



Make It Match

Color Replacement Brush Explained – Manual – Photoshop Elements

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For almost all recoloring jobs, the Color Blend Mode Recoloring method will fit our needs. But sometimes, there 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.

It's 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 lesson, 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.

Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- In the downloads for this lesson, you will find a flower PNG file. Download, unzip, and open that file now.
- In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate to create a copy. Click OK.
- Close the original.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Window > Images > Consolidate All to Tabs.

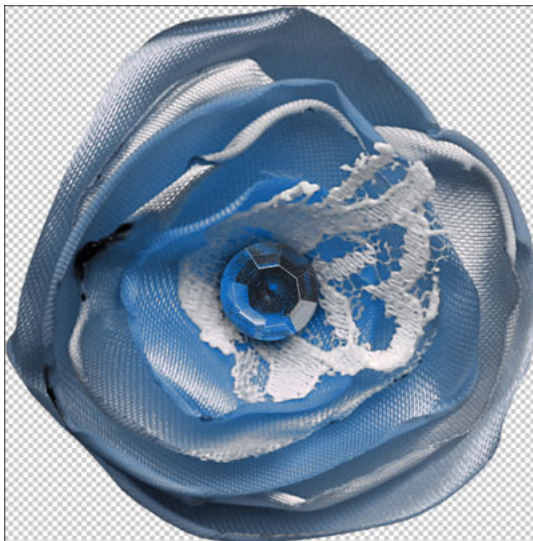


Step Two: Recolor the Flower

- Get the Color Replacement Brush tool. It's nestled with the other Brush tools.
- 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 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 this in a minute.
 - The next setting I want to discuss is the Tolerance. This should almost always be set to 100%. The only time you should lower this is if you are 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. In this case, we'll stick with Continuous.
 - The next option to look at is the Limits. We have three options but Find Edges does not work for our recoloring purposes here so don't use that one. In this case, it doesn't

matter if we use Contiguous or Discontiguous 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.

- Last, click to open the Brush Settings.
 - Set the Hardness to 0% and the Spacing to 1%.
 - Keep the Angle at 0° and the Roundness to 100%.
 - It's important to keep the Hardness and the Spacing set to those settings in order to get a smooth recoloring so unless you have a situation where you need to change those settings, I would always keep it at 0 and 1 % respectively.
- So, now I'm going to pick a color to recolor this flower to. Instead of pink, I want to try blue so I'll click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and I'm going to use Hex #: 0054a6. Then I'll click OK.
- On the document, I'm going to brush over the flower to recolor it. With my brush being smaller, you'll see that the color change isn't smooth or consistent. Some spots are bright and others are dull. So instead, let me undo this.
- Then I'll make the brush larger than the flower so I can change it with clicking a few times instead of brushing. So let me click once. As you can see, the flower has changed somewhat but one click wasn't enough. 3-4 clicks is usually enough to completely recolor the item.



Review:

1. The Color Replacement Brush is a tool you can find with the other brush tools.
2. It's a destructive recoloring process so you will always want to make sure you create a duplicate of whatever item you are trying to recolor.
3. When recoloring most elements, you'll want to make the brush size larger than the item for a smooth recoloring.

Credits:

Flower: Dear Mom by Kristin Cronin-Barrow