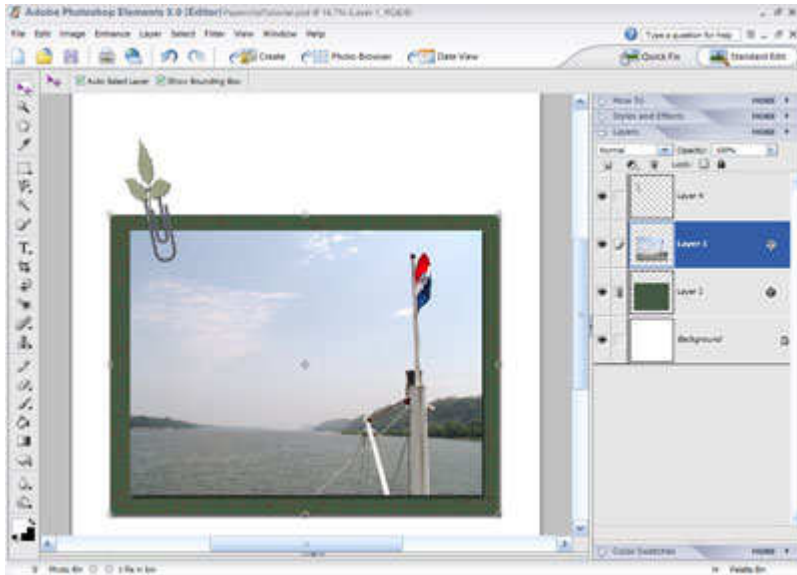


Paperclip Tutorial

By Hummie

One of the most asked questions by new digital scrapbookers is how to place a paperclip onto a layout so that it appears to go in front of and behind the photograph and/or mat.

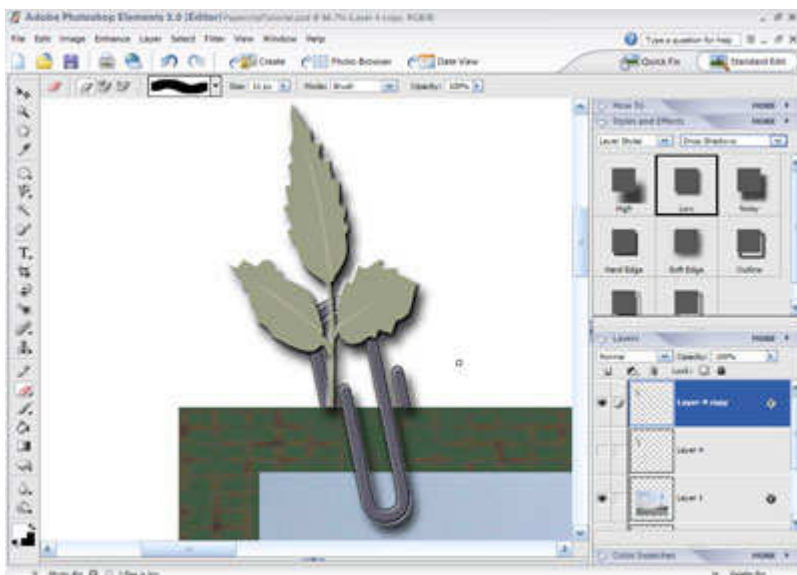
It is much easier than you would imagine.



First, place the paper clip in position over the mat and photo (or whatever you are clipping), turning it as needed.

Next, I would recommend that the paperclip layer be duplicated and then one of the layers be made invisible (with the eye in the layer's palette) for safe keeping, just in case of a mess up and do-over.

Use the control key and the plus key on the numeric keyboard to zoom in to the paperclip.



Click on the eraser tool in the tool bar to activate it.

Select a hard brush, preferably a square brush, so that clean lines may be obtained along the paper's edge.

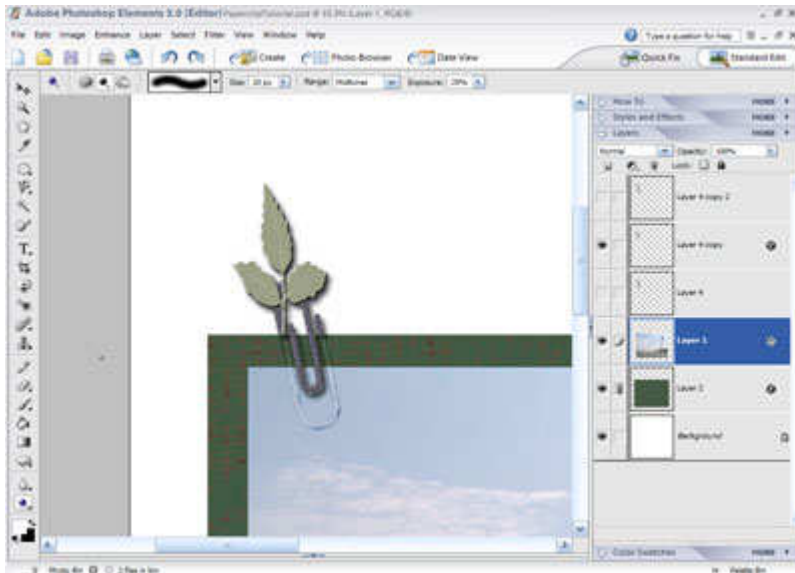
Use the [key and the] key to resize the eraser brush so that it is just big enough to cover one section of paperclip wire, or less.

Observe the paperclip and imagine which part of the clip in real life would go in front of the paper and mat and which part would go in the back. Of course, it really does not matter as they are used both ways; however, I believe that the larger wire is more often placed behind papers.

The area that you decide to place behind the papers is the area that is erased. Drag the eraser tool with the mouse over the parts of the wire that are behind to paper. Note that the part of the wire above the mat and photo is always visible and not erased.

Be sure to apply a drop shadow.

For me, the paperclip looks great at this point and I would stop. However, there is another additional step that will make the clip even more realistic.



First, duplicate the reserved paperclip layer once again and drag it to the layer on top. Lower the opacity of this layer so as to be able to see where you erased the paperclip on the applicable layer. I have applied opacity of 30%. This layer with the reduced opacity will only be used as a guide and be deleted at the end.

Next, make a selection with the opacity-lowered paperclip by holding down the control key and clicking on the layer (see the marching ants?). This selection will enable you to keep the burn and dodge brush within bounds without hassle.

Activate the dodge tool (directly above the foreground/background on the tool bar on the left of the desktop, then change the options bar at the top as it toggles between burn, dodge, and sponge). Adjust the size of the dodge brush so it is about one-half the size of the paperclip wire.

Using the mouse, with the mat layer as the active layer, draw down the middle of the paperclip area on the mat where it was erased. When finished, make the photo layer as the active layer and draw on it. The dodge tool will lighten the area it draws on, thereby creating the highlighted area that would be caused by the paperclip on the backside of the mat and photo pushing upward.

Next, use the burn tool in the same manner, drawing along both outer edges. It does not need to be exact as the bump is likely to be crinkled anyway. The burn tool will darken the areas as a shadow of the bump caused by the backside of the paperclip.

Press Control D to deselect and click on the eye to make the top paperclip layer invisible.

In my sample here, you will note that the it appears as if the paperclip made a big impression in the paper. To make it more subtle, I would suggest changing the exposure of the dodge and burn tools to approximately 25% (rather than the default 50% which I used in this sample).