

# Realistically Shadowed Paperclip



## Realistically Shadowed Paperclip

by Jen White

Realistically attaching a paperclip to a piece of paper or a photo is not hard, it's just a matter of making sure to get the shadowing right.

### For this tutorial you will need:

- A photo
- A paperclip
- Photoshop Elements or Adobe Photoshop

[Download the photo and paperclip I'm using.](#)

### Prepare Your Workspace

Create a new 12 x 12 inch document (File > New > Blank File) at 300 ppi with a white background. (PS: Choose File > New.)

Open a photo (File > Open). The photo I'm using is included in the download.

Get the Move tool.

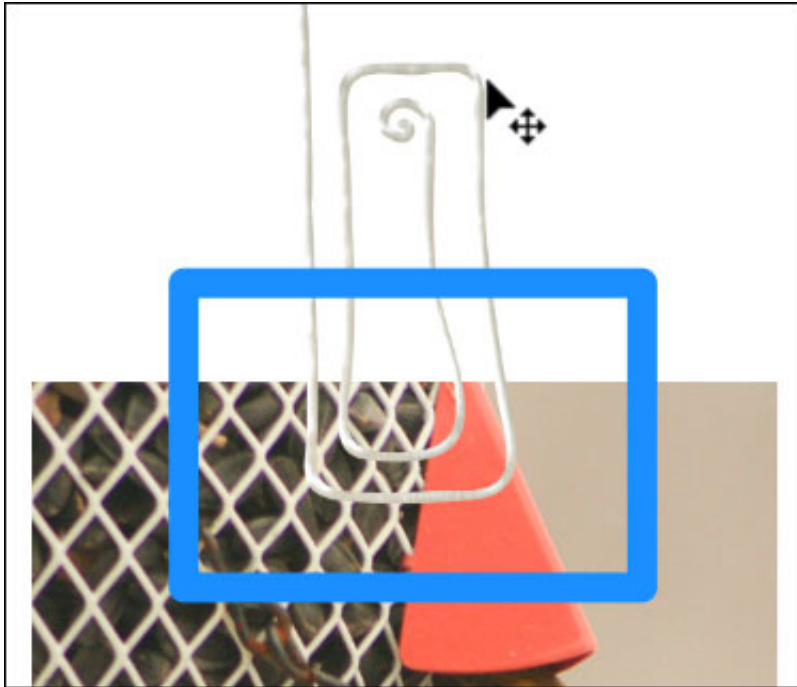
On the document, hold down the Shift key and click and drag the photo onto the new document.

Open a paperclip. The paperclip I'm using is included in the download.

On the document, hold down the Shift key and click and drag the paperclip onto the new document.

To zoom into the document, press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +).

On the document, click and drag directly on the paperclip to reposition it as shown, where the bottom two wires are overlapping the photo.



### **Add a Shadow to the Photo**

In the Layers panel, click on the photo layer to activate it.

#### **Photoshop Elements Only:**

In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Layer Style > Style Settings.

In the dialog box, set the Lighting Angle to 120°.

Click on Drop Shadow to open the settings.

Set the Size to 8, the Distance to 5, and the Opacity to 50.

Click OK to close the Style Settings dialog box.

#### **Adobe Photoshop Only:**

In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Layer Style > Drop Shadow.

In the dialog box, set the Blend Mode to Multiply, the Opacity to 50%, the Angle to 120°, the Distance to 5, the Spread to 0, and the Size to 8.

Click OK to close the Layer Style dialog box.



### **Mask the Paperclip**

In the Layers panel, click on the paperclip layer to activate it.

Click on the Add Layer Mask icon.

Holding down the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key) click on the thumbnail of the photo layer to get a selection outline around the photo.

Get the Brush tool.

In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker and choose a Hard Round brush from the Default Brushes. (PS: Choose a Hard Round brush from the Legacy Brushes.)

Set the Opacity to 100% and the Mode to Normal.

To zoom into the document, press Ctrl + (Mac: Cmd +).

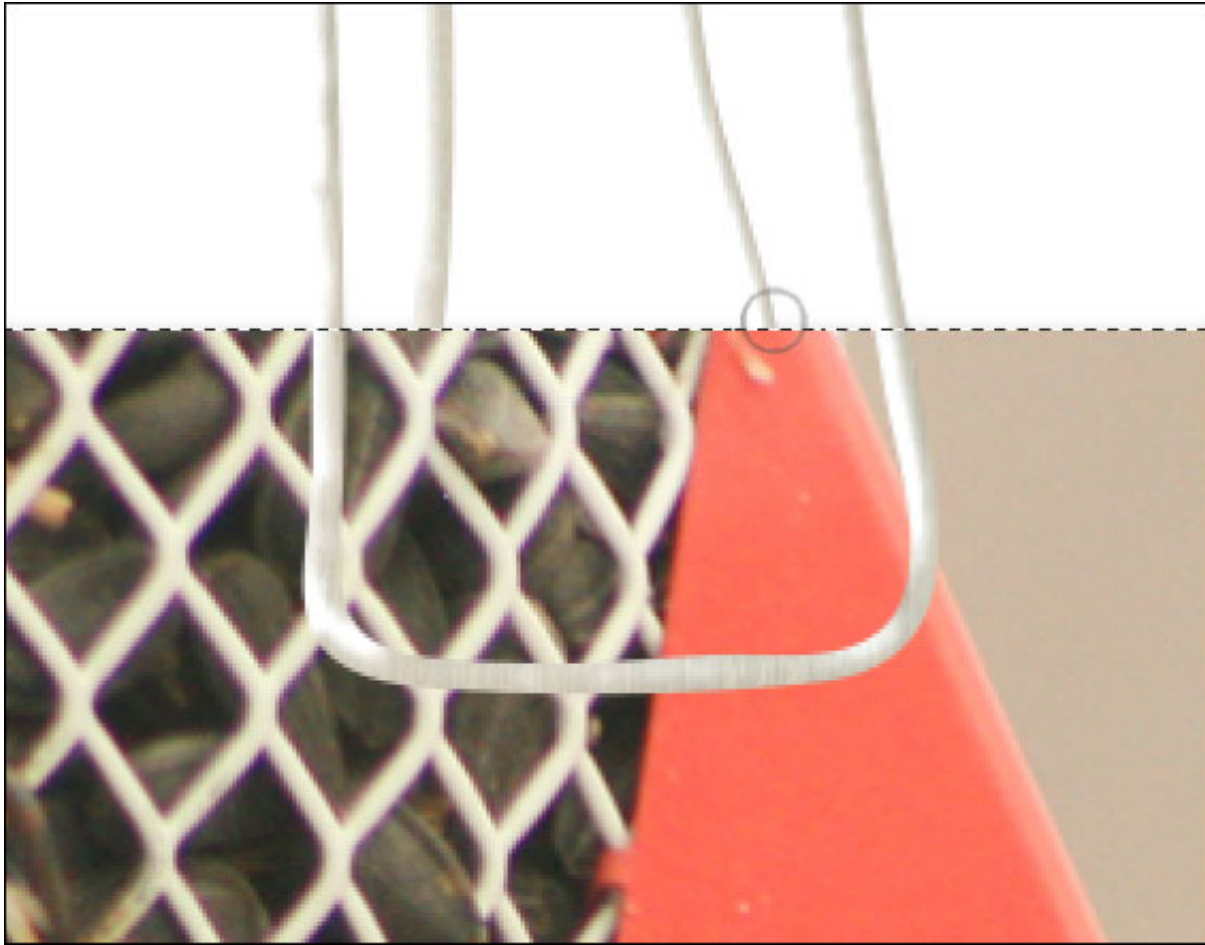
To reposition the zoom, press and hold the Space bar and click and drag on the document.

Press the Left or Right Bracket key to resize the brush so that it is twice as wide as the wire of the clip.

The Foreground Color Chip should be black. If it's not, press the letter X.

In the Layers panel, click on the layer mask of the paperclip layer to make sure it's active.

On the document, click and drag to hide the inside wire of the paperclip.



Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to deselect.  
To zoom out, press Ctrl - (Mac: Cmd -).

### **Add a Custom Shadow to the Paperclip**

In the Layers panel, click on the thumbnail of the paperclip layer to make it active.  
Holding down the Alt key (Mac: Opt key) click and drag a duplicate paperclip layer below the original.

Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the layer mask of the paper clip layer and choose Apply Layer Mask.

Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips.

Press Shift Alt Backspace (Mac: Shift Opt Delete) to fill the pixels of the current layer with black.

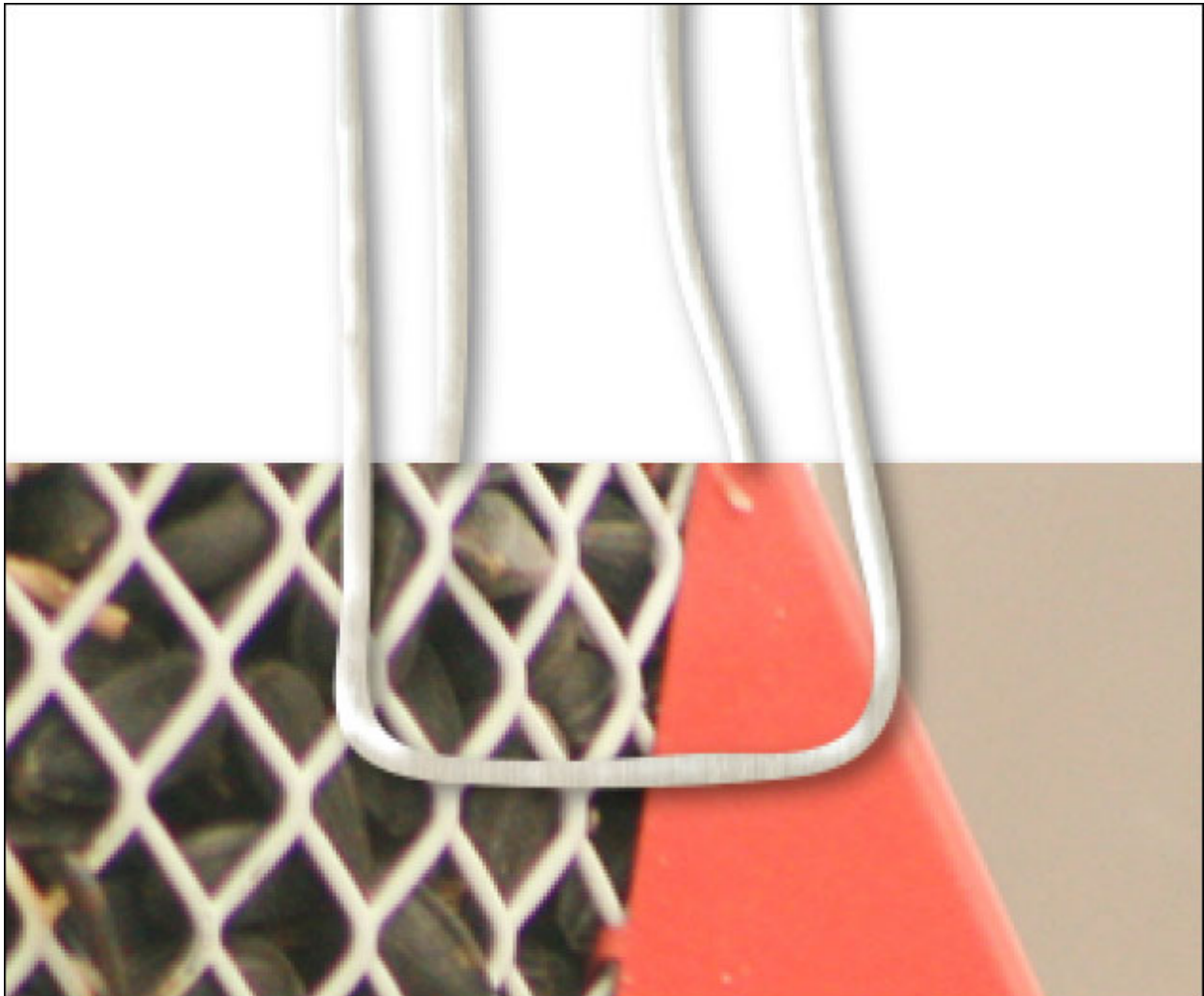
In the Menu Bar, choose Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur.

In the dialog box, set the Radius to 3 px and click OK.

Get the Move tool.

Use your Arrow keys to nudge the shadow down and to the right.

In the Layers panel, lower the Opacity to 50%.

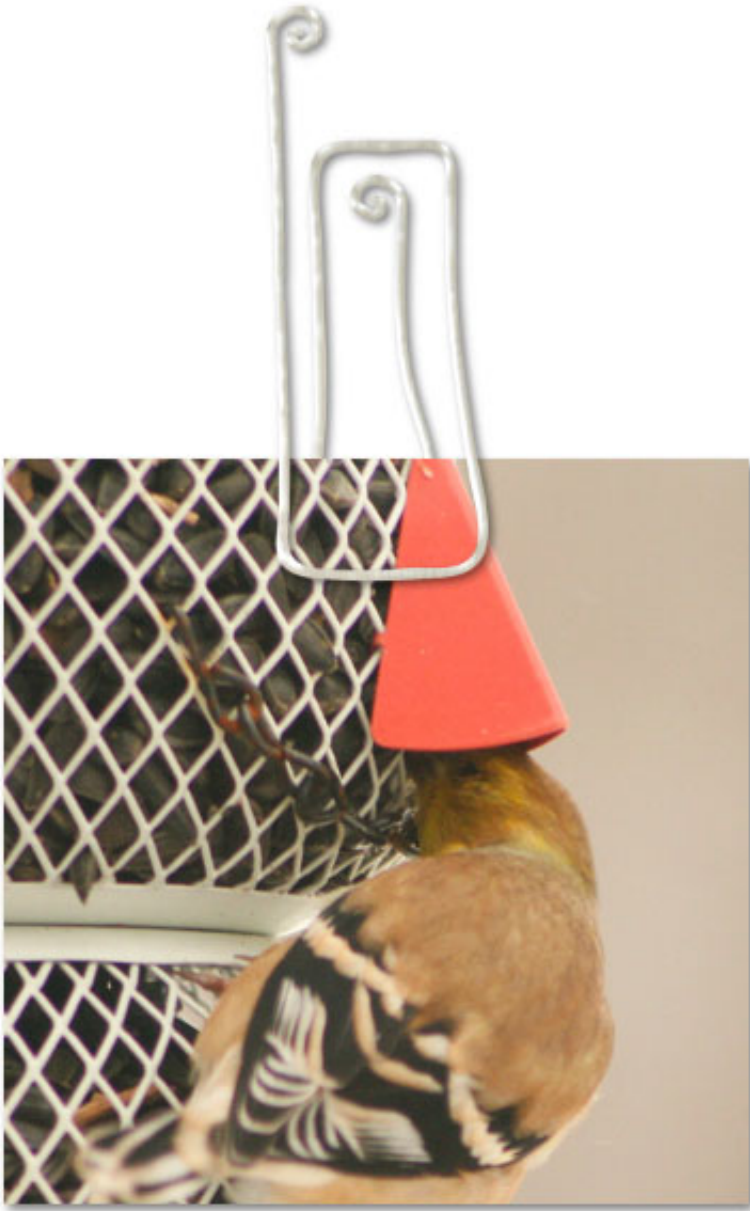


### **Mask the Drop Shadow**

In the Layers panel, hold down the Alt key (Mac: Opt key) and click and drag a copy of the layer mask from the paperclip layer to the shadow layer.









#### Credits:

Page: Nosey Finch by Jen White

Photos: Jen White

Kit: Farmhouse Style by Melissa Renfro

Font: DJB Annalise

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- In our Classroom.



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