Ready, Set, Gift!
Creative Gift-Giving Using Family Photos

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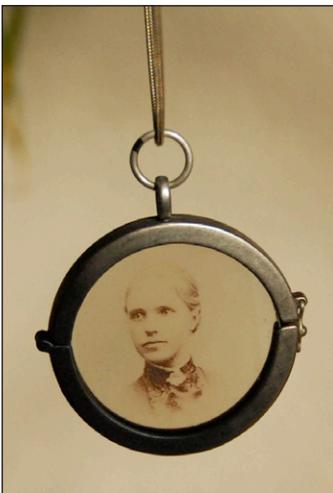*for Flip-Pal® mobile scanner (http://flip-pal.com)*

If you've ever been at a loss for what to get your parents, grandparents or any family member as a gift, help is on its way. Not only will you learn how to turn family photos into memorable keepsakes, but you'll have at your disposal the best list of resources gathered for today's family historian.

Ready: Identifying and Scanning Items

The premise is simple: scan your family photos with a Flip-Pal® mobile scanner (http://flip-pal.com) the right way, get inspired with the ideas below, and then create a variety of items from any of the websites described below. Better yet, you'll learn tips and tricks on creating photo-based gifts.

Here are some tips on the best ways to scan your photos for use in creating gifts:

- Choose photos with high impact, good darks and lights, and a minimal amount of background.

- Set your scanner to a high resolution, such as 300 or 600 dpi.

- Clean the scanner with a microfiber cleaning cloth. Remove dust, lint and fingerprints so you can achieve the clearest possible scans.

- Make sure the photo is in contact with the scanning surface or as close as possible to the surface; however, often you can get a good scan right through a plastic sleeve, matt, or glass. Don't move the photo while scanning.

- Keep the photo lined up with the edges of the scanner in order to reduce the need for editing later on.

- If a photo is larger than 4 x 6 inches, perform multiple scans with an overlap of at least 1/2 to 3/4 inch. Then use the Flip-Pal Easy Stitch software to create a single digital image.

- When transferring digital images to your computer, always save an original scan of the photo and then make copies of the file to be used for editing. Also export to multiple file types.

- Use Photoshop Elements or your favorite graphic editing software to resize digital images for use with your favorite project.

- Remember to periodically backup your scans of photos and documents.

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Set: Inspired Ideas for Creative Gift Giving

Once the photos are scanned and copies are created in different file formats, the most difficult choice will be to find the right gift for that special family member. There are literally hundreds of websites that allow you to upload your images and then create gifts. In addition, don't' forget that you can always take a DIY approach to creating gifts and then giving them to friends and family.

- **Bookmarks**: Amazing Bookmarks using photos of family members look like lots of fun in this DIY post at *Mama Say What*?

- **Books and Journals**: If you have someone in the family who loves to keep a journal, create a Customized Book at *paper coterie*.

- **Boxes and Tins**: Whether you use brand new tins or repurpose an empty breath mint tin, here are some creative ideas for Photo Tins from *Martha Stewart*.

- **Buttons and Magnets**: A great way to repurpose simple things like old bottle caps! Check out these Photo Magnets and Tacks at *Martha Stewart*.

- **Calendars**: Imagine a useful wall calendar or even a day planner filled with old family photos! Most photo-based gift creation sites have a Calendar product, one example being *Pinhole Press*. Simply select your photos, upload them and then, if the option exists, add your own special dates such as birthdays and anniversaries.

- **Canvas Prints**: Most sites offer a canvas print product in various sizes and formats. You upload a photo, select a size, style and a finish and then place your order. Canvas Prints are a nice way to display old family photos without using standard framing. At *Costco's Photo Center*, you can quickly create stunning canvas prints using your family photos.

- **Educational Items**: How about Flash Cards with ancestor photos? *Pinhole Press* shows how to use your own photos to create a set for your children or for a gift!

- **Frames**: A Pumpkin Photo Frame? You bet! A printer, a sheet of acetate and a candle are all you need according to *Good Housekeeping*.

- **Games and Puzzles**: Remember Go Fish? Well *The Crafting Chicks* shows you how easy it is to Create Your Own Deck of Cards for almost any game using your own scanned images. If your family loves puzzles, check out this easy Photo Puzzle Made with Craft Sticks from *One Smiley Monkey*.

- **Gift Wrapping and Gift Tags**: Sometimes it is all in the presentation. Just ask *Martha Stewart* as she shows you how to create Photo Gift Toppers. Also *pear tree* has some great Gift Tags just waiting for your photo upload.

- **Greeting Cards**: Family photos can be the perfect choice for different types of Greeting Cards and even invitations. The choices are almost endless! Think of

party invites, wedding thank you cards, and more. *Moo* lets you create holiday cards, greeting cards and invites using your own photos.

- **Holiday Ornaments and Decorations**: Whether you choose the "do-it-yourself" option or have them made online, what better way to honor your family than to create a Christmas Tree Ornament or a set of holiday decorations. The DIY crowd can visit a local craft store and then work with printed copies of scanned photos to create great items!

- **Jewelry**: Several sites allow you to create a keepsake piece of jewelry such as a bracelet or necklace. In addition, you may find it easier to purchase the jewelry on your own, then print out your photo to fit a locket, etc.

- **Photo Books**: A hot product, a Photo Book can help the family history share his or her research with family and friends in a compelling, storytelling format. Most sites have a photo book product, all with varying options. *MyCanvas* is a unique offering. It integrates with the research you already have stored in family trees on Ancestry. An added feature is the ability to print the pages you create directly to your printer so you can produce your own book if you don't want to print it through MyCanvas.

- **Quilts, Fabric, and Wall Hangings**: Did you know that custom printed fabric is available by the yard? One site that has no minimum order quantity is Spoon Flower. Many fabric and hobby stores have colorfast cotton fabric sheets that can be printed with ink jet printers right at home. Create a family history quilt, table runner, wall hanging or throw pillow. Or sew a favorite family picture and recipe onto an apron. Print fun photos on a fabric album cover, tote bag, or sweatshirt.

- **Table Runner**: Another great DIY project is this Table Runner made from family photos via the *Ruffled Blog*.

- **Tech Gifts**: Many sites allow you to create a variety of tech related items including iPhone and other Smartphone Cases, iPad cases, mouse pads, sleeves for a Kindle or Nook and more. One such site is *Café Press* and which offers iPhone cases.

- **Tiles**: Have you ever thought of a single tile with a family photo or perhaps an entire wall? *Image Snap* has you covered.

- **Tissue Box**: Make a Tissue Box with a family photo on each side in this DIY post from *right@home*.

- **T-Shirts and Sweat Shirts**: Turn your family photos into wearable art . . . there's no better way to start a conversation about family history than to be your own personal billboard! Most sites will create a ready-to-wear item such as a T-Shirt or Sweatshirt based on a photo you upload. *Zazzle* has plenty of options for clothing including sweatshirts.

- **ViewMaster**: Did you have a [ViewMaster](#) as a kid? Well Image3D lets you take your digital images and turn them into a fun party favor using the ViewMaster concept!

More Inspiration: Check out *Better Homes and Gardens*' post on [Easy Crafts With Photos](#) for some amazing ideas.

Gift! Tips and Tricks for Gift Creation and Gift Giving

Here's are some best practices to use when creating and giving photo-based gifts:

- **Choose your best photos to scan**. Photos should be as focused and as distinct as possible. The projects with the most impact are made from photos in which the subject stands distinct from the background.

- **Scan at highest resolution possible**. This means at least 300 dpi or higher. The Flip-Pal mobile scanner allows you to scan to 600 dpi. Some websites will reject your uploaded photo if it does not meet a minimum standard for resolution.

- **Save a master file of the photo and then create lower resolution copies**. A common mistake is to scan a photo at a high resolution and then make edits. Once you've lowered the resolution on certain file types, such as jpg, there is no way to restore it to its original format. Create working copies of each scanned photo and always keep the master file in its original format.

- **Export to several different file types**. Once you begin working with various websites and uploading photos, you'll realize that some accept only specific file types. Most will accept jpg, gif and png files so make sure you have at least one of these file versions available for use.

- **Review the Terms of Service when signing up for a site**. Before you start using photos at a website, understand who actually owns the photo once it is uploaded and what the website can do with it. It is your responsibility to fully understand the Terms of Service for each website.

- **Upload only the images you need**. Avoid uploading an entire album of photos to a site if you aren't going to use them to create items. Start with small batches of photos, six or eight, and then determine if the site is one you'll continue using. If not, delete you images and then move on to a site that appeals to you.

- **Backup your data**. There's nothing worse than spending hours scanning photos into digital format and working on cropping and formatting those photos only to suffer a data loss. Make sure you have a backup plan for all your data and store photo files in a secure area.

- **Understand each site's return policy**. Many of the items you create online are "one-of-a-kind" and cannot be returned unless there is a mistake made in production or the item is broken or damaged. Make sure you read the return policy before you order any item.

Flip·Pal® mobile scanner

- **Look for coupons and promo codes**. Before you click the Checkout button, make sure you search for available coupons and promotion codes. Check for sales on the website itself or use discount aggregator sites like [RetailMeNot](#) or [CouponCabin](#).

- **Create a "store" for family and friends**. Many gift creation websites allow you to not only create fun items, but also set up a store so that family and even the general public can purchase your creations. The best part: you can earn money selling items (and this can help support your "family history habit.").

Resource List

Photo Scanning
Digital Imaging Essentials – Print
http://bit.ly/digitalessentialsprint

Digital Imaging Essentials – PDF
http://bit.ly/digitalessentialspdf

Flip-Pal® mobile scanner
http://flip-pal.com/

Blogs
Creating Keepsakes
http://www.creatingkeepsakes.com

MiDesign by Michaels Photo Blog
http://blog.photocreations.michaels.com

Photobook Girl
http://www.photobookgirl.com

Ruffled Blog
http://ruffledblog.com

The Crafting Chicks
http://thecraftingchicks.com/

Gift Creation and DIY Websites
Blurb
http://www.blurb.com
Best for: *Photo books*

Bumblejax
http://www.bumblejax.com
Best for: *Canvas prints*

Café Press
http://www.cafepress.com
Best for: *Anything and everything; Create your own store*

Canvas Pop
http://www.canvaspop.com
Best for: *Canvas prints*

Costco
http://www.costcophotocenter.com
Best for: *Anything & everything*

CVS
http://www.cvsphoto.com
Best for: *Anything & everything*

Good Housekeeping
http://www.goodhousekeeping.com
Best for: *Inspiration and crafts*

Image3d
http://www.image3d.com/
Best for: *Viewmaster party favors*

ImageSnap
https://www.imagesnap.com
Best for: *Ceramic tiles*

Keepsy
http://www.keepsy.com
Best for: *Calendars, photo book*s

Legacy Charting
http://www.legacycharting.com
Best for: *Bookmarks, family tree charts; connects with Legacy Family Tree data*

Lulu
http://www.lulu.com
Best for: *Calendars, photo books; Create your own store*

Makeyourowngiftideas.com
http://www.makeyourowngiftideas.com
Best for: *Anything and Everything, Unusual items*

Mama Say What?
http://www.mamasaywhat.com
Best for: *DIY Projects*

Martha Stewart
http://www.marthastewart.com
Best for: *Inspiration and crafts*

Minted
http://www.minted.com
Best for: *Canvas prints, cards& invitations, party decorations*

Mixbook
http://www.mixbook.com
Best for: *Calendars, cards, photobooks*

Moo
http://www.moo.com
Best for: *Business cards, cards & invitations, labels, stickers*

mpix
http://www.mpix.com
Best for: *Calendars, canvas prints, kids growth charts, photo books*

MyCanvas
http://www.mycanvas.com
Best for: *Photo books, collage posters; connects with Ancestry.com data*

MyDaVinci
http://www.mydavinci.com
Best for: *Canvas prints and art photos*

MyPublisher
http://www.mypublisher.com
Best for: *Calendars, canvas prints, cards & invites, photo books*

One Smiley Monkey
http://www.onesmileymonkey.com
Best for: *Crafts*

OrangePiel
http://www.orangepiel.com
Best for: *Window shades*

Paper coterie
http://www.papercoterie.com
Best for: *Customized journals*

pear tree
http://www.peartreegreetings.com/
Best for: *Greeting cards, gift tags*

Pinhole Press
http://pinholepress.com
Best for: *Anything and everything*

Right@Home
http://www.rightathome.com
Best for: *DIY projects*

RocketLife
http://www.rocketlife.com
Best for: *Calendars, photo books, posters*

Shutterfly
http://www.shutterfly.com
Best for: *Calendars, cards & invitations, photo books*

SmugMug
http://www.smugmug.com
Best for: *Anything and everything*

Snapfish
http://www.snapfish.com
Best for: *Calendars, cards & invitations, photo books*

Spoonflower
http://www.spoonflower.com
Best for: *Custom printed fabric*

The UPS Store
http://photo.theupsstore.com
Best for: *Anything and everything*

Walgreens
http://photo.walgreens.com/walgreens/
Best for: *Anything and everything*

Wallhog
http://www.wallhogs.com
Best for: Wall decals

Walmart Photo
http://photos.walmart.com
Best for: *Anything and everything*

Wondershare
http://www.wondershare.com
Best for: *DVD Slideshow*

Zazzle
http://www.zazzle.com
Best for: *Anything and everything; Create your own store*