

SCRAPPER'S GUIDE

The Easiest Way To Learn Digital Scrapbooking. **Guaranteed.**

Cutout Alpha (Photoshop Elements)

Tip of the Week by Jen White on October 18, 2011

I love to work with my hands.

Any DIY project is the project for me — especially the ones that take a basic list of tools and a little elbow grease.

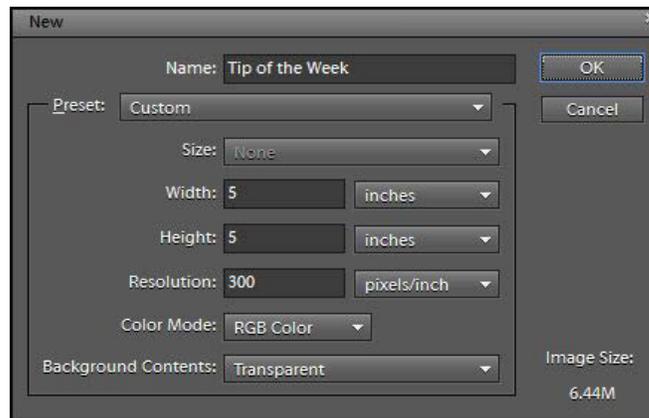
My DIY tool belt includes things like a hammer, a cordless drill or screw gun, and a tape measure.

When I'm working with Photoshop Elements, I find myself generally sticking with the Shape tools, the Type tool and the Marquee tool.

In today's tip we'll add a little elbow grease to the before mentioned list of tools to create a custom embellishment that is sure to dress up any scrapbook page.

Step 1: Prepare the Workspace

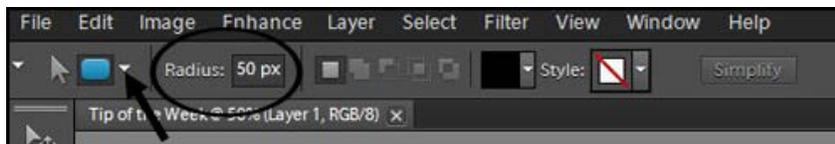
- Create a new document (File > New > Blank File) that is 5x5 inches at 300ppi with a Transparent background.



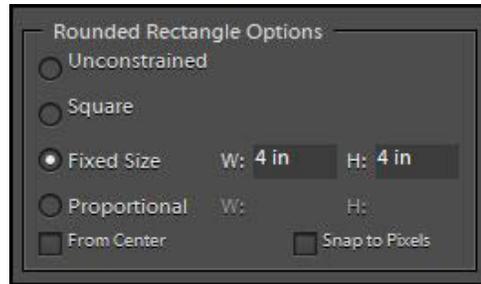
- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black and white.

Step 2: Create a Tile

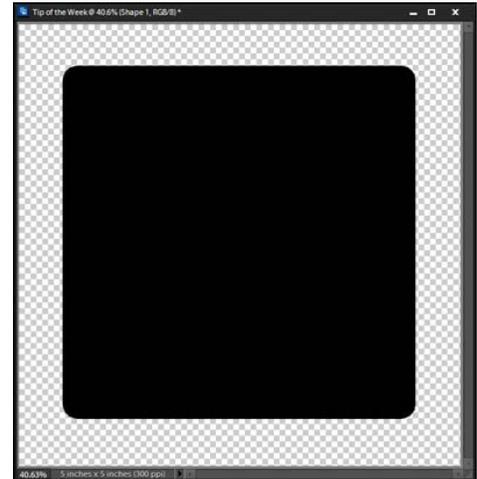
- Get the Rounded Rectangle tool.



- Open the Geometry Options and choose Fixed Size. Enter a size of 4x4 inches.

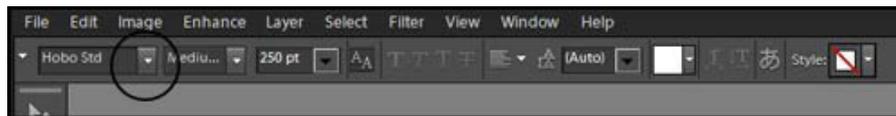


- In the Options Bar, enter a Radius of 50 px.
- Click in the upper left corner of the document to place the shape.
- Press and hold the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key), click inside the shape, and move the shape to the center of the document.
- In the Options Bar, click on Simplify.

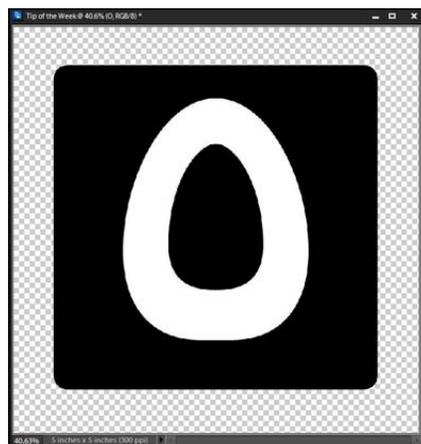


Step 3: Type a Letter

- Press the letter X to switch white to the Foreground Color Chip.
- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- **Note:** The Type tool will always open with your previous settings — except for the Color Chip. The Color Chip will always match the Foreground Color Chip in the Tool Bar.



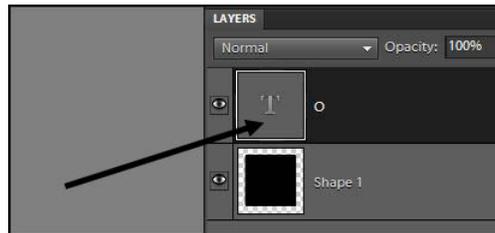
- In the Options Bar, open the Font picker and choose a chunky font. I've chosen Hobo Std.
- Click on the center of your document to place a text cursor and type a letter.
- If you need to move your letter more to the center (you do not need to be exact), hold down the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key), click inside the Bounding Box, and drag the letter to the center of the document.
- Click on the check mark at the bottom of the Bounding Box to commit the changes.



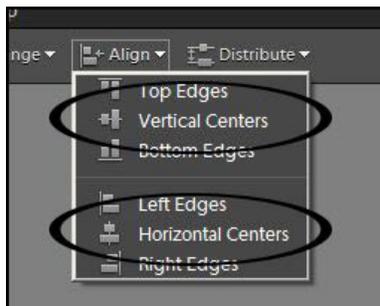
Step 4: Resize and Center the Letter

- In the Options Bar, increase/decrease the Size until your letter is nice and big within the shape. The size of my letter is 250 points.

- In the Layers panel, Ctrl click (Mac: Cmd click) on the thumbnail of the shape layer to get a Selection Outline.
- Make sure the type layer is still active.

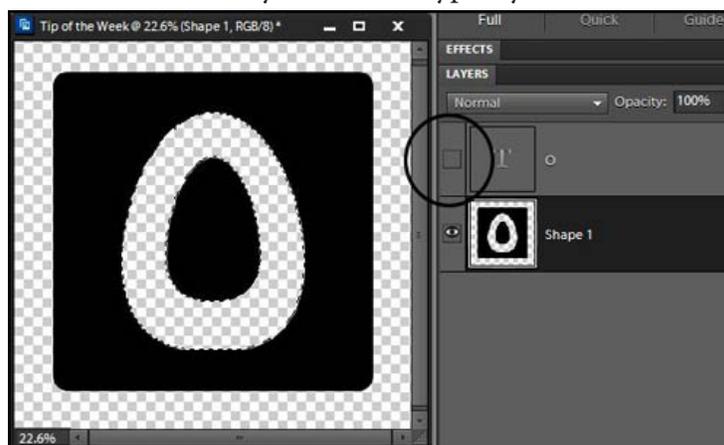


- Get the Move tool.
- In the Options Bar, choose Align > Horizontal Centers and Align > Vertical Centers.



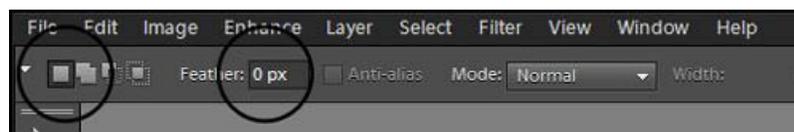
Step 5: Punch Out the Letter

- In the Layers panel, Ctrl click (Mac: Cmd click) on the thumbnail of the type layer to get a Selection Outline.
- Activate the shape layer.
- Press the Backspace key (Mac: Delete key).
- In the Layers panel, click on the Visibility icon of the type layer to hide it.

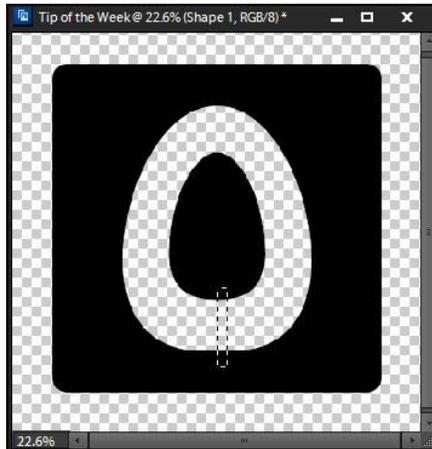


Step 6: Secure the Letter Parts

- Get the Rectangular Marquee tool.
- In the Options Bar, click on the New Selection icon. Feather should be 0 and Style should be Normal.



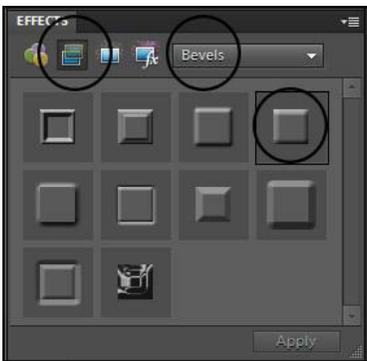
- On the document, draw a thin selection outline through the letter to secure the inside portion.
- If you need to rotate your selection outline, right click (Mac: Ctrl click) inside the selection outline and choose Transform Selection.



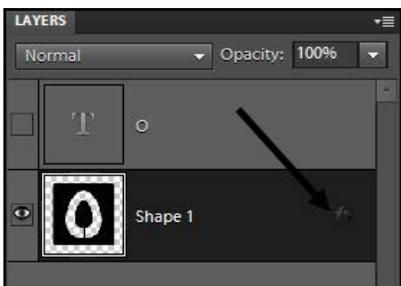
- Press Ctrl Backspace (Mac: Cmd Delete) to fill the selection outline with the background Color Chip.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to Deselect.
- Repeat if you need to add more bars to “attach” the unconnected portions of the letters.

Step 7: Add a Layer Style

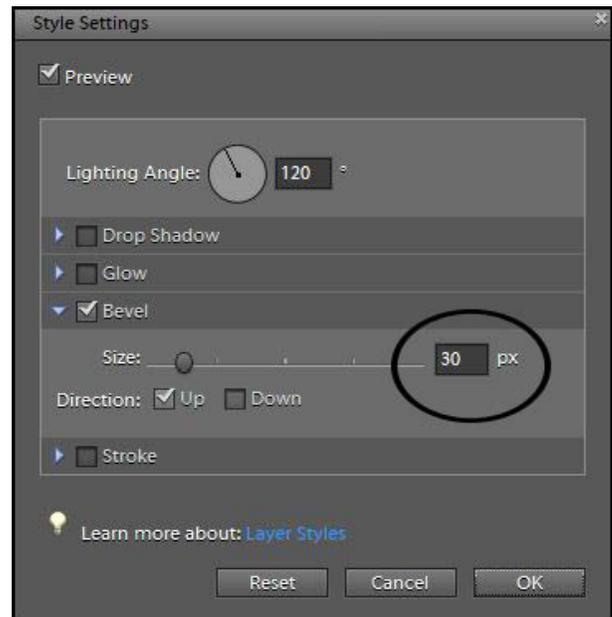
- Open the Effects panel (Window > Effects).
- Click on the Layer Styles icon.
- Open the Layer Styles drop down menu and choose Bevels.
- Double click on the Simple Inner icon.



- In the Layers panel, double click on the fx icon in the shape layer.

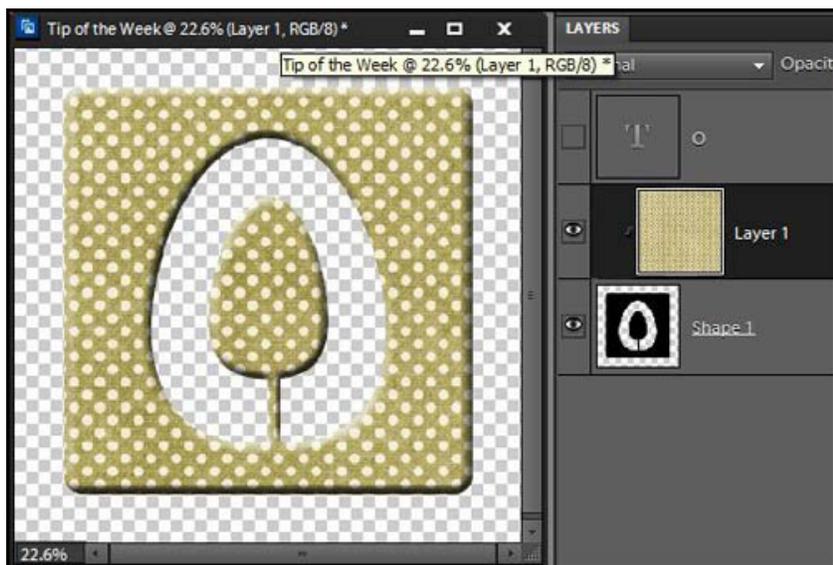


- In the Style Settings dialog box, enter 30px for the Bevel Size and click OK.



Step 8: Add a Background Paper

- Open (File > Open) a background paper.
- I'm using paper 5 from [Susan Bartolini's Happy Harvest kit](#).
- Get the Move tool.
- Click on the background paper and drag it onto your document.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask.
- **Note:** Earlier versions of Elements will say Group with Previous.



- Choose Layer > Merge Visible.
- Click on the tile and drag it onto your scrapbook page.



Credits:

Tip of the Week: Cutout Alpha by Jen White

Kit: [Happy Harvest by Susan Bartolini](#)

Font: Hobo Std

Software: Adobe Elements 10.0



Leap Frog To The Next Level!

Rather than learning a bit here and a bit there, why not leap frog to the next level? Our *Learn Digital Scrapbooking* class takes you **step-by-step from rank beginner to confident digital scrapbooker** in a *fraction* of the time!

[Find out more about the Learn Digital Scrapbooking class.](#)

If you enjoyed this Tip of the Week, be sure to sign up to receive the **Digital Scrapper Tip of the Week** newsletter.

**Newsletter
Signup**

For training in more **Advanced Topics** (at a grab-it-now! price), become a Premier member!

**Premier
Membership**