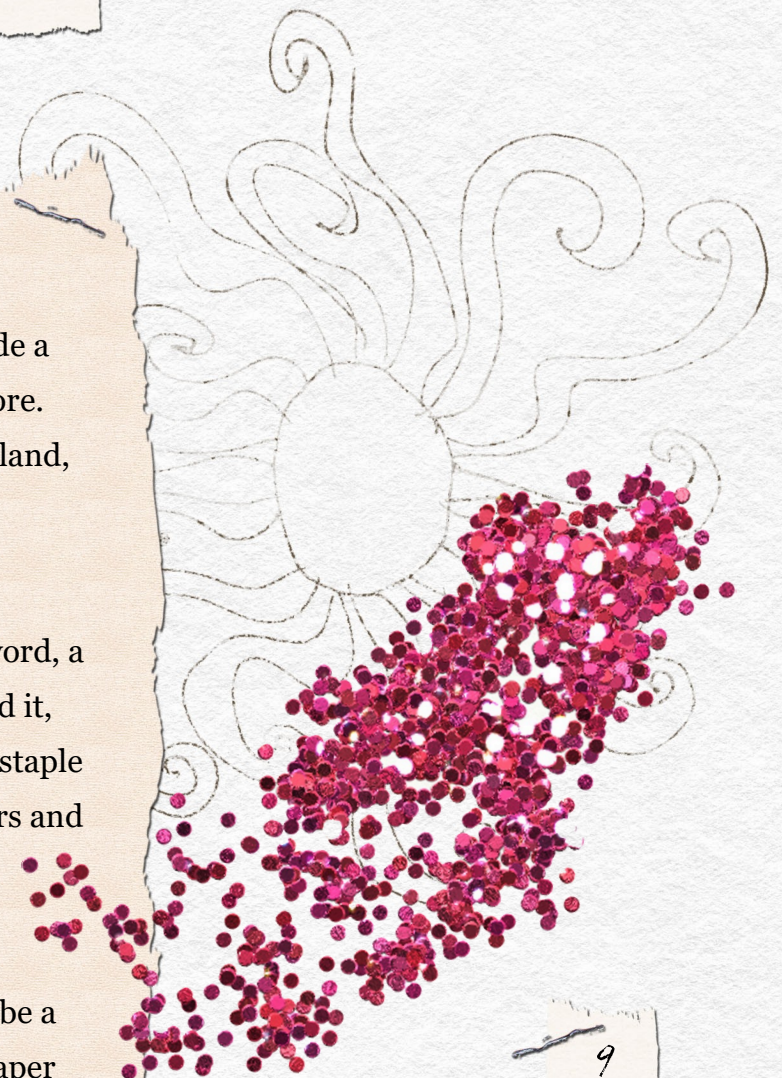
No, not if you don't want to. That said, sometimes you might want to set aside a particular journal for a special reason like an event or idea you want to explore. You can use any organizing idea you can think of: wedding, Alice in Wonderland, a favorite quote, Change, Grief, the color Pink, the number 9, etc.

What am I supposed to DO on a page?

Whatever you want. That sounds silly but it's up to you. You can write one word, a paragraph or fill the entire page; draw a stick figure and color flowers around it, doodle the page full, add materials like beads, brads, wire, ribbon and yarn, staple or glue magazine pages in and decorate anything and everything with stickers and glitter. Lots of glitter!

How do I keep from messing up a page?

That's kind of the point of the journal, hmm? But, that pristine expanse can be a little intimidating. There's an old artist's trick of marking or splashing the paper



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How-To Cont.

or canvas to break that spell. I like to go through a new book with a handful of pencils, markers, crayons or paint in a few related colors and make random marks or splashes on every page. Keeping the colors related keeps the resulting pages in the family and the ready-made marks are friendlier when it's time to work on the pages.

How often should I work in my Journal?

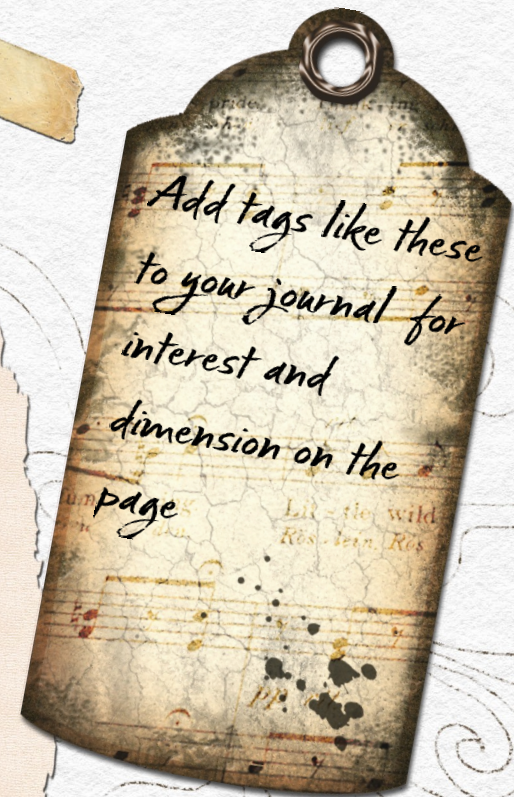
Whenever you feel like it. The more often you create entries and pages, the more natural it will feel and the easier it gets. Journaling, like most new habits, takes some practice and dedication to make it fit into your life.

What if I'm stuck?

Use a prompt as a starting point. They can be as simple as a word or favorite quote to spark an idea. Or, start with a list or answer a question.

Here are a few prompts and there are many more online and in [books](#). Beware of getting so caught up in finding the perfect prompt that you don't start journaling.

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How-To, Cont.

Prompts:

List your top five short term goals.

Describe the places you've enjoyed visiting.

Describe something you've done that you thought you never could.

List your top five long term goals.

What your favorite quote means to you

Choose a quote that resonates with you and expand on it

The most fun I've ever had . . .

The most surprised I've ever been . . .

The most fun I've ever had . . .

The most surprised I've ever been . . .

What was your favorite toy as a child?

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How-To, Cont.

Who was your best friend in elementary school?

As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

What was your favorite subject in school?

What did you do this week that moved you closer to reaching your goals?

Is there anything you did this week that you wish you'd done differently?

What did you most enjoy doing this week?

What's the funniest thing that happened to you this week?

Do I have to finish every page?

Nah... just leave them where they fall. This is your personal journal so do what you want: write one word, make one mark, leave a page half-done, fill it full - it's completely up to you.

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How-To, Cont.

Do I have to learn to draw?

Only if you want to. You can draw at whatever level you choose. Use your own personal library of symbols and pictograms or [polish your drawing skills](#) as you create.

I really messed up a page – can I fix it?

Why, yes, you can. One way to adjust a page that isn't working is to paint over it with [gesso](#)—a type of primer similar to acrylic paint that is usually white. While gesso covers well in two or three thin coats, some inks may still bleed through giving the page an interesting background. If you don't want to paint over the page or don't have gesso on hand, cover the page with another paper by gluing it directly on the surface. A last resort is to remove the page entirely and insert a new one. To do that, leave a margin of at least a half inch on the spine side and cut the offending page out. Attach the new sheet to the page stub with glue or tape.

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Last Words



Don't be afraid to splash, texture or even cut your pages. Go ahead and add beads and other dimensional materials. It's your journal—express yourself!

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Who Made This?

Monette Satterfield is a creative force with far more interests than can be explored in one lifetime. As a creative professional whose background includes science, business and art, her unique point of view on the creative process and how to use it produces concrete results that move projects forward. The heart of her work is grounded in the belief that creativity resides in everyone.

If you've got a project in mind – whether it's a book, a video or a website – and don't know how or where to start, just call or drop a note at www.ShinyDesigns.com.



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