

# A Picture Frame from any image - Part 3

The goal in this third part of the Picture Frame tutorial is to make a frame out of any thumbnail texture that you can find on the web. In this tutorial, we're going to concentrate on stone textures. However, I'm going to show you a site and technique where you can create thousands of frames out of all sorts of different backgrounds...materials, lights, and textures, and also where you create some great backgrounds and materials panels for your scrapbooking.

## Let's look at some results:

The first task is to look at some frame results, so that you will get a sense of where we are going with this tut. Can you see the difference between the top picture frame to the right, and the bottom picture frame? They were made from the same little thumbnail image of stone. Yet, the top image is far more clear, with stone texture and shadowing that the bottom frame has lost. The bottom frame is pixellated, flat, washed out, and if you were to use this frame, your project will lose the richness and sharpness you have planned for it.

If you would like your picture frames to look more like the one at the top, then read on!

## 1. What you'll need for this tut:

**A. Screen Capture software:** If you used something like FastStone Capture for tut #2, don't put it away yet. You'll be making great use of screen capture in this tut.

**B. WebPlus Starter Edition**, or a more full-featured edition, like WP10, WPX2, or WPX4, or some form of app that takes a thumbnail and tiles it for a full-screen effect. I used WP Starter Edition for two reasons: It's free, and it will tile a thumbnail as a background image.

Oh, and when we go through this tut of making background images in WP, you might want to snag a large screenshot for backgrounds in your DSA projects or as unique materials digikits.

On the next page, we'll go to a website with thousands of textures you can use for FREE!



## 2. [www.grsites.com](http://www.grsites.com)

The screenshot shows the GR Sites website interface. At the top, there's a logo for 'GR Sites' with the tagline 'Web Design Tools for the rest of us'. Navigation links include 'Design' (Buttons, Text Logos, Menus, Textures, Text Boxes, Icons) and 'Browse' (Background Textures, Fonts, Sound Effects). There are also 'Login' and 'Register' buttons. Below the navigation, there's a 'Pattern Background Maker' section with a sidebar listing color categories: RED, ORANGE, YELLOW, DARK BLUE, BLUE, LIGHT BLUE, BLUE-GREEN, DARK GREEN, GREEN, and LIGHT GREEN. Each category has a link to 'Background Textures' and a list of page numbers. The main area displays a grid of 16 background texture thumbnails, each with a filename and file size. The thumbnails include various patterns like marbled, geometric, and abstract designs.

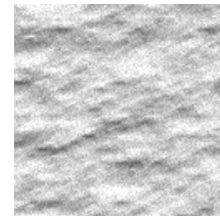
It's called Grsites.com, and there is no registration required. Some of the offerings on the site are “pay to use” items or services, but the backgrounds and fonts are free for you to use. I'm sure that there are other sites with similar content, but I found this one to be quite robust, with thousands of texture and pattern thumbnails that you can have loads of fun with.

## 3. Find a pattern that you like

Take your time and look through the pattern choices available. There are color collections to match a particular project. And, there are stone patterns. You will also find some various color stone patterns that will also either match or compliment the project you are working on.

I found a nice white-ish stone pattern with a slightly muted pattern that seemed to work well with the picture on the first page of this tut. Kathy's dress is black, but her hair is silver and so are the rocks behind her. I wanted something with a slight bit of contrast, but not something that would overpower the lightness of the photograph.

Here's the stone thumbnail sample I found. It should be perfect for Kathy's photograph.



On the next page, I'll show you the problem with this “perfect” rock sample.

In Part-2 of the tutorial, we learned how to CROP a Quick Shape to a background image. So, let's draw out the stone thumbnail to a size large enough to use for our frame. Go ahead and make the frame...CROP TO SHAPE...add the FX elements...drag it into the DSA Frames studio...drag it back out to your workspace, and then populate it with a picture. This will just take you a minute, and I'll wait while you do it.

All done? Great...well, not so great!!! Why is it that the frame doesn't look as sharp as the original stone thumbnail?



## The Problem

The problem is that our relatively sharp looking thumbnail (showing actual size here) lost a large amount of sharpness when drawn out large enough to be useful as a background for our frame. It became dull, pixellated, flat, and blurry. It lost much of the appeal we saw in the thumbnail.

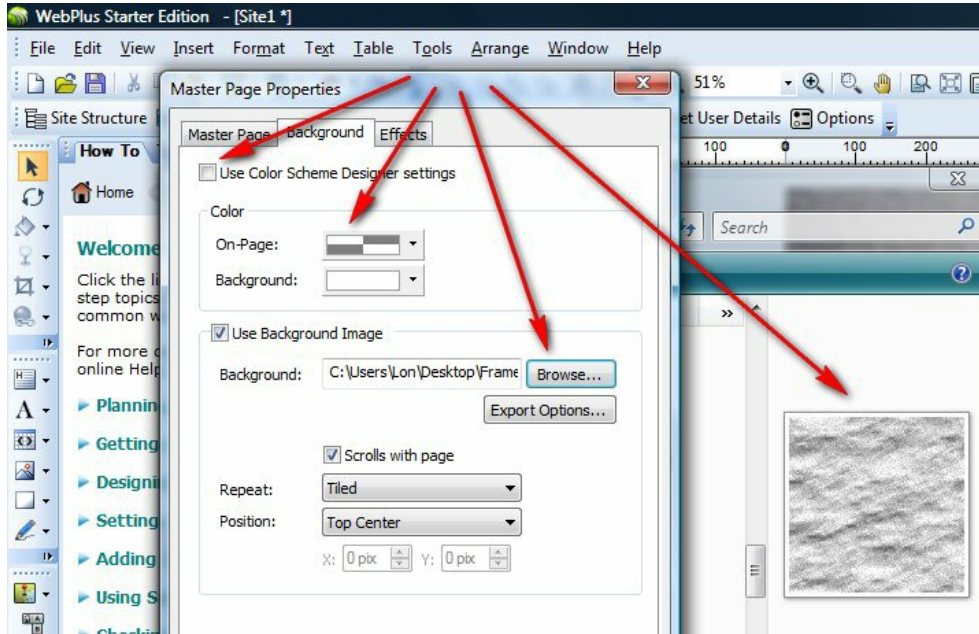
We need another way to blow up the size of this tile, and yet still maintain its sharpness and clarity.

**Time to start up WebPlus!!**

On the next page, we'll make a full page of the stone background and capture a section large enough to use for our frame....and a DSA background, too

## 4. Start WebPlus and start a New Site

If you are new to WebPlus, then you may have to come to the Serif Forums and get some help on creating your background image. We're only going to hit it lightly here, as we're assuming you have some experience with WebPlus.



What we're going to do is set the Master Page Properties up by:

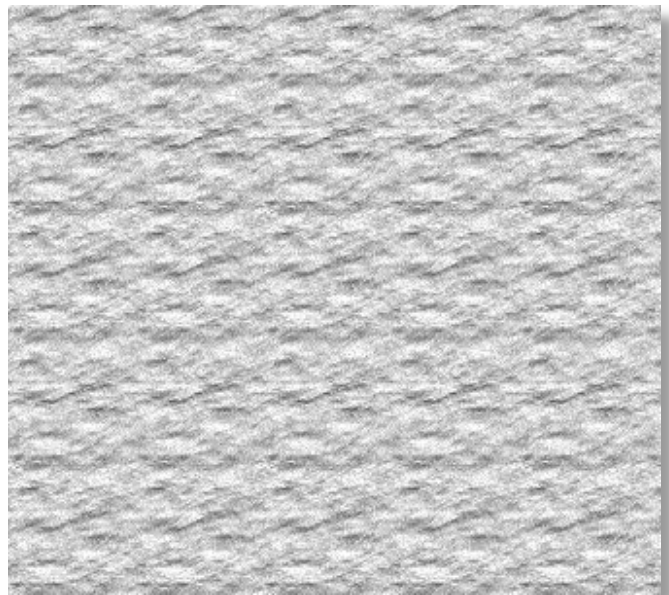
- unticking "Use Color Scheme Designer" and setting a tick mark in "Use Background Image"
- setting the ON-PAGE color to transparent
- browsing to find our stone thumbnail image
- OK Out

## 5. My, but what a nice big sample you have!!

Just as soon as you OK OUT of the Master Page dialog in WebPlus, you'll be presented with a full page of stone tiles, all nicely tiled across your page, and all with the same sharpness as your original thumbnail.

Use your screen capture software to take a snapshot of this stone image, big enough for your picture frame.

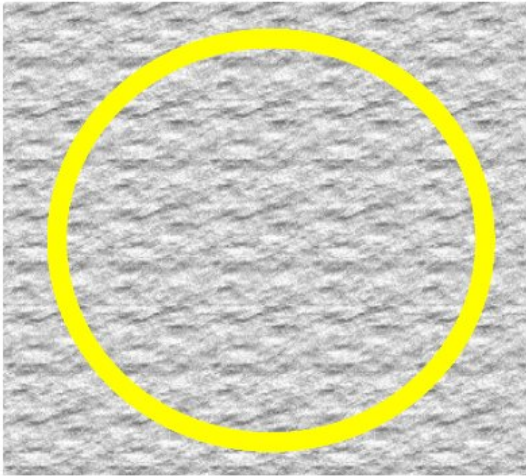
Its also at this point that you may decide to take an even larger snapshot and turn it into a background image for your DSA projects. I have a folder full of these unique and different backgrounds now. I use many of them in my DSA blending projects, due to the interesting textures that can be found on [www.grsites.com](http://www.grsites.com)



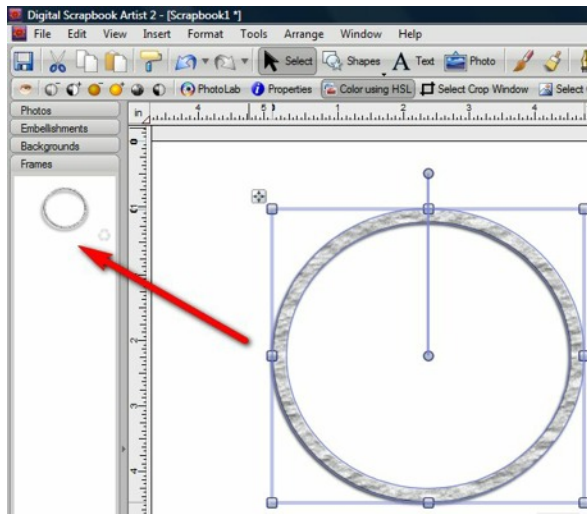
Go to the next page, and we'll make our frame from this larger stone image

## 6. Make frame...apply FX...Make the frame smart!

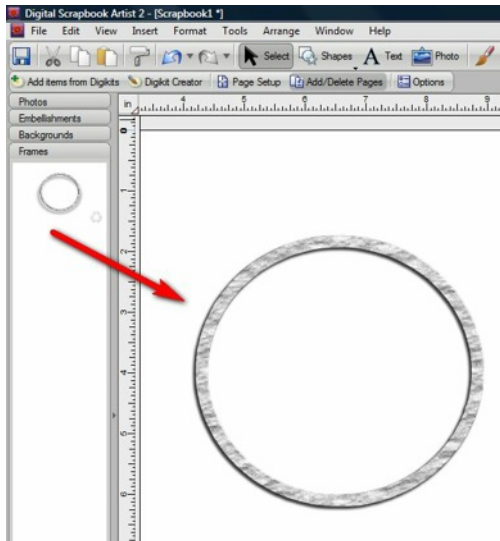
From here on out, this is just a duplication of what you learned in Part 2 of the tutorial, so we're not going to spend a lot of time on this page. The pictures should be just about enough, or refer to Part-2 of the tutorial.



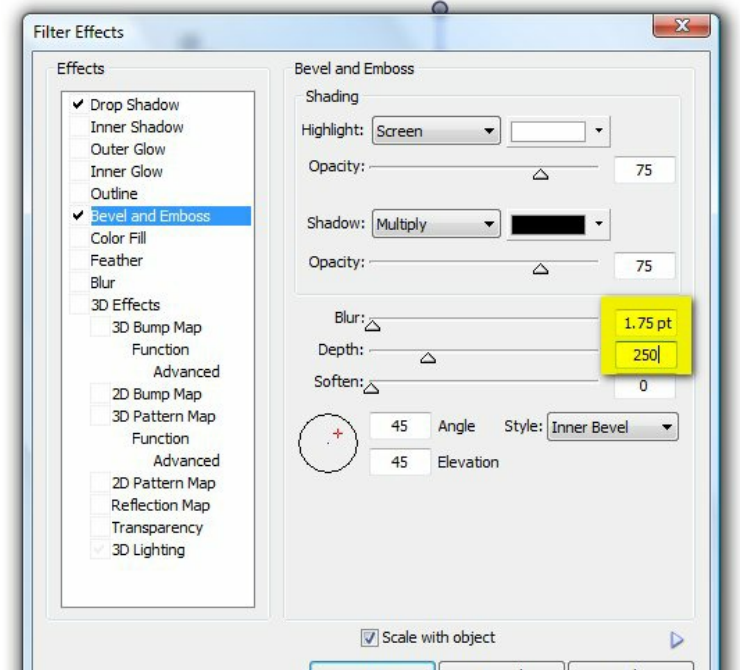
1. Position QS and Crop to shape



3. Drag frame to FRAMES studio



4. Drag "smart frame" back to workspace



2. Apply FX to the frame after the cropping



5. Populate your new frame with your image

On the next page...  
our finished frame appears



Here's Kathy's frame...finished...and then placed above some blendings in a DSA snapshot. Oh, and the muted background is another tiled image from [www.grsites.com](http://www.grsites.com), turned into a nicely textured background to soften the distance behind Kathy's frame, and to add some visual interest to the other blended shapes.

Have fun with DSA and frame creation. Just let your imagination loose for an afternoon, and there's no telling what you will come up with.

Good luck, and thanks for taking time to download and read this brief tutorial. Post back on the DSA forums, if you have questions about the tutorial, or just PM Lon In California. I'll be glad to help out with any question you have.