

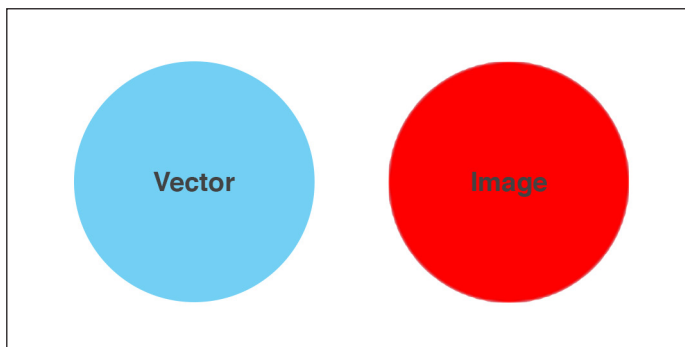
# Photoshop Tips For Web Design

Adobe Photoshop CC18

Notes by Gavin Kirby

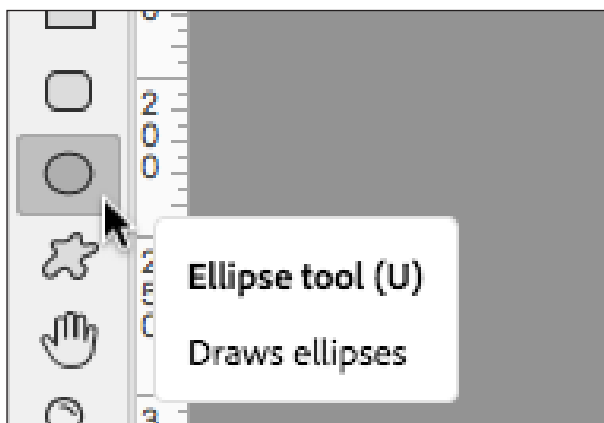
## Vector vs Pixel Artwork.

Photoshop has the capability to draw in both vector based objects as well as pixels. The advantage of drawing objects as vector elements is that it allows for greater flexibility in terms of scaling and manipulation. It also gives a much cleaner edge to your shapes, especially when the shape has curved edges or sections.

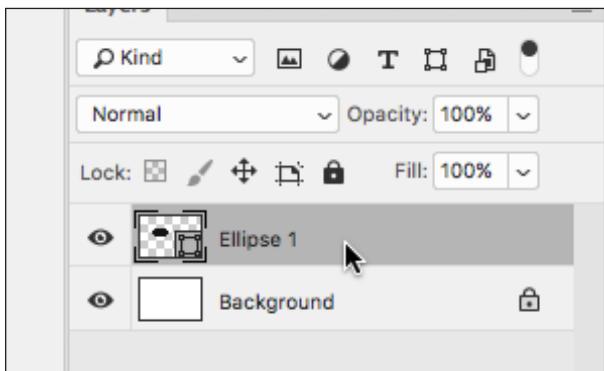


## Drawing with Vectors.

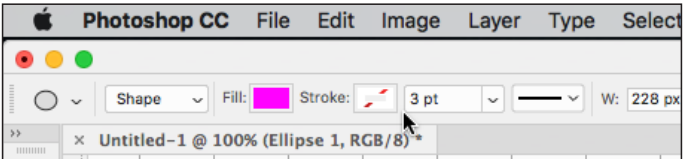
Photoshop has a selection of basic vector shape drawing tools. They will allow you to draw rectangles, squares, ellipses, circles etc much in the same way that you would in Adobe Illustrator.



When you draw a vector shape it appears in the Layers palette like this:

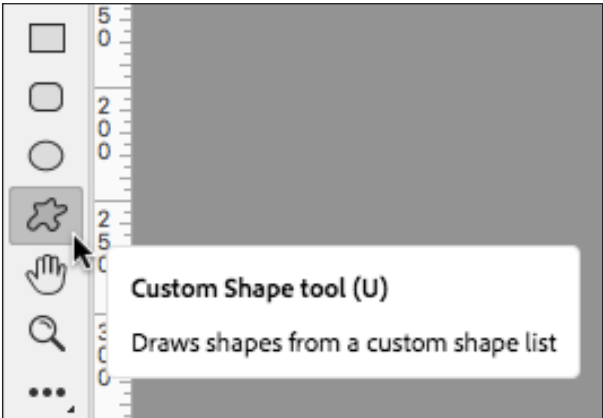


If you still have a vector tool as your active tool you can change the colour of the shape in the tool options bar near the top of the screen. You can easily add a stroke colour to the shape as well.

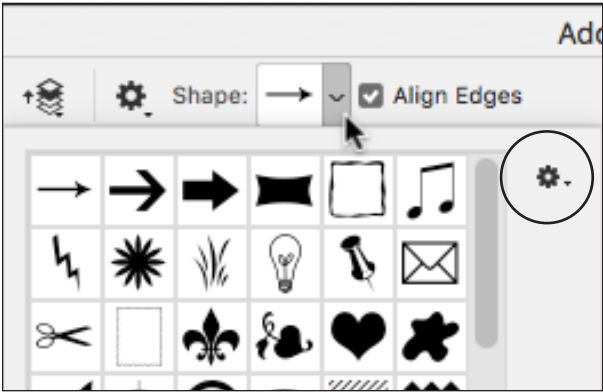


**Custom Shapes Tool.**

The Custom Shapes tool from the Vector tools palette is quite a handy tool for adding symbols to your designs.



There are a variety of symbols that can be chosen from and you can also load in other symbols from the Shape selection palette.



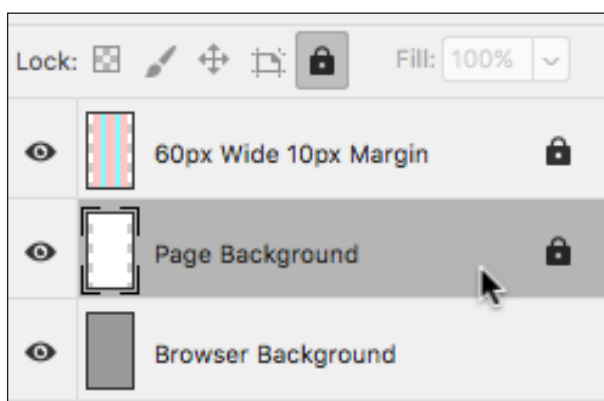
There are several websites available where you can download extra custom shapes to use in Photoshop. One I recommend is the Adobe Exchange, just Google search for *Photoshop Exchange* and the top search result will take you there.

Another one is [www.premiumpixels.com](http://www.premiumpixels.com) where you will find lots of handy stuff to help you in your designs.

## Roughing Out Your Designs.

Once you have done your thumbnail sketches the next step is to rough out your layouts ready to start building your client visuals. To help you with this process I have created a couple of Photoshop twelve column grid templates. One allows for 10px + 10px margins between columns and the one allows for 20px + 20px margins between columns (These are also available as Illustrator files).

In these examples I will be using the 10px + 10px margin version. There are three layers in each of the Photoshop template files.

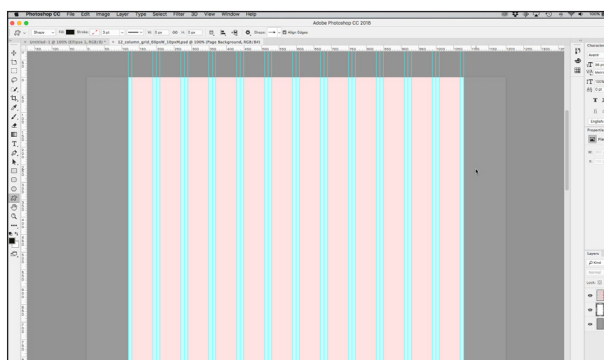


*Browser Background* is for the area outside of your web page design.

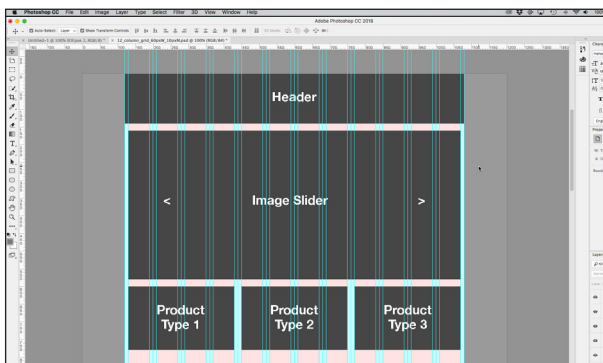
*Page Background* is the area for your web page design. Its width is set to 960px and has a height of 2000px.

*60px Wide 10px Margin* shows coloured columns to help you to visualise the columns when designing your web pages.

There are also several vertical guides to help you position your elements for your web pages.



Using the *Rectangle Tool* (*u*), start to rough out the key elements that are going to make up your web page design. Personally I block the areas out in a mid grey.

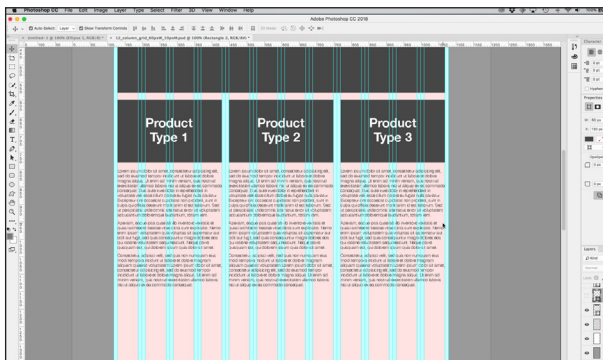


## Indicating Text Areas.

Adding areas that indicate text is really easy thanks to a handy little type feature in Photoshop.

Use the *Type Tool* to draw out a text box the size that you want it to be. Then set the type parameters like, font, point size, colour, formate etc.

Then go to *Type - Paste Lorem Ipsum* to add place holder text to the area. To add a bit more realism, it is a good idea to put in some paragraphs and paragraph spacing and leading etc.



You can then add in your actual text later on if you wish. This is always a good thing to do, especially if you are going to show them to a paying client.

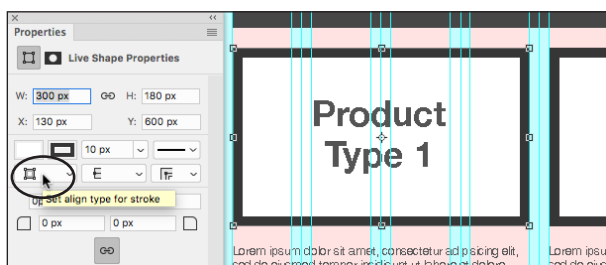
## Using Strokes On Boxes.

This sounds simple enough but you can get into a muddle if you don't have things set up correctly. Here I have selected the three *Product Type Boxes* and have converted them to have a white fill and a 10px stroke.

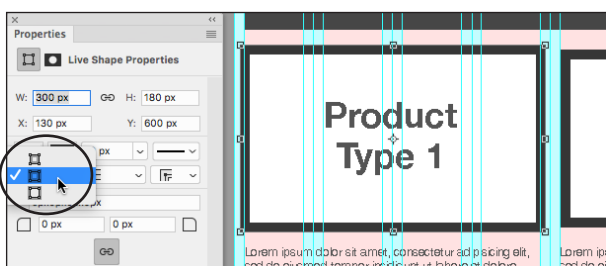
The thing that you need to check is how the stroke is being positioned in relation to the edge of the box.

From the *Properties Palette* you can set the stroke Alignment. These are *Inside*, *Centred* or *Outside*. It is important to have this set correctly because if it is not then it can throw out your calculations for spacing and positioning.

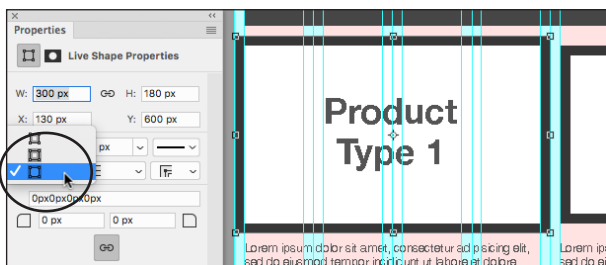
*Inside* - This is the one you want to be using as the thickness of the stroke is contained in the overall width of the box.



*Centred* - This has the look and feel of how Illustrator works by default. The Stroke is centred on the path of the box and as a result it has increased the width and height of the box by a total of 10px.



*Outside* - This sets the entire stroke on the outside of the box, thus increasing the width and height of the box by 20px.



Once you have finished roughing out where the key sections go in your design layout, you will need to start adding all the details of your design. Things such as images, logos, navigation etc.

When to have a set of finished designs you can then start to build/code your website.

## Adding Images.

Once you have completed your wire frame design templates you will need to start adding content to the web pages. The best way to prepare your individual image files is to work on them at 300ppi RGB then reduce them to 72ppi just before adding them to your wire frame templates.

1. Work on your images at 300ppi RGB doing all the edits and adjustments that you need to do.
2. Save a copy of the file to preserve the 300ppi quality.
3. Flatten the image to a single layer.
4. Reduce the image ppi to 72ppi and then crop the image to the required pixel dimensions.
5. You are now ready to add the image to the wire frame templates.

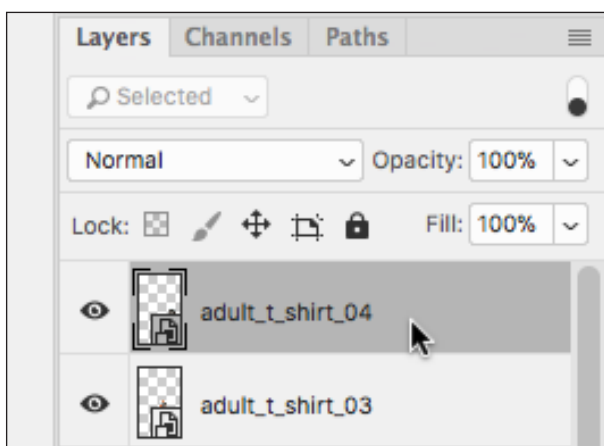
There are several different ways that you can add your images to your template designs. However, the easiest I find is to drag and drop.

Like with most things, preparation is key. Not only should you prepare the physical attributes of the images (resolution and colour mode) but you should also name your files appropriately. (See power point notes referring to file names).

Here you can see that the images have been dragged and dropped into the template design and have been positioned accordingly.



Also, this method of adding the images has added the file names of the images to their corresponding layer.



## Saving Assets for Web & Devices.

You will be wanting to decorate your web pages with images and graphics to enhance the look and feel of your designs. To do this you will need to optimize the images ready for use on your web pages. Both Photoshop and Illustrator have the ability to optimise images and graphics for web. You will need to determine the quality of the image and what format is best for your images and graphics.

The process of saving for web is a balancing act between image quality and image memory size. The higher the quality the larger the memory size, the smaller the memory size the lower the image quality.

There are three main image formats that you will be using to save your optimized images as, these are:

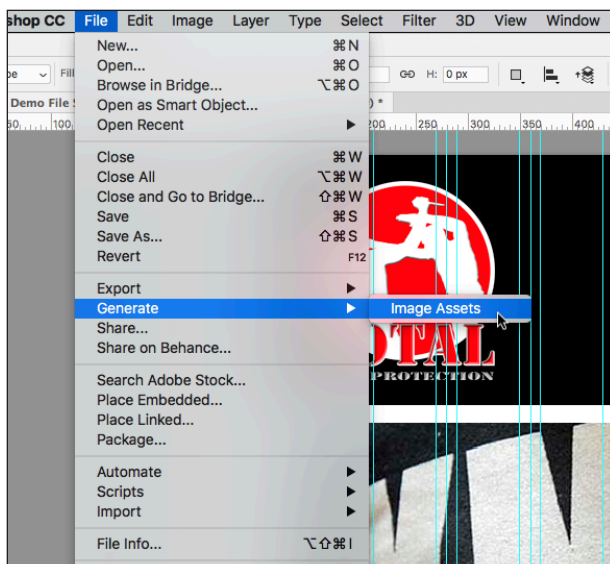
- *JPEG* - Joint Photographic Experts Group, these are best for multi-tone and continuous-tone images such as, photographs, gradients, drop shadows etc.
- *GIF* - Graphic Interchange Format, best used for simple graphic images with areas of solid colour such as logos, illustrations, cartoons etc. Also GIF's allow for simple animations.
- *PNG* - Portable Network Graphic, these work very similar to a GIF and in many cases will compress better but does not have animation capabilities. However, PNG files do have better transparency capabilities.

## Creating Image Assets for Web From Photoshop.

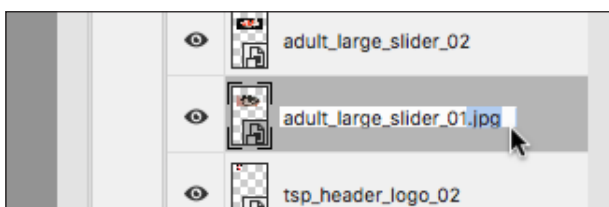
There is now a much easier and faster way to generate image assets for your websites from Photoshop. However, you do need to have good layer names and layer management.

1. Go to *File - Generate - Image Assets*.

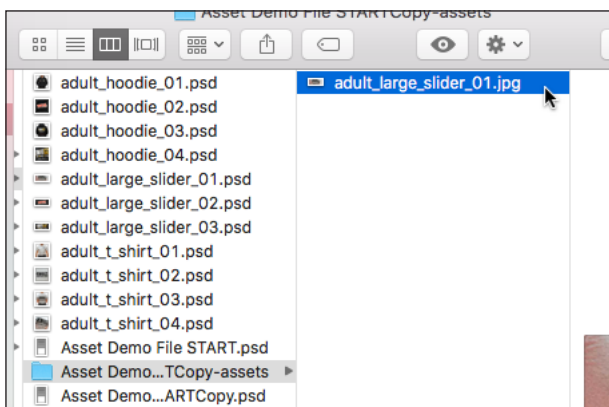
This will create an assets folder in the same location as your Photoshop file. All you need to do now is add file types to your layer names. It is that easy!



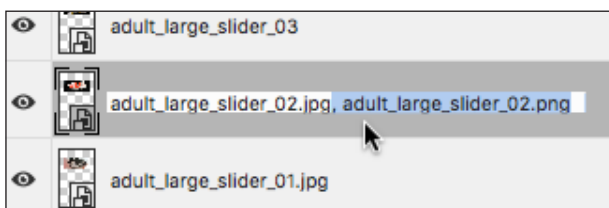
2. Choose one of the layers (I have chosen *adult\_large\_slider\_01*). Double click the layer name so that you can edit the name. Add *.jpg* to the end of the layer name and press *Return* to apply the change.



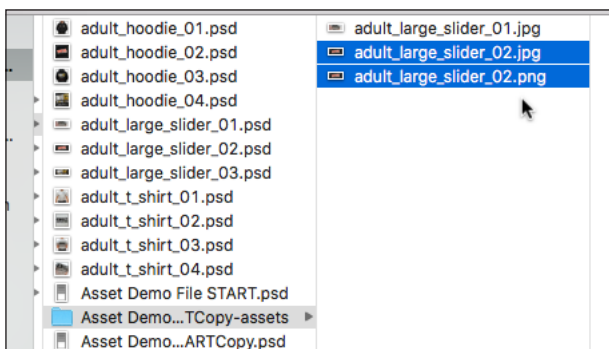
3. In Finder, navigate to the folder where the PSD template is saved and you will find a new Asset Folder has been created. It should contain an optimized jpg file of the layer you changed the name of.



4. You can also output multiple file types of the same layer. All you need to do is separate the names by a *,*. In this example I have named the next layer like this: *adult\_large\_slider\_02.jpg, adult\_large\_slider\_02.png*.



This has now created a jpg file and a png file in the Assets folder.



For more information on saving assets you can visit:  
<https://helpx.adobe.com/photoshop/using/generate-assets-layers.html>