Make It Match
Color Replacement Brush Explained – Transcript – Photoshop Elements

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For almost all recoloring jobs, the color blend mode recoloring method will fit our needs. But sometimes they are items that we might want to recolor that just won't work with the color blend mode method and so we're going to look at the next best options. The first of the next best options is the color replacement brush.

As we saw in the first section of the class, any object that has easy to select parts is best recolored using the color blend mode method. But sometimes there are items we may want to recolor that have difficult to select parts. In those cases, there are alternative methods we can try to use to recolor them. One of those methods is the color replacement brush.

The color replacement brush is a tool you can find nestled with the other brush tools. It's easy to use and when it comes to recoloring it's as fast or faster than the color blend mode method. Its major drawback is that it's recoloring process is done in a destructive manner. When I say the term destructive, I mean that the changes occur on the same layer as the original item as opposed to the color blend mode method where the changes occur on separate layers and the original item is still intact.

Because of this, it's even more important that if you choose to use this recoloring method, you always remember to create a duplicate of the item you want to change before you do anything to it. This way you'll never accidentally overwrite your original paper or element. So in this video I'm going to show you how the color replacement brush works. I'm going to explain the various tool settings by showing you how I can use this method to recolor a flower.

So here we are in Photoshop elements. In the downloads for this lesson you will find a flower PNG file. Download, unzip, and open that file. Now as we just talked about, because this recoloring method is destructive, we need to make a copy of this flower. To do that in the menu bar, choose file, duplicate to

create a copy. Click okay and then you can close the original file. Then in the menu bar, choose window, images, consolidate all to tabs. We want to recolor this flower using the color replacement brush. You'll find it nestled with the regular brush tool.

As you can imagine, using the actual brush isn't very difficult, but the settings are important to understand, so let's go over those first. The first thing to look at is the size. The size will vary depending on the object you're recoloring. Depending on the item you are recoloring, you may want to make the brush very large. I'll explain more about that in a minute. The next setting I want to discuss is the tolerance. This should almost always be set 100%. the only time you should lower this as if you're wanting to exclude closely related colors, but I have yet to actually find a situation where 100% doesn't work for me. In the tool options set the mode to Hue. This is basically telling the brush which blend mode to apply to the brush while using the color in the foreground color chip.

In some cases you'll want to use hue and in others saturation or color will work best. Each time you use this brush, you'll have to test to see which mode will work best for what you're trying to accomplish. Luminosity is a mode I have yet to have success with, but it can't hurt to try it if the others don't work. Now we have to pick a sampling option. The two I prefer are continuous or once. The background swatch is not something I have found very useful. So in this case we'll stick with continuous. The next option to look at is limits. We have two options. We have discontiguous or contiguous. In this case, it doesn't really matter what we use because we only have one item to be recolored and it's on its own layer. With most recoloring situations, it won't matter, but you can always try contiguous if discontiguous isn't working.

So then last click to open the brush settings and set the hardness to 0%, set the spacing to 1%, keep the angle at zero degrees, and set the roundness to 100%. and the size can be set to pen pressure and the tolerance can be set to off. And then you can close the brush settings. But just remember that it's very important to keep the hardness and the spacing set to these settings in order to get a smooth recoloring. So unless you have a situation where you need to change these settings, I would always keep the hardness at zero and the spacing at 1% respectively. So now let's recolor the flower with this brush.

Click on the foreground color chip to open the color picker. And I want to choose a blue color. For simplicity sake, I'm going to type in a hex number of 0054A6 and then I'll click okay. On the document, I'm going to brush over the flower to recolor it. I want to show you what happens with my brush being smaller so that you'll see what happens.

As you can see, the recoloring isn't very smooth. Some spots have a high saturation of recoloring and others are very dull and dark, so let me hit undo and let's go ahead and make the brush size larger. I want to make it larger than the flower itself, so I'm going to click once and see what happens. That's what it looks like with one click and I'll click a few more times until it looks completely blue. That recoloring looks a lot more smooth.

I do want to point out one thing if you'll notice that the blue of the flower here does not come anywhere close to the saturation or the darkness of the blue of our foreground color chip. That's one of the disadvantages of the color replacement brush method is that unlike the color blend mode method, we don't have a lot of control over how the end result will look. So that's how the color replacement brush works.

Let's do a quick review before we move on to the next lesson. The color replacement brush is a tool you can find with the other brush tools. It's a destructive recoloring process, so you always want to make sure you create a duplicate of what ever item you are trying to recolor. And when recoloring most elements, you'll want to make the brush size larger than the item for a smooth recoloring. In the next lesson, we're going to do a project that will require the color replacement brush tool to get an item recolored. I'll see you there. This is Jenifer Juris with make it match.