



Class by Jen White

Cluster Queen

Lesson 10 Part 2: Dependent Vertical Cluster



Drop Shadows

No - overlay

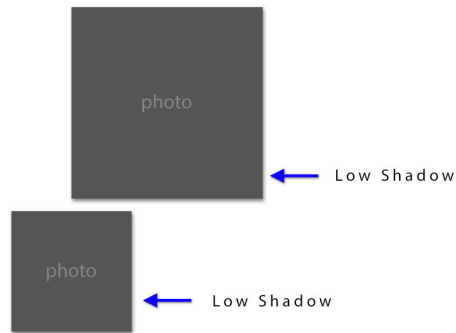
Low - ricrac, ribbon,
glitter dots

Medium - flower,
branch

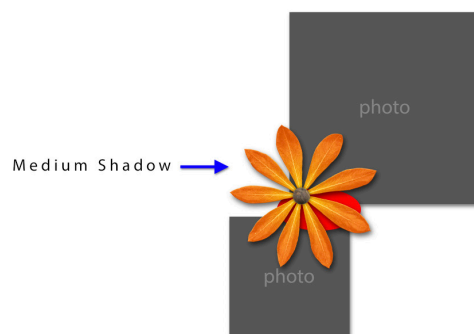
Here is one possible example of a dependent vertical cluster using the two photo masks and the five elements provided. This is an average design, not too minimal and not too fully loaded.

Evaluate My Cluster—Here's What I Did

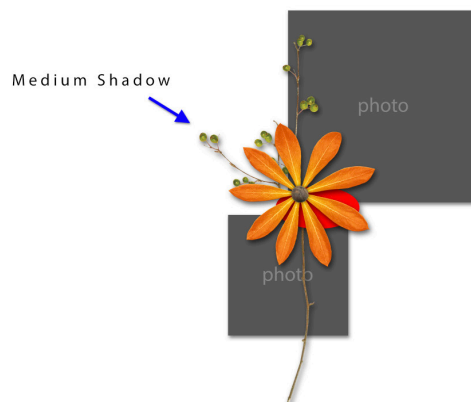
Remember, it's okay if your process of cluster creation is different than mine.



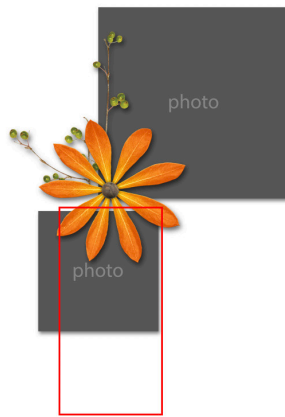
- I began by placing the two photo masks in the center of the document in the same position as they were in the PSD file.
- I added a low drop shadow to the masks since they are relatively flat objects.



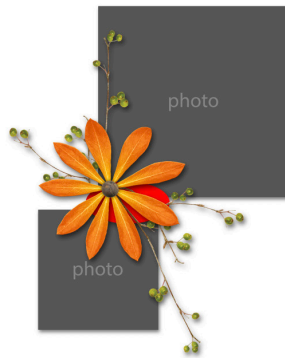
- Working from the top down, I identified the focal point of the cluster and then replaced it with the showiest element in the download.
- Notice how the flower is not exactly centered on the focal point. Placing it a little off center adds interest to the cluster.
- I added a medium drop shadow to the flower to get it lifted off the page.



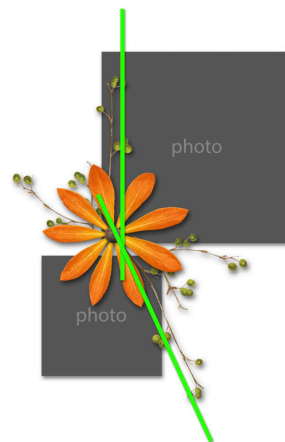
- Next, I added the berry branch behind the flower.
- I made sure to line the stem of the branch up with the focal point.
- Then, I applied a medium shadow to the branch to lift it off the page.



- Because the long stem of the branch is in the way and doesn't really add any interest to the cluster, I masked it away.



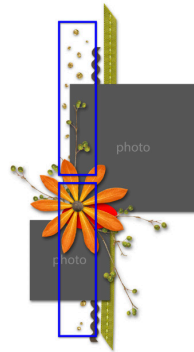
- To provide a little downward movement as well as upward movement, I duplicated the masked berry branch, rotated it, and positioned it moving away and down from the focal point.



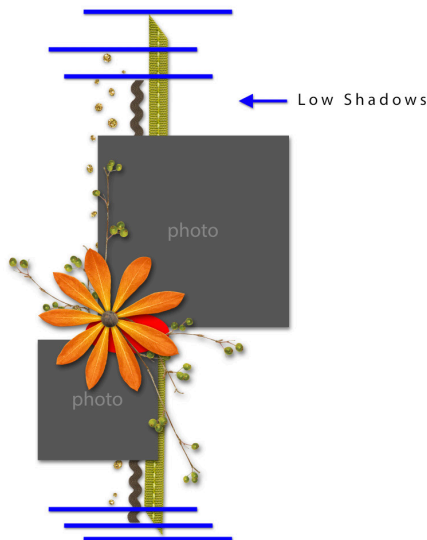
- Even though I used the exact same branch, they are not positioned as polar opposites. They are each at a different angle.
- Always try to avoid symmetrical positioning of elements when clustering.



- Next, I added the ricrac, ribbon, and glitter dots behind the photo masks.
- All three of these linear elements have a vertical orientation that provides the base for the dependent vertical cluster.
- Each of the three elements passes through the focal point.



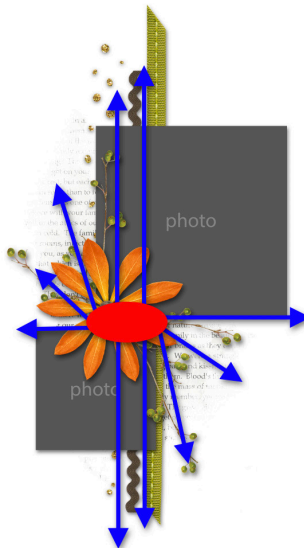
- In order to make the glitter dots extend the entire length, I chose to duplicate them instead of transform them bigger.
- Remember to never stretch elements in order to make them fit.



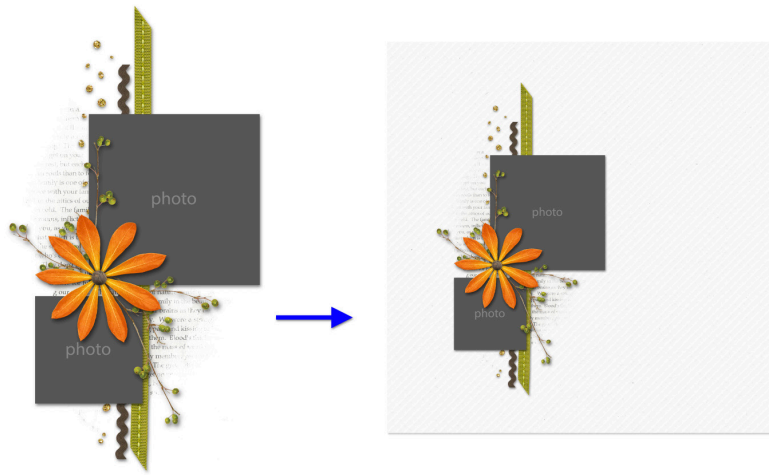
- When positioning the linear elements, I varied the high points of each of the elements as well as the low points.
- Small details like this make a big difference in creating a more interesting looking cluster.
- I added a low drop shadow to each of the linear elements since they are meant to look fairly flat on the page.



- I added the overlay as an anchor behind the focal point.
- This element does not get a shadow.
- As with all overlay style elements, you want to be careful not to let them overpower the cluster.
- Making the anchor no taller than the combined height of the photo masks and no wider than the combined width of the photo masks is always a safe bet. More than that will usually be too much.



- I put my cluster to the arrow test.
- It shows that all elements should be pointing away from the focal point and that the linear elements should extend past the top and bottom of the photo masks.
- Don't get hung up on the fact that I don't have an element pointing in every direction as indicated by the arrows. As with all the other clusters we've made, less is more.
- My cluster gets a thumbs up with the arrow test.



- Here is the size of my dependent vertical cluster in relation to my 12x12 inch scrapbook page.
- These clusters are great for filling an entire scrapbook page. They can easily stand on their own.
- Add a title and some journaling and you have a beautiful project that you can be proud to share.



Step Two: Copy My Cluster Exactly

- Take the time to create an exact copy of the dependent vertical cluster above. Use the photo masks and elements I provided.
- Pay special attention to the order and position of each layer and element.
- Follow the advice of drop shadow depth for the photo masks and each of the six elements.

More Inspiration

Did you happen to try the Additional Challenges above? I had a little bit of time to play. For some extra practice, try copying these designs as well.



Here are two more variations of my cluster from step two. These are both a little fuller. Notice how they still contain height variety and maintain the focal point.



These two clusters are more minimal in design, using only two or three of the elements in addition to the photo masks. Even though I only used a few elements, I still made sure to have at least one element give the cluster vertical length.

What's Your Preference?

Which of my additional clusters do you like best? Your answer might help you narrow down what your style preference is when it comes to clusters.



ATTENTION: Please do not post your results of Step Two on the class Facebook Group. Doing so may sideline the creative process for your fellow classmates.

If you're mega excited to share your result of Step Two, I'd love to see it. You can email it to me or send it via the Help Desk.

CAUTION: Don't rush to Step Three until you've successfully completed Step Two.