



Digital Scrapper Premier 2023, Volume 7
Lesson 2, Variation 3, Letter Grid Collage (Adobe Photoshop)

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Access a little-used pasting method to quickly fill a letter grid with a collage of photos and papers.

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NOTE: Please complete the lessons in the order they are provided.

For this lesson you will need:

- practice-photo7 from the Class-Files folder.



Quick Steps for Lesson 2, Variation 3, Letter Grid Collage

Step-by-step instructions are below.

- Create a new document.
- Add a 2-inch grid.
- Add a black 500 pt capital letter.
- Resize the letter to fit fully inside the grid squares.
- Mask away gridlines from the letter with a 15 px Hard Round brush.
- Turn off the grid, rasterize the type layer, and apply the layer mask.
- Select one section of the letter grid with the Magic Wand tool.
- Copy a photo or paper and paste it into (Paste Into) the selection.
- Resize, reposition, and rotate the photo or paper.
- Link the thumbnail and layer mask.
- Repeat for additional sections of the letter grid.
- After all sections are filled, add a drop shadow to the letter grid layer.
- Group the layers.
- Complete the title.
- Finish the page.

Step-By-Step for Lesson 2, Variation 3, Letter Grid Collage

Prepare Your Workspace

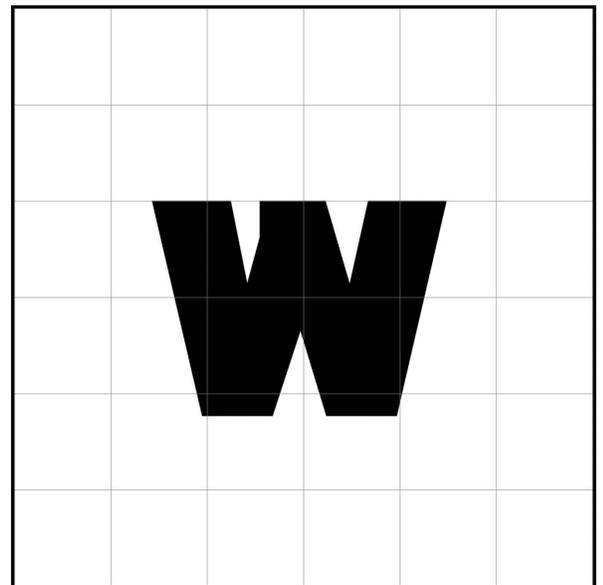
- Create a new 12x12 inch document (File > New) at 300 ppi with a white background. Letter-sized documents will also work for this tutorial.
- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black over white.

Add a 2-Inch Grid

- Press Ctrl K (Mac: Cmd K) to open Preferences.
- In the dialog box, click on Guides, Grid & Slices. Set Gridline Every to 2 and Subdivisions to 1. Click OK.
- In the Menu Bar, choose View > Show and place a checkmark next to Grid.

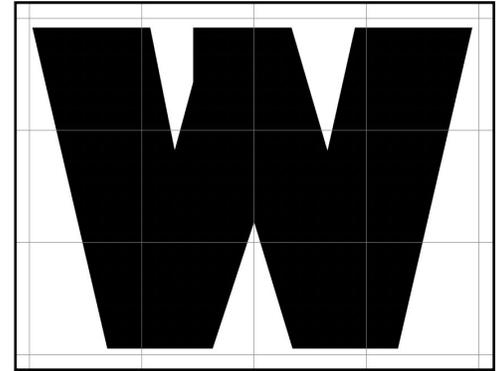
Add a Capital Letter

- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Font Picker and choose Kanit Black. Set the Size to 500. Click on the Center Align icon.
- On the document, click once in the center, type a capital letter, and click the checkmark to commit the change. I'll type a capital W because it coordinates with my title.



Resize the Letter Within the Grid

- Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- On the document, click and drag on the corner handles of the bounding box until the longest side of the letter spans just under 4 (or fewer) squares of the grid.
- To reposition the letter, click and drag inside the bounding box.
- If needed, hold down the Shift key and click and drag on the side handles to make the letter fit better within the grid.



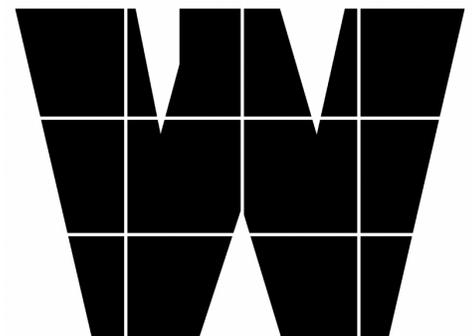
TIP: Do not let the edges of the letter extend past the gridline to create a very small piece.

Mask Away Lines in the Letter

- Get the Brush tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, open General Brushes, and choose the Hard Round brush. If you don't see the names of the brushes, open the flyout menu and place a checkmark next to Brush Name. Set the Size to 15. Set the Mode to Normal, the Opacity to 100, and the Flow to 100. In the Brush Settings panel (Window > Brush Settings), set the Spacing to 5% and uncheck all Brush Tip Shape options.
- Press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) until the letter nearly fills the viewing area and you can clearly see the gridlines and the entire boundary of the letter.
- In the Layers panel, the type layer should still be active.
- Click on the Add Layer Mask icon.
- Black needs to be the Foreground Color Chip; if it's not, press the letter X. On the document, hold down the Shift key and click and drag from the beginning of the top horizontal gridline to the end, making sure to completely cross the letter. (See the screenshot.)

NOTE: Holding down the Shift key will ensure that your brush travels in a straight line.

- Repeat for the gridlines that intersect with the letter.
- In the Menu Bar, choose View > Show and uncheck Grid.



Rasterize the Letter Grid

- In Menu Bar, choose Layer > Rasterize > Type.
- Choose Layer > Layer Mask > Apply.

Place a Photo Into a Letter Grid Square

- Get the Magic Wand tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon. Set the Sample Size to Point Sample and the Tolerance to 32. Uncheck Sample All Layers, but check both Contiguous and Anti-aliasing.
- On the document, click on one of the letter grid squares to select it.
- Open practice-photo7 (File > Open).
- Press Ctrl A (Mac: Cmd A) to select the entire photo.
- Press Ctrl C (Mac: Cmd C) to copy the selection.
- Return to the document.
- In the Menu bar, choose Edit > Paste Special > Paste Into.
- Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- To resize, click and drag on the corner handles. To reposition, click and drag inside the bounding box. To rotate, hover your cursor near a corner handle of the bounding box until you see a curved, double-headed arrow, then click and drag to rotate. Click the checkmark to commit the change.
- **In the Layers panel, click between the thumbnail and layer mask of the photo layer to relink them.**



NOTE: You can clip photos or papers to your grid squares using this same method.

Clip Papers or Photos to the Remaining Squares of the Letter Grid

- On the document, click on the letter grid layer to activate it.
- With the Magic Wand tool, click on one of the squares to select it.
- Open a photo (File > Open) of your choice.
- Press Ctrl A (Mac: Cmd A) to select the entire photo.
- Press Ctrl C (Mac: Cmd C) to copy the selection.

MAC ONLY TRICK: You can copy a file (photo or paper) from a folder on your computer without opening it in Photoshop. Windows users will have to open a photo, copy it, and then paste into the selection.

- Return to the document.
- In the Menu bar, choose Edit > Paste Special > Paste Into.
- Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- To resize, click and drag on the corner handles. To reposition, click and drag inside the bounding box. To rotate, hover your cursor near a corner handle of the bounding box until you see a curved, double-headed arrow, then click and drag to rotate. Click the checkmark to commit the change.
- Click on the Link icon to reconnect the layer mask.



Add a Drop Shadow to the Letter Grid

- In the Layers panel, click on the letter layer to activate it.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Layer Style > Drop Shadow. In the dialog box, set the Blend Mode to Multiply, the Opacity to 50, the Angle to 120, the Distance to 15, the Spread to 0, and the Size to 15. Click OK.



NOTE: Once you complete your page, you may need to alter the settings of the drop shadow so you can clearly see the masked lines in the letter. A drop shadow that's too large will make the lines hard to see.

(Optional) Add a Letter Grid Mat

- In the Layers panel, hold down the Alt key (Mac: Opt key) and click and drag a duplicate letter grid layer directly below the original.
- Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- Press Ctrl - (Mac: Cmd -) once to zoom out.
- Click and drag on the corner handles of the bounding box to resize the bottom letter grid to be slightly larger than the top letter grid. Click and drag inside the bounding box to offset the bottom letter grid from the top letter grid. Click the checkmark to commit the change.
- Open a coordinating paper (File > Open).
- Get the Move tool.
- Holding down the Shift key, click and drag the paper onto the document.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.



Group the Layers

- In the Layers panel, click on the top photo layer to activate it.
- Click on the bottom letter grid layer. Now all layers associated with the letter grid collage should be active.
- Click on the Create a New Group icon.
- Double click directly on the name of the new layer, rename it LETTER GRID COLLAGE, and press Enter/Return to commit the change..

Complete the Page

- Add a sticker style title to complete the thought of the large letter.
- Add additional photos, if desired.
- Add elements on the edge of the letter.
- Complete the page and save.



Page & Photos: Jen White
Class: DSP23, Vol 7, Lesson 2,
Letter Grid
Kit: Kristin Cronin-Barrow
Fonts: Aisling, Caroni