Scripted Overlay

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by Lidia Sari

Okay, I admit it. I cannot write in cursive. It's horrible! No matter how much I try, my cursive will turn into chicken scratch. I remember when I was young I could spend hours trying to perfect my cursive, but I gave up and spent my time with drawing or doing crafts instead.

My mother-in-law has the most gorgeous cursive I've ever seen. I love her cursive, and I love watching her hand move to write. I told her that I want her hands so I could write just like her.

When I see her writing I am always reminded of digital scrapbooking, since it is great to use such decorative cursive on a layout. I know if I had cursive writing just like my mother-in-law's, I would put it all over my scrapbook layouts.

Today, I am going to show you how easy it is to create an overlay using decorative brushes. **I am using handwriting brushes, but any decorative brush will work.** Let's get started.
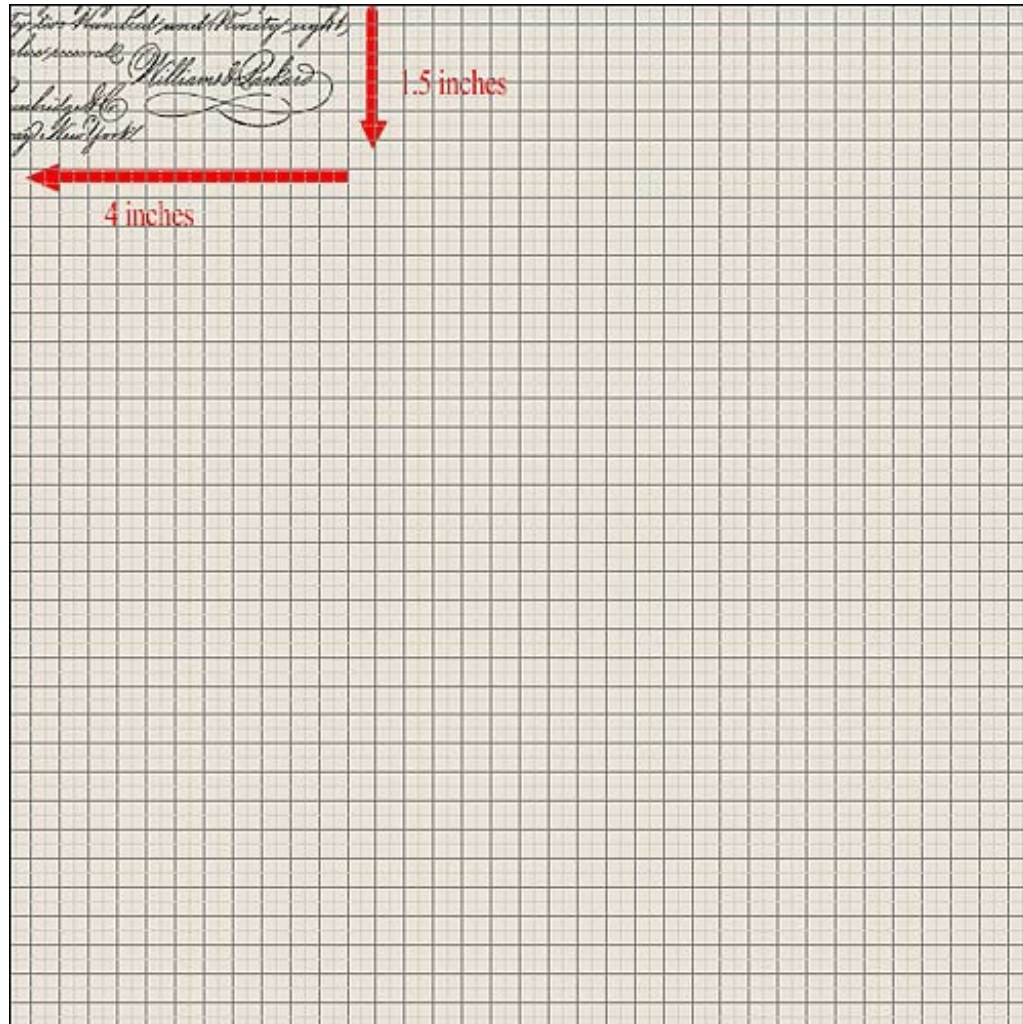
Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- Create a new 12 x 12 inch document (File > New > Blank File) at 300 ppi with a white background. (Photoshop: Choose File > New.)
- In the Menu Bar, choose View > Rulers.
- Choose View > Grid. (Photoshop: Choose View > Show > Grid.)
- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the dialog box, choose a color and click OK. I used Hex Code #ebe3d8.
- Press Alt Backspace (Mac: Opt Delete) to fill the Background layer with the foreground color.
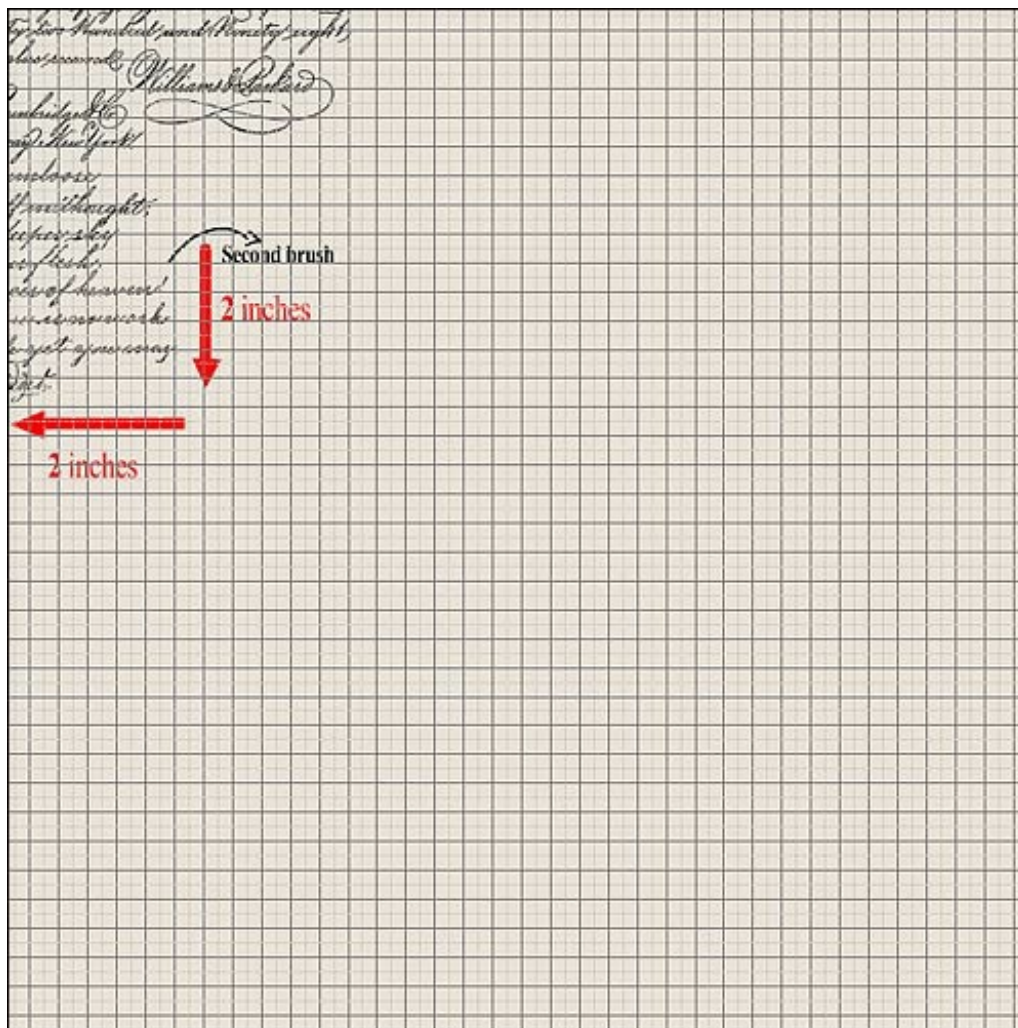
Step Two: Arrange the First Brush

- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black and white.
- Get the Brush tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Preset Picker and choose a decorative brush. I'm using Brush 4 from Vintage Hand Vol 1 by Susie Roberts. Set the Size to 1538 px, the Mode to Normal, and the Opacity to 100%. (Photoshop: Also, set the Flow to 100%.)
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- On the document, click once to brush. Do not drag. To change the size of the brush, press the Right or Left Bracket key.
- Get the Move tool.
- In the Tool Options, uncheck Auto Select Layer. (Photoshop: Uncheck Auto-Select.)
- On the document, click near the brush shape and drag it to the upper left corner of the document. I

placed my brush shape on the 1.5 inch horizontal line and the 4 inch vertical line. If necessary, use the Arrow keys to nudge the brush into position.
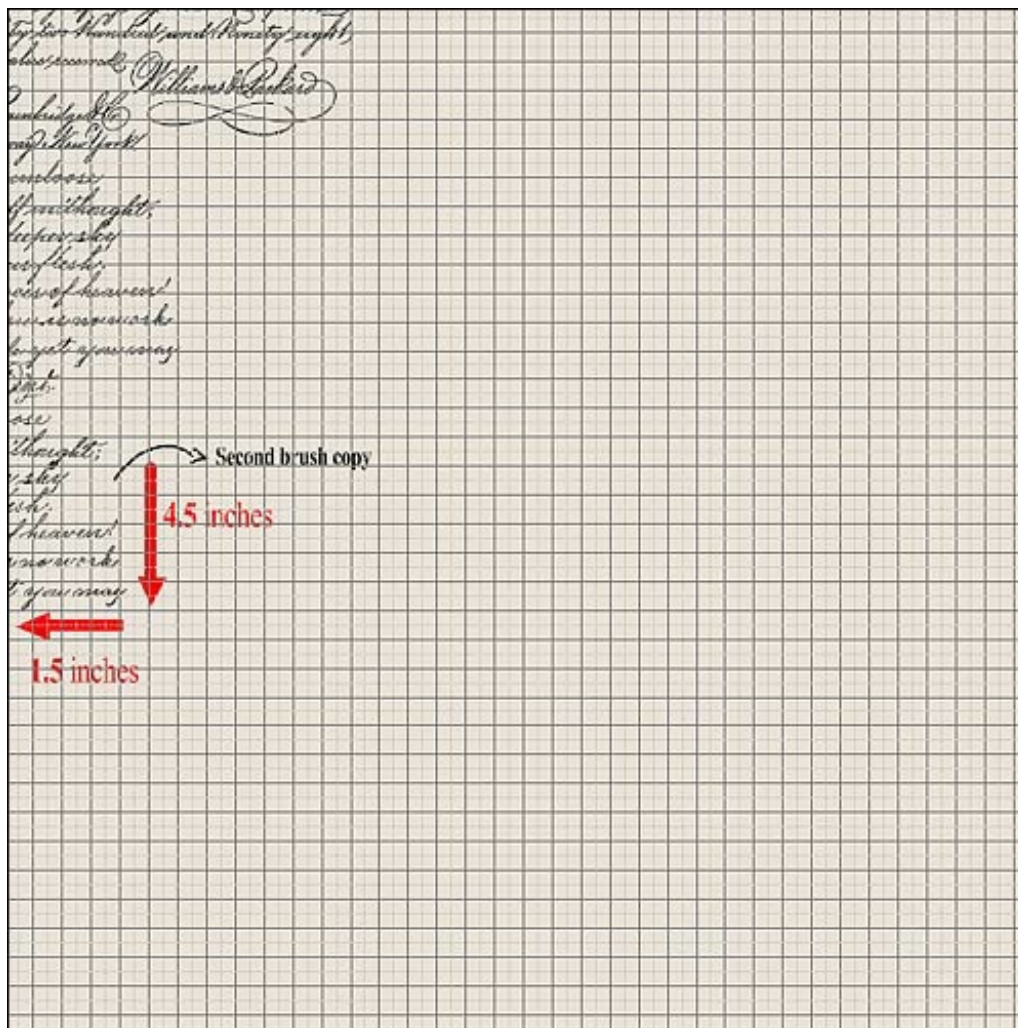

Step Three: Arrange the Second Brush

- With the Brush tool still active, in the Tool Options, open the Brush Preset Picker and choose a different brush. I'm using Brush 6 from Vintage Hand Vol 1 by Susie Roberts.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- On the document, click once to brush.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click and drag to position the brush shape below the first. I placed my brush shape on the 2 inch horizontal line and 2 inch vertical line. If necessary, use the Arrow keys to nudge the brush into position.
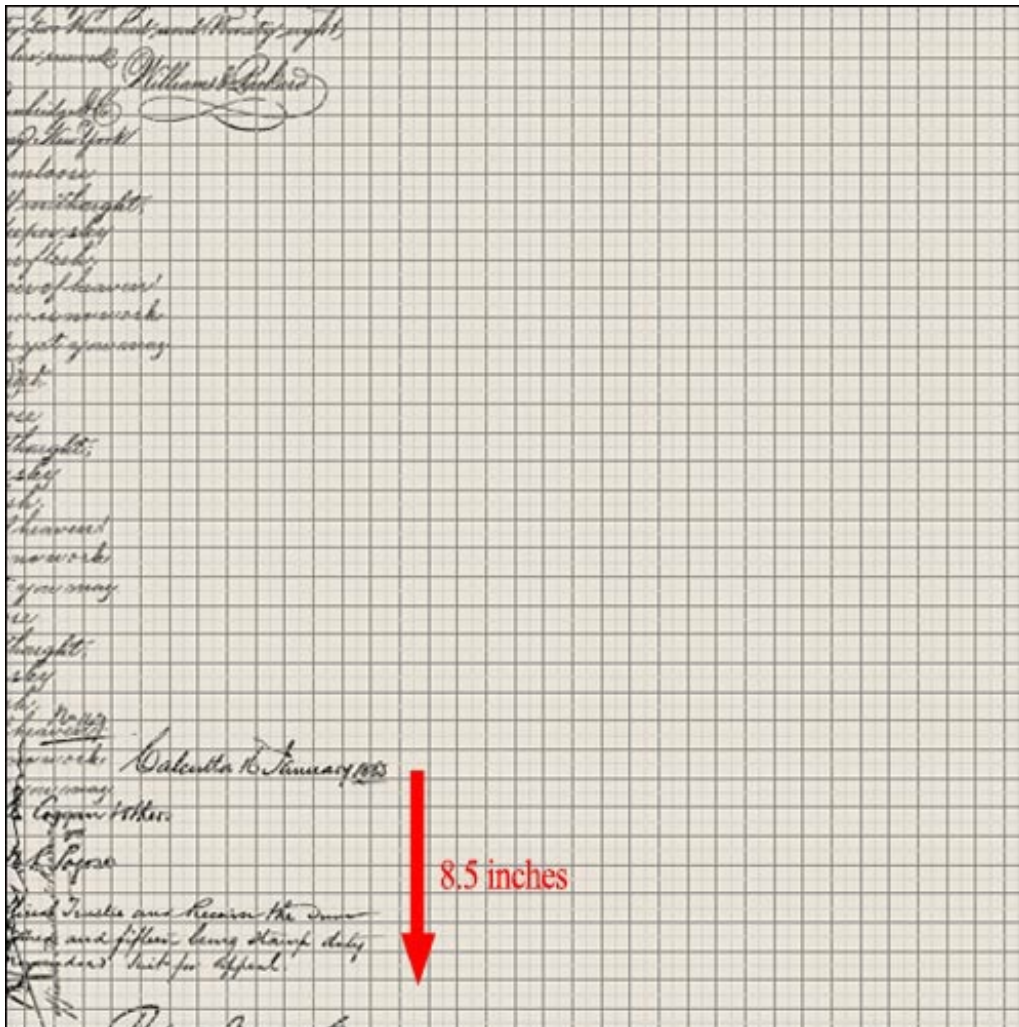
Step Four: Duplicate the Second Brush

- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate the second brush.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click near the new brush shape and drag it to a new position. I placed mine at the 4.5 inch horizontal line and the 1.5 inch vertical line.
- Using the same instructions, duplicate the brush again and move it to a new position.

Step Five: Arrange the Third Brush

- Get the Brush tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Preset Picker and choose a different brush. I'm using Brush 8 from Vintage Hand Vol 1 by Susie Roberts.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- On the document, click once to brush.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click near the brush shape and drag it to a new position. I placed mine at the 8.5 inch horizontal line and the 4.5 inch vertical line.
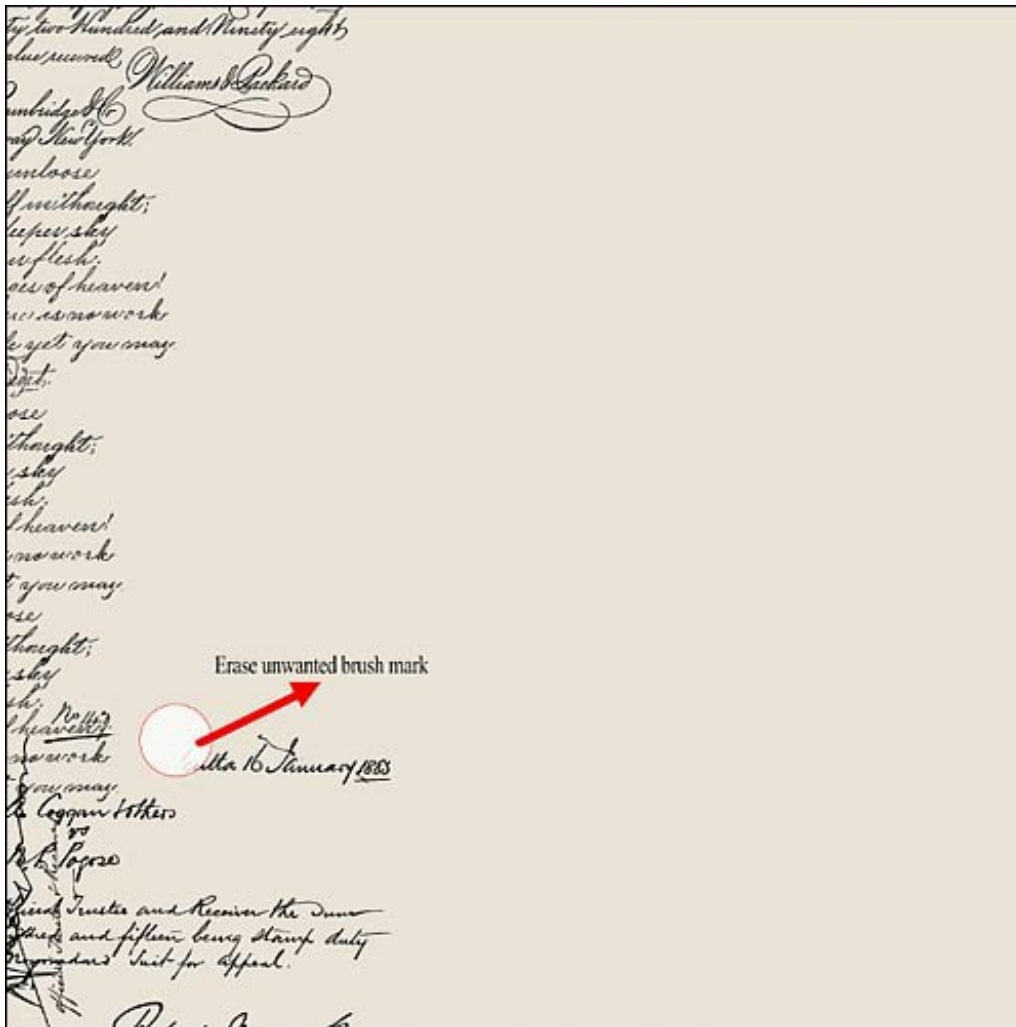
Step Six: Merge the Brush Layers

- In the Menu Bar, choose View > Grid to turn off the grid lines. (Photoshop: Choose View > Show > Grid.)

- In the Layers panel, activate the top layer, then Shift click on the bottom brush layer to activate all the brush layers.

- Press Ctrl E (Mac: Cmd E) to merge all the brush layers together.

Step Seven: Erase Part of the Brush Shapes

- Get the Eraser tool.

- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Preset Picker and choose a Hard Round brush. If you don't see a Hard Round brush, open the drop-down menu and choose Default Brushes. (Photoshop: Open the fly-out menu, choose Reset Brushes, and click OK.) Set the Size to 250 px, the Opacity to 100%, and the Type to Brush. (Photoshop: Set the Mode to Normal and the Flow to 100%.)

- On the document, click and drag to erase any unwanted brush marks.

Erase unwanted brush mark

Step Eight: Crop and Save

- Press Ctrl A (Mac: Cmd A) to select all.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Image > Crop.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Background layer and drag it to the Trash icon.
- Save the overlay (File > Save As) as a PNG document.

Step Nine: Use the Overlay

- Open a paper or layered scrapbook page (File > Open).
- In the Layers panel, activate the paper layer to which you'd like to add the overlay.
- Activate the overlay document.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, while holding down the Shift key, click and drag the overlay onto the scrapbook page.

Here's my finished layout using the overlay I made. In this layout, I decided to change the color of the overlay to match my layout better. I hope you will give this technique a try, and I can't wait to see it in the

Credits: Tutorial: Scripted Overlay by Lidia Sari
Software: Photoshop Elements 12, Adobe Photoshop CC 2014
Scrapbook page: Moments by Lidia Sari
Papers: Beautiful You by Kristin Cronin-Barrow
Script brushes: Vintage Hand Vol 1 by Susie Roberts
Circles stamp brush: Give Thanks by Anna Aspnes
Butterfly element: Mother Is a Verb by Krystal Hartley
Music note: Perfect Harmony Kit by Christine Mortimer
Overlay heart: Everlasting Love Kit by Studio Manu
Pencil scribbles by Lidia Sari
Fonts: Philly Sans and Monotype Corsiva