



by Jen White

Design Beautiful Pages

Lesson 01-01: Compelling Photo Clusters

The forth topic of our design series revolves around the irresistible draw of the cluster. In this video we'll take a look at photo clusters and explore the why and how of using them on a scrapbook page.

What Is a Photo Cluster?

A photo cluster is versatile, random, and short on rules.

A photo cluster is three or more photo shapes that when randomly overlapped form an irregular shape.

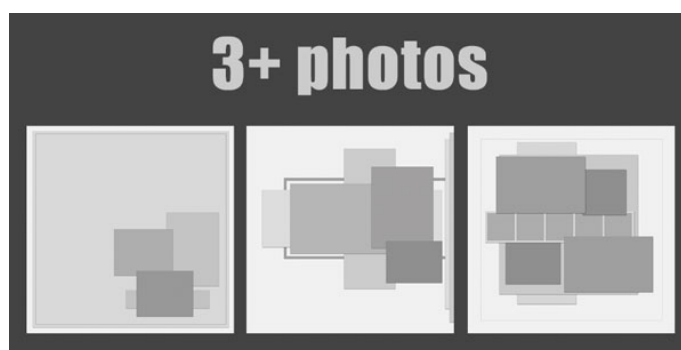
photo cluster

definition

A photo cluster is 3 or more photo shapes
that when randomly overlapped
form an irregular shape.

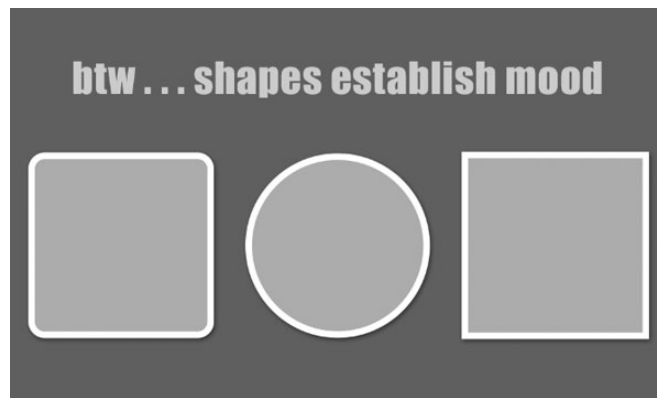
Create 3 or More Photo Masks

The minimum requirement is three photo shapes. There is no maximum limit.



The photos in a cluster can be any shape.

The shape of a photo can establish or support the mood of a page.



Randomly Overlap Photo Masks

Overlap a little or a lot. Overlap randomly.



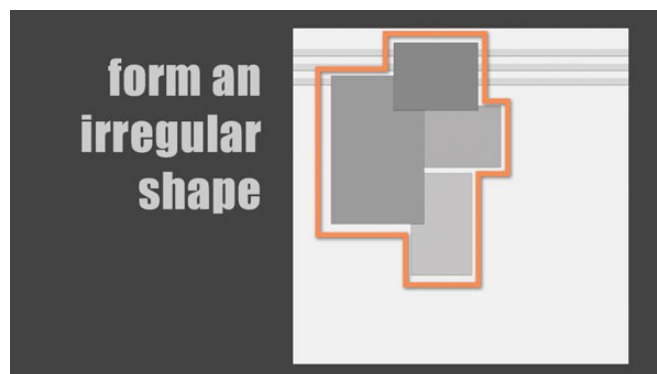
Form An Irregular Shape

Be intentional about creating an irregular shape with the entire photo cluster.

Try making one of the photos droop farther down than all the rest.

Maybe make one of the photos poke way out.

The idea is to be irregular.



Avoid No-Nos

Avoid straight lines that may try to form around the outer edge of the cluster.


Avoid trapped space.



Should You Tip?

Tipping is a mood changer. It will instantly add whimsy to your page.

Ask yourself if the page is appropriate for whimsy.



To Tip or Not to Tip

That is the question.

Appropriate for Whimsy

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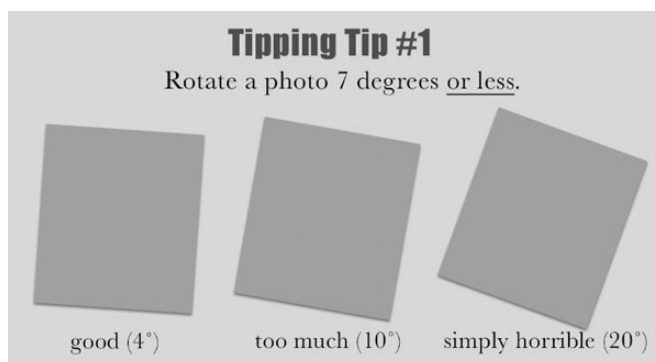
Not Appropriate for Whimsy

☐

Apply Tipping Tip #1

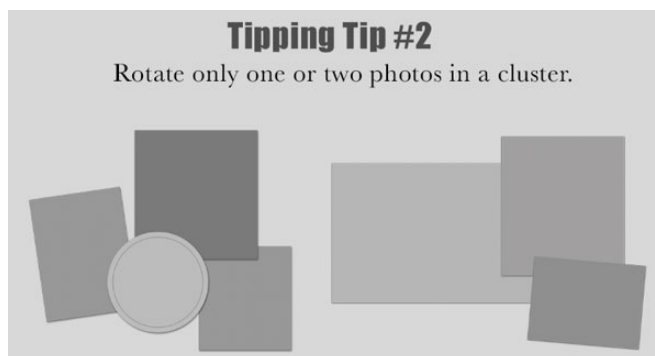
Rotate a photo 7° or less.

Tipping more than 7° can take you from good to simply horrible in no time flat.



Apply Tipping Tip #2

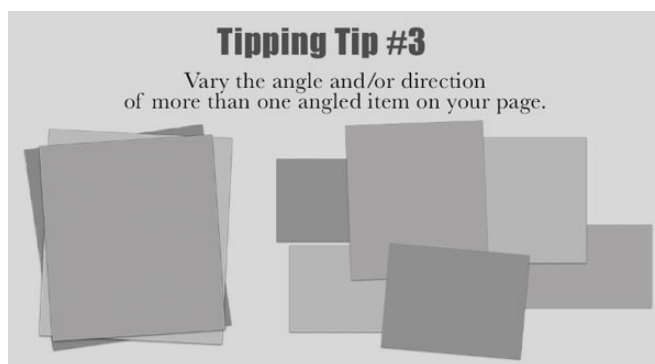
Rotate only one or two of the photos in a cluster. Less is more. If you have a small cluster, consider only tipping one. If you have a large cluster, two tipped photo will look great.



Apply Tipping Tip #3

If you are going to tip more than one photo in a cluster, vary the angle of the tip.

If you are going to tip more than one photo in a cluster, vary the direction of the tip.

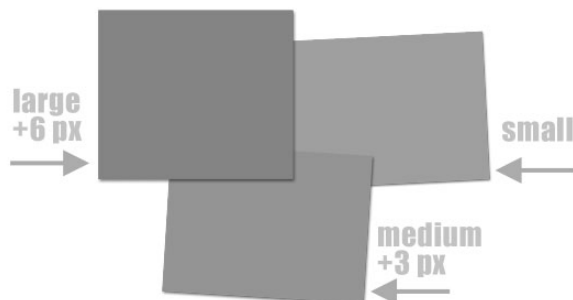


Applying Shadows To Photo Clusters

The very nature of photo clustering, because of the numerous overlapping layers, is going to provide many opportunities to add depth to your page by logically applying drop shadows. The shadows in a template are meant to be changed.

The bottom photo layer in a cluster has the smallest shadow. The middle layered photo has a slightly larger shadow. The photo on the top of the cluster stack has the largest shadow.

Custom shadows, when used sparingly and applied correctly, make a huge impact on the overall appearance of a scrapbook page.



Take the Photo Cluster Challenge

Browse your favorite galleries in search of clustering ideas.

Scraplifting clusters is perfectly acceptable.

Build upon one of the simple templates.

Photo Cluster Ideas

- Browse galleries searching for photo cluster ideas.
- Scraplift the size and position of the photos in interesting clusters you find.
- Build upon one of our simple templates.

Lesson 01-02: Compelling Element Clusters

Creating large element clusters is an art. In this video we'll take a look at large clusters of elements and how they can be effectively used on a scrapbook page.

What Is a Cluster Dump?

A cluster dump typically has TONS of elements, but only one or two photos. It is an art. It originated with the need to market a scrapbook kit to give it lots of exposure.



Pros and Cons of the Cluster Dump Style

Con: It's very difficult to successfully pull off the cluster dump style on a consistent basis.

Con: The photo is usually not the focal point.

Pro: Why not give it a try?

Cluster Dump Guidelines

Form big clusters from small ones.



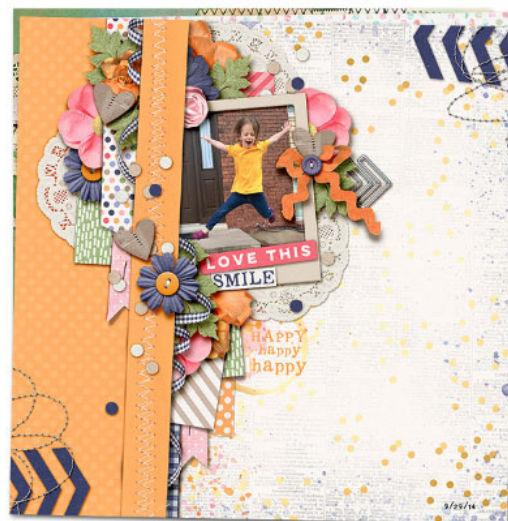
Vary cluster sizes.



When creating a cluster dump, do so in the form of a line, a triangle, circle, or a zigzag.



Use lots of anchors.



Follow the 2 Color Rule.

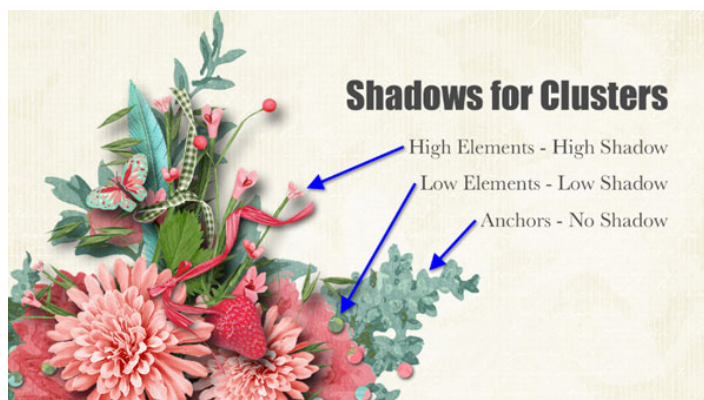


Shadows for Large Clusters

In order for the pile to look realistic, shadows need to be applied correctly to add proper depth.

Things at the top of the stack should have bigger, softer shadows than the things near the bottom of the stack.

Anchors such as paint and overlays should have no shadow at all.



Element Cluster Challenge

Practice creating cluster dumps by scraplifting some you've found on the web.

Try adding the dump to a scrapbook page with just a simple photo or two.

Start with one of the three simple templates for guidance.

Element Cluster Challenge

- Practice creating large clusters.
- Post the clusters on in the gallery.
- Try adding a large cluster to a scrapbook page along with one or two photos.

Main Large Cluster Credits

Cluster: Jen White

Kit: Shady Berry Bend by Krystal Hartley

All Scrapbook Pages by Lydia Tarbox. Credits:

Page: Curiosity by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Cheers by Studio Flergs. Font: Bebas Neue

Page: Daisy on the Dash by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Life's Little Pleasures by Sweet Shoppe Designs. Font: DJB Project Storyteller

Page: Merry and Bright by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Festivus by Studio Flergs. Font: Sweet Peony

Page: Relax by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Lazy Days by Digital Scrapbook Ingredients. Font: DJB Britanee's Thin Pen

Page: Night Out by Lydia Tarbox. Kits: Hey Girl by Amber Shaw, Punchy Circles by Julie Billingsley. Font: DJB Lydia Print

Page: Songbird by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Captivated Visions. Font: The Distressed Duchess, Sweet Peony

Page: Powerful by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Girl Power by Vera Lim. Font: DJB Dennis Davis

Page: Sweetie by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Such a Sweetie by Meghan Mullens. Font: DJB Lydia Print

Page: Free by Lydia Tarbox. Kits: She Is by Traci Reed, Lazy Sunday by Lliella Designs, Blossoms and Bliss by Amber Shaw and Tickled Pink Studio, Fairytale by Amber Shaw, Hey Sister by Tickled Pink Studio, Say What? Vol 1 by Tickled Pink Studio, Friendship Cards by Tickled Pink Studio, Little Boy by Heather Roselli, Little Boy Extras by Heather Roselli, Sew Many Edges 2 by Erica Zane, EZ Edges Vol 8 by Erica Zane. Font: The Rose Regular

Page: Dreamer by Lydia Tarbox. Kit: Follow Your Dreams by Lauren Grier. Font: DJB Anita Davis

Lesson 01-03: Photos for Clusters

Regardless of your scrapbook page design, your photos should always be the most important part. Here are some tips for adding photos to clustered designs.

Remember to Edit Photos

Photos are a big deal. Get your photos edited before you stick them on your page.

Lighten your photos. Brighten eyes when needed.



Shapes Create Mood

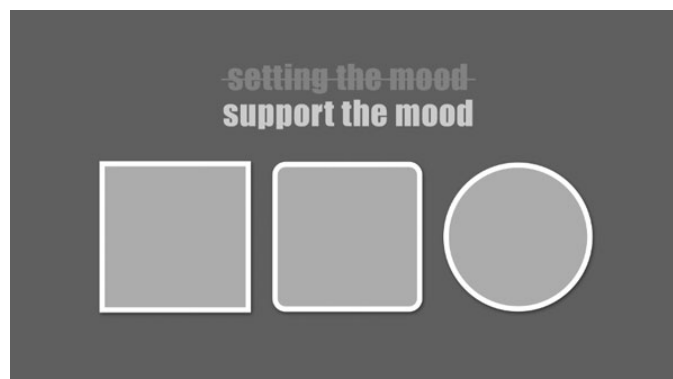
A photo with straight edges and sharp corners is more formal.

Things of greatest importance might reside within the boundaries of a rectangular photo.

Change the corners from sharp to rounded and you may find yourself wanting to relax a little. The structure is still there, but the harshness has suddenly been removed. Some consider rounded corners to be old fashioned, but if used sparingly, they can help you navigate the expanse between strict and silly.

A circular photo, or one lacking any straight sides or sharp edges, will give your page a soft touch. You may even feel giddy from the lack of structure. It's also said that a circle evokes a feeling of trust.

There are no hard and fast rules about which photos can go with which photo masks. But, hopefully you've gained a better understanding on how to use shapes in order to better support the mood of the story you wish to tell.

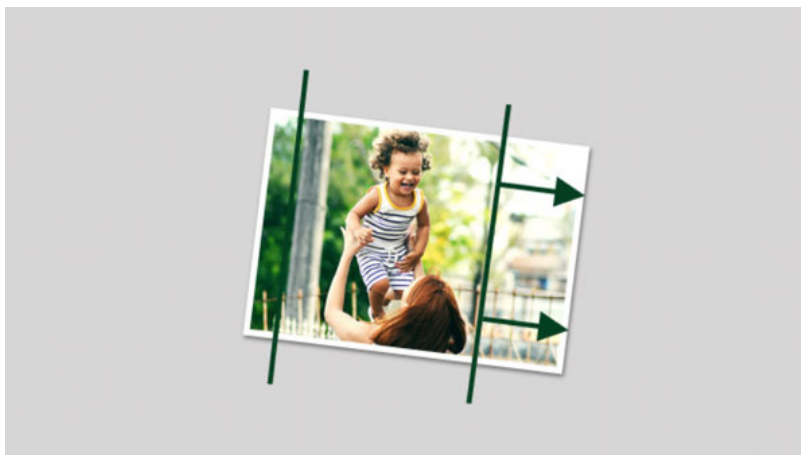


Photos for Tipping

When clipping a photo to a tipped mask, make sure the photo is tipped at the same angle as the mask.



If you're not sure what angle to tip the photo, look for natural indicators, like trees or telephone poles. These things should be parallel to the right and left sides of the tipped photo mask.



If your image contains a horizon, keep the horizon parallel to the top or bottom of the mask.



Break Up the Mush

Adding a stroke to the inside of one or more of the photos is a quick and common way to create distinction between the individual photos. This is done in the styles panel.



Adding a frame or photo mat to one or more of the photos is also a great way to break up the design. It's a good idea to keep the frames and mats a neutral color, however, so that you are not distracting from the photos themselves.



Desaturate a Photo

You may find that a colored or highly saturated photo is just too much color for a page. In that case, turning the photo black & white or sepia might be all you need in order to bring peace.



Credits

Page: 100% Boy by Jen White

Photos: Jen White

Template: Qwik Learn | Design Beautiful Pages

Kit: Epic by JB Studio

Fonts: Chapman, DJB ANNALISE 2011

Add'l Photos: Stock and Jen White

Page: Dreamer by Lydia Tarbox.

Kit: Follow Your Dreams by Lauren Grier. Font: DJB Anita Davis

Page: Relax by Lydia Tarbox.

Kit: Lazy Days by Digital Scrapbook Ingredients. Font: DJB Britanee's Thin Pen