



Perfectly Personal Word Art

Big Letter Mask Variation 1 – Photoshop Elements Transcript

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In this lesson we're going to cover how to take the big letter mask base and give it some artistic flair. In this variation, we're going to add some paint to the mask base and then clip a photo to it.

So here I am in Photoshop elements and I've already opened the artistic letter mask base file. Before you do anything else, in the menu bar, choose file, duplicate to create a copy and then in the dialog box click okay. Now you can go back and close the original artistic letter mask base file.

In the downloads for this section of the class, you can find a small number of PNG paint files I've included for you to use. You're going to need those files downloaded and unzipped in order to be able to follow along with this lesson. Okay, so now that we've created a copy of our base file and have the paint PNG files ready to use, let's get started on the fun stuff. This first variation I'm going to show you is very easy to do while also adding a large amount of visual impact. But before we add any paint to this mask, I first need to update the word that I'm using. To do that, in the layers panel, double click on the thumbnail of the type layer to activate the type on the document. Now type the word that you wish to use. I'm using the word nature in all caps. If you want to copy me exactly, you can, as I've also provided the same photo I'm using in this lesson in the downloads. So then once you're done, click the checkmark to commit.

And as you can see, the word no longer fits within the bounds of the document, but that's okay. We're about to fix that. So get the horizontal type tool and in the tool options, set the size to 125 points and then get the move tool and press control A in windows or command A on a Mac to select all. And then in the tool options, click on the align horizontal centers icon and the align vertical centers icon and then press control D in windows or command D on a Mac to de-select.

Now it's time to add the paint. So I've already opened the file called paint zero one dot PNG. Get the move tool and in the tool options, make sure auto select layer is unchecked. On the document while holding down the shift key, click and drag the paint zero one file onto your base copy document. And then in the layers panel, drag the paint layer below the type layer. Now press control T in windows or command T on a Mac to get the transform options. On the document, while holding down the alt key in windows or the option key on a Mac, click and drag from a corner handle to make the paint layer

smaller. I'm going to size it down until the transform box handles on the left and right side fit to the document edges. And then click the checkmark to commit.

Once your paint layer is positioned how you want it, in the layers panel, click on the background layer and drag it to the trash. Now in the menu bar, choose file, save as, and save this file with a unique name as a dot PNG file type in the same folder as the base dot PSD file. This will create a flat, transparent version of this mask for you to use on your projects. I recommend giving the flat version a unique name that uses the word that you used in the mask. For example, I'm naming this flat PNG file nature letter mask dot PNG. Now don't close this file just yet. I also recommend saving this file as a PSD layered file. There may be times that you want to make the paint a different color from the type, and you may also want to change the word you used, which is something you can't do with the PNG file. So in the menu bar, choose file, save as, and save this file as a PSD file for future customization. I'm going to save it as artistic letter mask paint V1 which stands for version one dot. PSD.

So now that we have saved the mask, let me show you how to clip a photo to it. In the downloads for this lesson, I've included a photo of mine for you to practice with. Download and unzip the files for this lesson and open the file called nature photo by Jenifer Juris dot JPEG. On top of having the photo open and ready, I've also already opened the nature letter mask dot PNG file we just saved a minute ago. We do not need the layered file for this step. The flat PNG file will work nicely for us. So we don't accidentally save over this black PNG file, let's create a duplicate. To do that in the menu bar, Choose file, duplicate and then click okay and you can close the original nature letter mask file. Now let's go to the photo document and get the move tool. And on the document we're holding down the shift key and click and drag the photo onto the nature letter mask copy document and let go. Then in the menu bar, choose layer, create clipping mask. Now press control T in windows or command T on a Mac to get the transform options. And at this point you're probably going to need to press control zero in windows or command zero on a Mac to resize the document so that you can see the corner handles.

Then while holding down the alt key in windows or the option key on a Mac, click and drag from a corner handle to make the photo smaller. I'm dragging mine in until the bounding box is just inside the edges, the right and left edges of the document, and then click the checkmark to commit. Now you'll also probably need to resize the document back up to size by pressing control plus in windows or command plus on a Mac a few times.

And then on the document while holding down the shift key, click and drag the photo up until the bee and the flower are visible inside the U and the R. Now to transfer this to a different project, press control A in windows or command A on a Mac to select all. Then press shift control C in windows or shift command C on a Mac to copy all of the layers. Then you would go to whatever your current project document is and press control V in windows or command V on a Mac to paste.

So here's our layer mask with the photo clipped to it. I really like how this first variation turned out. And here is how I used this first variation in a project. I made a digital scrapbook page using more photos from the same nature walk. I really love how the photo clipped to our mask completes the trio of pictures while also helping to tell a story. In the next lesson, we're going to look at a second variation on the big letter mask. I'll see you there. This is Jenifer Juris with perfectly personal word art.