THE
ADOBE PHOTOSHOP

elements

CRAFTS

BOOK

TUMBLED MARBLE COASTERS

The image I designed for this project appears much more complicated than it actually is. By adding self-adhesive felt to the back of the tiles, you'll have a unique set of coasters. If you want to use the Gerbera daisy image, you can download it from www.photoshopcrafts. com. With this project, you will learn how to silhouette an image using the Magic Selection Brush tool, create a custom gradient, experiment with Blending Modes, and apply filters such as Clouds and Noise.

Four 4-inch tumbled marble tiles

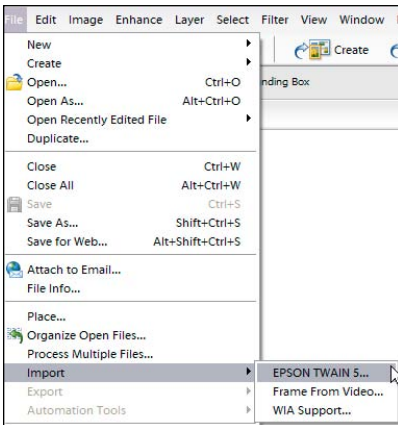Inkjet decal paper, such as Lazertran

Craft utility knife

Turpentine

Bowl of warm water

Oil-based varnish, such as polyurethane

Small paint brush

Two 9 x 12 sheets adhesive-backed felt, such as Quick Stick

1 The main graphic for the coasters is a silk Gerbera daisy which I put directly onto the bed of a scanner. To access a scanner that is hooked up to your computer, choose File > Import and select the name of your scanner manufacturer. The scanner software dialog box opens, and it is there where you select the resolution and the area of the image you want to scan. The image then opens in Photoshop Elements.
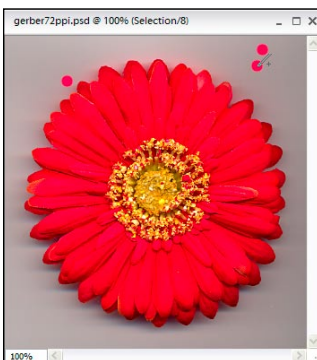
2 The next step is to select just the flower. In this case, it will be much faster to select the background because of the similarity in tonal colors. Select the Magic Selection Brush tool ✎ in the toolbox and click once on the background. Notice now that your cursor has a + sign next to it. This means that you can continue adding to your selection by clicking in areas not yet selected.

NOTE *Elements Version 3.0 users can select the background area of the image with the Magic Wand tool.*
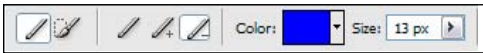
3 If you pick up some of the flower pixels, switch to the Magic Selection Brush tool that has a - next to the cursor in the Options bar located at the top of your work area. Click on the area that you don't want to be part of the selection.


gerber72ppi.psd @ 100% (RGB/8*)

100%

4 Next, since you ultimately want the subject selected (not the background), you need to select the inverse of the selected area by choosing Select > Inverse. Now the flower is selected.
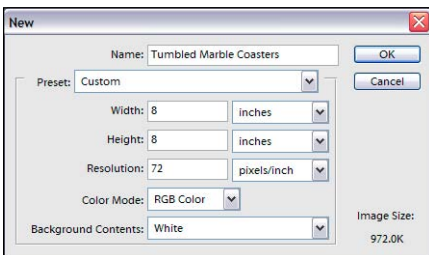
**5** Create a new document by choosing File > New > Blank File. The New dialog box appears. Enter a name in the Name field. Enter 8 inches in the Width field and 8 inches in the Height field. Enter the same resolution as your scanned image. If you're using the image of the daisy from the www.photoshopcrafts.com Web site, enter 72 for resolution. Choose White for Background Contents. Select RGB for Color Mode. Click OK.
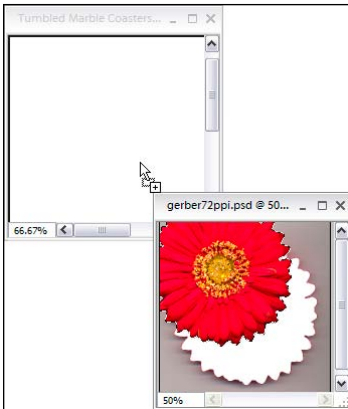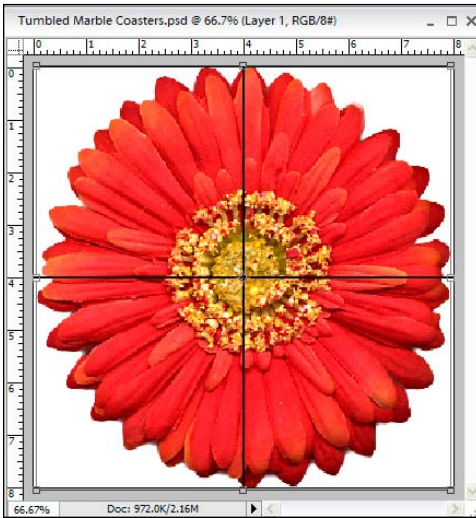
6 Select the Move tool ▶⊕ in the toolbox, and with the Shift key pressed, drag and drop the selection into the blank document. When you press the Shift key while dragging an image from one document to another, the image is automatically centered in the new document. Note that the flower is now on its own layer in the Layers palette.
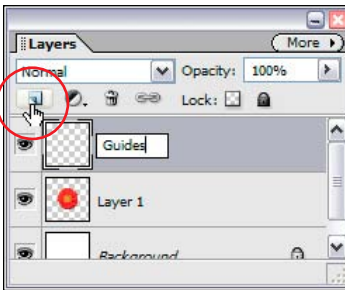

7 Create a new layer by clicking on the New Layer icon located at the top of the Layers palette. Double+click the layer and name it "Guides". Press D on your keyboard to set the Foreground and Background swatches in the toolbox back to the default black and white.
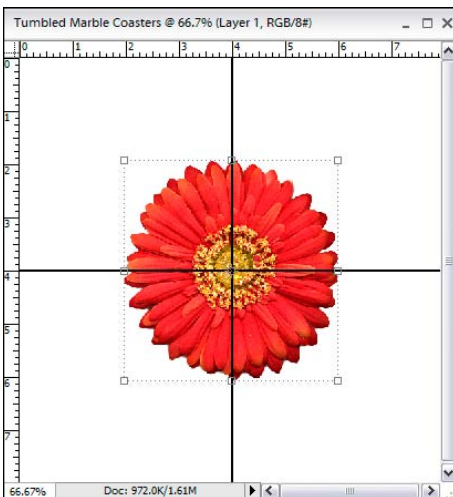
8 Choose Rulers from the View menu. Select the Pencil tool in the toolbox by pressing N on your keyboard. In the Options bar located at the top of your work area, enter 2 pixels for Size.

Now, press the Shift key and drag a vertical line from the top of your document to the bottom, at the 4-inch mark on the ruler. Release the mouse button. Now, drag a horizontal line also at the 4-inch mark, with the Shift key pressed.

9 The next step is to scale the flower to the size of the entire canvas. Select the Move tool in the toolbox by pressing V on your keyboard, and then click on the flower layer. Press Shift and drag the corner points. Remember to use the arrow keys on your keyboard to nudge the flower into place. The side, top, and bottom handles should line up with the guides. Press Enter to apply the transformation. Once positioned, you can discard the Guides layer by dragging it on top of the Trash icon located at the top of the Layers palette.
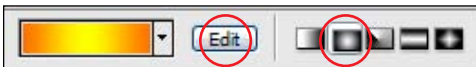
10 To add a gradient to the Background, select the Gradient tool in the toolbox by pressing G on your keyboard. Click the Radial Gradient icon in the Options bar located at the top of your work area, and then click the Edit button to open the Gradient Editor dialog box.
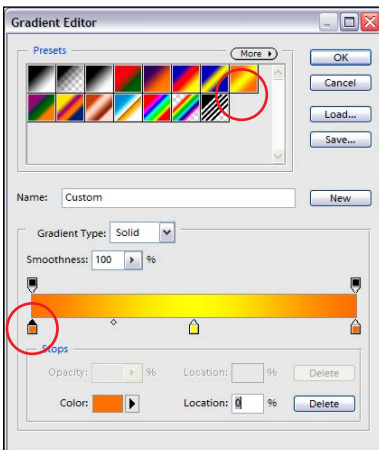
11 Select the "Orange Yellow Orange" gradient, as shown here, and then click once on the left Color Stop located in the lower left area of the dialog box. This will enable you to change the color of the first section of the gradient in the following step. You know it's selected when the triangle is black.
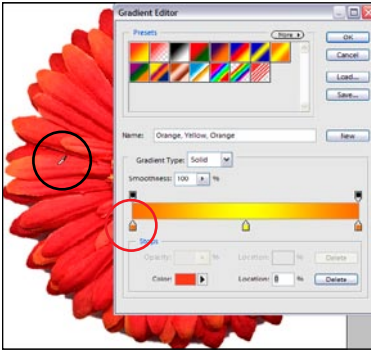
12 Float your cursor over the image. Your cursor will change into an eyedropper ✐, enabling you to sample a specific color in your image. Click on the desired color. You can also double+click the Color Stop to open the Color Picker and choose a color there.
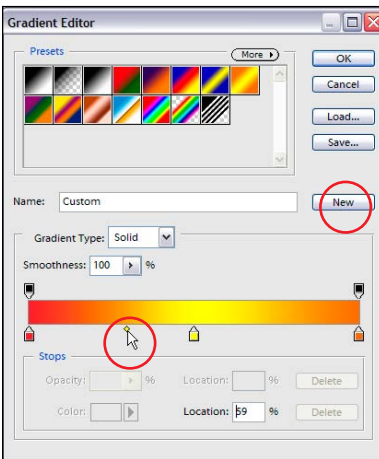

13 Designate the length of a color and where it transitions into the next color by dragging the small diamond to the left or right, as shown here. To avoid saving over one of the default gradients, enter a name for the gradient and click the New button. Click OK. Your custom gradient is now saved within the Gradient Editor and can be used another time.

14 With the Background selected in the Layers palette, drag across the image with the Gradient tool. Experiment dragging in different directions and lengths.
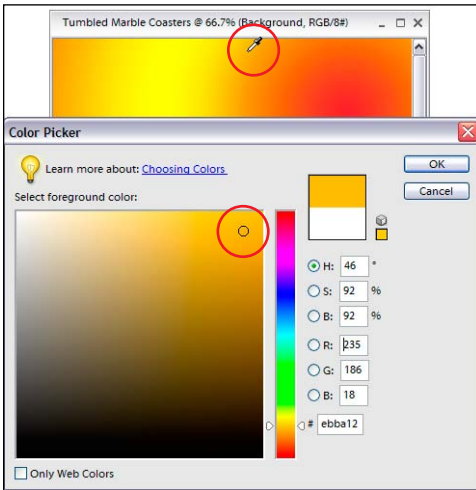
15 A different technique you can use on the background, instead of the gradient, is to apply the Clouds filter which randomly mixes two colors in a "cloud-like" fashion.

Click on the Foreground swatch in the toolbox to open the Color Picker. Float your cursor over the image. Your cursor will change into an eyedropper ✒, enabling you to sample a specific color in your image. Click on the desired color and then click OK.

Next, click on the Background swatch in the toolbox and sample a second color. Click OK. When you apply the Clouds filter in the next step, the new Foreground and Background colors you just selected will be mixed.


16 Select the Background in the Layers palette. Select Filter > Render > Clouds. Experiment toggling through different cloud combinations, by pressing Ctrl+F a few times.

17 Next, change the Blending Mode for the flower layer by first selecting that layer in the Layers palette. Choose Overlay from the Blending Mode pop-up menu in the Layers palette. The Overlay mode combines the pixels of the active layer with the underlying image pixels, but preserves the highlight and shadow detail in the image.
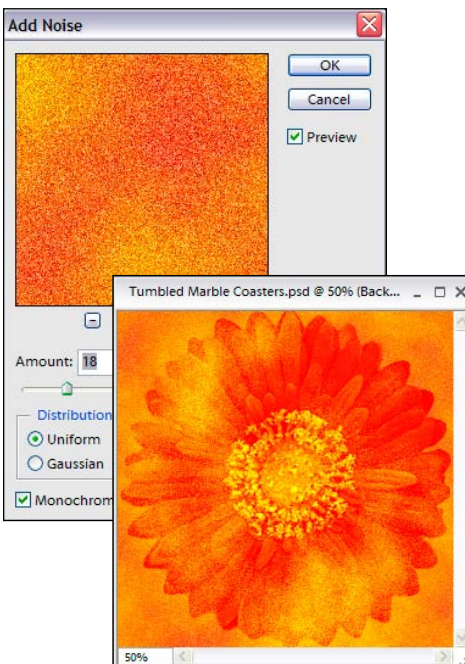
18 Press the Alt key and then choose Merge Visible from the Layers palette menu. This will make a merged copy of the two layers onto a new layer, so the mezzotint effect can be applied to both the Background clouds and the flower. To create a mezzotint effect, add Noise to the image by choosing Filter > Noise > Add Noise.
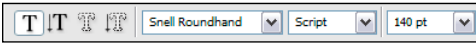
19 The final design step is to add a few lines of text to the image. I used the Latin terms for genus and species of the Gerbera daisy, along with a few other historical word associations relevant to this flower.

Select the Horizontal Text tool **T** in the toolbox and click anywhere in your document. Type what you would like.

20 Drag over the text to highlight it, and choose your formatting in the Options bar located at the top of your work area. I selected Snell Roundhand at various point sizes for each line of text. Select the Move tool in the toolbox to position each line of text.

21 When you are ready to print onto the inkjet decal paper, follow the directions provided by the transfer paper manufacturer. Allow the print to dry for at least 30 minutes. With a ruler and craft utility knife, trim the image so each quadrant is exactly 4-inches wide.

22 Brush the tiles with a coat of turpentine (do not substitute mineral spirits). This will help the transfer settle into the pores of the marble.

Soak the decal in fairly warm water for about 15 seconds (it will curl). Carefully slide the decal off the backing sheet and onto the marble. Gently position it in place and carefully remove any air bubbles with your fingertips. The decal is extremely delicate, so use a light touch. Allow the decal to dry overnight, and then apply several coats of oil-based protective varnish, such as polyurethane.

The final step is to trim the felt backing sheets just under 4-square inches for each coaster. I applied two squares of self-adhesive felt to the back of each coaster for added surface protection.