

Grungy Border Element with the Gradient Tool

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by Jenifer Juris



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Dress up a simple background paper with a grungy border element custom made by you. The Magic Wand and Gradient tools make this technique simple and fun.

For this tutorial you'll need:

- A patterned background paper
- Photoshop Elements or Adobe Photoshop

If you'd like to follow along exactly, [download the paper I'm using here](#).

One tip before you get started is to be careful which patterned background paper you use. Not all patterns work well for this. Look for patterned background papers that have good contrast and crisp edges.

Step One: Prepare the Workspace

- Open a patterned background paper (File > Open).
- In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate to create a copy. (PS: Choose Image > Duplicate).
- In the dialog box, click OK.
- Close the original paper file.

- [illegible]

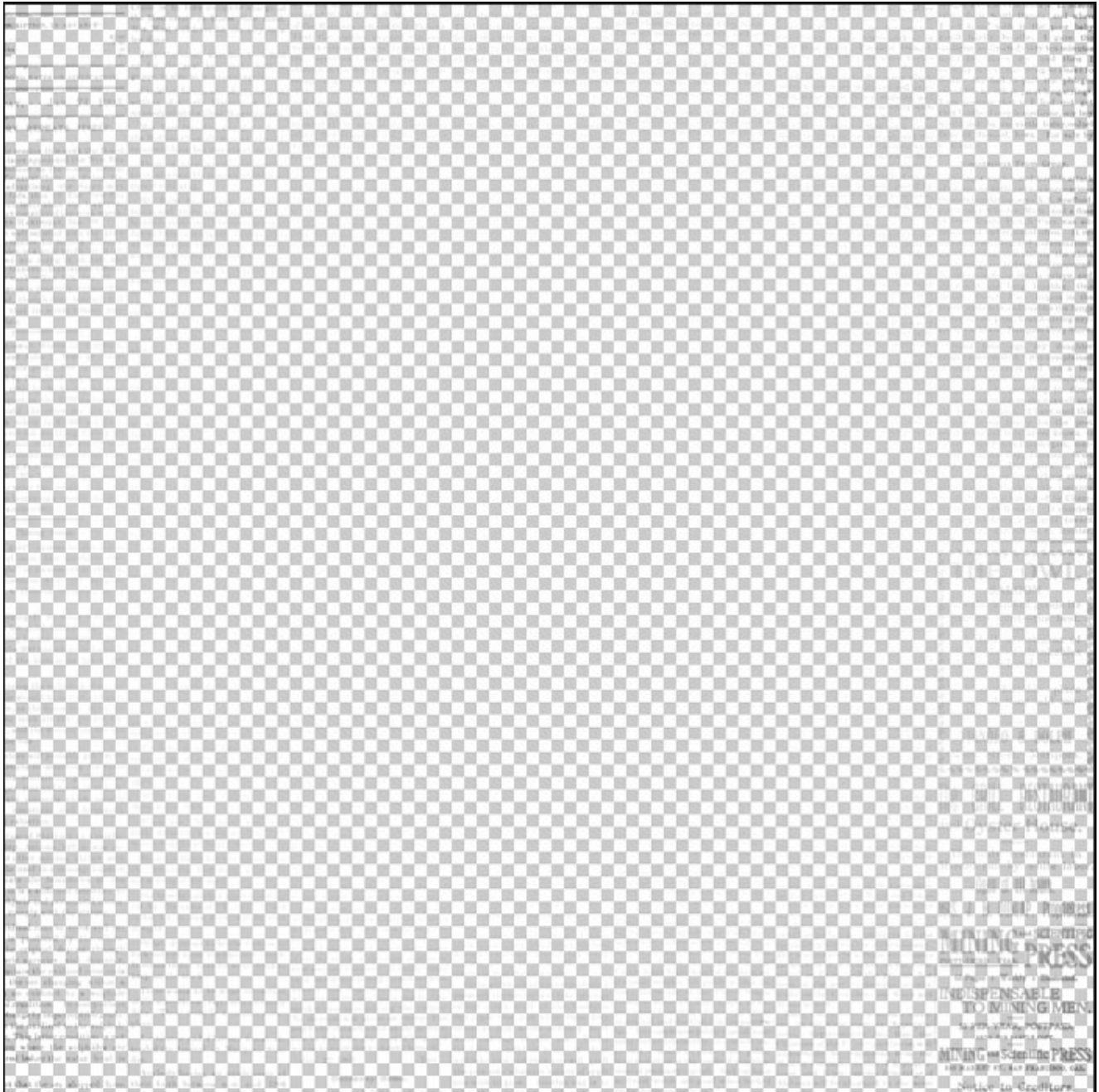
- Get the Gradient tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Gradient Picker and choose Foreground to Transparent.

Note: If you do not see Foreground to Transparent, open the menu and choose Default. Then, open the flyout menu and choose Large List. (PS: Open the menu and choose Reset Gradients. Click OK. Then, open the flyout menu and choose Large List.)

- In the Tool Options, set the Mode to Normal and the Opacity to 100%. Check Transparency and Dither, but uncheck Reverse. Click on the Radial Gradient icon.
- In the Layers panel, click on the Add Layer Mask icon.
- Black should be the Foreground Color Chip. If it isn't, press the letter X.
- On the document, click and drag from the center of the document outward to beyond the boundary of the document.
- Repeat this last step one to two more times.

NOTE: If you want to remove a little more of the pattern, extend the radial gradient even further beyond the edge of the document.

Once what is left of the pattern is to your liking, in the Layers panel, Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the Layer Mask icon and choose Apply Layer Mask.



Step Four: Save the Document

Save the document (File > Save As) as a PNG file with a unique name.

NOTE: Saving this as a PNG preserves the transparent background.

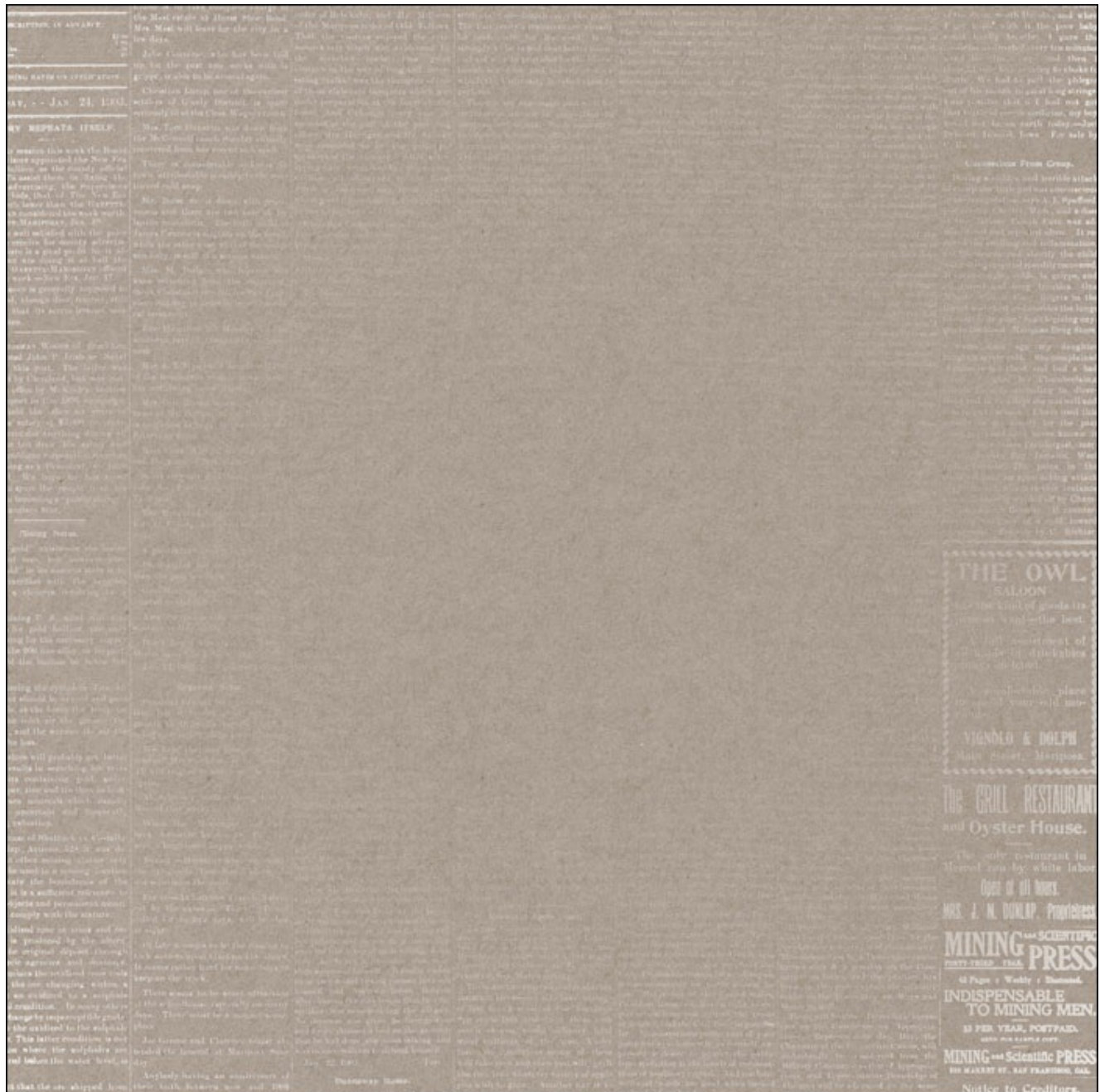
Step Five: Add to a Solid Paper

- Open a solid background paper (File > Open).
- Get the Move tool.
- On the grungy border element document, hold down the Shift key and click and drag the grungy border element onto the solid background paper.

Change the Color (Optional)

- Click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker.
- In the Color Picker, sample the color you wish to use and click OK. I'm using white.
- In the Layers panel, make sure your grungy border element layer is the active layer.
- Press Shift Alt Backspace (Mac: Shift Opt Delete) to change the element to the foreground color.

Here's how I used this grungy border element (after I changed it to white) with a solid background paper:



More Examples:

Here are a few more examples for you to look at. I want you to see how versatile this technique can be.

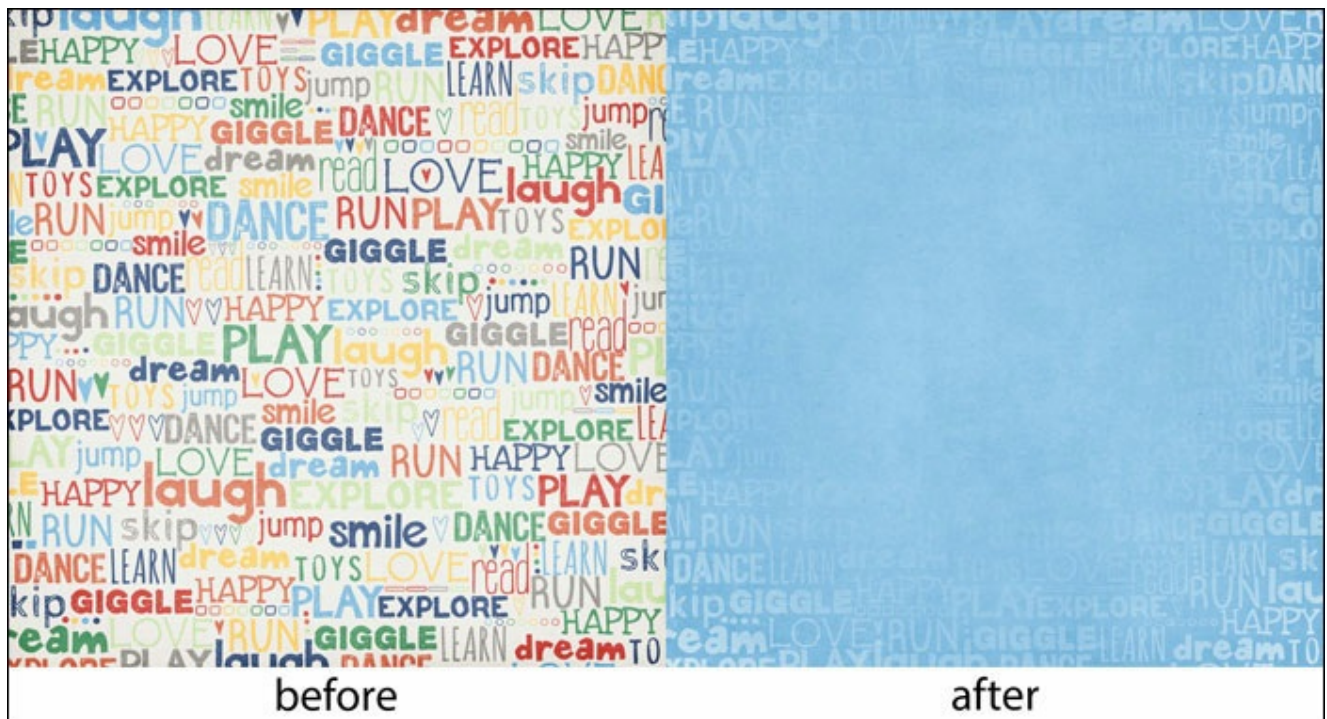
Example 1:

Here is the paper I started with next to the grungy border element I made and used on a solid paper.



Example 2:

Here is the second paper I started with next to the grungy border element I made and used on a solid paper.



Example 3:

Here is the third paper I started with next to the grungy border element I created and placed on an artsy style paper.



Last, let me show you how I used my original paper in a scrapbook page. Here it is BEFORE I added the grungy border element:



And here is it AFTER:



It really does take the page from good to great. It looks more finished and has more visual interest without taking away from the main event – the photo.

Credits:

Page & Photo: Jenifer Juris

Kit: Memory Keeper by Kim B Designs

Fonts: Bebas Neue

Example 1 Papers from the kit Time Teller by Etc by Danyale

Example 2 Papers from the kit Carefree by Amanda Heimann

Example 3 Papers from the kit Christas Chic by Studio New Life Designs



Selections 1: Master the Basics

If you've ever wished you were better at selecting something out of a photo or if you've ever envied the artistic effects of scrapbookers who use selections well, now's your chance to expand your skills!

Learn more about Selections 1 for [Photoshop Elements](#) or [Adobe Photoshop](#).

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