CG2-JW-01-el-Snowflakes-Background-transcript

Christmas Greetings 2 — Classic Snowflakes Card
Black Weave Background & Design (Photoshop Elements)
by Jen White

Get off to a great start on building a classic snowflake card from the ground up. This is part one of a three part video series showing you how to create this greeting card design. In this first video, we'll be creating the card background and setting up some design guidelines.

I'm beginning here in Expert Mode of Photoshop Elements and step one is to create a new 5 x 7 inch document at 300 ppi with a white background. Then in the Layers panel, click on the Lock icon of the Background layer to make it editable. Then press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black over white.

In step two, I'll add a dark gray pattern to the background of the document. You can skip this step if you'd like to add paper as the background. For the background of your snowflake card, I'd recommend using a paper or pattern that is dark, textured, and plain. Any papers like these would work lovely. Do not use patterned paper. But, here's how to create a plain textured background from scratch. In the Layers panel, click on the Add New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Pattern. In the dialog box, open the Pattern Picker, then open the dropdown menu and choose Grayscale Paper. Click on the Black Weave pattern. To see the name of the patterns, click on the flyout menu and choose Large List. Set the Scale to 100% and then click OK.

In step three we'll use another adjustment layer to make the pattern lighter or darker. You can also use this step to make other plain textured background papers lighter or darker. Or if you like the look that you currently have right now, you can just skip step three. In the Layers panel, click on the Add New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon again, and this time choose Brightness/Contrast. In the Brightness/Contrast panel, move the Brightness slider to the right to lighten the pattern or to the left to darken the pattern. I'll move my slider all the way to the right to about 100, then I'll click on the X to close the Brightness/Contrast panel.

Because my snowflake card will have many, many layers, I recommend grouping the layers to keep things organized and in the Layers panel, and here's how to do that. The top layer should be active in the Layers panel. Then, hold down the Shift key and click on the bottom layer. Now three layers should be active. Click on the Group Layers icon, then double-click directly on the name of the new group and rename it Black Weave Background.

The last step is to set up a guideline for the design of the card. This card follows a Rule of Thirds design where approximately one third of the design will be reserved for the titling and two thirds will be used for the pattern. To add the guide, go into the Menu Bar and choose View > New Guide. In the dialog box, set the orientation to horizontal and the position to 2.25". Then, click OK.

At this point, make sure to save your document as a layered PSD file in an easy to find location such as your Desktop. We'll be building on this document in the next lesson. So that's how to create the background setup for the Classic Snowflake Greeting Card. This is Jen White with Christmas Greetings 2.