How to use the Styles Panel in Photoshop Elements

The Styles Panel includes a variety of pre-made styles that can be applied to the background, a shape, a selection, type, even a stroke. These styles may include some of the styles included in the layer style settings, or they may be totally separate styles including colors, patterns and textures. They cannot be applied to the background layer, a locked layer or a blank layer.

Styles from the Style panel are cumulative. That means that if you apply a style, and decide you want to change that style, just clicking on a new style will not replace the original style, but will add to that style. As you continue clicking on new styles, eventually you will not see any effects changing. If you apply a style and decide you want to change the style, use command/control Z to undo the original style and then apply the new style.

Some styles will be affected by what is in the background. Most styles will not. As long as there is something on the layer, it can generally be any color, the style will be applied and in most cases unaffected by what color the shape or type is..

You can combine different styles by changing the opacity of the style layer. Changing the opacity will allow some of the background colors to affect the style. You can also combine more than one style by creating different layers for each style and changing the opacity to allow the other styles to show through. In the YouTube tutorial I combined three different styles with different opacities to create a sunburst effect. Just make each style a separate layer with it's own style.

A style from the style panel will be applied to the center of the background, type, selection, shape etc. If you want to move the position of the style, you can change the size of the item it is applied to. If the item is the background, just command/control T to enlarge the background. Drag the corner handles until the center mark is where you want the center of the style to be, then click the check mark to accept it.

You can apply a style directly to type or a shape, but you will not be able to move or reposition the style within the text or shape. The center of the shape or text will be the center of the style. To move the style in a shape or text, create a new layer above the type or shape layer. Make a marquee large

enough to cover the shape or text. Fill the marquee with a color, white or black. Apply the style to that layer and clip it to the shape or text layer. To clip it hold down the Option/Alt key and drag your curser between the text or shape layer and the style layer. When you see a square with an arrow pointing down, let go of the mouse button. The style layer will be clipped to the text or shape layer, showing up only where there are pixels on the shape or type layer. You can then transform the style layer by pressing command/control T and pulling one of the handles (squares) in the corner to move the center point of the style to the desires spot.

To rotate a style, create the style layer. Duplicate the layer and turn off the visibility of the original. This way you will have the original to go back to if you want to make changes. Select the copy layer and simplify it. The layer will now be filled with the style. This is no longer a style, but an actual object that can now be rotated to the desires position. Then clip it to the text or shape layer as described above.

Using multiple styles, combined with opacity of the layers can give you unlimited options for text, shapes and backgrounds.