

## Stenciling with the Type Mask Tool

Digi Scrap Tutorial by Nannette Dalton on November 13, 2012

We have such powerful tools available to us in Photoshop and Photoshop Elements, but we don't always use them. Either we don't know they are there, or we are not sure what to do with them.

One tool I do not use very often is the Horizontal and Vertical Type Mask tool. It is, however, a powerful tool and a great resource for us in digital scrapbooking.



Using the Type Mask tool in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements allows the combination of type and image. The Type Mask tool doesn't create a new layer. Instead, it creates a selection on the **active layer**. You could use this tool for filling text with an image or cutting text out of an image so that the background shows through.

Today we are going to use it to cut out an image, making it look like we used a stencil. It is a popular look right now and it is really easy to do.

### Step One: Prepare Your Workspace

- Open an existing scrapbook page (File > Open).
- Choose and open an element (File > Open) that would work good for this technique, like a paper strip or journaling block. I will refer to this as the paper strip layer.
- Get the Move tool. Click on the paper strip and drag it onto your scrapbook page.
- Add a low drop shadow to the paper strip.

Note: I created a brown paper pennant using Lisa Hanks' Tutorial, [Pennant Ribbon](#). Here are the settings I used for my shadow: Size 20px, Distance 10px, Opacity 75%.

- In the Layers panel, make sure that the paper strip is the active layer.



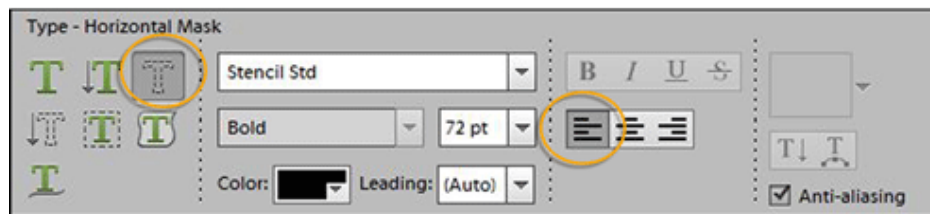
**Note:** This tutorial will not work on a layer that is a Smart Object or vector layer. It will need to be Simplified or Rasterized. To do that, use the Menu Bar to simplify the layer before you proceed (Layer > Simplify Layer). (Photoshop: Layer > Rasterize > Shape.)

## Step Two: Size and Format the Type

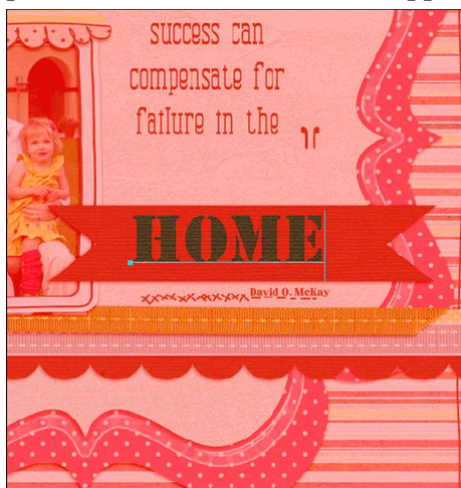
### Photoshop Elements 11:

- Get the Type tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Horizontal Type Mask tool icon. Choose a Font and Size, and also choose Left Justified. I have chosen Stencil Std for my font at 72pts.

#### Elements 11



- Click on your document and type a word. A red mask should appear over the entire document.

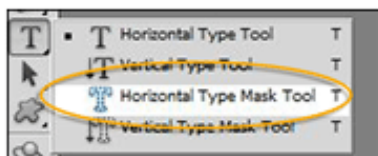


- At this point you can highlight your type and change the size and font in the usual way.
- To reposition the type, click and drag outside of the type while it is still red.
- Click on the check mark to accept the type.

### Photoshop and older versions of Elements:

- Get the Horizontal Type Mask tool. It is nested with the Type tool.
- In the Options Bar, choose a Font and Size, and also choose Left Justified. I have chosen Stencil Std for my font at 72pts.

#### Photoshop



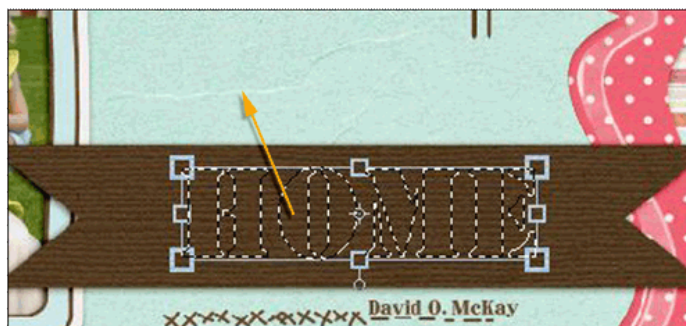
- Click on your document and type a word. A red mask should appear over the entire document. (See above)
- At this point you can highlight your type and change the size and font in the usual way.



- To reposition the type, drag outside of the type while it is still red.
- Click on the check mark to accept the type.

### Step Three: Move the Active Selection

- With the selection still active, get the Move tool.
  - Click and drag from inside the selection outline to “cut” your stencil out and move it to a new place.
- (See below.)



- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.

If you do not want to keep both the negative and positive portions of your stencil, just press the Backspace key (Mac: Delete key) with the selection active instead of moving it. That will delete the type you’ve cut out.

There you go. I hope this has helped you to understand how the Horizontal Type Mask tool works and what it can be used for. Play around with it a bit and show us what you have done in the [Digi Scrap Tutorial gallery](#).

#### Credits:

Digi Scrap Tutorial Stenciling With the Type Mask Tool by Nannette Dalton

Inspired by [Home Sweet Home](#) tutorial by Christina Rambo (requires free [Plus Membership](#) to view)

Kits: [Family Together](#) by Lauren Grier

Flower: *Vagabond* by One Little Bird, available in the [2011 Costco CD](#) goodies included with Photo-shop Elements 11.

Fonts: Combustion, Stencil STD Bold

Layout “Home” by Nannette Dalton  
Software: Photoshop Elements 11 and PS5

