

How to create spray paint effect in Photoshop

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Today, TipsMake.com will show you how to create a simple spray paint text effect in which letters look like they are sprayed on walls or surfaces. This trick also includes mixing the sprayed text with the background for a more realistic look. And because we only use layer effects and Photoshop **blending options**, the text can still be edited even when the effect is done.

The tutorial will use Photoshop CC 2019 but every recent version also applies. Below is an example of what the paint spray text effect would look like. Of course, users can use any text, background and colors they like:



Add paint effect to photos

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How to create paint spraying text in Photoshop

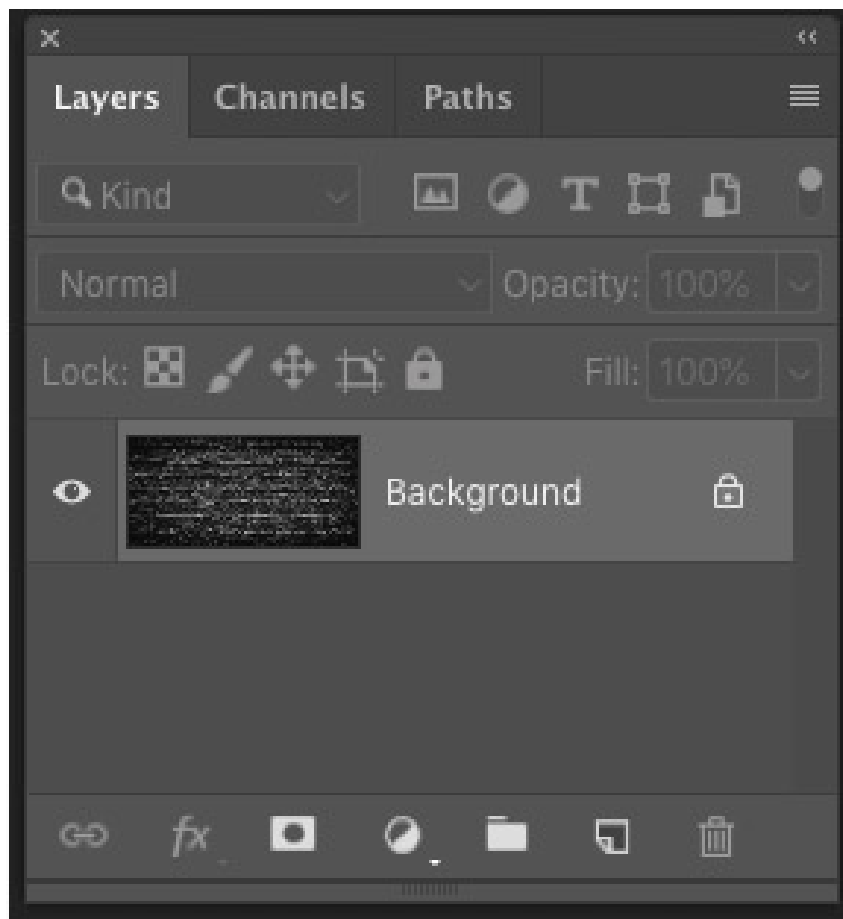
We will start by learning how to create the main paint effect, and then how to blend the letters with the background. The article will also show you how to duplicate the effect to add text to the design and how to change the paint color.

Step 1: Open the wallpaper

Because we will spray text on some types of backgrounds, start by opening the background image. The example will use this image from Adobe Stock (stock.adobe.com/images/black-brick-wall-texture-brick-surface-as-background/142590964):



And in the **Layers** panel , the reader will see an image on the **Background** layer :



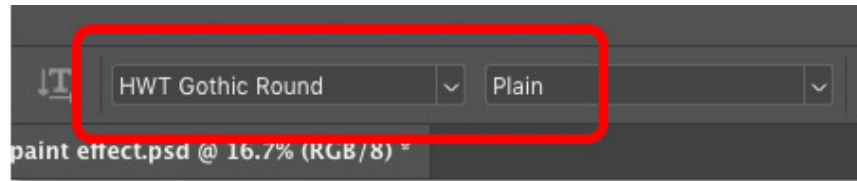
Step 2: Add text

To add text, select the **Type Tool** from the Photoshop toolbar (Toolbar):



Select the font

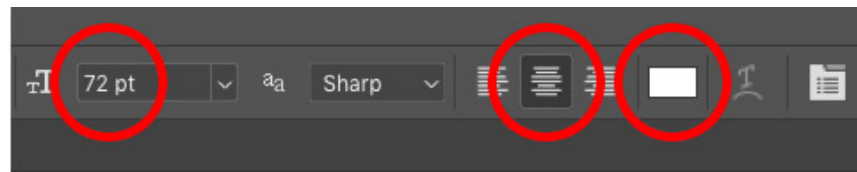
And then in the **Options Bar**, select the font. For example will use " **HWT Gothic Round** " download from Adobe Typekit. If you don't have access to this font, that's fine. You can choose any font:



Other options for the text section

In the **Options Bar**, we will set the font size to **72pt** (the current largest size) and align the text to the center.

For color, for example, select white by clicking on the color swatch and selecting white from Photoshop's **Color Picker** . This is not the color that will be used for painting effects. All that is needed now is something that allows you to easily view the text when adding it to the background:



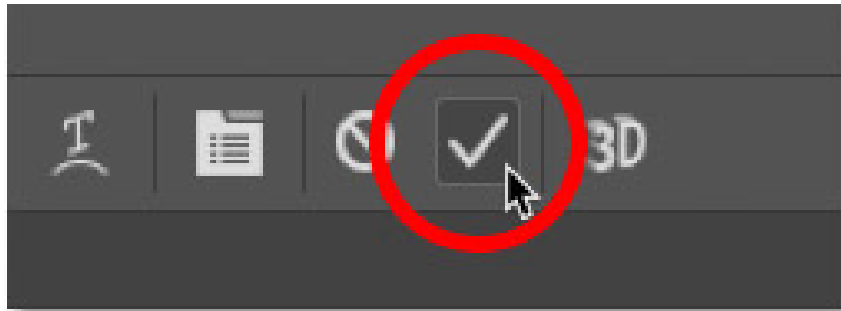
Add text

Then click on the document and add the desired text. The example will enter the word "**PAINT**":



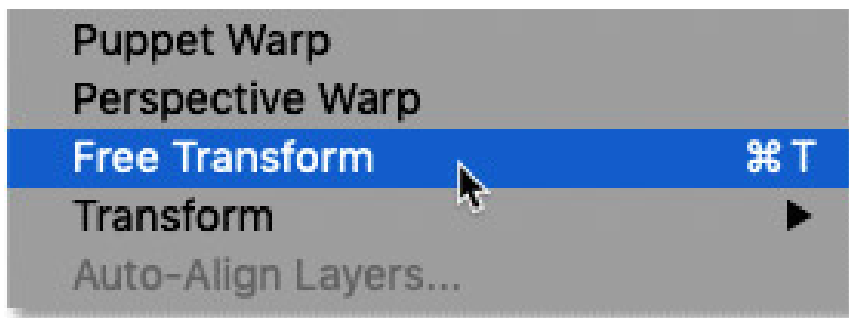
Accept the text

To accept it, click the check mark in the **Options Bar**:



Step 3: Resize and reposition text with Free Transform

To change the text size and move it to the correct position, go to the **Edit** menu in **Menu Bar** and choose **Free Transform**:



Select the Free Transform command in Photoshop

And then to change the text size, click and drag any handle at any corner. Since Photoshop CC 2019, the frame rate of the text will automatically remain the same when the user drags the handle. In previous versions of Photoshop, users need to hold down the Shift key while dragging the aspect ratio.

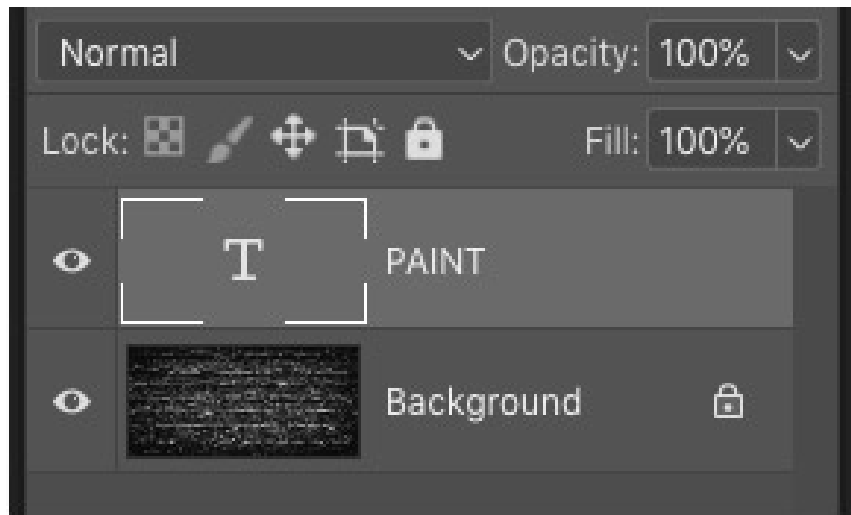
To change the text size, press and hold the **Alt** (Win) / **Options** (Mac) key when dragging. And if you need to reposition the text, click inside the **Free Transform** box and drag the text into place.

To accept the added text and exit **Free Transform**, press **Enter** (Win) / **Return** (Mac) on the keyboard:

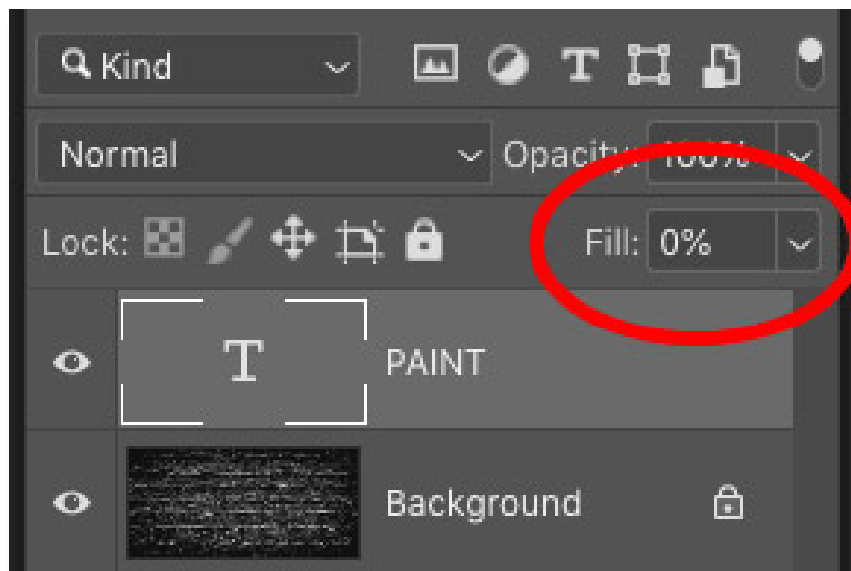


Step 4: Lower the Type layer's Fill value to 0%

In the **Layers** panel , users will see the text on a new **Type** layer above the image:



To create a paint effect, make the text transparent. You lower => reduce the **Fill** value at the top right of the panel down to **0%**. Make sure you are reducing the correct **Fill** value , not the **Opacity** value :



The text will not be visible, but it is still there, it is only transparent:



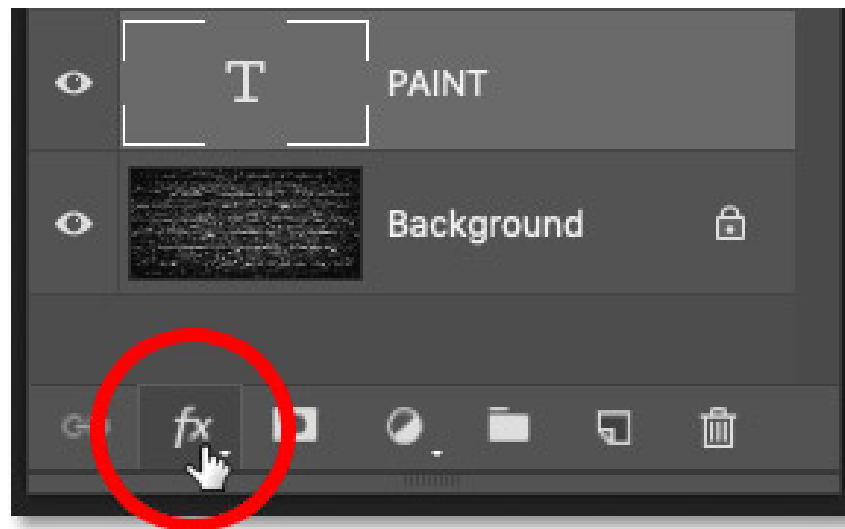
What is the difference between Opacity and Fill?

In the **Layers** panel , both **Opacity** and **Fill** values ??affect the transparency of the layer. The difference between them is that **Opacity** controls the transparency of both the content of a layer and any layer effects you have applied. On the other hand, **Fill** only affects the content of a layer. It has no effect on layer effects.

This means that by lowering the **Fill** value , we can apply layer effects to the text and keep the effects displayed even if the text itself is hidden. And this is the factor that creates the spray effect.

Step 5: Add the Drop Shadow layer effect to the Type layer

The entire paint effect can be created using effects for a single layer, and what we need is **Drop Shadow**. With the **Type** layer selected, click the **Layer Style** icon ("fx" icon) at the bottom of the **Layers** panel :

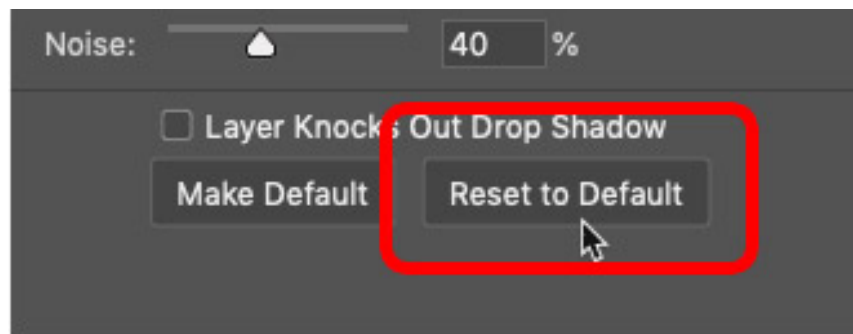


And then select **Drop Shadow**:



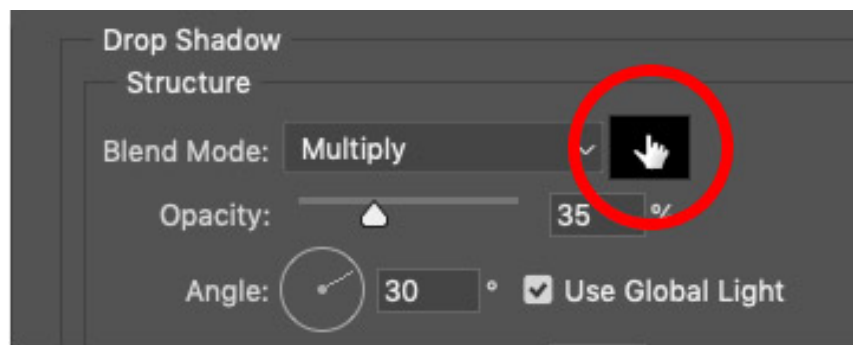
Step 6: Reset the Drop Shadow settings to default

In the Layer Style dialog box, click the **Reset to Default** button to restore the default **Drop Shadow** settings:

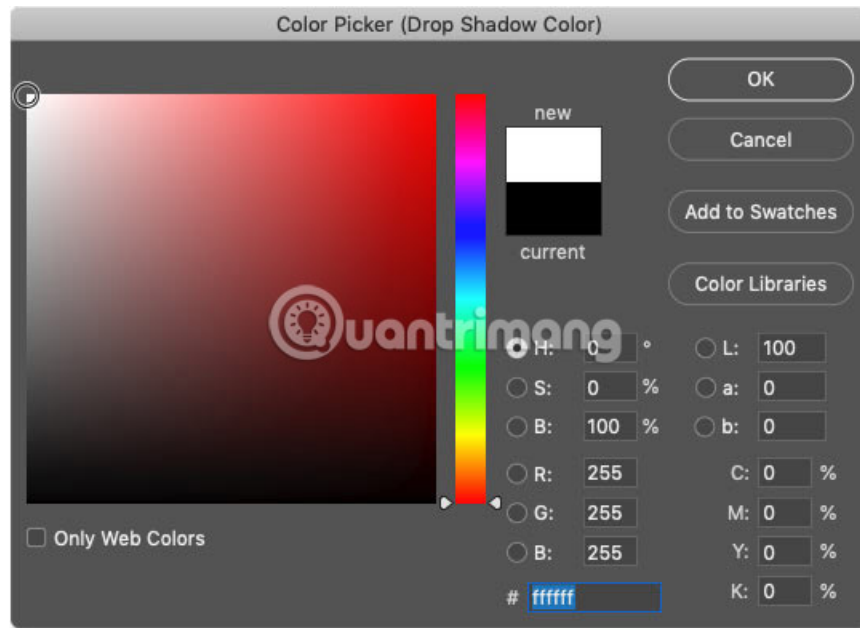


Step 7: Change the color of Drop Shadow to white

Then change the color of **Drop Shadow** by clicking on the color swatch:

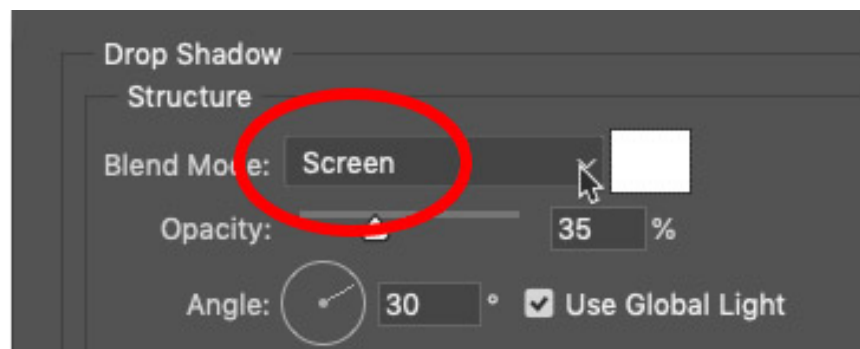


And in **Color Picker**, select white and then click **OK**. We will choose different colors to create the following effect:



Step 8: Change the Blend Mode of the Drop Shadow to Screen

To see white, change Drop Shadow's Blend mode from **Multiply** (default blending mode) to **Screen**:

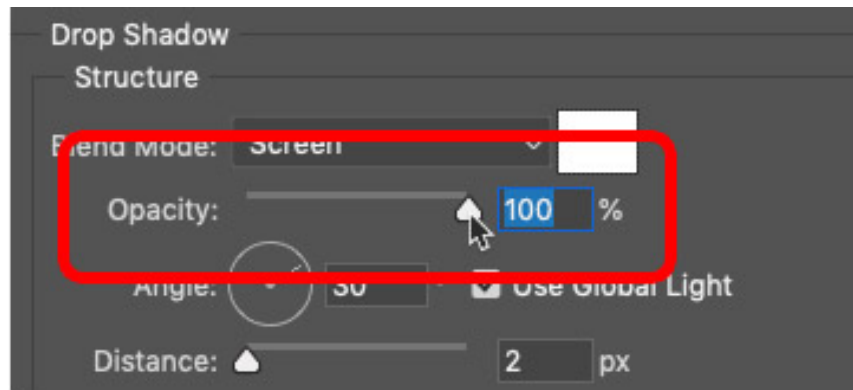


And immediately, the user will begin to see white appear behind the letters:



Step 9: Increase the Drop Opacity of Drop Shadow to 100%

To make the effect brighter, increase the **Drop Shadow** 's opacity to **100%**:

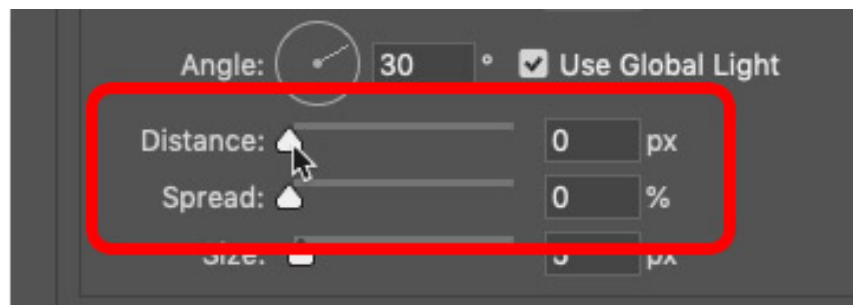


And now the effect will be easier to see. By changing the color of Drop Shadow from black to white and changing its Blend mode from **Multiply** to **Screen**.



Step 10: Set the Distance and Spread to 0%

Ignore **Angle** and **Use Global Light options** because they are not important here. But take the **Distance** to **0px** and make sure the **Spread** is set to **0%**:



By setting the **Distance** to **0px**, we have centered the drop shadow behind the text, creating a blurred outline or stroke around the letters:



Step 11: Increase the size of Drop Shadow

To stretch the shadow (or light in this case) further from the edges, increase the value **Size**:



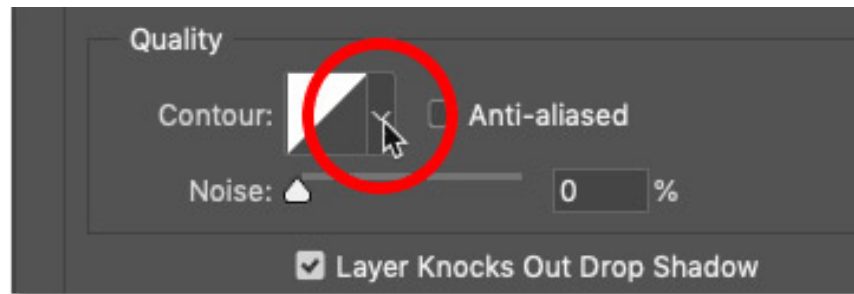
The more the value of **Size** increases , the wider the light portion appears:



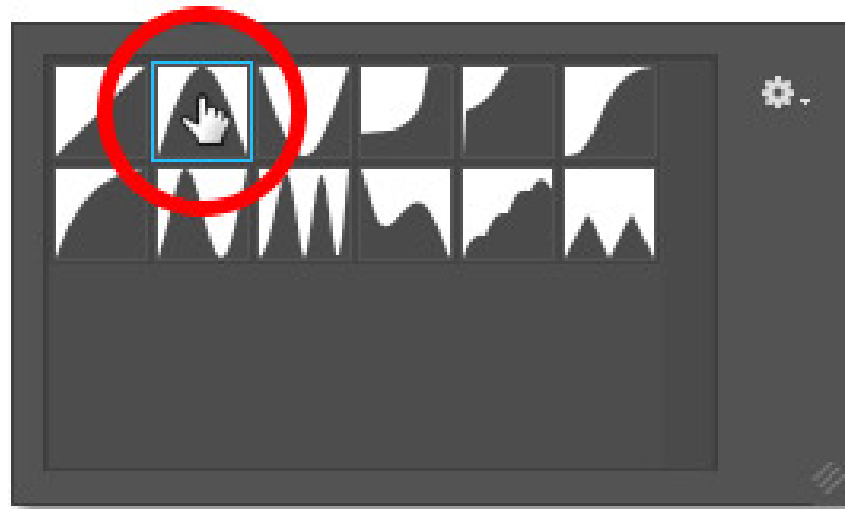
Step 12: Change Contour to Cone

At this point, the effect so far is not the same as paint spraying. The light needs to look like a border around the shape of the letters.

To fix that, still in the **Layer Style** dialog box , go to the **Quality** section , click the small arrow next to the **Contour** preview thumbnail :



And then select **Cone contour** (conical contour) by double clicking on its thumbnail. It's in the top row, second from the left:



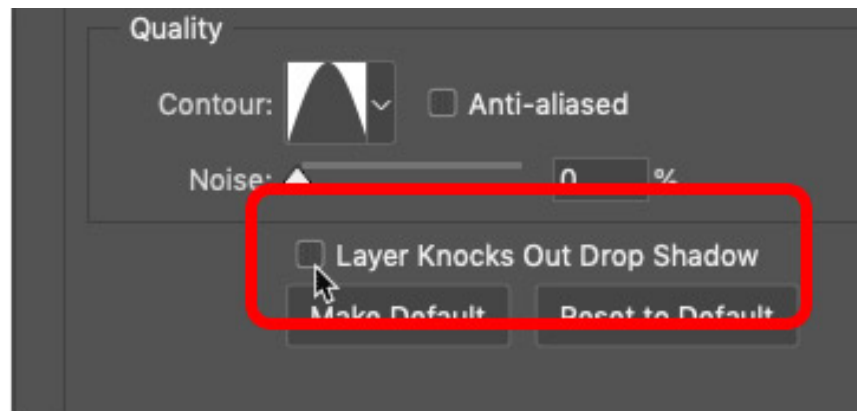
Contours affect the transparency of the shadow area, change the way and where it changes from blur to transparent area. And immediately, users will see a much clearer line around the edges of the letters:



Step 13: Uncheck "Layer Knocks Out Drop Shadow"

But note that the text is transparent, so the light only appears around (outside) the letters. Need to make the light appear inside the letters too.

To fix that, uncheck the **Layer Knocks Out Drop Shadow** option :



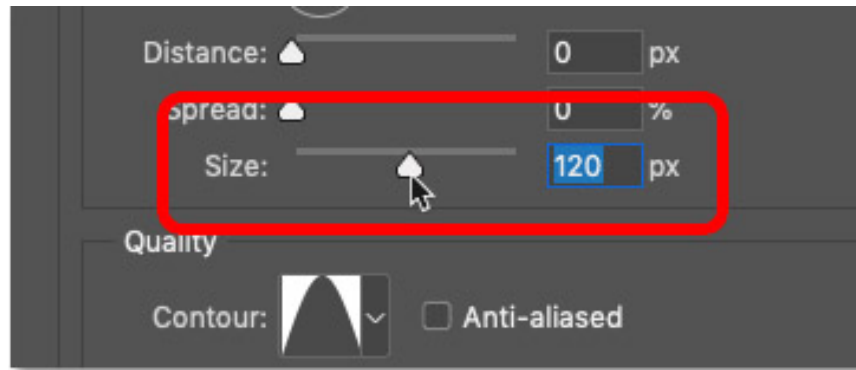
And now the outline will appear both outside and inside the text:



Step 14: Adjust the Size value if needed

At this point, the user may need to go back and adjust the **Size** value to change the thickness of the border. Do not increase too high as this will spread the light too far. The exact size will depend on the text size.

In the case of this example, we will use the **Size** value around **120px**, but this value may vary depending on the specific case:

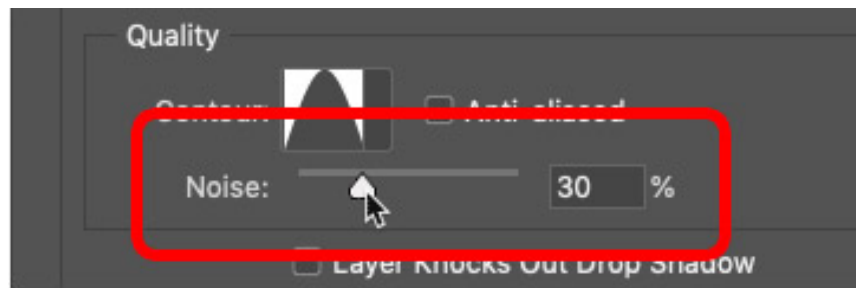


And this is the result:



Step 15: Add Noise

Finally, adding some noise (Noise in photography is a phenomenon of noise, which occurs when taking photos in low-light environments) into the outline by increasing the **Noise** value . The example will set this value at about **25-30%**:



And now, if you zoom in, you'll see small spots in the outline, making it look like a spray paint effect.

Depending on the size of the font in use, users may notice some hard edges blurred along the areas where the effect and background intersect. In this screenshot, readers can see them inside the letters "P" and "A". These edges will disappear after we blend the text with the background, that's what we'll do next:

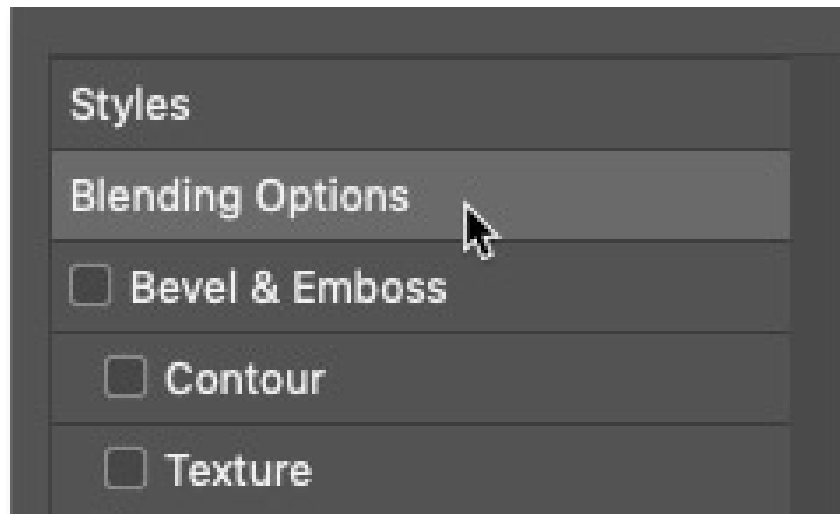


How to mix text with spray effect with the background

At this point, we have completed the Drop Shadow layer effect. Now learn how to blend the effect with the background, to make the text as it really is sprayed on the background, not just put text on the background. When done, the article will show you how to copy the effect to add text while maintaining the layer effects and blending options.

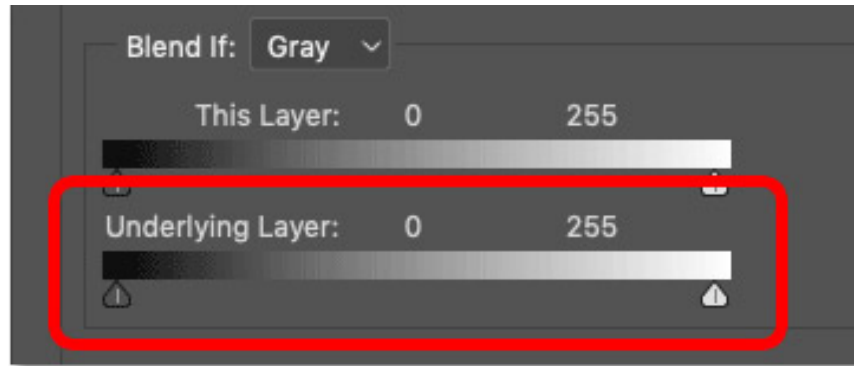
Step 16: Open Photoshop's Blending Options

Still in the **Layer Style** dialog box , select the **Blending Options** menu on the left:



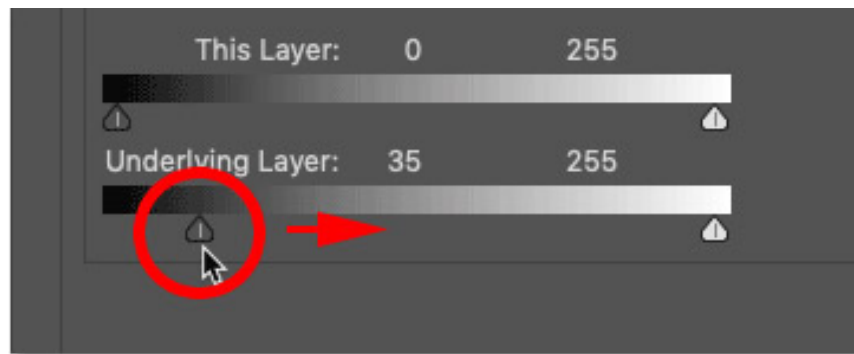
Step 17: Drag the "Underlying Layer" slider in black to the right

At the bottom of the **Blending Options** are two sets of sliders. The top slider has the name "**This Layer**" and the slider below is called "**Underlying Layer**". We can use these sliders to blend the text with the wallpaper. And the tool we need is **Underlying Layer**:



Notice the two sliders below the gradient bar. There is a black slider on the left and a white slider on the right. We will mix the text with the darkest parts of the background. And to do that, we need a black slider.

Click on the black slider and start dragging it to the right:

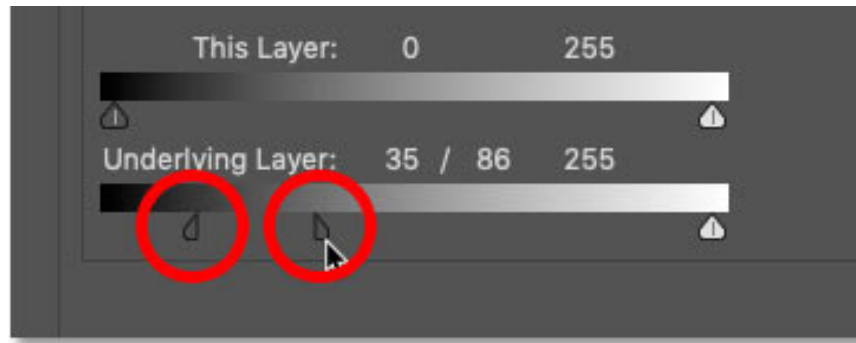


When dragging, keep an eye on the text and you will see the darkest areas of the background begin to show through it. And the more you drag, the more clearly the background appears:



Step 18: Divide the black slider in half

The problem is that the transition effect between text and background is difficult to handle. To create a smoother transition effect, press and hold the **Alt** (Win) / **Option** (Mac) key on the keyboard. Click on the right of the black slider and drag it to the left side. This divides the slider into two halves:

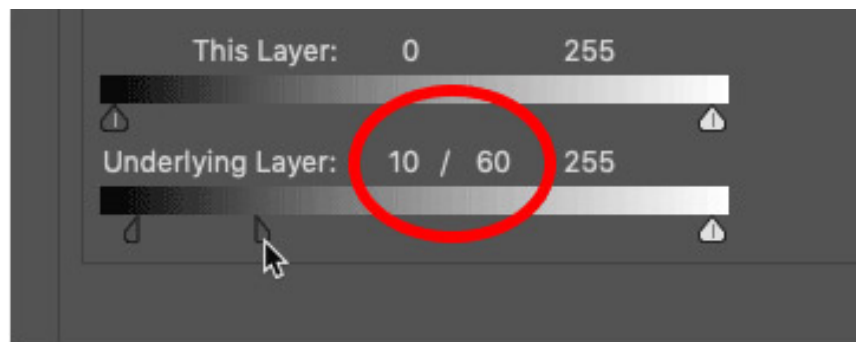


Step 19: Adjust the sliders to create a smooth transition

The left half of the slider now controls the brightness level where the text starts appearing in front of the background. And the right half sets the brightness level so that the text is fully displayed and the background is no longer displayed through it. The area between the two sliders becomes the transition area where the text and the background are merged. The more you drag the sliders away, the better the transition effect appears.

Adjust each half of the slider until you are satisfied with the effect. There is no specific value to use here because it will depend on the background in each case.

In our case, we will put the left half at the brightness level of **10** and the right half at the brightness level of **60**. In other words, any area in the background image at the brightness level of 10 or darker will completely through the text. Areas with a brightness level of 60 or more will be completely hidden by the text. And the brightness levels between (**11 to 59**) are where transitions are taking place:



And with the text now merged with the background image, we have the paint effect much more realistic:

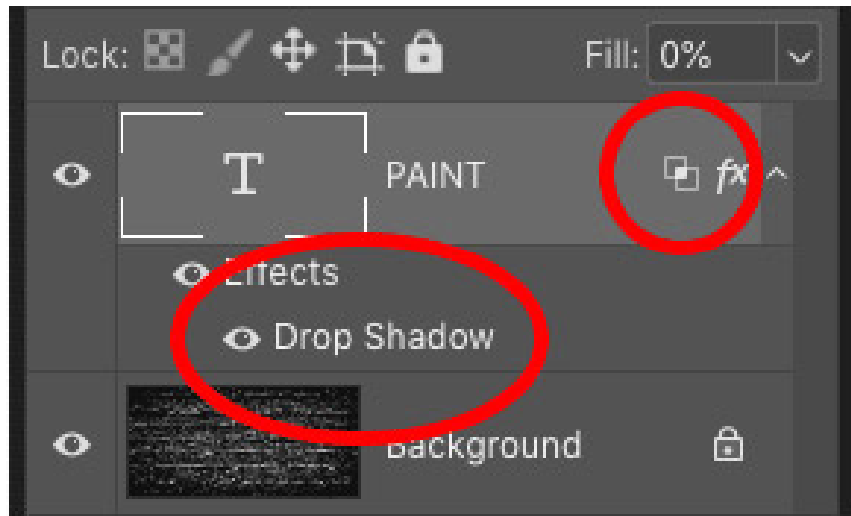


Step 20: Close the Layer Style dialog box

The main effect is complete, continue and close the **Layer Style** dialog box by clicking **OK**:



And in the **Layers** panel , we now see **Drop Shadow** listed as an effect below the **Type** layer . The **Blending Options** icon next to the "fx" icon indicates that there are some advanced mixing options applied to the layer:

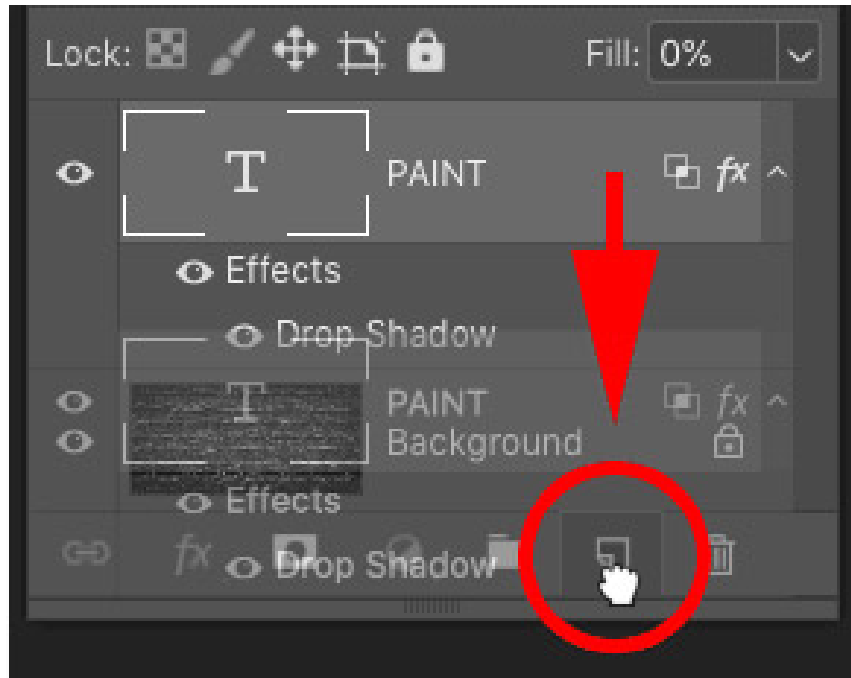


How to copy spray paint text effect?

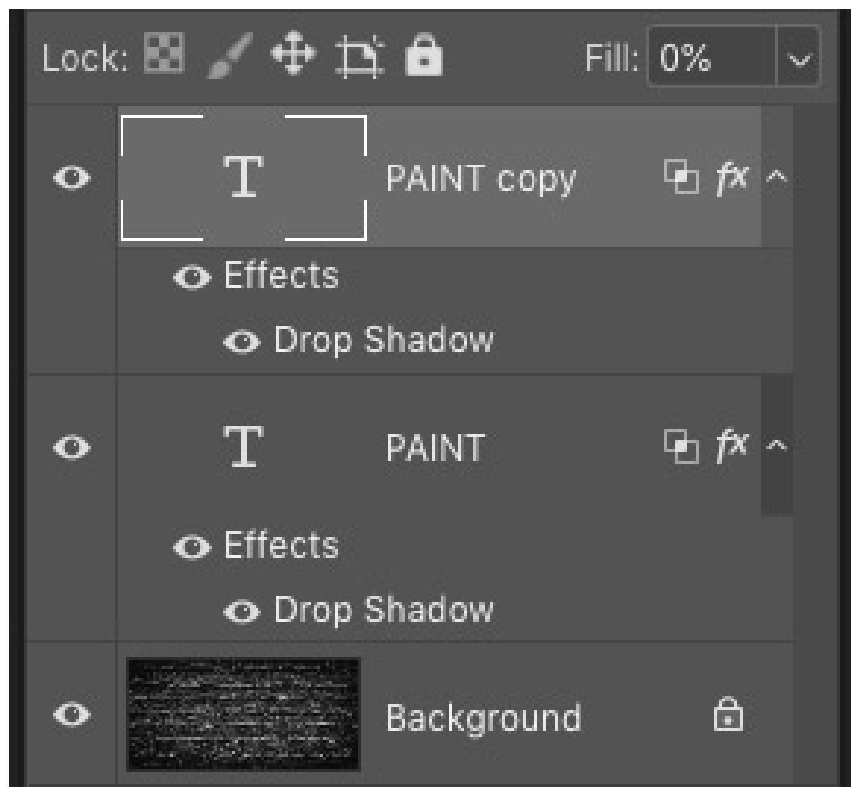
At this time, adding text with the spray effect is easy.

Step 21: Create a copy for the Type layer

All you need to do is duplicate the **Type** layer . Just scroll down to the **Add New Layer** icon at the bottom of the **Layers** panel :



A copy of the **Type** layer will appear above the original, complete with the **Drop Shadow** effect and the blending options done:



Step 22: Select the Move tool

To reposition text, select the **Move** tool from the Toolbar:

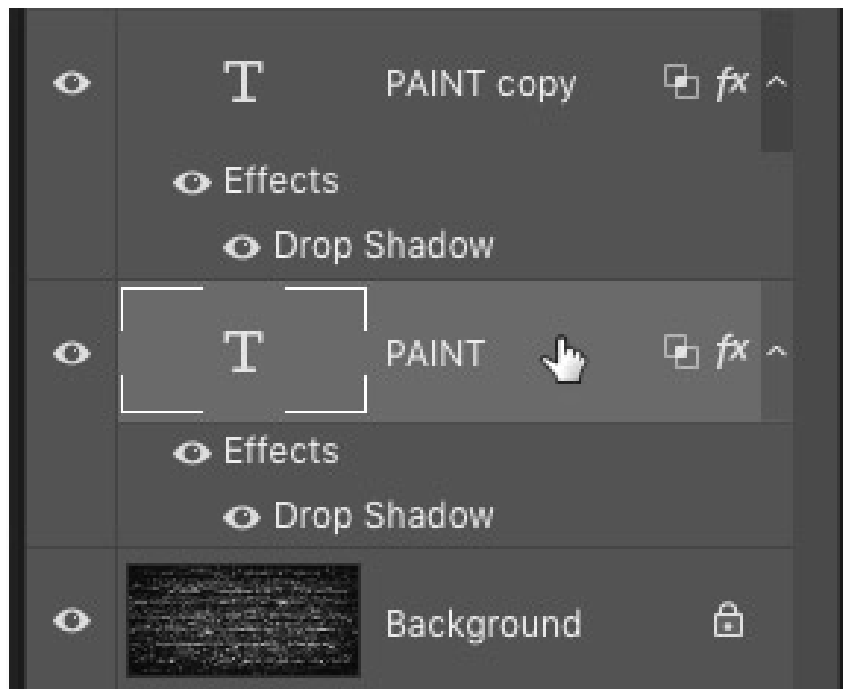


Step 23: Move the text to the right position

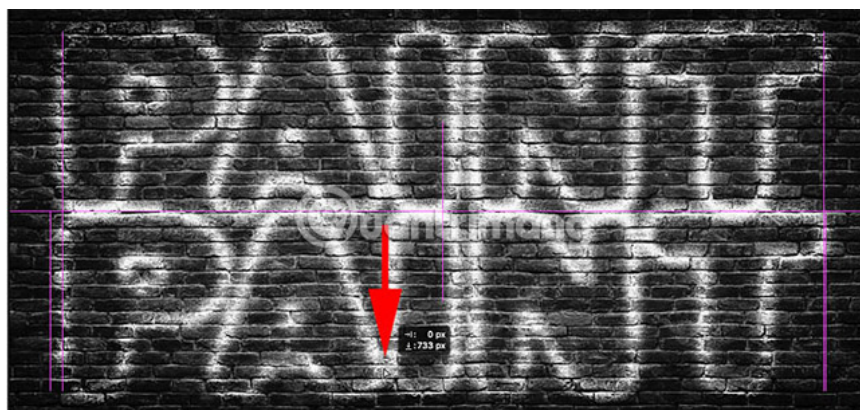
Then click on the text and move it to the right position. We will drag the copy of the text up:



Then, in the **Layers** panel , click on the original **Type** layer to select it:



And drag the original text below:



How to edit text with paint spray effect

Because the text is still editable, users can easily edit the text and keep the spray effect intact.

Step 24: Select the Type tool

If you don't want both texts to be the same, edit the text at the top. Select the **Type** tool from the Toolbar:



Step 25: Select and edit text

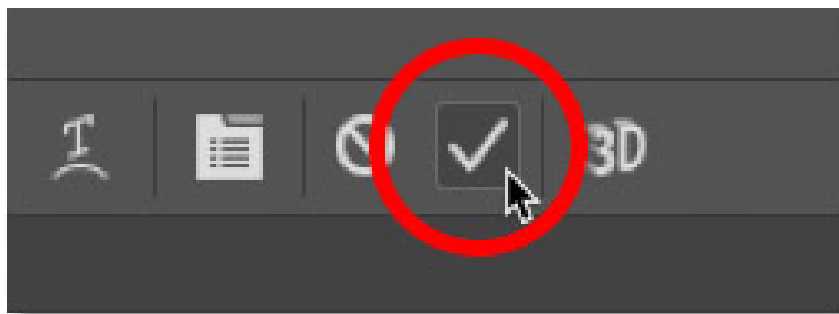
Then, double click inside the word to highlight the word:



And change the word "PAINT" to "SPRAY":

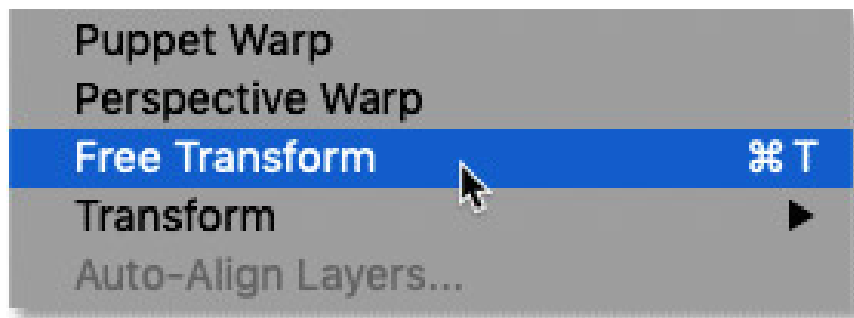


To accept it, click the check mark in the **Options Bar**:



Step 26: Change the edited text size with Free Transform

Change the top text size by going to the **Edit** menu and selecting **Free Transform**:



And then drag the handle in the top corner to change the size of the word, so that it has the same width as from the bottom. To accept it, press **Enter** (Win) / **Return** (Mac) on the keyboard:



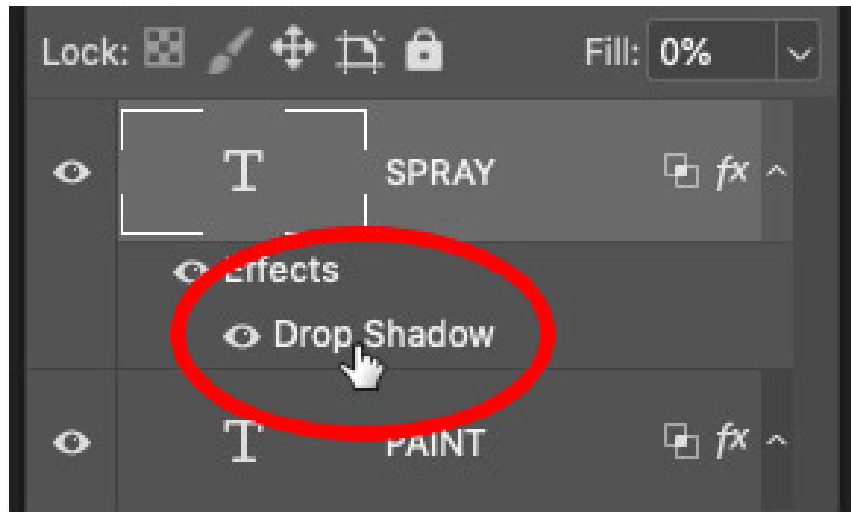
How to change paint colors

And finally, see how to change the color of the effect.

Step 27: Double-click the Drop Shadow layer effect

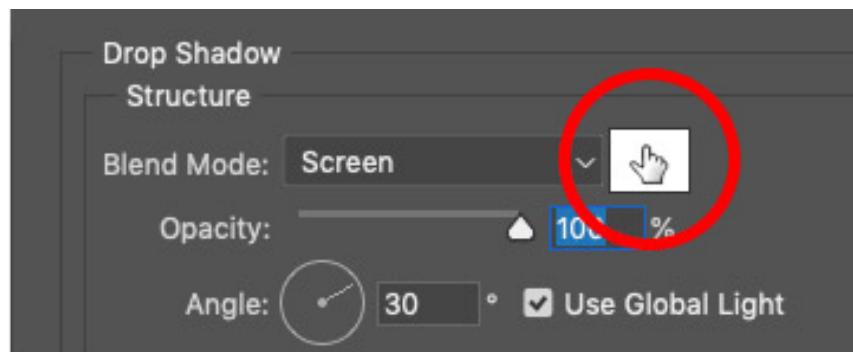
To change the color of the spray paint, double-click the "**Drop Shadow**" text below the **Type** layer . If you have more than one **Type** layer, make sure to double-click the correct layer.

In the example case, we will start with the word "**SPRAY**" at the beginning:



Step 28: Click on the color swatch

This opens the **Layer Style** dialog box again . Click on the color swatch:



Step 29: Select a new color from the Color Picker

And then in **Color Picker**, choose a new color. We will choose a lighter color, such as yellow:

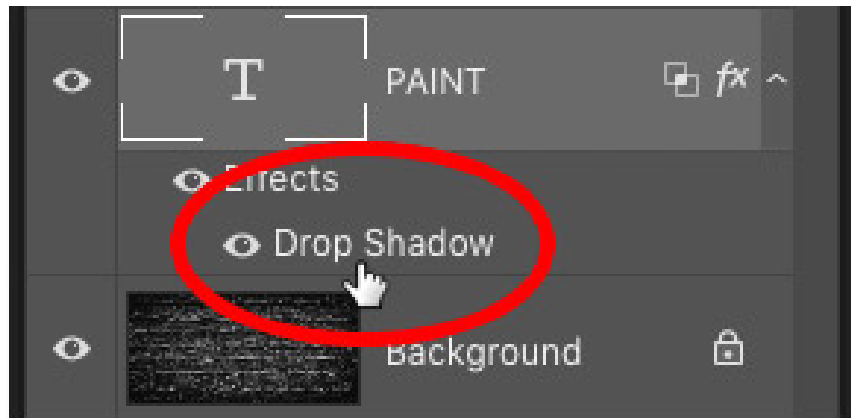


Click **OK** to close the **Color Picker**, and then click **OK** to close the **Layer Style** dialog box . And now the text above will be yellow:



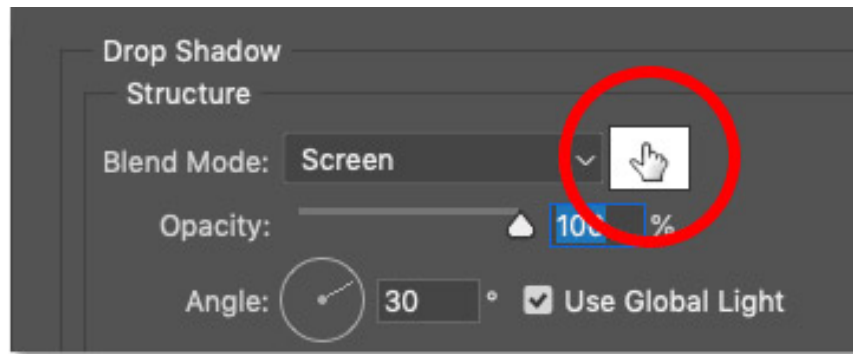
Change the color of the text below

The example will do the same thing with the text below. Double click on the words "**Drop Shadow**" to reopen the **Layer Style** dialog box :

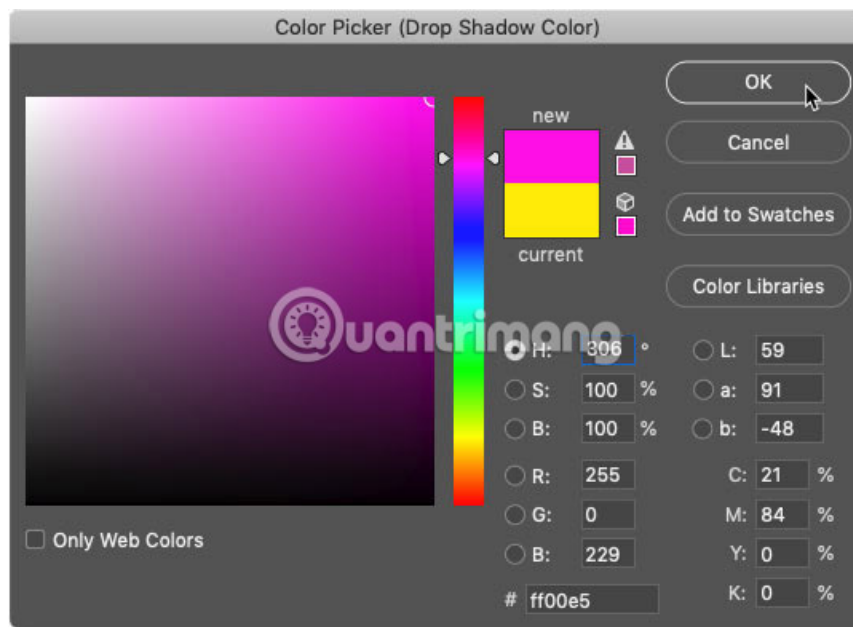


Reopen the **Drop Shadow** layer effect for the word "PAINT".

And then click on the color swatch:



And choose a new color from **Color Picker**. For the text below, choose a light color, like red pink:



Click **OK** again to close the **Color Picker**, and then click **OK** to close the **Layer Style** dialog box .

And here, after adding color to both words, the end result will be as follows:



Hope you are succesful.

You finished reading the article "**How to create spray paint effect in Photoshop**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.