Create a Photo Montage

A nice way to display your photos is to create a montage of several images or something as simple as a Triptych.

Using Elements makes this task quite simple **BUT** how simple it is depends on the preparation you have done before you even open Elements

To begin with you need to decide on the finished size of the image you want and which images are to be used.

Ideally you would start with a piece of paper a pencil and a ruler and plan the design template on the sheet of paper.

Think about the orientation of your images, I chose 6 landscape and 2 portrait images and created my drawing with rectangles as you see the finished image above.

You are going to use grid lines to help you place the images so you could be very accurate in your planning by drawing out your design on graph paper.

The images you are using can be resized to fit the shape that you want to place them in but it is important to make sure that the images have the same resolution as the blank document. If it is to be printed then all the images, including the template, need to be 300 ppi.
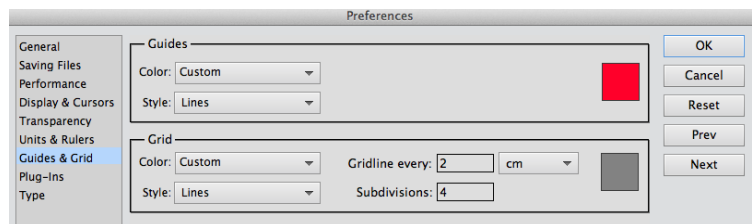
Open your images into Elements and check the sizes of them using **Image > Resize > Image Size.** Do not increase the sizes to fit or you will lose quality.

Once you have checked them and decided how you want them to be placed in your finished montage you are ready to begin. If you minimise all the open images they will go into the **Photo Bin** at the bottom of the Editor window.

Open a blank document **File > New,** set the size of the document to 30cm wide; 20cm high and 300 pixels per inch.

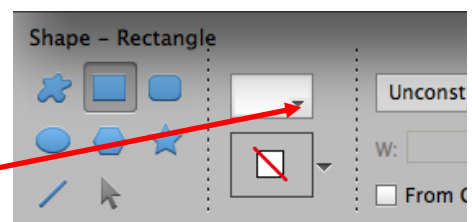Now place a grid on your new image using **View > Grid.**
The squares on the grid can be changed in **Editor > Preferences > Guides and Grid**. The grid I am using is set to Gridline every 2cm and Subdivisions 4.

The tool used to create the shapes for the images is called the **Shape Tool,** find it in the **Draw Palette**

It may not look this shape so when you click on it you need to open the **Tool Preferences** panel at the bottom of the window and change your shape to a rectangle.
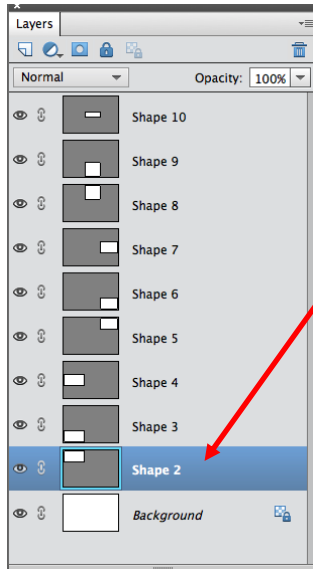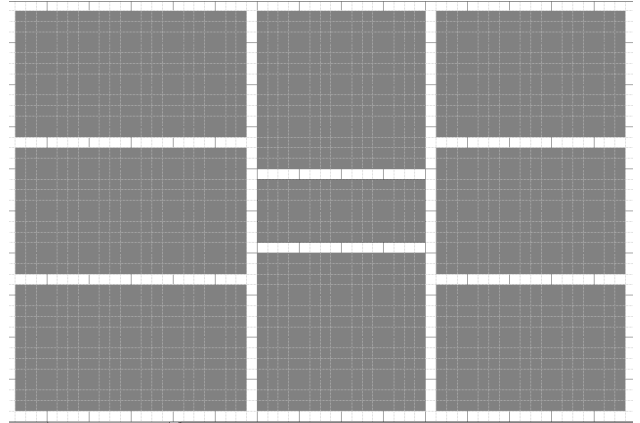
Also change the colour of the shape to grey by clicking on the dropdown and choosing grey.

Now you are going to construct a template for your images. Draw out your shapes, one by one, onto the grid.

If you go wrong use **Edit > Undo** and have another go.

This is what my template looked like before any images were put in.

And this is what the **Layers Palette** will look like.

☐ Decide which shape you are going to start with and click on it to make it the active layer in the **Layers Palette.**

Open an image from the **Photo Bin** by double clicking on it and using the **Move Tool** drag the image over the shape where you want to place it.

Resize the image, **Image > Transform > Free Transform,** so that it is roughly the correct size but make sure that it covers the shape that you are placing it in.

Now you need to make the image appear within the shape, to do this use **Layer > Create Clipping Mask.**
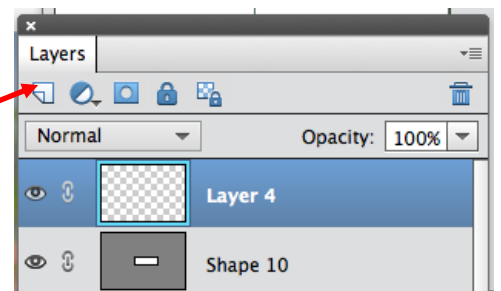
Continue to do this, following the instructions from ☐ until all of your images are inside their shapes.

Finally, if you want to, you can create a text layer as follows:
Click on the shape in the **Layers Palette** where   you want your text to appear
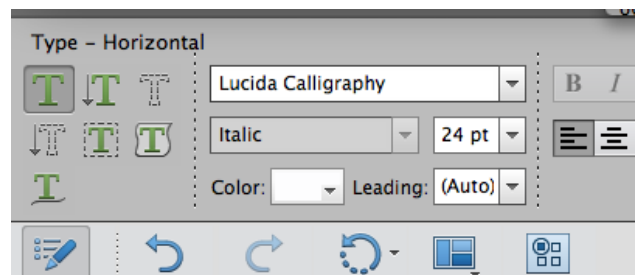
Create a new blank layer.

Click on the **Paint Bucket Tool.**

Choose a colour to fill the layer by clicking on **Foreground Colour** in the **Tools Palette**.

Click on the shape with the **Paint Bucket** to fill with colour then create a clipping mask **Layer > Create Clipping Mask** to fill only the shape with the colour rather than the whole document.

Select the **Type Tool** and type your words onto the coloured shape, if the text is the wrong size it can be adjusted in the **Tool Options**

To add a drop shadow to the type use **Layer > Layer Style > Style Settings** and click on **Drop Shadow**.

Experiment with different shapes, if you choose **Custom Shape** you will find lots of different shape options to play with.

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