

SCRAPPER'S GUIDE

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Wacky Brackets (Photoshop Elements)

Tip of the Week by Jen White on May 24, 2010

This is how the yearly tradition goes...

When the Christmas decorations come down - the double mini basketball hoops go up. This is in preparation for college basketball, of course.

And if you are a fan of March Madness, you know all about the Wacky Brackets.

This is where crazy fans try and predict the outcome of 64 teams battling their way on the road to the final four.

But you don't have to be a basketball fan to be a fan of the bracket.



Brackets in scrapbooking have been trendy forever, it seems. So in hopes of getting the 3x8 foot basketball hoops out of my living room, this scrapbooker is going to close out the season by creating my own version of the wacky bracket. Hope you will join me!

Step 1: Prepare

* Create a new document (File > New > Blank File) that is 4" wide by 8" high, 300 pixels/inch, RGB color, and has a transparent background. It is here that we will design a new element to drag onto a scrapbook page.

* Press the letter D to set the Color Chips to the default of black and white. This way we will be at the same starting point.

Step 2: Create

In this step we will create the foundational shape of our element...a bracket.

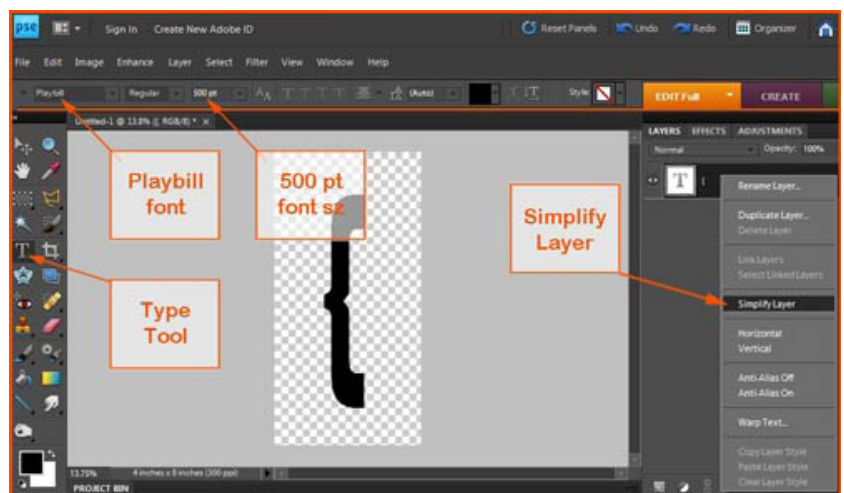
* Get the Type tool.

* In the Options Bar, choose Playbill for the font. Highlight the pt size number and change it to 500.

* Click near the bottom of your new document and type a bracket.

* Press and hold the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key) and click and drag on your bracket to reposition it to the center of your document. Press Enter to accept the changes.

* In the Layers panel, right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the bracket layer and choose Simplify Layer from the drop down menu.



Step 3: Duplicate

In this step we will duplicate our bracket layer in order to achieve a multicolored look.

- * Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to create a duplicate of the bracket layer.
- * In the Layers panel, activate the bottom layer by clicking on it.
- * Press Ctrl Shift Backspace (Mac: Cmd Shift Delete) to fill the bracket with the Background color (white). You will not see the white bracket because the black one is directly on top of it.

Step 4: Stroke

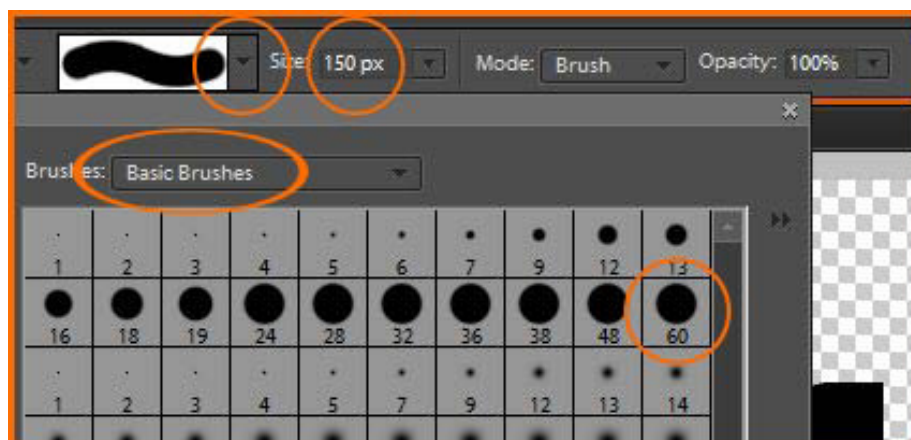
In this step we will add a stroke outline to our bracket to give a nice clean look.

- * In the Layers panel, activate the top layer.
- * Ctrl click (Mac: Cmd click) on the thumbnail of the active layer to create a selection outline.
- * Create a new layer by clicking on the Create a New Layer icon in the Layers panel.
- * In the Menu bar, choose Edit > Stroke (Outline) Selection. Enter 15 px for the Width, Black for the Color, and Inside for the Location. Click OK. You will not see the stroke outline because it is on top of the solid black bracket.
- * In the Menu Bar, choose Select > Deselect to get rid of the selection outline.

Step 5: Erase

In this step we will reveal parts of the white bracket by erasing sections of the black bracket.

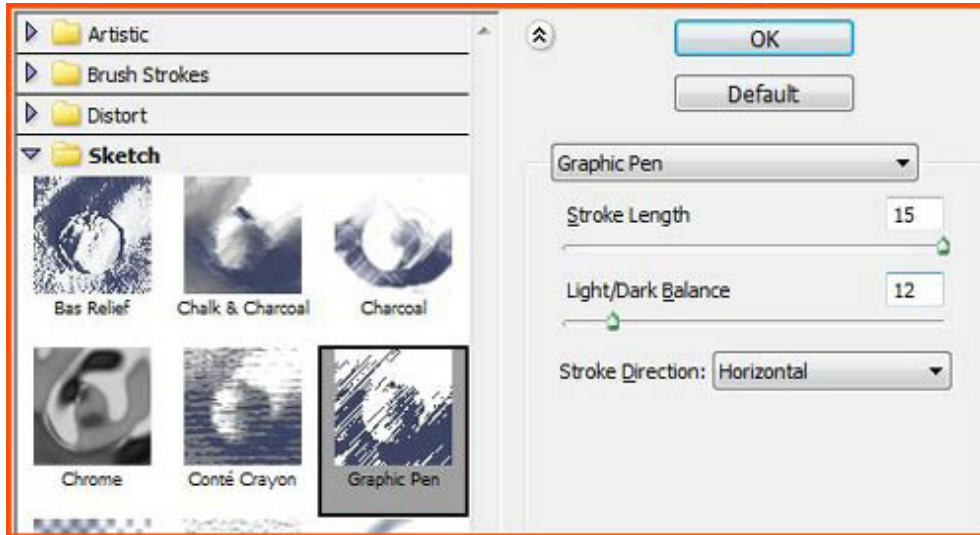
- * Get the Eraser tool.
- * In the Options Bar, choose a brush. To do this:
 - o Click on the down facing arrow to show selected brush presets.
 - o Choose Basic Brushes from the Brushes drop down menu.
 - o Double click on any Hard Mechanical brush.
- * Set the Size in the Options Bar to 150 px.
- * The Mode should be set at Brush and the Opacity at 100%.
- * In the Layers panel, activate the black bracket layer (middle layer).
- * Erase sections of the black bracket to reveal the white bracket below. See the scrapbook page below for direction.



Step 6: Sketch

In this step, we will add a filter to the black stripes to make them look as if they've been sketched.

- * In the Layers panel, make sure the black bracket layer (middle layer) is active.
- * In the Menu Bar, choose Filter > Sketch > Graphic Pen.
- * Set the Stroke Length to 15, Light/Dark Balance to 12, and Stroke Direction to Horizontal. Click OK.



Step 7: Merge

In this step we will get the bracket ready for transfer to our scrapbook page.

* In the Layers panel, activate the top layer.

* Press Shift Ctrl Alt E (Mac: Shift Cmd Opt E) to create a merged layer.

Your merged layer is now ready to be dragged to your scrapbook page!

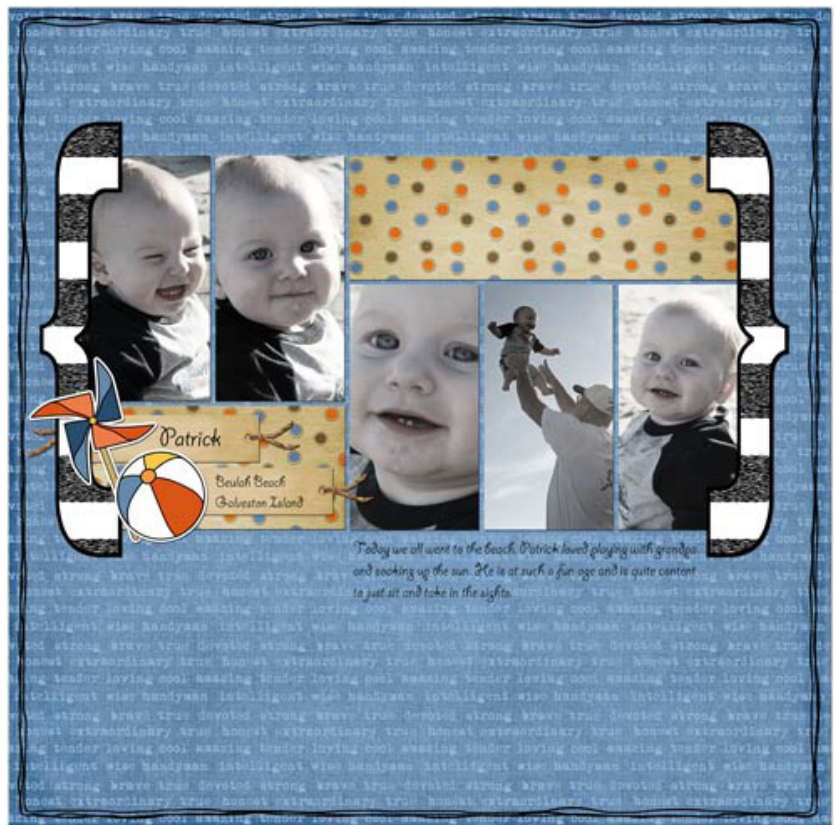
Step 8: Save

You wouldn't want to lose all that work you just did! Yikes!

* Save as a PSD file – this will enable you to edit individual layers in the future.

* Save as a PNG file – this will save the transparent background, but you will lose the ability to edit the layers.

Credits: Scrapbook page by Jen White. Kit - Boys & Toys by Digital Scrappers Designs. Font – Giddyup Std.





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