

# TEST YOUR Skills

## Design Beautiful Pages— Beautifully Blended Designs

### Test Your Skills Challenge 3

#### Blending With Masks & Photos

In my instructional video on blending I talk about using masks as blending agents on your scrapbook pages. A mask looks blended because it's a 2D element where the edges appear to be on the same plane as the background.

In this challenge we'll use Template #07 from your downloads to think a little bit more about masks and how to use them.

#### Question

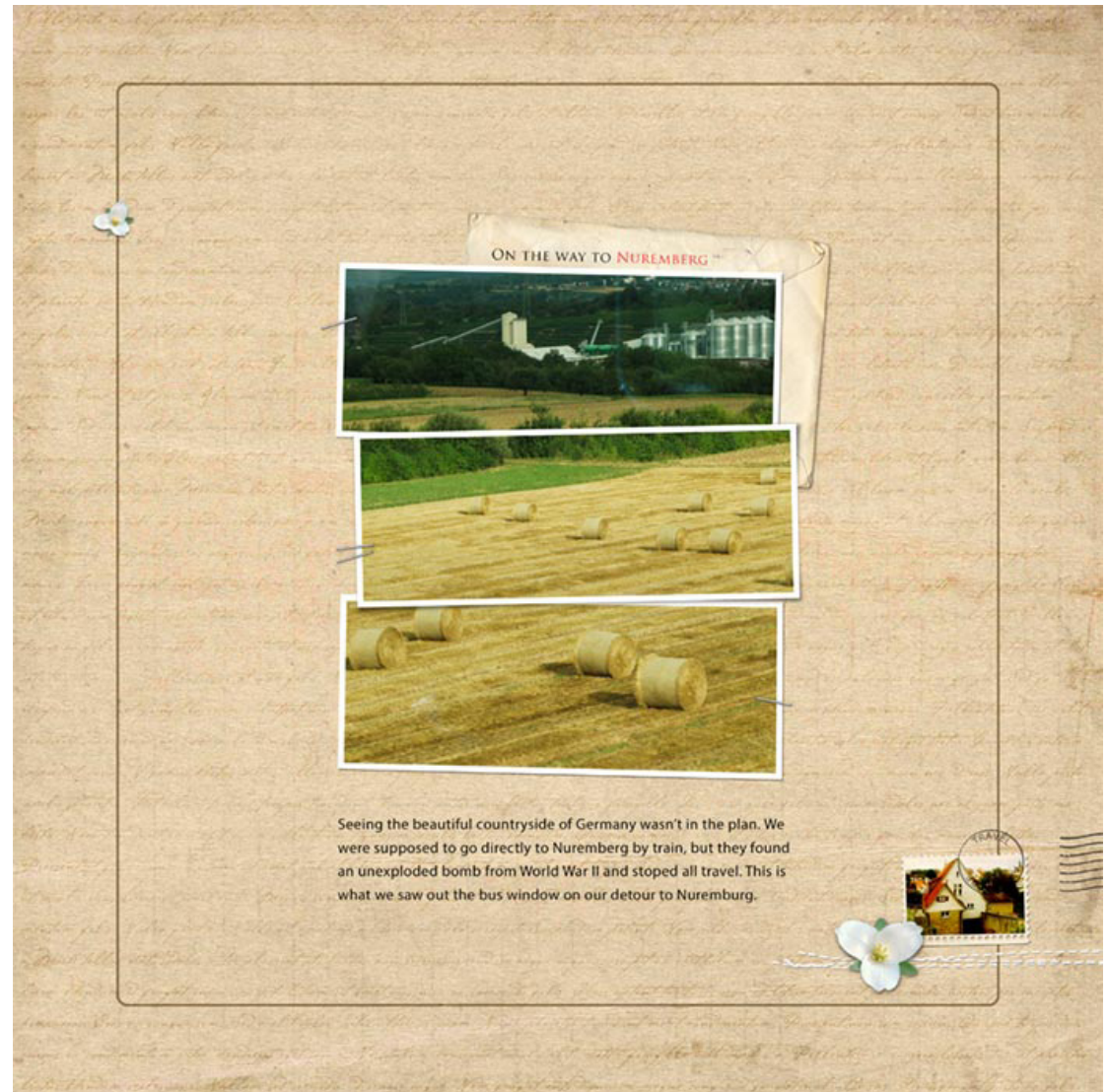
How many ways can you think of to use the masks in this template on a scrapbook page?



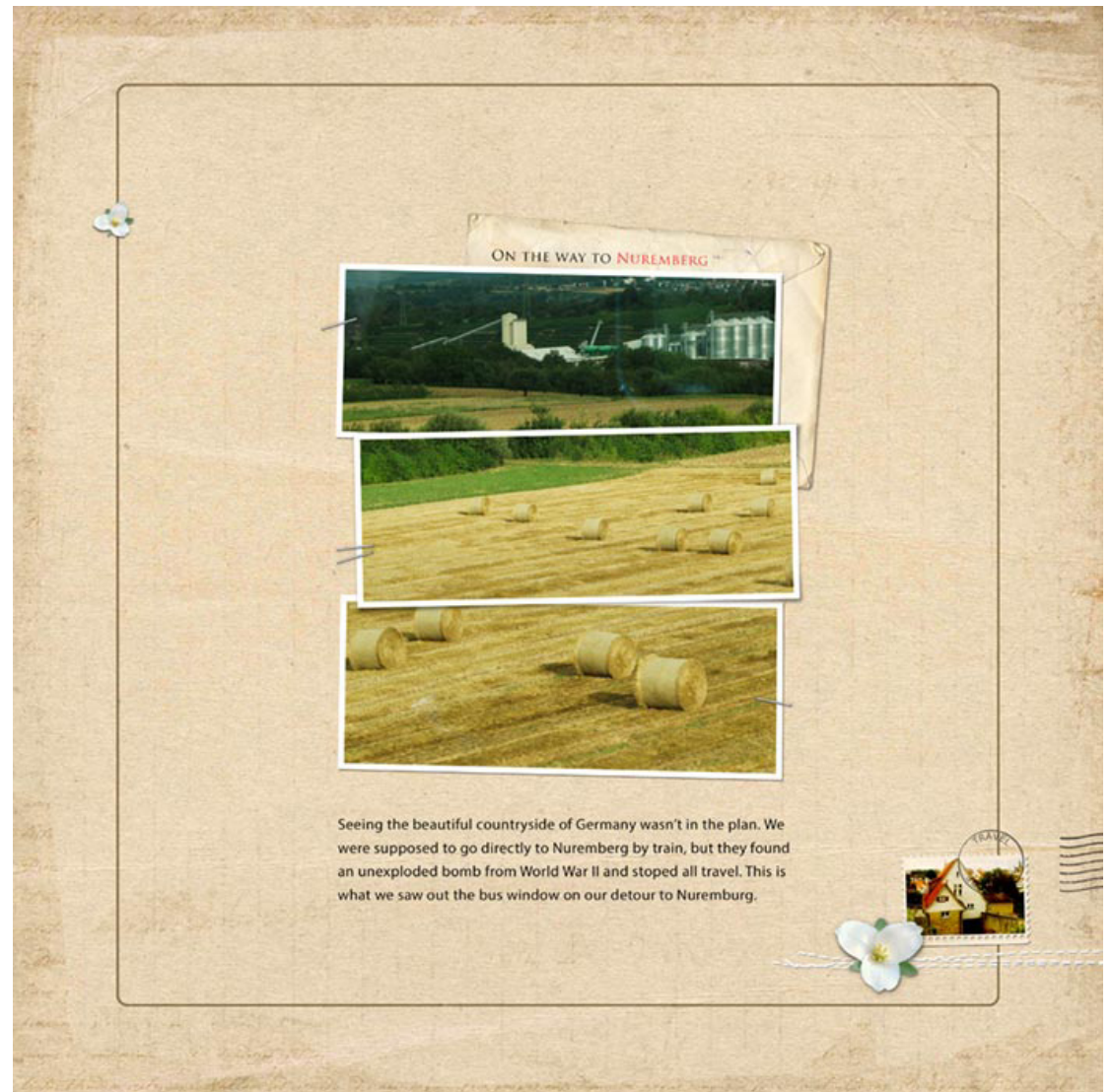
## Answer

- Fill the masks with a color that complements your page.
- Change the blend mode of the masks to blend with your background.
- Clip paper to the masks.
- Clip a photo to one or both of the masks.

Here's a page from an album called Travel Adventure that I created quite a few years ago about a trip to Europe. In this version of the page, there are no masks.

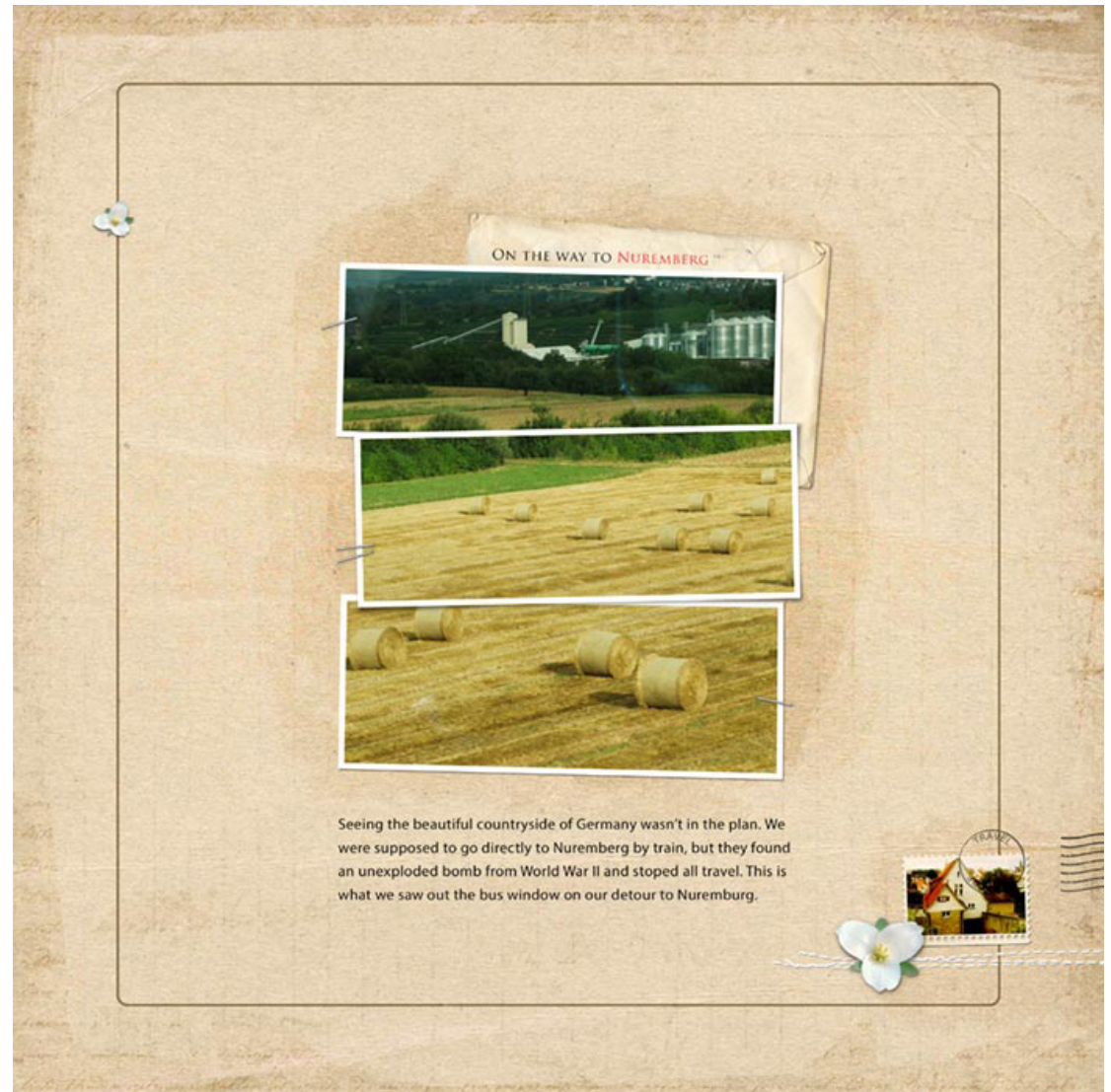


Here I added a layer mask above the background paper and clipped another paper to it. The result is that the background looks perfectly blended together, especially because the colors of the papers match each other so well. So clipping paper to a mask is a viable way to create a blended look. The colors don't have to match as well as mine did, but the background papers should feel like they fit together, even if they're different colors.





Here I added some black opaque masks above the blended background layers but behind my photos. I changed the blend mode to Soft Light and lowered the opacity to 30% which greatly softened the effect and turned the masks into an anchor element to anchor my photos to the page.



Here's another page from the same album. I used the same masks, blend mode, and opacity, but I filled the masks with white. So changing the color of the mask, with or without changing the blend mode, is one way to blend papers together.

### Travel Album Credits

Photos by Charlie and Linda Sattgast

Design by Linda Sattgast

Kit: Travel Adventure by Digital Scrapper Designs

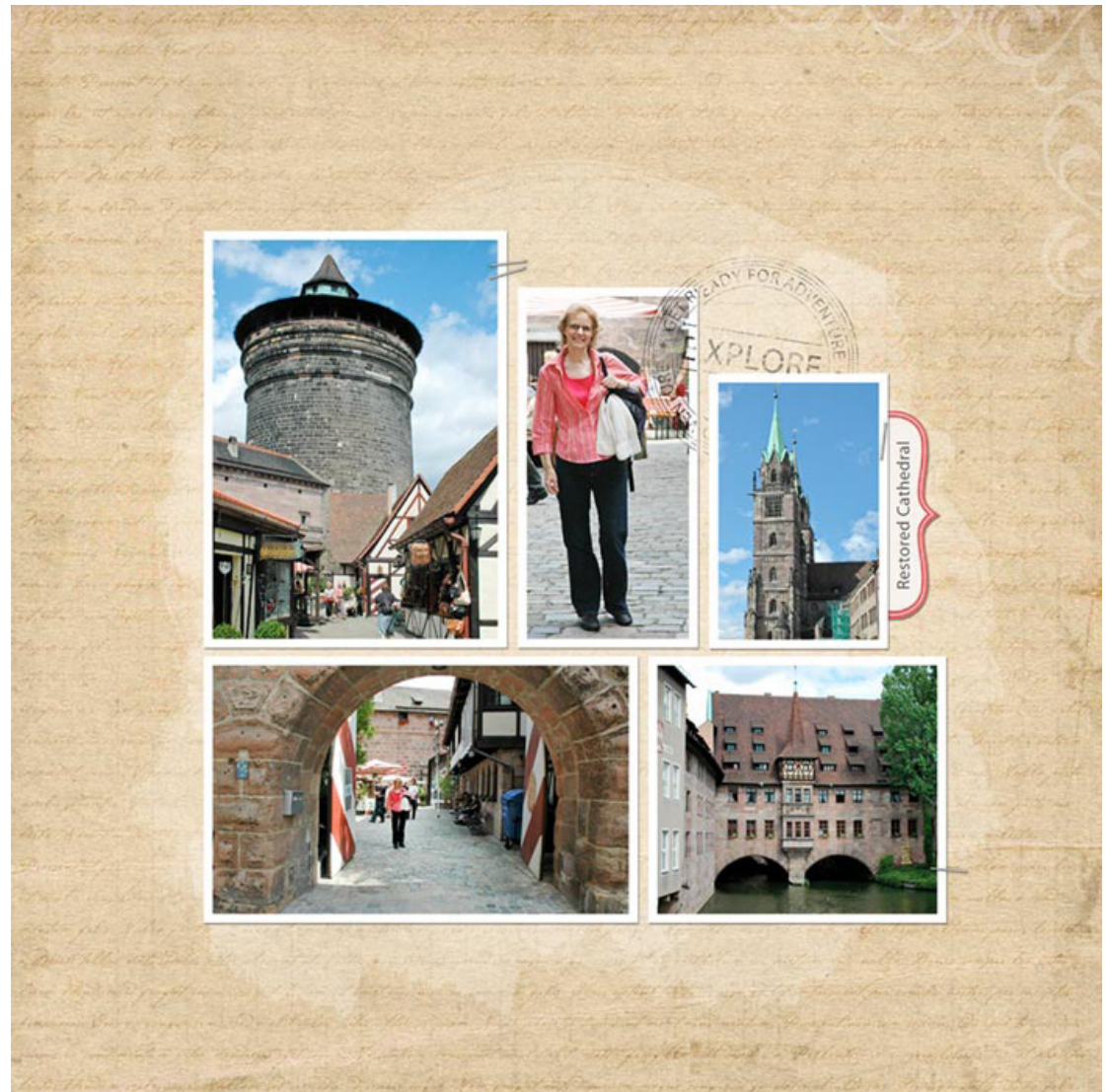
Fonts: Trajan Pro and Myriad Pro

### Resizing Masks

Now let's talk about resizing masks.

### Question

When you resize a mask with the Transform tool, does it matter whether you keep the original proportions or not?



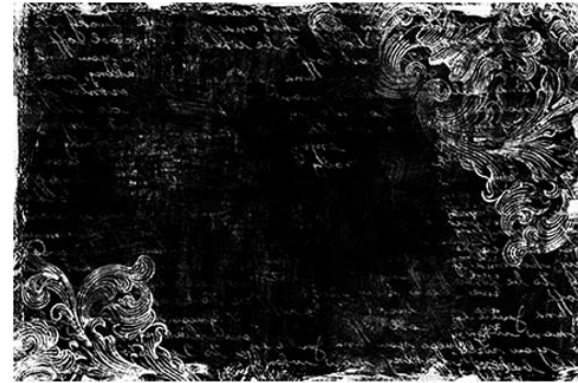
## Answer

### IT DEPENDS!

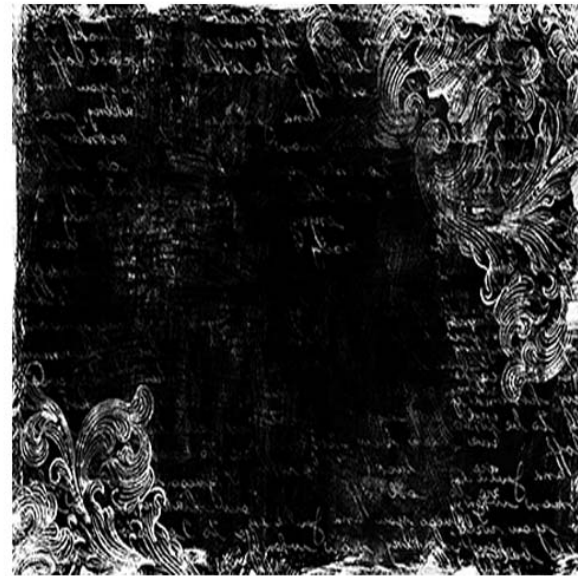
If the mask has anything in it that needs to stay proportional, then you must resize it proportionately.

### Credit

Mask from Count The Ways  
by Joanne Brisebois



Original



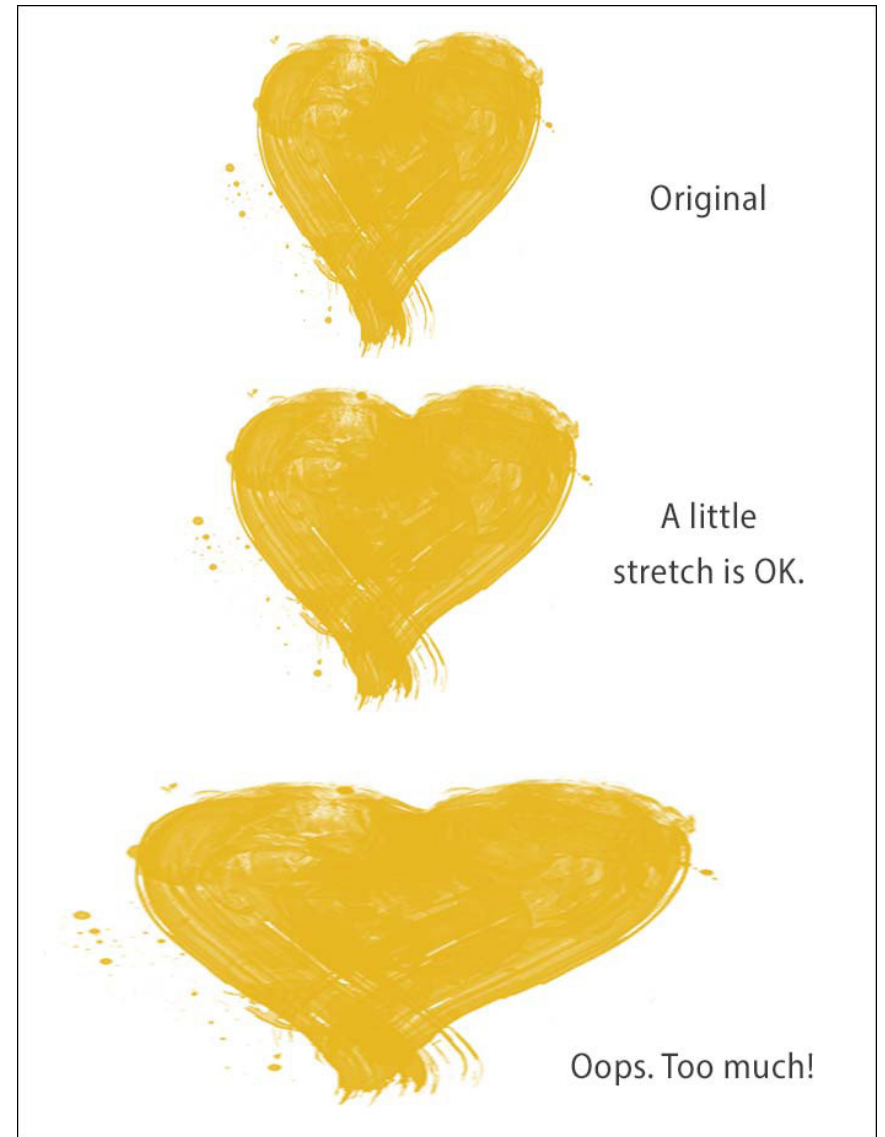
Stretched  
(No No)



Some masks can be stretched a little, but if you go too far you'll get an "Oops, you went too far!" vibe.

**Credit**

Mask from Me Personally  
by Taylor Made



Other masks you can stretch to your heart's content. I rotated and flipped and stretched and resized the lower mask without a twinge of conscience. Then I selected both mask layers and made them quite a bit smaller.

### Credit

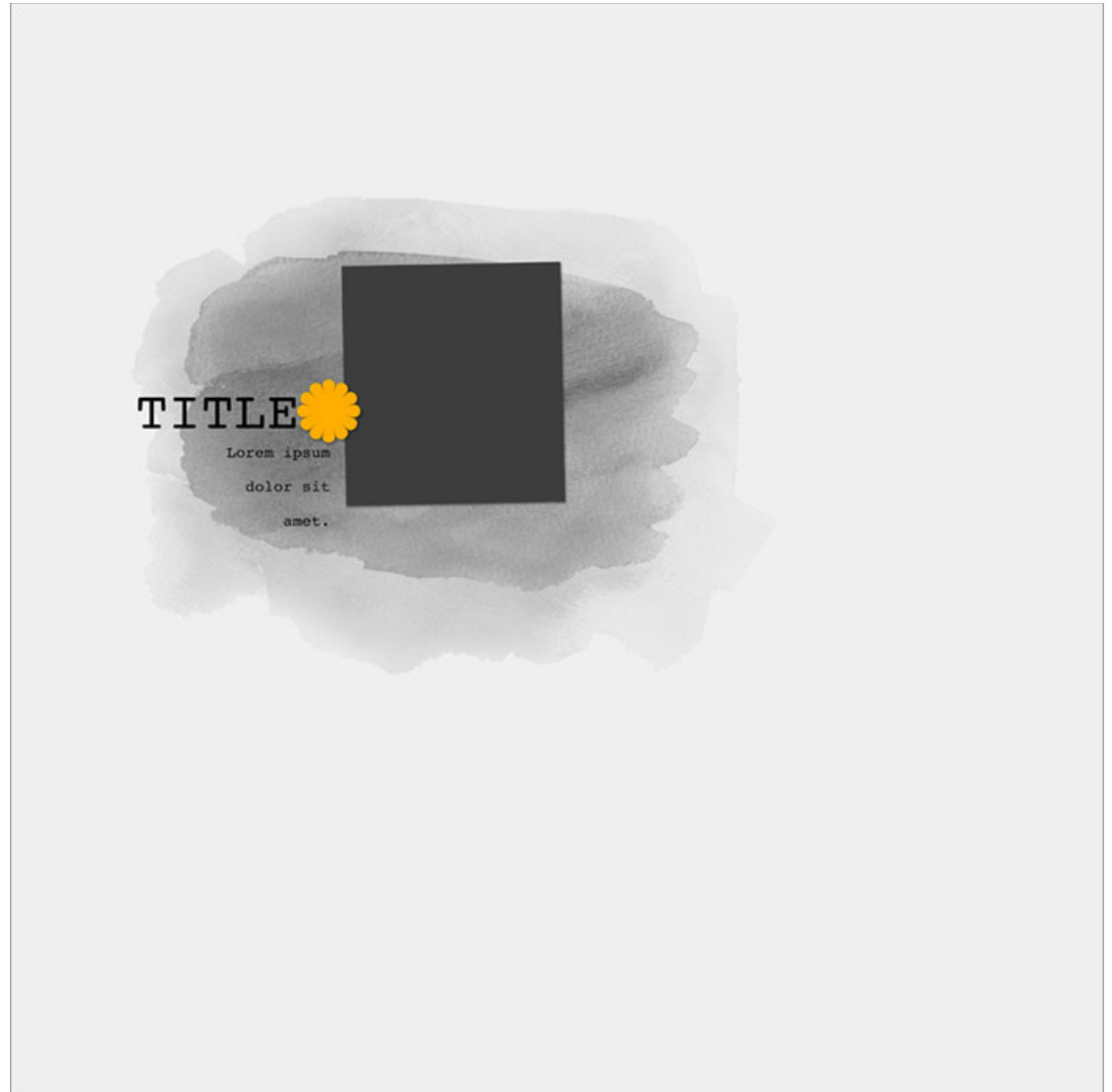
Template (altered) from Design Beautiful Pages

## Clipping A Photo To A Mask

I'm going to use the altered template for my final page, so let's talk about the kind of photo you might want to use for this template.

This is a specific type of blended template where, if you use one photo, you must follow these rules:

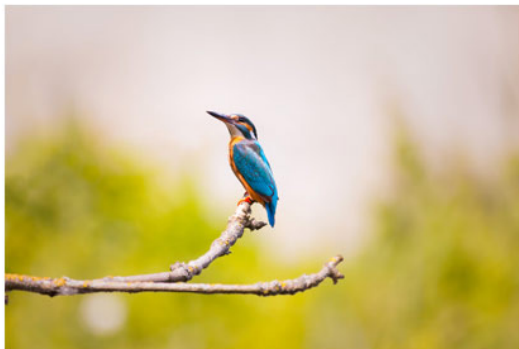
- The overall size of the photo must be, at a minimum, at least as large as the largest mask, which in this template is the bottom mask.
- Move your photo onto the template and clip it to one of the three masks.
- In the Layers panel create two copies of your photo and move each layer above one of the two remaining masks.
- Without moving the copied layers on your document, clip each copied photo layer to the mask below it.
- If you resize the photo, in the Layers panel select all three photo layers and resize them together so they stay the same size and location on your page.
- The focal point of the photo must appear in the top clipping mask that's completely opaque. This will make the focal point more prominent.
- You're allowed to flip the photo if flipping it doesn't cause a problem, and you're allowed to move the top clipping mask to a new location as long as the final design looks good.

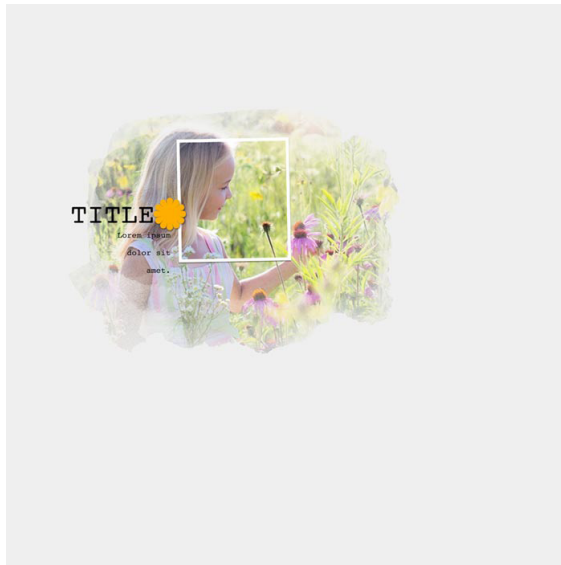




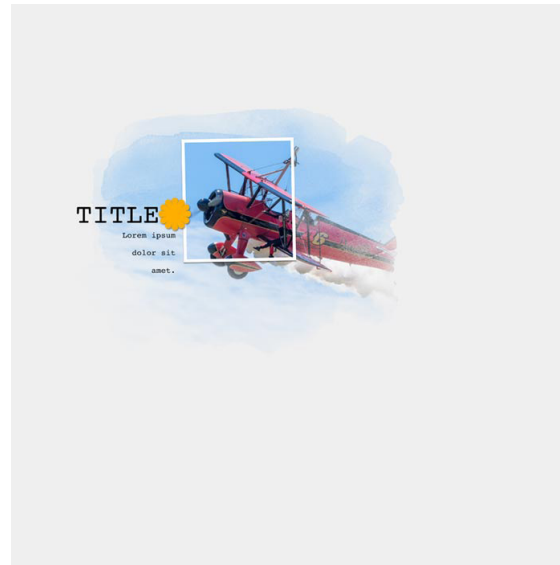
## Question

Which of the photos shown here would be a good candidate for this page?

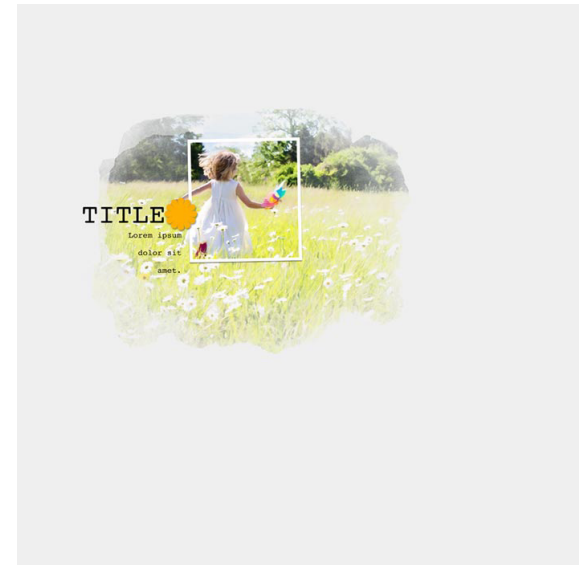




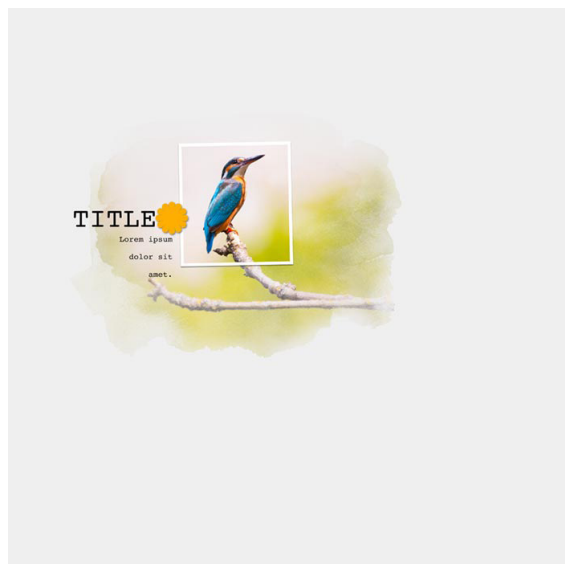
NO. Because this image is zoomed in too far I couldn't get the focal point (both her face and the flower) inside the top framed clipping mask without creating an edge on one or both of the lower masks. I could increase the size of the top clipping mask, but it would have to cover most of the masked area.



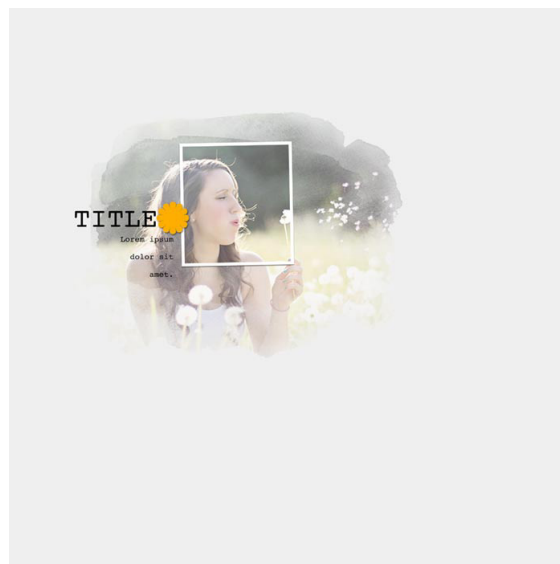
NO. Again this photo is also zoomed in too far. If it had more sky around it I could have made the photo smaller, and that might have been a fun effect! One of the top characteristics you look for when choosing a photo for this kind of masking is a central focal point that has plenty of space around it.



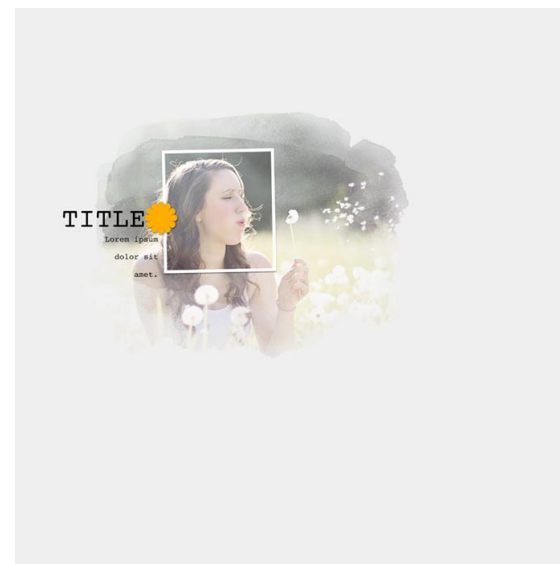
MAYBE. This photo works better. It has a more distant focal point and space around it. I personally wasn't that excited about the final result, though. It doesn't evoke the kind of gut response I'm looking for. You may differ on that, though, and that's OK.



YES! I flipped this image horizontally, and it fit beautifully in the focal frame. I originally thought this photo wouldn't be that exciting because there's not much to see in the background, but I ended up really liking the background! It simply accentuates the focal point by having less going on in the background.

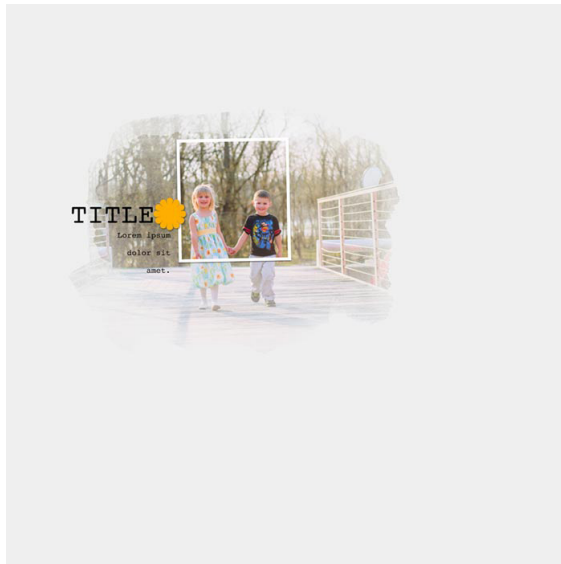


NOT YET. I flipped this photo horizontally to make it work. (I could have flipped the layer mask and title if flipping the photo was a problem.) I tried to fit the face and the dandelion into the frame, but it wasn't working. SEE NEXT...

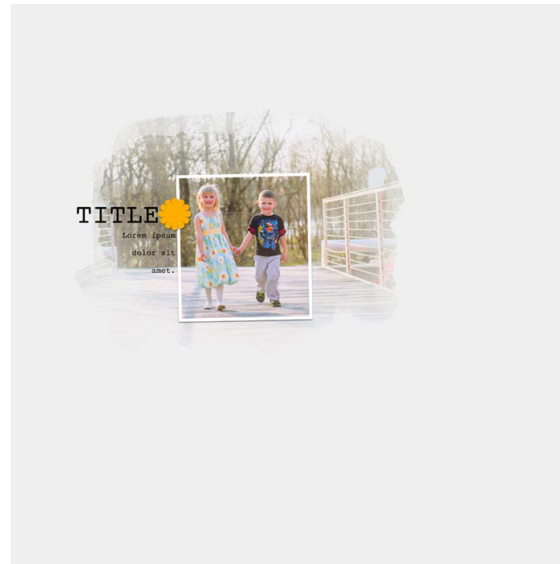


YES! By moving the clipping mask frame, title, and journaling to the left I was able to focus on her face, and the dandelion showed up quite nicely outside the frame. This worked for me.

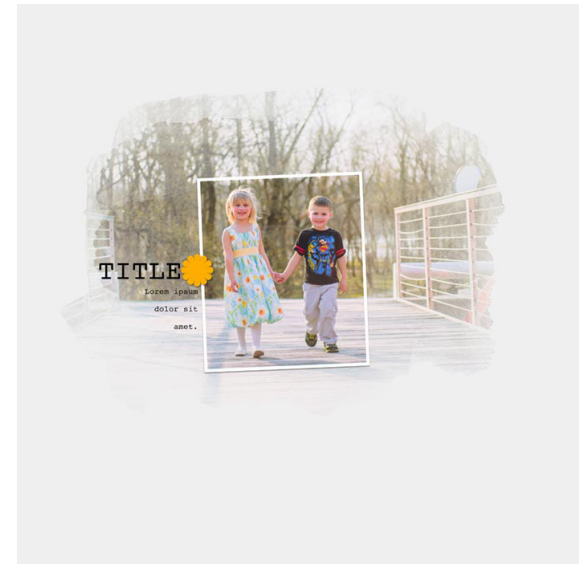




NOT YET. Having two people as a focal point can be tricky. You have to zoom out much more to get them both inside the frame, so that makes the image smaller. Also, The photo didn't have enough space at the bottom to move up enough to get all of them inside the frame. SEE NEXT...



BETTER. I resized the clipping mask and moved it down to get the two children completely inside the frame. SEE NEXT...



GOOD. Making the masks and photos larger while keeping the title and journaling the same size made this work much better for me. I'm not totally crazy about the sides of the bridge showing in the photo, but it's less of a problem to me in the larger image.

## Finish The Page

I'm ready to pick my favorite image and finish the page. As you can see, there is more than one photo that would work.

I chose the Kingfisher bird photo.

### Credits

Photo by Lukas Bieri

Kit: ArtPlayPalette Kinsfolk by Anna Aspnes

Fonts: GoBold Bold, Orator Std

### Wrap Up

Remember the versatility of masks and use them to their fullest:

- Fill a mask with a color that complements your page.
- Change the blend mode of a mask to blend with your background.
- Clip paper to a mask.
- Clip a photo to one or more masks.
- When clipping the same photo to multiple mask layers, choose a photo that shows off this technique well.

