

How to Composite a Decorative Border

By Diane Miller

I love the ragged borders from Silver Efex Pro, but sometimes I'd like to be able to use one on a color image. No problem. Here's how:

Open your image in Photoshop and add a new layer on top. (If you already have a stack of layers that's fine.) Fill the new layer with 50% gray (Edit > Fill) and open Silver Efex Pro. Don't do any adjustments except choosing the border. SEP will create a new layer above your gray layer. Delete the gray layer you made (or just turn off its visibility if you might want to try other borders) and change the mode of the new border layer to Hard Light.

You can resize the border on its new layer or change its aspect ratio by going to Edit > Transform. You can move each side independently.

If a border cuts into a picture too much, go to Image > Canvas Size and enlarge it to add some white padding to the edges, then move the edges of the new border just enough so its edge just barely intrudes on the image.

You can composite borders from other programs in the same way, and can make a collection of them on 50% gray canvases that you can add as a top layer to any image you wish.

If the added canvas is bigger than the size of your working image, go to Image > Reveal All.

It's that simple!

