

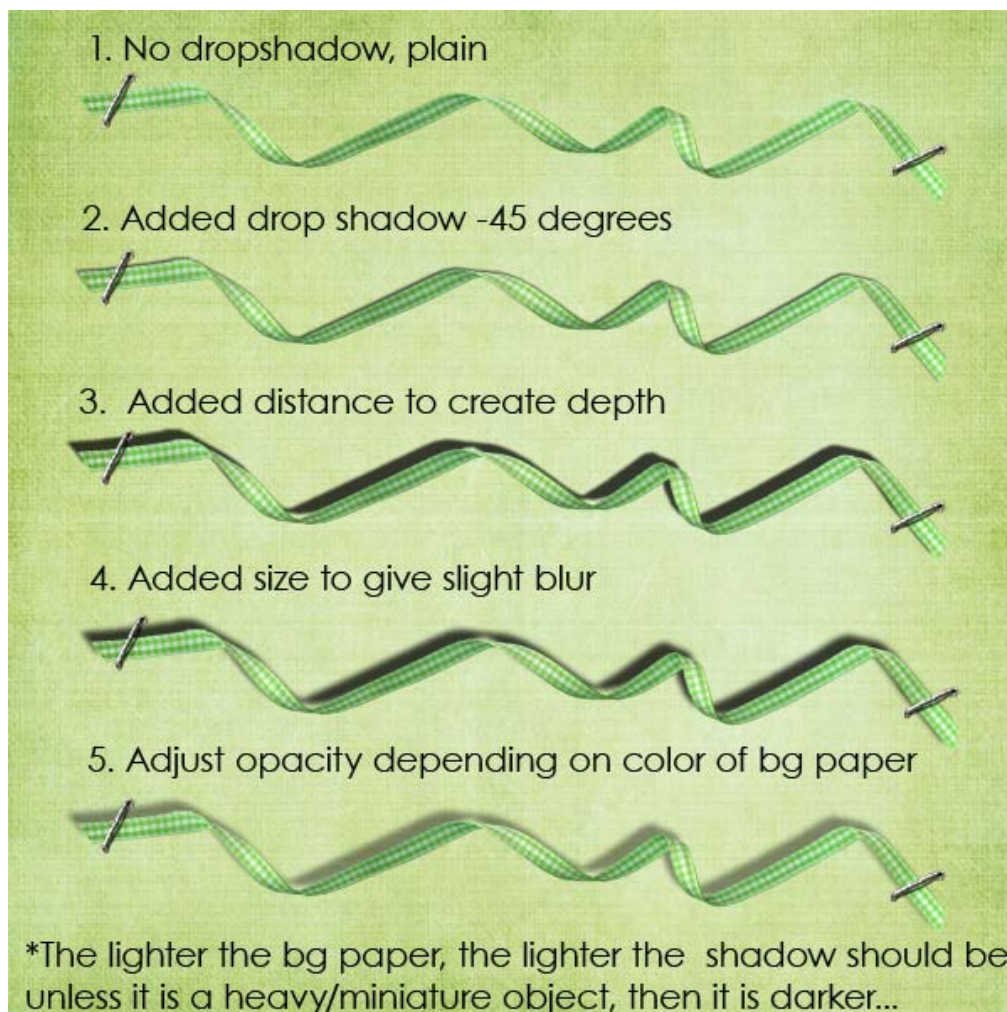
Realistic Drop Shadows Using Adobe Photoshop PS7, CS, CS2 or CS3

Tutorial by Divian

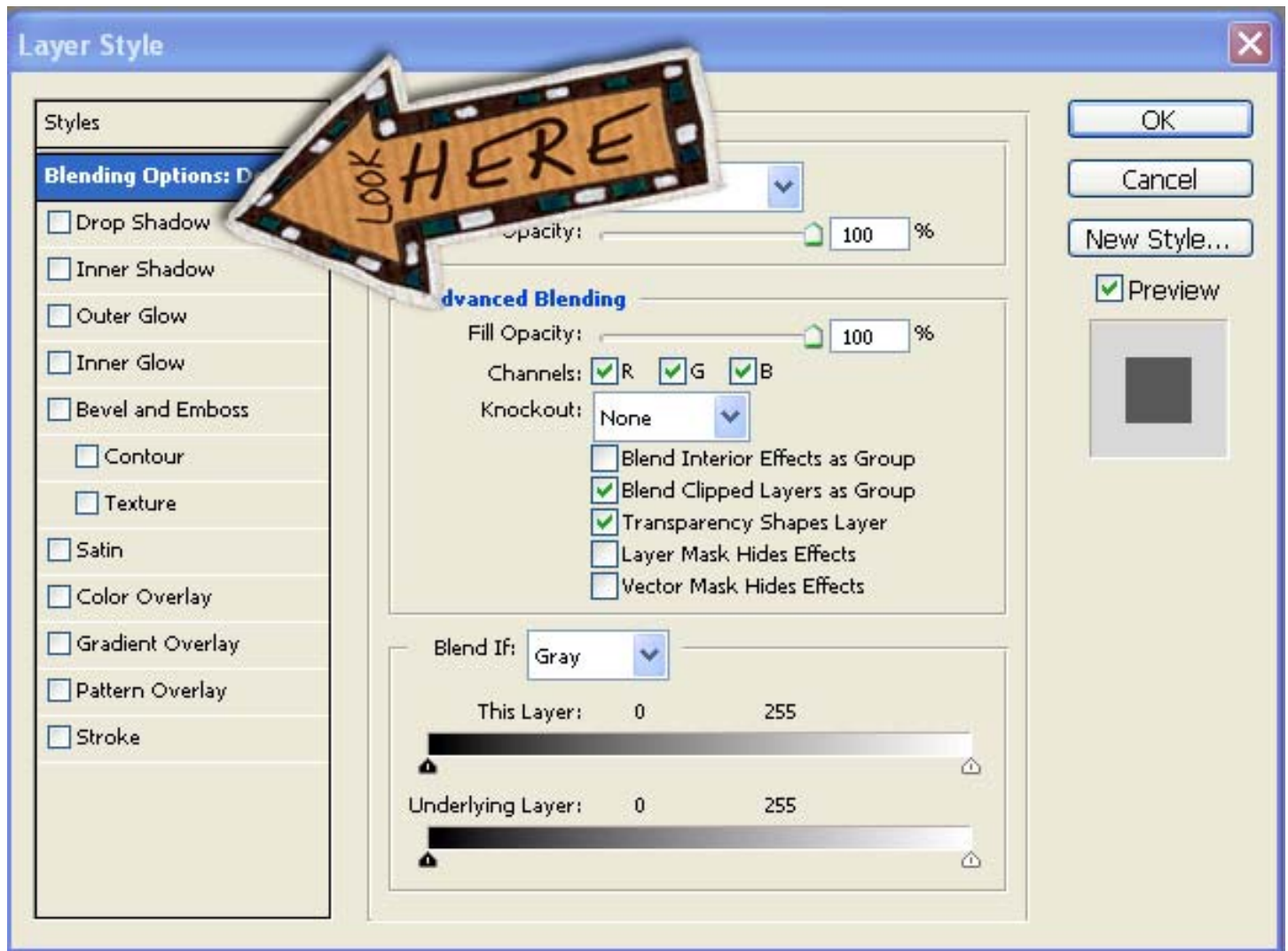
If you have any questions, please contact me at divianc@gmail.com.

It took me the longest time to figure out a method of adding drop shadows that I was actually pleased with. I played and fiddled, but nothing seemed right. My method is one that I like to use and it offers the most realism in the most simplest of steps. I am still learning but here is what I have learned so far!

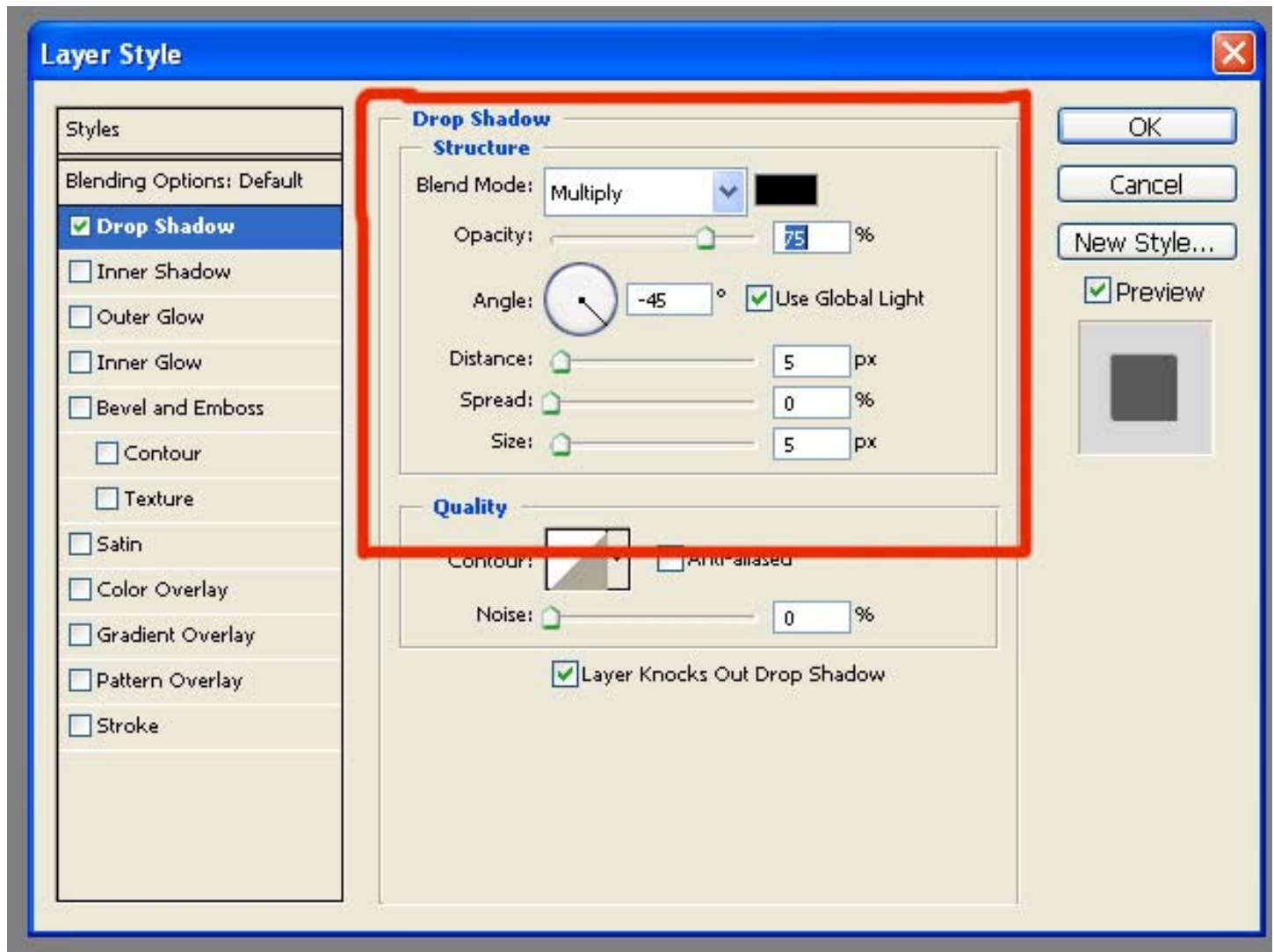
When I add my drop shadows, I like to use an angle of -45 degrees. This angle places the shadow along the top and left side of the object. I have found that a shadow in those places really makes the object pop. Of course, what angle you use is purely up to you, and you can still see a difference by following these easy and simple steps. I am not one for complication, so this is as simple as it gets without using actions!

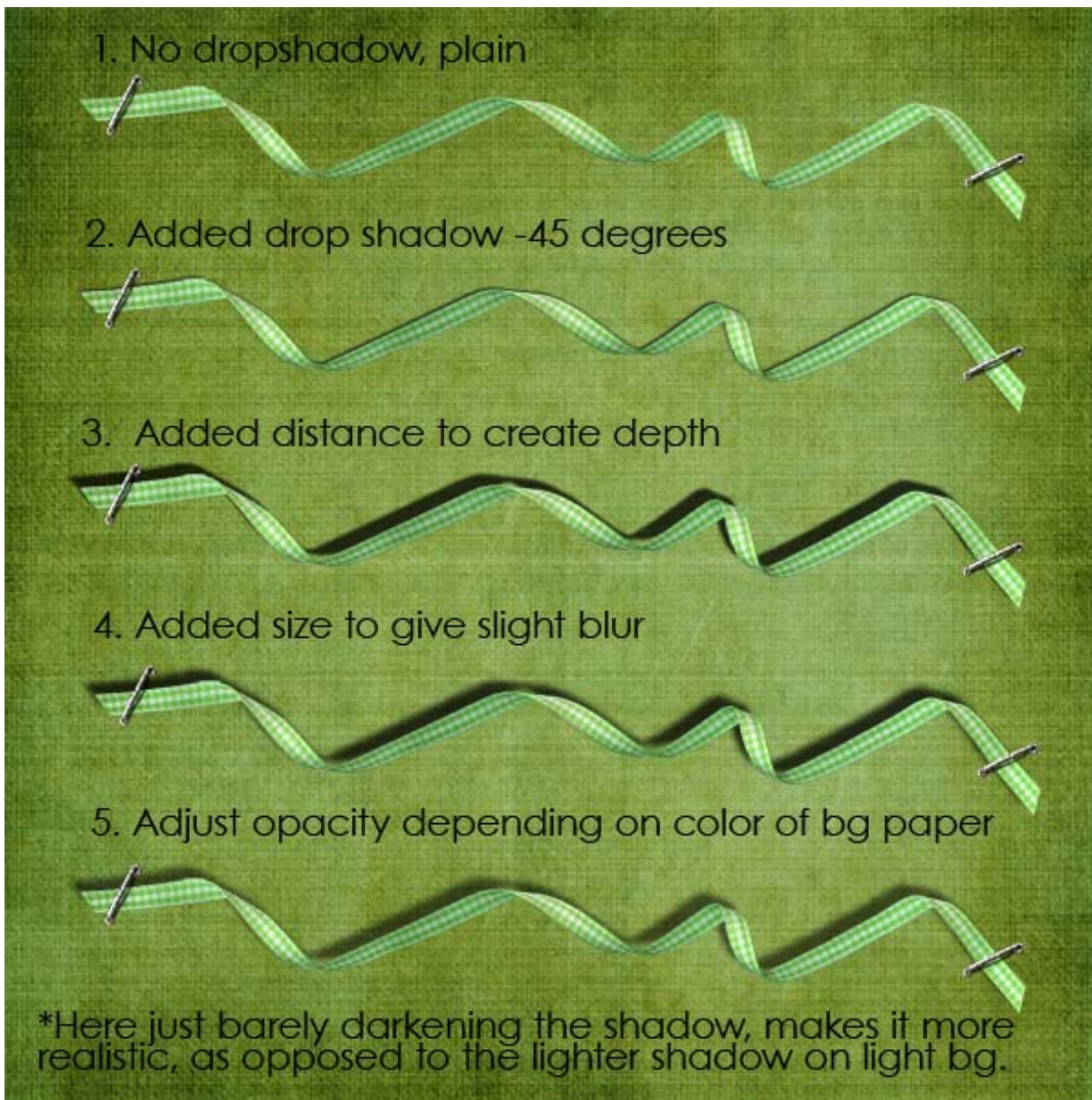


You begin adding a dropshadow by simply double-clicking on that layer in the layers window. This opens up the Layer Style window.



By double-clicking 'drop shadow' the middle of the window changes to show several sliders where you can make adjustments.

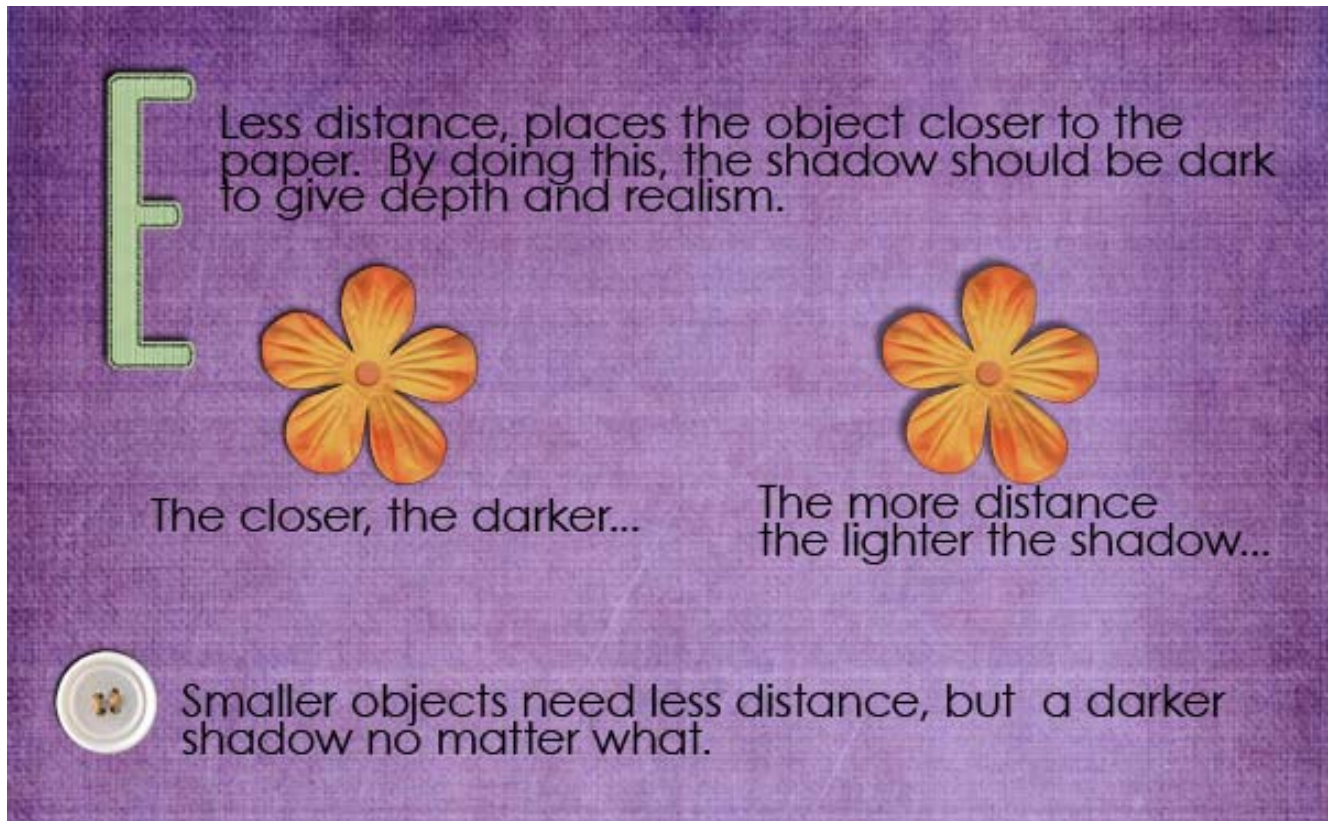




1. **DISTANCE.** Adding distance depends on how realistically something will ‘sit off’ of your page. The more distance you add, the more the object will appear not to be attached to the page. When using folding ribbons, flowers, or any object that cannot be ‘glued’ realistically all the way to a page, it is a good thing to go ahead and add a little distance! Just play around with it. The further left you go, the less distance...the further right you go, the more you get.
2. **SIZE.** You want to add size to the drop shadow...but just barely. This will give the shadow a slight blur. Not too much, just a faint hint of a blur...this adds to the realism.

3. **OPACITY.** Now that you have the distance and size, now depending on your background color, you can play with how dark or light your shadow should be. Light backgrounds need a lighter shadow on objects...unless the object is heavy...then only slightly darker.

Also, smaller objects need a darker shadow as well, sometimes 100%...the dark shadow on small objects give these objects depth and dimension. Dark backgrounds, unless you want to completely lose that fabulous shadow you just made, need a darker shadow...



And there you have it! Just a few simple steps and you're done. Just remember, each object should have its OWN set of adjustments. Not all objects are the same size, weight, etc. and therefore a ribbon with a further distance and lighter shadow will not have the same settings as those metal boyish elements or cardboard! So just play around with it...it's easy!

Credits...

*Sarah J Designs Gone Crazy Alpha

*Katie Pertiet Flowers

*Bren Boone Papers

*Katie Hadfield Arrows

*Jenn Patrick Staples

*Natalie Braxton Ribbons

*Karah Frederick's button