Setting Eyelets

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So my soul-sista bestest friend, Andrea, asked me:
So, I just bought some really cute eyelets, but now I'm not sure how to use them. I'm thinking I need to buy some extra tools to go with this, but I'm not exactly sure what it is I need to buy! Can ya help a sista out?!! ;o)

Girl, I'm so totally here for you! This pic is of the eyelets I currently own, all organized in a Making Memories organizer. See those things in the right of the picture? (Click on the picture.) Those are brads -- just put them in, then spread open the tongs. Much easier than eyelets. But yes, eyelets are very useful, too, so let's talk about them.

When I first bought eyelets, I had no idea what to do with them. There was a bowl of them sitting out at my local scrapbook store and I asked the clerk if they add bulk to the page layout. She said "No, not at all." But I was looking at them, thinking "damn, they are like 1/4 an inch thick, how do they NOT add bulk?" But they add a fun twist to pages, so I did I start using them -- and they DID make the pages bulky. And sometimes they fell out. I would hear in passing other scrappers (on websites) talking about "setting" eyelets, but I always figured they were talking about getting them on the page. Finally one day one of the scrappin' mags I read actually explained how to SET an eyelet -- meaning once it's in, pound the back a bit so it won't fall off of the page. (Or, as the Making Memories website says, "splay the back of the eyelet open so that the back of your eyelet or other metal embellishment lays flat on the page.") DUH, Jen. I went almost a year before I figured it out! Ok, now I'll tell you how *I* put in and SET an eyelet. It's all about the splaying. heh.

[All of the pictures will open bigger if you click on them. Most are numbered in white to correspond with numbers in the text.]

First, figure out where on your layout you want the eyelet to go. Sometimes it helps to make a pencil mark there so you won't poke a hole in the wrong place. Wait, no, first for this whole process you will need tools -- I have a nifty tool kit from Making Memories ($27.00 at Michael's, but if you wait to get a 40% off coupon in the Sunday paper the cost isn't so bad.)

[pic 1] So I poke a hole through the paper with a hole-poker thing (technically called a paper piercer. I did it with a needle before I had this kit.) Oh, the paper is face up at this point (so I can see my page elements -- except you can't see page elements on pics 1,2, and 3 'cause I was using scraps to take these pics) on a computer mouse pad so I'm not poking my table. And so the paper the hole pushes out is going from front to back.

[pic 2] Then I take the manual hole punch and make my needle hole a little bigger (before the kit, I made a small circle of 5 little holes with the needle). [pic 3] Now I'm ready to pop my eyelet in.

After the eyelet is in, turn the page face down on the table (needs to be a hard surface now, there will be hammering involved), so the pictures and text are facing away from you and all you see is the back of your page.

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Take the eyelet setter and put the flower thing center (picture 4) right in the middle of the eyelet (picture 5). Hold it firmly, straight up (picture 6), and pick up the hammer. Pound the top of the eyelet setter -- I usually do three firm taps -- then check the eyelet to see if it has splayed correctly.

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It takes some experimenting with how much pressure it takes to get the hang of it, and different eyelets take different kinds of pounding.

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If I were you, I would take some scraps and pick out some eyelets to practice on (if you have a multi-pack, pick your least favorite color to practice on! ha ha) and get used to setting them BEFORE you start doing this on actual layouts.

There is also an "instant setter" that Making Memories makes, and it requires no pounding! But regardless, you WILL need to buy special tools for setting eyelets, and MM is really the company to get them from. They usually have an entire section of products at Michael's with all sorts of fun stuff.