**Lesson 7: Gradient Blends Transcript** © Syndee Rogers

In this lesson we'll be using Gradients to blend textures into pattern or solid layers. Basically, we will be creating black gradient templates that softly fade Into the background, and will really help us create beautifully blended papers. And as an added bonus they work great for photos too!

I'm filming this video in Photoshop Elements but the instructions or just the same in Adobe Photoshop unless where noted.

As you can see I've already created a 12 by 12 inch document at 300 pixels per inch with a white background, and I've created a new layer. We'll want to make sure that our Color Chips are set to the default of black and white.

In the layers panel, click on the Create a New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon, and choose Gradient. Set the style to Linear, the Angle to zero, Scale to 100%, and check Dither and Align with Layer. Now open the Gradient Preset Picker, and choose Foreground to Transparent. If you don't see it, open the menu and choose Default. In Photoshop, open the fly-out menu and choose Reset Gradients, then click Append and OK. Let's set the Type to Solid and the Smoothness to 100%. Now click on the solid black color stop at the top left of the Gradient slider, and let's enter 20% for the location. Now click on the white color stop at the top right of the slider, and enter 70% in the Location. Let's click OK, and then OK again. And now we have a blended mask to help us blend or papers and textures together. So simple!

Let's go ahead and make another one. Hide the Gradient layer by clicking on the Visibility icon in the Layers panel. And then click on Create a New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Gradient. Let's use the Radial Gradient this time. Set the Angle to 90°, the Scale 142%, and check Dither and Align with Layer. Open the Gradient Editor, and we should still be on

Foreground to Transparent. Click on the solid black color stop at the top left of the Gradient slider, enter 21% for the Location and then click OK. Now on your document, holding down the Shift key, click right on your Gradient and move straight up until only about two-thirds of the darkest area of the circle is still showing. Then click OK.

I've opened some papers we created in our Filter and Brush lessons. For details on which specific textures and colors I used, please refer to the manual. Okay, I'm going to activate my Blue paper texture, and then holding down the Shift key I'm going to click and drag it over to my Gradient document. And in the Layers panel, I'm going to drag the texture down under my Gradient layers. This will act as our background. Next I'm going to activate the Pink textured paper. Holding down my Shift key, I'm going to drag that over and I'm going to drag that above my Linear Gradient layer. Now let's press Ctrl Alt G or Cmd Option G on a Mac, to clip our paper texture to the Gradient layer. And next, I'll activate my Yellow paper and holding down the Shift key, I'm going to drag it over to my Gradient document. Turn the Radial Gradient layer back on by clicking on its Visibility icon. And drag the Yellow paper above the Radial Gradient and then let's clip it to our Gradient. And Viola! A perfectly blended paper.

Now let me show you some other examples of blending with these Gradients. They are basically overlays, and are so much fun and so versatile. So here I have the same Yellow and Pink Filter textures and Gradients we just created. But this time I want to use the Blue Brush texture as a background. So I'll activate my Blue Brush texture, and holding down the Shift key, I'm going to drag that over on top of the Blue texture on my Gradient Blends document. You might be thinking it looks pretty much the same with the exception of the Brushes Blue background peeking out on the right corner. What I want to do is make it look like a multicolored, painted paper. And it's super easy to achieve that just by changing the Blend Mode on the Gradient layers to Color. So easy! And look how pretty that looks, like a soft rainbow cloud!

Now let's see what it looks like when we add one of our Pattern overlays to our Gradient Blend paper. I've opened my Diamond and Dot Overlay, and now holding down the Shift key, click on the Diamond Pattern Fill layer in the Layers panel and drag it over on top of the Gradient Blend document. Now, let's double-click on the Diamond Pattern thumbnail and set the Scale to 340%, that's a bit off-kilter, so I can just move it around on my page until I'm happy with the placement. There that looks better! Then we can just hit OK. Now I want to change the Blend Mode to Soft Light and reduce the Opacity to about 60%. Isn't that pretty?! And you can always leave the Opacity at 100% for more colorful look.

Now make sure to save your Bradient Blends document as a PSD.

I have one more example to show you using the Gradient Blends and some of the textures we've created. So here we have a Pink Brush texture that we created in Part 3 of the Creating Textures with Brushes. And I'm using it as a background, and then I made a duplicate copy and dragged it up above the Linear gradient layer and clipped them together. Then I added the Diamond Pattern Fill layer from our Diamond and Dots Overlay above the Pink textured paper, and clipped them together as well. Finally, I added a Yellow brush texture paper above the Radial Gradient layer and clipped those together. And it gives us a real collage look, mixed media, and I really like it!

That's the great thing about the Gradient Blends, you can swap out any papers, any textures, or any of your pattern overlays.

Okay! Now it's time for our assignment. So I want you to create a paper using a Gradient, or both your Gradients to blend two or more textures and/or patterns together. Basically, like what I've just shown you. And then please save it as a PSD, and then a JPEG, and upload to our private class Facebook group so that we can all see! I can't wait to see what you come up with!

Next up, we'll get edgy with our brushes! This is been Syndee Rogers with Passion for Paper.