

How do I create a ladder?

The Ladder Diagram

Just as you would never attempt to build a house without blueprints, you should never begin a yearbook without a ladder. "Ladder" is the yearbook term for a page-by-page listing of the yearbook's contents. Spring is a perfect time to plan next year's ladder while this year's challenges are fresh in your mind. The number of pages to include in the book is based on financial considerations and the number of students at the school. Once you determine the number of pages in the book, you must choose the content for each page. Thoroughly filling out the ladder diagram in detail creates a blueprint for your book.

The Process for Planning Your Ladder:

1 Determine the number of pages in your yearbook

2 Subtract the number of pages needed for theme pages

Theme pages include the title page, the last page, the opening and closing spreads, and the divider pages for each section.

3 Determine the number of pages needed for the people section

To calculate the number of pages necessary for the people section, answer the following questions:

- * How many students are in each grade at your school?
- * How many panel pictures will fit on each page?
- * How many faculty will be photographed?

Do the math to determine the number of pages needed in the people section. Be sure to leave space on each people spread to include a feature article, candid photo and headline or an alternative copy treatment such as a poll, survey or quiz. If there are seniors enrolled at your school, will their photos be printed in color? If so, then they need to fit within complete signatures.

4 Determine the number of pages needed for sports

Allow one complete spread for each varsity sport, including cheerleading. Allow one spread to be shared by JV teams or JV and freshman teams. For example, girls JV volleyball can share a spread with boys JV volleyball. Freshmen and JV football can be combined on one spread.

5 Determine the number of pages needed for ads/index

Use last year's book as a guide for estimating the number of pages needed for the ads/index section.

6 Distribute the remaining pages among the other sections of the yearbook

Example • • 232 pages in the book

- 16 theme pages (this includes title page, last page, one opening spread and six dividers)
- 16 senior pages (192 seniors total ÷ 12 portraits/pages)
- 12 junior pages (240 juniors total ÷ 20 portraits/pages)
- 10 sophomore pages (200 sophomores total ÷ 20 portraits/pages)
- 14 freshmen pages (280 freshmen total ÷ 20 portraits/pages)
- 3 faculty pages (60 faculty total ÷ 20 portraits/pages)
- 42 sports pages (a total of 21 spreads)
- 9 ads and index pages

110 remaining pages to be used for other sections.



Example A • • 16 pages in one Signature/8 pages in one Flat

You could choose to print Flat A, Flat B or both flats of any Signature in color. In this example pages 1, 4-5, 8-9, 12-13 and 16 comprise Flat A and pages 2-3, 6-7, 10-11 and 14-15 comprise Flat B.

Planning Your Color Pages

It is important that you place the color in your yearbook carefully. A ladder diagram can help you plan your color pages. Let's say, for example, only one Flat (eight pages) of color is to be used in the first 16 pages of a book and the title page needs to be in color.

The title page is on Flat A; so, pages 1, 4-5, 8-9, 12-13 and 16 would print in color. For our example, pages 2-3, 6-7, 10-11 and 14-15 would print in black and white. In Example B below, Flat A is shown in blue and Flat B is shown in green.

EXAMPLE B

Student Life Divider	4	5	Student Life Divider
Summer	6	7	Summer
First Day of School	8	9	First Day of School
Homecoming	10	11	Homecoming
Homecoming	12	13	Homecoming
School Spirit	14	15	School Spirit
Weekends	16		
		17	Weekends
Jobs	18	19	Jobs
Fashion	20	21	Fashion
Technology	22	23	Technology
Music/Bands	24	25	Music/Bands
Academics Divider	26	27	Academics Divider
Classes Outside	28	29	Classes Outside
Classes in Lab	30	31	Classes in Lab
Classes in Library	32		

Example B • • A ladder showing two signatures

Each signature is separated visually and each flat is denoted by color. The blue lines indicate Flat A of each signature and the green lines indicate Flat B.

Vocabulary Review

Closing - Final pages of the yearbook (typically one to three pages) where the theme is concluded.

Flat - Eight pages on one side of a signature. In the first signature of the yearbook, for example, pages 1, 4-5, 8-9, 12-13 and 16 make up one flat. Pages 2-3, 6-7, 10-11 and 14-15 make up the other flat.

Ladder - A page-by-page listing of the yearbook's contents. Yearbook staffs use the ladder to stay organized and to plan for deadlines.

Opening - The first one or two spreads of the yearbook which introduce the theme.

Signature - A 16-page sheet of paper stock made up of two sides or 8-page flats. Yearbooks are printed in signatures which are then folded, stitched and trimmed, then collated.

Spread - Two facing or side-by-side pages in the yearbook such as 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, etc.

Title Page - Page one of the yearbook. It should include the name of the book, the name of the school, the complete school address, the volume number and year. The school telephone number, Web address and enrollment may also be listed.

-Discoveries
Volume 8 Issue 3