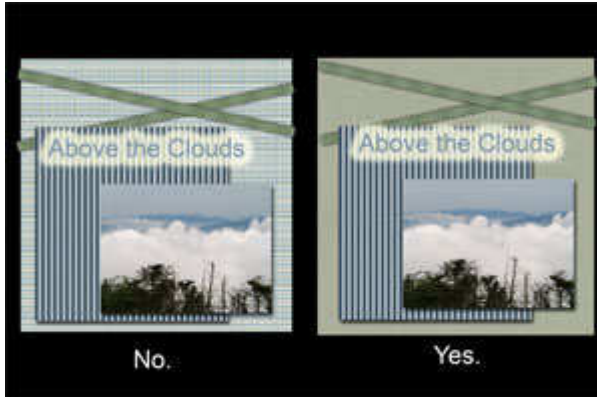# Design Principles – Patterned Papers
By Hummie

Are you like me in that you find it difficult to work with patterned papers?

As I played with them, I did a lot of analyzing and came up with these guidelines. Remember, however, that these are just guidelines and exceptions to rules always appear!

1) **Mix a pattern with a solid color.** Of course, coordinating colors should be used. Pull colors from the patterned paper (using your eyedropper tool) for the solid color. Use the color wheel to find a complementary color or monochromatic color. It also looks best if you apply a filter to put a soft texture to your solid colored papers.
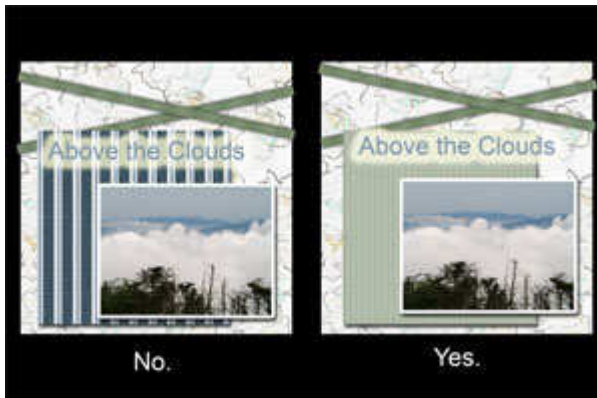

2) **Mix a big or bright pattern with a smaller or more subtle pattern**. Two big patterns or two bright patterns compete against each other. For example, use one paper with big flowers with a paper of subtle stripes.


3) **Use big and bright patterns in small amounts on the layout.** Big patterns and bright patterns carry a great amount of visual weight and the eye goes to them first. Use them in moderation so as to not take the eye away from the photos. Placed right, they can actually help to bring the eye to the photo.
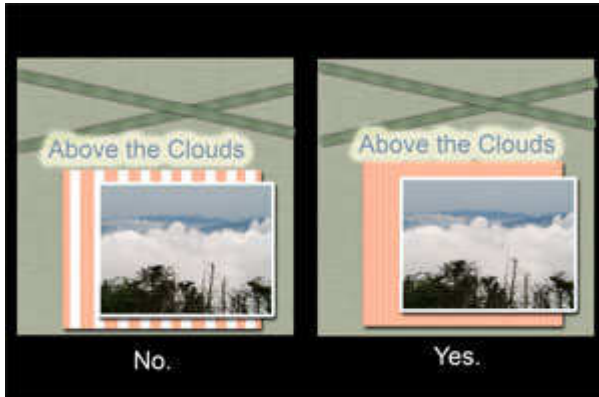
4) **Use smaller patterns**. A small pinstriped paper carries less weight than a large striped paper (which takes your eye away from the photo).
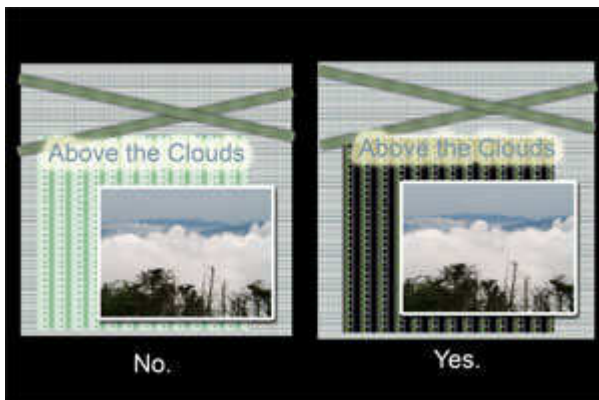
5) **Use a light pattern with a dark one (remember contrast).** Two light patterns do not work as well together as a dark and a light one.
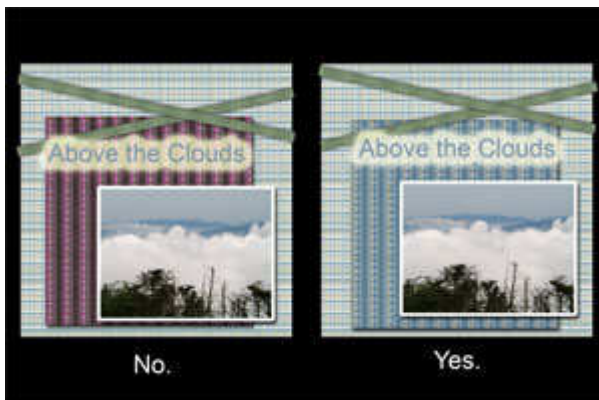
6) **When using multiple patterns, use coordinating colors.** Odd coordination brings your eye away from the photo. (Although in this sample, the dark contrast helps the bad example) Designers are great at putting coordinating papers in their kits. The papers do not need to be monochromatic, just good color schemes.