



Quick Pages for PS/PSE: The Hard Way

by LaWanna Desjardin

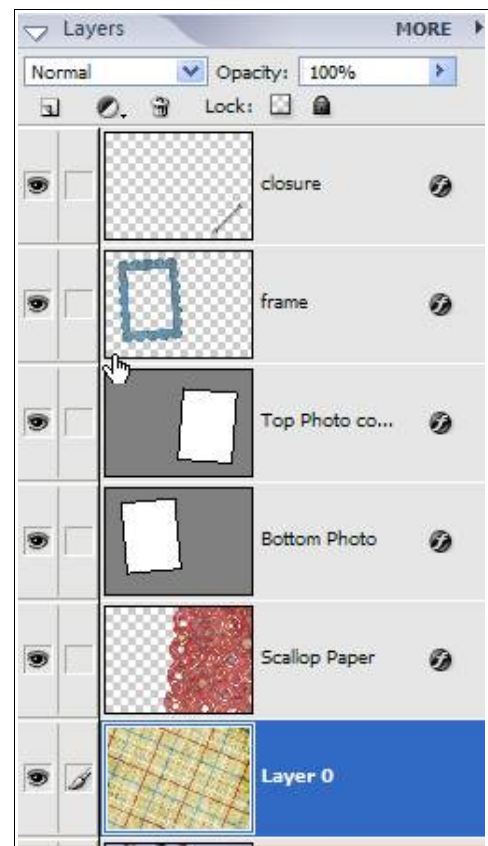
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I have another tutorial for Quick Page Entitled Quick Pages for PS/PSE: *The Easy Way*. It's easy because it employs one of the best and simplest features of Photoshop and Photoshop Elements, the **cntrl+clicking** on the layer thumbnail to select the entire layer. Don't ask me why, but I wondered how to do the same things without this feature. It is a little more tedious but it can be done. Here's how.

1. First you need to build your page. For this tutorial, I'm make a 5X7 Quick Page that could be used as part of a brag book. However, instead of a photo I'm using a photo sized rectangle as a place holder for the photo. Notice that I've made the placeholders a contrasting color. This will come in handy in the last steps.

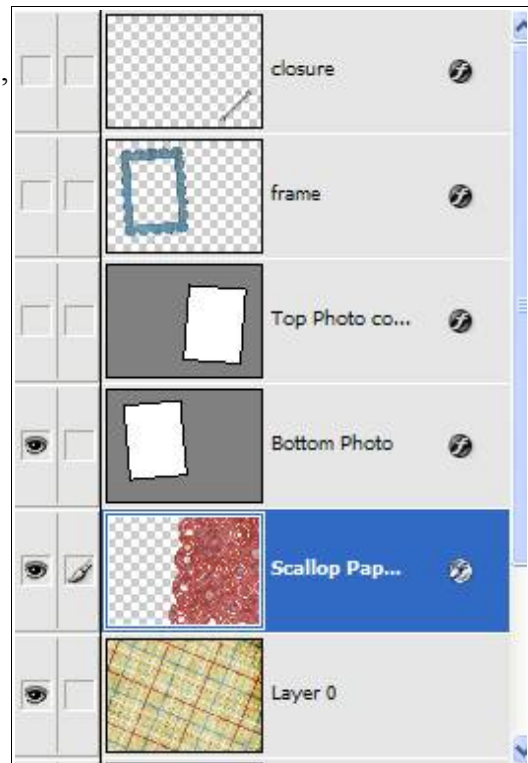
It's best not to simplify/rasterize anything at this point and to leave all your layers intact. Here is my layout as well as my layers.



2. When you create your own layout, make note of all the layers that are above your photo place holder(s). This will be important in the final steps.

These layers will include any frames, photo corners, some ribbons, etc. Anything that will appear to be on top of the photo in the finished page. It might even include other photos.

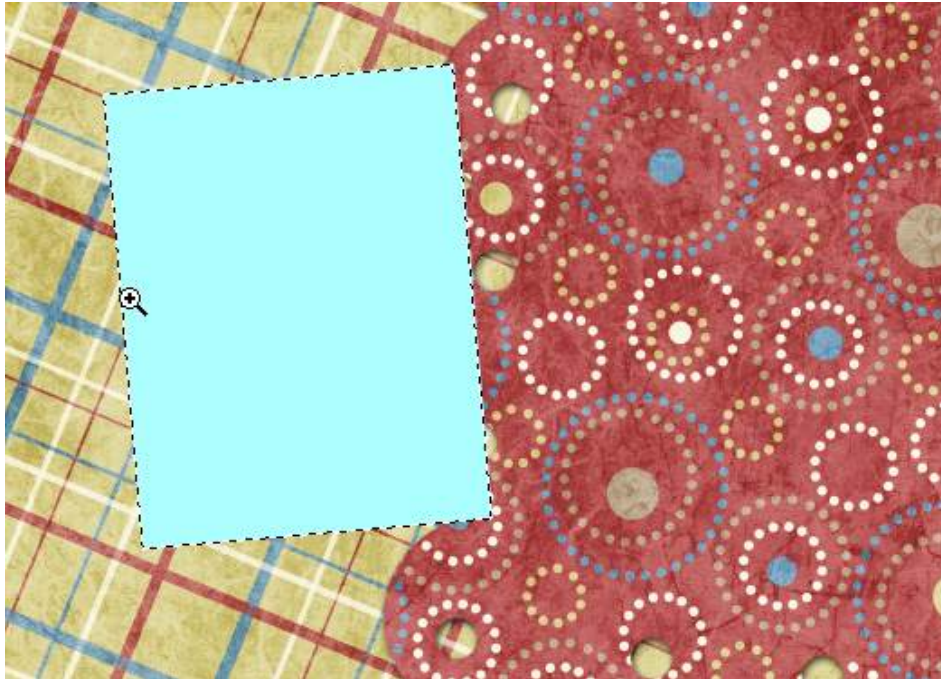
3. Now you are going to begin to flatten the page. But before we do, to preserve the original psd. Document, you may want to duplicate the image by going to File>Duplicate. You may also want to give the duplicate a new name.
4. In the Easy version of this tutorial, we used selections to cut out the photo places. We are going to do the same thing in this tutorial, but using a different – and yes, a harder – method.
5. First we need to hide all the layers that fall above the photo placeholders. Otherwise, when we select and delete the placeholders parts of the upper layers will be erased too. Find each of the layers that fall above the placeholders. For this layout, because one of the photos is without a frame, we are going to do one placeholder at a time, instead of selecting them together. So also, you need to hide the topmost placeholder. The layers and canvas will look like this.



6. Now we are going to make our selection. In the toolbar, choose the magic wand tool. Look in the options bar, and make sure the following settings are selected. You may need to adjust the tolerance if the placeholder does not contrast enough with the background papers, but it's easiest just to adjust the color of the shape.



7. Now click the placeholder, this should put marching ants around the placeholder. Check to make sure that only the placeholder is selected. If the selection falls elsewhere on the page, you may need to adjust the color of the placeholder or lower the tolerance settings in the options bar.

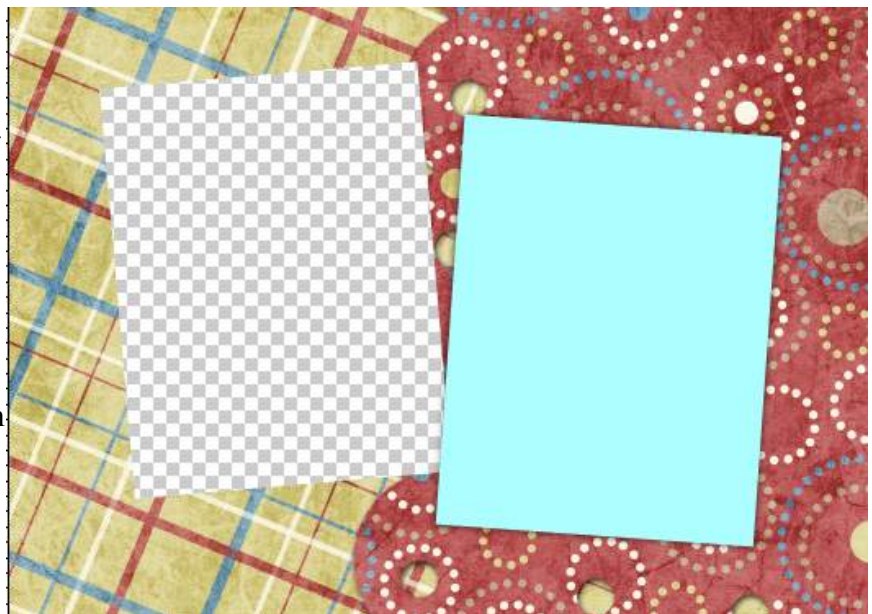


8. Now go to Layer>Merge Visible. Then hit delete on the keyboard. The shape will disappear leaving a transparent area for the photo.

That was easy enough but what about the next layer. It will require a few more steps because it contains shadows that need to be retained for a realistic look.

9. Turn on the visibility for next layer and only that layer. You will see that there is a shadow applied to the layer. That's because in reality I want the photo to look like it's laying on top of the layout. I need to cut out a hole for this photo while leaving the style in tact.

Using this method of selection is a little tricky, because the magic wand tool selects pixels based on color and it's likely that the shadow is going to throw things off, if not in this example then in the future. Some problems include jagged edges along the

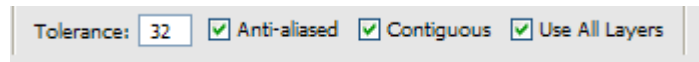


transparent photo areas and semi-transparency in the same areas.

So, what we're going to do is hide the layer style, select the photo with the magic wand tool and then turn the style back on.

10. Go to Layer>Layer Style>Hide all Effects. This will just hide the styles without clearing them.

11. Now choose the magic wand. Make sure the options look like this:



Click the photo placeholder, putting marching ants around it.

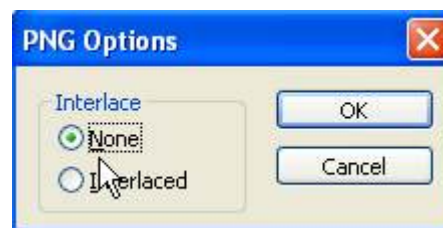
12. Now turn the styles back on - Layer>Layer Style>Show All Effects.

13. Now merge the visible layers by choosing Layer>Merge Visible. Hit delete to delete the photo area, leaving a transparent area. Notice the shadows are still there.



14. Now all that's left to do to complete the page is to turn the visibility on for the remaining layers.

Save the image as a PNG file. When the following box appears, choose None under Interlaced.



That's it!