Construct a Mini Concertina Photo Album

Six 50 x 75 mm panels, two print-friendly strips and optional covers

These are original printable digital plans for adult paper crafts. All measurements are calculated design dimensions, not results from a physically built album. Paper thickness, printer scaling, folds and adhesive may alter clearance and balance. Steadleaf Press has not printed, cut, folded, glued, mounted photographs, opened the accordion repeatedly or tested its durability. Use ordinary scissors and label-appropriate craft adhesive on a clean, dry table. Keep wet adhesive and sharp tools away from children. This is decorative craft display, not preservation-grade photo storage or a protective photo enclosure.

A photo story in six small panels

A concertina album folds back and forth in a sequence like a small accordion. Unlike a bound notebook, its panels are joined edge to edge and can open out as a line of photographs. This particular mini-album offers six nominal panels, each 50 mm wide by 75 mm high. The total exposed row, when opened flat, is 6 x 50 = 300 mm wide, excluding paper thickness, glue overhang or surface distortion. It folds into a packet with a nominal 50 x 75 mm face. The first and last panels may act as covers, leaving four front-facing middle panels for photographs; you can also write a short caption on the back of a panel.

The plan is split between two strips so an ordinary A4 or Letter sheet can print the dimensions at full size. Strip A contains three 50 mm panels plus a 10 mm joining tab: its cut rectangle is 160 x 75 mm. Strip B contains three more panels, with no separate tab: its cut rectangle is 150 x 75 mm. Bond the tab behind the first 10 mm of B so the tab becomes part of panel four's back. The visible length remains 150 + 150 = 300 mm, not 310 mm. The tab is not a seventh panel. A long commercial accordion would require additional joints or heavier stock; neither is implied by this small pattern.

Two optional outer cover blanks each measure 52 x 79 mm. Position each cover so its inner edge is FLUSH with the hinge-side edge of the 50 x 75 mm end panel (no overhang across the hinge). The opposite free outer edge then overhangs by 2 mm, and the top and bottom overhang by 2 mm each. Do not centre the 52 mm width on the panel: doing so would cross the hinge by 1 mm. Attach one cover to the outside of panel one and one to the outside of panel six after the accordion is dry-folded correctly; keep a narrow unglued zone beside the hinge. These covers are separate items on the second template page, not extra hinged panels. If you prefer a thinner packet, omit them; the main six-panel accordion is complete without separate covers.

Protect the originals; use copies

The name "photo album" is not permission to glue irreplaceable photographs onto craft card. The Library of Congress explains that adhesive tapes and glues should not be placed on original photographs and that appropriate preservation enclosures depend on materials and conditions. For this decorative mini-album, print duplicate images or draw copies of your own pictures on expendable paper. If your images are family photographs, keep the originals separately in suitable storage and do not pierce, glue, fold or crop them for this project. Do not call ordinary decorative cardstock acid-free, photograph-safe or archival unless the actual materials have documentation and relevant qualifications.

Each nominal 50 x 75 mm panel has a suggested safe content window of 42 x 63 mm, leaving 4 mm side margins and 6 mm top/bottom margins. This leaves space for the folds and avoids pushing image paper across a hinge. If a photo

crop would remove a face or meaningful detail, choose another photo or reduce the composition on a duplicate print; do not pretend every photo works inside a narrow vertical format. A 42 x 63 mm example is a digital design window, not a guarantee of printer border accuracy or adhesive clearance.

A short album can tell a story by arrangement rather than quantity. Six panels might cover one walk, six moments in a garden, an old-and-new comparison or a few family celebrations. Keep captions brief and consider choosing a cover title before arranging images. A useful order is: panel 1 cover, panels 2–5 four different images, panel 6 a date or closing note. The reverse may carry a private annotation, but avoid publishing private names, addresses or location details without consent.

Tools, materials and full-size printing

Start with two A4 or US Letter sheets of manageable folding cardstock, roughly 140-200 gsm as an exploratory range. Choose thin copies of images rather than thick rigid photo mounts. You need millimetre ruler, pencil, ordinary scissors, blunt score tool, suitable paper-safe adhesive and clean scrap paper. If using commercial printable image paper, follow its separate printer and ink recommendations; these instructions do not establish image fade resistance or compatibility.

Print the two original pattern sheets on the paper size you actually use at Actual Size / 100% with automatic Fit/Shrink disabled. Pattern page one has a 160 x 75 mm Strip A, and pattern page two has the 150 x 75 mm Strip B plus the two separate cover rectangles. Each has its own 50 mm calibration bar. Measure both printed bars with a physical ruler. If either page is scaled, the 50 mm panels will not match at the join. The full-size pattern is designed to fit an A4 or Letter portrait sheet with room for an ordinary printer margin, but check every outer edge for clipping.

The strips have exactly marked fold lines. Strip A is 160 mm wide: boundaries at x = 50, 100, and 150 mm from its left cut edge. Its final 10 mm beyond x150 is the join tab, not a panel. Strip B is 150 mm wide: its two panel boundaries fall at x = 50 and 100 mm. There are five panel hinges across the assembled six-panel sequence: after panel 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. The hinge between panels 3 and 4 is the A tab's x150 score and the attached first edge of B.

Every fold alternates direction. You may start with a valley crease between panels 1 and 2, then mountain between 2 and 3, then valley at the tab join between 3 and 4, then mountain and valley for the last two hinges. Or reverse all directions consistently. Adjacent folds should not go the same way or the packet will not collapse into an even stack. The joined hinge can be thicker than the others; a dry rehearsal is important, and no physical result has been claimed by the publisher.

Make the six-panel accordion

1. Choose six candidate duplicate images or original sketches and decide which panel is front cover, closing panel and four interior images. Record their order before touching adhesive.

2. Print Strip A and Strip B at 100% on matching sheets. Measure the 50 mm reference bar on each page; if either is wrong or any cutting edge is clipped, reprint or hand-draft from the exact dimensions.

3. Identify the solid outer cutting borders and dashed hinge guides. Keep the last 10 mm of A as its joining tab. Do not cut that piece off or treat it as a seventh panel.

4. While each strip is still on its larger printer sheet, lightly score A at 50, 100 and 150 mm and B at 50 and 100 mm. Score with a blunt tool; a score is not a cut or perforation.

5. Cut A to 160 x 75 mm and B to 150 x 75 mm with ordinary scissors. If the two have unequal heights after printing, correct the pattern rather than trimming B to an unrecorded scale.

6. Mark the intended FRONT on both strips. Place A and B left-to-right, fronts facing up, with A's 10 mm tab positioned behind the first 10 mm of B. The A score at x150 should meet the leading edge of B.

7. Make a complete dry layup before glue. Check the top and bottom edges align, the combined visible face has six 50 mm panels, and the tab overlap does not create an extra visible 10 mm strip.

8. Apply a thin amount of paper-safe adhesive only to the 10 x 75 mm tab area on the reverse of the join. Keep glue away from the x150 hinge. Press B onto the tab, straightening the long edges. Allow the bond to dry as the material label requires.

9. Crease gently at the joining line. Because the joint may be stiffer than uninterrupted cardstock, do not force it while adhesive is wet or after the paper shows a tear.

10. Fold across the five panel boundaries in alternating directions: valley / mountain / valley / mountain / valley when read left to right, or the fully reversed sequence. Close the strip into a nominal 50 x 75 mm packet. If it twists, reopen it and correct the direction of one hinge at a time.

11. Open the display flat on the table and pencil the suggested 42 x 63 mm image window inside each panel. Maintain the 4 mm side and 6 mm end margins; do not mark the seam with glue or ink.

12. Arrange the duplicate photo crops with no adhesive. Fold the blank again and check the inserts do not interfere with the hinges or make the stack unmanageably thick.

13. If the fit seems acceptable, attach only the expendable copies using a thin amount of suitable adhesive, keeping the actual paper seam lines clear. Leave an empty cover, date or title space if that serves the story better.

14. If desired, trim two separate covers 52 x 79 mm from the second pattern page. On the OUTSIDE of panels one and six, line up each cover's inner edge with the HINGE-SIDE panel edge without crossing the crease; leave 2 mm overhang only at each free outer edge and at top/bottom. Apply adhesive away from a narrow strip beside the hinge; if the packet will not close, omit the covers.

15. Let the adhesive dry fully with the accordion supported. Open and close slowly. Record print scale, panel height, join location, chosen image copies, any change, and the actual behaviour (or NOT TESTED) on the maker worksheet.

Check the arithmetic and the likely weak points

If the opened sequence appears to have seven faces, the join tab probably remains visible instead of being overlapped by the first 10 mm of B. Strip A has 150 mm of visible panels plus a hidden 10 mm tab; B contributes a full 150 mm of visible panels. The correct visible total is 300 mm, but actual folds and thickness affect what a ruler reads on a built piece. Do not stretch the joint to reach a target measurement.

If the first and last panels refuse to meet, inspect the alternating fold signs. A pair of adjacent valley folds will bend the strip into a shallow U instead of a tidy stack. Rehearse on an expendable strip of scrap and use pencil V/M labels behind each hinge. Never cut the hinge in an attempt to free it. A glued joint that buckles should be remade with fresh paper if it cannot be gently corrected.

If a photograph peels from an edge or folds across the score, it was placed outside the 42 x 63 mm suggested window or the adhesive was unsuitable. Crop a new copy, not an original, and keep clear space near hinges. Wet paper may

wrinkle. A heavy laminated print can make folds spring open; do not claim the design can retain every cardstock or photo thickness.

A 50 mm calibration mark printed at 49 mm means a factor of 49/50 = 0.98. A nominal 50 mm panel would therefore print at 49 mm, and the two strips might no longer align if one was printed at a different scale. This numeric example is not an observed test of any particular printer.

A practical display and an honest limit

Display the album supported on a clean, stable, dry surface. It is not a standing structural object, a child's toy, a waterproof keepsake, a fire-resistant decoration or an approved long-term photograph enclosure. A folded paper row may tip if left unsupported, and no stability test has been performed. For treasured photographic originals, use appropriate preservation enclosures rather than a handmade glued accordion.

This pattern's 50 x 75 mm panel size is intentionally tiny. If you need to show a wider photo without cropping, select a larger pattern designed for that print rather than enlarging the PDF through a printer setting and assuming the 10 mm tab remains sufficient. A proportional redesign must recalculate the strip cut widths, joining-tab width, photo windows, optional covers with their no-overhang hinge-side edge and the maximum page size required. Keep the original version and the redesigned measurements clearly distinct.

The two optional covers can carry a hand-lettered title and closing date, while the interior four panels tell a visual story. A good album may leave blank space where a photograph does not help. The goal is a readable sequence that can be handled thoughtfully, not a promise of photographic longevity or measured mechanical strength.

References, originality and publication disclosure

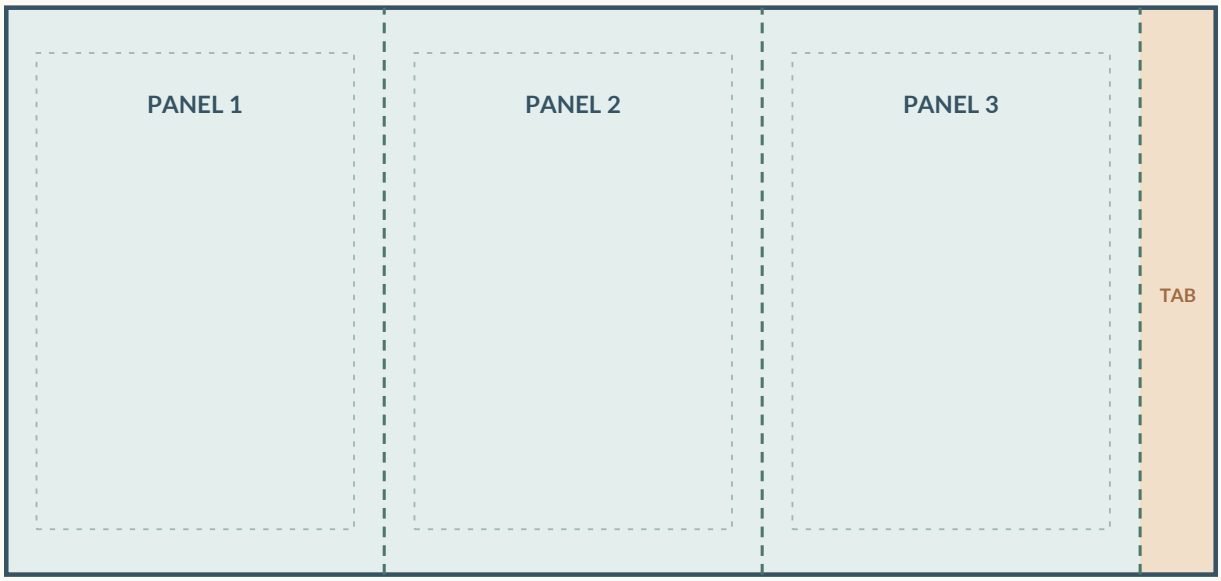
Adobe Acrobat Help, Adjust page size for printing PDFs: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/desktop/print-documents/set-up-and-print-pdfs/page-size.html . Used only for distinguishing Actual Size from print scaling; it does not certify this album.

Library of Congress, Care, Handling and Storage of Photographs: https://www.loc.gov/preservation/care/photo . General guidance for protecting photographs, notably avoiding glues and tapes on originals; this is not an endorsement of the proposed decorative craft or its materials.

All six-panel coordinates, joining-tab geometry, cover blanks, text, visual layout and maker record were created as new Steadleaf Press digital teaching assets. No photograph or commercial album template is reproduced. No physical printing, cutting, gluing, folding, photo mounting, stability or durability test was performed or claimed for this edition.

Printable full-size patterns and original maker records follow. No physical prototypes were made or tested.

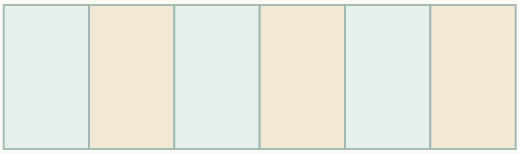
STRIP A - THREE PANELS + JOINING TAB



STRIP A: 160 x 75 mm = 3 panels x 50 mm + 10 mm hidden join tab.

Score at 50, 100, 150 mm. Cut at outer perimeter. Join tab is NOT a fourth panel.

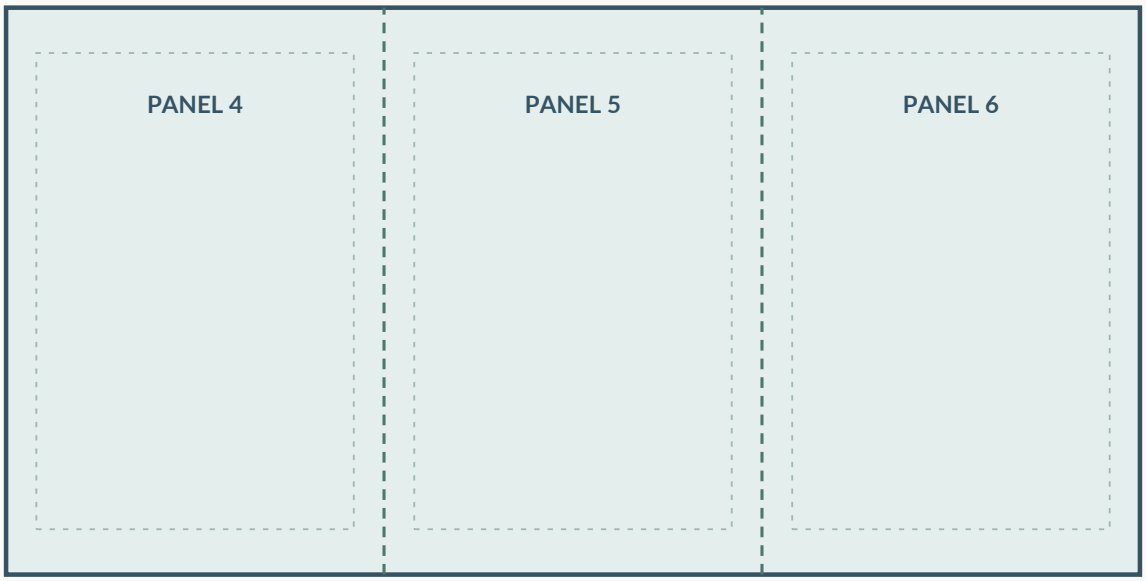
Image guide on every panel = 42 x 63 mm; keep 4 mm sides and 6 mm ends.



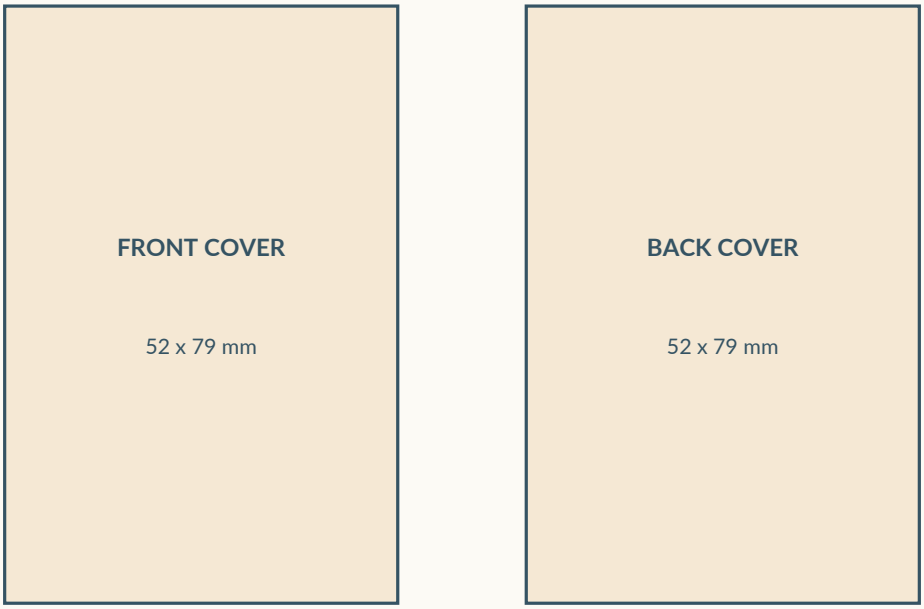
ASSEMBLED: 6 panels / 300 mm visible, five alternating hinges

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler

STRIP B - THREE PANELS + OPTIONAL COVERS



STRIP B: 150 x 75



Covers 52x79: FLUSH at hinge; 2mm overhang only at free side and top/bottom.

Join A 10 mm tab BEHIND first 10 mm of B; do not glue on the hinge.

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler

MAKER RECORD / PAGE 1

Strip A 160 x 75; score 50 / 100 / 150

Strip B 150 x 75; score 50 / 100

A4 / Letter: 50 mm readings on both sheets

10 x 75 mm tab joined BEHIND first 10 mm of B

6 panels; 5 alternating fold directions

Duplicate photo copies, 42 x 63 window checks

Optional covers 52 x 79, hinge-side edge FLUSH

Only record observations if you actually make the craft. Publisher physical test: NOT PERFORMED.

Actual fit / damage / NOT TESTED observations

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler



MAKER RECORD / PAGE 2

What changed from the supplied original pattern?

Where did paper resist, rub, crack or wrinkle?

Which fold, score, adhesive or image rule mattered?

Were all 50 mm calibration marks actually measured?

Does the real paper object close or open as intended?

What remains UNTESTED or uncertain?

Next version or alternative dimension to try

Only record observations if you actually make the craft. Publisher physical test: NOT PERFORMED.

Date / initials / safely stored tools and materials

50 mm SCALE CHECK - measure with a ruler

