



Class by Jen White

Cluster Queen

Lesson 04 Part 1: Right Edge Cluster



Why These Five Elements?

Each of the elements provided comes from my personal stash. The element set is not specific to any particular designer or kit.

- **Style.** For this lesson I searched for elements that have a variety of interesting edges. I chose something round (doily) and something square (paper frame). There are two long items (flower, string) and one short item (leaves). In an edge cluster you should always plan on not seeing the elements in their entirety.
- **Variety.** Each of the five elements I chose have a texture you can feel, and they are all different. The thread is light and airy. It will make a nice filler element. The doily has tons of texture and since it's full it will make a great anchor. The paper frame will bring structure to the cluster and will also work nicely as an anchor. The flower and leaves will provide the bulk of the cluster and give it depth.
- **Color.** For this lesson I'm again sticking with a more neutral theme of colors and then adding one additional bright color for interest. Color can be lovely, but it can also quickly turn a cluster to 'clutter' if not done right.

NOTE: In this lesson, the frame is meant to work as an anchor, not as a photo frame.

Step One: Create a Cluster

- Create an edge cluster along the right edge of a document using the five elements provided.

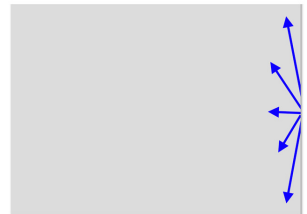
What is a cluster?

- A cluster is a group of elements positioned close together.

What is an edge cluster?

- An edge cluster is one that springs out from the edge (or side) of a document. In this lesson, I'm asking that you spring from the right edge.

- Elements appear to be peeking in or growing in from the side of the page.
- Edge clusters typically do not extend very far in from the edge of the page. See how the example below is not very wide.
- They typically are not very tall. The height of the example below is just a portion of the square document.



Edge Cluster—It's an Artsy Thing

When I first made the transition from paper scrapbooking to digital scrapbooking, I could not understand why someone would want to make an element look like it's half on and half off a scrapbook page. Edge clusters made no sense to me!

But here's what I know now: Edge clusters are a product of the artsy world of digital scrapbooking. They are meant to defy common sense.

Determine the Focus

- All good clusters contain focus. Without focus, all you have is cluttering, not clustering.
- One great way to keep focus in a cluster is to only use one fabulous, eye-catching element. This is the focal element.
- All the rest of the elements should simply support the focal element. They should not distract attention away from it.
- If using the Top Down Method, start with the focal element.
- If using the Bottoms Up Method, begin with anchor or filler style elements and then work your way up to the focus element.
- If using the Shape Starter Method, place a shape half on the page and go from there.

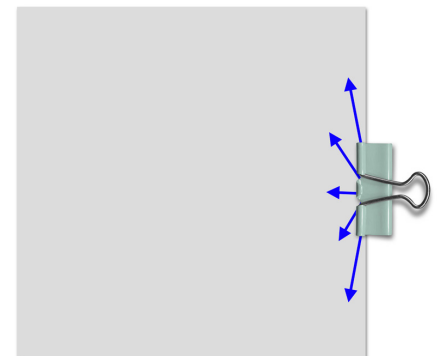


Tips, Tricks, and Inspiration

Having trouble getting started? Cannot seem to think outside the box? Here's a little help from a friend.

This is the image you need to keep in mind when creating an edge cluster. It's the image of a big clip holding on to the edge of a paper. The blue arrows represent various elements in a cluster.

- All elements at some point should come in contact with the edge of the clip.
- Every element should be partially off the edge of the page.
- You don't need to see much of an element in order for it to be effective.
- Position each element at a slightly different angle.
- Flip, clip, rotate, and resize until you are happy.
- Work to keep elements in good proportion with each other. For example, what size would the leaf be in relation to the flower in real life?
- Vary the horizontal centers of each of the elements so they don't look piled on top of each other.
- When trying to decide how much of an element should be showing, look for small details that might make a big difference.





Is your confidence growing?

Is it getting a little easier to read my instructions and then see a cluster start to form in your imagination?

If you are not feeling even the tiniest bit more confident, that means you need to spend more time in Step One and Step Two.

Do This—Chart Your Confidence. Make a physical note about your confidence level at the start of this lesson. Where are you on the scale? Any different than last lesson?

Additional Challenges

You will find some lessons easier than others. If you feel like you breezed through Step One, here are some prompts and ideas to get you thinking like a Cluster Queen and challenge you to take it to the next level.

- Look at the shape starter images. Try arranging the elements to fit the three different shapes.
 - For a more minimal look, see how many clusters you can create using just two or three of the elements.
 - For a fuller look, try duplicating some of the elements.
 - Which of your edge clusters do you like the best?
 - Which do you like least? Do you know why you don't like it?
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ATTENTION: Please do not post your results of Step One on the class Facebook Group. Doing so may sideline the creative process for your fellow classmates.

If you're mega excited to share your result of Step One, I'd love to see it. You can email it to me or send it via the Help Desk.

CAUTION: Don't rush to Step Two; take time to experiment and find your own solution.