Panels & Pages

A Comic & Graphic Novel Reading Log - for single issues, arcs, trades, and the art itself

Free sample - three real pages: The Panels Method, one complete Issue Log, and Panel Layouts That Stunned. Print at 100% on US Letter or A4.

How to Use This Log - The Panels Method

The whole system on one page (log p.3). The five habits the whole log is built around, so every later page makes sense.

1. Credit the whole team.

Every Issue Log (pp.11-20) starts with the credits page: writer, artist, colourist, letterer, cover artist. Comics are made by teams; log them like it. In a year, these fields quietly become the most valuable pages you own - they are how you learn whose names make you pick up a book.

2. Log the issue, not just the series.

Single issues are the unit comics are published in, so they are the unit this log records: what happened, the panel that got you, whether the ending was a cliffhanger. Three minutes, while it's fresh.

3. Close the arc.

When a storyline wraps - in issues or in a trade - give it the Volume & Arc spread (pp.21-26): the story told in six panels, the turning points, the cliffhanger it left (or didn't). Arcs are how comics are remembered; log them that way.

4. Study the art on purpose.

When a layout stuns you, a splash earns its page turn, a palette does the acting, or a sound effect lands like a punch - it goes in Art Notes (pp.27-31), with sketch boxes for copying layouts in pencil. Looking closely is a reading skill. This log treats it as one.

5. Follow the creators, keep the shelf honest.

Creator Trackers (pp.32-33) follow the people, the Series Shelf (pp.6-7) tracks what you own and have read - and only that. This log never asks you to recap plots to yourself (that's a different journal's job); it keeps the record of a reading life in comics: what you read, who made it, and what it looked like.

The keeper's rule:

A log you keep up beats a beautiful log you abandon. One line per field is a complete entry. The sketch boxes want pencil and thirty seconds, not talent.

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The Issue Log

One complete Issue Log (log p.11) - tonight's issue, logged properly. Three minutes, while it's fresh.

Series: **Issue #:** _____

Issue title (if it has one):

Date read:

Format:

[ ] Floppy [ ] Trade / TPB [ ] Digital [ ] Omnibus [ ] Library copy

The credits - the whole team, every time:

Writer:

Artist:

Colourist:

Letterer:

Cover artist:

The story in three panels:

Panel 1 - where it starts:

Panel 2 - the turn:

Panel 3 - where it lands:

The panel that got me (issue page / panel): **- why it worked:**

The cliffhanger check:

[ ] Ends on a cliffhanger - the wait until next issue begins now [ ] Self-contained - it lands whole

Part of arc: **- I am issue _____ of about _____**

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The verdict (tick one):

[ ] Instant classic - straight to the Hall of Fame shelf

[ ] Solid issue - the run is in good hands

[ ] For the art - log the pages on the Return Shelf (log p.37) and study one return (p.38)

[ ] Once was enough - noted, and the pull list verdict date just got closer

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Art Notes - Panel Layouts That Stunned

A study page for page design (log p.27): grids broken, pages bled, time stretched across a tier. A layout is the director's cut of a comic. When a page makes you slow down, speed up, or hold your breath - sketch its skeleton here. Thirty seconds, pencil, boxes only: you are studying structure, not forging art.

Study 1 - copy the layout skeleton here:



Comic: _____
Issue: _____ Page: _____
What it does to my reading (speed, breath, dread, joy): _____

What the layout does: [ ] Grid broken [ ] Full bleed [ ] Inset panels in a splash [ ] Silent page [ ] Time stretched [ ] Time compressed [ ] Mirror of an earlier page [ ] The gutter tells it

Study 2 - copy the layout skeleton here:



Comic: _____
Issue: _____ Page: _____
What it does to my reading (speed, breath, dread, joy): _____

What the layout does: [ ] Grid broken [ ] Full bleed [ ] Inset panels in a splash [ ] Silent page [ ] Time stretched [ ] Time compressed [ ] Mirror of an earlier page [ ] The gutter tells it

Study 3 - copy the layout skeleton here:



Comic: _____
Issue: _____ Page: _____
What it does to my reading (speed, breath, dread, joy): _____

What the layout does: [ ] Grid broken [ ] Full bleed [ ] Inset panels in a splash [ ] Silent page [ ] Time stretched [ ] Time compressed [ ] Mirror of an earlier page [ ] The gutter tells it

Study 4 - copy the layout skeleton here:



Comic: _____
Issue: _____ Page: _____
What it does to my reading (speed, breath, dread, joy): _____

What the layout does: [ ] Grid broken [ ] Full bleed [ ] Inset panels in a splash [ ] Silent page [ ] Time stretched [ ] Time compressed [ ] Mirror of an earlier page [ ] The gutter tells it

This free sample holds three real pages of Panels & Pages - A Comic & Graphic Novel Reading Log (44 pages: the Panels Method, the Longbox Dashboard, Series Shelf, Pull List and Release Watch, Gaps in the Run, ten Issue Logs with full credits, three Volume & Arc spreads, five Art Notes pages, Creator Trackers, the Cover Gallery, the Return Shelf, the Annual Panels Review and the Panels Awards - US Letter, A4 and tablet editions). Its shelf companion is our own original comic, Starfall Academy Issue #1. Both live at pagelyra.vercel.app