

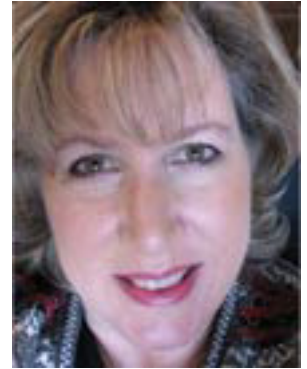
SCRAPPER'S GUIDE

The Easiest Way To Learn Digital Scrapbooking. **Guaranteed.**

Creating Templates From Your Layouts (Photoshop Elements)

Tip of the Week by Sara Horton on October 5, 2009

Do you ever feel like you are meeting yourself coming and going? Life swirls around us in a dizzying pace, doesn't it? We have a family calendar mounted in the hub of our home (otherwise known as the refrigerator) to try to keep some semblance of order in our lives. Keeping things organized in neat, numbered squares gives us a sense of control and direction.



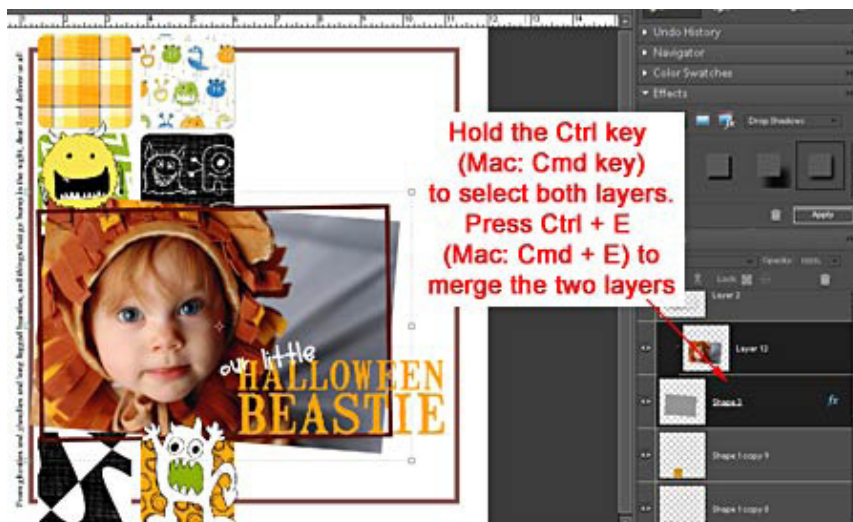
To keep control and direction in my scrapbooking life, I like to find shortcuts, like layered templates, to make the most of my scrapbooking minutes. By making each layout I complete into a layered template, I more than double my productivity. While doing this, I am building a library of templates that serve to jumpstart my creativity and provide a quick way to get a page done the next time I find a few minutes to scrapbook!

Making your scrapbook pages into layered templates is time well spent. Here's a peek into my workflow.

Step 1: Prepare the Layered Scrapbook Page

Begin by opening or creating a layered scrapbook page. Rename your page right away to avoid overwriting your original file. Select File > Save As and give it a new name. I like to use the word TEMPLATE in the new name to distinguish layouts from templates.

Next, check your layout to see if you have used any clipping masks. If you have, merge the layers before proceeding. To do this, hold the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key) and click on both of the layers. Press Ctrl + E (Mac: Cmd + E) to merge the two selected layers.



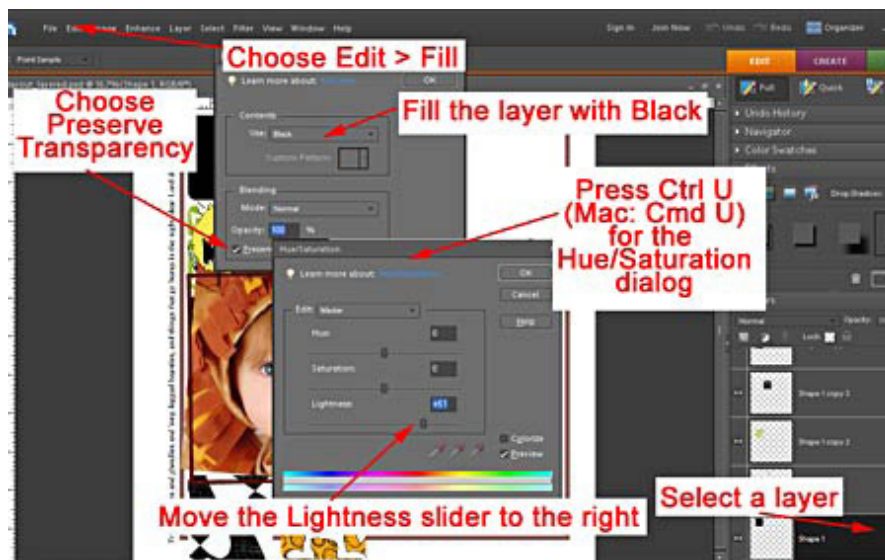
Step 2: Fill Text Layers With Dummy Text

Write generic terms such as “title” and “journaling” or “text” in place of the specific words you used on your layout. Just select the text layer, get the Text tool and highlight the existing text. Begin typing the new words to change it.

Step 3: Fill Paper, Mat, And Photo layers With Shades of Gray

Select the first paper, mat, or photo layer. Choose Edit > Fill to activate the Fill dialog box. Use the following settings: Content: Black, Blending Mode: Normal, Opacity 100%, and check the Preserve Transparency box. Click OK to confirm the fill. This fills the nontransparent section of your layer with black.

Change the black to a shade of gray by pressing Ctrl U (Mac: Cmd U) to activate the Hue/Saturation dialog. Move the Lightness slider to the right a bit to turn the black to gray.



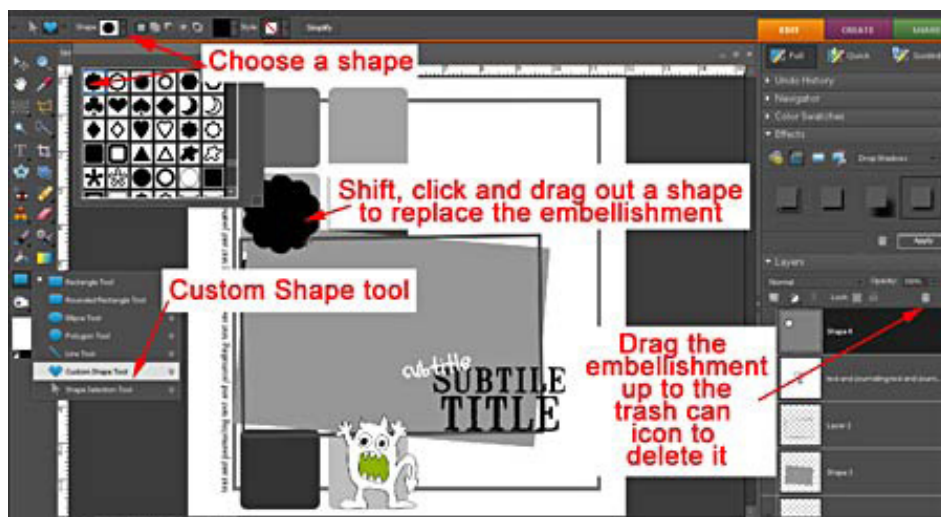
Repeat this process with the remaining paper, mat, or photo layers, moving the Lightness slider a little more or less to the right to make different shades of gray.

Step 4: Create Shapes to Represent Embellishments

When I have used an embellishment or brush image, I like to replace these with a shape layer as an embellishment “placeholder.” When I see the placeholder in my template, I know that this is the spot to add an embellishment that matches my new layout.

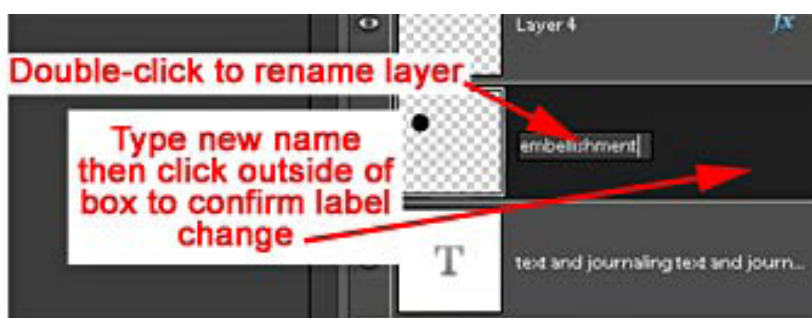
First delete the embellishment layer by dragging the layer to the trash can. Get the Custom Shape Tool that shares a spot on the Toolbar with the Rectangle Tool. Click and hold the Rectangle tool to reveal the other tools hidden beneath it. Click Custom Shape Tool and choose a shape from the Shape Picker drop-down menu in the Options Bar. You can choose a generic shape like a circle or choose one that resembles the embellishment you are replacing.

Press Shift and click and drag out the shape to represent the location of the embellishment. Simplify the shape by selecting Layer > Simplify Layer.



Step 5: Rename the Layers

Finally, rename the layers with labels that will help you identify them as you work with the template later. Double-click the layer name of each layer in the Layers panel. Type a new name such as “photo 1”, “patterned paper” or “embellishment.” Click on the layer outside of the name box to confirm the new name.



Step 6: Using Your Template

To use your template, select the layer you want to replace or “cover” with a photo or paper. Open a photo or paper and drag it onto your layered template. Move the photo or paper directly above the layer you wish to cover. Press Ctrl G (Mac: Cmd G) to group layers, which “glues” the photo to the layer. Repeat this process with other template layers.

Remember that the embellishment placeholders are there to remind you to add an embellishment to your page. Simply delete the placeholder after dragging an embellishment onto your page.

To replace the text, get the Text tool, highlight the existing text and begin typing on the text or title line.

Credits:

Scrapbook page by Sara Horton
Monstrous Paper Pack by Jesse Edwards at Designer
Digitals
Monstrous Brushes and Stamps by Jesse Edwards at
Designer Digitals
Fonts: Mailart Rubberstamp and Pea Yar Yar



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