



Class by Jen White

Cluster Queen

Lesson 09 Part 1: Dependent Bottom Edge Cluster



Why These Six Elements?

Each of the elements provided comes from my personal stash. The element set is not specific to any particular designer or kit.

- **Style.** I searched through my stash for elements that would look good “growing up” or “peeking up” from the bottom edge of a scrapbook page. I also asked myself, “Would this element look good if I could only see half of it?”
- **Variety.** Beautiful clusters often have a wide variety of textures. The textures I chose to work with were paper, twine, wood, and leaves. These all fit well together because they have a common theme—nature.
- **Color.** Too much color often equates into too much clutter. You cannot go wrong with a nature theme because nature contains soft earthy tones.

Step One: Create a Cluster

- Create a dependent bottom edge cluster using the photo mask and the five elements provided.

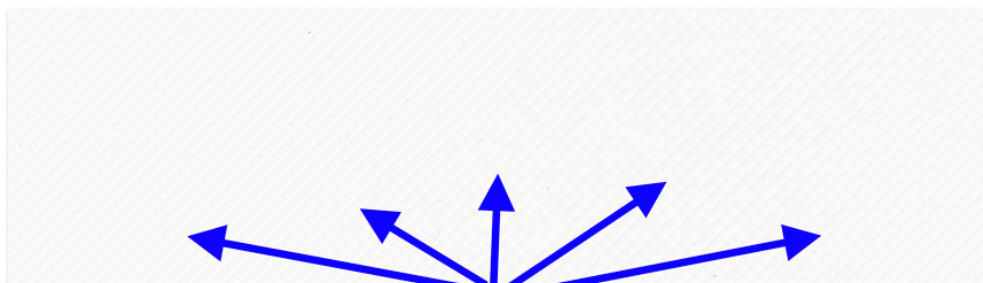
TIP: In order to focus on cluster creation, do not add photos to the photo masks in Step One, Two, or Three.

What is a cluster?

- A cluster is a group of elements positioned close together.

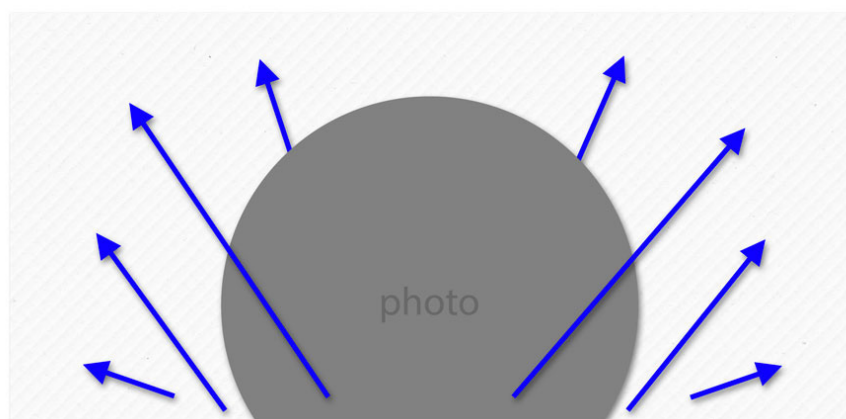
What is a bottom edge cluster?

- A bottom edge cluster is a cluster that peeks out from the bottom edge of a document.
- All elements in a bottom edge cluster should travel off the bottom edge of the document.
- Because the cluster is on the bottom edge of the document, all the elements in the cluster will travel up and away from the edge.



What is a dependent bottom edge cluster?

- A dependent bottom edge cluster is one that is completely dependent upon the photo it supports. If you were to take away the photo, the cluster would feel incomplete.
- This style of cluster is not intended to be the focal point of a scrapbook page. Instead, this cluster will support the main photo (and cluster) on the page. We'll talk more about this in Cluster Destinations after Step Three.
- The photo mask can be any shape, but only one photo (two at the most) should be used.



Edge Cluster—It's an Artsy Thing

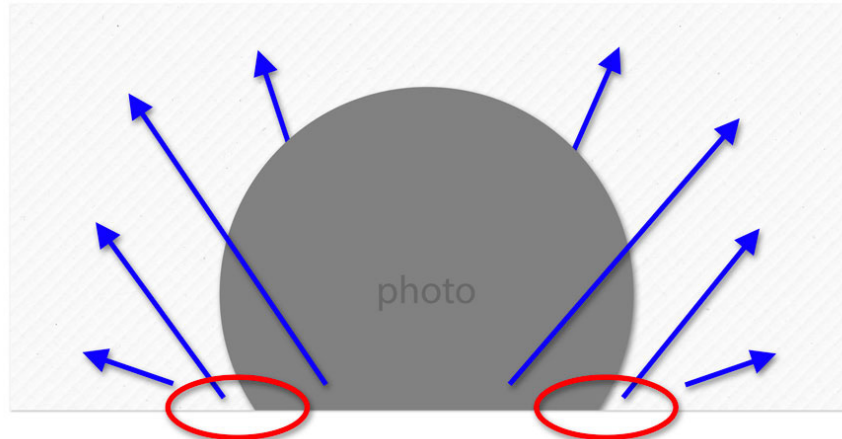
When I first made the transition from paper scrapbooking to digital scrapbooking, I could not understand why someone would want to make an element look like it's half on and half off a scrapbook page. Edge clusters made no sense to me!

But, here's what I know now. Edge clusters are a product of the artsy world of digital scrapbooking. They are meant to defy common sense.

Determine the Focus

All good clusters contain focus. Without focus, all you have is cluttering, not clustering.

- Because a dependent bottom edge cluster contains a photo mask, it will have two focal points, one on each side of the photo mask. See the red circles below.
- One of the focal points, however, should be more prominent. Think of it as a map for your eye. The prominent focal point says, “start here because I’m the prettiest.”
- The prominent focal point will contain the bulk of the elements.

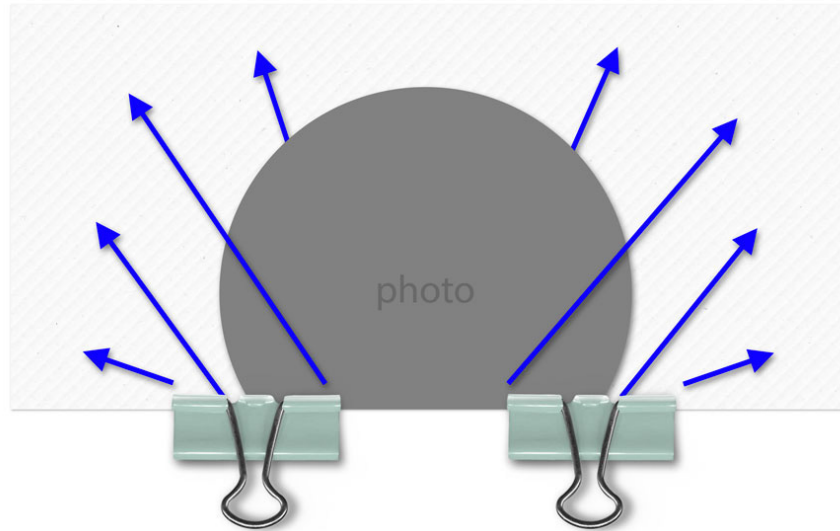


- In all clustering methods (Top Down, Bottoms Up, or Shape Starter), start the cluster by placing the photo mask on the bottom edge of your document. Part of the photo mask (approximately one-fourth) should be off the bottom edge.
- If using the Top Down Method, add a prominent element next. A prominent element is one that is the most showy. Use the prominent element to determine which of the two focal points will be the prominent focal point.
- If using the Bottoms Up Method, add an anchor style element next. Add the prominent element last to determine which of the two focal points will be the prominent focal point.
- If using the Shape Starter Method, you determine the shape. Whatever shape you choose, make sure it’s partly off the bottom edge of the document.

Tips, Tricks, and Inspiration

Having trouble getting started? Cannot seem to think outside the box? Here's a little help from a friend.

- When creating a cluster that contains a photo mask, place the photo mask on your document first.
- Follow the arrow test. Point all elements up and away from the two edges of the photo mask. See the blue arrows below.
- Follow the clip test. Imagine two clips on the edge of the document (which represent the two focal points). Make sure all elements in the cluster are clipped down by one of the two clips.
- All elements should fall off the bottom edge of the document.



- Place anchor style elements behind the photo mask.
- Anchor elements do not have to be highly visible in order to be effective. Sometimes just a little bit of an anchor goes a long way for creating beauty.
- Place some elements behind the photo mask and some in front. But, be sure leave plenty of area for the subject of the photo to shine through.
- Try flipping or slightly rotating an element for interesting looks and combinations.
- Always resize elements as you add them to your cluster. The more variety of size, the better your cluster will look.
- Vary the vertical height of each of the elements to give the cluster an uneven perimeter.
- Do not allow the height of the elements to overpower the height of the photo mask.



Is your confidence growing?

Is it getting a little easier to read my instructions and then see a cluster start to form in your imagination?

If you are not feeling even the tiniest bit more confident, that means you need to spend more time in Step One and Step Two.

Do This—Chart Your Confidence. Make a physical note about your confidence level at the start of this lesson. Where are you on the scale? Any different than last lesson?

Additional Challenges

You will find some lessons easier than others. If you feel like you breezed through Step One, here are some prompts and ideas to get you thinking like a Cluster Queen and challenge you to take it to the next level.

- Create several different dependent bottom edge clusters using the same five elements. Here are some ideas:
 - Try switching the prominent element.
 - Try switching the prominent focal point to the other side.
 - Try creating a fuller cluster by duplicating elements.
 - See how many tiny clusters you can make by using only two or three of the provided elements along with the photo mask.
- Which of your dependent bottom edge clusters do you like the best?
- Which do you like least? Do you know why you don't like it?



ATTENTION: Please do not post your results of Step One 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 One, 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 Two; take time to experiment and find your own solution.