



Polka Dot Grunge with a Layer Mask

by Jenifer Juris

Turn a simple polka dot paper into wonderful polka dot grunge using the help of the Magic Wand tool and a layer mask.

For this tutorial you will need:

- A paper with small polka dots
- A solid background paper
- Photoshop Elements or Adobe Photoshop

If you'd like to follow along exactly, **use the papers from the download that included this manual.**

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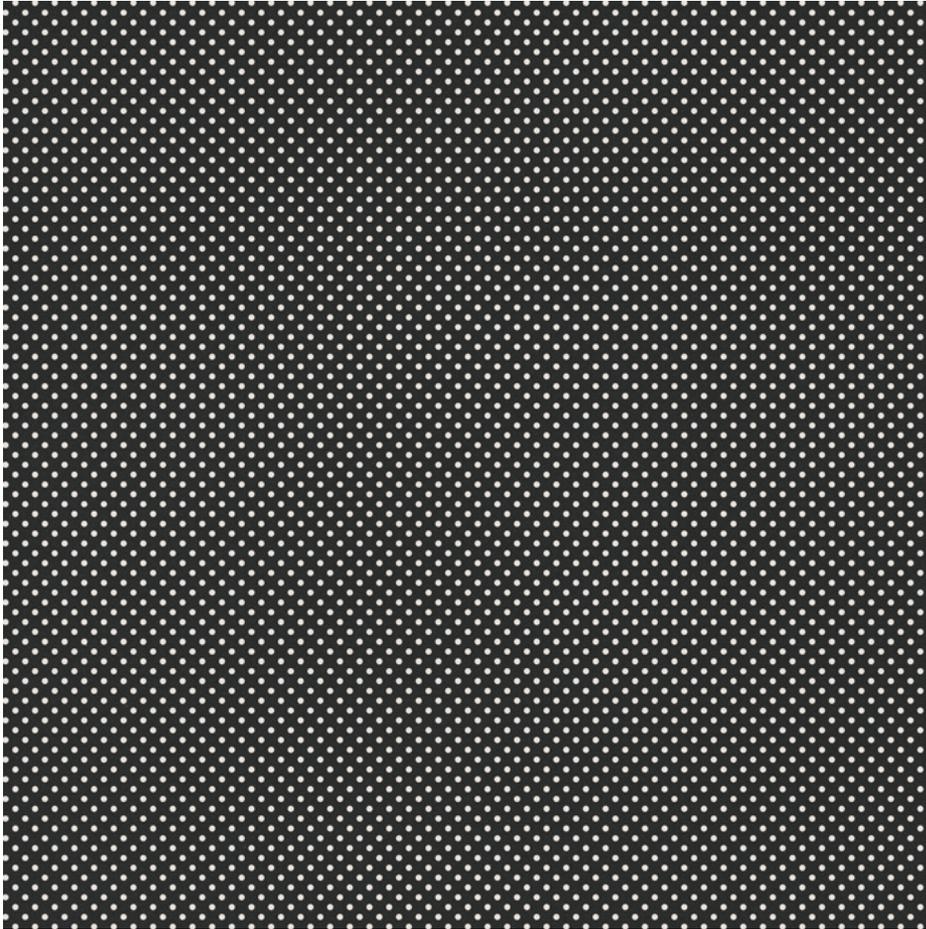
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Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- In the downloads for this tutorial, you will find two papers. One is a polka dot paper and the other is a solid paper. Open (File > Open) the polka dot paper now.

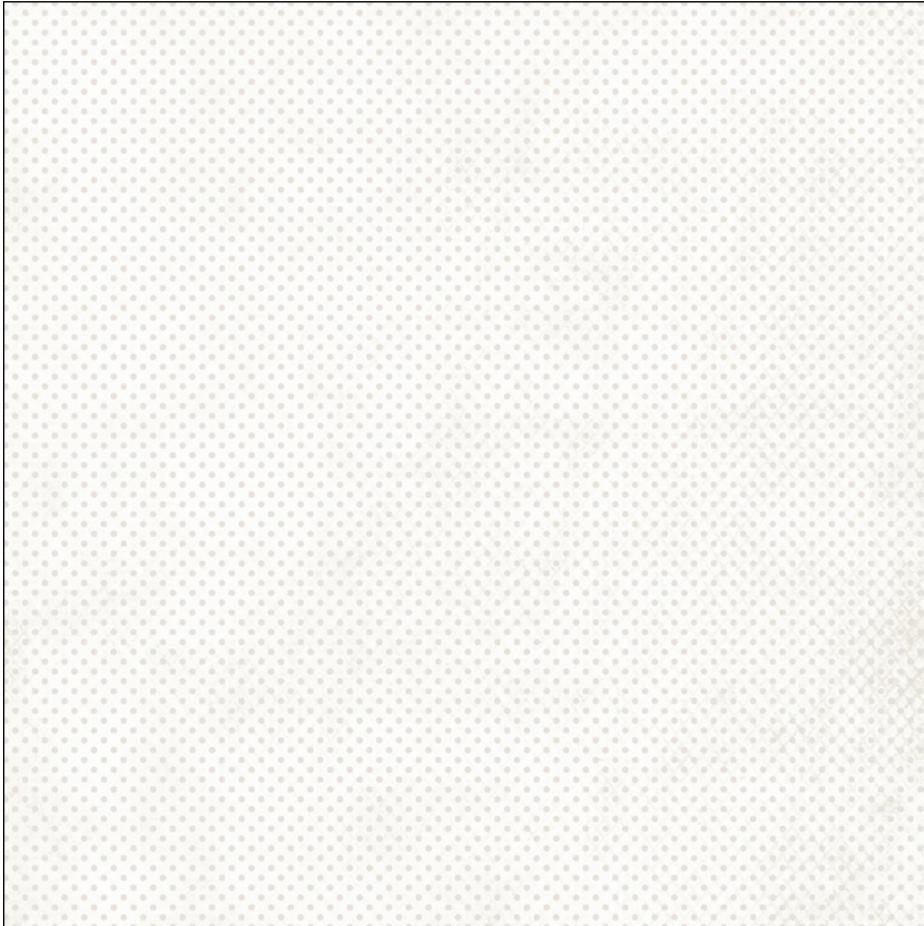


Step Two: Extract the Polka Dots

- Get the Magic Wand tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon and set the Tolerance to 32. Uncheck Sample All Layers and Contiguous, but check Anti-Alias. (Photoshop: Set the Sample Size to Point Sample.)
- Now we'll need to click on one of the dots in order to select all of the dots on the paper. But the dots are small so if you need to, press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) on Mac to Zoom In a couple of times.
- On the document, click once on one of the dots to select them all.
- Press Ctrl 0 (Mac: Cmd 0) to resize the document to fit your screen.
- Press Ctrl C (Mac: Cmd C) to copy the polka dots.

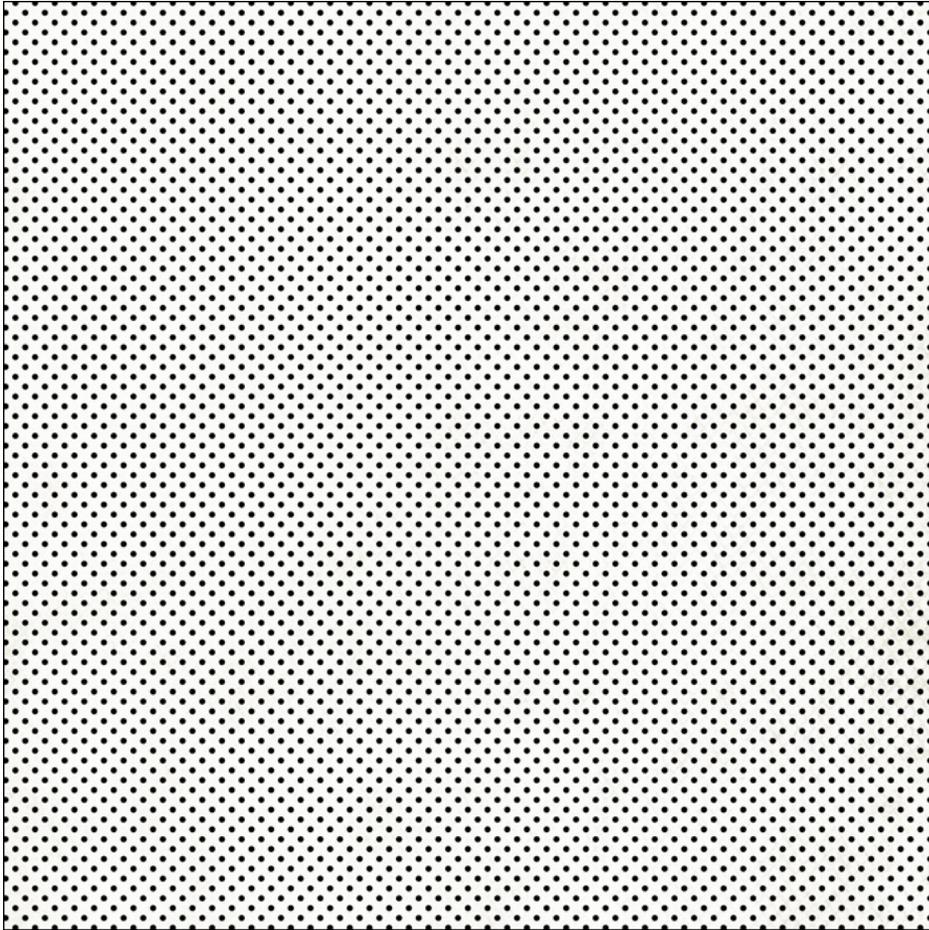
Step Three: Add the Polka Dots to a Solid Paper

- Now that we have our polka dots copied, we can use them to add grunge to any solid background paper we wish. For the purposes of this tutorial, I have included a solid background paper in the downloads for this lesson for you to be able to follow along. So open (File > Open) that paper now.
- Press Ctrl V (Mac: Cmd V) to Paste the Polka Dots.



Step Four: Recolor the Polka Dots

- In order to better see the polka dots, we need to recolor them. To do that, press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black over white.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Solid Color.
- In the dialog box, click OK.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.



Step Five: Use a Layer Mask to Create the Grunge

- Get the Brush tool.

Photoshop Elements:

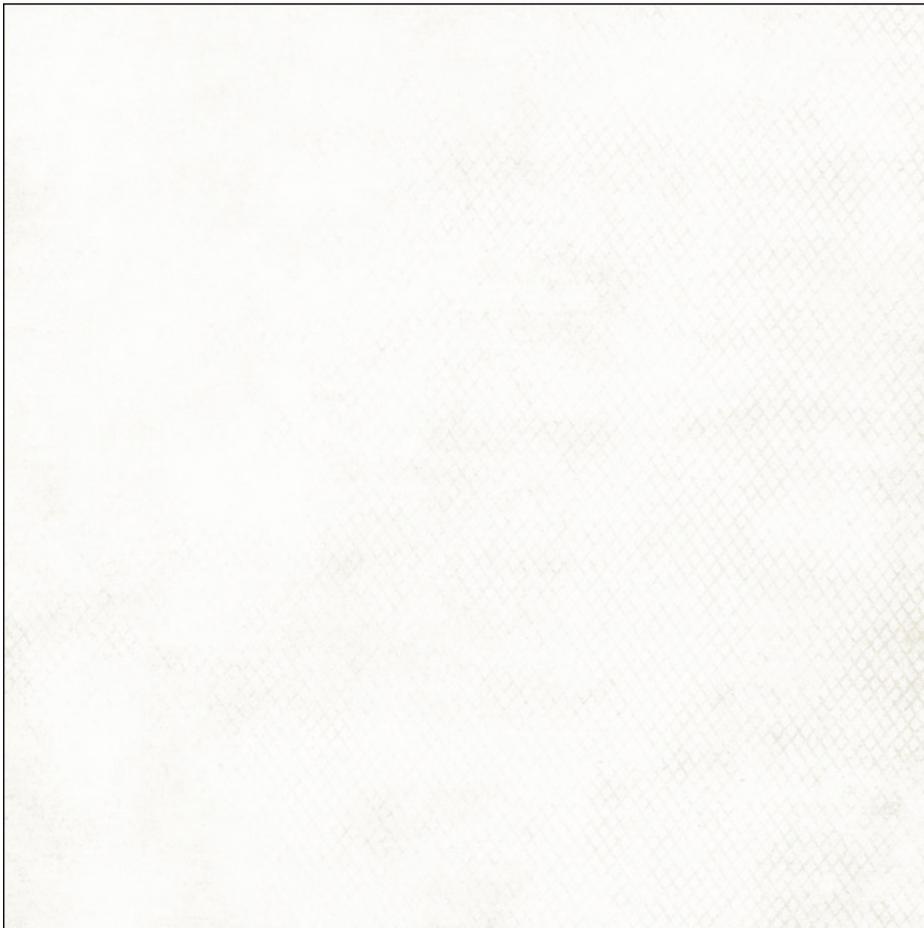
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker and choose the Stipple brush from the Natural Brushes.
- If you don't see the Stipple brush, open the flyout menu and choose Large List.

Adobe Photoshop:

- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker and choose the Stipple brush from the Legacy > Natural Brushes.
 - To see the Legacy Brushes, open the flyout menu and choose Legacy Brushes. Click OK.
 - To see the name of the brushes, open the flyout menu and check Brush Name.

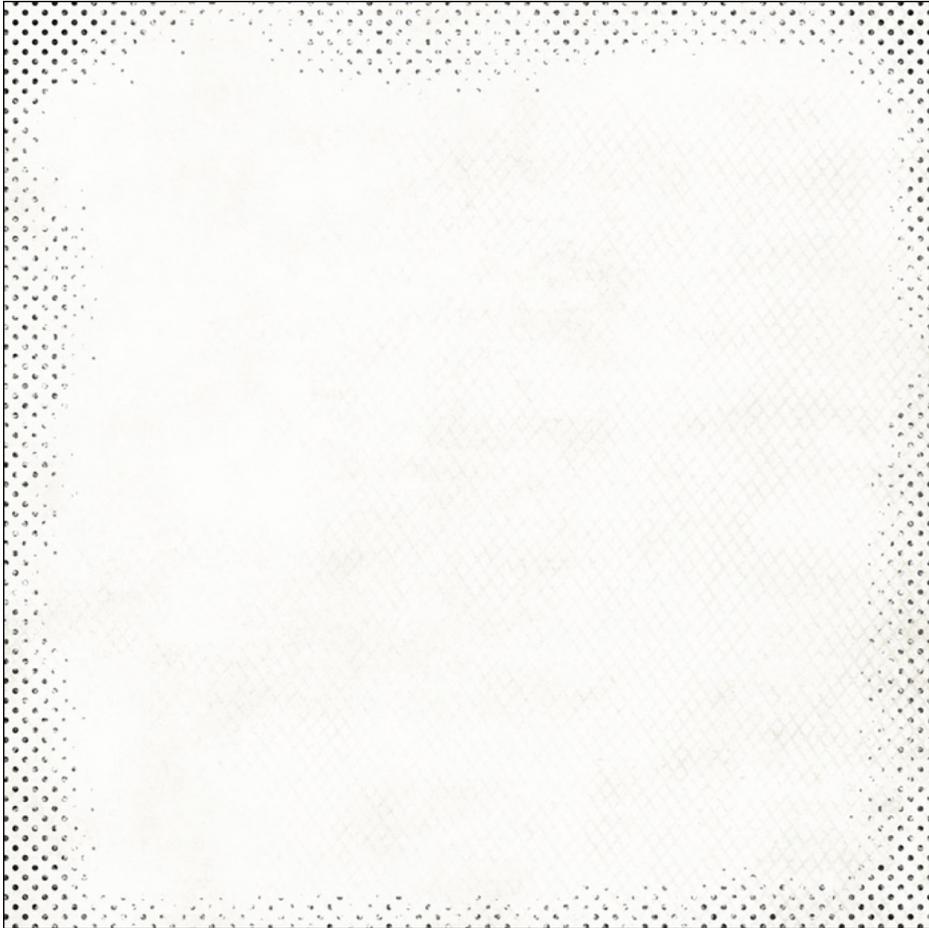
All:

- In the Tool Options, set the Size to 500 px, the Mode to Normal, and the Opacity to 70%. (PS: Also set the Flow to 100% and the Smoothing to 100%.)
- Click to open the Brush Settings and set the Spacing to 50%.
- Close the Brush Settings.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Polka Dot layer to make it the active layer.
- In the Layers panel, hold down the Alt key (Mac: Opt key) and click on the Add Layer Mask icon. Doing so will add a Layer Mask to the Polka Dot layer that is already filled with black. This will make all of the polka dots disappear.



- In order to brush the polka dot grunge on, we need the Foreground Color Chip to be white. If it isn't, press the letter X to switch the Foreground Color Chip to white.
- On the document, click and drag to add some polka dot grunge to the background.

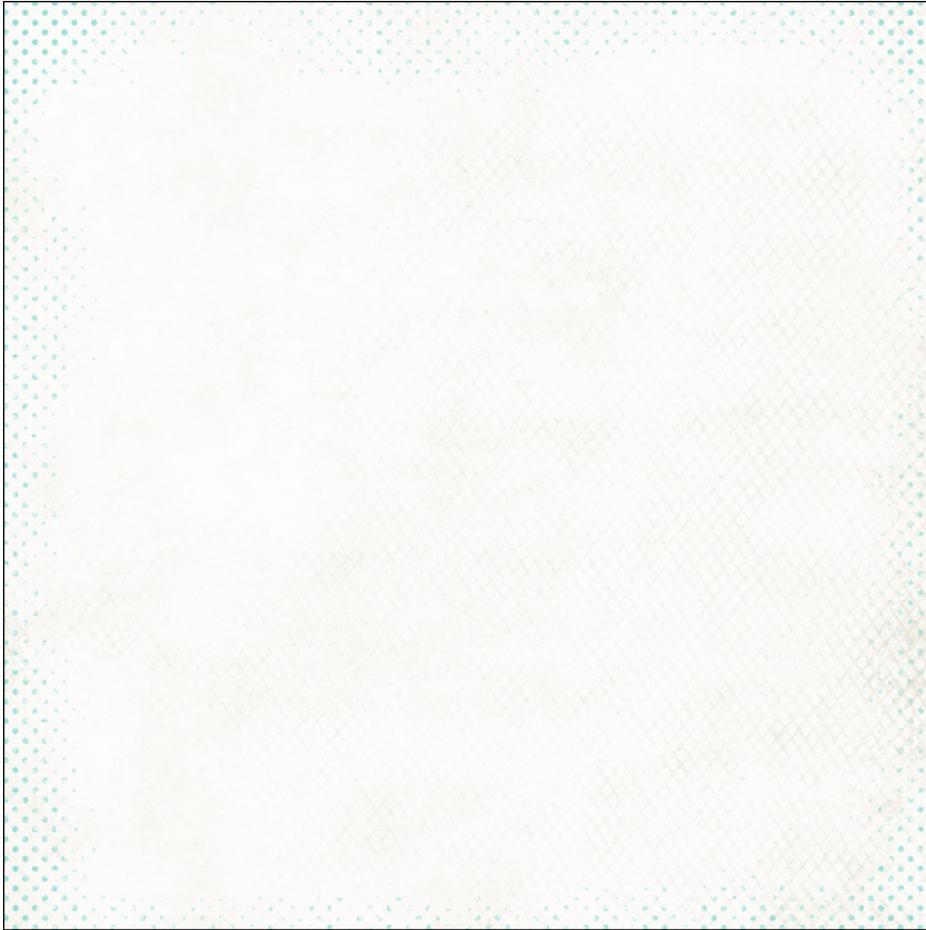
- In my case, I'm going to brush around the edge of the paper to create a grungy border. But you could also brush to create a grungy polka dot anchor for a photo cluster if you wanted.
- For the areas you want to be extra clear, brush over it more than once.



Step Six: Finishing Touches

The great thing about this technique is that you can customize it for your current project. You don't have to keep the dots black. To recolor the dots, simply do the following:

- In the Layers panel, double click on the thumbnail for the Solid Color Fill layer above the polka dot layer.
- In the dialog box, use the dropper to sample a color or type in a specific Hex #: you want to use. I'm using Hex #: 90d9d2. Once you've done that, Click OK.



Step Seven: Save As

- Save this document (File > Save As) as a layered PSD file with a unique name. I'm saving mine as Polka-Dot-Grunge-Template.PSD.
- Doing this would allow you to add any solid paper you want below the polka dot grunge layer and it would also allow you to change the solid color fill layer to anything that coordinates with your current project.
- Go to the other document, the original Polka Dot paper and close it without saving.

So now that you've seen how to create polka dot grunge, let me show you how I used this technique in a project.

Here's the scrapbook page I created using the polka dot grunge as an anchor for my main portion of my page as well as as some grunge around the edge of the document. I love how the polka dot grunge adds visual interest without overwhelming the entire layout.



Credits:

Page & Photo: Jenifer Juris

Kit: Laugh Often by Kristrin Cronin-Barrow

Papers: Solid White Paper from New Years Celebration by Just Jaimee, Polka Dot

Paper from Stories365 by Kristin Cronin-Barrow

Fonts: Forever Grateful, Veteran Typewriter