

3 Transformation and distortion

Scaling with Free Transform



IMAGE: HEMERA PHOTO OBJECTS

WHEN WE'RE CREATING a photo-montage, it's rare that all the elements of the design are going to be the correct size. We'll invariably need to change the size of one or more of the layers to fit. For this we need to make use of Elements' Free Transform tool. The tool comprises four modes; scale, distort, skew and perspective and with them, we can alter a design element to fit almost any image.

We'll be looking at all the different ways of using Free Transform over the next few pages. In this lesson we'll be looking at the scaling features. We'll apply the Alice in Wonderland effect to our unsuspecting model to demonstrate the ways we can resize an image.

DOWNLOADS



Drink Me.psd

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Scaling proportionally to maintain the image shape
- Free scaling to change both the size and shape



1 This little girl hasn't paid heed to Alice's plight and has sipped from the Drink Me bottle. Let's begin her transformation. Press **Ctrl** **T** **⇧** **T**. A bounding box appears to tell us we're now in Free Transform mode.



2 By default Free Transform is set to constrain the proportions of the layer. If we click and drag the top-left handle down towards the bottom-right, the girl starts to shrink down and keeps her original shape.



3 If we hold down **Shift** while we drag the corner we temporarily disable constrained proportions. Now when we drag the mouse, she starts to stretch out in the direction we move the bounding box.



4 The middle handles are different; they only scale vertically and horizontally and do not maintain the proportions, regardless of whether or not the option is enabled. Here we've dragged the top-middle handle down. She's now looking a little squashed.



5 Normally when we drag the handles the transformation follows the cursor, expanding or contracting out in one direction. If we hold **alt** **↵** as we drag, the layer will be scaled in or out from the center of the bounding box.



6 We'll adjust her out a little to get her proportions back but keep her small; she won't fit down the rabbit hole otherwise! Once we're happy with the adjustments we've made we can apply them. To do this either click the green check at the bottom or press **Enter**.

HOT TIP

You can also access Free Transform from the Move tool. If you have its bounding box enabled in the options, as soon as you click on one of the handles Elements will switch modes. This is indicated by the apply and cancel icons appearing at the bottom of the bounding box.