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Secrets of Terrific Type

Lesson 04-05: Layer Styles How To—Photoshop

As promised, in this lesson, I'll show you how quick and easy it is to use Layer Styles and how to use them to turn a piece of word art into a sticker.

Step One: Prepare the Workspace

So here we are in PS. I've already created a new document that is 12 inches by 12 inches at 300ppi with a white background.

I've also already opened this piece of word art I created in Lesson 5 and duplicated the layer to my new document.



Step Two: Change Background Color

Now, in order for you to be able to see the drop shadow better, I'm going to make my background layer a light gray.

To do that, in the Layers panel, click on the background layer to activate it.

Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and choose Hex #: cccccc. Click OK.

Press Alt Backspace (Mac: Opt Delete) to fill the background with the light gray color.



Step Three: Add Stroke

Now, in the Layers panel, click on the type layer to activate it.

In PS, at the bottom of the Layers panel, you will see an icon that has two letters in it, fx. Click once on that icon to access the Layer Styles options.

First, click on the word Stroke.

This will open the Layer Style dialog box with the Stroke part of the menu showing.

For the Stroke, I'll set the Size to 20 px and the Position to Outside. That part is important. Whenever you are making your wordart into a sticker, always set the Stroke Position to Outside or it will hide part of your letters. Ok, then set the Blend Mode to Normal and the Opacity to 100%. Set the Fill Type to Color and set the Color the White.



Step Four: Add Drop Shadow

Now, on the left hand side of the Layer Style dialog box, click on the Drop Shadow option to access that menu. For the Blend Mode set it to Linear Burn and set the Opacity to 40%. Set the Distance to 15, the Spread to 10, and the Size to 22. Click OK.



Now you have a realistic looking sticker. How easy was that?!

Feel free to make as many stickers as you wish. Keep in mind that if you change the size of the type, you'll often need to reduce the size of the layer style settings, too. Both the stroke width and the shadow numbers.

Because layer styles are simple and not something we'll often use, I'm forgoing any big projects for this lesson. Instead, I've come up with a small quiz for you to take. The quiz will help reinforce what we've learned about layer styles so I hope you ace it!