



LESSON 3: PAINTING WATERCOLOR FLOWERS

Creatively Yours

Lesson 3: Painting Watercolor Flowers (Photoshop Elements)

In this lesson, I'll teach you how to paint realistic watercolor flowers using a magical brush!

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Download and Install the Font(s)

Click on the links below, and download the fonts into the class folder for this lesson.

[Lummoxie Script](#)

[Wollaston](#) (Optional: this font is only used in the demo at the end of the lesson)

Installing fonts on a Mac:

NOTE: The Wollaston font was not in a zipped folder when I downloaded it. The Lummoxie Script font was in a zipped folder.

Unzip the file: the files will usually automatically unzip when downloaded. But if not, double-click on the zipped file to unzip it.

Double-click one of the font files in the Finder window, then click Install Font in the font preview window. Your Mac will then validate the font and open the Font Book app. The font is now installed and ready to use.

Installing fonts in Windows:

Right-click on one of the font files, and then select "Extract All" from the pop-up menu. Open the font folder, then right-click on the font file and select Install. Your font should be installed and ready to use.

Set Up the Workspace

- Begin in Advanced Mode (Expert Mode for earlier versions) of Photoshop Elements.
- Open the Flower-Reference-Worksheet.jpg (File > Open) from the CTY-Class-Files folder.
- In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate. Click OK.
- Close the original Flower-Reference-Worksheet.jpg (File > Close).



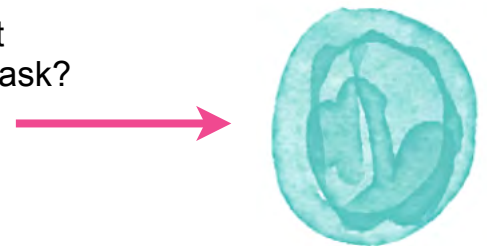
Paint Watercolor Flower Petals

Paint watercolor petals using one of the flower reference sketches.

- In the Color Swatches panel, choose a color from the CTY-Class-Swatches. I used Aqua.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon to create a new layer.
- Get the Brush tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, and choose the SK Watercolor Flora 3 brush from the CTY-Class-Brushes. The class brushes have built-in settings, and any adjustments made to the brush will revert back to the original settings once you choose a different brush, with the exception of the Opacity settings. The Opacity for all the class brushes should be set to 100%.
- Press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) to zoom in on the flower reference image on the right side of the document.

Before we paint our first petal, there is a trick to painting with these watercolor brushes.

The best way to start is to draw an outline of the petal, and without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the petal. Why, you may ask? Look what happened when I let go of my mouse and then tried to fill in the rest of the petal. This is due to the transparent nature of these types of brushes.



- Starting with the middle petal on the reference image, click and paint an outline with the brush of the first petal, and without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the petal shape.



TIP: As long as you don't let go of your mouse, you can continue to refine and reshape your petal.

NOTE: Practice is key with this technique, the more you practice the easier and more comfortable it will become to fill in the petal shapes.

- Move to the petal on the bottom-right side of the document. Start by clicking and painting an outline of the petal shape following the reference image, and then, without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the petal shape. Remember, as long as you don't let go of your mouse, you can continue to paint and reshape your petal.



- Move over to the petal on the bottom-left side of the document. Following the reference image, click and paint an outline of the petal, and then, without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the petal shape.



- Move to the petal in between the two petals on the right side of the reference image. Following the reference image, click and paint an outline of the petal, and then, without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the petal shape.



- Move to the petal in between the two petals on the left side of the reference image. Following the reference image, click and paint an outline of the petal, and then, without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the petal shape.



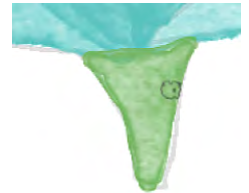
The color depth and texture will vary with these watercolor brushes, so your flowers may not look exactly like mine or even others that you paint yourself. Which is great! No two flowers will look exactly the same!

This mimics the watercolor technique where you paint each petal separately, allowing the petals to dry between each one. If you were to paint the petals on top of each other without letting them dry, they would all run together, and there would be no clear definition of each petal.

- In the Layers panel, double-click directly on the name of the flower layer and rename it Flower. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.

Paint the Top of the Stem

- In the Swatches panel, click on the Green swatch from the class swatches.
- Press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) to zoom in on the top of the stem on the reference image.
- In the Tool Options, reduce the brush size to 19 px. You can go even smaller if you prefer.
- Using the reference image as a guide, click and paint an outline of the stem top. Then, without letting go of your mouse, fill in the rest of the shape.



- To darken the top of the stem, click and paint another layer right on top of the previous brushwork.

Add a Word

- Press Ctrl - (Mac: Cmd -) to zoom out.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- Get the Horizontal Type tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Font Picker, and choose the Lummoxie Script font you installed at the beginning of the lesson. Set the size to 85. If needed, press Enter/Return so it sticks. The color should be the Green swatch from the class swatches. If it's not, open the Color Picker and choose the Green swatch. Set the Leading to Auto and the Tracking to 0. Anti-aliasing should be checked.

- On the document, click to place the cursor somewhere in the middle of the document, and type the word cherish in lowercase letters.
- Click the checkmark to commit the type.

cherish

- In the Menu Bar, choose Image > Rotate > Rotate Layer 90 degrees left. Get the Move tool.
- On the document, click on the word and move it so that it is centered about ½ inch or so below the flower.



Draw the Top Part of the Stem

- In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon.
- Get the Brush tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker, and choose the #2 Pencil brush from the CTY-Class-Brushes. Because this is a new brush you've never used, you won't have to adjust the settings.



- Zoom in to your document so that the stem top and the last letter of the word are both visible.
- On the document, click and draw a slightly wavy line connecting the bottom of the stem top to the end of the last letter.

Brush Tool Trick

A super fun trick to turn our current brush into an eraser!

- In the Tool Options, change the Mode of the brush to Clear.

We can now use the same brush to erase and reshape the stem (the wavy line we just drew). This saves us time because we don't have to switch to the Eraser tool and adjust the settings!

- On the document, click and erase any unwanted areas with the brush.

NOTE: Keep in mind that when using this trick, make sure to go back and set the Mode to Normal in the Tool Options when you're done erasing.

- In the Tool Options, change the Mode of the brush back to Normal.
- Click and drag with the pencil brush to thicken the wavy line if desired.

- Press Ctrl - (Mac: Cmd -) to zoom out, and move your document so that the bottom of the word cherish is visible and there's enough room to draw a stem.
- On the document, starting at the bottom-left side of the letter 'c', click and draw a wavy line down toward the bottom of the page. Make it longer than the previous line.

- If you need to clean up your new line, go to the Tool Options and change the Mode to Clear.
- Press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) to zoom in if needed.
- On the document, click and erase any areas you want to clean up.
- Go back to the Tool Options and set the mode to Normal.

- In the Layers panel, double-click directly on the name of the active layer and rename it Stem. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.



Group the Layers

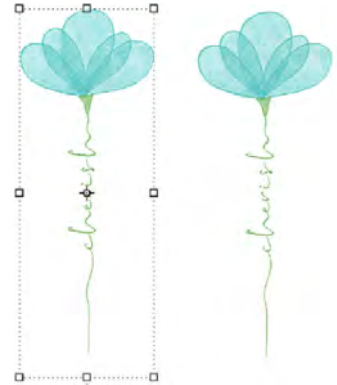
- With the Stem layer active, hold down the Shift key and click on the Flower layer. You should have three layers active.
- Click on the Create a New Group icon.
- Double-click directly on the name of the group and rename it Cherish Flower. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.



Create a Duplicate Flower (Optional)

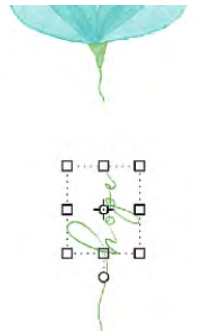
An easy way to create another flower with a different word stem is to duplicate the group.

- With the group active, press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate the group.
- Get the Move tool.
- Click on the duplicate flower shape on the document and move it to the left.
- Double-click directly on the name of the group and rename it. I've renamed mine Hope Flower. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.

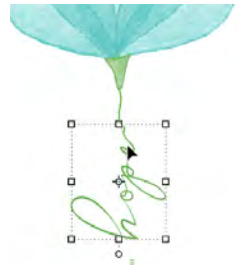


Change the Word

- Double-click on the thumbnail of the type layer in the Layers panel, and then type a new word.
- If you would like to change the font, double-click on the thumbnail of the type layer in the Layers panel.
- In the Tool Options, open the Font Picker and choose a new font. I've used the Wollaston font we installed at the beginning of the lesson. I set the font Size to 125 pts.
- Click the checkmark to commit the change.



- Get the Move tool if needed.
- On the Document, click on the new word and move it so that it connects with the stem under the flower.

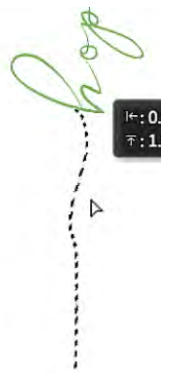


Depending on your word, you may need to modify the bottom of the stem. An easy way to do that is to use the Lasso tool.

- Activate the Stem layer in the Layers panel.
- Get the Lasso tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Add To Selection icon, set the Feather to 0, and check Anti-aliasing.
- On the document, click and drag out a selection around the stem you want to move.

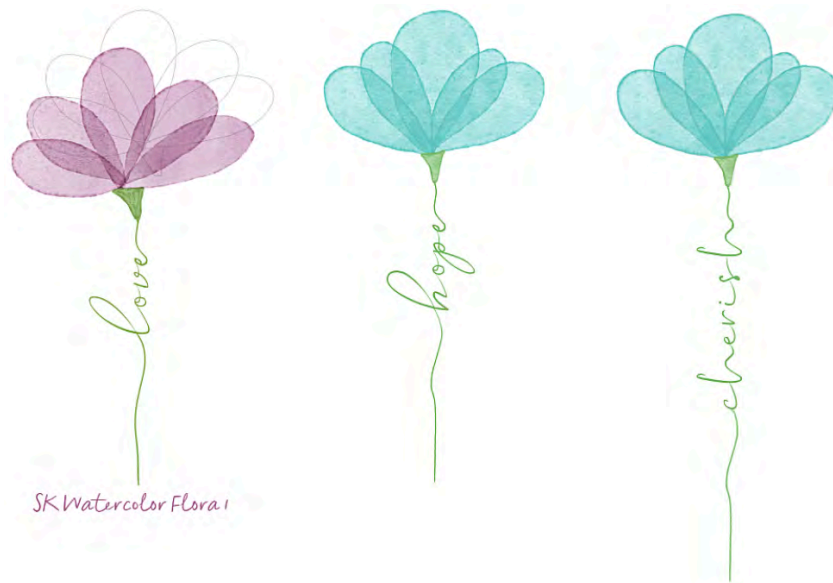


- Press the letter V to get the Move tool.
- Move the selected stem up to connect with the bottom of the new word.
- Press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) to zoom in if needed.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.



If you need to clean up areas of your stem, follow the instructions above under the heading: **Brush Tool Trick.**

You can paint additional flowers in different colors and use different fonts and words. Try using the other flower reference image as I did in the plum flower on the left side of the examples below.



Please Note: The plum flower version was created in Photoshop and the brushes work better than in Photoshop Elements due to all the additional brush settings available.

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.

Add the Flower to a Document or Page

Quickly add your flower creation to a new document or scrapbook page.

- In the Layers panel, click on the Cherish Flower group (or any other flower group) to activate it.
- Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the name of the group and choose Duplicate Group.
- In the dialog box, set the Destination to New, or if, you have a scrapbook page open, choose it from the list. Click OK.

NOTE: When choosing New as the destination, your flower group will be added to a document that is the same size as the original document.

Ideas for Future Watercolor Projects

You aren't limited to painting flowers! You can use shapes, doodles, clip art, brushes, and letters as reference images to trace over, like we did with the flower images in this lesson. I've included two additional reference images in the CTY-Class-Files Extras folder, as well as two line art PNG files that you can use for this technique.

