



Color Story

Lesson 7: Primary Colors - Comic Page (Photoshop Elements)

We learned about primary colors in the last lesson, and now it's time to play! We'll create a comic book page using a simple overlay template and learn some fun tricks along the way.

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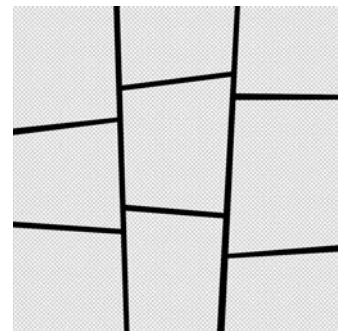
This is the project we are creating in this lesson.



Set Up the Workspace

- Begin in Advanced/Expert Mode of Photoshop Elements.
- Create a new 12x12 inch document (File > New > Blank File) at 300 ppi with a white background.
- Open the Comic-Frame-Template-SyndeeRogers.png (File > Open) from the CLR-Class-Files folder.
- Holding down the Shift key, click and drag the overlay over
- to the new document.

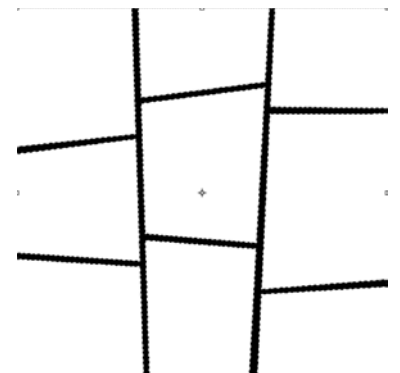
NOTE: Adding photos and papers behind the open areas of this overlay would not only end up being a lot of work but it would also create a lot of layers.



Create a Mask

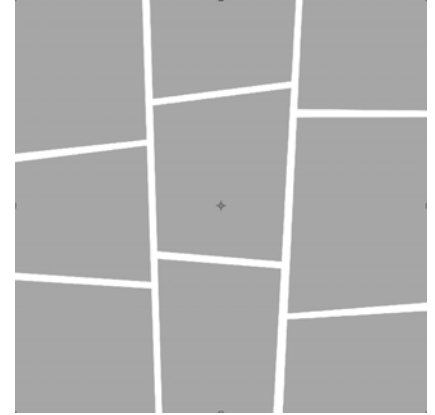
Create masks for all the open areas of the overlay template on one layer.

- Hold down the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key) and then click on the Create a New Layer icon to create a new layer below the overlay layer.
- Double-click on the name of the layer and rename it Masks. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Click on the Foreground Color Chip and choose a medium grey from the Color Picker. Click OK.
- Ctrl click (Mac: Cmd click) on the thumbnail of the overlay layer to make a selection.
- In Menu Bar, choose Select > Modify > Contract. Enter 1 pixel for Contract By. Click OK.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Select > Inverse.



NOTE: We used Select > Contract to modify the selection so that the masked shapes completely fill each of the open areas of the overlay.

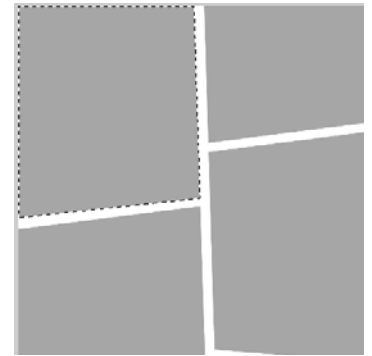
- Press Alt/Backspace (Mac: Opt/Delete) to fill the layer with the foreground color.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.
- In the Layers panel, double-click on the name of the overlay layer and rename it Overlay. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Click on the Visibility icon of the Overlay layer to hide it.
- Activate the Masks layer.



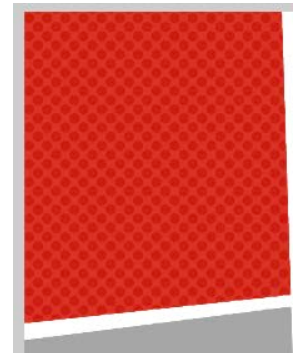
Fill the Mask Shapes with Patterns

- Get the Magic Wand tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon, set the Tolerance to 0, uncheck Sample All Layers, and check Contiguous and Anti-aliasing.

- On the document, click on the mask shape in the top-left corner to make a selection.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.

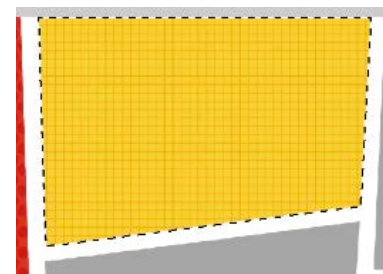


- In the Menu Bar, choose Edit > Fill Selection. In the dialog box, open the Use dropdown menu, and choose Pattern. Open the Custom Pattern Picker and choose the Red Dots pattern from the CLR-Class-Patterns. If you don't see the names of the patterns, click on the flyout menu and choose Large List. The Blending Mode should be Normal, the Opacity 100%, and make sure Preserve Transparency is unchecked. Click OK.



- In the Layers panel, double-click on the name of the active layer and rename it Paper shapes. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Activate the Masks layer.
- Click on the mask shape at the top-middle of the document to make a selection.

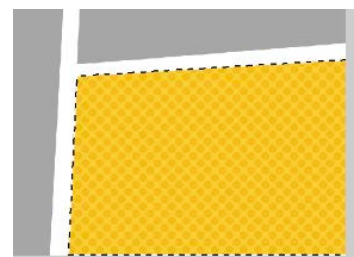
- In the Layers panel, activate the Paper shapes layer.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Edit > Fill Selection. In the dialog box, it should still be set to Pattern, open the Custom Pattern Picker and choose the Yellow Grid pattern from the class patterns. Click OK.



- Activate the Masks layer in the Layers panel.
- Click on the mask shape on the middle-left side of the document to make a selection.
- Activate the Paper shapes layer in the Layers panel.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Edit > Fill Selection. In the dialog box, open the Custom Pattern Picker and choose the Comic Stars pattern from the class patterns. Click OK.



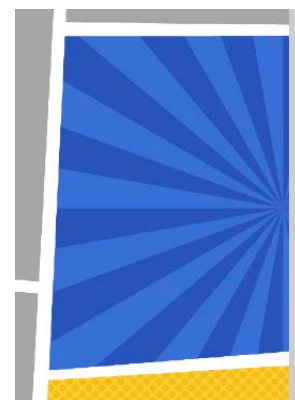
- Activate the Masks layer in the Layers panel.
- Click on the mask shape at the bottom-right side of the document to make a selection.
- Activate the Paper shapes layer in the Layers panel.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Edit > Fill Selection. In the dialog box, open the Custom Pattern Picker and choose the Yellow Dots pattern from the class patterns. Click OK.



Layer Mask Pattern Fill Layer

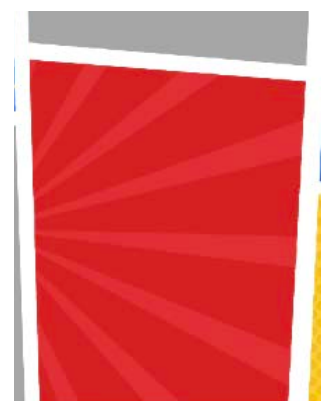
Depending on the pattern we use, we may need to move it around inside the selection. In that case, we need the pattern to be placed on a separate layer.

- Activate the Masks layer in the Layers panel.
- Click on the mask shape on the middle-right side of the document to make a selection.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Fill/Adjustment Layer icon and choose Pattern. In the dialog box, open the Pattern Picker and choose the Blue Starburst pattern from the class patterns. The Scale should be 100% and Link with Layer should be checked.
- With the dialog box still open, on the document, click on the starburst pattern and move it so that the center of the starburst is on the middle-right edge of the mask shape. In the dialog box, click OK.
- The Pattern Fill layer now has a layer mask of our selection.



NOTE: Adding a pattern fill layer after creating a selection automatically makes a mask of the selection for us and clips the pattern fill layer to it.

- Activate the Masks layer.
- Click on the mask shape on the bottom-middle of the document to make a selection.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Fill/Adjustment Layer icon and choose Pattern. In the dialog box, open the Pattern Picker and choose the Red Starburst pattern from the class patterns.
- With the dialog box still open, on the document, click on the red starburst pattern and move it so that the center of the starburst is on the middle-left edge of the mask shape. Click OK in the dialog box.



Add a Photo to a Mask Shape

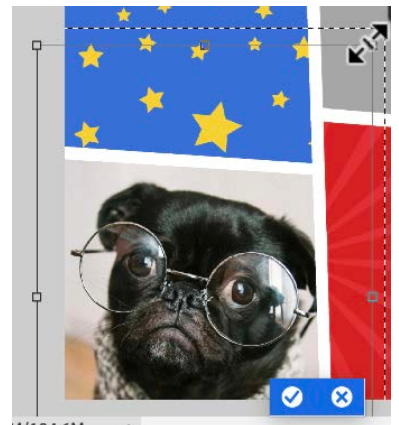
- Activate the Masks layer in the Layers panel.
- Click on the mask shape in the top-right corner of the document to make a selection.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- Open a photo (File > Open).

- In the Menu Bar, choose Select > All.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Edit > Copy to copy the photo.
- Activate the comic overlay document.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Edit > Paste Into Selection to paste the photo into the selection.



Move and Resize the Photo

- Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click inside the selection and move the photo if needed.
- Click on a corner handle of the bounding box and drag it inward to reduce the size of the photo or drag it outward to increase the size of the photo.
- Click the checkmark to commit the transformation.



- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.
- Follow the previous steps to add photos to the remaining mask shapes.



Save the Document

- Save your document (File > Save As) as a layered PSD file.
- Give the file a name.
- Save the document in the class folder for this lesson. Click Save.



Examples of products that work well with the techniques taught in this lesson:



Comic Page Overlays

Die-Cut Dream Overlays

Coordinating product:

Comic Book Kit