

Photo ideas: create vintage photos

How to create a "vintage" photo collection without ruining irreplaceable family treasures.

Those old black and white photographs sit waiting, nestled in the dark pages of ancient albums for someone to look at them and smile. Some are yellowing, some are falling out of their little corner mounts, some may even be cracked and curling in some forgotten desk drawer. You may have inherited Grandma's antique album, holding such treasures as her and Granddad's wedding portrait or a photo of your mother in her christening gown and later in her cap and gown. Why hide these heirlooms when they can be enjoyed by the whole family?

Create a photo collection that will bring a tear to Granddad's eye this holiday season or on his wedding anniversary. No, you won't be giving away the goods, because you won't be using the actual snapshots. Those old photographs are irreplaceable family treasures and you don't want to tape them into a multi-framed mat where they will be exposed to sunlight. You need to clone them - reproduce them, and you will have a new family treasure to enjoy.

The first step is buying the frame and mat. These can be found ready made at almost any craft store and in most department stores. Next, go through the old album, shoebox or drawer and find those favorite shots. Try to find a representing photo of every member of a generation or two, depending on the size of the family. Keep in mind those images that are NOT favorites and avoid using them.

On to the cloning. Recently readily available are do-it-yourself photograph copy machines. These are actually scanners and photo quality printers, enclosed into a handy, instant processor. You simply lay the photos on the scanner glass and choose how many copies you would like. Very user friendly and worth the minimal cost per sheet.

If this option is unavailable to you, a photo processor can create a new negative or a simple copy print for you. This can be timely and expensive though, so be cautious. Of course, if you have a personal computer, complete with scanner and photo quality paper and ink, then you can accomplish all of the copying from the comfort of your desk top.

Another avenue is a business copy center. Some can reproduce photo quality copies. The old photocopier is also an option, with technology today giving us wonderful clarity. Black and white or color copy machines can give you a result that, under the glass of the frame, will look like the real thing.

When you are finished fitting the new clones into the mat, those "old" family favorites will be new fodder for retelling old family stories. And the next generation will be able to gaze at their ancestors without getting fingerprints all over the originals, nestled safely back in their albums.