



## Perfectly Personal Word Art Negative Space Mask 1 – Photoshop Elements

© 2019 Jenifer Juris

Negative Space is a simple concept that can be applied differently to different art forms. We're going to briefly discuss what negative space means, and then we're going to jump right in and start working on our first negative space mask.

So before we start creating, let's quickly discuss the concept of negative space. As I said before, negative space is slightly different depending on the type of thing you're doing.

In photography, negative space is leaving much of the photograph area blank or empty and having only one main subject. These photos are perfect examples of negative space in photography.



In design, however, negative space is slightly different. It's the concept of using what's not there to showcase a design.

n=g•tve  
p•c=

So, one way we can use that artistically is to add custom words to complex masks. The steps are simple but the effect is wonderful. And as with our big letter masks, we have many options on how to use them. In this example, I clipped a photo to it. But you can also recolor the masks and use them as anchors or decorative accents. There are so many options between using any complex mask you might have, all the different fonts on your computer, all the different words you could use, and then how you choose to use your negative space masks. Now that you better understand the concept, let's get creating.

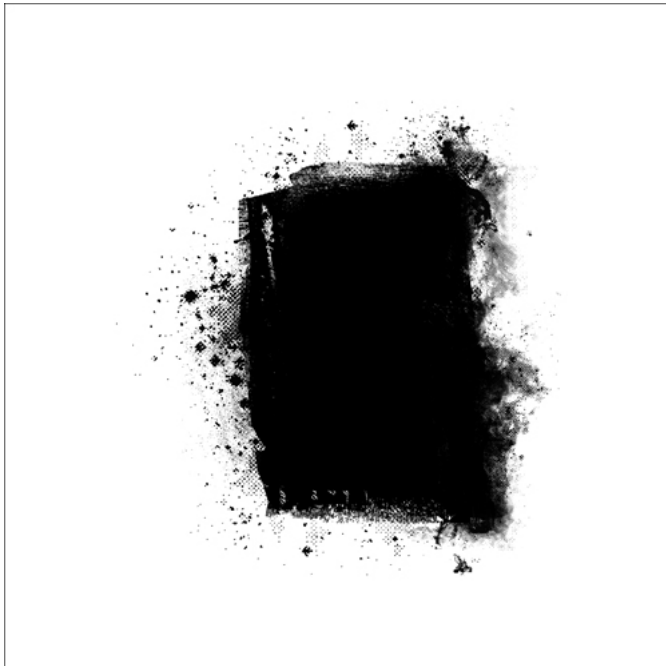


### **Step One: Prepare the Workspace**

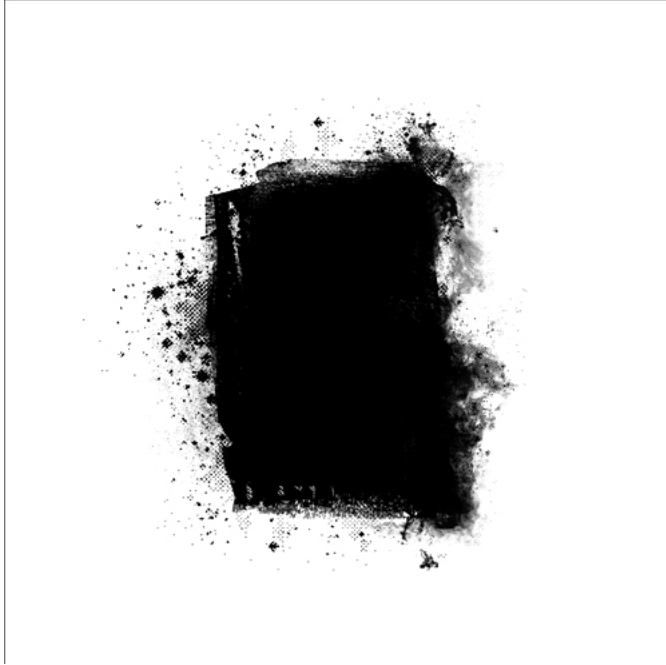
- Create a new document that is 12 inches by 12 inches at 300ppi with a white background.
- Press the letter D to reset the color chips.

### **Step Two: Add the Mask**

- In the downloads for this section of the class, I've included 7 complex masks for you to use. I've already opened Mask-01.png so go ahead and open that mask now.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, while holding down the Shift key, click and drag the mask onto your working document.



- Now because of the extra paint splats that are part of this mask, the bulk of the mask isn't centered so on the document, while holding down the Shift key, click and drag the mask to the left until the main part of the mask appears centered.



### **Step Three: Add the Type**

- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and choose a medium gray color. I'm using Hex #: 959595. Just know that the exact shade doesn't really matter as we're only using this to create our negative space.
- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- In the Tool Options, click to open the Font Picker and choose a script font. I'll be using the font Battshion. As of the taping of this video, it is a font you can find for free in the Freebie Section of the Font Bundles.net website. So if you want to follow along exactly, you can go there and download and install it now.
- In the Tool Options, set the Size to 80pts and the Alignment to Center.
- On the document, click once anywhere there is white and type the word you wish to use as negative space within the complex mask. I'm using the word thankful. Click the checkmark to commit.



#### **Step Four: Create the Negative Space**

- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click and drag the type layer and place it within the complex mask. I'm putting mine in the bottom left corner of the main portion of the complex mask.



- Now, in the Layers panel, Ctrl click (Mac: Cmd click) on the thumbnail of the type layer to get a selection outline.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Select > Inverse.
- In the Layers panel, click on the mask layer to activate it.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Add Layer Mask icon.
- In the Layers panel, drag the type layer to the trash.



### **Step Six: Final Adjustments**

- At this point, if you're happy with the placement of your custom negative space word, your mask is ready to be used. But let's say you're like me, and you want to play around with the position of the word, here's how you do that.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Link Layers icon that is between the complex mask thumbnail and the layer mask thumbnail to unlink the layers.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Layer Mask thumbnail to make sure it's active.
- On the document, click and drag the word around until you are happy with its placement.
- You can also press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options. Just make sure you click and drag from a corner handle so that you maintain proportions. I'm going to make my word just a tiny bit bigger and then center it along the bottom part of the complex mask. Now I can click the checkmark to commit the changes.
- Then, in the Layers panel, click on the space between the mask thumbnail and the layer mask thumbnail to re-link the layers again.



### **Step Seven: Save As**

- In the Layers panel, drag the white Background layer to the Trash.
- In the Layers panel, Ctrl click (Mac: Cmd click) on the thumbnail of the Complex Mask (not the Layer Mask) to get a selection outline.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Image > Crop.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.
- Since this technique isn't something that allows us to create a template with adjustable layers, we're just going to save this as a flat transparent file. So, in the Menu Bar, choose File > Save As and save this file with a unique name following the same folder structure we've been using throughout the class. I'm going to save this as Neg-Space-Mask1.PNG. This will save it as a flat, transparent file so I can use it on any project I wish. So now that we've finished our first negative space mask, let's quickly review the folder structure we've been using.

So, just like with all of the other sections of this class, let's create a new folder for our Negative Space Masks within the same folder as the others. Save all of your negative space masks here so they will be easy to find.

### **Folder Structure:**

#### **-Custom Word Art**

- Paper Strips
- Circles
- Triangles
- Hexagons
- Big Letter Masks
- Negative Space Masks**
  - Neg-Space-Thankful-Mask.png

And before we move on, here is how I decided to use my mask in a project. I wanted to make a simple but beautiful thank you card and this negative space mask really works well for clipping a pretty photo to. I let the photo clipped to my custom negative space mask be the design focus and it worked well for this artsy card design.



Credits:  
Card Design: Jenifer Juris  
Negative Space Mask: Jenifer Juris  
Photo: Stock Photo  
Kit: Chasing Dragonflies by Brandy Murry  
Fonts: Battshion