



6 Ways to Add Value to Your Online Course *with stand-out workbook content*

Workbooks are the get-it-done complement to your core lessons

Workbooks are a supplement to the lessons in your online courses. Done well, they give your students the reference materials and guides they need to complete lessons well.

When you're deciding on whether to include a workbook and what to put into it, always make sure you're giving true value. Do not include a workbook because you think you should. Do it because your students will be able to better execute on their own work with this workbook content.

Six types of content that you can put into a workbook follow.



1 use workbook content to: Detail key lesson takeaways

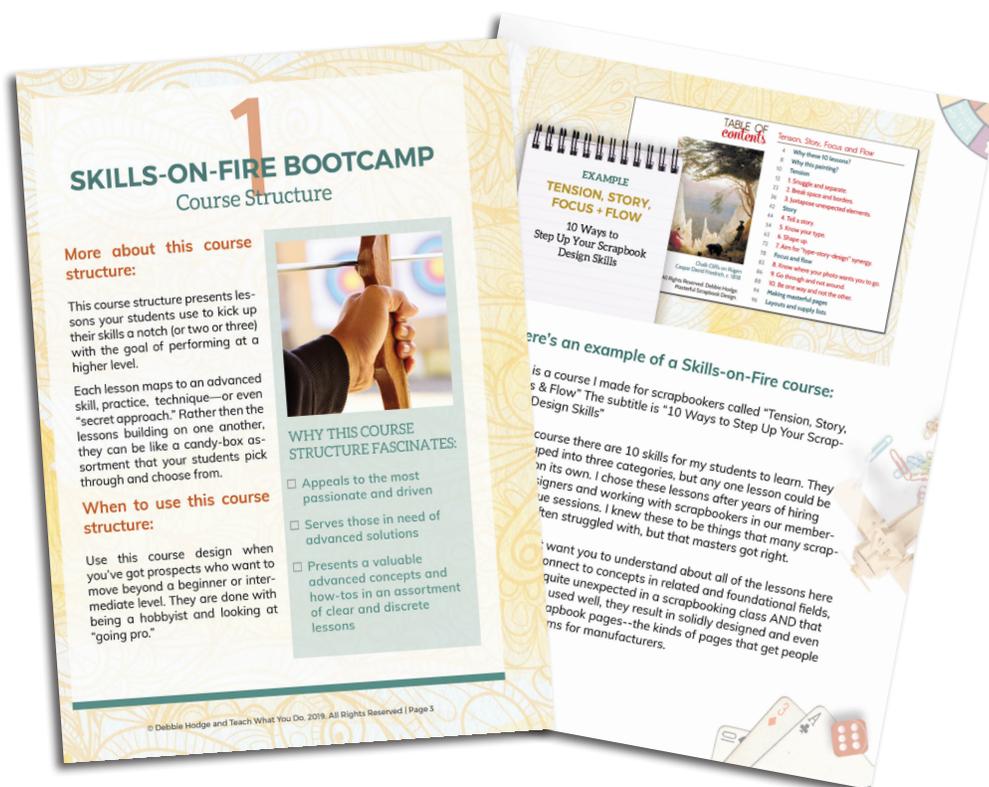
Your course lessons will teach important concepts and practices your students need to understand. These lessons might include background, examples, and how-tos on those key concepts.

Providing a lesson “takeaway summary” gives your students an easy way to review what’s especially important about what you’ve just presented.

Two ways to present key takeaways are:

1. **In a list of key points.** Optionally add one or two sentences to elaborate on each. This approach is good for a lesson that is comprised of multiple points or steps.

2. **As a longer written summary** (like a short magazine piece) perhaps with a pull-quote or key example box. This is good for when there are one or two overarching concepts being covered in depth within the lesson. You’re not putting everything in here. Rather, it’s a summary of the key concepts.



Ask yourself: *What key lesson takeaways can I summarize for my students to help them do the necessary work?*

TAKEAWAY #1:

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TAKEAWAY #2:

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TAKEAWAY #3:

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use workbook content to: Provide a checklist of action items

When there are several elements or steps or ingredients your students need to prepare, you can include them in a checklist.

This works when students don't need an in-depth how-to, but, rather, a reminder of the actions to be taken. Presentation is as a simple list with checkboxes. You might add one or two sentences to elaborate on each item.

AN EXAMPLE OF THIS TYPE OF CONTENT:

Here's a checklist from the eCourse Blueprint workbook. It goes with the lesson on creating a rich course outline. The actual lesson goes into more detail than the checklist. The checklist works as a handy guide for students to use while actually doing this work.

STEP 5: ADD METHODOLOGY
Spot, refine, develop and weave your methodology into your outline.

Are your unique methods emerging?
If not, revisit the previous lesson and think through to prompt your work:

- What are the ongoing tasks or work process you have SOPs, tips, guidelines, steps?
- What are the key decisions your students will need evaluation criteria, rules for making choices, pros and cons to consider?
- What are your students' "creative crossroads" where results? What process can you offer for them to rely on?
- What are your own original ideas that get remarkable?

As methods do emerge, weave them into your creative naming and delivery so that these processes stand out and are clearly understood.

STEP 6: EVALUATE MODULES
Develop module overviews and use them to evaluate.

- Print a Module Overview Worksheet for each module (or put a digital equivalent in your worksheet right after the 7-step process is complete).

The goal is to make sure all of your planned contributions to the course overall.

The first section of the worksheet has you do THINKING, FEELING and DOING at module level. As you fill this out, you get a real sense of what the impact.

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STEP 3: FIRST PASS
Add detail. Make a first pass at filling your buckets.

- Start writing.** Milestone by milestone. Look at the "buckets" you just created and start detailing what they are. Your work should be detailed but not a complete way through for a first pass at the full course design.
- Rely on:**
 - bullets,
 - brief descriptions of processes rather than detailed steps
 - notes where examples/stories/illustrations are found (or even found)

STEP 4: ITERATE & REFINE
Work in iterations and layers to refine structure.

Your work from here forward will be done in iterations. You took a first pass to get down what immediate ideas you had. Now go back through again. As you do:

- Layer on notes of additional ideas for expansion or refinement techniques.
- You're also discovering what your course structure wants to be (and you should be adjusting it as you go).
- Use formatting to convey hierarchy and structure. Use bold or all upper case for key terms. Make the hierarchy scannable.
- You should be starting to get a sense of what the structure is within modules.

Look ahead now to next steps, but understand that you will go through the work just described several more times.

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STEP 1: KEY MILESTONES
Identify key milestones and first draft of course structure.

- What is the "big promise" outcome your students want to achieve? Put that in the center of your paper or at the top of your document.
- What are all the big things you can think of that they'll need to master or understand to get there? Brainstorm with post-its or a big piece of paper or a digital tool.
- What are the connections between these things? You're looking for:
 - relationships (which things go together?)
 - hierarchies (which things should be grouped under another?)
 - sequences (does order matter and, if so, what should it be?)
- Work through until you have the key top-level milestones your students will need to work through—and all those other items grouped beneath them.

STEP 2: WORK STRUCTURE
Set up your work area (and the capability for it to reflect structure).

- Choose your tool and set up the work area within it. (We just talked about tools above.)
- Create several "buckets" (or folders or files) to represent course modules (or top-level lessons).
- Look to the work from Step 1 + the work you did in the Course Structures Lookbook lesson to determine your modules. Label your "buckets" for these.

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Ask yourself: *What steps do my students need to take next?*

STEP #1:

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STEP #2:

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STEP #3:

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STEP #4:

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STEP #5:

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3 use workbook content to: Supply step-by-step how-tos for work to be done

This is the checklist expanded. Here's you'll have more detailed how-tos for each step. You might also include illustrations or "call-out" notes.

The example I'm showing here comes from my Scrapbook Coach course. Each video lesson showed the creation of a scrapbook page. To go with that video are guides that review the steps. I took screenshots from key milestones in the process and added numbered steps to the work.

After watching the video, a student could then refer to the quick guide to recall the steps.

Scrapbook Coach
"Bracket" Quick Reference

#1: bracket of woven strips #2: photos define bracket arms



#3: bracket with drama



This is the quick guide that accompanies the 4 videos in the "Bracket" class in the Scrapbook Coach series, self-paced classes by Debbie Hodge. This guide is an overview only. Be sure to view the videos for full design lessons.

Share your layouts, ideas or questions in the Get It Scrapped Scrapbook Coach Forum/gallery. Questions? Email me (Debbie.Hodge). Scrapbook Coach is a Get It Scrapped Production!

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BRACKET #1 (continued)



consider space needed for your title and journaling **10**
think of the two



embellish in two more spots with your accent color **14**
choose those spots to work with your title to create a visual triangle
the triangle should frame or pass through the photos

BRACKET #1
bracket of woven strips



portrait-oriented photo (this one is 5" x 7.5") **1**
determine whether to place your photo to the right side or the left side of the canvas **2**
select two colors for your papers and elements - one to be dominant and the other to accent **3**



cut a strip (a little less than 1" wide) of patterned paper in your accent color **6**
add to the horizontal arm of the bracket
"weave" the horizontal and vertical arms
add one more narrow strip or piece of trim your dominant color to the horizontal arm **7**
add a wide neutral block to horizontal **8**



select two patterned papers with your dominant color **4**
they should be tone-on-tone or tone-with-neutral
cut strips from each about 1" wide, play with lengths - keep long for now and trim as your design develops **5**
you could add a second photo if desired



choose background paper **9**

the bracket on this first page of the lesson was established with woven strips of paper
one dominant and one accent color were chosen
the horizontal arm was built up and layered more heavily than the vertical arm
the photos are housed inside the bracket

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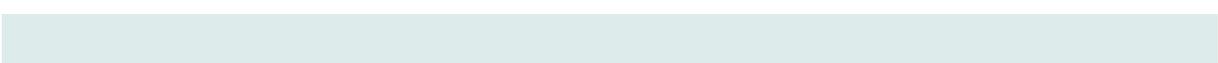
Ask yourself: *What step-by-step how-tos might my students need in order to execute on a specific action items?*

HOW-TO:

MATERIALS NEEDED:

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ACTION ITEM BROKEN DOWN INTO SMALLER STEPS:

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 

IMAGES, EXAMPLES, RECOMMENDATIONS:

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use workbook content to:

Enrich conceptual lessons with nitty-gritty details and case studies



With big courses (several modules with multiple lessons in every module), the scope of the work to be done can be quite extensive.

You could take an approach in which you provide upper level, conceptual instruction in the lesson--and then point your students to step-by-step how-tos in the workbook. This could be an especially apt approach when different students will take different routes, and, thus, not all content applies to everyone.

Another approach would be to use your workbook to provide detailed examples and case studies that supplement your lessons.

YOUR FIRST COURSE SALES

Building an online teaching business entails both course creation and marketing activities. The most successful online teaching businesses will take first steps that avoid a hard break between the two: they'll work so that course creation and course sales overlap.

I know that's not always welcome news. I've heard again and again from students who believe that the separation between development and sales will let them work more efficiently, batching things up, concentrating on one challenge at a time.

When you've got a big idea, your impulse can be to dig in and get your course created.

You believe that you'll figure out how to sell it once you get the creation work behind you! (And often that's appealing because many of us have a fear of selling.)

BUT... consider this: When you work instead so that development and sales overlap, taking smaller first steps, there is less risk to your pocket-book and morale (in the case of a disappointing launch). What's more, you'll create a course that best serves your customers.

Use this quick guide, to understand options and a process for making first course sales that could include any of these:

- > minimum viable product or MVP
- > beta product
- > soft launch

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EXAMPLE OF MVP & SOFT LAUNCH TO SOMEONE ELSE'S AUDIENCE

THE PRODUCT. The first scrapbooking class I sold was a minimum viable product. I'd written a book called "Get It Scrapped" and I'd been editing and writing on design for a scrapbooking magazine. When it came to teaching my first class, I had SO many ideas for a big course.

Instead, I started, though, I made a course based on ONE CHAPTER in my book. The Chapter was "Get Events Scrapbooked" and the course was "Scrapbooking Events." It went well and I moved forward with several other courses, many built on chapters from my book.

MINIMUM VIABLE PRODUCT

What you eventually hope to offer

You're seeing (and, of course, your talents and the needs of your audience) a first small product you could create quickly and that they'd like.

Be that:

- beginning cake decorators or advanced
- beginning travel or scrapbooking everyday life or scrapbooking
- beginning quilting or advanced quilting
- beginning a wordmark logo with two fonts

Your course has a niche. Your niche is a small project (i.e., how to make a simple quilted bag).

It gets you a small project (i.e., how to make a simple quilted bag).

pricing and your first students

You don't need to offer this at a big discount or for free. It will naturally have a smaller price tag than the larger more comprehensive course you'll eventually offer because of its limited scope. Part of the point of the course is to get you started making your own business.

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Ask yourself: *What additional info could be included in a workbook that would help move your students forward.*

EXAMPLES

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HOW-TOS

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GUIDED PROMPTS

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CHECKLISTS

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use workbook content to:

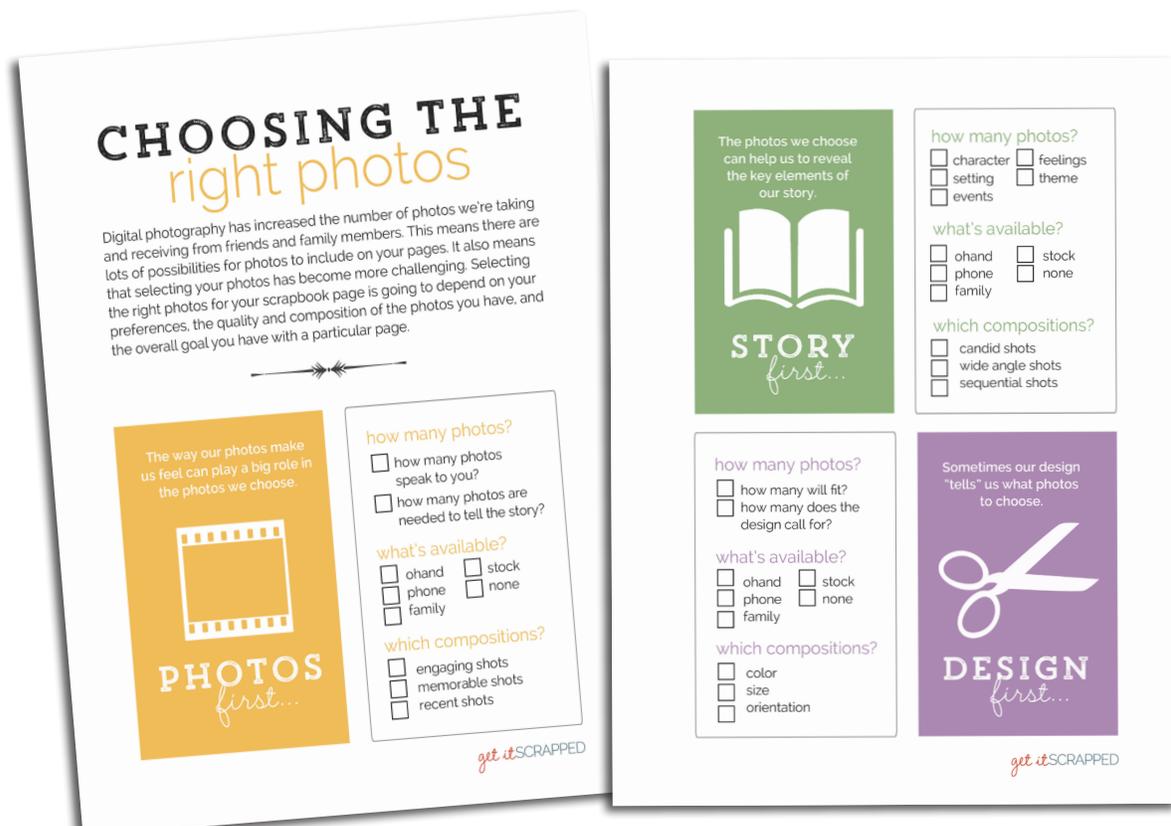
Provide a decision-making framework

If your students need to choose a tool or an artistic ingredient or a technique or a way forward in a coached situation, you can break down the choices for them and create a decision-making tool they can rely on to move forward.

Present key features or aspects to evaluate. Include pros, cons, and best usage situations. Perhaps pricing or rules or best combos. It depends on what they are considering / choosing / deciding on in order to move forward.

You might present this in a grid or list or decision tree--whatever form makes the most sense.

- We share a comprehensive table in the eCourse Blueprint to help students choose a classroom platform.
- In scrapbooking courses we provide visual guides for choosing patterned papers or colors or fonts.



Ask yourself: *What decisions can I help my students make so they can move forward with their work?*

DECISION TO BE MADE:

OPTIONS

[Three light blue horizontal bars for writing options]

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING OPTIONS:

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-
-
-
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use workbook content to:

Give students work prompts that help them figure out what they need to do

6

Map out the work your students need to do for the lesson they've just completed. Then, in the workbook, provide prompts and journaling or notes areas that get them thinking through this work.

Much of the work I'm teaching my students at Teach What You Do requires thinking through a detailed set of evaluations and decisions. Prompted guides are useful for this.

For example:

- *If you're going to price your course, you'll need to work through understanding value offered, competitor pricing, the offer stack, your own budget and more. The lesson covers this and the workbook prompts journaling and decisions.*
- *To brand your course, you'll make choices that require thinking through multiple aspects: brand personality, colors, fonts, and imagery. The lesson teaches this and the workbook prompts it.*

Ask yourself: *What parts of my student's work can I help them think through with guided prompts?*

QUESTIONS	
GOALS	
CHALLENGES	

That's it. You've now got an understanding of 6 types of content you can include in your teaching workbooks:

1. Key Takeaways
2. Checklists
3. Step-by-Step How-Tos
4. Enriching Details and Case Studies
5. Decision-Making Frameworks
6. Guided Work Prompts

