

Making Buttons with Adobe Photoshop

Program Outline

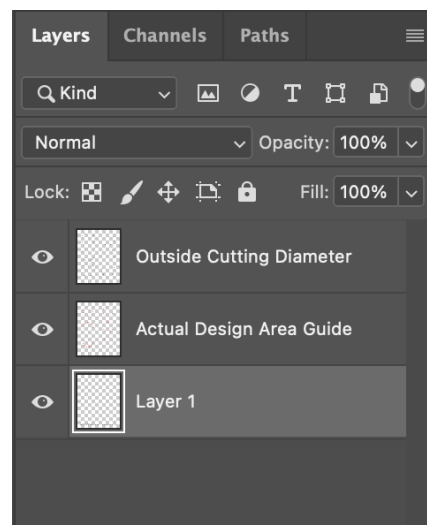
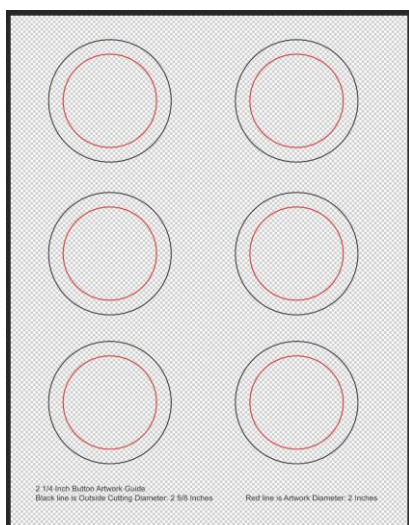
This program / class visit activity is designed to have attendees find images online, use Adobe Photoshop and a button layout template to arrange and size the images, print those templates and cut out the button designs, then use the button maker to press buttons with the printed and cut images.

Supplies Needed

- Button maker (most branches use 2.25")
- Button supplies including metal shell fronts, metal pinbacks, mylar sheets
- Macbook/laptop kit with Photoshop licenses
- USB stick and scissors
- Office printer for printing button templates

Step 1 – Let's Get Shopping

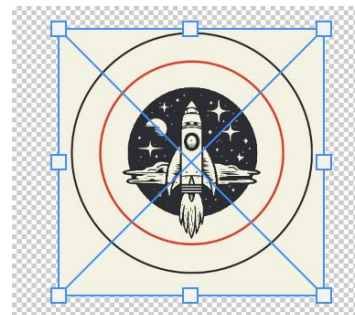
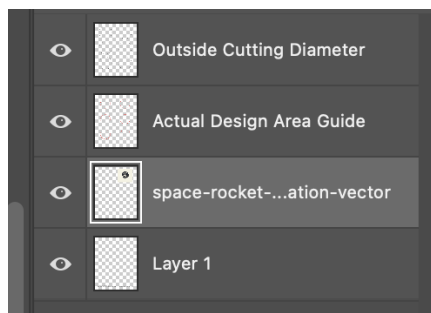
- Start by downloading a Photoshop button template from this website:
<https://www.umakebuttons.com/pages/templates>
- Scroll down, and under Adobe Photoshop templates, download the 2.25" .psd file. Open the file in Photoshop, where images will eventually be added to the template.



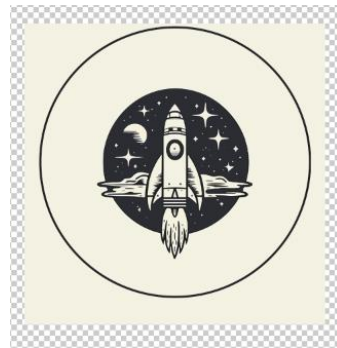
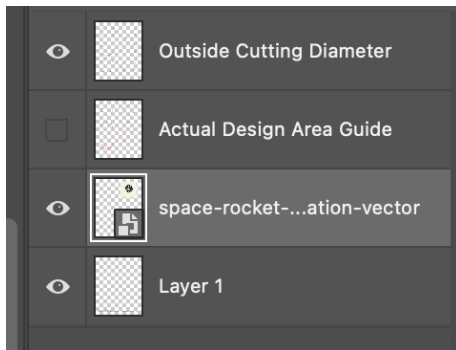
- The button template is set up to print on an 8.5”x11” sheet of paper and consists of three layers: Layer 1 (the background layer), the ‘Actual Design Area Guide’ layer, and the ‘Outside Cutting Diameter’ layer.
- For 2.25” buttons, there are six circles laid out on the template, ready for images to be imported. There’s a red circle inside a black circle for each button.
- The red circle is the border for the ‘Actual Design Area Guide’ layer, which is the surface area that will be visible on the front of the finished button.
- The black circle is the border for cutting each button once the finished template has been printed. The space between each black and red circle will be wrapped around the edge of the button once it's pressed.
- The three layers are stacked on top of each other and it’s important that images imported into the template are placed on a layer just above Layer 1, so the circle layers will still be visible above the images when they’re first imported.

Step 2 – Find It, Size It, Print It, Cut It

- Head online and search for button images. Buttons are circular, so images will need to have a circular shape or will be cropped to fit within the red circle. Square images work better than landscape or portrait for this purpose.
- Save the desired images to the computer and from the download folder, drag the first image file onto the Photoshop canvas, making sure Layer 1 is highlighted first. This will ensure the image is imported onto a new layer, right above Layer 1.
- Most images will need to be re-sized when first imported, done by clicking and dragging the corner boxes surrounding it. Dragging the image itself will move it around the canvas, with the arrow keys providing finer movements. Press Enter on the keyboard to confirm the size/placement. CTRL or CMD+T to resize again.
- Size the image so that whatever is being shown on the front of the button fits entirely within the red circle, allowing for the rest of the image to overlap with the black circle. This will ensure the image shows prominently and doesn’t leave any gaps around the edges of the finished button.



- Do the same for the rest of the images, filling up the template. Once the sizing and placement of all images is satisfactory, hide the 'Actual Design Area Guide' layer by clicking on the eyeball icon next to it on the layers panel. This will remove the red circle from the template, so it doesn't get printed with the image and shows up on the front of the finished buttons.



- Save the finished template as a .pdf file by going to File -> Save As, then changing the file format to Photoshop PDF. Click Save PDF from the pop-up window and save the file to a USB stick.
- Print out the finished .pdf templates full size on regular 8.5"x11" office paper and cut out the button images, using the black circle border as a guide for each one.

Step 3 – A Pressing Matter

- With the cut-out images and button supplies ready, take a metal shell front (ensuring there's not two or more stacked together) and place it face-up in Die A of the button maker, followed by the paper image and a single mylar sheet.



- Once these items have been secured in Die A of the button maker, spin the press around and place a metal pinback face-down (sharp edge up) in Die B.

- With the button maker now loaded, press down firmly on the handle while Die A is in the pressing position, then release it back. This will press the three pieces in Die A together and bring the components up into the top part of the button maker.



- Spin the press around and then press the handle down firmly while Die B is in the pressing position. This will take the pressed components from Die A and press them together with the metal pinback from Die B. Release the handle back to the starting position and spin the press around once more to retrieve the finished button.
- If the pinback pin is skewed with the image on the front of the button, simply twist the front and back pieces until they're aligned.
- Repeat these steps for the rest of the images and enjoy the buttons.

