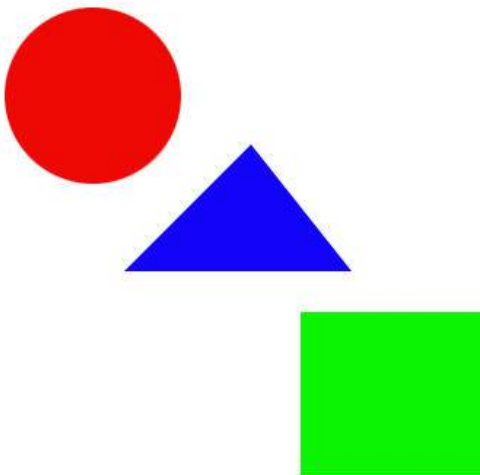


Photoshop Elements SIG - November 9, 2005
by John Durrett - SIG Co-lead

Using Layer Styles

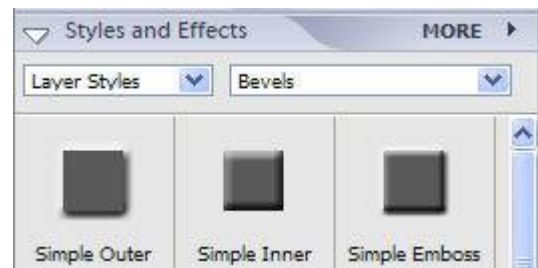
Layer Styles are useful when you want to add special effects to the objects on individual layers. Start this exercise by creating a new file of 500 x 500 pixels at 72 dpi. Create three new layers and name them Circle, Triangle, and Square (to name a layer, just double click on the layer's name and type in the new name). Now, make the Circle layer the active layer (click on that layer) and select the Elliptical Marquee tool. While holding down the Shift key, click and drag out a circle. Pick a nice red color for the Foreground color and fill the circle. You can fill the circle using either the Paint Bucket or by typing the two-stroke key combination Alt+Backspace.

Make the triangle layer active and draw a triangle using the Polygonal Lasso Tool. Fill this triangle with a blue color. Next, click on the Square layer and use the Rectangular Marquee Tool and the Shift key to draw the square. Fill this square selection with green. You should have a drawing that looks like this.



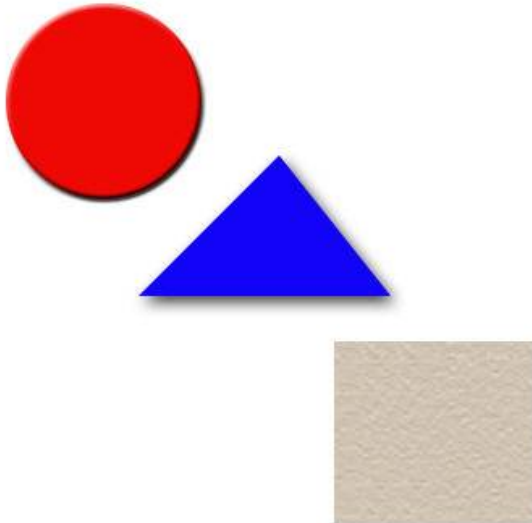
Be sure to save your file as a PSD file. Now for the fun.

From the menu, select Window > Styles & Effects (this adds a check mark). Your Styles & Effect palette should open right above your layers palette. Click on the first drop-down menu and select Layer Styles. Click on the second drop-down menu and select Bevels. Your palette should look like this.



Click on the Circle layer in your layers palette and then click on Simple Emboss in the Styles and Effects palette. Notice how your red circle picks up extra definition from the edging and shadow effect. Now make the Triangle layer active. Go up to the Styles & Effects Palette and select Drop Shadows for the second drop-down menu. Then click on the Soft Edge icon. Notice how your blue triangle picks up a soft shadow. Next, activate the square layer and select Patterns for your Layer Style. Go down the Patterns icons until you find Painted Wallboard and click on that. See how the green color has disappeared and the square is filled with a cream-colored wallboard texture. This is a reminder that some of the Layer Styles available will enhance or slightly modify the

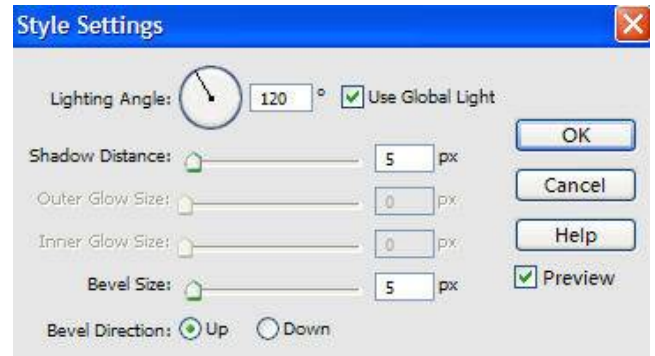
color of the object and other styles will totally replace the color with a color scheme and texture of their own. You have to experiment to find a combination that is pleasing to you. Your figure should look like the following.



Layer Styles are Additive

You can add one style to another. Make sure your Square layer is active and go up to Layer Styles and select the Drop Shadows menu option. Find the Low icon and click on that to apply the Low shadow to the square. Let's add another effect to the square. Choose Bevels from the menu and add the style for Simple Sharp Inner.

You can also adjust the Layer Style settings. Note that each of the figure layers in the Layers palette has an icon on the right with a cursive f on it. This icon can be used to change the Layer style settings applied to an individual layer. Double click on the f icon on the Square layer. We can now change the angle of the shadow, the distance of the shadow and the size of the bevel.



Let's double the dimensions to 10 pixels. Note what happens to the square when we do this. The result is shown below.



Text Tips

Judy DiFrancesco talked last month about adding text on photos. This month I want to introduce you to some tips on using text and how to apply Layer Styles to text. We will continue with the same figure we built in the first part of the lesson. Let's add the text "Red" to the red circle. Click on the Circle layer to make it the active layer. Then click on the T for the Horizontal Type Tool in the tool bar. At the top of the tool bar is a row of options for the text. Select Comic Sans MS for the kind of type, a size 18 font, and make your text color the same color blue as your triangle. Move your cursor over the red circle and click. This places the start of a line of text over the circle and opens a new Text layer in the layer palette above the Circle layer. Type the word Red, and reposition the text to center it over the circle.

Suppose you don't like the style of the font you used. First highlight the text (Red) by double-clicking on it. Then go up to the option bar and click to highlight the name of the current font family. Then use the up and down arrows on your keyboard to change the font family. Notice how you can continue to change the font and see the effect on the words immediately. You can also use this same technique to change the size of the font.

Now you can add other special layer styles. With your text layer still active, add a drop shadow to the text by selecting Layer Styles and Drop Shadows in the Styles & Effects Palette. I like the Low shadow effect for this application. I also like adding a Simple Outer Glow. Here's what I get for the Red circle.



You can continue on with this example to add words to your triangle and square, and I recommend you do this on your own. I want to switch to another text application using curved text.

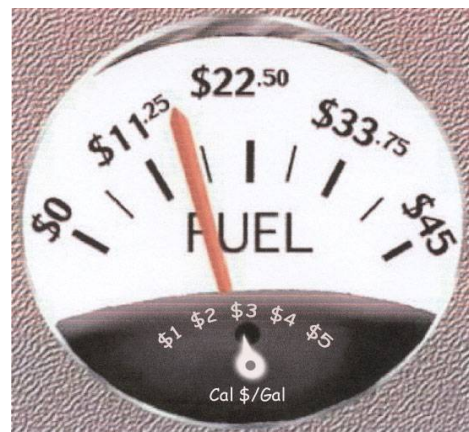
Curved Text

This is a fun exercise. Take this image of a gas gage, which I received from Ralph Ilsen. Obviously Ralph's friends have been impacted by the gas price hikes.



Because gas prices are changing so radically, I want to add a recalibration dial at the bottom of the gage so that I can reset the dollars on the scale as needed.

I will show the details in the SIG meeting, and will only discuss the highlights here. To modify this figure I use the Ellipse and Polygon Lasso tools to build a pointer. Then I add text for \$1 through \$5 over the black part of the gage. I curve the text using the Create Warped Text icon and selecting Arc for a style. I add a Cal \$/Gal on another text layer and I am done.



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