



## Creatively Yours

### Lesson 5: Photo to Frame (Photoshop Elements)

In this lesson, we'll take a photo of a real picture frame, transform it into a versatile element, and then explore ways to use it.

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### Load the Class Layer Styles

- In the Styles panel (Window > Styles), open the flyout menu and choose Load Styles. Navigate to the CTY-Class-Styles.asl file in the CTY-Class-Download folder. Click Load/Open.

### Set Up the Workspace

- Begin in Advanced Mode (Expert Mode for earlier versions) of Photoshop Elements.
- Create a new 12 x 12 inch document (File > New > Blank File) at 300 ppi with a white background.
- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to black and white.
- Open the anthony-garand-7RxMsJdvt7k-unsplash.jpg photo (File > Open) from the CTY-Class-Files folder.
- Duplicate the photo document (File > Duplicate).
- Close the original photo (File > Close).



### Extract the Frame

- Get the Auto Selection tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon. Uncheck Sample All Layers, check Constrain Selection. Click on the Select Subject icon. In the warning dialog click OK.

NOTE: This should do a pretty good job of selecting the frame. I've tested this method with this photo in PSE 2021-2024 with great results.



## Troubleshooting the Selection

Clean up areas of your selection following the instructions below.

To add missed areas of the frame (or object) to the selection, do the following:

- Get the Quick Selection tool. It's nested with the Selection tools.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Add to selection icon, set the Size to 15px, uncheck Sample All Layers, and check Auto-enhance.
- On the photo document, click and drag over the areas that need to be added to the selection.

To clean up areas you don't want in your selection, do the following:

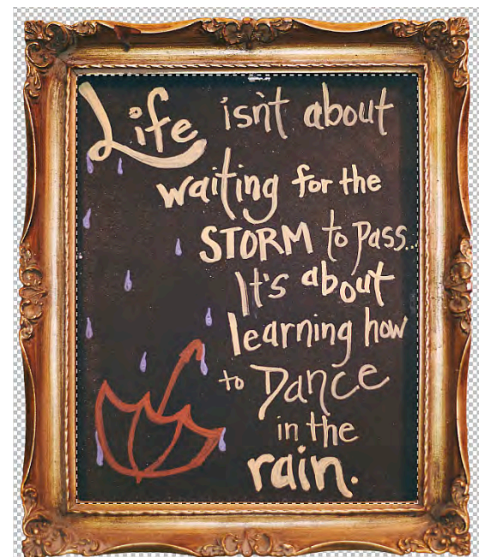
- Get the Quick Selection tool. It's nested with the Selection tools.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Subtract from selection icon, set the Size to 15px, uncheck Sample All Layers, and check Auto-enhance.
- On the photo document, click and drag over the areas that need to be subtracted from the selection.

- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to place a copy of the selection on its own layer.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Visibility icon of the Background layer to hide it.



## Delete the Inside of the Frame

- Press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +) to zoom in a bit if desired.
- Get the Rectangular Marquee tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon, set the Feather to 0 px, and the Aspect to Normal.
- On the document, click and drag out a selection inside the middle of the frame.



- Press Backspace/Delete to delete the selection. It's okay if there's a bit of black around the inside edges of the frame because we will be recoloring it in the next step.
- Press Ctrl D (Mac Cmd D) to deselect.



- In the Layers panel, double-click directly on the name of the layer and rename it Original. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate the frame.
- Double-click directly on the name of the layer and name it Frame. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Click on the Visibility icon of the Original frame layer to hide it.

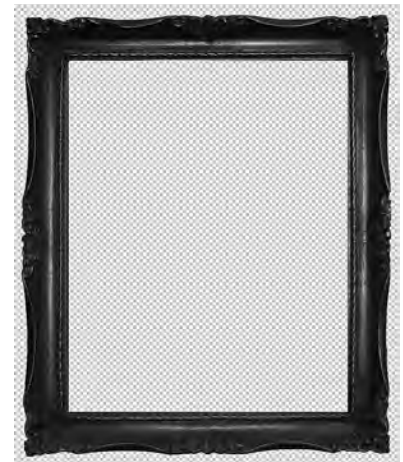
### Recolor the Frame

- Click on the Create a New Adjustment Layer icon and choose Hue/Saturation.
- In the Adjustments panel, move the Saturation slider all the way to the left so that the frame is now greyscale.

NOTE: You will need to play with the Adjustment settings depending on the object you are recoloring for future projects using this technique.



- In the Adjustments panel, click on the flyout menu and choose Brightness/Contrast. In the New Layer dialog click OK.
- In the Adjustments panel, set the Brightness to -112 and the Contrast to 100. You can play with the sliders if desired.
- Close the Adjustments panel.



- With the Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer active, hold down the Shift key, and click on the Frame layer. You should now have three layers active.
- Press Alt Ctrl E (Mac: Opt Cmd E) to create a merged copy.
- Double-click directly on the name of the layer and name it Frame. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.

## Group the Layers

- Activate the Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer, then hold down the Shift key, and click on the Frame layer. You should now have three layers active.
- Click on the Create a New Group icon.
- Double-click directly on the name of the group and name it Frame Master. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.

- Activate the black Frame layer.
- Get the Move tool.
- Hold down the Shift key, and on the document, click and drag the frame to the 12x12 inch document we created earlier.



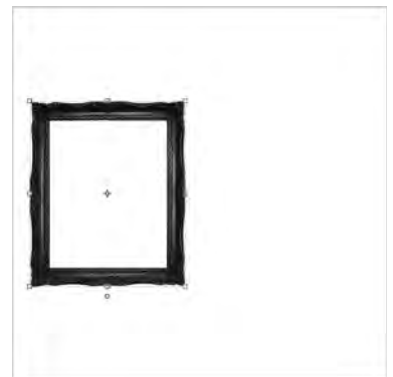
## Resize the Frame

- Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- In the Tool Options, check Constrain Proportions. Enter 5.01 inches for the Width, and the Height should automatically be 6 inches. If not, go ahead and enter 6 inches. You may need to enter 'in' for inches next to the number.
- Click the checkmark to commit the change.



## Duplicate and Arrange the Frames

- On the document, click on the frame and move it to the middle-left side of the document.



- Double-click directly on the name of the frame in the Layers panel and rename it Frame 1. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate the frame.
- Double-click directly on the name of the frame and rename it Frame 2. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate the frame again.
- Double-click directly on the name of the frame and rename it Frame 3. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.

- On the document, click on the frame (Frame 3), and holding down the Shift key, drag it straight down, leaving a bit of space between the frames.



- In the Layers panel, activate the Frame 1 layer.
- On the document, click on the frame (Frame 1), and holding down the Shift key, drag it straight up, leaving a bit of space between the frames.



## Rotate and Resize Frame 2

- In the Layers panel, activate the Frame 2 layer.
- Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
- In the Tool Options, check Constrain Proportions. Set the Angle to 90°. Enter 5.01 inches for the Height. Click the checkmark to commit the change.



## Arrange the Frames

- In the Layers panel, activate the Frame 1 layer.
- On the document, click on the frame (Frame 1) and move it down, leaving a bit of space between the bottom of the frame, and the top of Frame 2.



- Activate Frame 3 in the Layers panel.
- On the document, click on the frame (Frame 3) and move it up, leaving a bit of space between the top of the frame and the bottom of Frame 2.



### Align the Frames

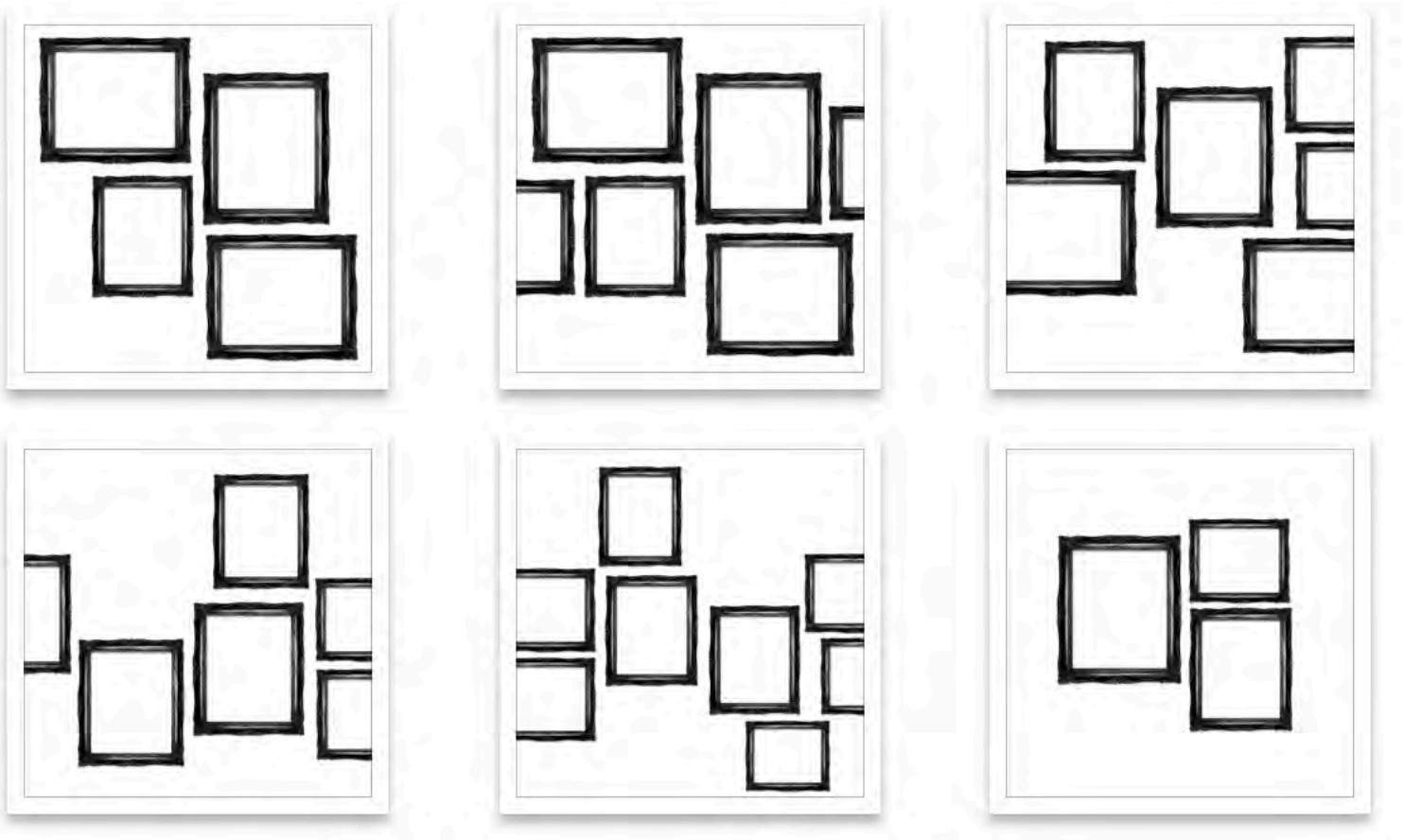
- With Frame 3 active in the Layers panel, hold down the Shift key, and click on the Frame 1 layer so that all three frames are active.
- In the Tool Options, click on the Distribute Center icon, and then click on the Distribute Middle icon.

### Apply Drop Shadows

- With the three frame layers still active, in the Menu Bar, choose Window > Styles. You should have loaded the CTY-Class-Styles earlier.
- Click on the top of the Styles panel, and drag it over to the right side of the Color Swatches panel until you see a blue highlight appear. Release the cursor to dock it.
- In the Styles panel, click on one of the shadow Styles from the class styles, I used the first style (CTY Med Shadow).



You can use the original frame on its own or come up with more photo-wall style layouts. I've included several reference images (you can find them in the CTY-Class-Files folder) that you can copy or use as inspiration for new variations.



Layout using a photo wall variation



Keep in mind that you can use this technique to extract other things from photos, such as family treasures to add to your pages. Of course, you don't have to recolor them like we did with the frame.



For future projects:

1. Search for photos on sites like [www.unsplash.com](http://www.unsplash.com).
2. Take photos of your own photo frames or other treasures.

Tips for using this technique:

- Choose photos with a clear object to extract.
- The color of the main object should not compete with the background color or other objects that are nearby.
- Avoid busy backgrounds.
- The selection tools continue to improve, so when in doubt, go ahead and try this technique on your photo. It's a super-quick process, and you may be surprised by the results.
- Depending on the object you are using, you may need different settings than we used for this project. Play with the settings until you are happy with the results.

### Save the Documents

- Save both your documents (File > Save As) as layered PSD files.
- Give the files names.

Here's what I named my files:

CTY-Frame-Master.psd (extracted frame photo document)  
CTY-Photo-Wall.psd (12x12 inch document)

- Save the documents in the class folder for this lesson. Click Save.