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Picture Perfect Gift Books—How To for Photoshop Elements, Pt 3

Lesson 09: Resize a Template

Depending on which printing company you use and which size of book you choose, you may want to convert a template from one size to another. Here are a few tips on how to do that.

- Find a cover that would be a good fit for the album. In my demo I chose Cover 8 from the cover templates for adults. These templates are for 8 x 8 inch books, but my senior yearbook is a 12 x 12 inch book, so this cover needs to be converted.

I can't simply upsize the template, because the proportions are slightly different, even though both books are square. The 12 x 12 inch book needs about the same amount of edge material to fold under the edges of the front and back covers as the 8 x 8 book, so that part of the template doesn't need to change that much, while the rest of it does.

- Download the size of cover template you want from the online company you plan to use. Many companies provide downloadable templates for people who want to create their own covers. I used a 12 x 12 inch cover template I downloaded from Shutterfly, but you can use a template from any other company.
- Open (File > Open) the correct cover template from your online company and also open the class cover template you want to copy.
- Make the class cover template document the active document.
- Select the Move tool. In Tool Options, check Auto Select Layer and Show Bounding Box.
- Make sure you can see the Layers panel. If you don't see it, in the Menu Bar choose Window > Layers.
- In the Layers panel, click on the top template layer and Shift click on the bottom template layer to select all the layers.
- Click and drag from anywhere on your document to your new template document to copy the layers. When you're over the new document press Shift, let go of the mouse, and then let go of the Shift key. Pressing Shift will cause the layers to land in the center of the document.
- Press Alt (Mac: Opt) and click and drag from a corner handle until two of the sides reach the sides of the new template. Click on the green check mark to commit the change.
- Click on any layer in the Layers panel to deselect all the layers.
- With the Move tool, on your document click on any layer that needs to be adjusted and use the Bounding box to adjust it.
- You can use side handles to adjust a template layer and it won't look distorted. Using side handles would distort a photo, but there's nothing to distort on a template layer composed of flat color.
- In my example, I clicked and dragged the right Bounding box handle of the white PHOTO Clipping Mask layer to the right until it reached the edge. Then I clicked on the green check mark to commit the change.
- I did the same for the gray template layer on the left, this time dragging the template to the left edge of the document.

After resizing the template, check to make sure other objects or type layers aren't too big. On my example, the circle with the title on it increased in size when I made the template bigger. Sometimes it's easier to wait until you add your photo(s) to know for sure what you need to change.

Once I added my photo, I made the circle and title quite a bit smaller and deleted some of the type layers.

In order to make a good decision about the size of the type, it helps to view the template on your computer at a size close to the actual size it will be when printed. That varies from computer to computer, but a 33.33% viewing size usually comes the closest for most computers.

The viewing size is shown in the lower left corner of a document. Use the viewing shortcuts Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) to zoom in and Ctrl - (Mac: Cmd -) to zoom out until you reach the 33.33% viewing size.

Don't forget to turn your layered document into a single layer JPEG image before uploading it to an online printing company. I explain how to do that in the video, Finish Your Cover in the How To section of the classroom.

Lesson 10: Page Template Tips

Here are some tips for working with the Picture Perfect Gift Book page templates that are available to download on the Class Downloads Page.

Move Tool

When working with templates always make sure the Move tool is set to Auto Select Layer and Show Bounding Box. This will put a bounding box around the selected template layer, which will let you know exactly which layer is active.

Layers Panel

When a template layer is selected on your document, its layer is also selected in the Layers panel. Check the name of the layer to know whether this layer was intended for a photo or for paper. If it says PHOTO Clipping Mask, that means the designer intended you to clip a photo to this layer.

I explain how to clip a photo to a layer in the video Add & Resize Photos in the How To section of the class.

Styles

If a layer has an fx symbol, that means the layer has a layer style. In my example the style was a white stroke outline, or edge, around the photo and a drop shadow.

- To adjust a layer style, double click on the fx icon to get the Style Settings dialog box. You can change any of the settings for a different look. For example, you can change the size of the stroke outline from 40 px to 30 px and click OK.
- To remove a layer style, Right click on the layer and choose Clear Layer Style.

Though the photo layers are intended to have a photo clipped to them, you can clip something else to them, like digital paper, if you prefer.

Adjust a Clipping Mask

When you add a photo and clip it to a PHOTO Clipping Mask, the mask may not be the correct proportion for the photo. You can change the mask to fit the photo better, if you wish.

- In the Layers panel, click on the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer below the photo.
- On your document, click and drag from any handle to resize the clipping mask. You're not resizing the photo—just the clipping mask, so you can use a side handle and it won't distort the photo. It just changes how much of the photo you see.
- Click on the green check mark to commit the change.

- Even though you've resized the clipping mask, any styles associated with that clipping mask will remain the same size, which is one of the beauties of layer styles.

Create Your Own Template

I've provided some useful documents for you to download if you want to create your own templates. Each document has something to do with an outline.

The document called **stroke-white-edge.psd** is an 8 x 8 inch document that contains one PHOTO Clipping Mask layer that has a white stroke outline and a drop shadow.

You can use this document as is, or you can use the Move tool to click and drag the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer onto a different document.

- You can adjust the PHOTO Clipping mask layer to any size you want by moving the bounding box.
- To create a second PHOTO Clipping Mask layer, press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate it, and then reposition it.
- To rotate a clipping mask layer, move your cursor outside the bounding box near a corner and when you see the curved double arrow, click and drag to rotate the PHOTO Clipping Mask. Press Shift to rotate in increments of 15°.

The second file called **stroke-outline.psd** is also 8 x 8 inches and has two layers: a PHOTO Clipping Mask layer with no layer style, and a stroke outline layer similar to what I used with the Senior Yearbook templates.

- The spacing between the Stroke Outline layer and the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer is even all the way around.
- If, in the Layers panel, you select the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer and Shift click on the Stroke Outline layer to select both layers, you can resize them together.
- If you resize from a corner handle to maintain the original proportions, the spacing between the two remains equal on all sides, but the spacing gets smaller or larger as you make the file smaller or larger.
- If you resize from a side handle, however, the spacing between the stroke outline and the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer is no longer equal on all sides.
- It's best to resize just the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer first.
- Once the PHOTO Clipping Mask layer is the size you want, click on the green check mark to commit the change.
- Now you can click on the Stroke Outline layer and use the bounding box to adjust it as well.
- You might want to make the entire outline larger or make one side of it larger so you can have a place for some text. You can be as creative as you want.
- If you want this template style on a different size of document, simply select both layers in the Layers panel by clicking on one and Shift clicking on the other, and use the Move tool to click and drag the template layers to the new document.

NOTE: Keeping the Stroke Outline layer below the clipping mask layer in the Layers panel will ensure you can select the correct template layer with the Move tool. The Stroke Outline layer has a fill that's invisible but is clickable, so if you place it above a regular template layer, you won't be able to select the template layer with the Move tool.

The document called **type-outline.psd** contains several type layers.

- When you open this document, you'll probably get some kind of warning, such as the need to update the text layers.
- If you don't have one or more of the fonts on your computer, you may also get a warning and an offer to substitute a font you do have, and if that's the case, simply say yes.
- All the type layers show only the outline of the letters. The letters themselves are invisible.
- Use the Move tool to click and drag one of these type layers onto your document to use it, and if you need to change fonts, go ahead and do so.

- If you put a color or digital paper behind the words, only the outline will show.

All three of these documents involve some kind of outline. The download for these files is called outlines.zip. You'll find it on the Class Download Page.

Lesson 11: Divide a Double Spread

Some pages are easier to create as a double spread which you then divide into two spreads later. Or you may want to divide a double template created for AdoramaPix so you can use it with another company.

Here's how to divide a double spread into two separate pages:

- Open the double spread in Photoshop Elements.
- In the Menu Bar choose File > Duplicate to create a copy so you don't harm the original document.
- Close the original document.
- Make sure you're in the tabbed view by choosing Window > Images > Consolidate all to tabs. That way you'll be able to see some space around your document.
- If your rulers aren't showing, in the Menu Bar choose View > Rulers.
- In the View Menu also make sure Snap to Guides is checked.
- Click and drag out a guide from the left ruler to place in the center of your document. My document is 24 inches wide so the half way point is 12 inches.
- Get the Rectangular Marquee tool. In Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon. Feather should be 0 and the Aspect should be Normal.
- Click slightly outside the upper left corner of the document and drag down and to the right until you reach the bottom right corner of the left page, next to the center guide.
- You can double check your measurement by looking at the Info panel (Window > Info).
- In the Menu Bar choose Image > Crop.
- In the Menu Bar choose File > Duplicate to make a copy of the cropped document.
- Choose File > Save As and save this file as the layered left page with a new name.
- Make the document you cropped the active document.
- Open the History panel. If you don't see the History panel, in the Menu Bar choose Window > History.
- Click on the Rectangular Marquee history state to return to a full sized document.
- In the Menu Bar choose Select > Inverse. This will select the entire right side of the document.
- In the Menu Bar choose Image > Crop.
- Choose File > Save As and save this file as the layered right page with a new name.

Now you have two separate documents that you can save as a JPEG for uploading to an online printing company.

Separating Templates

The one other scenario where splitting two sides might come in handy, is if you want to split a double spread template, such as the AdoramaPix templates available in the classroom. You might want to divide one or more of those templates in two so you can use them on Shutterfly, for example, or on some other printing site. Use the same technique I showed you above.

The only thing I would add is a couple of new guides to show how far the safe area extends around the gutter (the part of the page that is attached to the spine in the center of the book). You don't have to be super exact. Just eyeball it.

Follow the same instructions as above to divide the template.