

Using Layered Templates in Photoshop

For this tutorial, I am using the Grunge Wildflower Layered Template available in my [Etsy store](#) and [Klikchic Designs store](#).



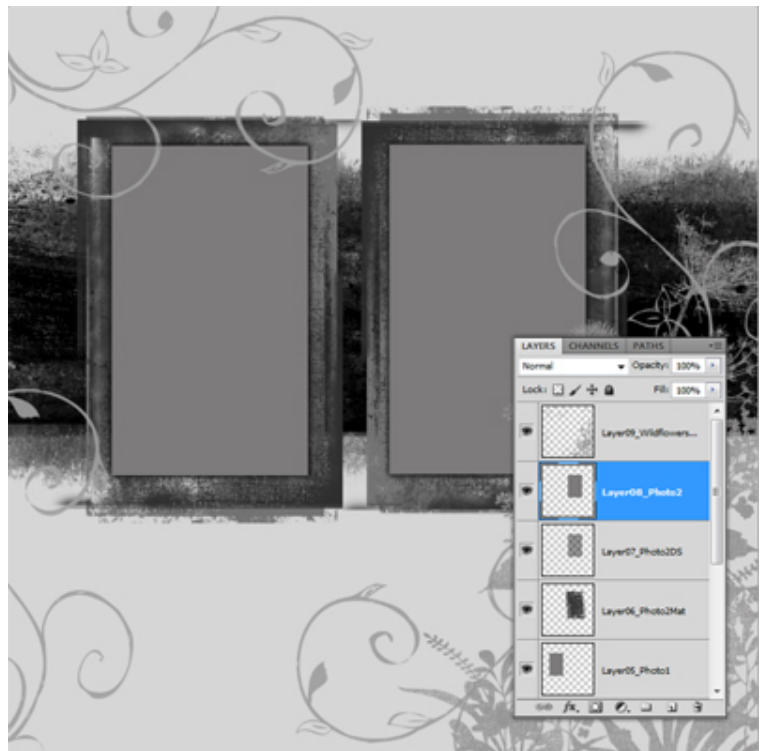
Once you have downloaded and unzipped your template, find the .psd file and open it in Photoshop. *(You might notice that there are a bunch of .png files and a layered .tif in zip file, which you don't need if you use Photoshop. They are for the people who cannot use .psd files or do not have Photoshop.)*

When you open it in Photoshop you will notice that there are several layers in your layers palette already named and ready to use.

There is no set order to do a layered template, but it helps to have a plan as to how you wish to do it. I have chosen my two photos so that will make it easier deciding which papers to use.

You may decide to put the photos in first because it will make it easier to see how those photos look with the kit you use, but you can still get an idea with your photos open in Photoshop as well as your layout in progress.

It really is up to you, how you wish to start.



I am going to begin from the bottom up, because I already have a plan in mind as to how I want to do this layout.

I have my digital paper files ready to go and I am ready to add my background.

Adding the Background

When working with layered templates, most of the time you will use clipping masks to clip your papers or photos to the pre-designed shapes. For the initial background layer, it is a simple case of selecting the bottom layer to ensure that the paper you drag onto it is placed in front of the bottom layer and behind the other elements. Then you simply have to Shift-Drag your opened paper onto the background layer. Holding down the shift key as you drag will ensure it is centred on the page automatically.

Here I have my paper over the top of the bottom layer and already you can see it looks like a layout is starting to take shape.

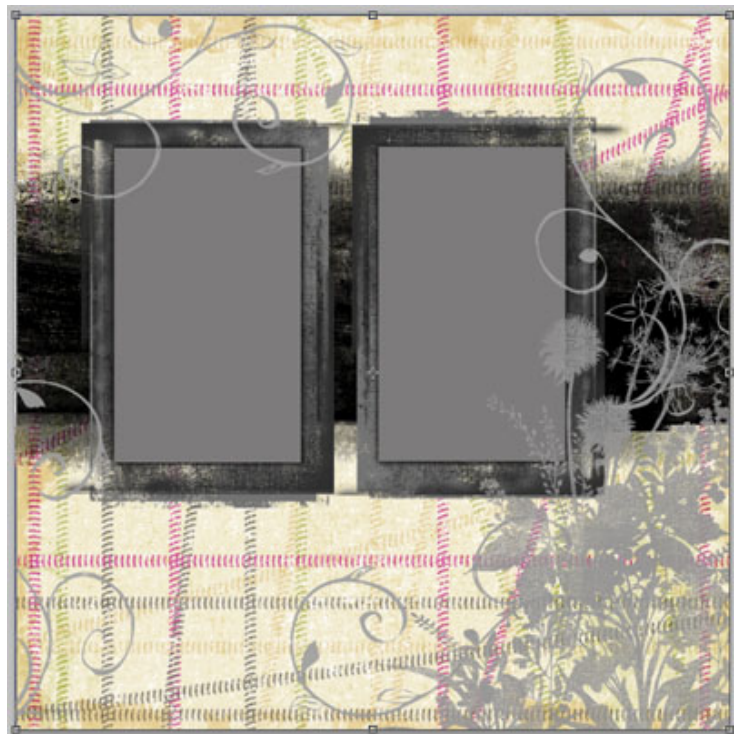
Clipping Mask

The great thing about clipping masks is that once a layer is clipped, you can rotate, resize and drag the clipped layer around to suit you. I am taking advantage of that with this clipping mask. The mask itself will remain in place as you make any adjustments to the clipped layer.

Next, I am going to clip a paper to the black grunge band behind the photo mats.

Before I drag the paper to the layout I am going to click on the Layer02_BGGrunge layer in the layers palette to ensure it is selected.

Next, I just need to once again Shift-Drag my next paper onto the layout. Having pre selected the Grunge Layer means the new paper will appear above that layer on the Layered template.



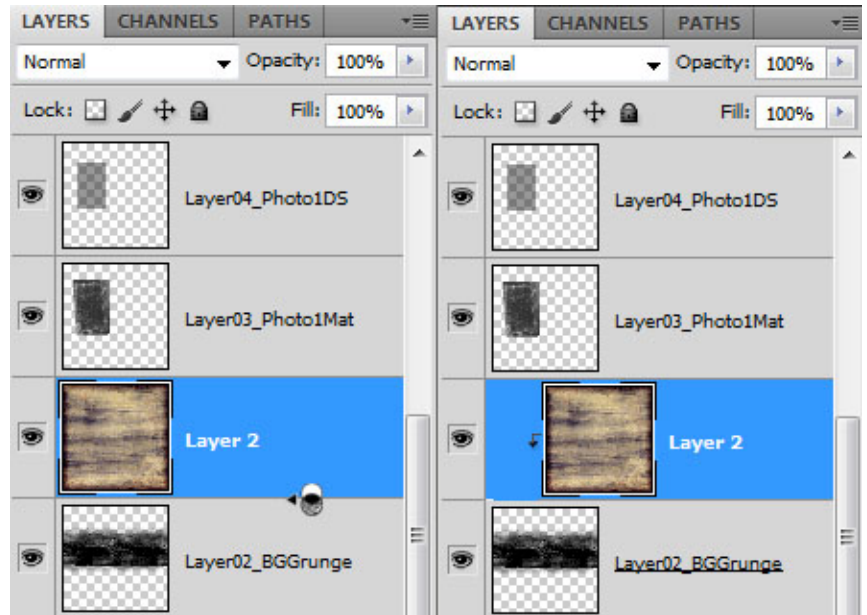
Once the new paper layer is above that layer, we need to over the mouse cursor over the line between the two layers until the cursor changes to the clipping mask symbol, which looks like two overlapping circles and a small triangle. Then you just need to click, and the paper layer will be clipped to the Grungy Band layer.

Here we have the grunge band with the grungy navy and brown paper clipped to it.

Now is a great time to save as to save your layout under a new file name, so that you don't overwrite the template file.

Now for each mat I am going to use that same background as I did for the grunge band.

First, I am going to click on the first mat to select it, and then shift-drag another copy of the navy and brown paper onto the layout. When I clip it to the mat layer because it is in the same position as the same paper clipped to the band across the page it is hard to distinguish.

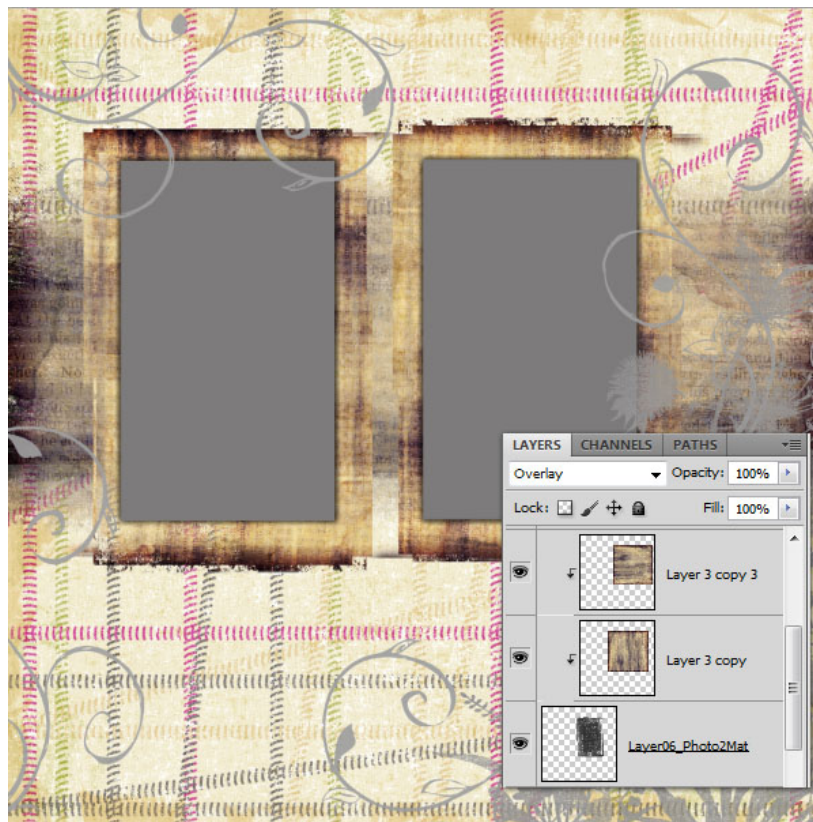
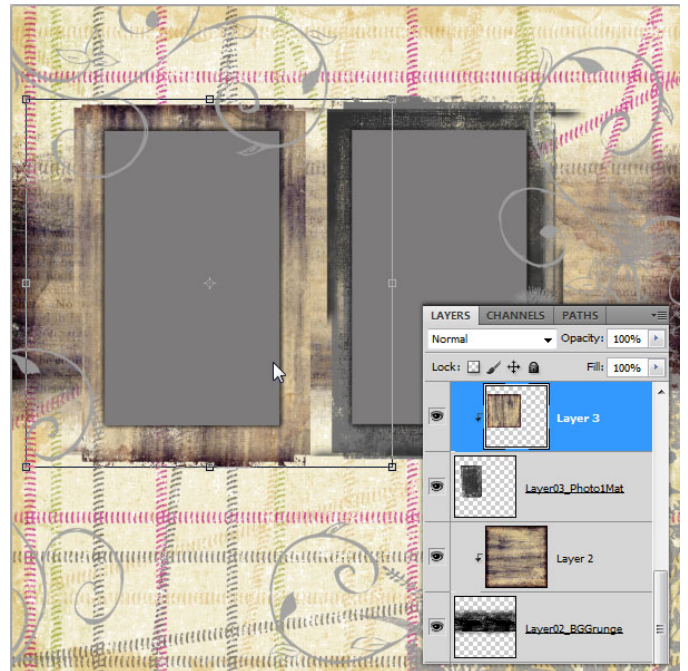


To the right you can see how I have clipped, rotated and resized the second copy of the same paper to the mat layer as the grungy band layer all while it is clipped to the mat layer.

I quite like the look here, but I am going to take it one step further and right click on the clipped layer to make a duplicate copy.

Once I have done so, I am going to rotate 90° CW again and change the blend mode to overlay.

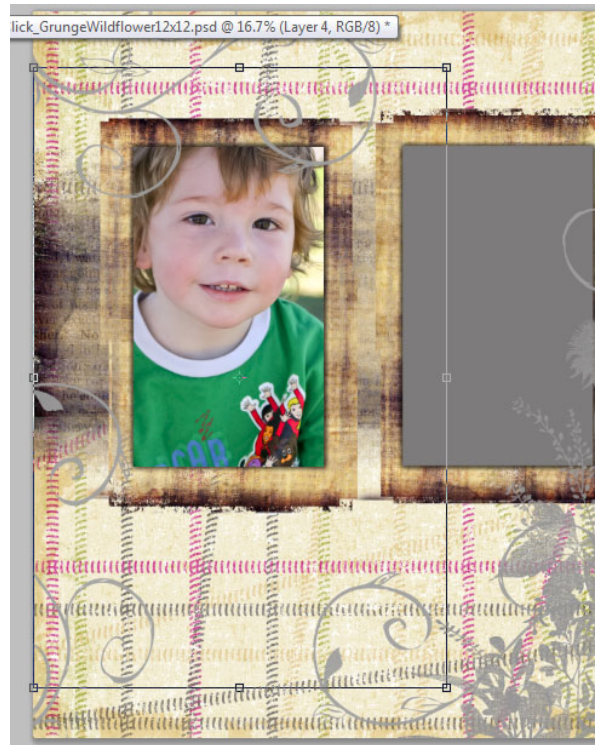
Then I am going to go ahead and do the same thing for the second photo mask. You will notice on the screenshot below that the duplicated clipped layer, which has then been rotated by 90° and blend mode changed to Overlay is now adding extra texture and makes the mat stand out a little more against the band behind it.



Placing Your Photo

I am going to add the photos next, since they are the next layers. To do that, like before, I am going to click on the first photo layer to select it after which I will drag my photo onto the layout. I am not going to worry about holding down the shift key this time, as I don't need the photo to be centred. After I have dragged the photo, onto the layout I am going to clip it to the photo Layer05_Photo1 layer as described earlier in the lesson.

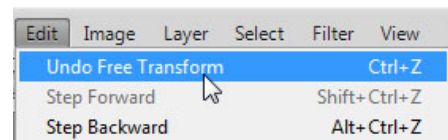
I am going to leave the resizing till it is clipped so I can move it around and resize in such a way that looks good in the size depicted on the Layered template. Now that I have clipped the photo to the photo rectangle layer, you can see by the transform controls on my layout I have quite a bit of playing room. I am going to make my photo smaller to suit the size of the clipped layer making sure to leave it big enough to fill the whole rectangle. If you make it too small, and have grey exposed, you can simply delete the clipped layer and drag the photo onto the page again. Or, let's show you Undo!



Undo

One of the best parts of Photoshop is that you can undo your errors. Like anything in Photoshop, there are multiple ways to do things. For one simple undo, you can go to Edit>Undo Free Transform. The Undo option will show whatever your last action was. If you need to go back a step further, you can go to Edit>Step Backward, which will step backward one step. As you can see on the screenshot, there is a shortcut next to the options on the menu.

You can press Ctrl/Optn+Z to undo the last action, or Alt+Ctrl/Opt+Z to step backward. It will be Ctrl for a PC or Optn for a Mac.



Resizing Photos

Remember, when resizing photos to constrain proportions so as not to have a squished or stretched person on your photo! To constrain proportions, hold down the shift key while resizing or check the maintain aspect ratio box on your toolbar.

On my layout below you can see I have resized my photo and moved it to sit perfectly within the photo rectangle which the photo is clipped to. I am now ready to go ahead and clip my second photo to the second photo layer.

Once I have added my second photo using the methods described above, I am going to clip another paper to the Wildflower layer.

I now want to add journaling and since my background layer has quite a busy pattern I have made a new layer of vellum to make my text easier to read.

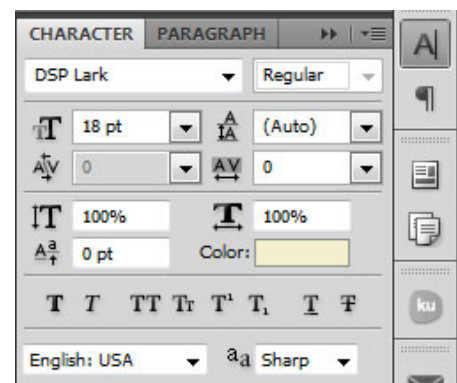


Journaling Text Box

Typing text is a little different to typing a title as we want it to fit within a certain shape and there is going to be a lot more words. We will leave the page zoomed in to the Vellum because that is where we are going to do our typing. Instead of just a click to select our position and type; we are going to click and drag with the text tool to create a box to type in.



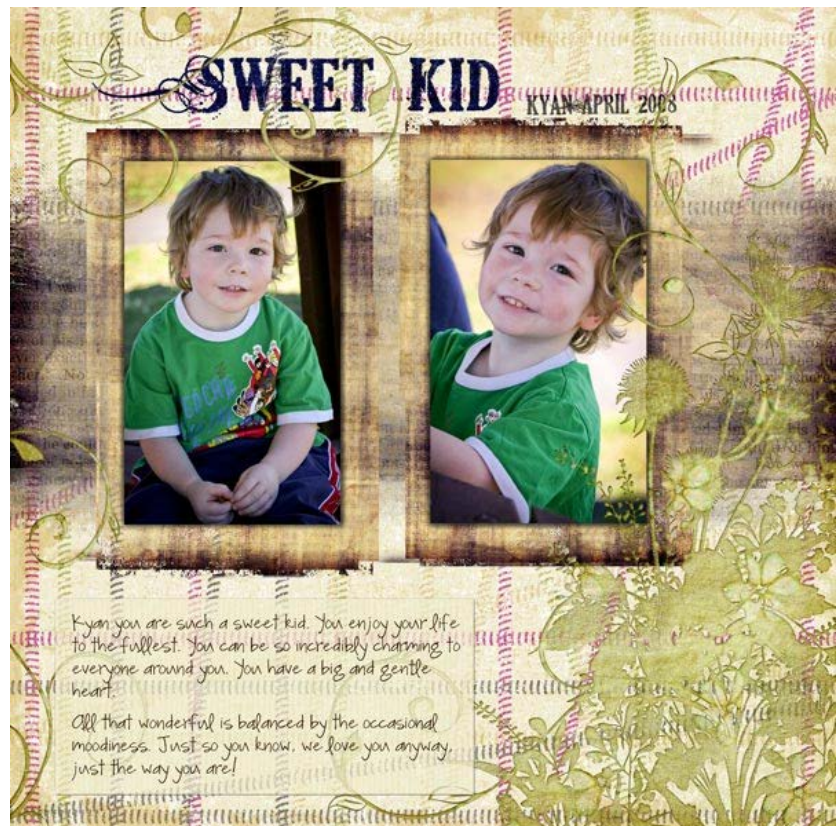
We now have a bounding box where we can type our text, at the top left you can see a small line where my cursor is blinking and this box can be adjusted if it isn't quite the right size. I like to use the Character Palette on the Palette toolbar when I am doing journaling because it makes it easier to adjust my options as I go. As you can see on my Character Palette, my text colour is set to cream which will not work against a cream background. I can click on that colour to use the colour picker and change my text colour.



I can also fine tune my journaling such as the distance between lines (Leading), and between letters (Kerning). If you click on the paragraph tab you have further adjustment options such as alignment and hyphenation. Hyphenation is checked by default and in most instances, you will want this to be unchecked.

There are also options on Character for faux bold, italic etc for when your chosen font does not have those options included in the options bar. Depending on the font you use, getting the journaling to fit how you want it can take a bit of tweaking but it is worth fiddling with the controls at your disposal to get it looking the way you want. If your journaling extends beyond the bounds of your text box, the bottom right square on the bounding box will change, this is to indicate that you need to increase the box to contain all the text. You will probably need to do that to reduce the text size so that it fits, and you can then reduce the bounding box size after you have done that.

Now all that is left is to title and date the page and my layout is done! To create titles, I usually just click the text tool and start typing instead of creating a text box first. You can again then change the type settings in the Character Palette as before.



Here is a layout done with the same template and my Floral Fancy Digital Scrapbook Kit available in my [Etsy store](#) and [Clikchic Designs store](#).

I hope you enjoyed this tutorial and find it helpful to enable you to create layouts using layered templates.



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