Class by Jen White

Design Beautiful Pages

Lesson 01-01: Mastering Mask Potential

Let's dive into the second topic of our design series—masks. Here you'll discover the first part of our simple mask design formula and what it means.

Page Credits

Page & Photo: Jen White
Class: QwikLearn | Design Beautiful Pages
Paper: Blank Cardstock by Susie Roberts
Fonts: Courier, Featherly

Mask Design Formula

The formula is Mask + Photo + Paper = Art.

The formula is referring to art within a scrapbook page.

The formula assumes the addition of a title, date, and journaling.

$$mask + photo + paper = art$$

What Is A Mask?

A mask is anything you can clip a photo to.

A simple mask is a solid rectangle or circle.

A complex mask has fancy edges and varying degrees of transparency.
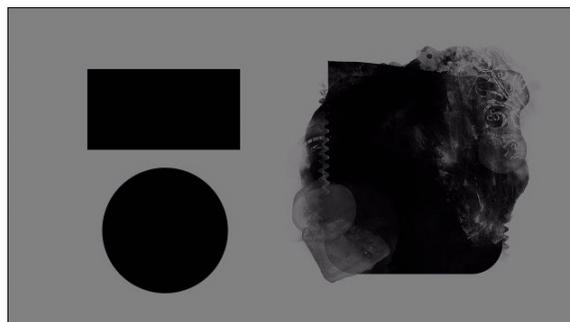
Mask Shadows

Add a shadow to simple, solid masks.

Do not add a shadow to complex masks.
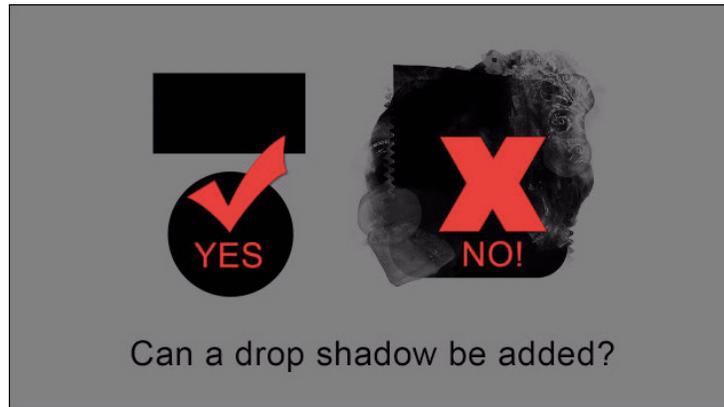
Mask Color

A mask can be black or white or any color in between.

The color of a mask does not matter.
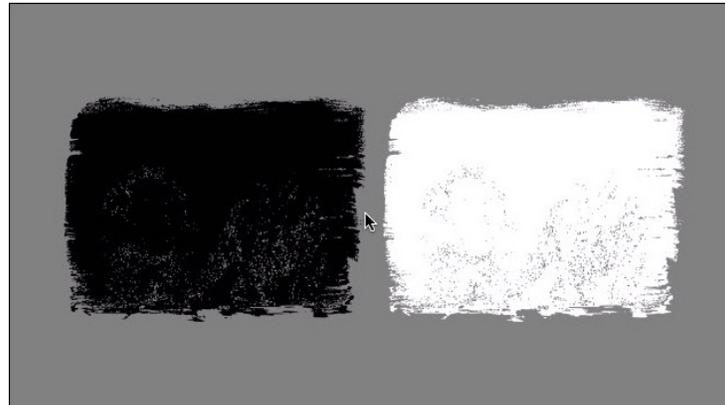
Blending Masks

If a photo is clipped to a mask, blend the mask, not the photo.

More advanced blending designs will be covered in this class in another lesson.

Mask Size

A mask can be big.

Big masks can work to define a space or create an interesting border on a page.

A mask can be small.

Small masks are perfect for minimalist pages.
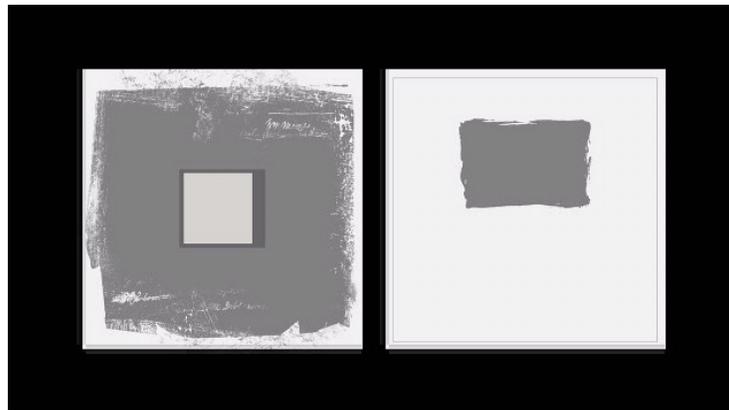
## Purpose of Masks

Clip a photo to a mask.

Clip paper to a mask.

A paper or photo mask makes a good anchor behind a group of photos.

Placing Masks on a Page

Stretch a mask from edge to edge.
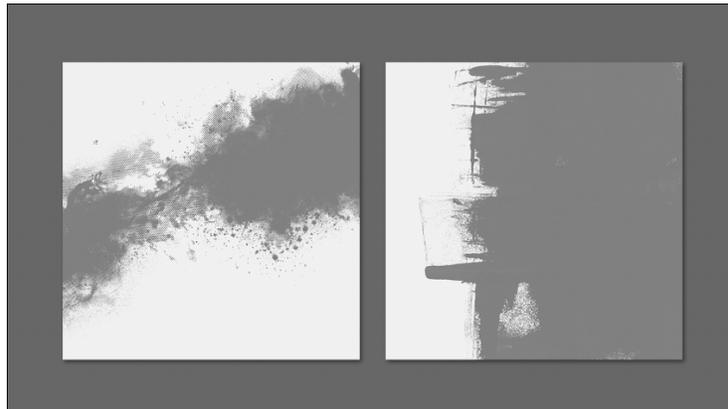
Use a mask to create a repeating pattern.

Stack masks to produce a unique design.
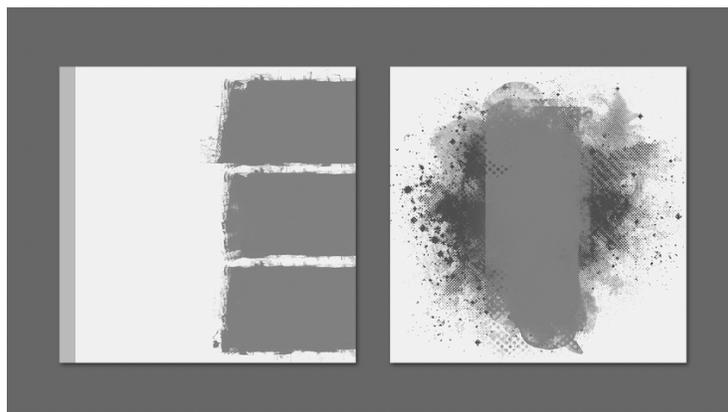
Awareness Challenge

Browse your favorite gallery.

How many mask-style layouts do you see?

Which ones are you drawn to?

Collect pages of inspiration.

Awareness Challenge

- Browse your favorite gallery
- How many mask-style layouts do you see?
- Which ones are you drawn to?

Obtaining Masks

Check the credits of your collected inspiration pages.

Masks come in kits and smaller packaging.

Search the web for free Photoshop brushes and shapes that can be used as masks.

Use decorative masks as photo masks.

Where do I find masks?

- Kits and small packaging
- Free brushes and shapes on the web
- Decorative masks in kits you own

Using Templates

Create your own mask designs.

Use one of our 20 starter templates.
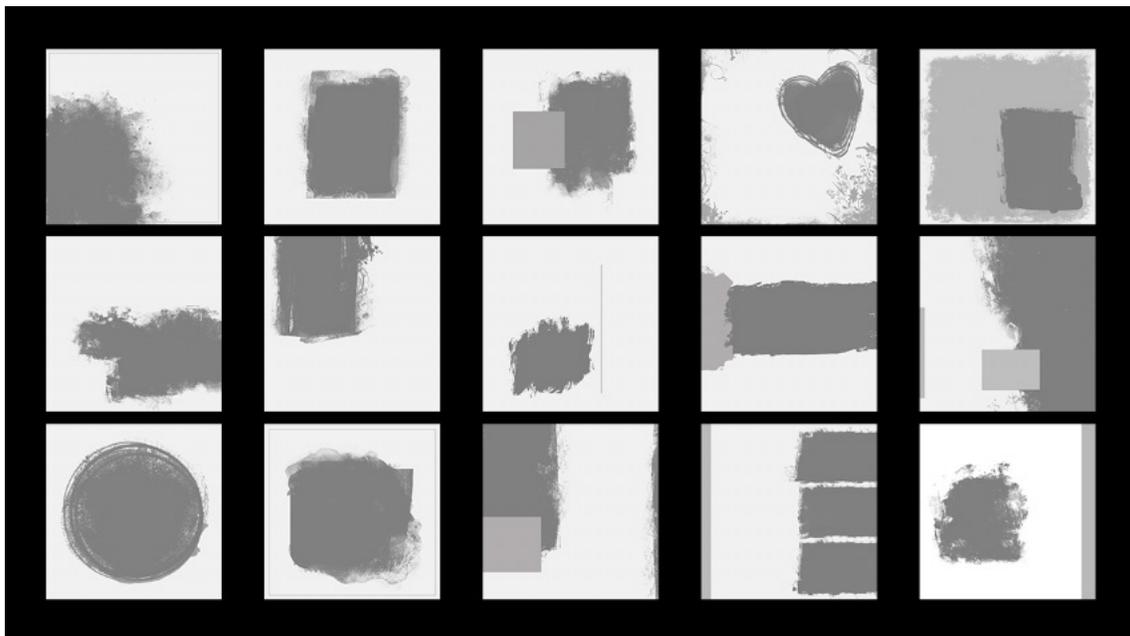
Lesson 01-02: Photos for Masks

Next we'll take a look at the kinds of photos that work well with a mask design and explore some ideas.

Mask Design Formula

The formula is Mask + Photo + Paper = Art.

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$$mask + photo + paper = art$$

Start With a Good Photo

Use your best shots for masks.

Use photos that contain a single focal point.

Use photos that are zoomed way out.
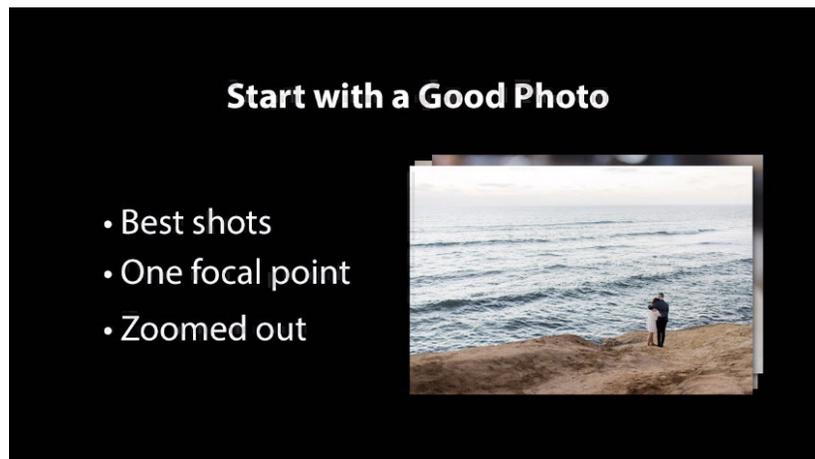
Match the Mood

Match the mood of the photo with the mood of the mask.
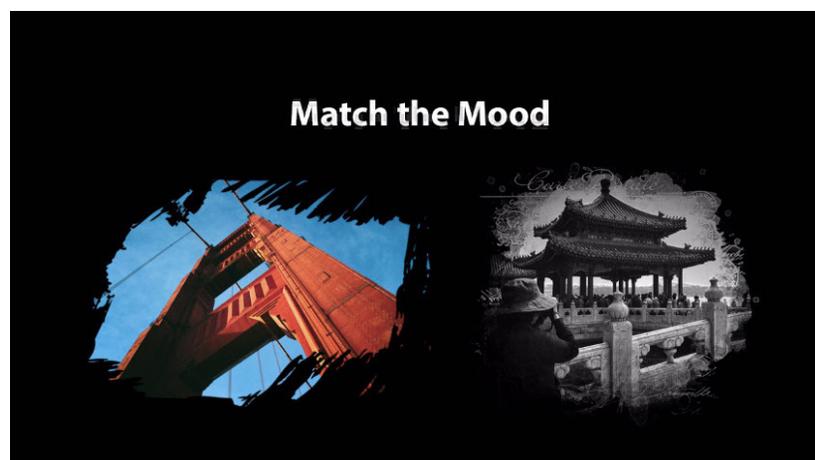
Avoid the No-Nos

Review the No-No PDF each month.

Avoid dark photos.

Avoid a crooked horizon.

The Biggest Photo Mask No-No

A photo must fill a mask.

Watch the Million Dollar Mask Makeover to see how to do that.

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Lesson 01-03: The Million Dollar Mask Makeover

In this video I'll share three common mask makeovers that will help to simplify the adjusting process.

Credits

Page: In the Swim by Jen White
Photo: Jen White
Class: QwikLearn | Design Beautiful Pages
Kits: Hello Summertime by Digilicious Designs, After Five by Susie Roberts, Blank Card Stock by Susie Roberts
Fonts: Beautiful Day, Josefin Sans, DJB ANNALISE 2011

The Problem & Solution

Cameras take rectangular photos, but complex photo masks are rarely rectangular.

The solution is to adjust the mask, not the photo.

Problem:

Cameras take rectangular photos, but complex photo masks are rarely rectangular.

Solution:

Adjust the mask, not the photo.
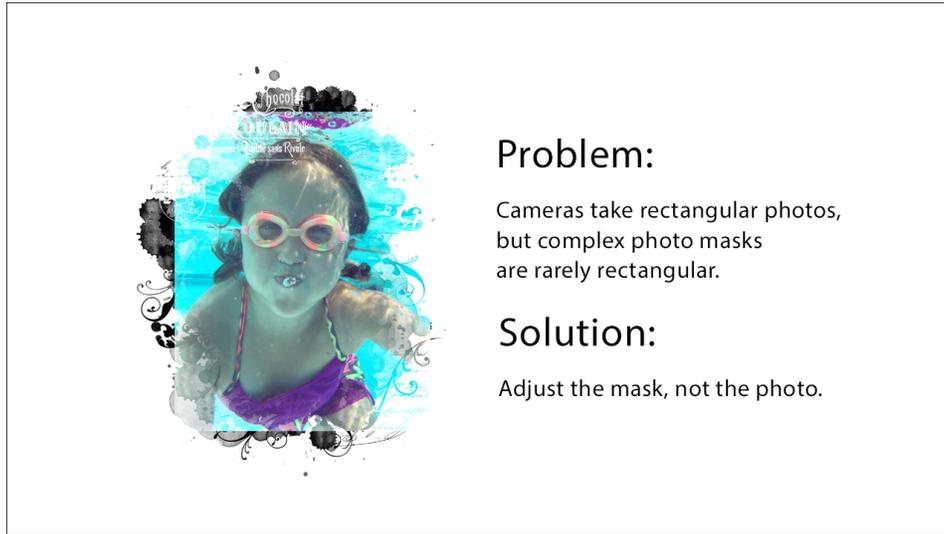
Good & Bad Easy Solution

Fill the mask with the photo unless too much detail is lost.

Never stretch a photo to fit a mask.
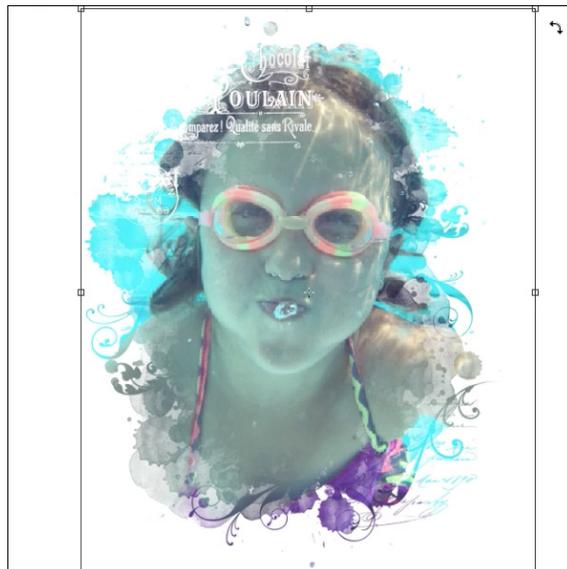
Makeover Solution #1

Stretch or squeeze a mask to fit a photo.

Avoid loosing details by squeezing too much.

Stretch or squeeze until the harsh photo edges are undetectable.
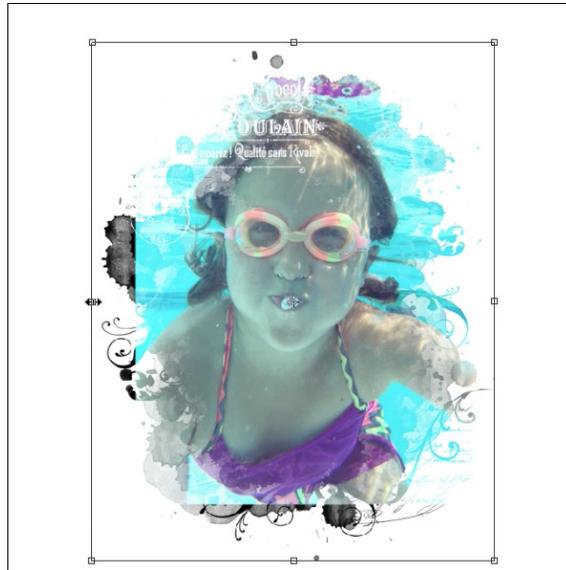
Makeover Solution #2

Color match a mask to make the photo look extended.

Use a soft round brush with color sampled from the photo.

Paint on a blank layer positioned between the photo and the mask.
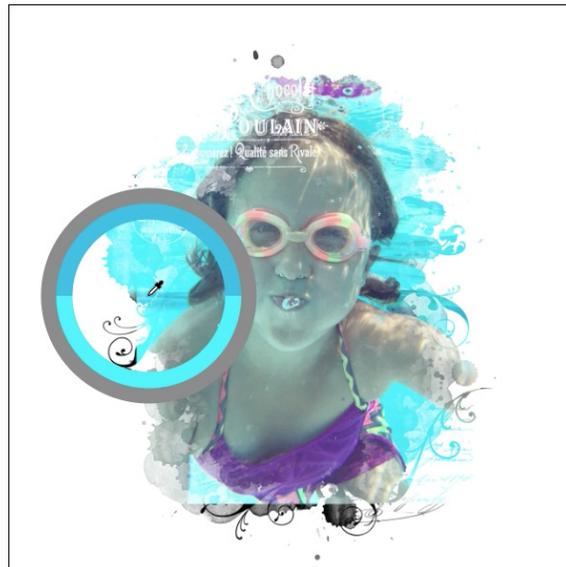
Makeover Solution #3

Add to or subtract from a mask to fill it in or extend it.

Use a soft round brush or a grungy brush at 50% opacity.

Paint directly on the mask layer.

Paint with a color that matches the mask.

Lesson 01-04: Practicing Potential

Finish up the art equation and learn seven ways to get the most potential from a mask.

The Paper Part of the Equation

Behind every successful mask design is a good plain paper.

A patterned paper will hinder, and I might even say ruin, the success of a mask design.

If you want guaranteed success with designing with masks, stick to the plain papers in your stash.

For a brush up on what exactly defines a plain paper, refer to the Design Basics videos.

mask + photo + paper = art

Way #1 - Photo on Mask

Use your photos to clip to masks.

This way is the perfect example of the art formula.

Photo on Mask

Way #2 - Paper on Mask

This way is equally artistic.

The same feeling is obtained, only instead of clipping the photo to the complex mask, paper was clipped to it and the photo was added elsewhere.

Paper on Mask

Way #3 - Masks As Anchors

Use a mask behind a photo to ease that loneliness.

Anchors are meant to compliment your photo, not distract from it.

Just right!

Way #4 - Stacking Masks

Stack plain colored masks, paper masks, and photo masks.

The more the merrier.

The color of masks should be intentional.

Repeat colors with masks to bring balance to a photo.

Use masks to extend colors from a photo.

Compliment in neutral tones and avoid distracting colors.

Avoid distracting from the subject of the photo.

Way #5 - Masks with Elements

Add additional masks and elements to masks to make them unique.

Start by clipping a photo to mask. It will provide a good idea of where you might want to add things and what kinds of things you might want to add.

Add elements to fill in grunginess.

Add elements that compliment the subject of the photo.

Additional elements should only slightly extend the original mask.

The original mask needs to remain the dominate shape.

Little things like these can make a big difference.

If your mask design is stealing the focus from your subject, then you might ask yourself if you've gone too far.


Shortcut — PS and PSE15 and Later

The mask and all other elements go into a folder or group.

Then the photo gets clipped to the folder.

If you put items into the folder, the photo will be automatically clipped to them.

This shortcut is convenient because I can move the mask pieces around until I have a good layout.

Add each element to the folder as you go.

The position of the element in the Layers Panel does not matter.

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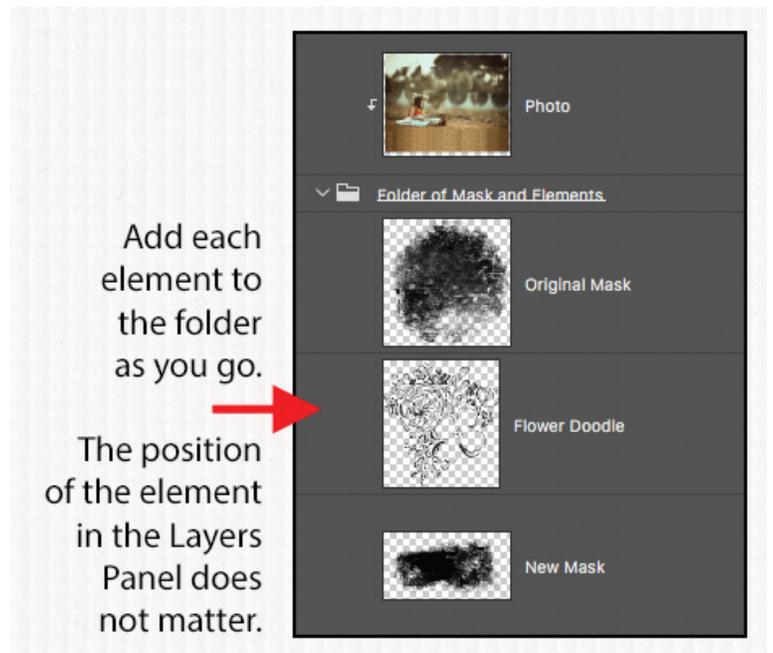
Shortcut — PSE14 and Earlier

With the absence of groups, the quick way to accomplish this same technique is to merge any new element with the original mask.

Then, clip the photo to the merged mask. You will not have as much flexibility, but the same thing will be accomplished.
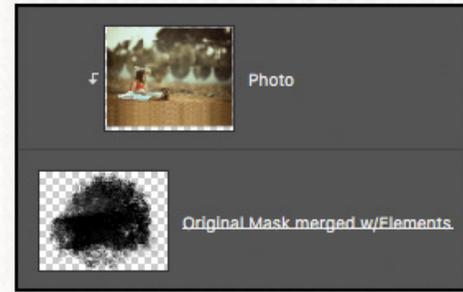
Photoshop Elements 14 and Earlier

Merge new elements with
the original mask, then clip the photo.

Way #6 - Masks from Elements

This similar to number five, except I'm not going to start with what you'd traditionally call a mask. Go through your stash seeking out items that might look good when a photo was clipped to them. Find elements that are multifunctional, like paint or a decorative overlay.

Way #7 - Creative Combos

Use the tools your are given to produce unique combinations.

Simple changes to a mask's opacity or blend mode can make a big difference.

Lower the opacity of the original mask, then added a photo clipping mask at full opacity.

When changing the Blend Mode of the mask, the entire mood of the photo changes.

When changing opacities or blend modes of masks, remember to alter the mask, not the photo.

Linear Burn Blend Mode
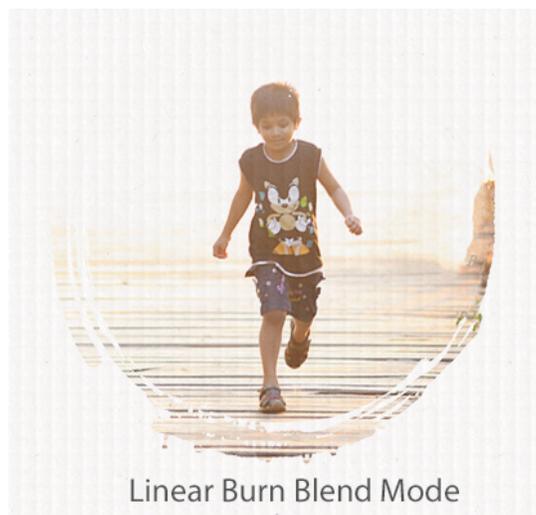
7 Ways to Practice Potential

1. Photo on Mask
2. Paper on Mask
3. Masks as Anchors
4. Stacking Masks
5. Masks with Elements
6. Masks from Elements
7. Creative Combos

Credits

Quote: Behind Every Successful Man—author unknown
Fonts: Myriad Pro, Asmara, Beautiful Day

Page: Sadie by Jenifer Juris
Photo: Jenifer Juris
Kit: APP Airy by Anna Aspnes
Fonts: Paulina, Money Penny

Page: Sails by Jen White
Photo: Jen White
Template: QwikLearn | Design Beautiful Pages
Kits: Summer Passport by Syndee Rogers-Nuckles, Blank Canvas by Susie Roberts
Fonts: DJB ANNALISE 2011, feathery

Page: My Love by Jen White
Photo: Lee Hisu
Template: QwikLearn | Design Beautiful Pages
Kits: Blank Canvas by Susie Roberts, APP Airy by Anna Aspnes
Fonts: Chapman, Carlotta, Courier

Page: Europe by Linda Sattgast
Photo: Linda Sattgast
Kit: Travel Adventure by Digital Scrapper Designs
Fonts: Trajan Pro, Myriad Pro

Photo Cluster: Explore by Jen White
Photo: Peter Danka
Kit: Press Pause by Blue Heart Scraps
Font: Ellizabeth

Photo Cluster: Read by Jen White
Photo: Fam Mi
Kit: Me And You by Sahlin Studio
Font: Featherly

Paint Photo Cluster: Jen White
Photo: Jamie Taylor
Kit: Farmhouse Style by Melissa Renfro

Overlay Photo Cluster: Jen White
Photo: Christopher Windus
Kit: Christmas Overlays by Susie Roberts