



♥ QwikLearn



QwikLearn Photoshop® Elements

Step-by-Step
Instructions
for
WINDOWS

PART 5 USING LAYERED TEMPLATES

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Qwiklearn Photoshop Elements for Windows

Lesson 05-01: What Is A Grayscale Template?

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 1–3 Practice Folder.

A grayscale template is a layered document designed by some else. You simply replace the layers in the template with your own photos, papers, and elements. That way you can quickly create a well-designed document.

The templates are called grayscale because the color used for the template pieces is often gray. However a grayscale template can be any color.



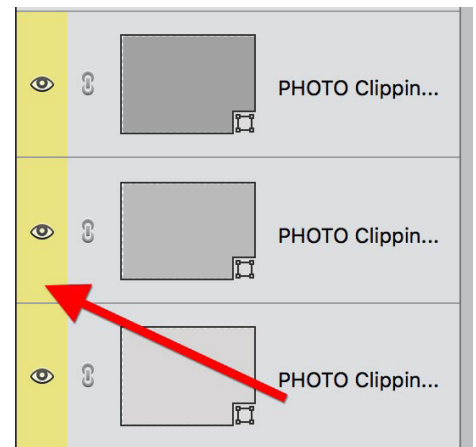
Color Coding On Layers

To add color coding to a layer:

- In the Layers panel select one or more layers.
- Right click on the strip that contains the visibility icon to the left of the layer.
- Choose a color from the pop up menu.

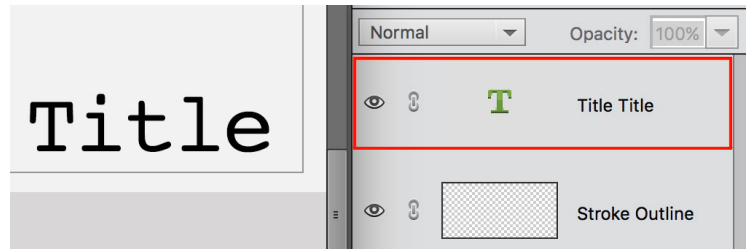
In this class the photo clipping mask layers are coded with yellow to help you quickly identify which layers are for clipping photos. The name “PHOTO Clipping Mask” also appears on the layer itself.

NOTE: Color coding visibility and function is only available with Photoshop Elements 15 or later.



Type Layers On Templates

Grayscale Templates often have one or more type layers with generic words to show you a good place to put a title or journaling. The font used on class templates, Courier, makes a good place holder, but it isn't the best font to use for either a title or journaling, so choose a new font when using templates.



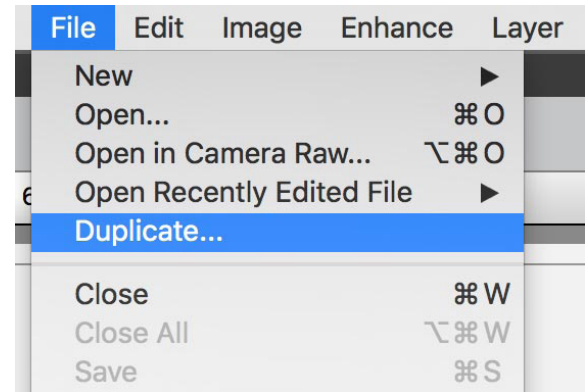
Credit

Template by QwikLearn

Lesson 05-02: Why Duplicate A Template?

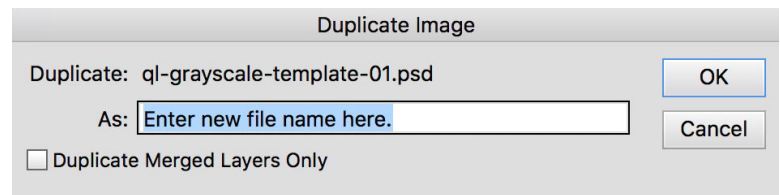
Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 1–3 Practice Folder.

Since digital templates can be used over and over to create different projects, it's important to keep the original template in its original form and only work on a copy of the template.



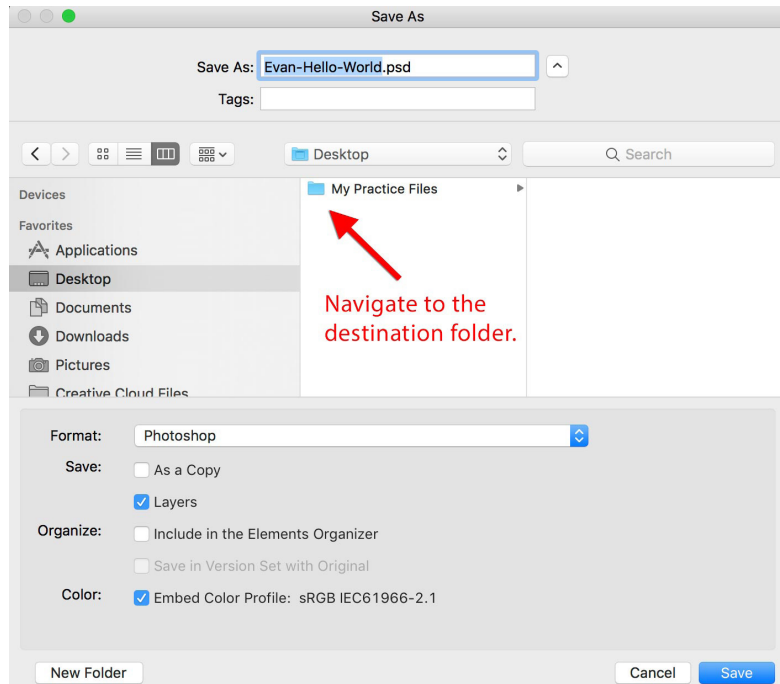
Duplicate The Template

- Open the grayscale template of your choice.
- In the Menu Bar choose File > Duplicate.
- When the dialog box comes up, enter a new name based on the subject of your project and click OK.



Save The Duplicate Template

- In the Menu Bar choose File > Save As.
- When the dialog box comes up it will show the name of the duplicate document and it will already be the right format, which is PSD, or Photoshop, so the only thing you'll need to change is the location.
- Using your computer navigation, find and click on the destination folder where you plan to keep your new file, or create a new folder in the desired location on your computer.
- Click Save, and now you can safely make any changes to the template because it's a copy.



Close The Original Template

On your desktop activate the original template by clicking on it and choose File > Close.

Lesson 05-03: Where Do I Start?

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 1–3 Practice Folder.

When using a grayscale template I recommend that you start with your photos because everything else you do depends on the topic of your photos and the colors in your photos.

Locate the Photo Clipping Mask layers and decide which photo to clip to each clipping mask.



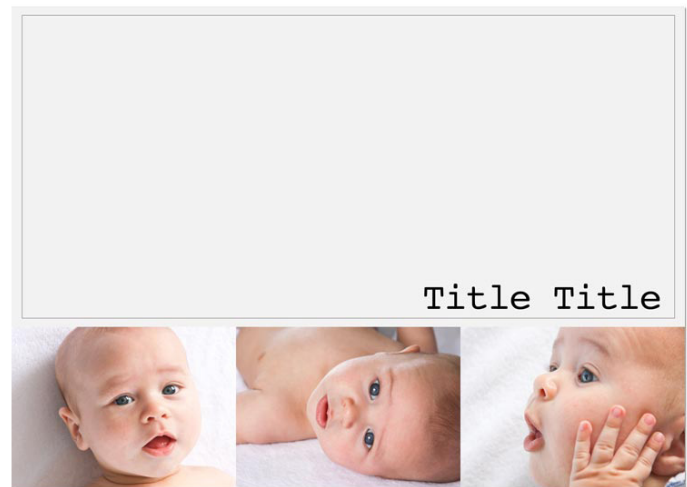
Move And Clip Your Photos

- When dragging images from the Photo Bin, make sure the template is the active document.
- Click and drag your photo over the clipping mask you want to use before letting go of the mouse to make sure your photo lands above that clipping mask in the Layers panel.
- If your photo doesn't land above the correct clipping mask, in the Layers panel click and drag your photo to the correct spot above the desired clipping mask.
- To clip the photo to the photo clipping mask, in the Menu Bar choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.



Resize Your Photos

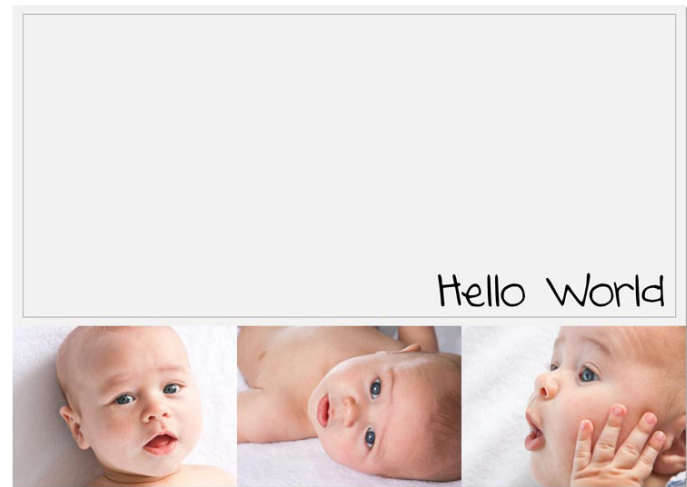
- If your photo isn't the correct size, press Ctrl T to get a Transform outline.
- If you can't see all the handles on the outline, press Ctrl 0 to fit the transform outline to the available desktop.
- Click and drag from a corner handle to resize while maintaining the original proportions.
- Press Alt and drag from a corner handle to resize all four corners at the same time.
- When you're satisfied, click on the green check mark to commit the change.
- Continue adding photos to any remaining photo clipping masks.



Personalize The Title

The template used for this lesson is a simple graphic design where the colors of the background and stroke outline don't need to be changed, but you'll always need to change the template title.

- Get the Type tool and open Tool Options.
- Click once on the title to activate the type layer and then click and drag over the type to highlight it.
- In Tool Options open the Font menu and choose a font.
- Adjust the size and Alignment as necessary.
- Type a new title.
- If you need to move the type, move your cursor away from the type to get a Move tool icon. On your document click and drag the type to move it.
- When you let go of the mouse, Photoshop Elements automatically commits the type.
- Choose File > Save to save your changes.



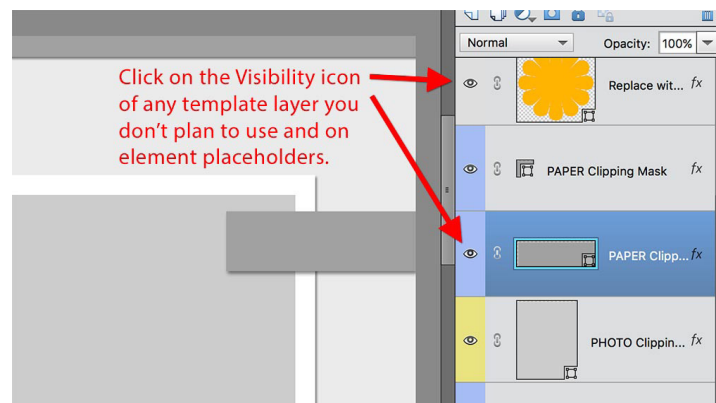
Lesson 05-04: Replace Template Layers

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 4 Practice Folder.

Grayscale templates give us structure with creative freedom.

Clipping Mask Layers

You can decide whether to use all the template layers or not. If you decide not to use a clipping mask layer, in the Layers panel click on the visibility icon to hide the layer. You could also delete the layer, but I find it's best to wait until I'm finished with the page just in case I change my mind.



Follow This Template Procedure

If you're working with a lot of layers and needing to resize frequently:

- Get the Move tool.
- In Tool Options make sure Auto Select Layer is checked.
- Temporarily check Show Bounding Box as well to make it fast to resize.

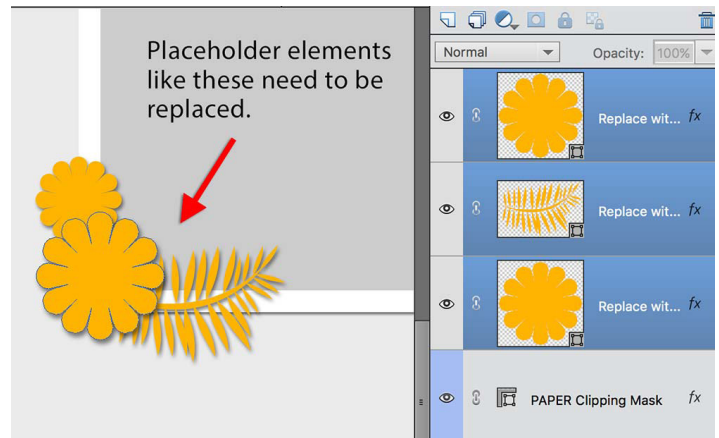
NOTE: when you're finished moving and resizing files, remember to uncheck Show Bounding Box if you don't want a bounding box around the selected layer.

- When dragging files from the Photo Bin to your document, the file lands above the layer over which you let go of the mouse.
- If you accidentally drop a file in the wrong spot, you can click and drag its layer to a new spot in the Layers panel.
- Move and resize the files you add as needed by clicking and dragging from a corner handle of the bounding box or clicking and dragging inside the bounding box.
- To resize all four corners of the bounding box at the same time, press Alt as you click and drag from a corner handle.
- Clip each photo or paper to a clipping mask layer on the template by choosing Layer > Create Clipping Mask.

Replace Placeholder Elements

Some layers on a template are meant to be replaced because they aren't real elements—they're simply placeholder shapes that show a good location for real elements.

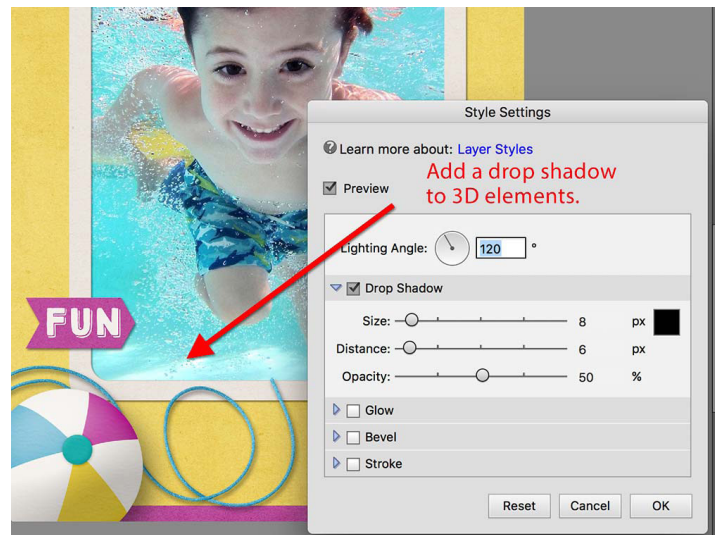
- Take note of the position and number of placeholder elements, and then click on their visibility icons in the Layers panel to hide them.
- Look in your stash of elements to see what you could use instead of the placeholder elements. I chose a piece of word art, a beach ball, and some string.
- Think through the possibilities of how you would arrange the elements keeping them as realistic as possible.
- Add each element to the template in a logical order, resizing and repositioning as you do so.



Add Layer Styles To 3D Elements

Any decorative elements that are 3D will need a drop shadow. Think of how the drop shadow would look in real life and use that as a guide. For example in real life a small tab would have a very small drop shadow, but a beach ball would have a large drop shadow.

- On your document click on an element with the Move tool to select it.
- In the Menu Bar choose Layer > Layer Style > Style Settings.
- Click the Drop Shadow check box and make any adjustments you want to the settings.
- When you're satisfied click OK.



Duplicate Drop Shadows

To add a drop shadow to other layers you can duplicate the first drop shadow. In the Layers panel press Alt and click and drag the fx icon from a layer that has a shadow to a layer that doesn't have a shadow.

If the copied drop shadow needs to be adjusted, double click on the fx icon, make the changes, and click OK.

Remove A Layer Style

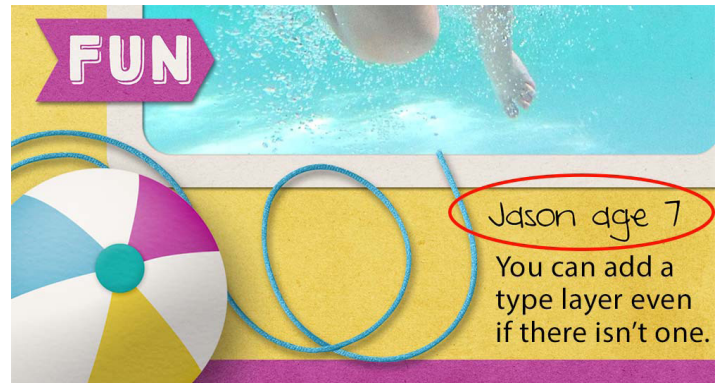
You may want to remove one layer style but leave a second layer style in place. For example, in the video I removed a stroke outline from the photo clipping mask layer, but I left the drop shadow. To do that:

- In the Layers panel double click on the fx icon to open the Style Settings dialog box.
- Click on the check mark of the layer style you want to remove to uncheck the style.
- Click OK.

Add A Type Layer

If a template doesn't have a title or type layer, you can still add some type.

- Get the Type tool.
- In Tool Options select your Font, Size, and Alignment.
- On your document click and add your type.
- Click the check mark to commit the type.



Delete Hidden Layers

Once you've finalized your template, you can get rid of any hidden layers, such as the placeholder elements that you replaced. The easiest way to delete multiple hidden layers is to click on the Layers panel fly out menu icon and choose Delete Hidden Layers.

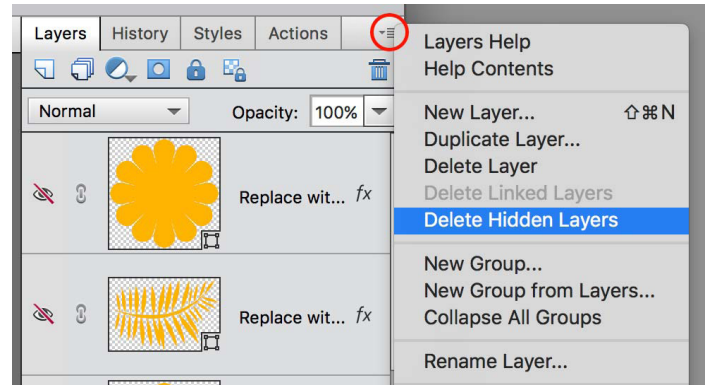
Remember, *you're* in control of the template design. The template gives you a framework to create a good design, but you control the final results.

Credits

Template by QwikLearn

Papers and Elements from Hello Summertime by Digilicious Design

Font: DJB Annalise the Brave

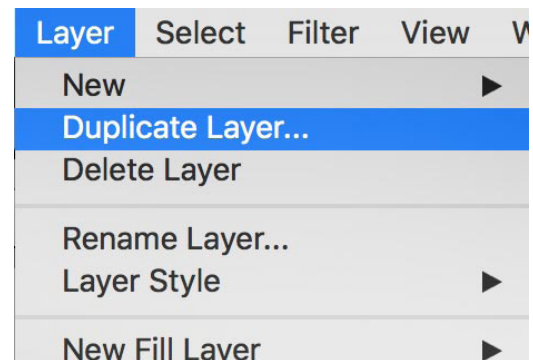


Lesson 05-05: Add A Clipping Mask

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 5 Practice Folder.

A template can be close to what you want, but not quite right. Here's how to easily add a clipping mask to your template and alter the design:

- Get the Move tool and open Tool Options.
- Make sure Auto Select Layer is checked.
- On your document click on the photo clipping mask you want to duplicate. This will make it the selected layer in the Layers panel.
- To make a copy of the selected layer, in the Menu Bar choose Layer > Duplicate Layer.
- When the dialog box comes up, click OK.
- On your document click on the layer and move it wherever you want.

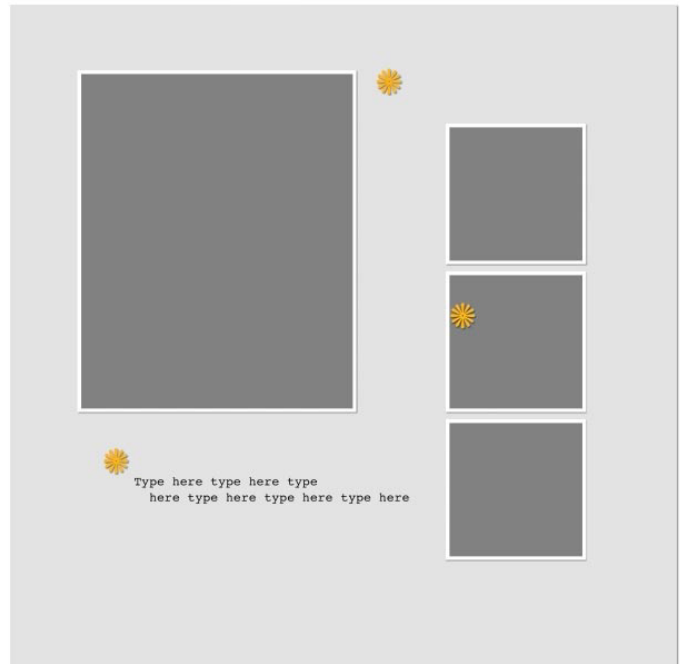


Line Up The Photo Clipping Masks

The template may now be out of balance, so you'll have to think through the best way to solve the problem of how to accommodate the new template piece. There's more than one way to go about it, so figure out a layout that's pleasing to you.

Here's one method:

- Click and drag the new photo clipping mask below the image on the right so the two photo mask are lined up, and leave a small amount of space between them.
- Drag the left smaller photo clipping mask below the other two to make a row of three photo clipping masks. Make sure the space between all three images is the same.
- If necessary use the Arrow Keys to move them into place.



Resize The Photo Clipping Masks: Method 1

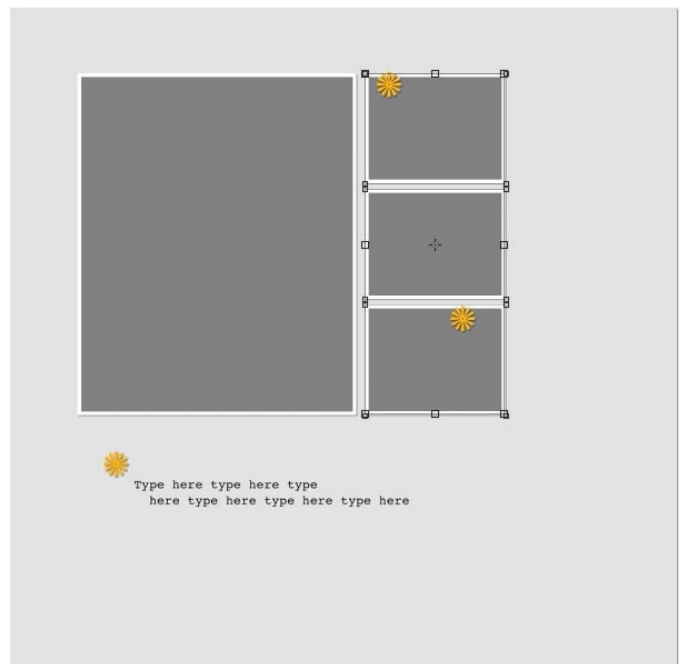
You may need to resize the photo clipping masks. Here's what I did:

- In the Layers panel select all three smaller photo clipping mask layers by clicking on the bottom mask layer and Shift clicking on the top mask layer.
- Press Ctrl T to get a Transform outline. Because you have three layers selected, all three are included in the transform outline and you can move and resize all three at the same time.
- Click and drag the set of three photo clipping masks near the larger photo and resize them.

Normally you would resize using a corner handle to maintain the original proportion, but these are generic clipping masks, so you can distort them without causing any harm.

To do that click and drag the bottom middle transform handle up to the bottom edge of the larger photo. This changes the proportion of the smaller photos from square to horizontal.

The stroke outline will easily adjust to the new size without distortion because a stroke layer style keeps the same distance from the edge of the template no matter how much you change the photo clipping mask layer.

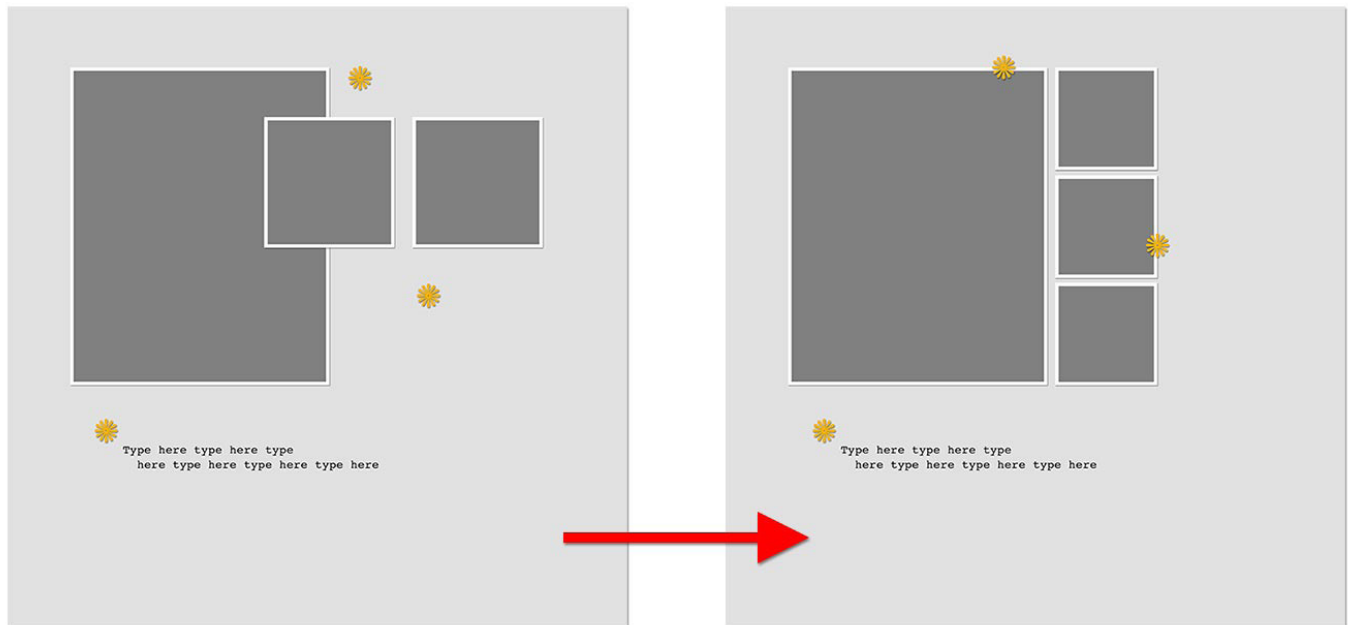


Resize The Photo Clipping Masks: Method 2

If you prefer to resize the clipping masks proportionately click and drag from a corner handle instead. Line up the bottom edge of the row of masks with the bottom edge of the larger photo and click on the check mark to commit the change.

Note: Any time you change a template you may also need to adjust the position of the placeholder elements and type to fit the new design.

Here's my before and after template.



Here's the family history image I made with the revised template. All of the papers and elements, except for the flowers, are flat items that don't need a drop shadow.

Credits

Template by QwikLearn

ArtPlay Palette Family by Anna Aspness



Lesson 05-06: Rotate Clipping Masks

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 6 Practice Folder.

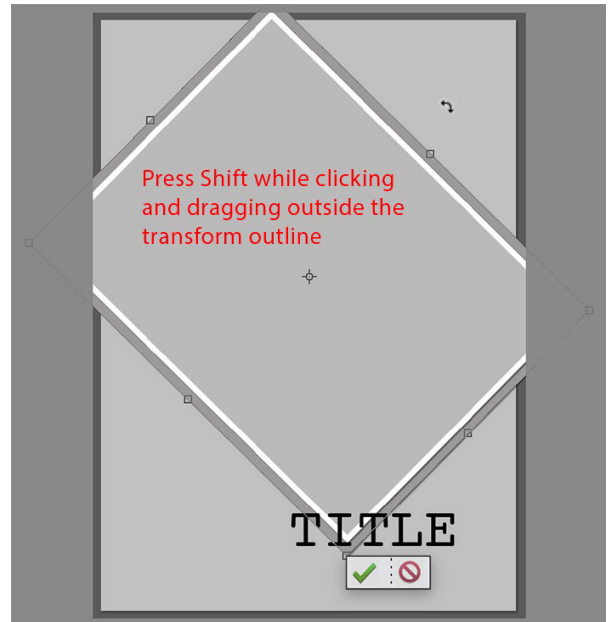
Here are some tips on how to rotate a clipping mask.

- Get the Move tool and make sure Auto Select Layer is checked in Tool Options.
- On your document click on the photo clipping mask to select that layer in the Layers panel.
- If you want to rotate more than one layer, Shift click on another layer in the Layers panel to select a row of layers or Ctrl click to select additional non-contiguous layers.
- Press Ctrl T to get a transform outline.

Three Ways To Rotate Layers By Exact Increments

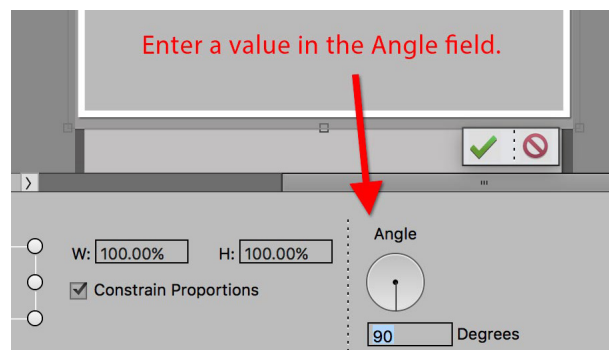
Method 1: Use the Shift Key

- With the Transform tool active, move your mouse outside the transform outline until you see a curved double arrow.
- Press Shift and click and drag the mouse in the direction you want to rotate.
- Pressing the Shift key forces the rotation to go in increments of 15° which makes it easy to land exactly at the right spot for a horizontal orientation.
- Let go of your mouse and then let go of the Shift key.
- Click on the check mark or press Enter to commit the transform.



Method 2: Use the Angle field in Tool Options

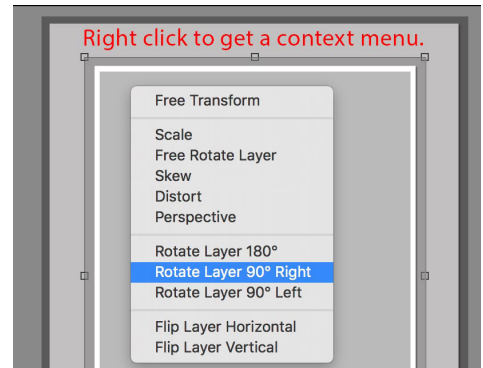
- With the Transform tool active, in Tool Options enter the number of degrees you want in the Angle field.
- Enter 90 to instantly rotate the layers 90°.
- You can also enter -90, which rotates the layers the opposite direction. In some cases, it'll be important which direction you go.
- Click on the check mark or press Enter to commit the transform.



Method 3: Use The Context Menu

- With the Transform tool active, right click on your document to get a context menu.
- Choose one of the degree options down at the bottom for rotating layers, and that instantly rotates the selected layers.

All three of these methods let you easily choose an exact rotation rather than you trying to eyeball it.



Resize Layers

Once you've rotated the layers, you can choose to resize them as well.

- To resize all four corners at the same time and maintain the same proportions, press Alt and click and drag from a corner handle.
- Click and drag inside the transform outline to move the layers. Press Shift as you drag to move the layers in a straight line.
- Click and drag from a middle handle on any of the sides to resize the layers. (This changes the proportions.)
- If you want two opposite sides to resize at the same time, press Alt and click and drag from any side handle.
- When you're satisfied click OK.

Rotate Freestyle

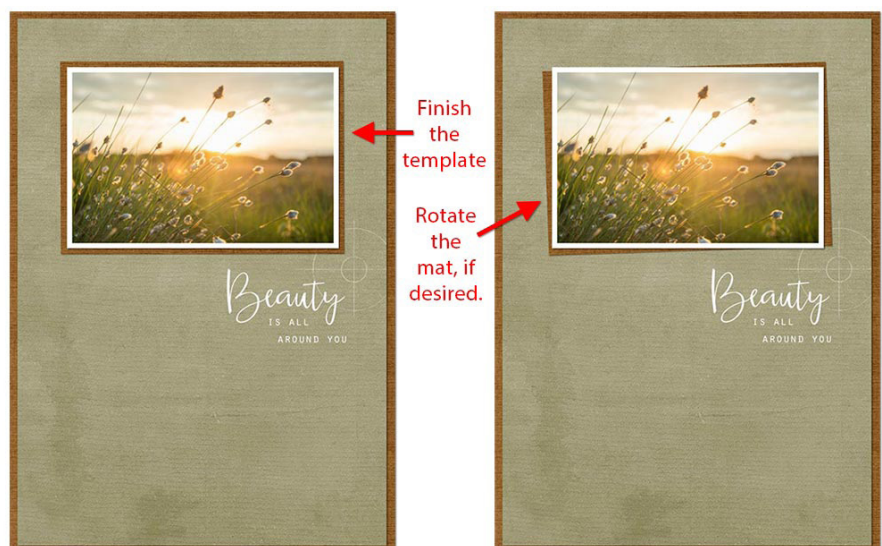
Rotating a layer can also be done free style.

- In the Layers panel select the layer or layers you want to rotate.
- Press Ctrl T to get the Transform tool. The outline may be large if a large photo or paper is clipped to a clipping mask.
- Move your mouse outside the transform outline.
- When you see the curved double arrow, click and drag in the direction you want the layers to rotate. Doing it this way you have to eyeball it.
- Click on the check mark or press the Enter key to commit the transform.

Here's my finished template with the photo mat straight on the left and with the photo mat tipped on the right.

Credits

Paper from Sweetie Pie by Brandy Murry and Heartbeat At My Feet by Zoe Pearn.
Overlay stamp from Photographie by Joanne Brisebois
Fonts: Caleigh and Orator Std



Lesson 05-07: Flip A Template

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 7 Practice Folder.

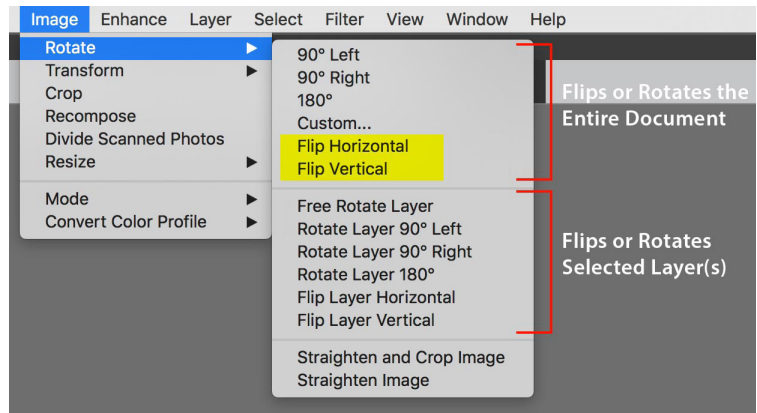
One way to customize a template is to flip it.

- If you want to make adjustments to clipping mask layers before flipping the document, do that first.
- To flip a template horizontally in the Menu Bar choose Image > Rotate > Flip Horizontal.
- To flip a template vertically in the Menu Bar choose Image > Rotate > Flip Vertical.

Choose The Correct Rotation

Don't confuse the two sections in the Image > Rotate menu. In the top section all the rotate options will rotate the entire document, including all the layers in it. There's a dividing line after the top section.

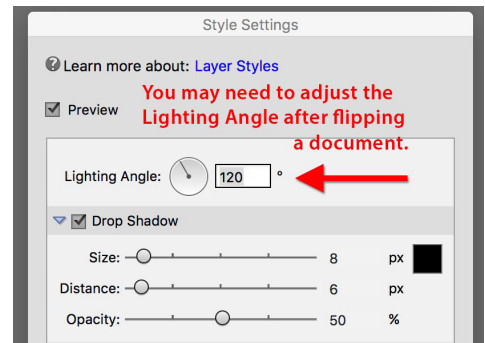
The next section will rotate only one or more selected layers within the document. So make sure you're choosing the rotation you really want, whether it's a layer or the entire document.



Adjust Drop Shadows

After flipping or rotating a template you'll need to adjust the drop shadow direction, if it isn't what you want.

- Select one of the template clipping masks. It doesn't matter if it's a photo clipping mask or a paper clipping mask.
- Double click on the fx icon on the layer to get the Style Settings dialog box.
- Change the Lighting Angle to 120°, or whatever angle you prefer and click OK. This will change the angle of all the drop shadows in the entire document, which ensures that all the shadows appear to come from the same light source.

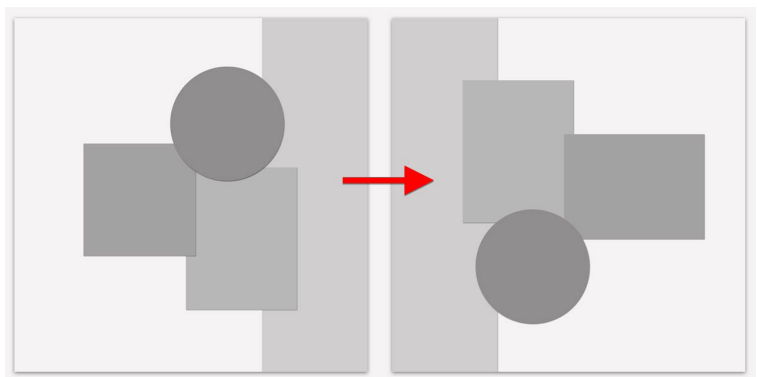


Use The Revised Template

Once you're done flipping the template and adjusting the drop shadows, you're ready to use the template to create a project.

Note: Everything I used to create my project is in the Practice folder for this lesson. In the Practice folder the white paint file will appear to be blank because the paint is white against a white background, but it will show up when you move it onto your template over a layer that's darker.

Here's my original template and the flipped template.



And here's my finished project.

Credits

Patterned paper (recolored) from Love Mom by Karla Dudley
Textured paper and bow (both recolored) from Make A Wish by Kim Broedelet
Circle Frame from A Mother's Heart by Susan Bartolini
Paint Wash from Christmas Wishes by Kristin Cronin-Barrow
Fonts: Quicksand and League Script Thin



Lesson 05-08: Avoid These No No's

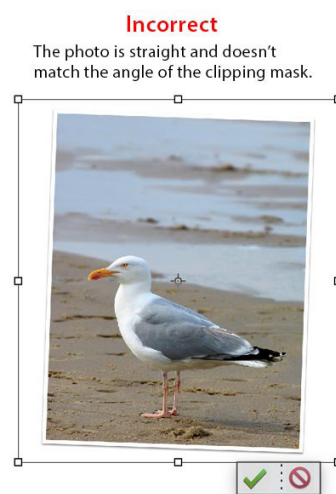
Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 8 Practice Folder.

There are two no-no's to avoid when using templates that have angled clipping masks.

No-No #1: Forgetting to angle a photo that's clipped to an angled clipping mask.

Here's how to angle a photo so it matches the clipping mask:

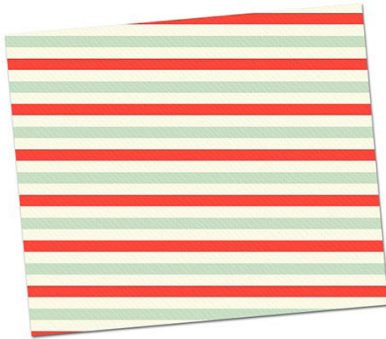
- Select the clipping mask you want to use.
- Open the Photo Bin and click and drag the photo you plan to use onto your document above the clipping mask.
- In the Menu Bar choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask, or use the shortcut: press Alt and click on the line between the two layers in the Layers panel.
- Press Ctrl T to get Transform options. Using a corner handle resize the photo until it's about the size you want.
- With the transform outline still active, angle the photo to match the clipping mask angle by clicking and dragging outside the outline.
- When the photo edge and clipping mask edge are parallel, click on the check mark or press Enter to commit the transform.
- Click on the photo and adjust it as needed.



- Don't forget that paper may also need to be rotated to line up correctly with an angled paper clipping mask.

Incorrect

The paper is straight and doesn't match the angle of the clipping mask.



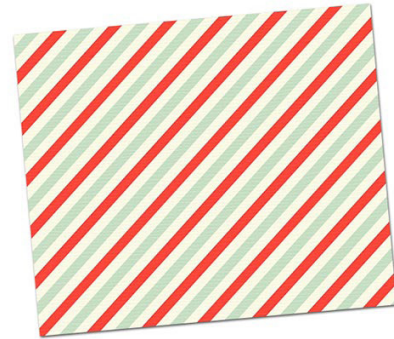
Correct

The paper is angled to match the angle of the clipping mask.



Another Option

Choose a different angle for the paper that works with the clipping mask.



No-No #2: Using a side handle to resize an angled clipping mask.

You can resize an angled clipping mask proportionately, but if you click and drag from the sides, you'll distort it.

Here's the right way to adjust the width or height of an angled clipping mask.

Step 1 is to straighten the clipping mask:

- In the Menu Bar choose View > Rulers.
- In the Layers panel click on the photo clipping mask for the photo you want to widen.
- Press Ctrl T to get Transform options.
- Click and drag outside the bounding box to make the clipping mask straight again.
- Drag a guide from one of the rulers to check the position and make sure it's straight.
- When you're satisfied, commit the transform.

Step 2 is to widen the clipping mask and then angle it.

- Once the clipping mask is no longer tipped, get the Transform tool again and click and drag from a side handle to make the clipping mask wider.
- When you're satisfied with the width, rotate the clipping mask again and then commit the transform.
- Make any adjustments necessary to the photo and any other elements around the photo.

Original



Resized Incorrectly



Resized correctly



Here's my finished project

One final note: the same steps would be necessary if you want to increase the height of an angled clipping mask. Use this resizing technique any time you're changing the proportions of a clipping mask that's angled.

Credits

Papers and sailboat sticker from World Travel by LaurieAnn
Compass (recolor) from Summer Passport by Syndee
Nuckles

Fonts: Myriad Pro Light and Amigirl Sans Swash



Lesson 05-09: Modify A Template Size

Practice Image is in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 9 Practice Folder.

There are two kinds of modifications. The easy one is to keep the same proportions but change the overall size, either larger or smaller.

The second kind of modification is a bit harder, but still easy to do, and that is to change the size AND proportion of the template without distorting it but still keeping a similar design. You can do this with just about any size or orientation of document

Modify The Template Keeping The Same Proportions

Here's how to turn a 12 x 12 inch template into an 8 x 8 inch template. (Other sizes work with this method as well.)

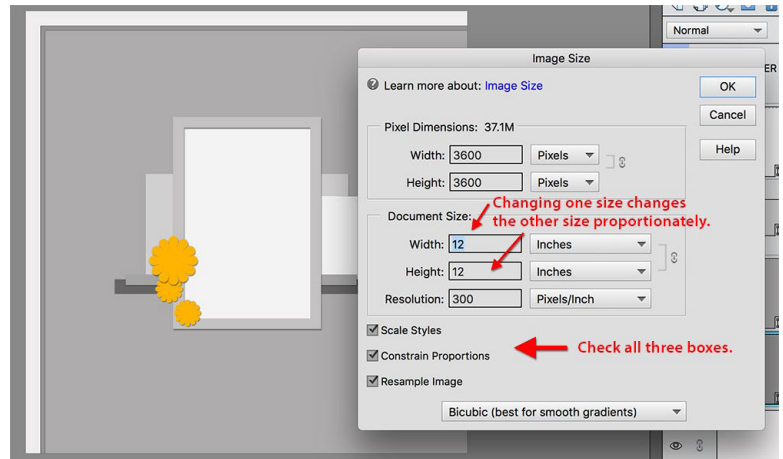
- In the Menu Bar choose File > Duplicate.
- When the dialog box comes up, give the duplicate a new name and click Okay.
- In the Menu Bar choose Image > Resize > Image Size.
- When the dialog comes up check all three check boxes in the lower left: Resample Image, Constrain Proportions, and Scale Styles.

Check Box Meaning

- Resample Image tells Photoshop Elements that it's OK to change the number of pixels in order to change the document size. Photoshop Elements will delete or add pixels to create the new size of document.
- Constrain Proportions tells Photoshop Elements to keep the image in proportion. When you can change the Width, the Height automatically changes proportionately.
- Scale Styles is important because if you don't check it, the styles will stay the same size when you resize. This makes the styles too big if you make the document smaller, or it makes them too small if you make the document larger. By checking Scale Styles you give Photoshop Elements permission to adjust the styles for the size of the new document, which is a good thing.

Resizing Algorithm

- The resize menu at the bottom gives you several choices for the best kind of algorithm when enlarging or reducing the size of your document. Since I was reducing the size I chose Bicubic Sharper.
- Click OK, and your duplicate document will change to an 8 x 8 inch size.



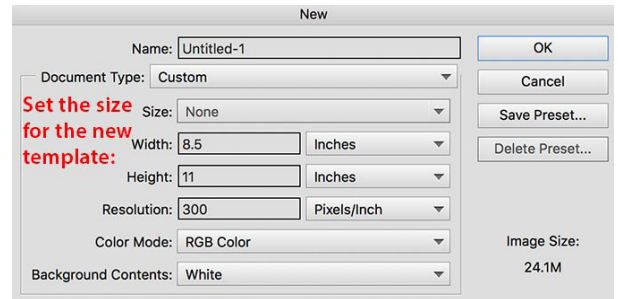
Modify The Template Using A Different Proportion

Here's how to modify the size AND proportion of a template. In the example we changed a 12 x 12 inch template to an 8.5 x 11 size.

Make An 8.5x11 Document

Start by making a new document that's 8.5 x 11.

- In the Menu Bar choose File > New > Blank File.
- When the dialog box comes up enter the new size you want.
- Keep the same resolution as the original template, which is 300 ppi.
- Give your document a new name. I used the same name but added -8.5x11 at the end.
- For the Color Mode Use RGB Color and use White for the Background Contents. Then click OK.



Resize The Original Document

- Activate the original document.
- In the Menu Bar choose Image > Resize > Image Size.
- When the dialog comes up make sure all three check boxes are checked.
- Choose the longest side of the desired 8.5x11 document, which in this case is 11 inches, and enter it in either the Width or the Height field. Since Constrain Proportions is checked, both size fields will change to 11 inches. Click OK.

Move Template Layers

Now it's time to move the layers from the original template to the destination document.

- In the Layers panel of the original document, click on the bottom layer and Shift click on the top layer to select all the layers.
- Get the Move tool and click and drag the layers to the new document via the tab, or, if you're using the Floating Window view you can drag from one floating window to another. Press Shift, let go of the mouse, and then let go of the Shift key to center the layers on the new document.

Make Template Layer Adjustments

Because the proportion is different on the destination document you'll most likely need to make some adjustments. Start by selecting groups of layers that go together and move or resize them.

Select And Adjust Layers

To quickly select a cluster of layers so you can adjust them:

- Get the Move tool and make sure Auto Select Layer is checked in Tool Options.
- Hide any background paper(s) that cover the Background layer by clicking on the Visibility icon(s) in the Layers panel.
- On your document click and drag over a group of layers with the Move tool to instantly select their layers in the Layers panel.
- Once the group of layers is selected, press Ctrl T to get transform options.
- Press Alt and click and drag from a corner handle to resize all four corners at the same time.
- To move the layers while transforming, click and drag inside the transform outline.
- When you're satisfied, click on the check mark to commit the transform.

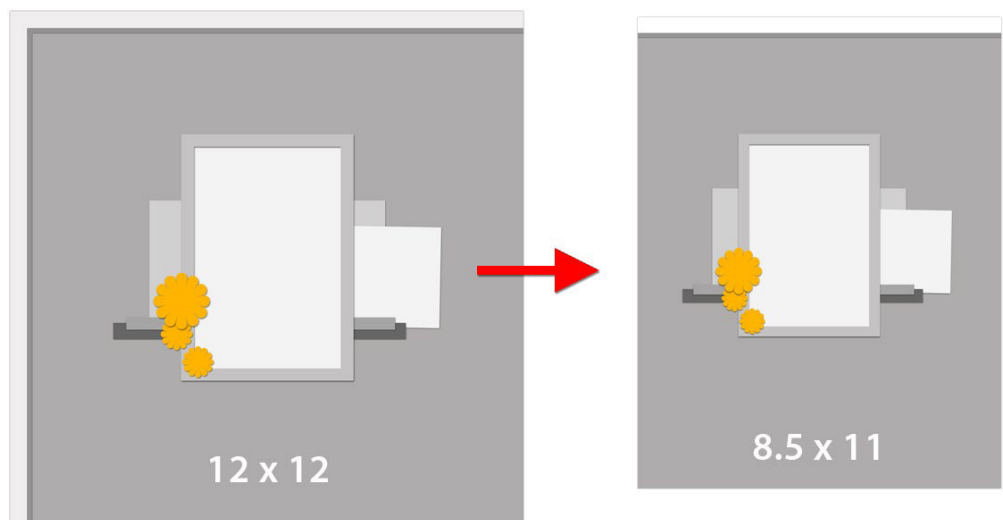
Adjust Large Background Papers

- Turn on the visibility of any large background paper layers you hid earlier.
- Move and resize the papers as necessary.
- The template doesn't have to be an exact match of the original, but it should look similar. The final look, though, is up to you.

So that's how to quickly change the size and proportion of a template to suit your needs.

Credit

Template by QwikLearn



Lesson 05-10: Part 5 PROJECT—Using Grayscale Templates

Practice Images are in QwikLearn Part 5 Lesson 10 Practice Folder.

Use your new template skills with a fun project! You may use your own files and photos or the files in the Part 5 Lesson 10 Practice folder which include:

- One template
- Three photos
- Papers and elements

Project Rules

- Modify the size of the template in some way—either by changing the size proportionately or by changing the size AND proportions.
- Use your own photos, if possible. If you simply don't have any photos, you may use the demo photos I provided for this lesson.
- Do your project before watching the next video called “Watch Me Create” where I show you what I did. There are many ways to make a great looking project, so I don't want you to be influenced or limited by seeing what I do before you've had a chance to use your own imagination.

Have fun putting your new skills into action!

Credits

Practice files from Memory Keeper by Kim Broedelet

Frame from Perfect Harmony by Digilicious