Envelope Burst with the Brush Tool

by Jenifer Juris

Add a burst of confetti to any project using the Brush tool in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements.

For this tutorial you will need:

- The dst-envelope-burst-template.psd file from the downloads
- Adobe Photoshop or Photoshop Elements

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Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- Open the dst-envelope-burst-template.PSD file (File > Open) from the downloads.
- In the Layers panel, click to toggle open the Envelope group.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Envelope Flap - Paper Clipping Mask layer to activate it.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the Color Picker, choose a medium gray color. Click OK.

Step Two: Create Confetti Style No. 1

- Get the Brush tool.
- **Photoshop Elements Only:** In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, open the dropdown menu, and choose Default Brushes. Choose a Hard Round brush. Set the Size to 80, the Opacity to 100% and the Mode to Normal. Click on Brush Settings. Set the Fade to 0, the Hue Jitter to 0, the Scatter to 100%, the Spacing to 1000%, the Hardness to 100%, and the Roundness to 100%.
- **Adobe Photoshop Only:** In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, open the General Brushes, and choose the Hard Round brush. If you don't see the General Brushes, open the flyout menu and choose Append Default Brushes. Set the Size to 80px and the Hardness to 100%. In the Tool Options, set the Opacity to 100%, the Flow to 100%, and the Smoothing to 0%. Click on the Brush Setting icon to toggle open the Brush Settings panel. In the Brush Settings panel, set the Spacing to 200%. If you don't see the Spacing setting, click on the Brush Tip Shape word. Uncheck all other Brush Tip Shape settings. Click on the Scattering option and set the Scatter to 500%. Uncheck the Both Axes box. In the Tool Options, click on the Brush Settings icon to toggle it closed.
- On the document, placing your mouse over the envelope area, click and drag to create some confetti. Make sure to include some confetti that looks like it's spilling out of the envelope.

- If you end up getting some confetti in areas you don’t want, you can do the following:
- Get the Elliptical Marquee tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon and check Anti-aliasing. Set the Feather to 0 and the Aspect to Normal. (PS: Set the Style to Normal.)
- On the document, click and drag to create a selection around the piece(s) you wish to remove. To reposition while dragging, press and hold the Spacebar.
- Once the selection is in place, press Backspace (Mac: Delete) to remove the pieces.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.

NOTE: Repeat the removal process as many times as needed.

Step Three: Add a Drop Shadow

- **Photoshop Elements Only:**
  - In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Layer Style > Style Settings.
  - In the dialog box, set the Lighting Angle to 120˚.
  - Click directly on the word Drop Shadow to open the settings.
  - Set the Size to 5, the Distance to 8, and the Opacity to 50.
  - Click OK to close the Style Settings dialog box.
- **Adobe Photoshop Only:**
  - In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Layer Style > Drop Shadow.
  - In the dialog box, click on Reset to Default.
  - Set the Blend Mode to Multiply, the Opacity to 50%, the Angle to 120˚, the Distance to 8, the Spread to 0, and the Size to 5.
  - Click OK to close the Layer Style dialog box.

Step Four: Create Confetti Style No. 2

- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.

NOTE: This layer should be just above the first confetti layer.

- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the Color Picker, choose a dark gray color. Click OK.
- Get the Brush tool.
- **Photoshop Elements Only:** In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, open the dropdown menu and choose Assorted Brushes. Choose the Circle 4 brush. Set the Size to 80px, the Opacity to 100% and the Mode to Normal. Click on Brush Settings. Set the Fade to 0, the Hue Jitter to 0, the Scatter to 100%, the Spacing to 1000%, and the Roundness to 100%.
- **Adobe Photoshop Only:** In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, open the Legacy Brushes and from there, open the Assorted Brushes, and choose the Circle 4 brush. If you don't see the Legacy Brushes, open the flyout menu and choose Legacy Brushes. Set the Size to 80px. In the Tool Options, set the Opacity to 100%, the Flow to 100%, and the Smoothing to 0%. Click on the Brush Setting icon to toggle open the Brush Settings panel. In the Brush Settings panel, set the Spacing to 200%. If you don't see the Spacing setting, click on the Brush Tip Shape option. Uncheck all other Brush Tip Shape settings. Click on the Scattering option and set the Scatter to 500%. Uncheck the Both Axes box. In the Tool Options, click on the Brush Settings icon to toggle it closed.
- On the document, click and drag to create a second set of confetti.

NOTE: If any of the pieces of the new confetti end up in a place you don't like, follow the steps on Page 4 to remove those pieces.

- In the Layers panel, hold down the Alt key (Mac: Opt key) and click on the style icon of the first confetti layer, and drag it to the second confetti layer to copy the drop shadow to the new confetti layer.

Step Five: Save As

- Save the document (File > Save As) as a layered PSD file with a unique name. I'm naming mine dst-envelope-burst-template-complete.psd.

Step Six: Use the Template

- Once the template is complete, you can use it to create a scrapbook page. It's a good idea to duplicate the template before working with it so that you don't accidentally overwrite it.
- To do that, In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate. (PS: Choose Image > Duplicate.)
- In the dialog box, click OK.
- Close the original complete template file.

Here’s how I used the template to make a page about my nephew’s first birthday. I love how the bursting envelope helps add to the party theme here. If you decide to clip a patterned paper to the whole circle confetti, just make sure the pattern is small in scale or it will be hard to see. Because the circle hoop confetti is so thin, make sure to use a solid paper for clipping to that layer. A darker color will be easier to see on a light background and a light color will be easier to see on a medium or dark background.

Credits:

Page: Jenifer Juris
Template: Jenifer Juris
Photos: Jodi Finley (sister)
Kit: Congratulations by Kristin Cronin-Barrow
Fonts: Rampage, Autogate Sans Stamped