

Mastery1-03-2-el-Complex-Clipping-Mask-transcript



Lesson 3: Complex Clipping Mask, Part 2 for PSE

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In this video, we'll start off where we left off in part one of lesson three. The next step is to turn the white parts of this image dark and the dark parts of the image white. So if you're already working with an image that has the center area, the darkest and the outside area, the lightest, then you can skip this step, but for this image we're going to need to invert it. And to do that, go into the Menu Bar and choose filter adjustments > Invert. This is more of what I'm looking for and if you're used to working with complex masks, then you're starting to probably see something that we can use. The next step is to get a Selection outline around the part of this mask that I want to keep.

Sometimes the best way to do that is by using a Selection tool, but with all these different tones in here, using the Selection tool is going to be a hot mess. So here's another way around with the image active in the Layers panel, press Ctrl J, Cmd J on a Mac, to create a duplicate copy. Then back in the Menu Bar, choose Filter > Adjustments > Threshold. What the threshold adjustment does is that it makes all the pixels in the image, either black or white. You can see that the mask that we're trying to go for is now all black, but when I want to avoid is any of the black parts moving off the edge of the image, because that's going to create a flat side on our mask. So using the slider in the Threshold Dialogue box, move that slider over to the left until that grungy mask starts to shrink enough so that none of it is

actually touching the edge of the image.

The setting on this threshold is going to be different for every single image that you put in Photoshop Elements. Now, like I said, when you have white all the way around the Mask image, then click okay. Now we're ready to use a Selection tool. Get the Magic Wand tool, and in the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon. Set the tolerance to 32, uncheck sample all layers, definitely uncheck contiguous, but anti aliasing can be checked. Then on that image, since there's only white or black pixels, click on any of those black pixels and then they will all be selected. Now I'm finished with that Threshold layer. I'm going to go ahead and just turn it off, or you could drag it to the trash. Then I'm going to activate the Original Image layer. Press Ctrl J, Cmd J on a Mac to copy the pixels of that original image layer to a new layer.

Then finally in the Layers panel, click on the Visibility icon of the original image layer to hide it. That's really starting to look like a super cool mask, but we're not done yet. We want to try to get this mask to be as dark as possible without losing the definition of the different colors of gray. This is especially important if you've chosen to work with a mask that is really light gray, because that's not going to come out well in the end. We'll need to darken it up. To do that with the Mask layer, as the active layer in the Menu Bar, choose Enhance > Adjust Lighting > Brightness > Contrast. The settings for this Dialogue box are going to be different for every image, but the goal is to make the image as dark as possible without losing all of the details inside of the mask. So for example, if I add too much contrast to the image, it's going to turn really black and then I don't see all those varying different colors of gray, so I want to try to avoid that.

You can also move the Brightness slider and see what a difference that makes. That lightens it up. That's going to create a more transparent image, and if I darken it up, it's going to be less transparent. For this image, I think I'm going to set my brightness at negative 11, my contrast at 19 and click OK. The next step in this process is to create a brush out of this mask, and before you can create a brush, you need to have either transparent px or white px behind the image that you want to be the brush. So I'm going to hold down the Alt key and Windows, or the Opt key on Mac, and click on the Mask layer that's going to make it so only the Mask layer is visible. Now I'm ready to define the brush in the Menu Bar choose Edit > Define brush in the dialogue box. You can name the brush anything that you'd like.

I'm going to keep mine descriptive and name it Mastery one since this is the only brush I'll be creating in this class. Then click OK, and before we move on to the next step of stamping with the brush, we need to return the layers panel to its previous state. To do that, repeat the process, hold down the Alt or Opt key, and click on the Visibility icon of that Mask layer. And now we're back to where we were, but now I no longer need this Mask layer, so I'm going to go ahead and turn it off. Now all three Mask Layers should be turned off. Then in the Layers panel, click on the top layer to activate it and then click on the create a New Layer icon. This is the layer that we're gonna use to brush on the document. So get the Brush tool and in the Tool Options open the brush preset picker, and you should see your new brush at the bottom of the picker and it should already be active.

I'm going to set the size of this brush to the maximum, and the Opacity all the way to 100%.

Then I'll close the Tool options. And one thing you don't want to do with this brush is to click and drag. The reason is because that creates a repeating pattern along the edges where you drag the brush and if the mask has repeating edges, it's not going to look as cool on your scrapbook page. So I'll press Ctrl Z, Cmd Z on a Mac, to undo that. It doesn't really matter what color you use with your brush, but if you'd like to see your mask clearly, press the letter D to reset the color chips to the default of black over white. And now when you stamp the brushed just by clicking once, you can see how nice that looks on the page. Now it's very possible that you're going to want to add more brush stamps to this to make the shape taller or rounder, and to do that, I'd recommend stamping on a new layer every time, and here's why.

In the Layers panel I'm going to click on the create a New Layer icon and I'm going to click to stamp again. As you can see, that's creating a repeat along the sides again, but if I get the Move tool, I can click on that brush and adjust the position. I can also press Ctrl or Cmd T to get the transform options, resize that single brush all by itself, even rotated a bit. I can even Right click or Ctrl. click inside the bounding box and choose Flip Layer horizontal, so that gives you some ideas of how you could actually change the mask into something that more fits your photo. I'll click the check mark to commit in the Layers panel. Click on the top layer to activate it. Then hold down the Shift key and click on the bottom Mask layer, which is actually the original image layer. Then in the Layers panel, click on the Group Layers icon. All those brush layers are now one set so that by click and drag, they all move around together.

As you can see, I've skipped ahead a little bit and opened a photo and added it to my scrapbook page. I plan on clipping this to the group that I just created that contains my masks. If you'd like to follow along exactly as what I'm doing, you can find this photo in the downloads. With the Image layer as the active layer and it's positioned directly above the group in the Menu Bar. Choose Layer > Create Clipping mask. Now with my Image layer still active, I can click on that image and drag it around to reposition it. Also because I've created a nondestructive group of brush layers, I can now open that group, click on one of the Brush layers and move it around so I can position it where best fits the photo that I'm using. I'll spend some time and a little bit perfecting how I'd like my mask and my photo to look, but for now let's move on to the organizational part of this video.

All those layers have created quite a mess over here, so let's put them all together. In the Layers panel, activate the Top Photo layer. If you don't have a Photo layer, I would encourage you to choose one and add it to your scrapbook page now. The best kind of photo to work with this mask and the type of scrapbook page that we're planning to create is somewhat of a landscape photo. Something that coordinates well, what the main photo that you're going to use now, holding down the Shift key. Go to the bottom and click on the Image layer. Now all the layers that make up that complex Photo mask, including the photo should be active. Then in the Layers panel, click on the group layers icon and finally we'll want to rename this group so that we know what's inside of it. That's all for this lesson. I hope I've given you lots of ideas to get going. Don't forget to save your scrapbook page and make sure to check out the Archived layer section of this class to find out how to save this complex photo mask for later. This has been Jen White with Digital Scrapbooking Mastery.