

Getting Started

Get inspired by the Post Modernist era of witty colour and spontaneous pattern. This tutorial shows you how to make quick patterns that interlock and look complex but only use basic Photoshop tools such as the Polygon Lasso and Define Pattern.



Drawing shapes

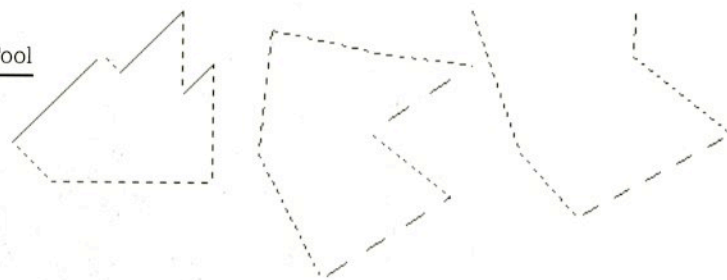


First experiment with cutting out shapes from origami paper.

Open Photoshop and a new document sized 40 x 40 cm (15 7/8 x 15 7/8 in) at 300dpi. Select the Polygon Lasso tool from the toolbar. With this tool draw the cut shapes that you made with your paper cutting.



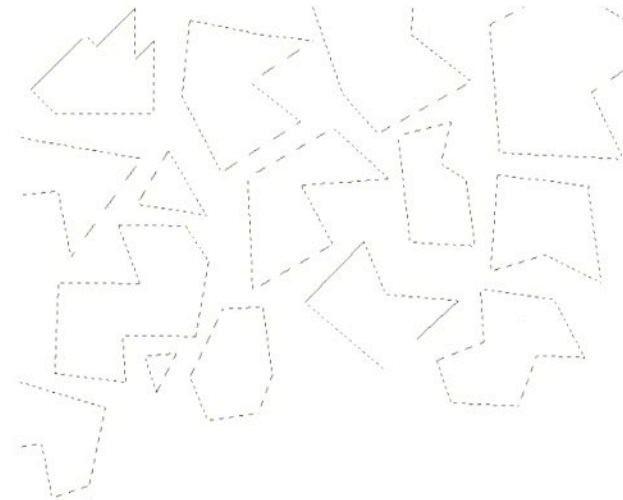
Lasso Tool



Building a pattern

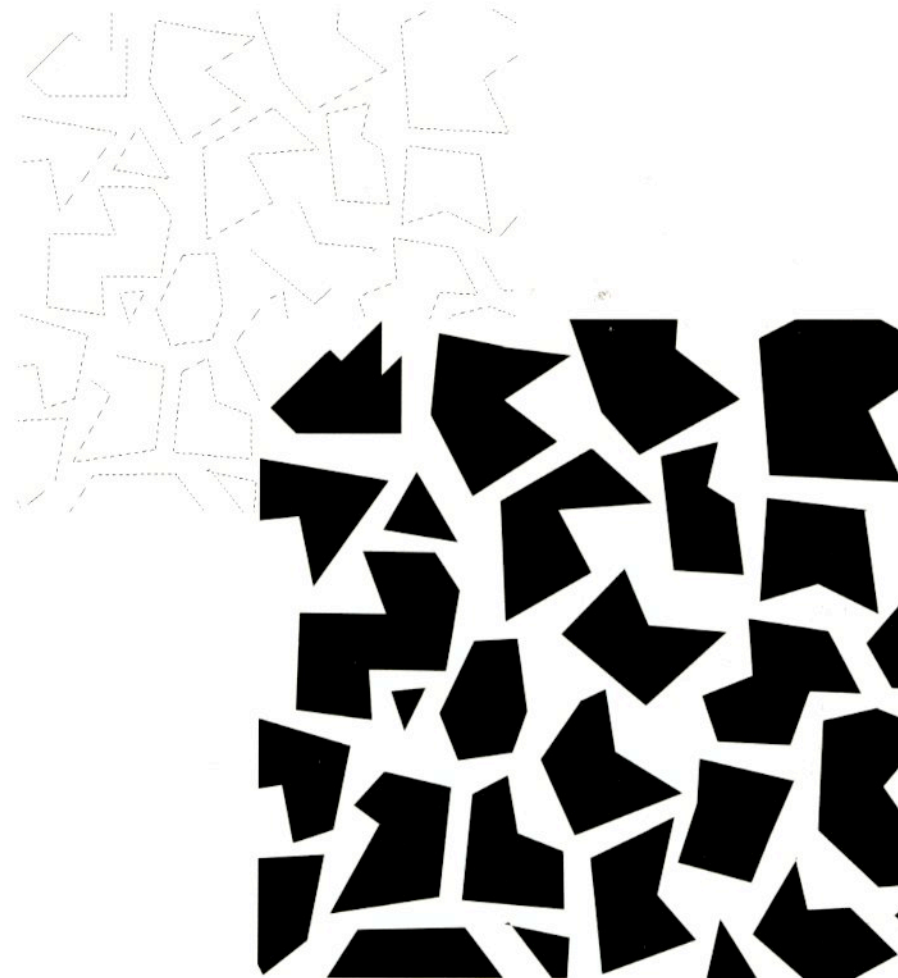


Continue to make shapes with the Polygon Lasso tool by holding down the Shift key as you build up shapes. Your shapes can go over the edge of the document to give a sense of a continuous pattern.



Once you have filled your document, fill your shapes with black

Edit > Fill > Foreground Colour



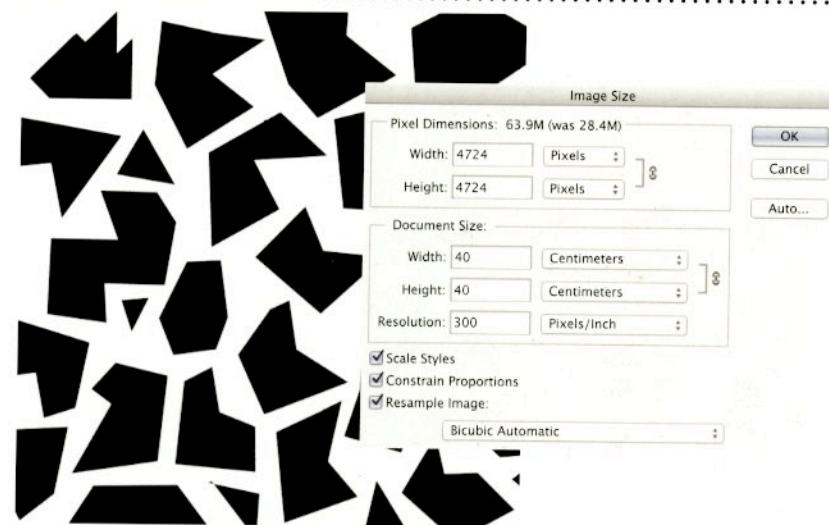
Pattern repeat

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You will now put this basic design unit into repeat and add colour later. Jot down the image pixel size

Image > Image Size

In this case it is 4724 x 4724 pixels.



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Now use the Offset filter to cut and flip the design ready to make it into a repeatable unit.

Filter > Other > Offset



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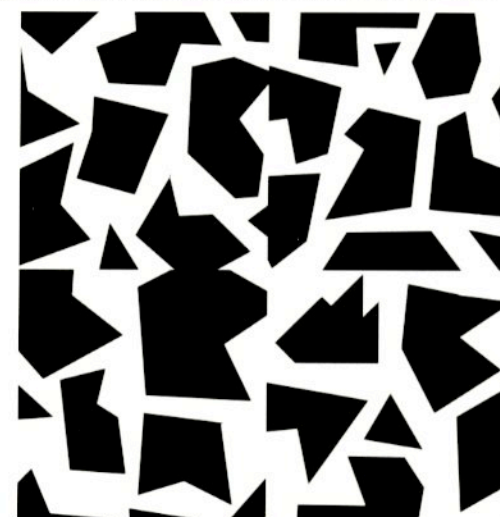
In the Offset dialog box, divide the horizontal and the vertical pixel image sizes by two, enter the new values and click OK.



Mending seams

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Your design has now been cut into four and flipped around so the outside of the design is in repeat. You will notice seams appear: these need to be mended.

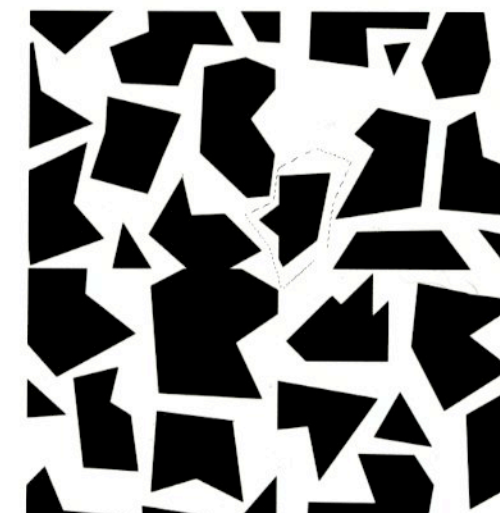


8

To mend the seam between the repeat sections, select the Polygon Lasso tool from the toolbar and draw around the shapes that sit on the central seams.

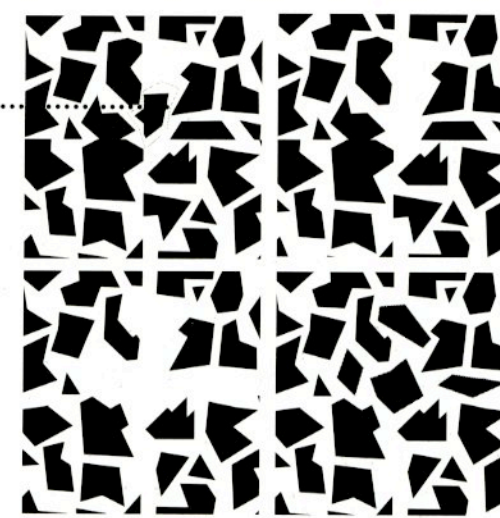
Edit > Cut

Your shapes will be deleted from the seams.



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Once you have deleted these shapes you can draw them back in using the Polygon Lasso tool.



ARTIST'S TIP
USING THE LASSO TOOL TO MAKE CUT SHAPES IS SO FAST AND FUN!

Applying colour

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Your basic design unit is now in repeat. Save and name the document. It is a good idea to preserve this original file and continue to work on a copy so that you can always refer back to the original and use it as a template for further colour variations.

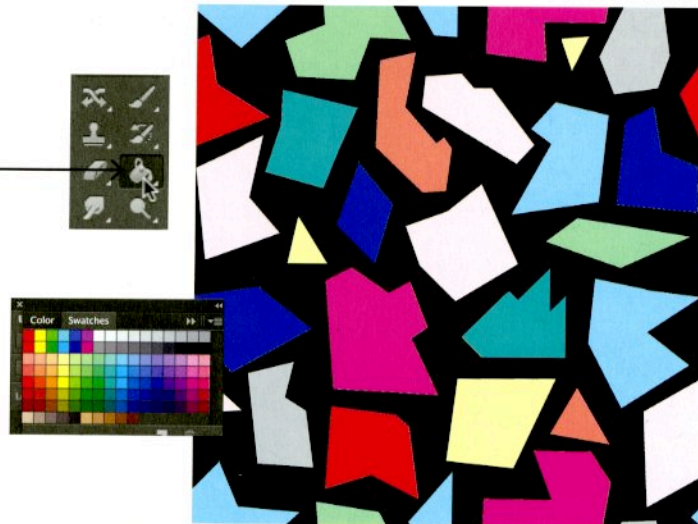
Now change the image size.
Image > Image Size
20 x 20 cm (8 x 8 in).



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Colour in your shapes, referring to your cut paper shapes in coloured paper. Try to colour the edge shapes the same so that when they repeat they match. You can also check this using the Offset filter. Give the background layer a fill of blue.

Fill Tool

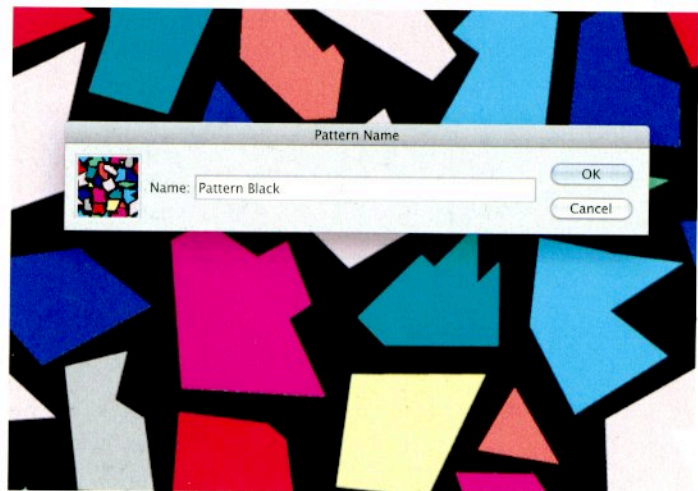


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Remember that your design is already in repeat so, once coloured, make it into a pattern.

Edit > Define Pattern

This will save your first pattern fill to the Pattern Library which you will use later.



Different colourways

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Now change the colour of the design unit. Change the colour of every shape so that they are different to the last colourway. Go to the background layer and change the colour.



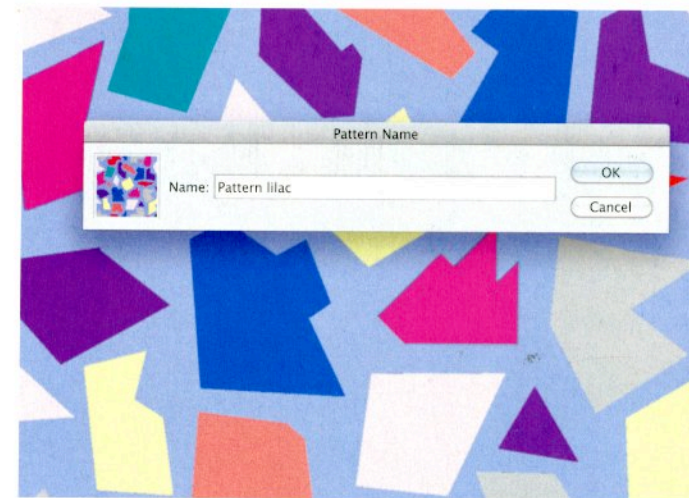
14

As before

Edit > Define Pattern

You now have two pattern fills. Save and name them for future use.

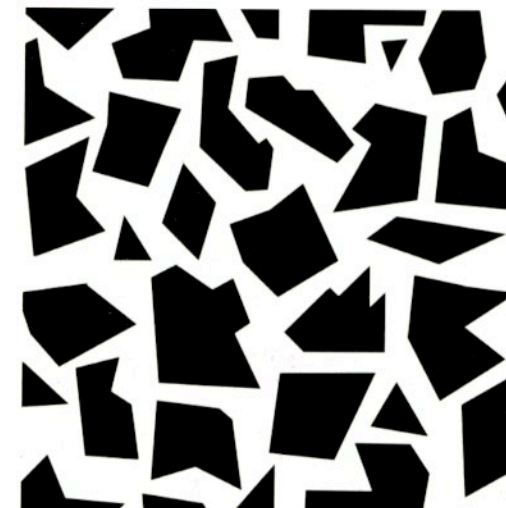
Open your original design unit; this is 40 x 40 cm (15 7/8 x 15 7/8 in) and in repeat.



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You also have two pattern fills of the same design but in different colourways and measuring 20 x 20 cm (7 7/8 x 7 7/8 in). These smaller repeat units will fit perfectly into the original unit. Select one shape with the Magic Wand.

From the Menu bar click **Select > Select Similar** to select all your black shapes.



Filling pattern

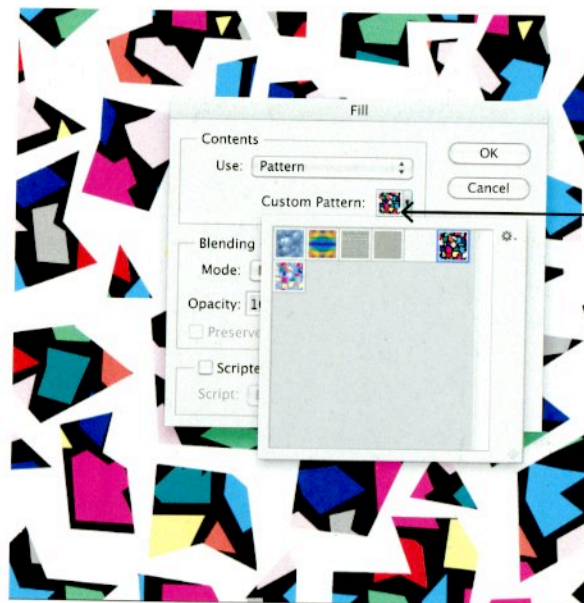
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It's time to start filling in your shapes and building your design using the Pattern Fill tools. To start you will fill in the shapes in your design unit with one of your saved pattern fills.

Edit > Fill

In the Fill dialogue box select Pattern and find your first design unit under Custom Pattern.

Click OK.



Fill with your first pattern

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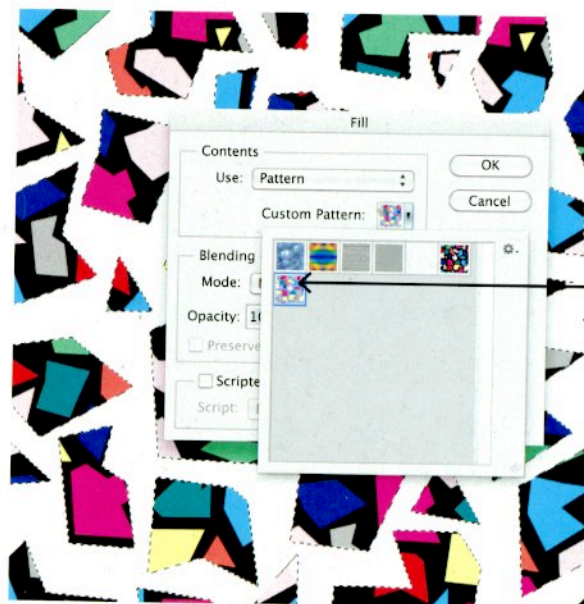
Now you are going to fill the white space with your other pattern. Your shapes are still selected, so just inverse the selection so the white space is selected.

From the Menu bar click on

Select > Inverse

In the Fill dialogue box select Pattern and find your second design unit under Custom Pattern.

Click OK.



Fill with your second pattern

Pattern repeat

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See how the pattern shapes interlink and connect to create a complex but repeating pattern.

Before you define as a final pattern you can change the image size.



YOUR PATTERN IS NOW COMPLETE!

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Edit > Define Pattern

Name your design unit and click OK.



The final design

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Open a new document 80
x 80 cm (31½ x 31½ in)

Edit > Fill > Pattern

Find your pattern and
fill your new document
to see how the design
repeats.

Clever eh?!

