



Collage Desktop (Photoshop)

This tutorial will show you how to make a collage desktop which is perfect if you've got several pictures that you want to use. For the purposes of this tutorial we're working on a desktop size of 1024x768 pixels.

This is what we'll be making:



- Load Photoshop and create a new image measuring 1024x768 pixels and set the resolution to 72 pixels per inch.

- Open up all the images you wish to use on your desktop. One of the pictures needs to be of a reasonably high quality as it will be used as the background for our desktop.

- If your images are particularly dull in colour you'll probably want to make them brighter. To do this go on to your first image and bring up the Brightness/Contrast option. You'll find this under Image > Adjustments > Brightness/Contrast. You can also desaturate your image if you want your desktop to be black and white.

- Move the sliders along until you're happy with the result and click OK.

- Select the area of the image you want to use on your background by using the marquee tool and drag it over to your new document. If you want to use the whole image on the background then you can just drag the whole thing over to your new document.
- If you need to resize your image then you can do so by using the squares at the corners of the image and click 'Commit Transform' when you are done.
- Create a new document measuring 400x400 pixels and set the resolution to 72 pixels per inch. Flood fill this document with white (#FFFFFF). This will be part of the polaroid-type effect that is on the smaller images.
- Open the first picture you want to use on the smaller images and select the area of the image you wish to use by using the rectangular marquee tool and drag it over to the 400x400 document.
- When resizing your images you should ideally leave a border around the edge but if you've got a wider border on one of your edges then don't worry because it can always be cropped down.
- Once your image is the right size confirm your changes.
- At the moment this 400x400 document will have two layers and if we try to drag it across without merging the two layers we will end up dragging the layer we currently have selected. To merge the layers go to Layer > Merge Layers.
- If your image has a wider border then you can crop it down by selecting the area of the image you want to keep using the rectangular marquee tool and then going to Image > Crop.
- Drag the merged 400x400 document on to the desktop sized document. If it's too big you can make it smaller by using the boxes at the edge of the image. Once you're done click to confirm your changes.
- These desktops look better if the photos are at an angle and you can change the angle of the layer by dragging it around when the curved two-directional arrow appears (hold your cursor away from the corner of the document slightly). Again, you'll need to confirm the changes using 'Commit Transform'.
- Our collage desktops usually have layer styles added to the smaller picture layers to make them stand out. To add these go to Layer > Layer Style > Stroke. Add a 1px Stroke in Black (#000000) to the outside of the image.
- Whilst still on the layer style screen go on to Drop Shadow and add a shadow in Black (#000000) at 70% Opacity. This will add a shadow to the image as well. Click OK.
- Repeat the steps for any other images you want to add, varying the size of the smaller document if you choose.
- To add the text (if required) click on the 'Text' button and if it's not already selected, right click and select "Horizontal Type Tool".
- Select your font size, style and colour.

- Click on the image and type your text. You can move it around until you find a place you like from the text tool, just lookout for the cursor changing into a multi-directional arrow. When you're happy click commit.

- Save your image and you're done.

If you have any questions about this tutorial please do not hesitate to email us at designers@coldwatermorninggraphics.com.

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