

Hello! You may be wondering what you've been given (or bought) ...

What is this group of papers that looks like a book or journal and what is it supposed to be used for... ? The first answer is – anything you choose. This grouping of paper and fabric is in the genre called “junk journaling”, where a crafter binds together pages of all different kinds of paper and adds fun elements as a surprise to bring delighted smiles as you discover what’s inside.

It’s like a hug – a treasure hunt – and a way to bring hand-made art into your life in a practical way.

The papers might be dyed with tea, coffee, avocado, herbs, and more. Choices for paper are from so many areas: digital images printed on paper, book pages from books that were to be discarded because of their age or binding was failing, unexpected papers like wallpaper, paper bags, business forms, kitchen paper, or art supplies and recycled junk like mailers and flyers... And added to these papers, there may be stenciled designs, hand-painted places, sewn elements, buttons, fabrics, embroidery, clusters of interesting items and other unexpected treasures.

This is a handmade journal, where personality, not perfection, is the result.

Sometimes these pages in the journal are fully decorated, and sometimes they’re what’s called “naked”, with few embellishments. Sometimes there are many pieces of ephemera, and other times there will be just a few, carefully selected and created extras. Often there will be vintage items or paper, and sometimes you’ll find items or pages from antiquarian books, from more than 100 years ago.

Repurposing old things to make something new is a part of this genre of junk journaling – even junk. Yes, you might find junk mailers recycled into something pretty in your journal.

You can add your own touches, remove what’s there and use it elsewhere, write on the pages, glue other treasures in, color, paint or draw, or just keep it as it is - pretty piece of handmade art...

So, what have others used these kinds of journals for?

- Some use their junk journals as a way to document life, like a diary.
- Other people use their junk journal as pages to collect their own treasures – things like ticket stubs from events, pictures and memorabilia from trips or events – the birth of a baby, the celebration of a marriage or anniversary, a special season or transition or a way to say goodbye.
- Sometimes they’re used as a gratitude journal, keeping track of all the blessings in life, sometimes as a way to document their life of faith, with Scripture quotes or song lyrics or answered prayers.
- Other people collect (or write) poetry, quotes or funny memes and use the journal as a place to display their collections.
- And other people use their journal as a guest book – having everyone who visits leave their favorite thought, poem, or joke. A “wit and wisdom” kind of journal, collected from friends.

Basically, this collection of paper and elements, bound into a journal or book, is for you to enjoy. *Enjoy it in any way you choose.*

Welcome to the world of “junk journaling”! Or maybe we should call it treasure journals?