

Letterboard with the Line Tool for Adobe Photoshop

by Jenifer Juris

Create the look of a realistic letterboard with the use of the Line tool.

For this tutorial you'll need:

- The DST-Letterboard.psd document which can be found in the downloads for this tutorial
- Adobe Photoshop

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

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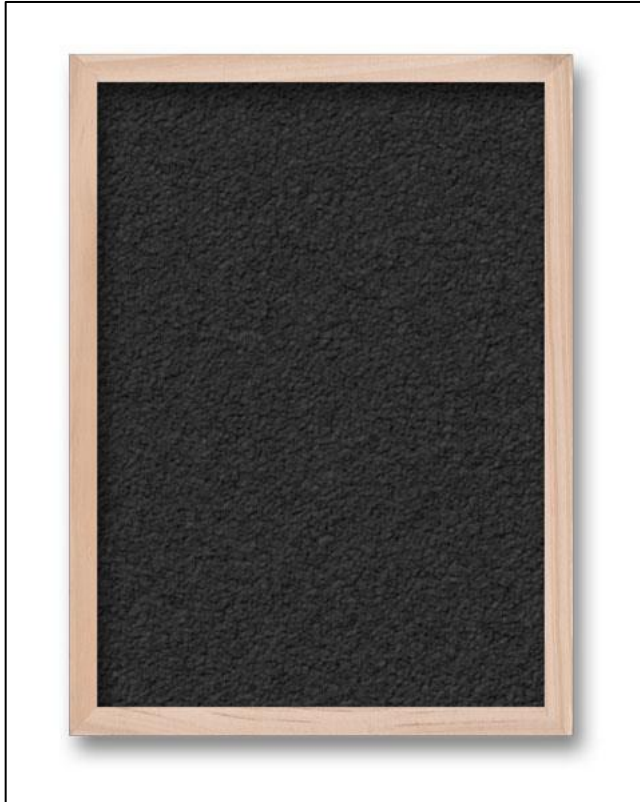
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Step One: Prepare the Workspace

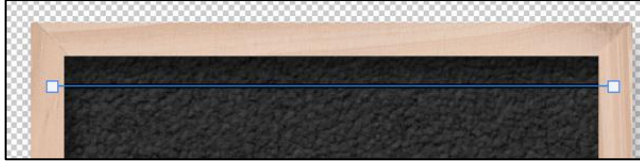
- Open the DST-Letterboard.psd document (File > Open) which can be found in the downloads for this lesson.
- In the Layers panel, click on the black paper layer to make it the active layer.
- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black over white.



Step Two: Create the First Letterboard Line

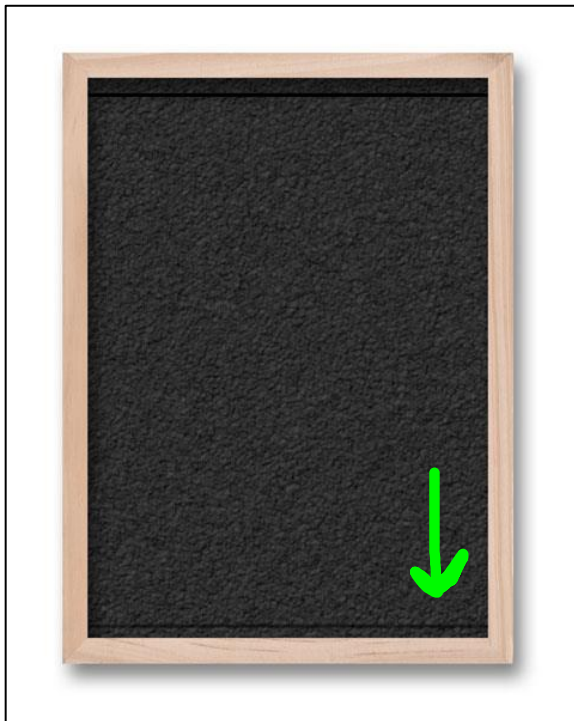
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- Get the Line tool. It's nested with the other shape tools.
- In the Tool Options, set the Tool Mode to Shape. Click on Stroke Type, click on the Solid Color icon, and then click on the Color Picker icon. In the Color Picker, choose black and click OK to close the Color Picker. Set the Stroke Width to 10px. Open the Stroke Type settings and click on More Options. Set the Preset to Solid Line, the Align to Center, the Caps to Butt, and the Corners to Miter; then click OK. Set the Path Operations to New Layer. Click on Path Options and uncheck Arrowhead Start and End. Check Align Edges.
- On the document, hold down the Shift key, and click and drag a line across the top of the black paper that extends the entire width of the paper. The line should not extend past the boundaries of the frame. To reposition while dragging, press and hold the Spacebar.

- In the Layers panel, Right click (Mac: Ctrl Click) on the name of the line layer and choose Rasterize Layer.
- In the Layers panel, set the Blend Mode of this line layer to Soft Light.
- In the Layers panel, set the Opacity of this line layer to 80%.



Step Three: Create the Rest of the Lines

- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) 30 times to duplicate the line 30 times.
- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, hold down the Shift key, and click and drag the last of the duplicated lines down until there's a little bit of space between the line and bottom edge of the frame.



- In the Layers panel, hold down the Shift key and click on the bottom most line layer to make all the line layers active.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Distribute Vertical Centers icon. (PS: Click on the Align and Distribute icon, then click on the Distribute Vertical Centers icon.)
- With the line layers still active in the Layers panel, press Ctrl G (Mac: Cmd G) to create a group of the line layers.
- In the Layers panel, double click on the name of the group layer and change the name of this group to Letterboard Lines. Press Enter to commit the name change.



Step Four: Reveal a Phrase

- In the Layers panel, click on the visibility icon of the phrase you wish to display on your letterboard to reveal it.

NOTE: In a future tutorial, I'll show you how to make your own letterboard letters so you can make your own phrases.



Step Five: Save As

- To preserve the layers for later use, save the document (File > Save As) as a PSD file with a unique name.
- To create a flattened image, save the document (File > Save As) as a PNG file with a unique name. Then, close the working document without saving.

NOTE: Before you close Photoshop, it's a good idea to get the Line tool and set the Stroke back to None. If you don't, the Stroke will stay turned on no matter which shape tool you use.

Here is how I used this letterboard on a scrapbook page. I love how realistic the letterboard looks! It works great next to the photo and it also doubles as a title for my layout:



Credits:
 Page: Jenifer Juris
 Photo: Jodi Finley (sister)
 Kit: Fresh Start by Bellisae Designs
 Font: Bebas Neue
 Letterboard Frame: All About A Boy by Shawna Clingerman (modified)
 Letterboard Paper: Snugglesaurus by Laura Louie (recolor)



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