



by Jenifer Juris

Secrets of Terrific Type

Lesson 04-05: Layer Styles

So first, what is a layer style? A layer style is one or more effects applied to a layer or a group of layers. Both PS and PSE come with built in layer styles and even though PS gives us access to more of them, PSE still has a lot to pick from. But when it comes to type, layer styles can be tricky.

Let's go over some do's and don'ts when it comes to layer styles and type to see if I can help you better understand when a layer style may be appropriate.

#1. Don't use a layer style just because you can.

When I first started digital scrapbooking, I used ALL the layer styles on my text. From embossing to shadows to you name it, I used it! I often cringe when I go back and look at my first pages. Don't get me wrong, I am proud of my journey and it's great to see how far I've come. I just wish I had had someone reach out and tell me to stop it with the layer styles. The reason is, at least when it comes to digital scrapbooking, most layer styles make your page look less realistic. And the goal for most of us digital scrapbookers is to make our page look MORE realistic. Even with super artistic art journal style pages, it's very rare to see layer styles used on text.

Layer Style Layer Style

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#2. Do use a layer style when it's appropriate.

For instance, if you want to turn your type into a sticker, adding a stroke layer style along with a drop shadow layer style will help you do that. Stickers are actually used a lot in scrapbooking so it's common to see them in digital scrapbooking too.

Sticker Wordart

#3. Do use a layer style if it goes with your theme.

This past year, My husband and I had a young adult move in with us. We've known her for years and she needed a place to stay while she gets her feet planted in adult life. So, for now, she's with us and we wanted to have a lot of fun with our most recent Christmas card. We decided to get dressed up in 80's themed outfits and I used my tripod and timer to get some great pictures. I then designed this 80's style card and in this case, I purchased this layer style so that I could create any 80's style text I needed for this project. (Don't worry, it was super cheap.)

But as a caution, these layer styles are only to be used when it FITS your project. I may never use that layer style again. I have it, just incase another 80's project comes along but until it does, it's stashed away in a safe place on my computer.



So, to summarize, unless you're creating a special project like my 80's themed Christmas card, or you're a graphic designer who's creating 3d type logos, layer styles aren't something you'll be using much on type.

Now that we understand where layer styles fit in when it comes to creating wordart, let's move on to the next video where I'll show you how easy it is to use layer styles by walking you through how to take Word Art we created in Lesson 5 and turn one into a sticker.