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Issue 11
April 2012
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on page 36



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NOT FEELING IT?

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Meet your Photoshop geniuses...



James Paterson
» Having worked as a studio portrait pro, our Technique Editor has used Photoshop on a daily basis for the past decade. Check out his striking 'tiger text' tutorial featured on **page 42**.



George Cairns
» George has been using Photoshop since the very first incarnation. This issue, he makes a cool composite of a hand and tree. Find out how he does it in his tutorial on **page 68**.



Ali Jennings
» Ali has been using Photoshop for a decade, and is Imaging Lab Manager for Future's photography portfolio. This month, he shows you how to get the Bleach Bypass look on **page 58**.



David Cole
» Photoshop 5.0 inspired David, a traditional artist specialising in watercolours, to move into natural media simulation. He gives us his artistic insight into creating custom brushes on **page 77**.



Steve Caplin
» A digital artist and author, Steve has his photo montage work published worldwide. He tells you everything you need to know to make some funky 'bling' text effects on **page 76**.



Angela Nicholson
» Our Head of Testing has used Photoshop since version 4.0, and is now immersed in the joys of CS5. She explains the fundamentals of Selections on **page 52**.



Paul Grogan
» A talented photo journalist and Deputy Editor of our sister title *Digital Camera*, Paul has used Photoshop since version 4.0, and helps you get up to speed fast in our Essentials section on **page 105**.



John Beardsworth
» This Photoshop author first encountered Adobe's program in 1991, when a colleague used it to transfer an ear onto someone's nose! Check out his digital painting tutorial on **page 88**.

Welcome to...

PRACTICAL Photoshop®

SENSATIONAL IMAGES MADE SIMPLE



This month, we're going on a Photoshop adventure into the amazing world of Layer Styles. These hidden gems, sitting discretely in the Layer drop-down are the unsung heroes of many a creative project.

If you've ever wondered how to make cool glowing light trails, bring type to life or add pizzazz to shapes, we've got everything you need to know in our ultimate guide. And as usual we'll also show you how to create the effects that we used to make this month's stunning cover.

Our creative projects are packed with inspirational ideas, tips, tricks and videos, too. James Paterson shows you the easy way to make a striking tiger picture out of type, George Cairns masters the art of surrealism and John Beardsworth gets down and dirty with the Mixer Brush tool. If you're looking for inspiration, Miss Aniela talks to us about her favourite shot, *Stuffed Birds*, Jeff Huang reveals how he made *Flaming Lips* and we look at the explosive portfolio of Valp Maciej Hajrich.

We've also created a new Flickr group, visit us at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/practicalphotoshopmag/> we'd love to see your images, too.

Ben Brain

Ben Brain, Editor
ben@practicalphotoshopmag.com

PS Don't miss out on our special introductory offer on pages 40-41. You can **save up to 40%**

Get Inspired...

» Every issue of *Practical Photoshop* is packed with fresh ideas and expert advice to help you improve your Photoshop skills. Be inspired by the best new imagery in our World of Photoshop section and let our technique guides teach you how to create your own with our tutorials in the magazine and on our DVD.



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Turn to pages 40-41 for more information

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SENSATIONAL IMAGES MADE SIMPLE!

LAYER STYLES

WATCH & LEARN!

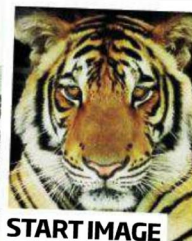
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PRACTICAL Photoshop

24 Find out how we created this month's great cover using simple Layer Styles

42 Illustrate Blake's The Tyger with text

Create an amazing illustration for a poem using text effects



32 Create a surreal portrait

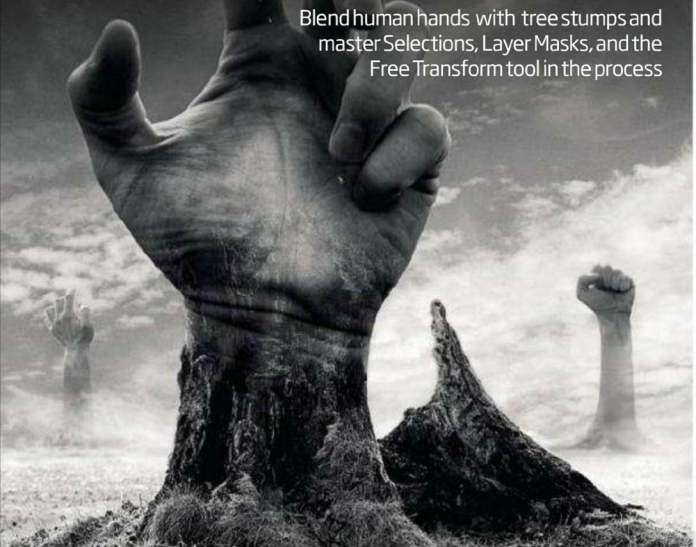
Use Layer Styles to add depth to your surreal transformations of photographic artwork

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UK readers see page 40 for full details. International readers see page 81 for your own special offer...

68 Make this spooky scene from scratch

Blend human hands with tree stumps and master Selections, Layer Masks, and the Free Transform tool in the process

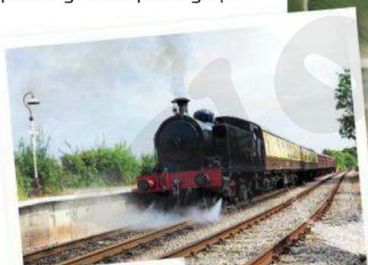


START IMAGES



88 Get the blended oil paint look

Discover how to use the Mixer Brush to create a realistic oil painting from a photograph

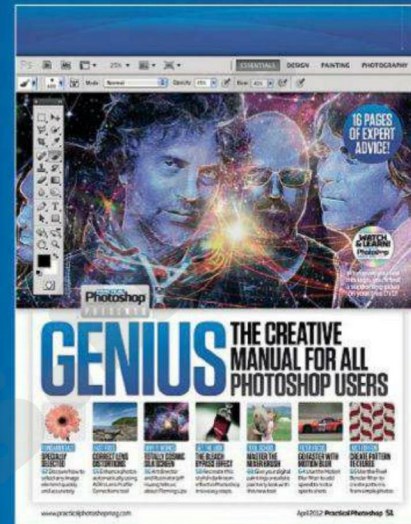


NEXT MONTH

For a sneak preview
Turn to page 67

PLUS! YOUR CREATIVE MANUAL!

See page 51 for more...



16 PAGES OF IN-DEPTH TECHNIQUES, TRICKS & TIPS INCLUDING:

- ▶▶ Lens corrections
 - ▶▶ Mixer Brush
 - ▶▶ Motion Blur filter
- And much more...

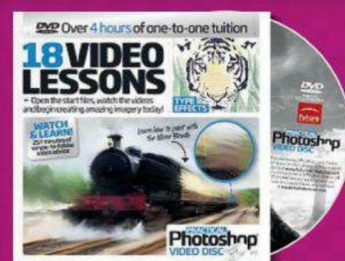


New to Photoshop?
Get up to speed fast in...

ESSENTIALS

YOUR PHOTOSHOP QUICKSTART GUIDE

105 Take a tour of Elements and CS, and learn the principles of image editing



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time to *switch.*

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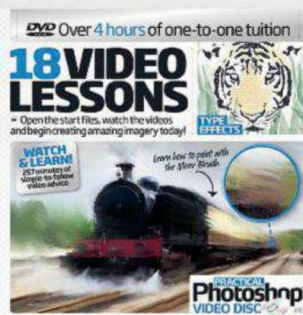
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PRACTICAL Photoshop

Look for the logo! Whenever you see this graphic in the magazine, click to download video and images



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Feature videos

- Create realistic gooey text using Layer Styles with *James Paterson*
- Use the Bevel and Emboss Layer Style to make transparent text effects with *James Paterson*
- Surreal art Layer Styles with *James Paterson*
- Use Layer Styles to create awesome effects with *James Paterson*

Project videos

- Get creative with type to make pictures from words with *James Paterson*
- Black and white montage with *George Cairns*

- From photo to painting using the Mixer Brush with *John Beardsworth*

Genius videos

- Understanding the fundamentals of Selections with *Angela Nicholson*
- Correct lens distortion in Adobe Camera Raw with *Chris Rutter*
- Get the Bleach Bypass look with *Ali Jennings*
- Master the incredible Mixer Brush with *George Cairns*
- Mimic camera panning with motion blur with *Helen Bradley*
- Cool patterns with the Cassini filter with *Helen Bradley*

Essentials videos

- Photoshop CS introduction with *Paul Grogan*
- An introduction to Photoshop Elements 10 with *George Cairns*
- Layers and Layer Masks explained with *Paul Grogan*
- Learn the techniques of advanced image editing with *Paul Grogan*
- Adobe Camera Raw explained with *Paul Grogan*

Bonus resource

- 20 high-res images from



PLUS Creative Resources



Start images for every tutorial

» Plus layered Photoshop files so you can see how it all works



Check out our Reader Challenge images

» Get creative and enter our great monthly competition



Bonus pack of 20 hi-res images from Fotolia

» Landscapes, portraits and inspirational images for you

The *World* of Photoshop®

Get inspired by the very best new imagery

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Photoshop® loves



“Martin’s surreal composite is a great example of a well-executed image that blends simplicity with attention to detail”

Ben Brain, Editor



« PREVIOUS PAGE

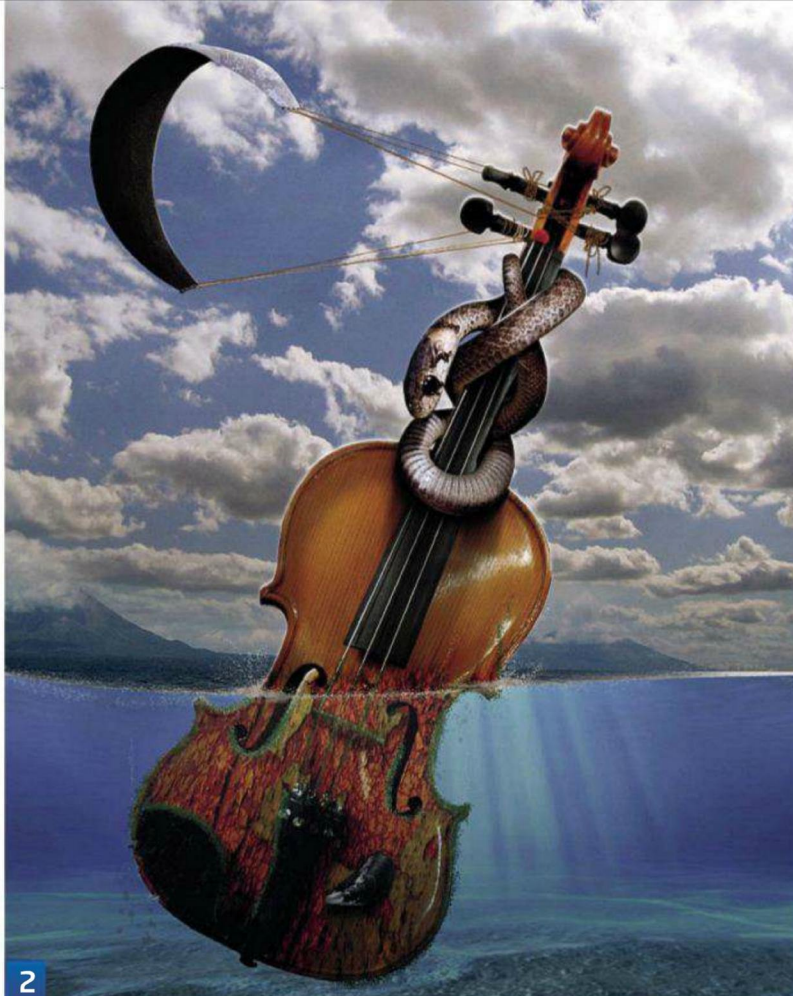


Breakfast

By Martin Grohs, Germany

Using Photoshop CS3

1 "This is one of my favourite works, because I photographed all the items myself," says Martin. "The idea came to me while having breakfast. The picture was taken from four individual shots, which I assembled using Photoshop. There are really only a few Layer Masks, which were combined in the final image. It was important for me that it was clean, high-class and, of course, realistic-looking."
www.martin-grohs.com



Snake On A Violin

By Mads Bo Pedersen, Denmark

Using Photoshop CS5

2 "I have worked as a graphic designer for about five years now - the last three years as art director for a fashion brand," explains Mads. "I love to work with every branch of Photoshop: retouching, making composites and manipulations, text effects and so on and often use the worth1000.com website as inspiration. *Snake On A Violin* comprises seven separate elements and features a wide array of colour adjustments and Layer Masks."
<http://fotomalia.dk/gallerier/mads-galleri/>



Aaargh!!

By Abel Tonkens, The Netherlands

Using Photoshop CS5

3 "This is a self-portrait using two pictures - one with an open mouth and the other with my hand covering it," says Abel. "Both were shot in Raw so that I could make them 'pseudo HDR'. I blended the pictures in Photoshop using a Layer Mask on the 'covered mouth' picture. After this, I carried out the black and white processing, some sharpening, dodging and burning plus some vignetting to get the final result."
www.abeltonkens.1x.com





4



The Shores And Skies Of California

By Nathan Spotts, USA

Using Photoshop CS5

4 Constantly seeking new inspiration, Nathan's images reflect his desire to travel, learn and push the creative envelope. "First comes the concept phase then fleshing out the idea," Nathan explains. "Finding locations and photographing them is the next step, which can often take some time due to travel and weather. Editing and development takes place in Lightroom, and the photos are then moved to Photoshop for compositing. The blending of the sky, ocean and stars here was done with Adjustment Layers and Layer Masks. Once the photos were blended, some global adjustments and retouching were made at the very end." www.nathanspotts.com

PRACTICAL Photoshop® loves



“This is packed with drama and the blend between the different grades of lighting is superb”

Amie Causton, Art Editor



PRACTICAL
Photoshop loves



“Full of impact and carnage, Joe has really gone to town with this apocalyptic composite”

James Paterson, Technique Editor



28 Months Later

By Joe Roberts, UK

Using Photoshop CS5

5 “New York and London look cool, but I wanted my apocalyptic city to be somewhere iconic, yet less frequently nuked,” says Joe. “I was more interested in narrative and compositional harmony than real-world authenticity. I aged the scene with real textures of rot, rust and decay, choosing a green palette to convey a return to nature. This kind of job usually comprises hundreds of layers, so Smart Objects are essential. I can then edit each element, non-destructively, with their own set of self-contained folders and layers. A bit of airbrush work was necessary to ensure that the lighting, both in its direction and colour, look synchronised across all of the elements in the piece.”

www.joeroberts.co.uk



6



Tree Of Life

By Mikko Lagerstedt, Finland

Using Photoshop CS4/Lightroom 3

6 "Atmosphere is the most important thing in my images and I try to constantly view the world in a unique way. I love how fog makes pictures simple yet powerful. The back lightning here is from a streetlight. I softened the background in Lightroom with the Adjustment Brush tool and also made Color Balance tweaks." www.behance.net/MikkoLagerstedt



Breakout

By Marc Goodman, UK

Using Photoshop CS4

7 "The main body of the image was created in 3D modelling software. I then used clipping masks in Photoshop to create the focal 'broken' section," explains Marc. "I also made use of stock textures which were added to the background before using Adjustment Layers to finalise the colours, saturation and brightness." <http://el-nombre.deviantart.com/>

See your images in print!

Do you want the chance to see your images printed in our gallery? Just email them to images@practicalphotoshopmag.com, putting 'Gallery' in the subject line. Please limit the size of your images to 2MB each in the first instance and, if we're going to feature your work, we'll contact you to request the original artwork.

7



Portfolio

Valp Maciej Hajnrich



Profile

Name Valp Maciej Hajnrich, Poland

Uses Photoshop CS5

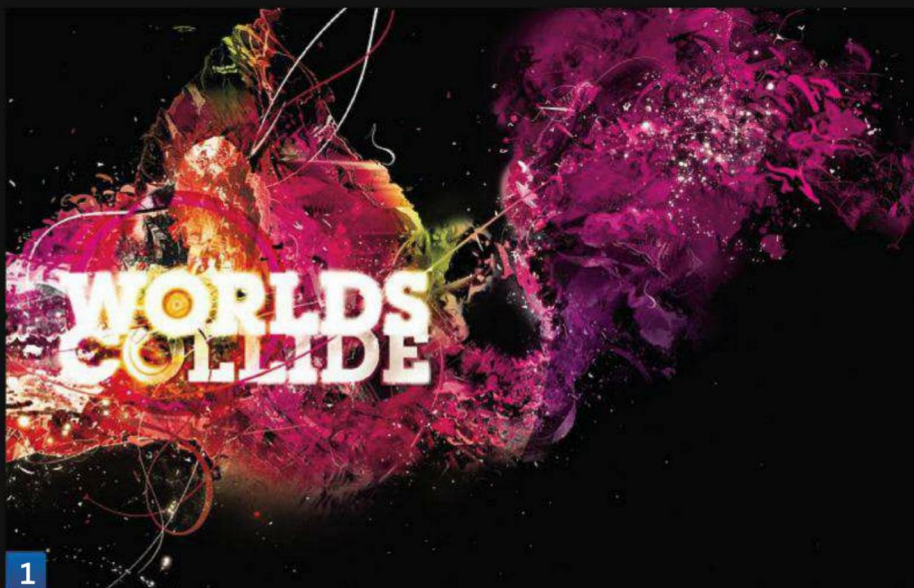
Visit www.valpnow.com

▶ Characterised by bright colours and a vibrant energy, the creations of the self-styled 'Graphic Illusionist' Valp Maciej Hajnrich are unlike anything his contemporaries are doing and have featured on websites, album covers, TV adverts and even London buses.

Recent works include his illustration for the musical *Priscilla - Queen of the Desert* and the stunning underwater visuals for Pendulum's new *Immersion* album.

The self-taught artist takes his inspiration from the visuals in the world around him - from static to motion, ancient to contemporary - and uses a combination of photography manipulation and hand-drawn effects to make his ideas a reality. In his spare time, he works on personal creative projects, experimenting with style and technique.

He is also a member of the Keystone Design Union and the Depthcore digital arts community.



1

PRACTICAL Photoshop loves



“Valp's striking portfolio showcases his amazing Photoshop skills and artful eye”

Ben Brain, Editor

1 Worlds Collide

2 B(omb)

3 A(tom)

4 Dream

5 C(osmos)

2

The World of
Photoshop
Get inspired by the very best new imagery

PRACTICAL
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“Positively bursting with energy, Atom boasts a remarkable amount of fine detail”

James Paterson, Technique Editor

See more online

If you'd like to see more of Valp Maciej Hajnrich's amazing Photoshop work, visit his homepage at:

www.valpnow.com

3



4

NU/CLEAR AFFECTION

DRAM





NOISE LETTERS FROM YOU...

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Transparency and animations?

▶ Regarding the answer to the question, 'Can you save me from confusing choices?' in the January issue, I agree that the mentioned file types are the three most useful, but it is as important to point out that JPEG can't show transparency, and therefore if you are in need of a compressed file format with transparency you should use PNG. In the same manner, if you have made an animation in Photoshop you will have to save it as a GIF for it to show. So maybe it should have been the

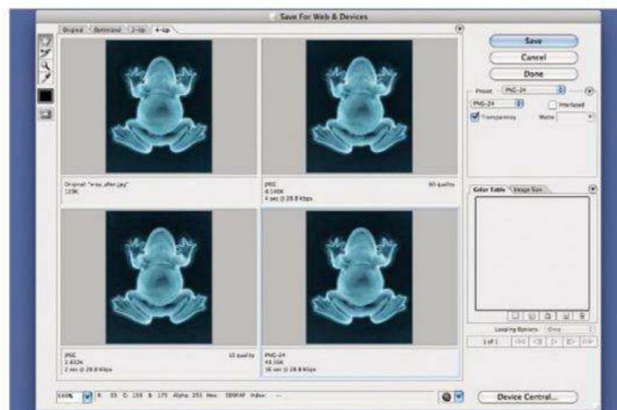
five most useful file types. Additionally, when you mention JPEG as being ideal for email and web, you should have mentioned that you should use 'Save for Web & Devices' instead of 'Save As', as this will give you additional control.

Jacob Luttermann, Email

Reply

Good points, especially concerning the *Save for Web & Devices* tool, which as you say, offers a much more controlled and informative way of saving JPEGs.

Compare the levels of JPEG compression using the *Save for Web & Devices* tool



★ STAR LETTER ★

Another 'egrettable Photoshop incident

▶ The *Guardian* ran a story today on another photographer who's been sacked for using Photoshop on a news photo. I was reminded of your response to the letter from Damian Pollard on this subject in the last issue, which suggested you disapproved of Photoshopping by journalists. The *Guardian* disagrees with you. They make the point that every press photographer deliberately misleads the viewer every time they take a photo – by choosing a focal point and a crop, by choosing the aperture and shutter speed, and by choosing from multiple images at the selection stage. They have a point, don't they?

Matthew Skinner, Email



The Sacramento Bee's explanation for sacking photographer Bryan Patrick

Reply

We agree that press photographers, have a lot of influence over what we see through their use of cropping, point of focus and other in-camera techniques. However, the photo of the egrets that got the photographer suspended – and the photo of the Auburn wildfire that got him sacked had been manipulated in post-processing, rather than 'in camera'. It might seem harsh to get the sack for enhancing what's already there – splicing two shots in the case of the egret shot, or augmenting the flames in the wildfire shot – but with news images, the reader has to be able to trust that what they see really happened. So if post production of news images goes beyond the tweaking of tones and colours, we disapprove. The subjectivity of journalists is an age old debate. What do other readers think?

I can't preview Blend Modes any more

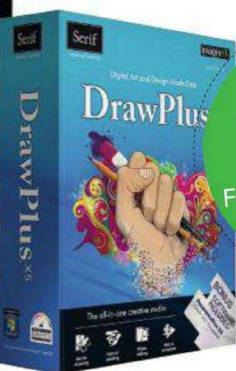
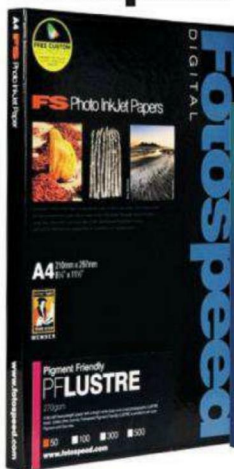
▶ I sometimes have fun playing with Blend Modes, often with some interesting results. With Photoshop CS3 it was easy to see the different effects created with each mode – I could just quickly scroll down the list using the scroll wheel on my mouse. With Photoshop CS5 I can't do this – the scroll wheel doesn't work so I have to select each mode individually, which is much slower, and therefore not easy to quickly review the various effects. Is there anything in the settings that will enable me to use the scroll wheel again?

Andrew Bebbington, Email

Reply

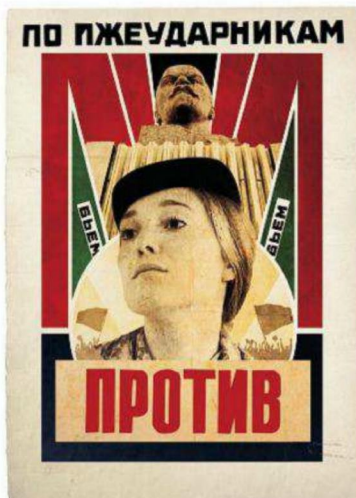
We're not sure why this has stopped working for you, Andrew, because the feature hasn't been disabled in CS5, so it should be working fine. All we can think of is that you're not selecting a Blend Mode first – once you've selected a Blend Mode, the menu should be highlighted in blue, after which you should be able to scroll through the modes using your mouse wheel. Alternatively, you can do the same thing by holding down Shift and pressing + and -, which is easier than selecting them individually. There are also individual keyboard shortcuts for each of the Blend Modes. They are too numerous to list here so search online for the full list if these would be useful.

Fotospeed



WIN!
Star Letter wins a pack of A3 Fine Art paper from Fotospeed and a copy of DrawPlus from Serif





Make better Soviet-era posters with free Russian fonts from www.dafont.com

Need Cyrillic fonts? Nyet problem!

▶ I loved the Russian poster project by Ali Jennings last month! Here's an idea: download a Russian font from www.dafont.com (click Russian under Foreign look), and you have all sorts of text possibilities. They have loads of examples, and they are all free as far as I know. Much better than relying on the graphics supplied on the disc.

Stephen Shawcross, Email

Reply

Glad you liked the tutorial Stephen, and thanks for sharing your tip!

**“You learn from your mistakes,
and I have done plenty
of learning of late”**
Adam Parker, Email



Adam learns to preserve the original layers in a composite the hard way

My hip-hop image

▶ This was my first attempt at using Brush tools. In the past I have only used Photoshop for text and basic cropping with the Magic Wand tool for my websites. Now I have shifted from coding to begin my graphic design studies, so I have spent the last few weeks getting to know the program better. It took me a while to grasp the importance of understanding how the Brush tools affect almost everything you do in Photoshop. Your mag helped me understand so much more and in a very short time. Thank you.

The PSD I've sent you is a great example of all the don'ts. I merged most of my layers down to three core layers and now I have no way of making small or major adjustments. Before I started merging I had about 70 layers. I deleted parts of my layers instead of blending or masking, and it goes on and on. You learn from your mistakes, and I have done plenty of learning of late. I would appreciate a bit of feedback before I give the image a second go.

Adam Parker, Email

Reply

You've put a lot of work into this, Adam, and I can see why you're irritated that you've merged all the layers. The best approach with images containing so many layers is to group them. That way you can collapse the groups, keeping your Layers Panel tidy, yet preserving the flexibility offered by the layers. Putting my critic's hat on, I think your final image is pretty cool. It has movement, it's vibrant, and it has plenty of detail throughout.

From our online community...

Join us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/practicalphotoshop

We've built up a great following on the social networking giant, here's a brief selection of comments...

Do you use your camera to record video?

Yer, at gigs though.
- **Scott Newton**

All depends on the situation. If it's studio work using Chroma Key for example, then yes.
- **Alan Donoghue**

New camera (Sony A77). Still learning how to use the video capabilities.
- **Homer Scarborough**

I use my Lumix TZ7 to record videos, though not as often as I'd like. My Canon EOS 20D doesn't record videos.
- **Nikky Pearce**

Not very often as my husband has a dedicated camcorder.
- **Grete Howard**

It is cool to be able to do video without putting one camera down and picking up another. Also, it's great to use the various lenses - fisheye, superwide, etc.
- **Danny Gilleland**

Yes, it's convenient - on a Canon EOS 550D and Panasonic FZ38 - although I prefer to use a Flip camera for video in general.
- **Stephen Speirs**



Contact **Practical Photoshop** today!

Get in touch with the Practical Photoshop team! We'd love to hear your views about the magazine along with any handy tips or shortcuts you might have to offer us. You can email us at: letters@practicalphotoshopmag.com with a subject heading of 'Noise'. Alternatively, you can contact the team by post. Write to us at: **Noise, Practical Photoshop, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW UK**. Please note that we reserve the right to edit letters we print for clarity and brevity.

READER CHALLENGE

PC and Mac files ►► <http://bit.ly/w6l9FO>

Take the Practical Photoshop challenge!

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The best image wins a copy of Tiffen Dfx 3.0 worth \$229!

Take a journey into the darkest corners of your mind and dream up your own surreal mono landscape

►► Every issue in *Practical Photoshop* we set you a task to create something special based on the techniques you've learnt each month.

Our latest *Reader Challenge* is inspired by George Cairns's surreal tree hand tutorial on page 68. We're looking for something strange, warped and imaginative that provides a odd slant on reality. Be as bold and daring as you like!

Take a look at the composite on the right for an example of what we're looking for, and read our five top tips to help you master the techniques you'll need to use.

Now it's your turn. Our favourite images will be featured in Issue 14 which goes on sale on 31 May, 2012. The closing date for entries is 12 May, 2012. The overall winner walks away with a copy of the superb plug-in, Tiffen Dfx 3.0.

What you can win

►► In addition to featuring the best image in *Practical Photoshop*, you'll also bag a copy of the Tiffen Dfx 3.0 filter suite worth \$229 (approximately £145). Tiffen Dfx 3.0 has 125 individual filters that simulate 2,000+ Tiffen glass camera filters, specialised lenses, optical lab processes and film grain types. Visit Tiffen's website at www.tiffensoftware.com for more information.

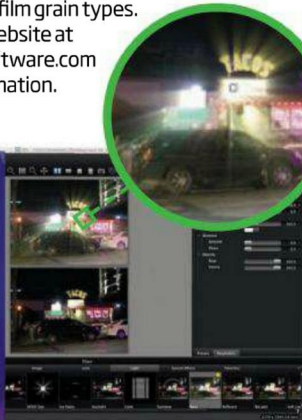
TIFFEN
Dfx

How to enter

►► Simply load up the DVD and go to the Resources section, where you'll find the source images that you can use as a starting point to create your own work of art. You can use as many or as few as you like, and include any images of your own. Enter by email to: challenge@practicalphotoshopmag.com or by sending a CD to:

Practical Photoshop,
Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth
Street, Bath BA1 2BW.

Please give your finished creation a suitable title, supply a headshot and 100 words to describe what you did, and the version of Photoshop you use. The closing date for entries is 12 May, 2012.

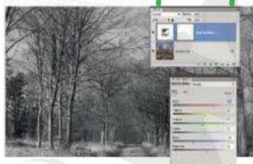


Your challenge images...





Five top tips for... Making a surreal mono landscape

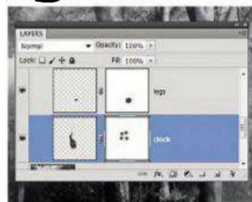
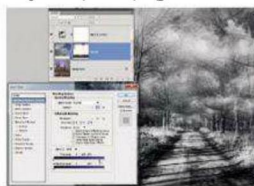


01 Convert to mono

You'll need to convert each of your image elements to black and white, and the best way to do this is with a Black and White Adjustment Layer. Find out how to add one while controlling the brightness of different colours in our Bleach Bypass tutorial on page 58.

02 Blend If sliders

It's very easy to blend clouds with a scene if you know how to use the Blend If sliders in the Layer Styles box. You'll find top tips on how to use these handy controls in the steam train digital painting tutorial on page 88 and the Layer Styles tips on page 34.



03 Montage skills

To blend different objects like our clock and legs here convincingly, you need to know how to make precise cut-outs with selections and Layer Masks. Get to grips with these crucial Photoshop skills in our surreal landscape tutorial on page 68.

04 Use Warp controls

We've copied part of the clock and used it to texture the legs by blending layers with Blend Modes. We've then used the Warp Transform controls to make the clock follow the contours of the legs. Master the Warp command with our tiger text tutorial found on page 42.



05 Learn to Liquify

To give our clock head a surreal edge, we've used the Liquify filter to bend the spire. Find out how to do this in our surreal portrait tutorial on page 32. As a finishing touch, we've added a border using the Stroke Layer Style. Find out how on page 34.



PRACTICAL
Photoshop loves



“Richard’s take on this popular theme is original and well crafted”

Ben Brain, Editor

And the winner is...



Film Noir Neon

By Richard Turner, Austria

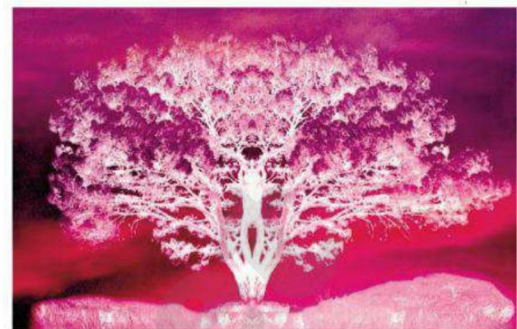
Using Photoshop CS5

1 The Noise filter has been used here for a more film-like grain. The neon sign was created using a standard font and layering the colour in and around it, while the 3D effect was achieved with various Layer Styles. I wanted to create reflections from the sign so I isolated various elements like his face and wall edges by creating paths around these areas and then colouring the selections on new layers.



CHALLENGE WINNERS

Best of the rest



Crucifixion By Len Docimo, USA



Junkyard Composition

By Joan Ladendorf, USA



Oz

By Joan Ladendorf, USA

Using Photoshop CS5

2 I selected the doorway and window panes with the Polygonal Lasso tool then inverted the selection. I then dropped a Black and White Adjustment Layer onto that. It struck me it was like Dorothy opening the door to Oz.

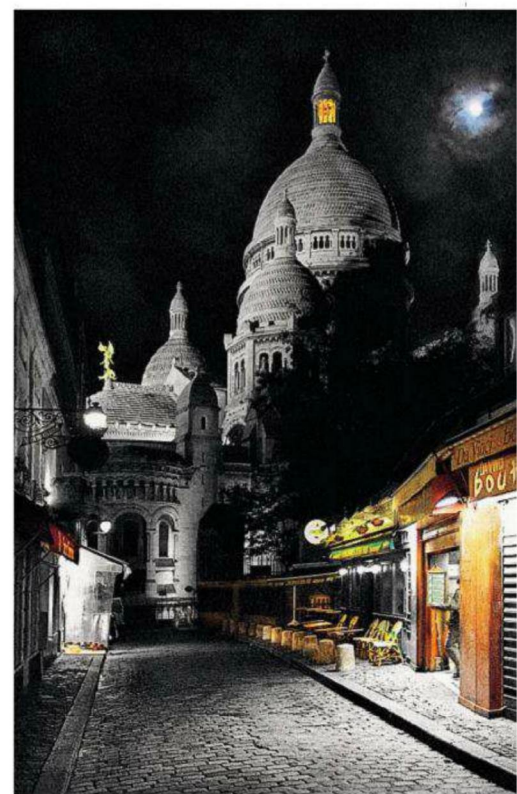


Train

By Robert Lord, UK

Using Photoshop CS5

3 This was taken at Nene Valley in Lincolnshire on my Canon EOS. I added layers for dodging and burning. I also used the Motion Blur filter, selective sharpening and the Sponge tool to bring out the main colours.



Don't Cross Alone By Robert Lord, UK

The wonderful world of

LAY STY

**WATCH
& LEARN!**

<http://bit.ly/w6I9F0>

**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**

Give your images pizzazz
and learn how to add
amazing effects to shapes,
type and more. Our essential
guide shows you how...

WorldMags.net

LAYER STYLES



One of the first things newcomers discover in Photoshop is the incredible range of effects on offer. Any novice who comes across the Layer Styles box will be rightly impressed.

There are ten different Layer Styles to choose from. Common styles like Drop Shadow are fairly familiar. Others like Color Overlay are pretty self-explanatory. And some, such as Satin, require a little more description.

Over the next few pages we'll cover them all, and show you how to unleash the vast potential of the Layer Styles box. There are tips and techniques that show you how to

design a poster, create a surreal portrait, and make honey-coated text. Plus there's a complete walkthrough on creating the glow effects on this month's cover. There are videos in this month's project files for all the techniques covered, as well as PSD files with all the Style settings intact among the layers.

Tucked away in the various Style menus lie hundreds of different settings to play with. Sometimes it's not immediately clear what a setting does, but as with most Photoshop features, experimentation is crucial. So open up one of the start images supplied or create a line of text or a shape, then start playing.



Introducing Layer Styles

Apply a huge range of spectacular effects to your images with Layer Styles. Here's how to get started...

Bevel and Emboss - Texture



Layer Styles are effects that can be applied to image, type and shape layers. They're easy to add, and they enable you to transform a design or image with just a few clicks. Some of these effects work around the edge of the layer shape, so they are particularly useful when applied to text or shape layers. Other styles will transform the entire look of the layer by adding colours, patterns or gradients.

How do I apply them?

You can access the Layer Style Dialog Box by double clicking the layer in the Layers Panel, or by clicking the 'fx' Layer Style icon at the bottom of the panel. You're greeted by the Layer Styles Dialog Box, the control centre for thousands of effects. On the left-hand side of the box you have a list of styles such as Drop Shadow and Outer Glow. Click any one of these to access the settings for that particular style.

What settings should I use?

The real depth to Layer Styles lies in the sheer number of options you have to tweak each effect. There are literally thousands

of different combinations. Most styles have one or more Blend Mode drop-down menus that give access to the same 27 Blend Modes available in the Layers Panel, each offering a different blend for your style. There are also numerous sliders, angles and colour settings. As ever, the best way to get to grips with Layer Styles is to experiment with the different options and sliders. The effect updates as you change the settings, so you can judge which settings are working.

What if I want to change the effect?

Once you've added a Layer Style, a list appears in the Layers Panel below the layer, with each particular effect listed. Like most layer controls, the settings are editable at any time. Double click over the list to re-enter the Layer Styles Dialog Box and tweak the settings.

Can I still edit the layer?

Yes you can. Styles automatically change with the shape of the layer, which is incredibly

useful when working with text, because you can edit the text and whichever styles you've added will automatically apply to the new layer. In fact, any change to the shape of a layer will automatically affect the styles applied. To see this in action, try adding a large bevel to a shape layer and then slowly rotate it. You'll see the lighting on the bevel change as the shape rotates.

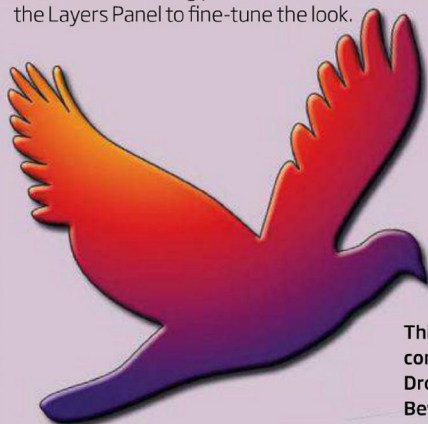
Keyboard shortcut
Switch between styles
Cmd/Ctrl + (0-9)

How can I make the effect work on several layers?

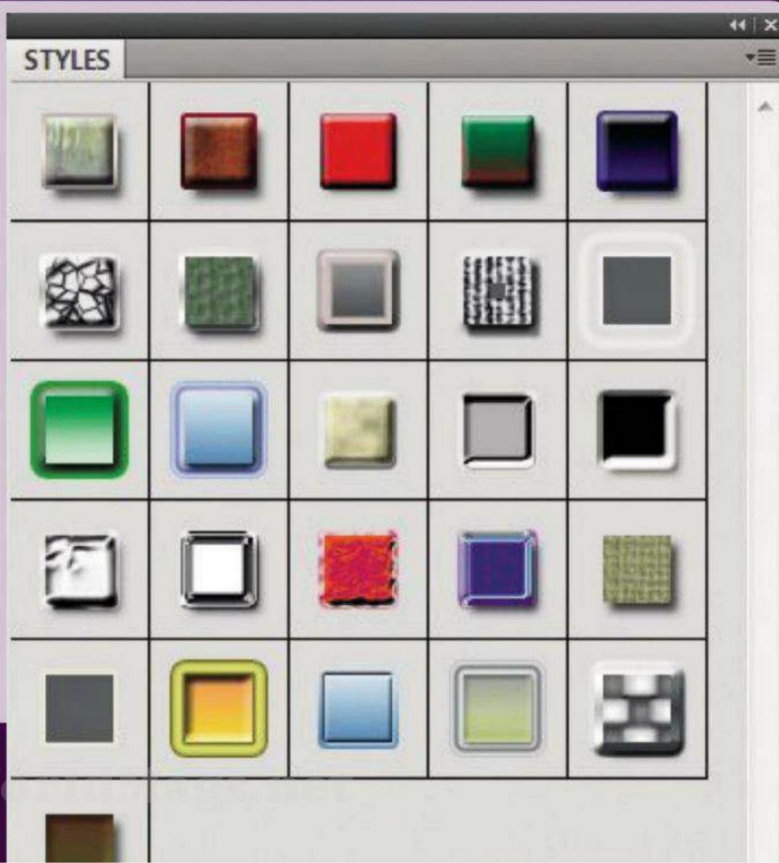
You can copy a style quickly and easily from one layer to another - simply hold down **Alt** and drag it from one layer to another (if you don't hold down **Alt**, then the style is moved). What's more, you can right click and choose Copy Style, then highlight another layer, right click and choose Paste style. This works across different documents, so if you want to replicate any of the styles in this feature, simply locate the Photoshop document (PSD) among this issue's project files, open it and copy the style you like to your own image.

The Styles Panel

The Styles Panel is often overlooked, but it can be a useful place to organise your different style presets, or to load and save styles. There are plenty of pre-loaded styles here to play with, too, although their practical uses may be limited. Remember that each preset is editable, so you can use one as a starting point, then double click the effect in the Layers Panel to fine-tune the look.



This style is a combination of Drop Shadow, Bevel and Emboss, Gradient Overlay and Stroke



A

Stroke

B

Gradient Overlay

Introduction

Outer Glow

BEVEL AND EMBOSS

The settings here are specific to the Bevel and Emboss style, but similar sliders and menus feature throughout. Click each style in the left-hand list to access its particular options.

PRESETS LIBRARY

Click here to access Photoshop's range of style presets (also available through the Styles Panel). You can save your own styles and they'll appear here.

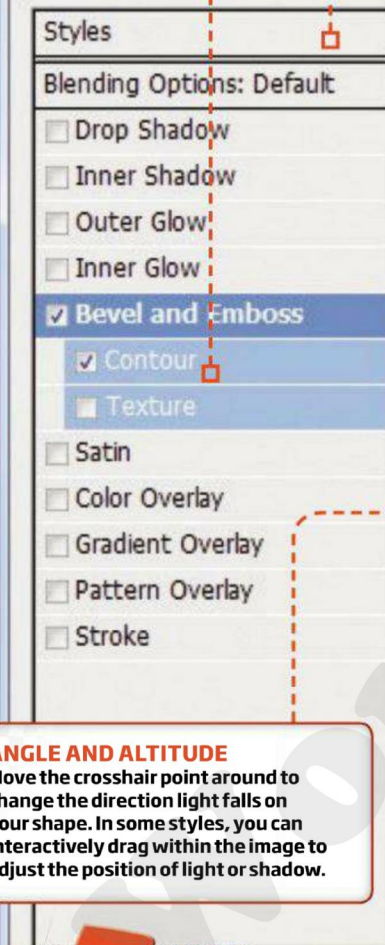
THUMBAIL PREVIEW

This handy preview gives you an idea of what the combined styles would look like on a simple square. The preview updates automatically as you move a slider or setting, so it can be useful for judging the finished effect.

SLIDERS

Use the sliders to change the appearance of the Bevel. It's best to judge these by eye, as pixel value sliders will vary in effect depending on the resolution of your image.

Layer Style

**Bevel and Emboss Structure**

Style: Inner Bevel
Technique: Smooth
Depth: 602 %
Direction: ☒ Up ☐ Down
Size: 43 px
Soften: 7 px

Shading

Angle: 174 °
Altitude: 37 °
☒ Use Global Light
Gloss Contour: ☐ Anti-aliased
Highlight Mode: Screen
Opacity: 75 %
Shadow Mode: Linear Light
Opacity: 75 %

Make Default

Reset to Default

ANGLE AND ALTITUDE

Move the crosshair point around to change the direction light falls on your shape. In some styles, you can interactively drag within the image to adjust the position of light or shadow.

USE GLOBAL LIGHT

This box features in many of the Layer Style options. When checked, the angle of light will be the same as in the other styles applied. This can occasionally cause frustration, so only check it if you want consistent light throughout.

HIGHLIGHT AND SHADOW MODE

The Highlight Mode controls the lighter area on one side of your shape, the Shadow Mode controls the darker area on the other. Combined, they create the bevelled effect, and give the illusion of depth. Many Layer Styles also have a Blend Mode option.

GLOSS CONTOUR

Choose from the drop-down list of contours to alter the appearance of the lighting around the edges of the shape. You can click within the preview to create your own contour curve.

Bevel and Emboss

Pattern Overlay

Layer Style effects

Discover what each of the Layer Styles does, and how they can be used together to create multiple effects

So now you know what they are and how to access them, it's time to look at each of the 10 Layer Styles and explain briefly what each one does. Take a look at our examples below and you'll notice straight away that some of them can be set up to create very similar effects. If we'd used the same colours for Inner Shadow and Inner Glow, for instance, you wouldn't know the difference. But there are differences, either in effect or scope, which you'll quickly get accustomed to after a little experience. Another thing you'll quickly discover is that

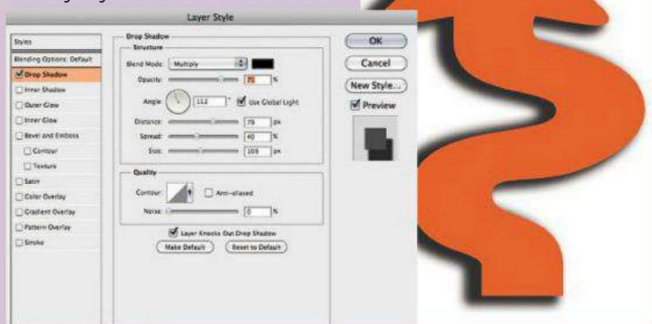
you can use multiple Layer Styles on the same layer, so you could, for instance, add an outline and a drop shadow to a text layer. The styles are overlaid according to their hierarchy in the list, so Drop Shadow is applied first, then Inner Shadow, and so on. This means that some combinations won't work as well as you expected, because the effects of one may alter the effects of another. As ever, experimentation is key. And if you can't find a way to apply a particular set of styles, you can easily get around it by applying the styles to multiple layers and combining them later.



Layer Style effects up close

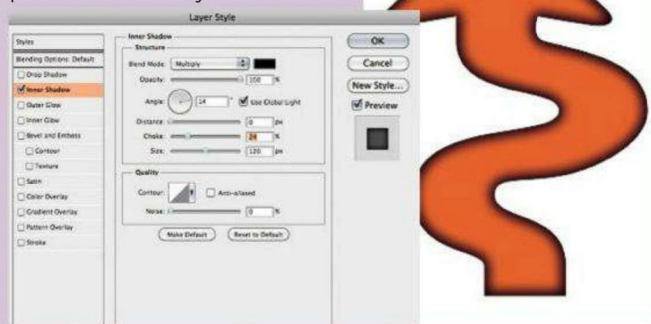
Drop Shadow

Places a shadow beneath the layer's content, at a size, angle, colour, and density of your choice.



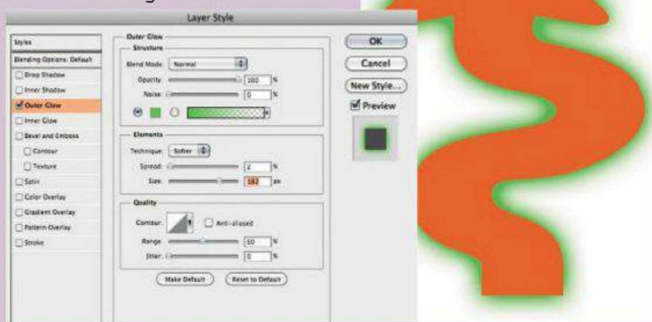
Inner Shadow

Places a shadow inside the content, creating the impression it's been punched out of the layer beneath.



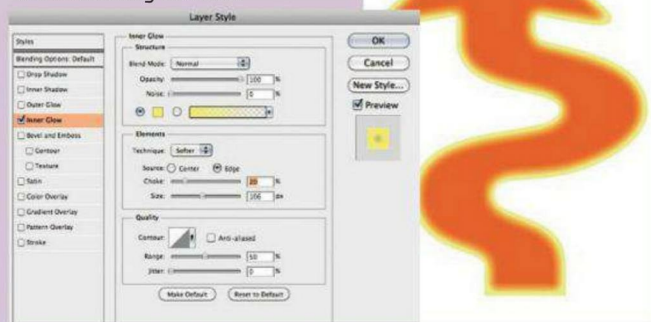
Outer Glow

Creates a soft border around the layer's content, using either a solid colour or a gradient.



Inner Glow

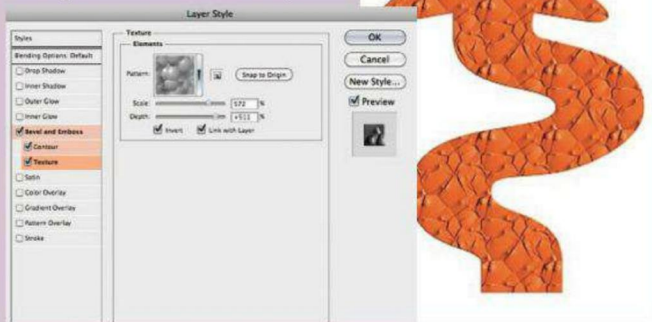
Creates a soft border inside the content, like Inner Shadow, but without the Angle control.





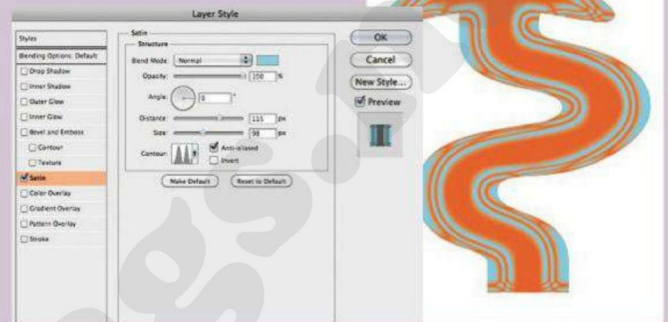
Bevel and Emboss

Gives the layer's content a 3D effect and/or a texture. Use the Contour setting to define the bevel's shape.



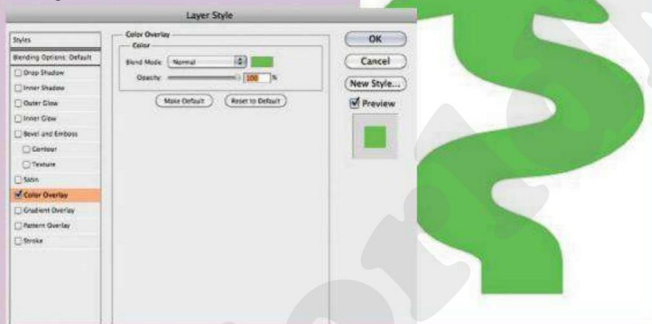
Satin

Applies an effect similar to Inner Shadow, but with greater control over the style and shape of the effect.



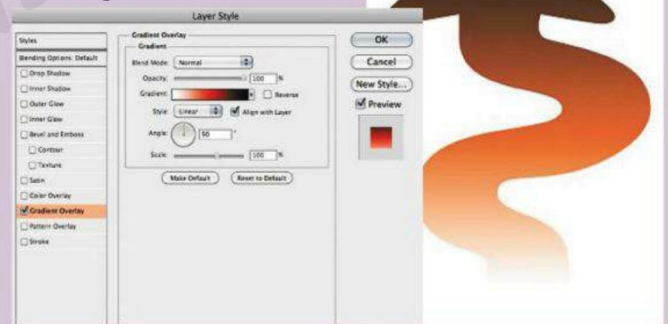
Color Overlay

Offers a very quick and easy way of changing the colour of the layer's content.



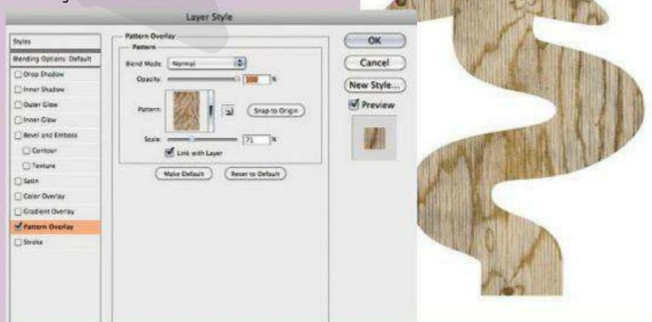
Gradient Overlay

Changes the colour of the layer's content using a gradient. It's useful for shading text and so on.



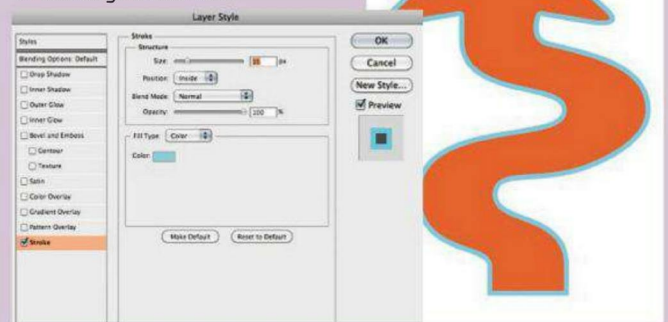
Pattern Overlay

Lays down a pattern or texture over the content. Again, it's useful for text layers and illustrations.



Stroke

Places a hard-edged border around the edges of the content. It's useful for creating text outlines.



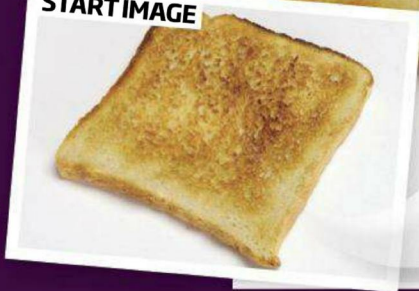
Translucent effects

Learn how to turn type into honey using Layer Styles

Ever wondered why there are two Opacity sliders in the Layers Panel? The Fill Opacity slider differs from the Opacity slider in that it allows you to control the translucency of the layer without affecting any Layer Style effects you've applied. This makes it possible to create a whole range of translucent effects such as we have on our honey in this image.

We've used an array of styles, so you'll need to open the 'honey_after.psd' file from the project files on the DVD and double-click 'effects' in the Layers Panel to see the settings, or if you're feeling lazy, simply right-click the style and choose Copy Style, then paste it onto your own layer. Let's see how it's done...

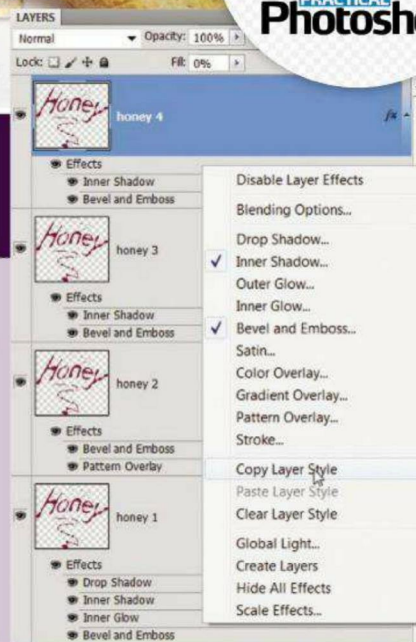
START IMAGE



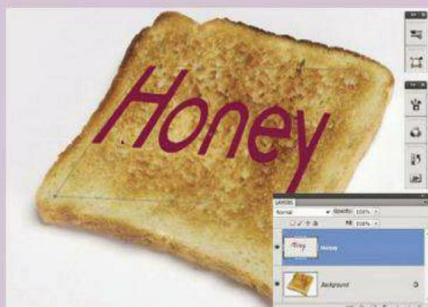
WATCH & LEARN!

<http://bit.ly/w619F0>

Practical Photoshop

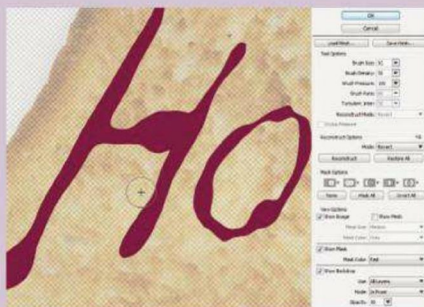


Step-by-step Create honeyed text



01 Choose your font

Open our file 'honey_before.jpg', then grab the Type tool, choose a font and write your word. Now grab the Move tool and check Show Transform Controls, then resize the type to fill the toast. Right-click the layer in the Layers Panel and choose Rasterize Layer, then hold down **Cmd/Ctrl** and drag the corners of the bounding box to skew the word so that it looks like it's written on the toast.

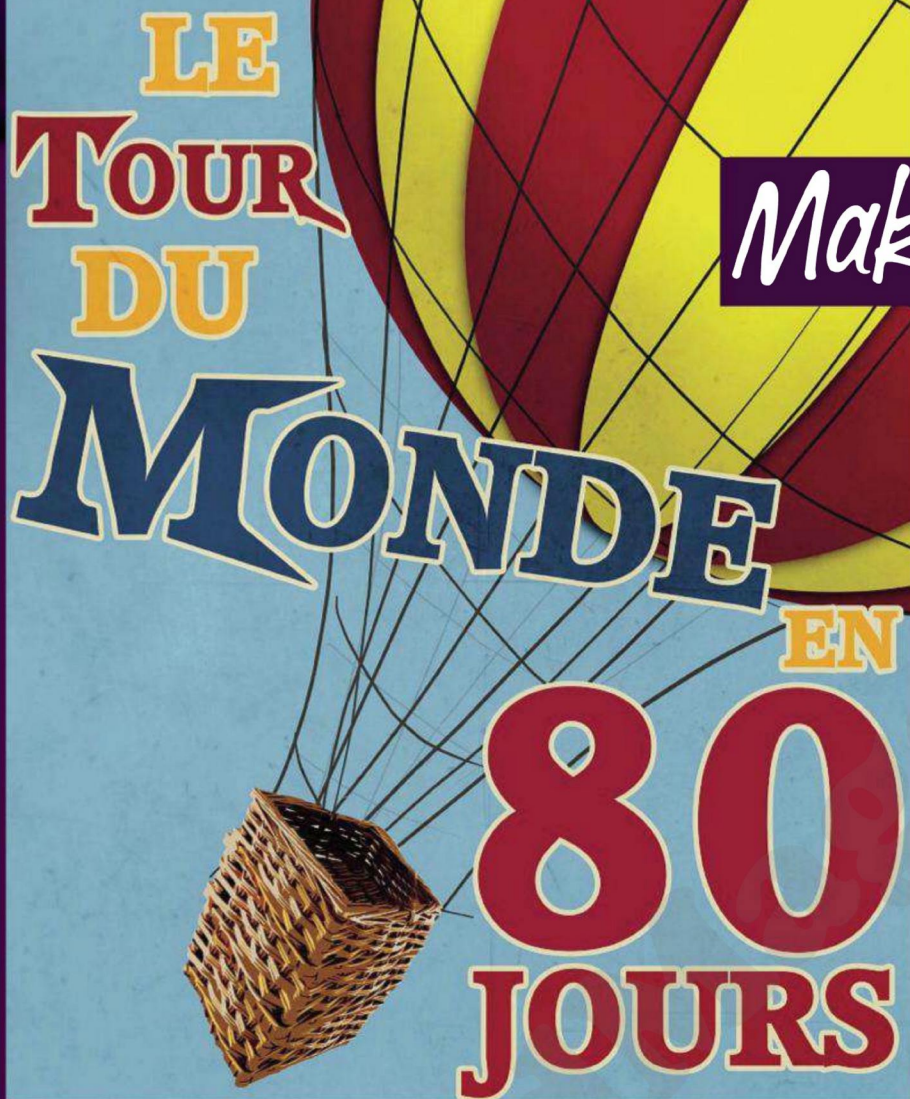


02 Liquify the type

Go to Filter>Liquify. In the Liquify box, use the Forward Warp tool to make the type less uniform by bloating or thinning the letters. When you're happy, hit OK and grab the Brush tool. Set hardness 80 (the colour isn't important) then use a small brush size to paint in a few swirls to complement the design. Go to Liquify again and give the lines the same treatment as before.

03 Copy over styles

Press **Cmd/Ctrl+J** a total of three times to duplicate the layer, so that you now have four honey layers. Open our file 'honey_after.psd' from the project files. You'll see it also has four layers above the background. Right-click 'effects' on the lowest of these then go to your 'honey_before' file, right-click the lowest layer here and choose Paste Style. Repeat with the other three layers.



Poster design

Make a poster

Transform simple shapes and type into a stylish design

One of the greatest strengths of Layer Styles is the power they give you to create depth in your design. Here our Jules Verne-themed poster is made from little more than a few circles, some type and an image of a basket. Stroke and Drop Shadow Layer Styles introduce depth, and help to add the vital ingredient for any poster: impact.

If you want to watch the poster design in action, there's a complete walkthrough in this month's project files. To get started, create a new A4 document and fill it with sky blue, add a dark red circle, then follow the steps below to continue...

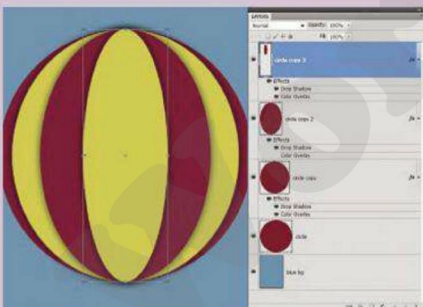
WATCH & LEARN!

<http://bit.ly/w619FO>

PRACTICAL Photoshop



Step-by-step Make a poster



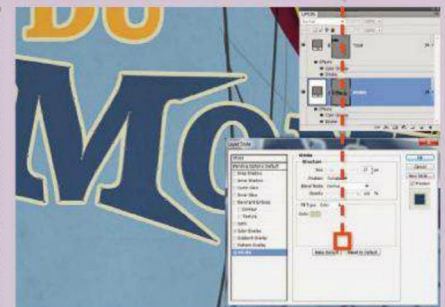
01 Make a balloon

Hit **Cmd/Ctrl+J** to duplicate the circle. Click the 'fx' icon in the Layers Panel and choose Drop Shadow. Set the Blend Mode to Multiply, Opacity 75%, colour black, Size 80. Next, check Color Overlay and choose a yellow. Hit OK then **Cmd/Ctrl+T** to transform the layer. Hold down **Shift+Alt** and drag the left centre point inwards. Hit **Enter**, duplicate the layer, transform and uncheck Color Overlay to make a red ring. Repeat until the balloon takes shape.



02 Add the basket

Highlight all the circle layers and hit **Cmd/Ctrl+G** to group them together, then position the balloon in the corner at an angle. Make a new layer and draw a few ropes with the Brush tool, then open our file 'poster_basket.psd' and select the basket with the Quick Selection tool. Use the Move tool - with Show Transform Controls checked - to drag the basket into the main image. Next, grab the Type tool and choose a font style.



03 Add the words

Write your words. Click a different tool after each word to apply the type to separate layers, then position the words with the Move tool. To personalise the letters, go to Layer>Type>Convert to Shape then use the Direct Selection tool to adjust the letter shapes. Next, Add a Stroke Layer Style with size 27, colour cream. **Alt-drag** the effects to the other type layers to copy them, and use the Color Overlay style to vary the colours.

Create a surreal portrait

Keyboard shortcut
Press **V** to quickly access the Move tool

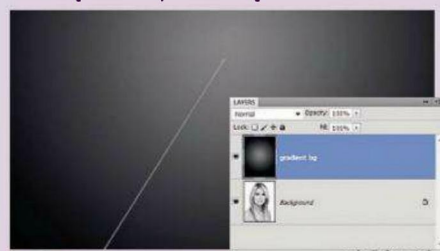
Discover how to create a surreal portrait using Layer Styles to add depth to your digital artwork

You may think that Layer Styles are just for graphic design and web graphics. But for those more interested in photographic images, there's still much joy to be found. Here, we've used Layer Styles to give depth to our surreal

portrait shapes. This technique encompasses a host of Layer Style skills, such as how to quickly copy a style from one layer to another, how to use the Bevel and Emboss settings to make a shiny heart, and how to turn a Drop Shadow style into a fully editable layer of

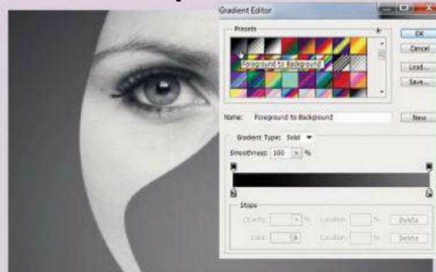
its own. Remember that if you want to copy any of the style settings we've used in this illustration, open the 'surreal_after.psd' from this month's project files on the DVD, right-click the effect and choose Copy Style, then paste it into your own layer.

Step-by-step Make a surreal portrait



01 Make a gradient

Open our file 'surreal_before.jpg', then click the Create New Layer icon. Grab the Gradient tool from the Tools Panel then go to the Options Bar and choose the Radial Gradient Style. Set your colours to Black and Grey, click the Preview box then choose the first preset 'Foreground to Background' from the Gradient Editor. Click and drag from the centre outwards to make a gradient.



02 Draw a shape

Hide the gradient layer, click the background, then grab the Pen tool from the Tools Panel. Zoom in to the face then drag to make your first anchor point. Drag again to begin a curved line and continue until you have a complete shape. Right click and choose Make Selection. Set radius to 0.5 and hit OK. Press **Cmd/Ctrl+J** to copy it to a new layer.



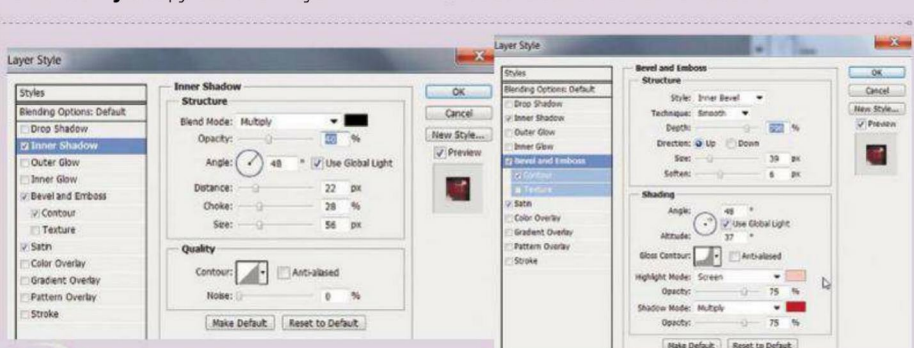
03 Add a Layer Style

Reveal the gradient layer, then drag the Eye layer to the top of the stack. Click the Create Layer Style icon in the Layers Panel and choose Bevel and Emboss. Set Size 5, Soften 9, Angle -63, Altitude 21. Next, click Contour and choose 'Half Round' from the Contour menu, then hit OK. Select the Move tool and check Show Transform Controls and Auto-Select Layer in the Options Bar. Position the layer and use the box to resize and rotate it.



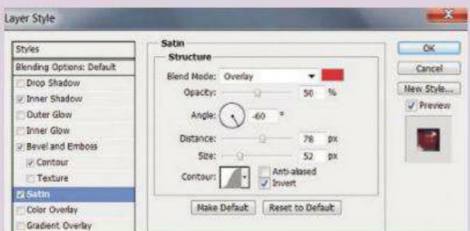
04 Liquify the shape

Go to Filter>Liquify, then select the Forward Warp tool. Use it to warp the layer and create wobbly trails, then hit OK. Next, repeat from Step 02 to make more pieces. For each, hold down **Alt** and drag the Bevel and Emboss style from a layer below to copy it to the new piece of face. Next, make a new layer, then use the Pen tool to draw a heart. Right-click and choose Fill Path, then fill with red.



05 Make a heart

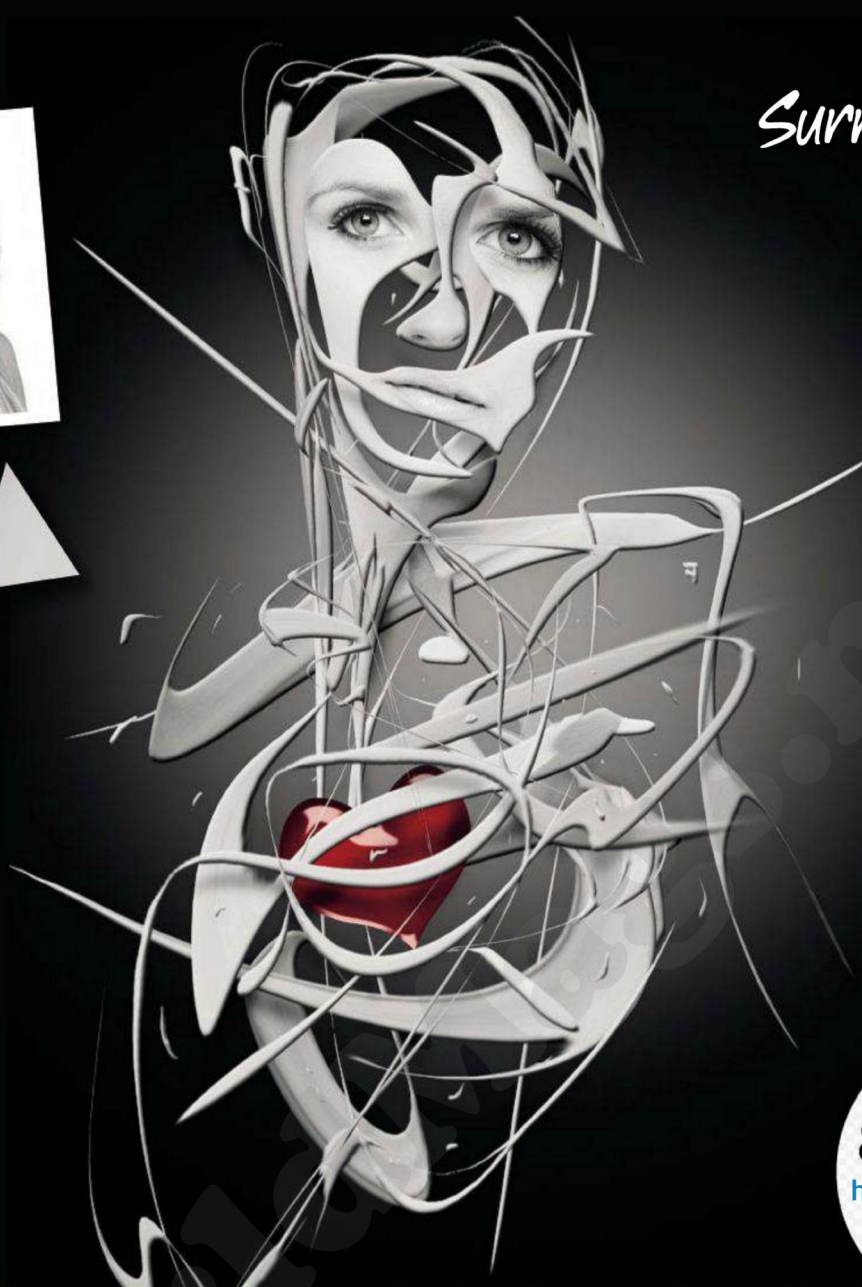
Add an Inner Shadow Layer Style and choose Distance 22, Choke 28, Size 56. Next, select Bevel and Emboss. Choose Depth 800%, Size 39, Soften 6, Angle 48, Altitude 37. Choose Gloss Contour 'Cove - Deep' then select a light and dark red for Highlight and Shadow. Next, highlight Satin and choose the Overlay Blend Mode, colour red, Distance 78, Size 52, Contour Gaussian. Hit OK.



START IMAGE



Surreal portrait



**WATCH
& LEARN!**

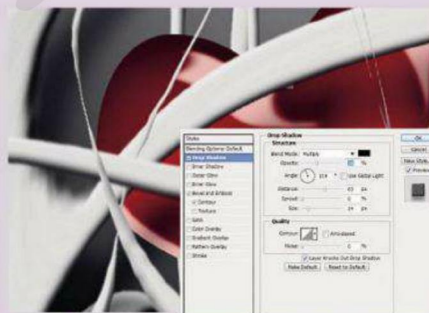
<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>

**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**



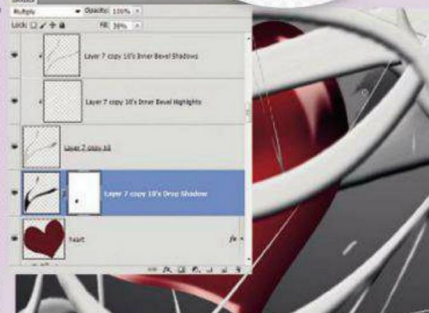
06 Warp the skin

Reveal the background and select some skin with the Pen tool. Copy it to a layer, then drag that layer to the top of the stack. Grab the Move tool, hit **Cmd/Ctrl+T**, then right-click and choose Warp. Warp the layer dramatically, hit **Enter** to apply, then warp repeatedly until you have swirling lines. Duplicate the layer multiple times and warp in different ways, then position the lines to form the shape of a body.



07 Add a drop shadow

Select the Heart layer then hit **Cmd/Ctrl+J** repeatedly to move it up the stack until it sits in the middle of the swirls. Click a layer above the heart, then double-click the 'Effects' and choose Drop Shadow. Set Opacity to 38%, Size 24. Uncheck Use Global Light, then drag the shadow to position it. Click 'Make Default' then hit OK. Next, right-click over the style in the Layers Panel and choose Create Layers.

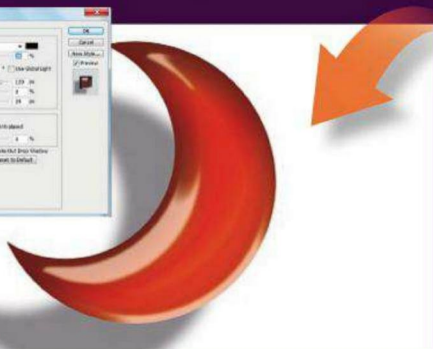
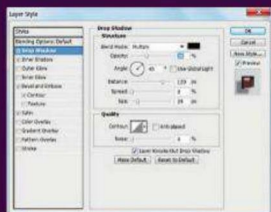


08 Mask the shadows

Highlight the newly-created Drop Shadow layer, then click the Add Layer Mask icon. Grab the Brush tool and choose a soft-edged brush, then paint with black over the shadow where it overlaps the background. Use the square bracket keys to resize your brush as you paint. Repeat from Step 07 to add a few more shadows.

Layer Styles: Tips and tricks

Use these quick and easy techniques to speed up your workflow and create eye-catching effects in a couple of clicks



Interactive shadows

In the Drop Shadow settings, you have the option to control the distance and angle of the shadow effect. But if you'd rather position by eye than fiddle with sliders, simply drag the shadow in your image to move it around. You'll see that the slider and angle settings change accordingly as you drag. Similar interactivity works for the Inner Shadow, Satin, Gradient Overlay and Pattern Overlay styles.

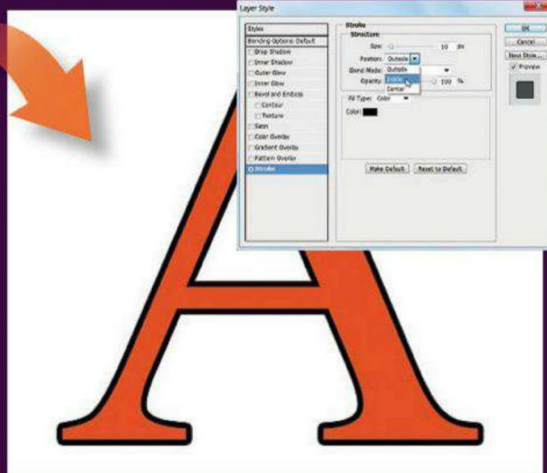


Quick photo effects

Layer Styles can be useful for quick photo edits. You can use the Color Overlay or Gradient Overlay styles to add a toning effect to a black and white image, or perhaps use Pattern Overlay to introduce texture. And if you want a quick border, the Stroke style can create one in seconds.

Stroke corners

When applying a thick stroke to a text or shape layer, the edges can look very rounded. If you want sharper edges to your stroke, choose 'Position: Inside' in the Stroke style settings.



Scale Effects

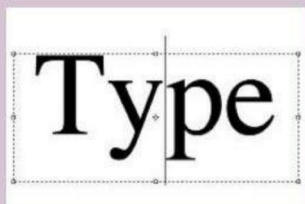
Right-click over a style in the Layers Panel and then choose Scale Effects to collectively adjust the size of all the styles applied to that layer. This can be particularly useful if you want to copy a style between two documents that have different resolutions, as you can rescale the styles to fit.

Download styles

Although the best way to get to grips with Layer Styles is through experimentation, you can take a shortcut by downloading style sets. There are thousands available online, some free, others at a (usually modest) cost. Once downloaded, open the Styles Panel (Window>Styles) and choose Load Styles.

Type tool

T Layer Styles can perform wonders with type. There are literally thousands of ways to spruce up a dull line. The best place to start experimenting is the Bevel and Emboss Layer Style. Here you have a wealth of controls that can give your words extra depth and make them stand out. Experiment with different contour settings and angles to get the best results. You can also make splendid type effects with Stroke and Outer Glow. And, of course, there's the ever-faithful

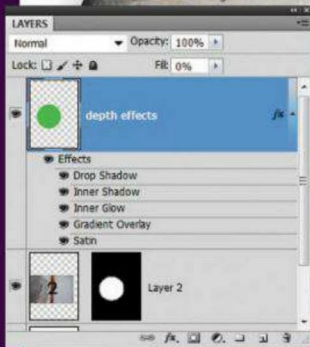


Drop Shadow, which never fails to help a word stand out from the background. Perhaps the greatest thing about applying style effects to type is that you can still edit the letters or change the font style, and the effects will automatically adjust.



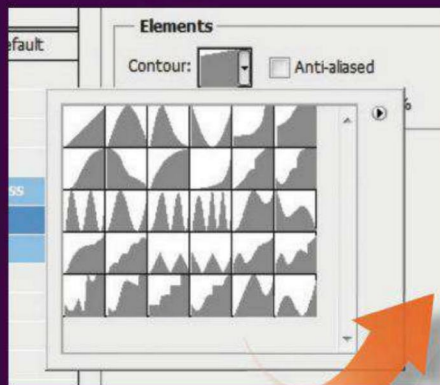
Blend If options

The Blend If sliders (which are found in Blending Options) allow you to quickly blend layers by controlling the transparency of particular tones and colours. Hold down **Alt** and drag the right or left side of any of the four sliders to split them apart and create a more graduated blend.



Transparent effects

The Fill slider lets you hide the contents of a layer, but not any styles that have been applied. You can make a shape such as a circle on a layer above an image, set Fill to 0%, then add effects such as Drop Shadow, Bevel and Emboss, and Gradient Overlay to give it depth.



Access more contours

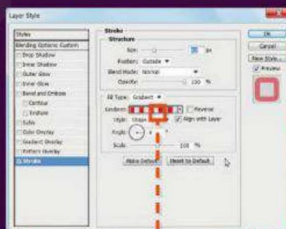
By default, there are 12 Contours to choose from in the Bevel and Emboss settings, each giving a different finish to the edges of your shape. To experiment with a few others, go to Edit > Preset Manager, then choose Contours from the Preset Type drop-down. Click the arrow icon and choose Contours to load in 30 different options.

Reset

As with most Photoshop boxes and commands, holding **Alt** will change the 'Cancel' button to 'Reset', so if you want to start over you can reset all the settings without leaving the Dialog Box.

Paint styles

Create a new layer and set Fill Opacity to 0, then apply any styles you like. Here, we've used Drop Shadow, Inner Shadow, Pattern Overlay and Color Overlay. Grab the Brush tool and start painting and you'll find that the paint will be invisible, so you're effectively painting with Layer Styles. It's great for effects like stains, rust or tears.



Stroke pattern

You may think the Stroke style is only good for adding a line around your layer, but delve a little deeper and you'll find plenty of creative potential. Set Fill Type to Pattern and choose a chequerboard pattern for a dotted line stroke. Alternatively, set it to Gradient with the Shape Burst style for coloured rings.

Keyboard shortcut
Hit **P** to access the Pen tool

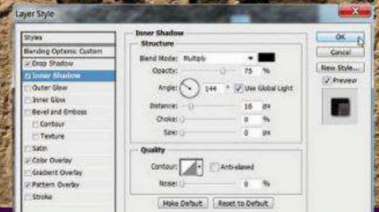
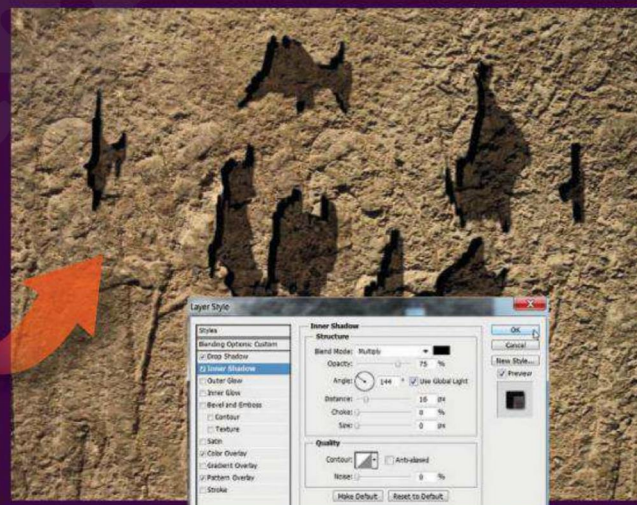
Pen tool



Layer Styles are most commonly applied to shape-based layers, and the number one tool for making and manipulating shapes is the Pen tool. The Pen tool works by placing anchor points that form a line, called a Path. Drag as you make a point to form two handles that can be tweaked to change the shape of a curve. If you want the line to come to a sharp corner, hold **Alt** and click the anchor point to get rid of the control handles and make the angle more abrupt. You can also hold **Cmd/Ctrl** to

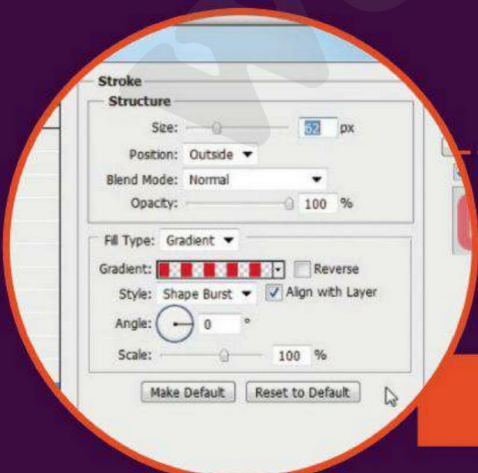


switch to the Direct Selection tool, which allows you to drag anchor points or control handles in the path. If you want a solid shape, close the path by bringing the line back to the start, then right-click and choose 'Fill Path' or 'Make Selection'.



Create layers

Right-click on any style in the Layers Panel and choose Create Layers to turn the style into a pixel-based layer that, depending on the effect, will appear on top of or below your original layer. You can now edit the effect in any way you like and make use of all the features working with layers allows.



Glow effects

Learn how to make a host of glow and colour effects to use on images and text

PROJECT INFO

You'll learn

▶▶ How to make our cover using selections, Adjustment Layers and Custom Shapes

You'll need

▶▶ Photoshop CS5

It'll take

▶▶ 60 minutes

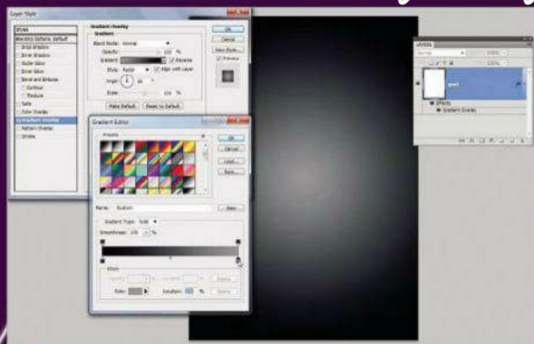


Glow effects can add impact to all kinds of design, and they're quite simple to make. The Outer and Inner Glow styles are your best friend here. Apply them with a punchy

Blend Mode such as Vivid Light to turn a curling white line into a flicking streak of energy.

Here, we'll show you how to add fantastic glows to your images and text, plus a host of other eye-catching effects. We'll do this by combining Layer Styles with various Photoshop commands, tools and filters.

Step-by-step Add glowing light streaks



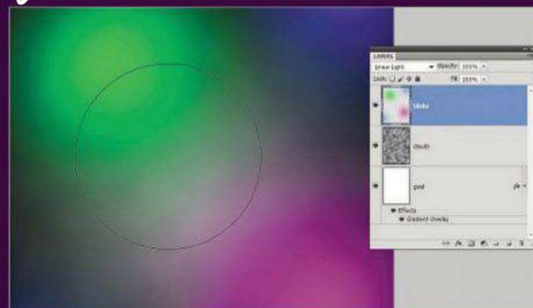
01 Make the background

Go to File>New and choose Preset: International Paper and Size A4 then hit OK. Double-click the Background Layer in the Layers Panel and call the layer 'Grad'. Next, click the 'fx' icon at the bottom of the panel and choose Gradient Overlay. Choose Style: Radial then click the preview window. Choose the first preset, foreground to background. Double-click the right colour block and set to mid-grey then hit OK.



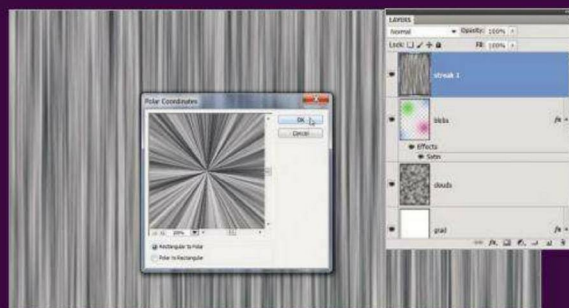
03 Make ripples

Click the Layer Style icon and choose Satin. Set Blend Mode: Linear Light, Contour: Ring Double, then hit OK. Next, grab the Move tool, check Show Transform Controls, then drag the corner of the bounding box outwards while holding Shift and Alt to hide the messy edges. Set the layer Blend Mode to Linear Light.



02 Add colours

Click the Create New layer icon and hit **D** to reset your colours, then go to Filter>Render>Clouds. Set the layer Blend Mode to Soft Light and Opacity to 20%, then go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Set radius to 50px and hit OK. Next, create a new layer and grab the Brush tool. Choose a large soft-edged brush and paint a few bright-coloured blobs around the edges of the image.



04 Make light streak

Make a new layer and call it 'streak 1'. Hit **D** then **Alt+Backspace** to fill the layer with black. Go to Filter>Render>Fibers. Set Variance 19, Strength 3 and hit OK. Next, go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur, set Angle 90, Distance 700. Next, go to Filter>Distort>Polar Coordinates and choose Rectangular to Polar.

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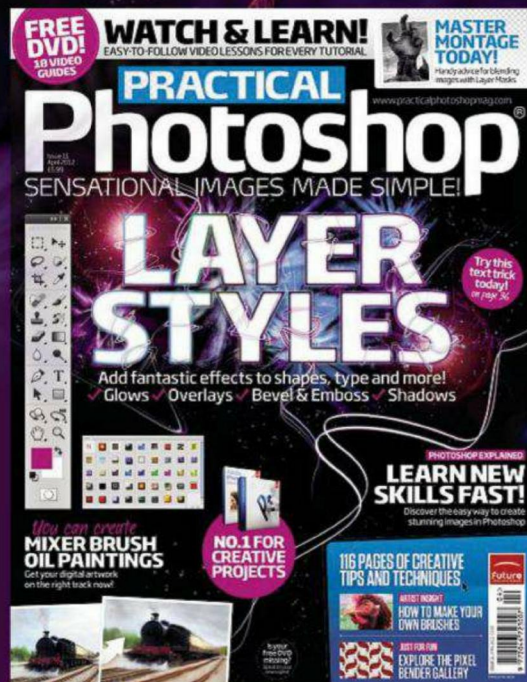
PRACTICAL Photoshop



YOUR GENIUS

JAMES PATERSON

▶▶ Former studio pro James has a decade of photographic experience and, as *Practical Photoshop's* Technique Editor, is an expert in Photoshop manipulation. Specialising in creative imagery, retouching and photomontage, he knows a great deal about the coolest piece of software ever invented.

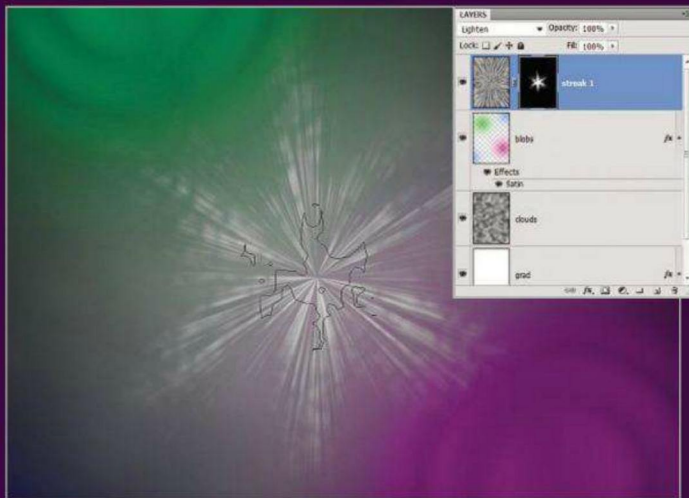


Glow effects

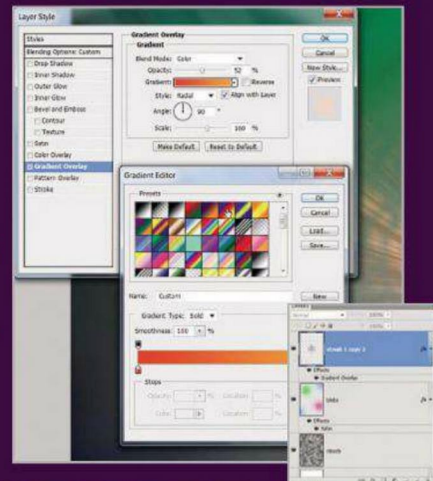
LAYER STYLES



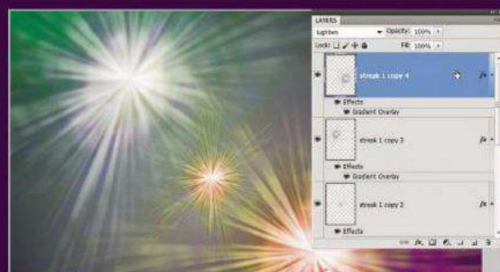
LAYER STYLES



06 Add a style
Duplicate, rotate and resize the streak a couple of times, then hold **Cmd/Ctrl** and highlight all the streak layers. Press **Cmd/Ctrl+E** to merge them together, then change the layer Blend Mode to Lighten. Next, add a Gradient Overlay Style. In the Layer Style box, set Blend Mode: Color, Style: Radial, Opacity 65%. Choose a bright-coloured preset or make your own gradient in the Gradient Editor.



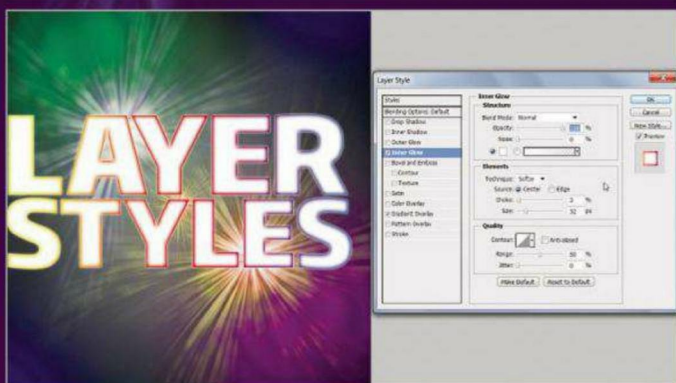
05 Mask the streak
Hold **Alt** and click the Add Layer Mask icon to hide the layer behind a mask, then grab the Brush tool. Choose the Star 70px brush and set foreground colour to white, then paint over the centre of the layer to reveal the streaks of light here. Set Blend Mode to Lighten. Next, press **Cmd/Ctrl+J** to duplicate the layer. Use the Move tool to rotate and resize the copy and change the Blend Mode to Screen.



07 Build up effect
Duplicate the light streak then grab the Move tool from the Tools Panel. Click the bounding box then right-click and choose Warp. Drag the grid slightly to bend the streaks. Duplicate again then position and resize the streaks to build up the effect. Double-click the effects on the duplicate layers and experiment with different Gradient Overlay settings to alter the colours. Use Gaussian Blur at a low setting to soften the streak lines.



08 Create text
Create words with the Type tool then right-click the type layer and choose Rasterize Type. Alternatively, copy in the 'styles_text.psd'. Hit **Cmd/Ctrl+J** to duplicate then highlight lower type layer. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Set Radius 7px and hit OK. Next, add a Color Overlay Layer Style and choose colour: white with Blend Mode: Normal, Opacity 100%. Highlight the top layer then add a Gradient Overlay style. Choose the Blue, Red, Yellow gradient preset with Style: Linear, Angle 180.



09 Add a glow
Double-click Effects on the top layer and then choose Inner Glow from the list of Styles. Set Blend Mode: Normal, Opacity 100%, colour white, Source: Centre, Choke 3%, Size 32px then hit OK. Next, hold down **Cmd/Ctrl** and click the layer thumbnail to load the shape as a selection, then go to Window>Paths to access the Paths Panel. Now click on the 'Make work path from selection' icon.



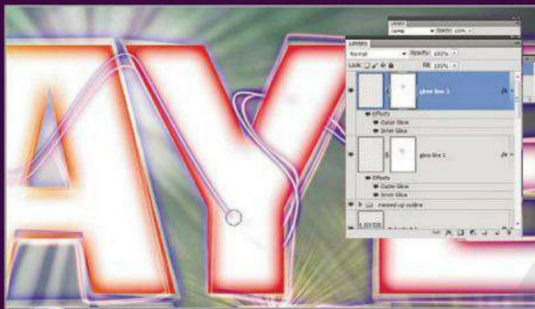
10 Adjust the path
Grab Direct Selection tool. Click on path outline. Drag anchor points to adjust shape of path slightly and make letters less uniform. Work around the words, then make a new layer, right-click and choose Fill Path. Choose any colour, set layer Fill Opacity to 0. Add Outer Glow Layer Style with Blend Mode: Linear Light. Choose a bright colour for glow and set Size 18px. Repeat to add a couple more glowing outlines.

Glow effects



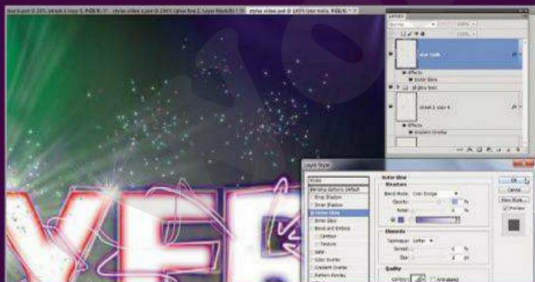
11 Make lines

Create a new layer. Grab Pen tool. Click and drag to make an anchor point with the control handles, then click-drag somewhere else to form a curve. Continue drawing the curve, weaving it around the letters. When you're happy, select the Brush tool. Set colour to white and choose a small brush tip, around 8-20 pixels. Go back to the Pen tool, right-click and choose Stroke Path. Set Tool: Brush, check Simulate Pressure and hit OK.



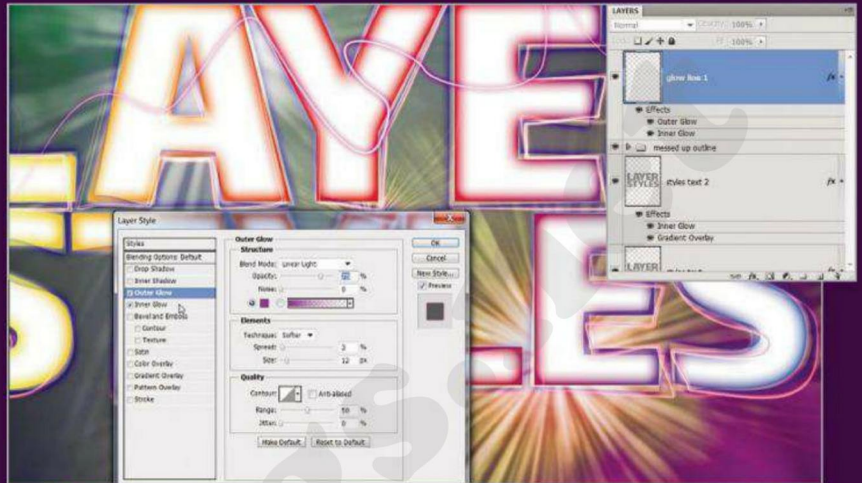
13 Mask the lines

Add a Layer Mask to the glow line layer then grab the Brush tool and choose a soft-edged brush tip. Paint with black to hide parts of the line so that it looks like it's weaving in and out of the letters. Create more glowing lines throughout the image and mask in the same way. Now make a new layer called 'star trails', grab the Brush tool and choose the Star brush again.



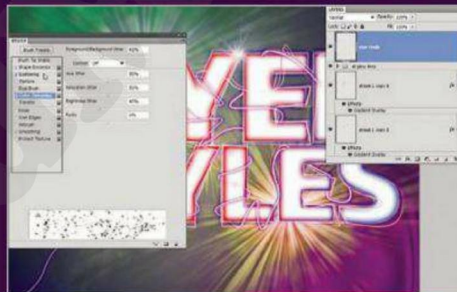
15 Paint trails

Before you start painting, add Outer Glow Layer Style to the empty 'star trails' layer. Set Blend Mode to Color Dodge, Size 3 and choose a bright colour. Paint around image to add star trails. Next, open 'styles_butterfly.psd'. Use Move tool to drag and drop the butterfly into main image, then position, resize and rotate it to fit. Double-click the layer to bring up the Layer Styles Box then go to Blending Options.



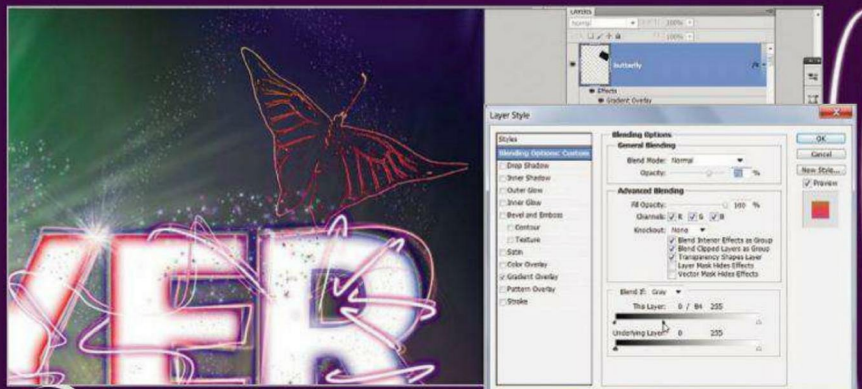
12 Add a glow

Add an Outer Glow Layer Style to the glow line layer. Set Blend Mode: Linear Light, Opacity 75%, Spread 3, Size 12 and choose a bright colour for the glow. Next, go to Inner Glow. Set Blend Mode: Linear Light, Opacity 100, Source: Edge, Size 2, then hit OK. Grab the Direct Selection tool and use it to adjust the anchor points on the path, then make a new layer, stroke the line and make it glow again using different colours.



14 Set up a brush

Go to Brush Panel. Click Shape Dynamics. Set Size Jitter 80%, Angle 80. Click Scattering, set Scatter 800%, Count 1. Click Color Dynamics and set Foreground/Background Jitter 100%, Hue Jitter 80%, Saturation Jitter 50%, Brightness Jitter 40%. Sample two colours from image for foreground and background colours.



16 Blend the butterfly

In the Blend If controls, hold Alt and drag right half of black point slider on 'This Layer' to 84. This hides the darker parts of the layer. Next, add a Gradient Overlay style to colour the butterfly. Click Create Adjustment Layer icon and choose Curves. Make an S-shaped curve with two points to add contrast. Finish with a Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer and drag the Hue slider to add a blue cast.

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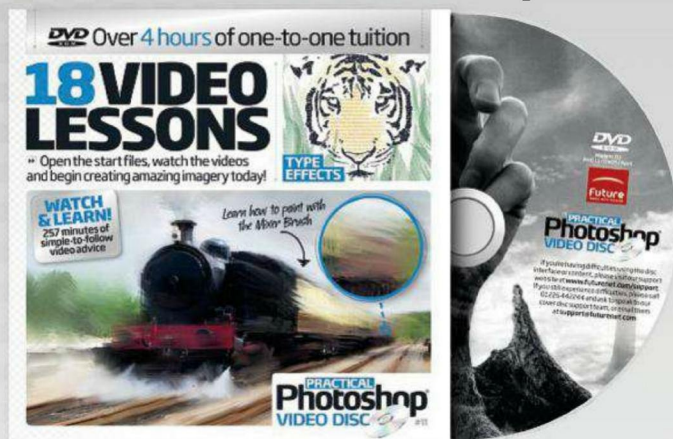
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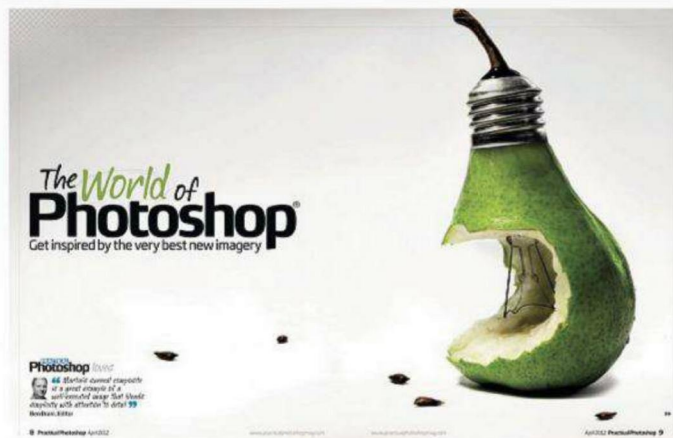
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THE UK?**
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on page 81

Go wild with our tiger text effects

Learn how to warp letters and fill shapes with text to build an image entirely from words

PROJECT INFO

You'll learn

►► How to make selections with Channels, warp text, make an Action and fill Paths with text

You'll need

►► Photoshop CS3 or above

It'll take

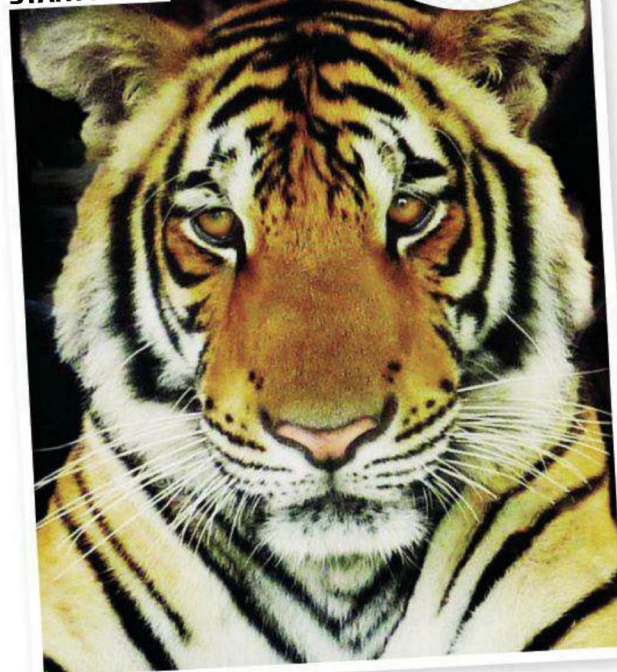
►► 3 hours

Tyger, tyger burning bright' is one of the most renowned lines in the history of the written word. In his famous poem, *The Tyger*, William Blake ponders the creator that crafted the fearsome big cat.

We've used the poem as both inspiration and building block here. Blake asks 'What immortal hand or eye, could frame thy fearful symmetry?' Well, in the case of this project, that would be you. But rather than Blake's suggested hammer, chain and anvil, you'll forge your tiger with the Type, Move and Pen tools.

There are two main stages to this project. In stage one, we'll create the black tiger stripes. We'll isolate the stripes then fill them with our words. We'll also make a simple Action to help speed things up. In stage two, we'll move on to the long passages of text that add colour to the scene, selecting colours then turning them into Paths that can be filled with words. So let's get started...

START IMAGE



WATCH & LEARN!

<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>

PRACTICAL
Photoshop

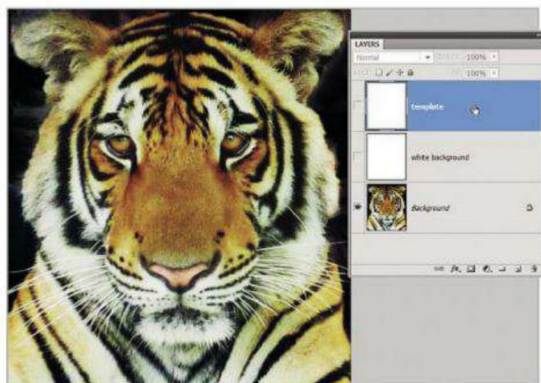
Step-by-step Tiger text effect



YOUR GENIUS

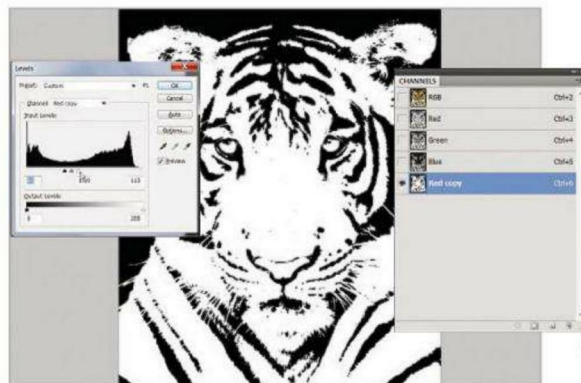
JAMES PATERSON

►► Former studio pro James has a decade of photographic experience and, as *Practical Photoshop's* Technique Editor, is an expert in Photoshop manipulation. Specialising in creative imagery, retouching and photomontage, he knows a great deal about the coolest piece of software ever invented.



01 Make two white layers

Open our file 'tiger_before.jpg' then click the Create New Layer icon twice for two new layers. Double-click the layer name and call the top layer 'template' and the one below 'white background'. For each layer, go to Edit>Fill and choose Use: White. Set Opacity to 80% on each then click the Eye icon to hide them.



02 Copy a channel

Go to Window>Channels to access the Channels Panel, then drag the Red channel to the New Channel icon to make a copy. Highlight the copy then go to Image>Adjustment>Levels. Squeeze the white and black point sliders inwards to boost contrast so that the stripes are pure black with the other parts white.



TIGER TEXT EFFECTS

ing bright in the for-
ests of the night, What im-
mortal hand or eye Could
frame thy fearful symme-
what distant deeps or
skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes? On what wings dare he
aspire? What the hand dare seize the fire?
And what shoulder and what art Could twist
the sinews of thy heart? And when thy heart
began to beat, What dread hand and what
dread feet? What the hammer? what the
chisel? What the furnace was thy brain? What the
anvil? What dread grasp Dare its deadly ter-
rors clasps? When the stars threw
down on high And water'd
heaven with their tears, And water'd
their eyes

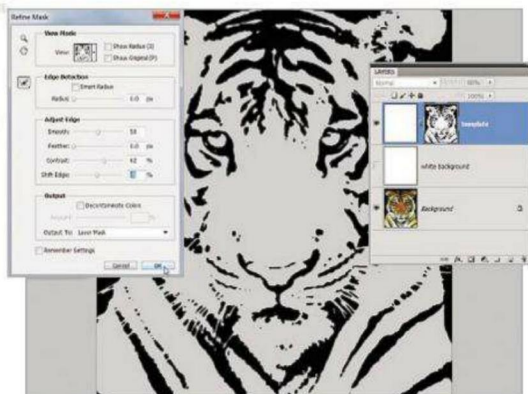
CREATIVE PROJECT

TIGER TEXT EFFECTS

PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Action

► Actions are great for speeding up your workflow. If you've got a repetitive task, then a couple of minutes spent making an Action could save you hours. Actions are controlled through the Actions Panel. Once you've created a new one and hit Record, everything you do is recorded. You can carry out your repetitive task once, hit Stop, then play the Action back to automate the task. You can also assign your Action a shortcut key and save the Action Set using the fly-out menu at the top of the panel.

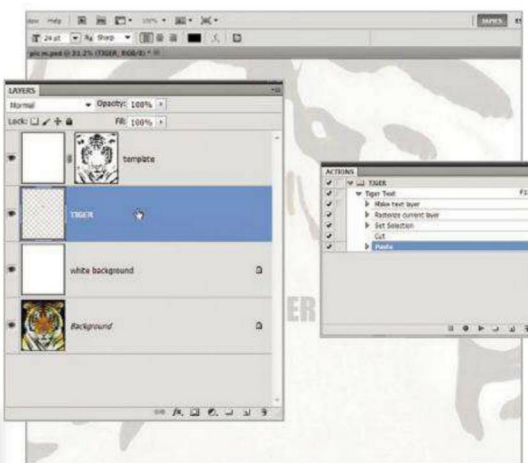


03 Make a selection

Hold **Cmd/Ctrl** and click on the Red Copy channel to load a selection. Click back on the RGB channel then go to the Layers Panel, highlight and reveal the template layer then click the Add Layer Mask icon to turn the selection into a mask. Next, right-click the Layer Mask thumbnail and choose Refine Mask. Set Smooth 15, Contrast 45, Shift Edge -25 choose Output to: Layer Mask, then hit OK.

05 Record your Action

Grab the Type tool and choose a suitable font size and style - we used Impact, 24pt - and set the font colour to black. Click in the centre of the screen and write TIGER, then right-click the newly-created Type layer and choose 'Rasterize Type'. Next, hit **Cmd/Ctrl+A** to Select All then **Cmd/Ctrl+X** to cut and **Cmd/Ctrl+V** to paste. Click the Stop Recording icon in the Actions Panel.



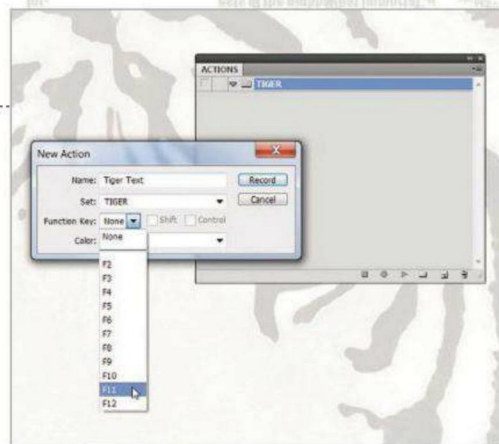
GENIUS TIP! UPSIZE YOUR DOCUMENTS

► Our start image is cropped from a wider shot, then upsized in Photoshop with the Image Size command. As a result, the image quality isn't great, but that's not important. The base image acts as a guide for us to build the image, so as long as the broad shapes can be defined, we needn't worry about fine detail. You can use any low-res image as a start file. Objects, animals or clothes with strong stripes work best.



07 Run the Action

Highlight the template layer and set the Opacity to 100 then click the Lock icon in the Layers Panel. Click back on the layer below then hit F11 to run your new Tiger Text Action - the newly-created word may be hidden behind the template layer. Click on the bounding box, drag the layer over the eye. Resize, rotate and warp to position.



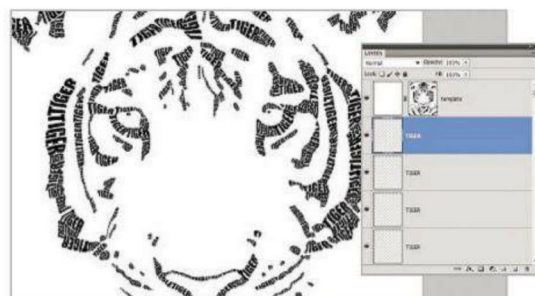
04 Set up Action

Now use the Brush tool and paint with white and black on the mask to tidy up any rough edges. Next, highlight and reveal the white background layer then go to Window>Actions. In the Actions Panel, click on the Create New Set icon and call it 'Tiger', then click the Create New Action icon. Call the new Action 'Tiger Text', set the Function Key to F11 (or any other you like) then hit Record.



06 Warp the word

Grab the Move tool and make sure 'Auto Select Layer' and 'Show Transform Controls' are checked in the Options Bar. Click on the corner of the bounding box around the 'Tiger' Layer, then drag it over to the tiger's eye. Drag the corners of the box to resize and rotate the letters to fit the contours of the stripes, then right-click, choose Warp and drag the box to adjust the shape. Hit Enter when you're happy.



08 Get to work

This step will take as long as the rest of the tutorial put together. Repeat Step 06 over and over again to create more words, then use the Transform and Warp controls to position each one. Make sure that the template layer always stays at the top of the Layer Stack, and if you want to check your progress, drag the white background Opacity back to 100% to get an idea of the finished result.

Photoshop Anatomy

Let's take a look at five major Photoshop features you'll be using to complete this project

PATHS
Photoshop lets you fill a Path with type, so we made a selection of the orange fur then turned the selection into a Path with the Paths Panel.

TYPE TOOL
The Type tool not only allows you to add your own lines of text, but also lets you change the font, size and colour of passages of text copied in from other documents.

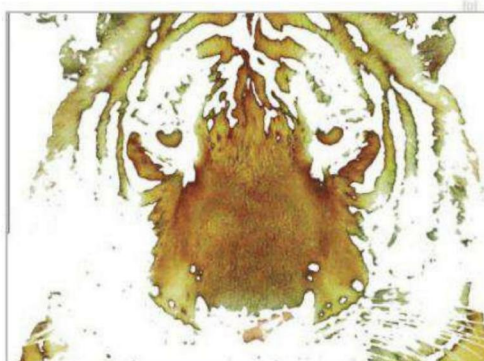
BOUNDING BOX
The bounding box displays when the Move tool is selected and 'Show Transform Controls' is checked. Quick access to it is vital for this project.

ACTIONS
We set up an Action to record the task of creating the word Tiger and assigned a keyboard shortcut to it. This helps to speed up a repetitive task.

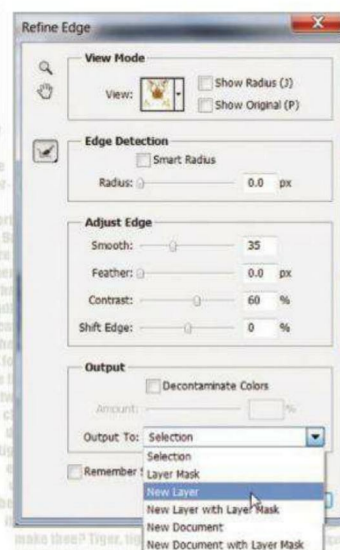
LAYER MASKS
Layer Masks allow you to selectively control a layer's transparency. Black areas on the mask hide parts of the layer and white reveals it.



09 Select the fur
When you've filled all the tiger stripes, highlight the top tiger layer then scroll to the bottom tiger layer and Shift-click to highlight them all. Press **Cmd/Ctrl+G** to group the layers together. Next, Alt-click on the eye icon of the Background Layer to hide all the others, then go to **Select>Color Range**. Click over the orange fur and use the Fuzziness slider to control the effect.



10 Refine the selection
When you are happy with the Color Range settings, hit OK to form a selection. Next, go to **Select>Refine Edge** then set Smooth 35, Contrast 60 and choose 'Output to: New Layer' then hit OK. You should name the newly-created layer 'fur' then hold down **Cmd/Ctrl** and click the layer thumbnail to load its shape as a selection.



CREATIVE PROJECT

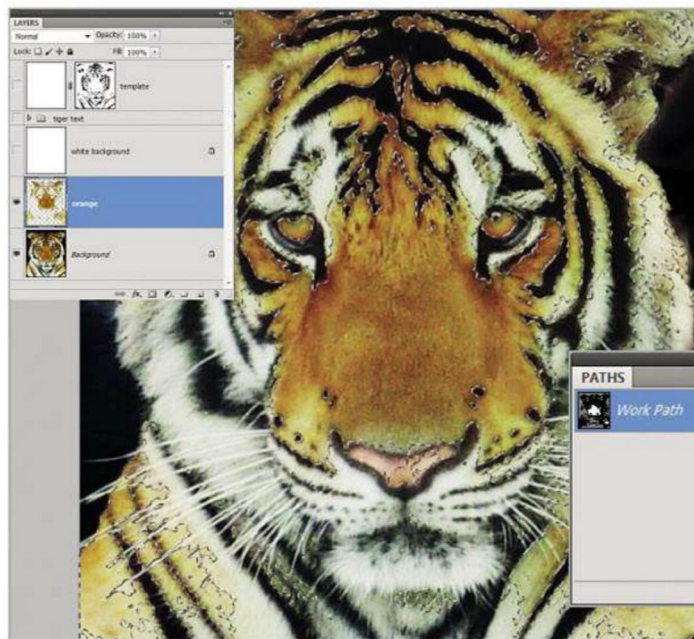
TIGER TEXT EFFECTS

PRACTICAL Photoshop

Know your tools!

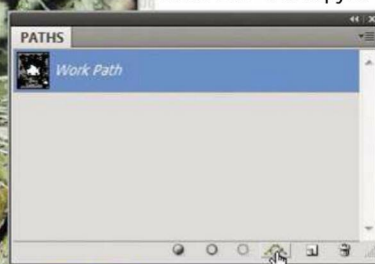
Type tool

► We're building an image entirely out of words, so it helps to know the ins and outs of the tool that creates them. The Type tool adds a type layer when you click inside a document or drag to make a type box. You can then type in words or paste in passages as we've done here. Each time you click off the tool, the type layer is applied. The options at the top of the screen let you adjust the font style, size and colour. You can find many more type controls in the Character Panel (Window>Character).

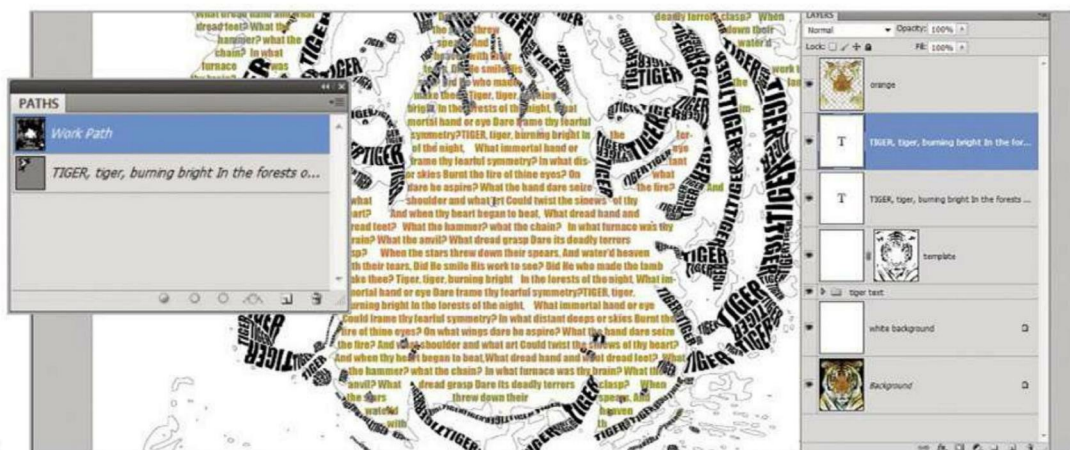


11 Make a path

Go to Window>Paths to access the Paths Panel. Click the 'Make workpath from selection' icon at the bottom of the Paths Panel to turn the selection into a path. You can now fill the shape of the fur with any passage of text you choose. We've used the William Blake poem, *The Tyger*. Select a passage of text from any document or web page and hit **Cmd/Ctrl+C** to copy it.

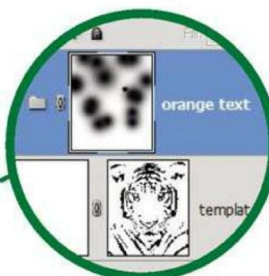


Make work path from selection



12 Paste a passage

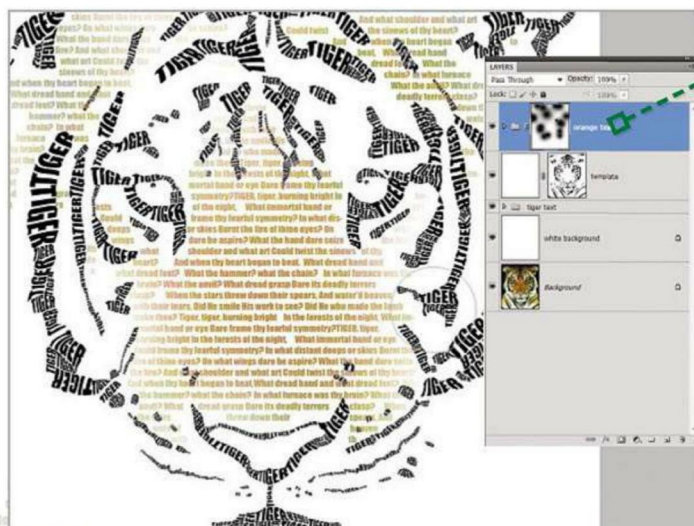
Drag the Orange layer to the top of the Layer Stack then click the Blend Mode drop-down at the top of the Layers Panel and choose Color. Highlight the template layer below then grab the Type tool and choose a font. Set font colour to mid-grey. Hover over the nose until the type icon changes to a circle, then click inside and press **Cmd/Ctrl+V** to paste in your passage of text.



GENIUS TIP!

USE WARP CONTROLS

► The Warp transform gives you interactive control over a layer's shape. A grid of nine boxes divides the layer into areas that can be pushed and pulled around to shift pixels. Warp can be accessed with Edit>Transform>Warp but it's far quicker to right-click while in Transform mode and choose Warp from the drop-down.



13 Mask the words

Continue hitting **Cmd/Ctrl+V** to paste in text until the shape is full, then click on the Work Path in the Paths Panel. Click over another area with the Type tool then fill it with more text. Group all the Type Layers and the Orange layer together, then click the Add Layer mask icon. Paint on the mask with a black soft-edged brush to soften the edges of the orange text.

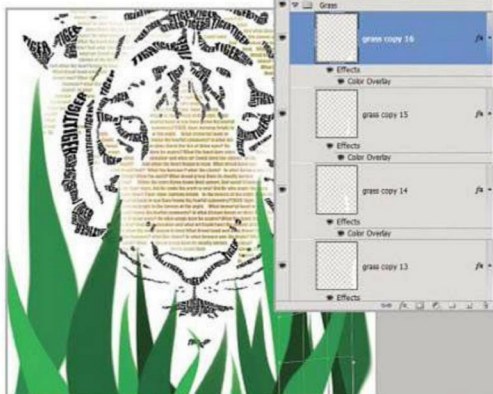
CREATIVE PROJECT

TIGER TEXT EFFECTS



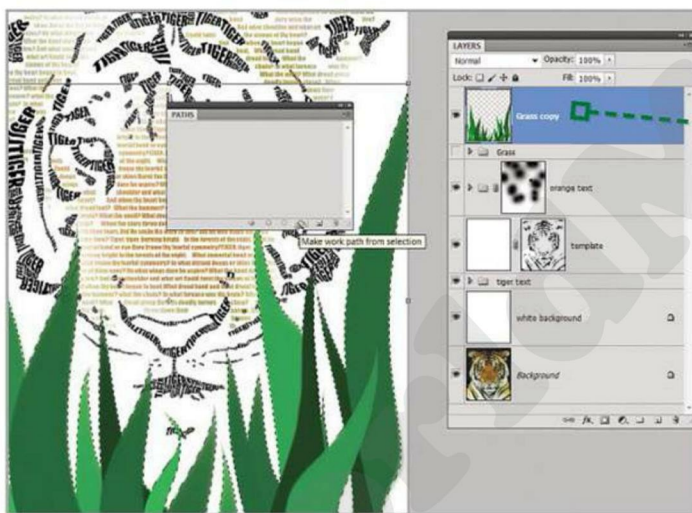
14 Create some grass

Create a new layer at the top of the Layer Stack and call it 'grass'. Grab the Pen tool then click and drag to make an anchor point. Click-drag again to make a second point then continue to make the shape of a blade of grass. Once the shape is complete, right-click and choose Fill Path. Choose any colour and hit OK then select a green colour and hit OK.



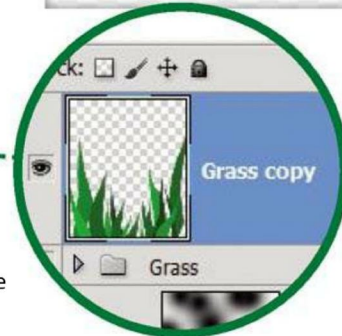
15 Make more grass

Hit **Cmd/Ctrl+J** to duplicate the 'grass' layer, then grab the Move tool and use the bounding box to position, resize and warp it. Double-click the Color Overlay style and choose a slightly different shade of green. Continue in the same way to build up a row of grass of varying shapes and colours. When you're happy, group the layers together.



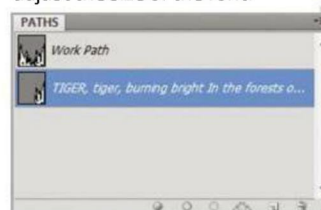
16 Make another path

Drag the grass group to the New Layer icon to duplicate it then hide the original group. Now press **Cmd/Ctrl+E** to merge the group into a single 'grass copy' layer, then set the Blend Mode of the layer to Color. **Cmd/Ctrl-click** the layer thumbnail to load a selection. Once again, click the 'Make work path from selection' icon in the Paths Panel.



17 Copy in text

Highlight the group below the 'grass copy' layer then grab the Type tool. Click inside the new work path then paste in more text to fill the grass. A smaller font size works best here, so press **Cmd/Ctrl+A** to select all the text then adjust the size of the font.



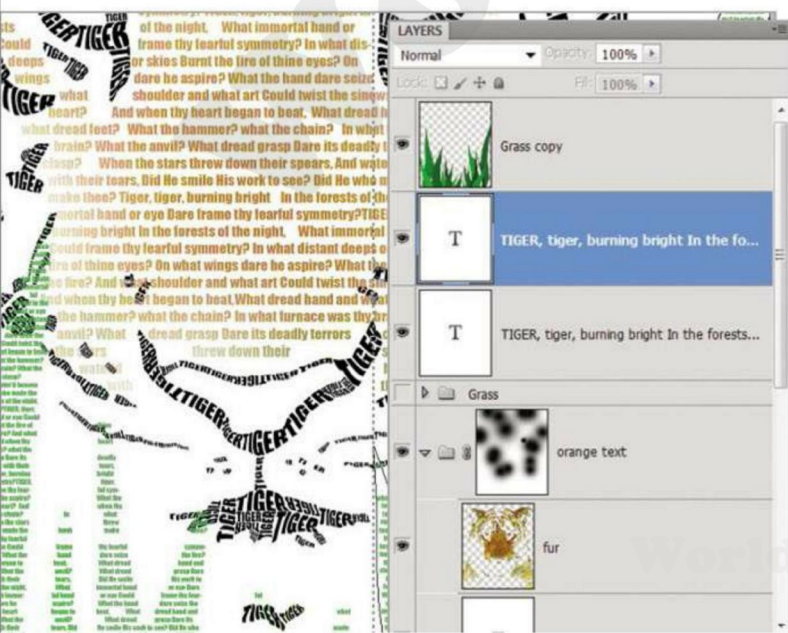
PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Paths

► Paths are vector-based shapes that are infinitely resizable, as opposed to images, which are pixel-based. Here, we've turned a selection into a Path, which then means that we can use the Type tool to fill the shape with our text. This is just one of the many things you can do with Paths. But perhaps the best reason for using them is that you can adjust the shape any time you like. In simple terms, Paths are just lines with anchor points that can be manipulated to change the shape.

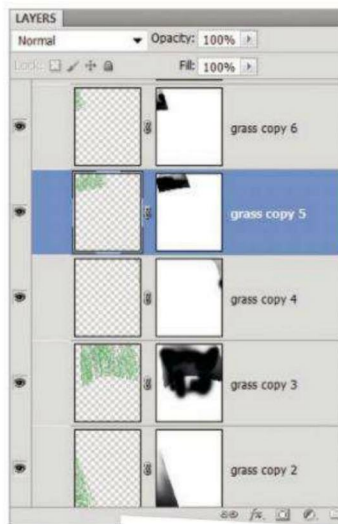
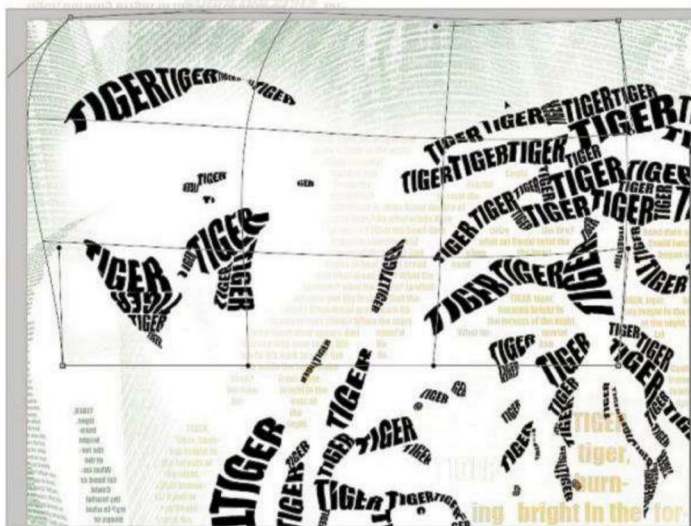
GENIUS TIP! SELECTIONS FROM CHANNELS

► We've used Channels here to select the stripes. Each channel displays the image in terms of colour brightness. We can duplicate a channel then make changes to it by boosting contrast and using the Brush tool to create a black and white scene. We then **Cmd/Ctrl-click** the channel to load a selection that includes all the black parts of the channel, creating an intricate selection in minutes. It's then a simple matter to turn the selection into a Layer Mask.



CREATIVE PROJECT

TIGER TEXT EFFECTS



18 Build up the grass Group the new text layers and the 'grass copy' layer together then duplicate the group and hit **Cmd/Ctrl+E** to merge to a single layer. Use the Move tool to position and warp the grass so that it surrounds the tiger. Add Layer Masks to hide the grass over the face. Make any final tonal tweaks you think are necessary with Adjustment Layers.

A look through the layers

Layers and Layer Groups are key to the success of this project. Let's take a closer look at the Layer Stack

GRASS

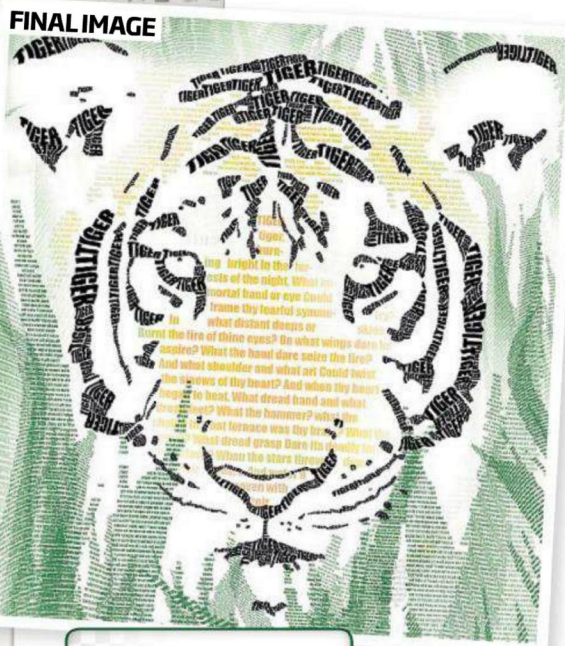
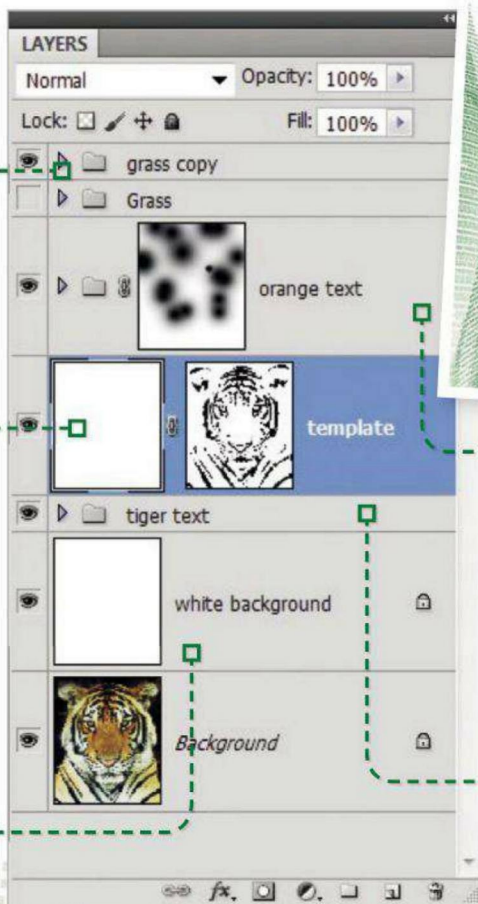
A blade of grass was made with the Pen tool, then copied, warped and coloured to make a row. The outline of the grass was made into a path, then filled with words.

TEMPLATE

You may end up with hundreds of layers, but this one really is the most important. It gives us the shape of the stripes and provides a crucial outline for the tiger text effect.

WHITE BACKGROUND

Our white background here was set to 80% Opacity to show where the words should cover the stripes. Set it back to 100% to see the finished effect.



ORANGE TEXT

A selection of the orange fur was made with the Color Range command, then copied to a new layer with the Overlay Blend Mode. A path was created from the shape of the selection then filled with passages of text.

TIGER TEXT

The bulk of the work in this project goes into making this Layer Group. It's filled with the tiger words that form the stripes. Each was made with our automated Action then positioned and warped with the Move tool.

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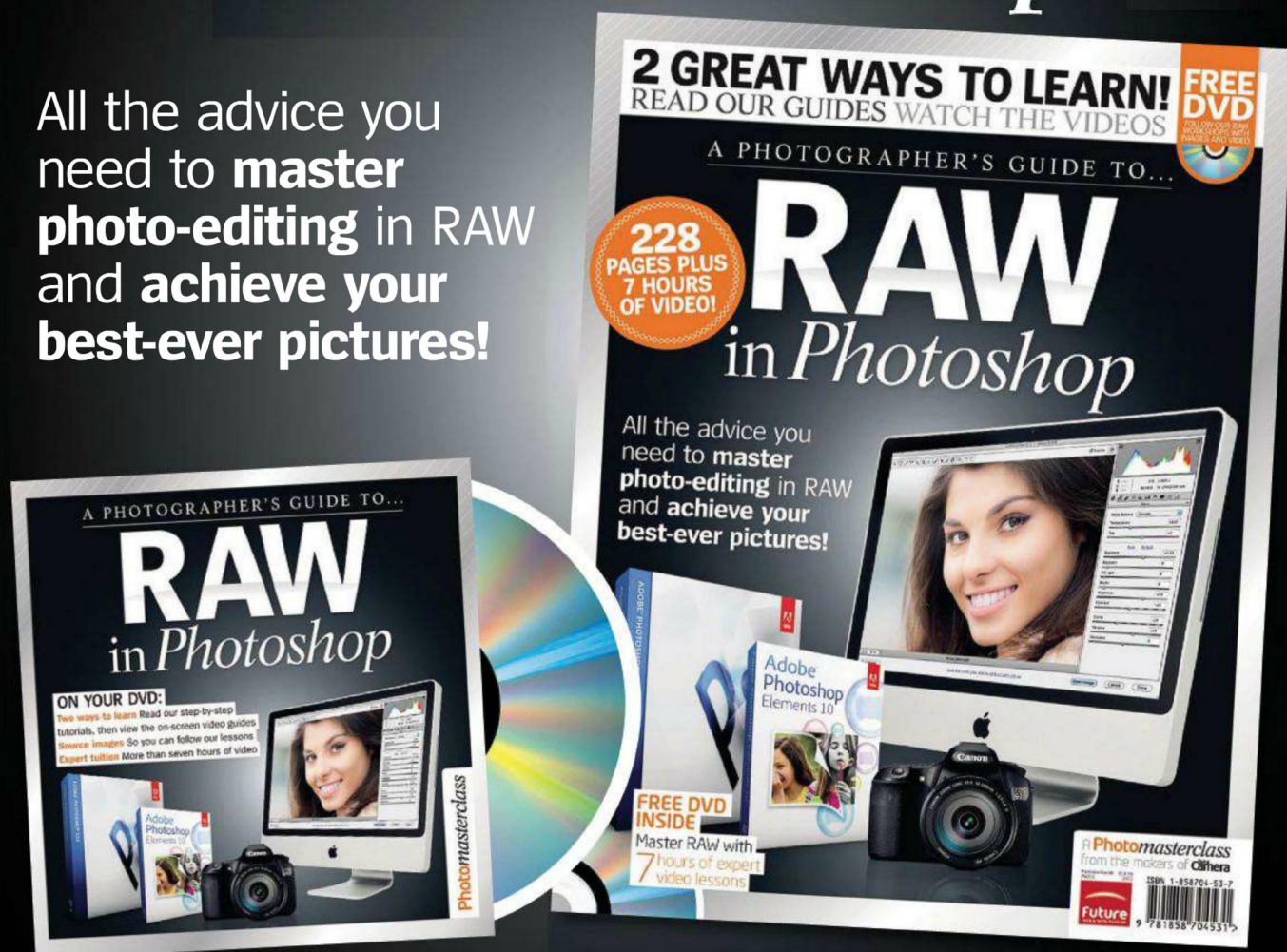
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A PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDE TO...

RAW

in Photoshop

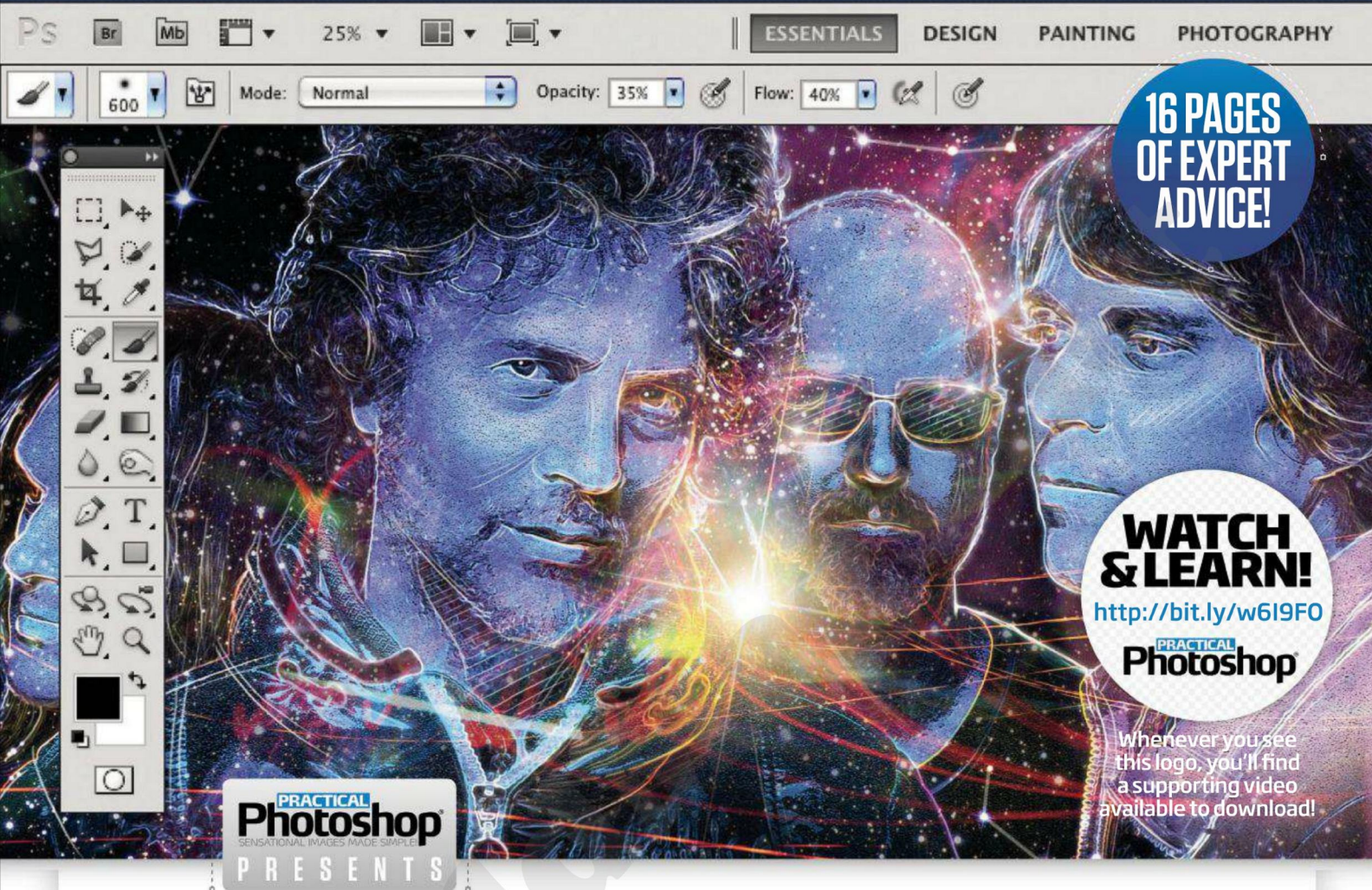
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FUNDAMENTALS SPECIALLY SELECTED

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FAST FIXES CORRECT LENS DISTORTIONS

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56 Art director and illustrator Jeff Huang tells us about *Flaming Lips*



GET THE LOOK THE BLEACH BYPASS EFFECT

58 Recreate this stylish darkroom effect in Photoshop in six easy steps



TOOL SCHOOL MASTER THE MIXER BRUSH

60 Give your digital paintings a realistic painterly look with this new tool



FILTER FOCUS GO FASTER WITH MOTION BLUR

64 Use the Motion Blur filter to add speed to motor sports shots



JUST FOR FUN CREATE PATTERN TEXTURES

66 Use the Pixel Bender filter to create patterns from simple photos

“Before long,
making selections
of almost any object
will be second
nature to you”

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**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**

START IMAGE

FUNDAMENTALS

ESSENTIALS OF SELECTIONS

Making accurate selections is a key skill when using Photoshop. Here's how to get started

▶ Sooner or later when you start using Photoshop you'll want to select something.

It might be that you've got a great shot of your kids, but you need to brighten their faces without changing the background, or perhaps you want to give a cracking landscape image the sky it deserves. Whatever it is, knowing how to select your subject accurately can be the

difference between a successful final image and one that looks amateurish and obviously edited.

Being able to make a selection allows you to selectively adjust parts of an image, cut out and paste in specific objects and create accurate Layer Masks.

However, as you move the cursor towards the Tools Panel you'll notice that there's a pretty extensive range of tools that can

help. They all have their own special properties that are designed to make selecting an object easier in certain circumstances, but which is the most appropriate to use, and how do you use it?

Over the next few pages we'll take you through some of the essential information that you need to know when making a selection. We'll explain how the

various Lasso tools work, how to use the Quick Selection tool, and importantly, how to add to, subtract from, and refine your selection so that you can even select tricky subjects such as wispy strands of hair or fine leaves and tree branches. Before long, making selections of almost any object will be second nature to you, and you'll instinctively know how to tackle any subject.

Building up your selection

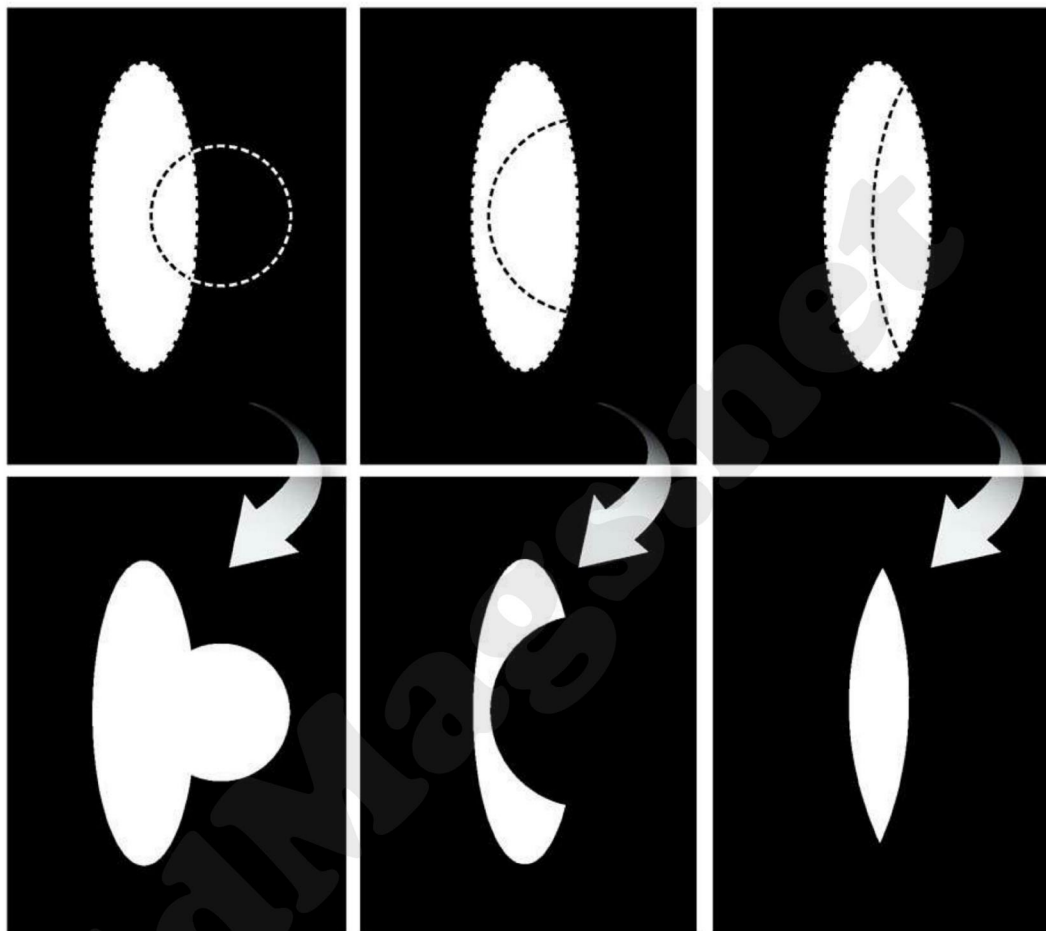
Creating perfect selections is easy with the add, subtract and intersect modifiers

▶▶ When you make a selection, you don't have to get it right first time and all in one go. You can add or remove areas from the selection, and you can do it with whatever selection tool you use.

The easiest way to make these changes is to use the modifier shortcut keys. For example, if after making a selection you want to add another area to it, just hold down **Shift** and you'll see that a small plus symbol appears next to the tool on screen. Now, whatever you select will be added to your existing selection.

Conversely, hold down **Alt** and you can then use your chosen tool to subtract from the selection (a minus symbol will be displayed).

A third option, which you activate by holding down **Shift** and **Alt** at the same time, enables you to create a new selection from an intersection of two selections (a cross symbol will be displayed).



Add

After making your initial selection, hold down **Shift** and use the tool to select the area you want to add

Subtract

Hold down **Alt** and click and drag with the selection tool to remove an area from the selection

Intersect

Hold down **Shift** and **Alt** and you can use the tool to select an area within the original selection

Make quick selections

Use one of the three Lasso tools to make a quick selection that can be refined later

▶▶ The Lasso tool enables you to select an object by encircling it. There are three variants: the (freehand) Lasso, the Polygonal Lasso and the Magnetic Lasso. The Lasso tool selects an object following a line you drag. It's useful for making quick, simple selections. The Polygonal Lasso tool is useful for making straight-edged selections using clicks to add anchor points and corners. The Magnetic Lasso tool hugs edges within the image. Use a click and drag technique to outline your selection.



GENIUS TIP! PATHS WITH THE PEN TOOL

▶ The Pen tool enables you to create Paths, which can be turned into Selections. Paths can be altered at any time using anchor points and control handles, and because they are vector shapes, they can also be rescaled without loss of quality. As you click and drag to form a curve, two control handles appear from the anchor points. These can be used to bend and manipulate the curve.

Refine edges

Use the Refine Edge controls to perfect selections and get rid of unwanted bits of background colour

▶▶ Selecting wisps of hair, fur or fine twigs on trees manually is a painstaking chore, but CS5's Refine Edge Panel has controls that can really make it much easier and quicker. One of its most important controls is the Radius slider, which sets the parameter for edge detection. While there's an automatic Smart Radius option, this doesn't always get things right, and it's best to take control of it yourself. The key is to use a large radius with fine objects such as hair and a smaller one with subjects that have a clearer edge. The Decontaminate Colors control in the Output section is also very useful because it removes the last traces of any background colour around the edge of your selection.

You can use the Refine Edge controls after making any selection, whatever tool you use – simply choose it from the Menu bar, set the Radius and then paint

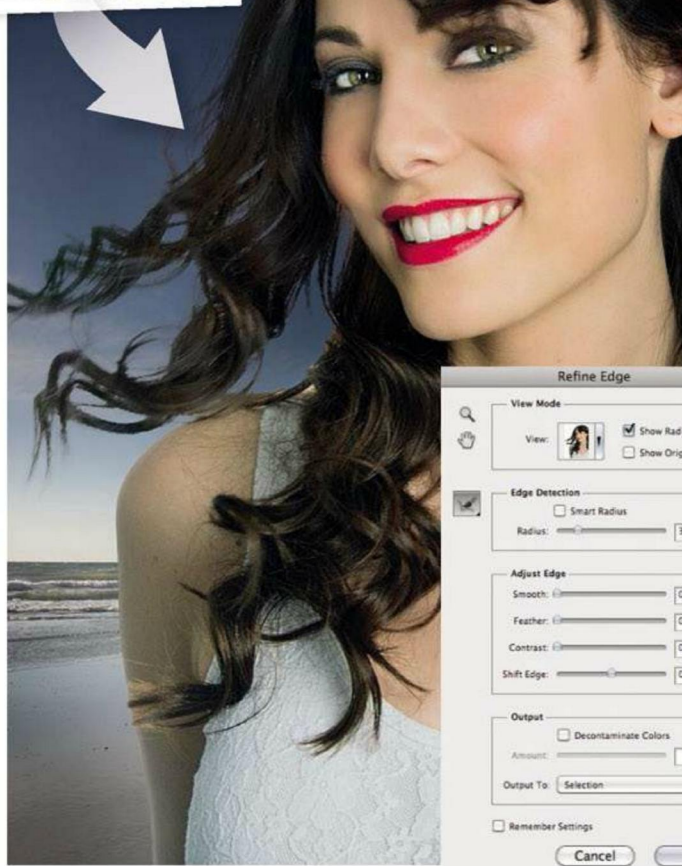
“The key is to use a large radius with fine objects such as hair”

along the edge of concern, making adjustments as necessary to ensure the right parts are selected. Once you've finished making the selection, use the Output menu to determine what happens to it. For example, it can be made into a new layer, or a new layer with a Layer Mask.



CS5's Refine Edge Panel has made cutting out hair a much easier task

START IMAGE



GENIUS TIP! REFINE EDGE VIEW MODES

▶ Cycle through the seven different Refine Edge view modes (by pressing F or using the drop-down list at the top of the panel) to see which one gives you the clearest view of your selection. For example, if you're cutting out a subject that's placed on a black background, you'll find that the On White or On Layers options would make it much easier to see what's going on in your image.

Using the Quick Selection tool

Photoshop's Quick Selection tool makes light work of selecting objects – and it learns as you use it

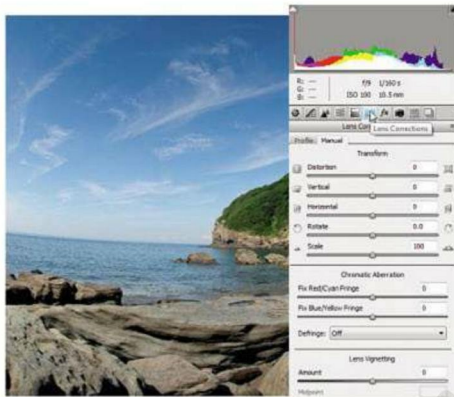
▶▶ The Quick Selection tool is found next to the Magic Wand tool. It's used like a paintbrush to sweep over the selection target. If you stay on the edges of your subject, the tool learns what you're trying to select, and starts to help you as you progress. Make sure Auto Enhance is selected in the Options Bar because this produces more accurate edges. If you make a mistake, hold down **Alt** and paint the area that needs to be removed from the selection, then use the Refine Edge controls to get the selection just right.



FAST FIXES

REMOVE LENS DISTORTION

Correct lens distortion in just a few clicks using Adobe Camera Raw to create a perfectly straight landscape shot



01 OPEN UP IN ACR

In Adobe Bridge, click on the image 'lens_before.png' and go to File>Open in the Camera Raw option to ensure the image is opened in ACR. Click on the Lens Corrections tab on the right of the window to allow you to correct the distortion.



02 CORRECT DISTORTION

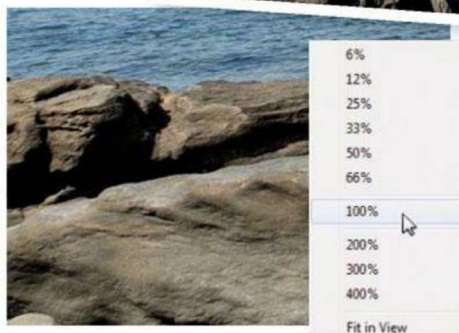
Click on the Profile tab then on the Enable Lens Profile Corrections box. This will automatically choose your lens by using the information in the EXIF Metadata, although you can also manually select the Make, Model and Profile from the drop-down menus.



WATCH & LEARN!

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PRACTICAL Photoshop



03 ZOOM IN

Using the automatic Profile has corrected the distortion in the image, but the horizon isn't quite straight. To do this, zoom in to 100%, and make sure that the horizon is close to the top of the window by holding down the spacebar and dragging the image.



04 LEVEL THE HORIZON

Now click on the Manual tab at the top of the screen and use the Rotate slider to move the image until the horizon lines up with the straight edge of the preview window. For our image, we needed a value of +1.2 degrees.

WHY IT WORKS...

FLAMING LIPS

Every issue we uncover the secrets behind great digital art images



ARTIST INFO

Name Jeff Huang
Location United States

Based in New York, freelance art director and illustrator Jeff Huang has been creating digital art for over seven years, and produced work for the likes of HBO, Hyundai, T-Mobile, *Mojo* and *New Scientist*. He's also a member of international art collective Depthcore. www.thefifthorder.net

▶ *Mojo* magazine approached Huang with an initial concept for this illustration of indie rock band Flaming Lips: "They attached a Hawkwind album cover, and said they'd like the illustration to be cosmic, trippy and to incorporate the five star signs," he recalls.

"I wanted to create something that invoked a believable extraterrestrial atmosphere."

Huang believes this piece is particularly notable for being so unique: "I didn't search for any references when I made it. I strictly wanted to create a look that I'd never done before," he goes on.

"It was about thinking outside the box, so I really didn't want to imitate another style."

IDEAS YOU CAN STEAL! #01

ADDING COLOUR

Make a great base for your composition by paying close attention to the background tones

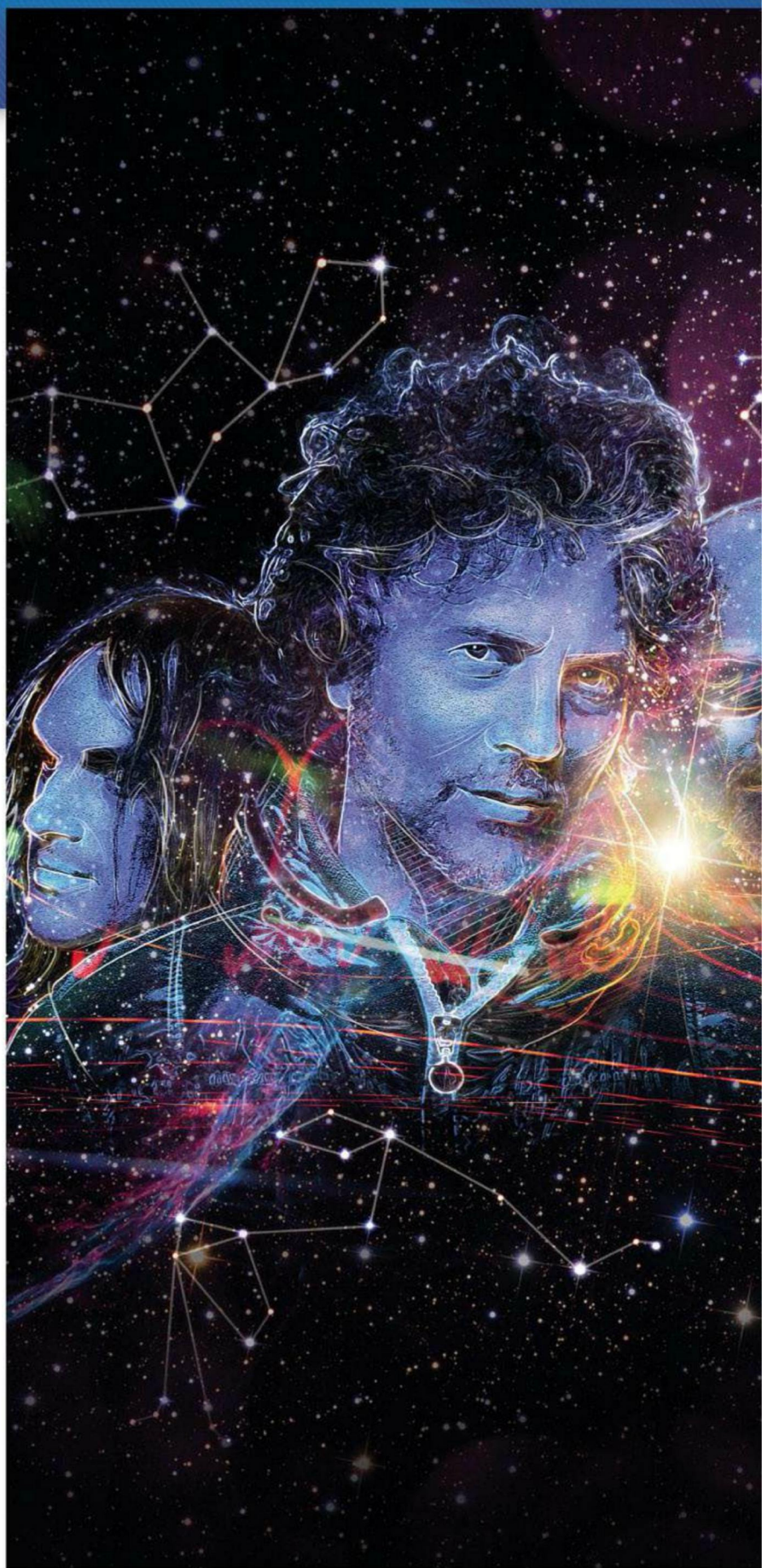
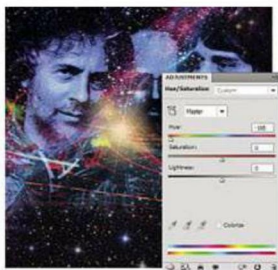


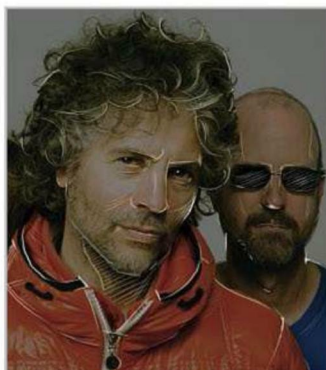
01 MULTIPLY CHANGE

In order to return some colour back into his newly-modified greyscale 'silk-screen' image treatment, Huang started the process by duplicating the original image and then setting the layer's Blend Mode to Multiply.

02 A BLUE TWEAK

Secondly, he created an Adjustment Layer for Hue and Saturation. "I used a Hue setting of '-168', because I thought they looked much better in blue against the background," he explains.





LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

►► Huang's first task was to break down the base photograph of the band members to incorporate it in the piece. "I didn't want the final illustration to look like a photo, so I thought of drawing on top of it," he explains. "I freestyled a quick sketch, not worrying too much about being precise at that stage. My focus was simply to break the image down." After various amendments later in the process, this initial rough sketch would develop into the main focal element in the final composition.



WORKING UP THE SKETCH

►► With the rough sketch outline in place, the next stage was to take it further and start working into it, adding levels of detail in Photoshop for depth and texture. "I experimented with filters, photo manipulation and digital painting," reveals Huang. "I ended up with something that I really enjoyed - it looks like a silk-screen treatment, but with preserved details as well." At this stage, the treated photo was greyscale, but Huang planned to add colour back to the piece later on in the process.

IDEAS YOU CAN STEAL! #02

GLOWING EDGES

Stylistic tricks like using the Glowing Edges filter can bring images to life when done tastefully



01 SCREEN BLEND MODE

Huang subtly used the Glowing Edges filter here (Filter>Stylize>Glowing Edges), set to a Screen Blend Mode so that only the highlights show up. A mask would be used to cover up any unwanted areas.

02 A LITTLE MASKING

"I didn't want colourful glowing edges everywhere, so I created a new Hue and Saturation Adjustment Layer with settings '205,60,0' to make the glowing edges blue," says Huang.



03 COLOR DODGE

To brighten highlights, Huang chose to duplicate the glowing edges layer, setting it to Color Dodge. "From there, I created a mask, filled it with black, then painted white back into the areas where I wanted more highlights."



04 GAUSSIAN BLUR

Finally, Huang duplicated the glowing edges layer again adding Gaussian Blur (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur) with a setting of 5px and set to Screen, to create a soft light glow around the edges.

GENIUS TIP! BRUSH MEETS TABLET

► Huang swears by the combination of a graphics tablet and the Brush tool. "I've had a tablet for six years now, and there isn't a single illustration that I don't use this with. Here, I drew the lines that were overlaid on top, and lots of under-the-hood things like masking. It's a very versatile tool. You can use a hard small brush to draw lines; a large round brush to paint lights; or a bunch of settings to create limitless unique brushes."

GET THE LOOK

BLEACH BYPASS TIPS

Want to add cool effects to your images? This traditional darkroom technique is easy to replicate in Photoshop

▶ The bleach bypass effect has its roots in the traditional darkroom. It's a complicated and potentially messy process that requires the printer to miss out certain chemicals in the printing process. However, the striking results boast enhanced contrast and wonderfully muted colours that are generally considered to be

worth the effort. It's easy to see how the technique has become extremely popular, especially with advertising and fashion photographers.

Tweak those tones

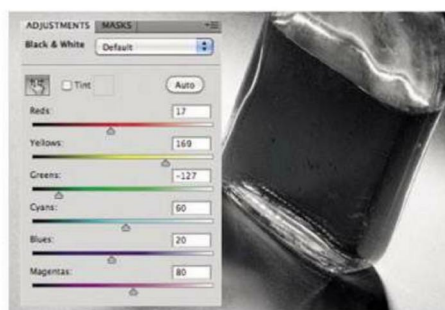
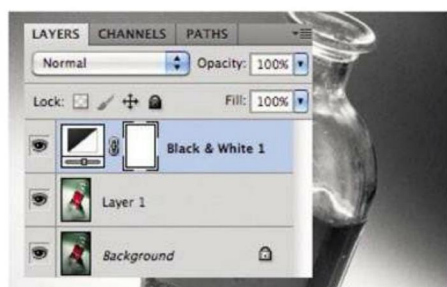
Thankfully, recreating the process in Photoshop is much easier, quicker and there's no

nasty chemicals to deal with. It can be done using a selection of Adjustment Layers and Blend Modes. We're going to show you how to use a Black and White Adjustment Layer so that we can target specific tones. Then we'll use a cunning combination of Blend Modes and colour tweaks. So let's see how it's done...

WATCH & LEARN!

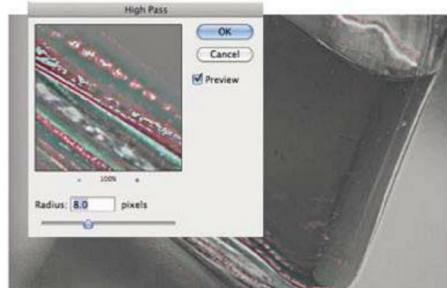
<http://bit.ly/w6I9F0>

PRACTICAL
Photoshop



01 DUPLICATE LAYERS

Open 'Bleach_Bypass_Before.jpg' and press **Cmd/Ctrl+J**. Make sure that the top layer is selected and choose the Screen Blend Mode then press **Cmd/Ctrl+E** to flatten the layer onto the layer below. Create a new Black and White Adjustment Layer and then select the finger icon at top left of the window.

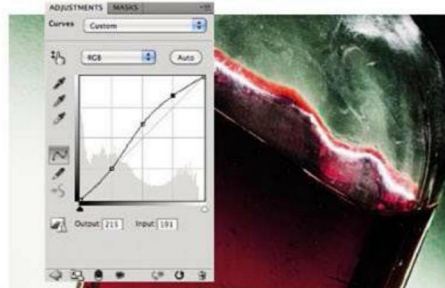


04 HIGH PASS SHARPEN

Make sure the new layer is selected and go to **Filter>Other>High Pass**. Decrease the Radius to 8 pixels and click OK. Change the Blend Mode to Overlay. Now click onto the top layer and create a new Curve Adjustment Layer. We now want to create a subtle S-curve to increase the brightness of the mid-tones.

02 ADJUST THE TONES

Move the cursor over the image and click and hold the mouse over the liquid in the bottle. Drag left to darken the tone. Click into the darker area of the background near the top and repeat. Adjust the tones of the image in this way to create a high-contrast black-and-white image.

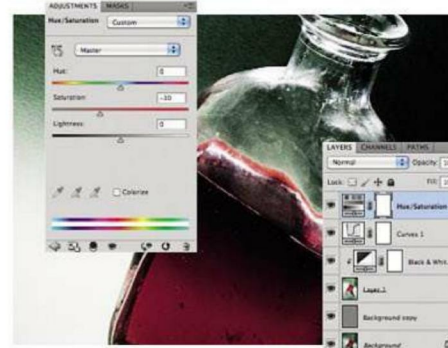


05 IMPROVE THE TONE

Create a point at the centre of the curve and increase the Output value to 156. Create another point in the bottom quarter of the shadows and set Output and Input values to 64. Finally, in the top right quarter in the highlights, reduce Output to 215. We now want to subdue the colour to replicate the bleach bypass effect.

03 CLIP THE LAYERS

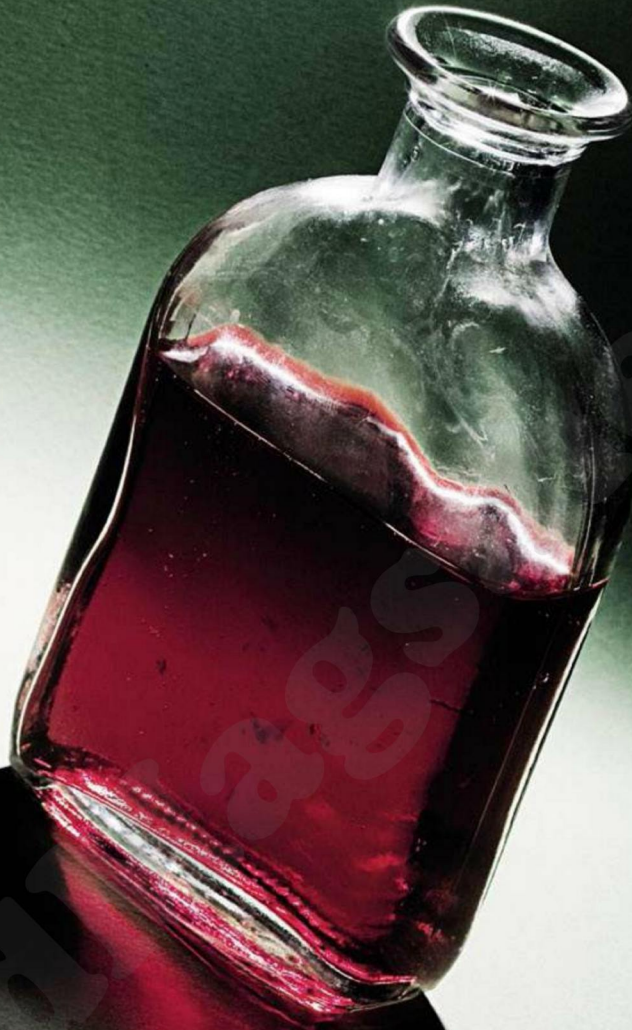
Hold down **Alt** and hover between the Black and White Adjustment Layer and the image layer. When you see the cursor change, click to clip the Adjustment Layer to the image layer. Click the image layer and change the Blend Mode to Soft Light. Click back onto the Background Layer and then duplicate it using **Cmd/Ctrl+J**.



06 SUBDUCE THE COLOUR

Create a new Hue/Saturation Layer and then reduce overall Saturation to -30. To finish, double-click the Black and White Adjustment Layer and use the tonal adjustment to make any final changes to the tone of the image.

“The results boast enhanced contrast and wonderfully muted colours”



START IMAGE



GENIUS TIP! A FINAL FINE-TUNE

▶ When it comes to applying the bleach bypass effect digitally, every image will react differently to the process applied, depending on the colours involved. The readjustment in the final step of the Black and White Adjustment Layer helps you to fine-tune the tone of the colours after applying the layer blending and other effects.



TOOL SCHOOL

MASTER THE MIXER BRUSH TOOL

Use the Mixer Brush tool to turn a photo's pixels into a variety of paint-like brush strokes

► This month in Tool School, we dig deep into the toolbox's Brush tool compartment and put the Mixer Brush through its paces.

Unveiled in Photoshop CS5, the Mixer Brush appears to do a similar job to the Smudge tool. Like the Smudge tool, the Mixer Brush enables you to spray over a photo and turn the pixels into similar coloured strokes, making your photo look like a painting. If you tick the Smudge tool's Finger Painting box in the Options Bar then it will add some of the foreground colour to the start of the stroke, before blending it with the sampled colours in the image. The Mixer Brush can perform a similar task using its Mix option. So are there any major differences between the two tools? Absolutely!

The Mixer Brush can produce much more realistic paint-like strokes than the Smudge tool. This artistic verisimilitude is thanks to the more sophisticated range of editable controls in the Mixer Brush's Options bar. As its name suggests, the Mixer Brush enables you to mix the foreground colour and the colours in your photo. However, where the Smudge tool only allows you to switch this feature on or off, the Mixer Brush enables you to change the percentage of the mix to produce more subtle blends.

Thank to its extra options, the Mixer Brush behaves much more like a real paintbrush than the humble Smudge tool. The Load option allows you to put more or less paint on the tip, enabling you to produce longer or shorter

strokes. You can also mimic different styles of paint media using the Wet option. This enables you to mimic the smudgy strokes of an oil painting, or the scratchy strokes of the drybrush technique.

You can clean the brush of paint after every stroke so that it samples new colours from the photo, or you can allow the brush to clog up with different colours to produce a more complex and natural mix of colours.

Different strokes

We'll show you how to master the Mixer Brush's options to produce wet or dry brush strokes. You'll also learn how to combine the Mixer Brush with Photoshop CS5's new range of editable Bristle Tips, so that you can create a wide range of

convincing brush strokes and mimic a range of styles, from impressionistic dabs of paint to fine, accurate strokes.

Thanks to the double act of the Mixer Brush and CS5's Bristle Tips, you can make a little artistic talent go a long way and dramatically extend the painting power of these tools by adding a pressure sensitive stylus to the mix. This will enable you to create more realistic strokes that range in size and angle, just like a real brush.

You could slap a filter onto a photo to create a piece of 'art', but this lacks the organic strokes and random smudges that you'd get using a real paint brush. The Mixer Brush will bring you a big step closer to creating realistic paint effects - without the mess.

Enhance the Mixer Brush tool with Bristle Tips

Learn how to give the Mixer Brush tool more realistic-looking brush tips by modifying the new Bristle Tips

▶ Once you've selected the Mixer Brush from the toolbox, change the workspace by clicking the Painting tab. This gives you access to a range of handy tools that will help you paint more effectively. The Swatches Panel acts like an artist's palette, enabling you to change the brush tip's colour with a quick click.

By scrolling down in the Brush Presets Picker you'll discover the new range of Bristle Tips (represented by distinctive paint brush icons). These tips can be modified to give the Mixer Brush a wide range of realistic brush strokes. You can modify each Bristle Tip by clicking the Brush Panel icon at the top right of the Brush Preset Picker.

The Brush Panel enables you to change the properties of the selected Bristle Tip, such as its shape, thickness and even the number of bristles it has. You'll see a preview of the type of stroke that the edited brush will produce.

Once you've chosen a Bristle Tip for your Mixer Brush (such as Round Angle Low Stiffness), follow our three-step walkthrough below to discover how to produce different types of paint strokes. This will help give you a sense of how the key Mixer Brush options create different paint effects.

Different Mixer Brush options enable you to produce dry or wet brush strokes



GENIUS TIP! BRISTLE TIP PREVIEW

▶ You can see a preview of the brush tip as you apply it to the image. When you click to dab or stroke, the Mixer Brush on the image the preview tip will dab, too, showing you the direction the bristles are moving in when you stroke. The preview is only available if your graphics card supports OpenGL. To enable it, go to Edit > Preferences > Performance. Tick Enable OpenGL Settings.

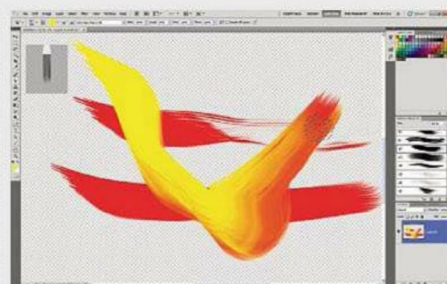


STEP-BY-STEP MODIFY THE MIXER BRUSH OPTIONS



01 LOAD YOUR BRUSH

Grab the Mixer Brush and choose a Bristle Tip. Set the blending brush combinations option to Dry, Light Load then paint a streak of red. Set the blending option to Dry, Heavy Load. This creates a longer stroke because there is more paint loaded onto the tip.



02 MIX IT UP

Change the foreground colour to yellow. Set the blending brush combinations option to Very Wet, Very Heavy Mix. Paint a stroke that overlaps the other two. The stroke starts off with the foreground yellow, but then picks up and adds streaks of red to the mix.



03 CHANGE THE TIPS

Add more strokes. Hold down **Alt** and click to sample reds or yellows. Use the rougher Round Fan Stiff Thin Bristles tip to add extra texture to your strokes. Experiment with different brush blending options to explore other tip textures. You can almost smell the paint!

Create a painted look

Use the Mixer Brush with a stylus to turn any photograph into a hand-painted picture



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& LEARN!**
<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>
**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**

START IMAGE



» When creating our 'abstract painting' on the previous spread, we used a mouse, which is pretty obvious when you examine the strokes close up.

In the walkthrough on the right we'll show you how to create a more complex oil painting of a child and her pony using the Mixer Brush with a stylus. We used a Wacom Bamboo Pen, which you can pick up from Argos for just under £50. The beauty of using a stylus is that you can change the size and strength of each stroke by varying the pressure you apply with the pen when pressing down on the pad. It also feels a lot more natural, which makes it much easier to control your brush strokes. It's also easier to follow the lines and curves in a photo using a stylus.

If you do stick to using a mouse, you can vary the brush tip size in a variety of ways. Use the right or left square bracket keys to increase or decrease the tip size.

Alternatively, hold down **Alt** and right click, then drag left to create a smaller tip, or right for a larger one. Large brush tips are good for filling in large, uniform areas such as the pony's flank in our photo, while smaller brush tips help to retain detail in smaller areas.

Open up our file 'mixer_before.jpg'. Use the Painting workspace. Click the Create a new layer icon so you can paint on a separate layer. Pick the Mixer Brush and tick Sample All Layers, so it will use the photo as a palette.

“You can change the size and strength of each stroke by varying the pressure you apply with the pen”

STEP-BY-STEP PAINT EFFECTS



01 CHOOSE A TIP

Choose the Round Blunt Medium Stiff brush tip. Set the blending option to Very Wet, Heavy Mix. The 100% Mix means that the brush will only use the photo's colours, not the toolbox's foreground colour. Set the tip's Size to 30 pixels. Apply long, rough brush strokes to paint over the horse's coat.



02 ADJUST THE BRISTLES

Go to the Brush Panel. Set the Shape to Round Angle. Decrease Bristles to 9%. Set the Size to 66 pixels. Set the Mix option to 83% to add a little brown foreground colour. Set Load to 100% and paint the horse's mane.



03 FINESSE THE DETAILS

Select the Round Angle Low Stiffness Bristle Tip. Create a new transparent layer. Use a small Size to paint in the finer details of the girl's face. Use a Round Fan Stiff Bristle Tip to paint in her hair. Change the brush tips and size to sketch in the rest of the scene.

Photoshop Anatomy The Mixer Brush

Create different brush stroke effects by adjusting the Mixer Brush's tips and options



LOAD

If you untick this option then the Mixer Brush won't automatically load the foreground colour on each stroke. It will only sample from the image.

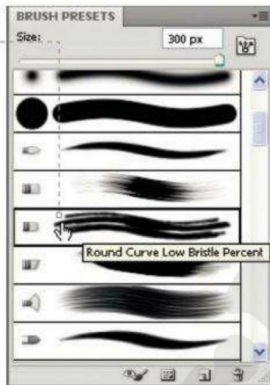
CLEAN

If you untick this option then the Mixer Brush won't clean itself after each stroke. This means paint sampled in the previous stroke will also be used.



BRUSH PRESET PICKER

Produce realistic brush strokes by selecting one of the new Bristle Tips from the Brush Presets Picker.



BLENDING OPTIONS

Click here to choose a blending brush combination. These change the way the Wet, Load and Mix options behave.

WET

This option enables you to smear one colour into another as you stroke. A value of 0% will create a dry tip.

MIX

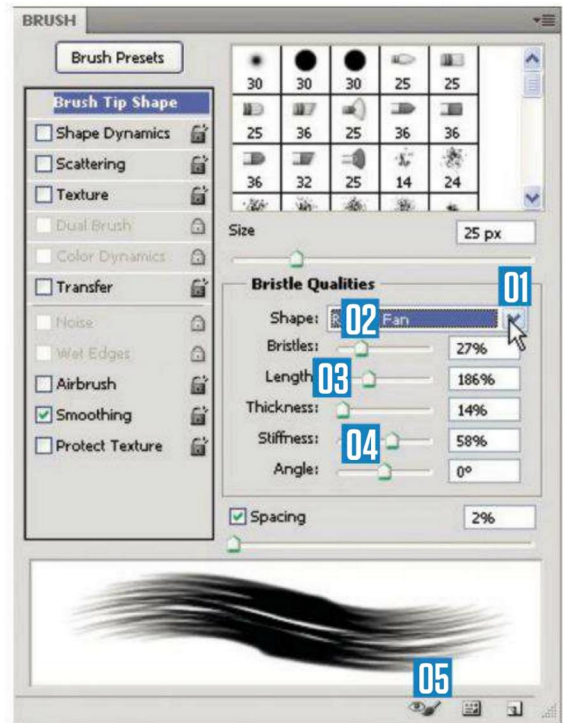
This changes the balance between the foreground colour in the toolbox and the colours sampled from the photo. A value of 100% will only include the colours in the image.

Understanding... The Brush Panel

Modify a brush tip's properties to produce a variety of realistic strokes

► The Mixer Brush can produce a wide range of different strokes if you give it one of the new CS5 Bristle Tips. You can modify the behaviour of these brush tips by clicking the icon on the Options Bar next to the Go to Bridge icon. Click the Shape drop-down menu [1] to choose from a variety of different tip shapes. You can create finer brush strokes by reducing the number of bristles with

the slider beneath [2]. For longer bristles, increase the percentage value of the Length slider [3]. By adjusting the Stiffness [4] of your bristle tip you can create dramatically different brush strokes. Get a clearer idea of what the modified tip looks like by clicking the icon at the foot of the Brush Panel that looks like an eye next to a brush tip [5] to open the preview panel.



FILTER FOCUS

MIMIC THE CAMERA PANNING TECHNIQUE

Use Photoshop's Motion Blur and Radial Blur filters to create a dramatic sense of movement in an action photo

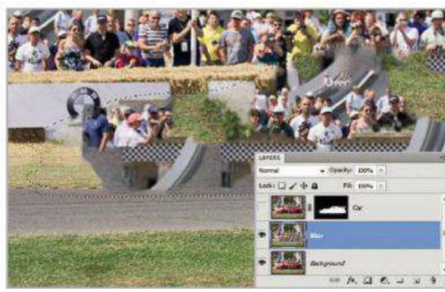
▶ The Photoshop Blur filters can be used to create interesting effects. One of these is to give a sense of motion to a photo. In this tutorial you'll discover how to take an image of a moving vehicle and apply a motion blur to the background. The result will look as if the image had been captured by a camera being panned so

that it follows the movement of the vehicle, keeping the subject sharp while blurring the distracting background. To ensure that the result is realistic, you'll need to create some extra pixels around the car so that the blur in front and behind it looks believable. You'll use a Radial Blur filter on the wheels, too.



01 LOAD THE SELECTION

Open '03_panning_before.psd' and press **Ctrl/Cmd+J**. Name the copy, 'Car'. Choose **Select>Load Selection**, and choose Car Selection from the Channel list. Click OK. Choose **Select>Modify>Feather**, set the Feather Radius to 2 and click OK. Click **Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection**.



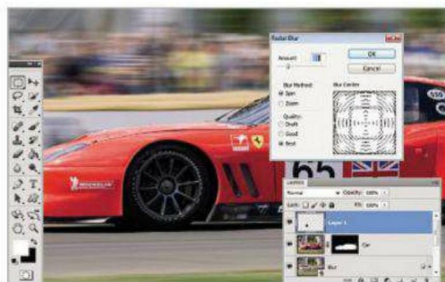
02 CLEAN UP THE BACKGROUND

Hold down **Ctrl/Cmd** and click the mask thumbnail. Choose **Select>Modify>Expand**, type 15 and click OK. Copy the Background Layer again and call it 'Blur'. With this layer targeted, press **Delete**. Choose **Edit>Fill**, select **Use: Content-Aware** and click OK. Press **Ctrl/Cmd+D**.



03 CREATE THE MOTION BLUR

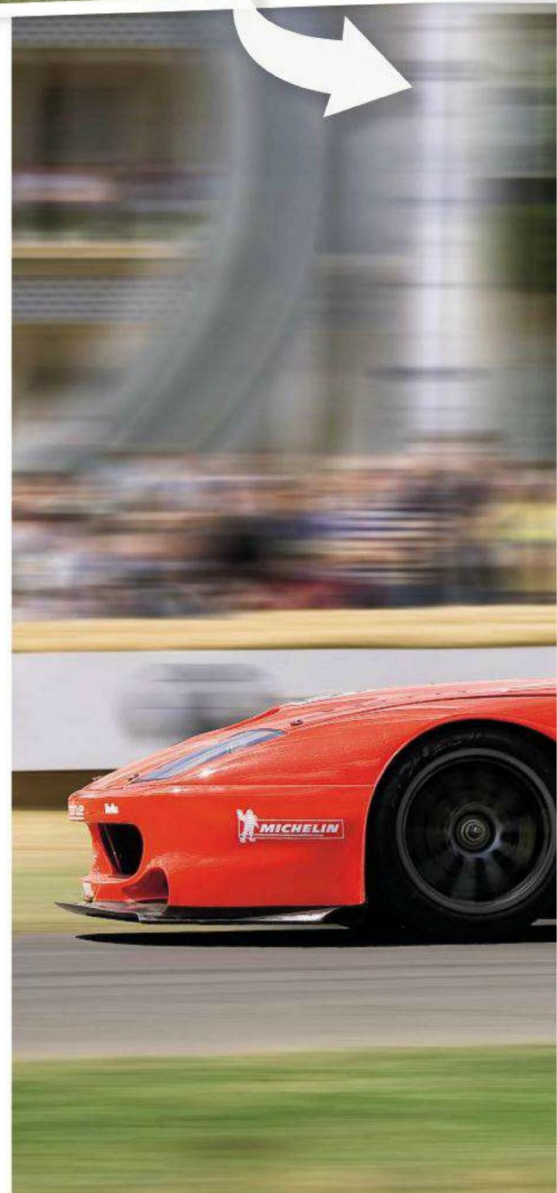
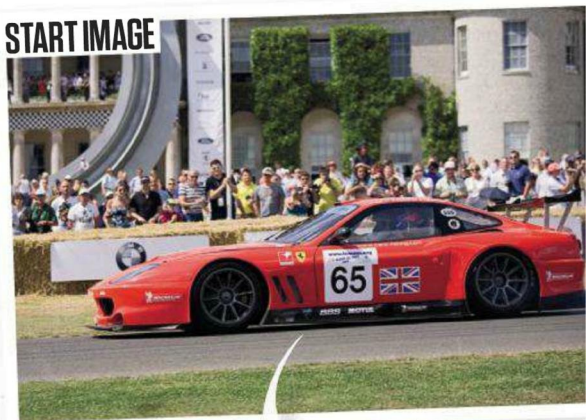
Use the Clone Stamp tool to fill in areas around the car. Right click the 'Blur' layer and choose **Convert to Smart Object**. Choose **Filter>Blur>Motion Blur**. Set Angle to 0 and Distance to 200. Target the 'Car' layer and select the front wheel using the Elliptical Marquee tool.



04 BLUR THE WHEELS

Press **Ctrl/Cmd+J** to make a new layer of this selection. Hold down **Ctrl/Cmd** and click the layer thumbnail. Choose **Filter>Blur>Radial Blur**, select **Spin**, and set Amount to 20 and Quality to Best. Click OK and repeat for the second wheel, moving Blur Center to the middle of the wheel.

START IMAGE



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“TO ENSURE REALISM, CREATE SOME EXTRA PIXELS AROUND THE CAR SO THAT THE BLUR IN FRONT AND BEHIND IT LOOKS BELIEVABLE”



101 uses* for the... Motion & Radial Blur filters

Use the Motion and Radial Blur filters to simulate a range of creative in-camera effects. Here are five ideas you can try out for yourself with just a few clicks...

DREAMY SEASCAPE

01 Create a surreal seascape using the Motion Blur filter. Set Angle to 0 and use a Distance that blurs fine details.



SILKY WATERFALLS

02 Turn waterfalls into a silky blur using the Motion Blur filter on the water. Set the angle to match the direction the water is flowing in.



ADD DRAMATIC MOVEMENT

03 Add drama using the Radial Blur's Zoom setting on a duplicate of the image layer. Use a Layer Mask to preserve detail.



SOFTEN A BACKGROUND

04 Focus on the most important part of the image and play down a busy background using a zoom Radial Blur.



SUBJECT MOVEMENT

05 Apply a Radial Blur using the Zoom setting to a duplicate layer. Mask out the background so that the subject is moving and the background is still.



*APPROXIMATE NUMBER ONLY. JUST ADD CREATIVITY FOR MORE...

JUST FOR FUN!

REPEATING PATTERNS

Create patterns from a simple image with a Pixel Bender filter

▶ The Cassini Pattern extension is an addition to Pixel Bender that you can use to create repeating patterns. Its geometry is based on the Cassini Oval, named after the 17th Century astronomer Giovanni Cassini. By altering the filter settings, you can produce a range of different patterns from a single image. The filter works inside Pixel Bender that is available for Photoshop CS4 and CS5, but not earlier versions.

**WATCH
& LEARN!**

<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>

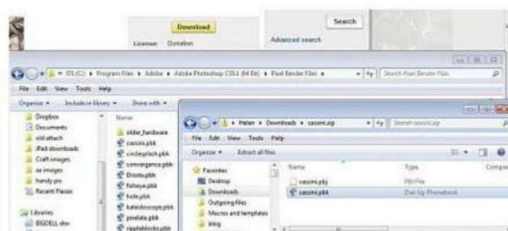
**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**

START IMAGE

“Its geometry is based on the Cassini Oval, named after 17th century astronomer Giovanni Cassini”

GENIUS TIP! ▶ INSTALL YOUR PIXEL BENDER

To install Pixel Bender, close Photoshop and run the Adobe Extension Manager. On Windows Vista and Windows 7, right-click the Extension Manager and choose Run As Administrator. Choose File>Install Extension and install the downloaded .mxp file. Pixel Bender doesn't run on Photoshop CS3 or earlier. Depending on where your Photoshop program files are installed, once downloaded, place the cassini.pbk file in the new Pixel Bender Files folder at c:\Program Files (or Program Files (x86))\Adobe\Photoshop folder.



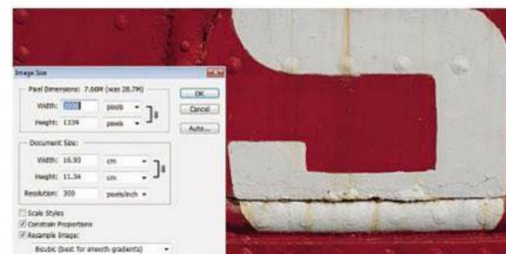
01 INSTALL THE FILTER

Download the Cassini Pattern extension from <http://bit.ly/cassinifilter>. You'll need to have already installed the Pixel Bender plug-in for Photoshop CS4 or CS5 from <http://adobe.ly/pixelbendercs5>. You must install the correct version of Pixel Bender for your version of Photoshop. Then unzip 'cassini.zip' and copy the cassini.pbk file to your Pixel Bender Files folder.



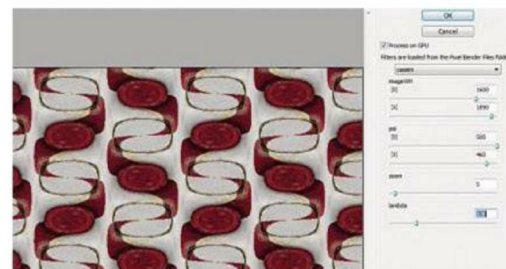
03 SET UP THE FILTER

Set the imageWH values to the image Width and Height. We set ours to 2000 and 1339. Use the poi adjusters to change the image. poi[0] changes the rotation of the shapes and poi[1] changes the vertical height of the entire pattern, either stretching or squeezing it. The Lambda adjustment adjusts the rotation of the shapes in the pattern.



02 SIZE THE IMAGE

Open the image 'cassini_before.jpg' in Photoshop and resize it by choosing Image>Image Size. Check the Constrain Proportions checkbox, set the Width to 2000 pixels, note the Height value and click OK. Choose Filter>Pixel Bender>Pixel Bender Gallery and from the list, choose Cassini.



04 FINE-TUNE THE FILTER

Most Pixel Bender filters work best when you set imageWH to the actual image dimensions but it is also possible to find other patterns using different values for Width and Height. Use zoom to move in or out to create a smaller or larger repeating pattern. Click OK when you are done. Our final settings, top to bottom are 1600, 1890, 500, 460, 5, 1.5.



101

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PHOTOSHOP TIPS, TRICKS AND FIXES

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INSTANT WAYS TO BUILD YOUR SKILLS!

We give you the lowdown on a whole host of quick and simple creative tricks to revolutionise your workflow

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Create a Pointillist digital painting using the Mixer Brush and Layer Masks by following our expert tutorial

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Blend flesh with wood

Use layers, filters and Layer Masks to morph dead tree stumps into grasping hands

PROJECT INFO

You'll learn

▶▶ How to use Layer Masks and Blend Modes to turn tree stumps into outstretched hands and create an organic border to complement the scene's components

You'll need

▶▶ Photoshop CS5 or Elements 10

It'll take

▶▶ 20 minutes



**YOUR
GENIUS**

GEORGE CAIRNS

▶▶ George has been pushing pixels around using Photoshop since the very start with version one and remembers the dark days when it didn't have layers! After a decade of teaching university students the joys of creative image editing, he extended his reach by writing regular Photoshop tutorials for magazines including *Digital Camera* and *PhotoPlus*.

People can't resist seeing human features in nature, such as faces in clouds, for example. Thanks to Photoshop's impressive tools you can take this trend to anthropomorphise one step further and express it as a piece of nightmarish art!

In the following creative project we'll show you how to conjure up a spookily surreal scene in which dead tree stumps burst from the earth like grasping human hands. The end result of our project will make an excellent poster for a horror film or even a heavy metal album cover.

We'll show you how to select the hands from their source images and then scale and position them so that they blend with the jagged tree stumps.

You'll learn how to use Layer Masks and Blend Modes to ease the transition between wood and flesh.

To complement the scene's nightmarish nature, we'll demonstrate how to convert the various source elements to monochrome.

This lack of distracting colour will help emphasise the composite scene's striking shapes and textures, and will disguise many of the joins.

You'll also learn how to add atmosphere and depth to the landscape by adjusting the tonal levels.

For greater control over the monochrome tones, we'll show you how to dodge and burn shadows and highlights in a non-destructive way, courtesy of the Brush tool and Blend Modes. If you get stumped at any stage you can check out the tutorial on the DVD to see the techniques in action.

“We'll show you how to conjure up a spookily surreal scene in which dead tree stumps burst from the earth like grasping human hands
George Cairns”

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**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**

START IMAGES



CREATIVE PROJECT
SURREALIST LANDSCAPE



PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Digital Negative

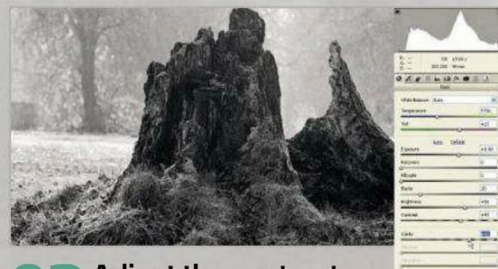
► Different camera models use different processing techniques to produce an uncompressed RAW format file. This can mean that older versions of the Adobe Camera Raw editor will fail to open particular RAW files. To overcome this problem, Adobe created a universal RAW format that should be easier to open in older versions of Photoshop – the .dng (or Digital Negative). You can turn troublesome RAW files into .dng files using the free Adobe DNG Converter, which is available from www.adobe.com.

Step-by-step Create a surreal landscape



01 Convert stump to monochrome

Open 'stump_before.dng'. It's a Digital Negative, so it will open in Adobe Camera Raw. The tones are flat and lack drama. Click HSL/Grayscale. Tick the Convert to Grayscale box. Click Default. You can now adjust the tones to reveal more texture detail. Set Reds to -22, Oranges to +44, and Yellows to +58 to make the tree stand out. Increase Greens to +24.



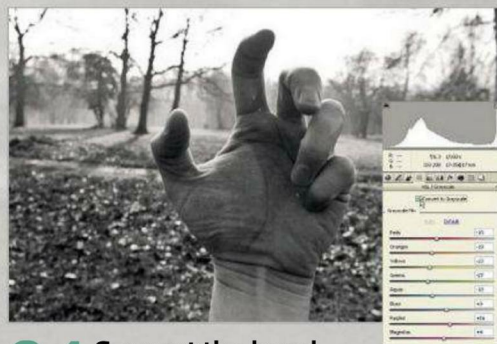
02 Adjust the contrast

To produce a more striking contrast for our foreground trunk, click the Basic tab. Set Exposure to +80 to brighten things up. For more contrast between the shadows and highlights, set Blacks to +20. Set Contrast to +43, too. To increase the mid-tone contrast and reveal more delicate tree texture, move Clarity up to +43. Click Open Image to open the image in the standard Photoshop editor.



03 Make more space

To create some more space for our grasping hand, go to Image > Canvas Size. Set the drop-down menu to Percent. Type in a Height value of 150. Click the bottom central square of the anchor grid to make the canvas extend upwards from the top of the photo. Set the Canvas extension drop-down menu to a nice clean white. Click OK to extend the canvas above the tree stump, making space for the hand.



04 Convert the hand

Open 'hand1_before.dng' in Adobe Camera Raw. This backlit hand lacks contrast and has lost some highlight detail. Drag the Recovery slider to 49 to recover some of the blown-out highlights. Set Blacks to 32 for darker shadows. Drag Clarity to +55 to darken edge mid-tones and recover more finger detail. Convert the shot to Grayscale and use the Auto settings for the colour sliders. Click Open Image.



GENIUS TIP! BLACK AND WHITE

► If you're using an older version of Photoshop CS then you won't have access to the tone-tweaking colour sliders of the Adobe Camera Raw editor's Convert to Grayscale command. You can produce a similarly striking monochrome image by opening the .dng file in the standard Photoshop editor and choosing Image > Adjustments > Black & White. This will give you access to colour sliders that enable you to selectively lighten or darken specific colours in the grayscale version of the image.



05 Isolate the hand

Choose the Quick Selection tool. Make sure that the Auto Enhance box is ticked in the Options Bar. Spray over the hand to select it. Tick the Subtract From Selection option and spray to remove unwanted bits of background from the selection marquee. Use the Add To Selection option to recover any missing areas. The initial selection may be a bit rough, so click the Refine Edge button in the Options Bar.

06 Refine the edges

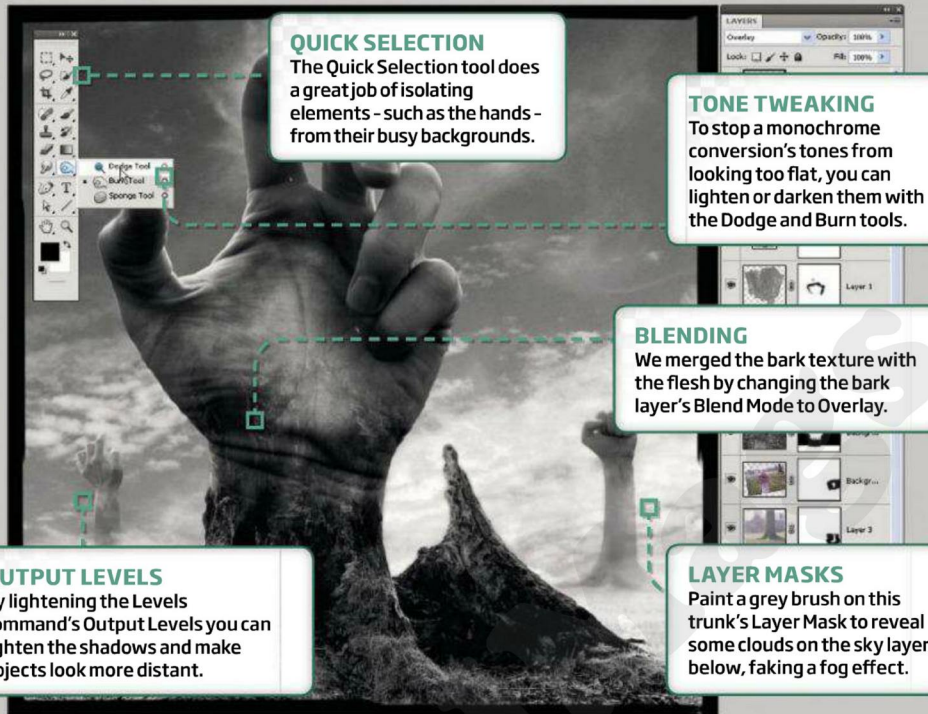
Set the Refine Edge command's View Mode to On Layers by pressing L. This shows you the hand against a transparent background. Set Radius to 1.7 to increase the spread of the edge refinement. To lose any jagged blocky pixels, push Smooth up to 21. Create a softer edge for your selection by setting Feather to 1.0 pixels. Set Contrast to 0 and Shift Edge to -16. Set Output to New Layer with Layer Mask.

Photoshop Anatomy

Here's a closer look at how we used selection tools, brush tips and Layer Masks to produce our surreal scene

PRACTICAL Photoshop Using Elements?

► You can open our 'stump_before.png' start image in Photoshop Elements' Adobe Camera Raw editor, but this lacks the Convert to Grayscale command. You can still tweak the shot's tones using basic Raw settings described in Step 02. To create a monochrome version of the shot, click Open Image to take it into the standard Elements editor. Go to Enhance > Convert to Black and White. Click the Scenic Landscape preset to create a high-contrast monochrome version of the tree stump. In Step 03, go to Image > Resize > Canvas Size. Once you've selected the hand and refined the selection, Edit > Copy the hand. Then go to the main document and Edit > Paste. Click the Add layer mask icon. You should then be able to follow the rest of the steps, although you won't have access to a Bristle Tip to draw the border at the end. Use a Chalk tip instead.



QUICK SELECTION

The Quick Selection tool does a great job of isolating elements - such as the hands - from their busy backgrounds.

TONE TWEAKING

To stop a monochrome conversion's tones from looking too flat, you can lighten or darken them with the Dodge and Burn tools.

BLENDING

We merged the bark texture with the flesh by changing the bark layer's Blend Mode to Overlay.

OUTPUT LEVELS

By lightening the Levels command's Output Levels you can lighten the shadows and make objects look more distant.

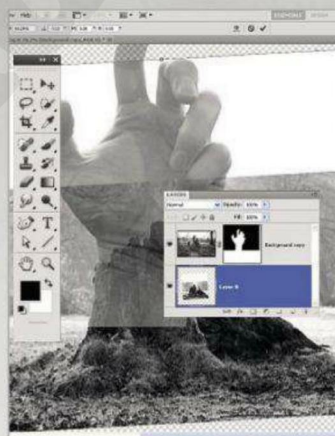
LAYER MASKS

Paint a grey brush on this trunk's Layer Mask to reveal some clouds on the sky layer below, faking a fog effect.



07 Add the hand to the background

Click the Arrange Documents icon and choose the 2 Up side-by-side view. Click the isolated hand's thumbnail and drag it onto the stump. Click the main document and choose the Consolidate All view.



08 Scale the background

The hand is too small to fit the stump. Reduce the Opacity of the hand's layer to 65% so you can see the stump and the hand as they overlap. Double click the Background thumbnail to unlock it. Click OK. Press **Cmd/Ctrl+T** to summon the Free Transform tool. Hold down **Shift** to constrain the layer's proportions and drag a corner handle to scale the stump down by 68.29%. Rotate it -3.13 degrees. Hit **Enter**.



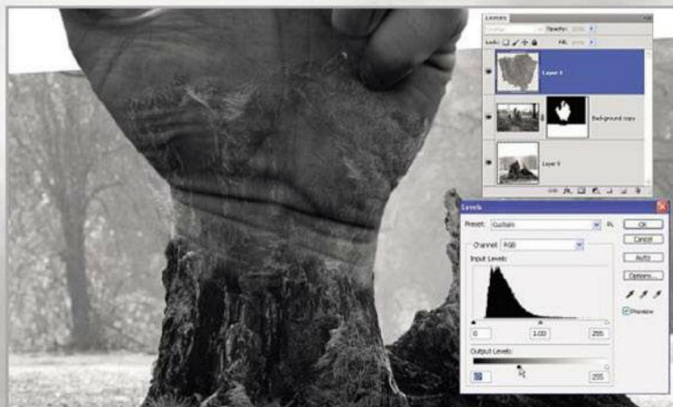
09 Edit the mask

Use the Move tool to align the stump with the hand. Click the hand layer and restore its Opacity to 100%. Grab the Brush tool. Choose a soft round tip with a Size of 175. Click the hand's Layer Mask. Set Foreground colour to black. Spray over the lower part of the hand to blend it with the stump.

10 Transform the bark

Hide the hand layer and click the stump layer's thumbnail. Select the stump using the Quick Selection tool. Press **Cmd/Ctrl+J** to float the bark onto a new layer. Choose Edit > Transform > Flip Vertical. Drag the bark over the hand. Choose Edit > Transform > Perspective. Drag the handles to scale the bark.

CREATIVE PROJECT SURREALIST LANDSCAPE



11 Blend the bark

Set the bark layer's Blend Mode to Overlay. Go to Image > Adjustments > Levels. Drag the Output Levels slider to 87 to turn the blacks on the bark layer grey. Click OK. Add a Layer Mask to the bark layer and use a soft black tip to hide any sharp bark layer edges.



12 Add the sky

Open up our file 'stump_sky.jpg'. Choose Select > All and then choose Edit > Copy. Go to your layered project and choose Edit > Paste. Drag the sky layer between the tree stump and the hand layers. Click the Add a layer mask icon. Spray using a soft round black tip on the mask to hide bits of sky that should be behind the hand and the stump. Hide the grass at the bottom of the sky layer, too.



13 Convert it to monochrome

To change this JPEG-sourced sky layer to monochrome, go to Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Black & White. By dragging the Blues slider down to -51, you can darken the blue pixels on the sky layer. This makes the white clouds stand out more effectively against the darker grey background, creating a more dramatic-looking sky. We can now go on to populate the background with additional mutated trees.

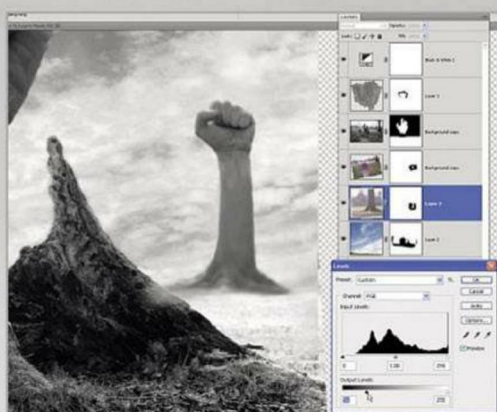


14 Add new hand

Open 'hand2_before.jpg'. Use the techniques covered in steps 05 to 07 to add it to the main project. Right-click the hand2 layer's mask and choose Delete Layer Mask. Now use the Rectangular Lasso tool to select the tree and background on the right. Copy and paste the tree into the main layered project.

PRACTICAL Photoshop
Know your tools!

Brush Opacity
▶ When you spray black paint on a Layer Mask, you hide pixels on the associated layer. By changing the brush Opacity to 50% you create a grey stroke, which makes the edited pixels become semi-transparent, enabling you to produce more subtle blending effects. If you have a pressure-sensitive stylus you can choose the Soft Round Pressure Opacity tip from the Brush Presets picker. This lets you create black or grey strokes by varying the pen pressure, which gives you even more control over the mask-based blending effect.



15 Merge the hand with the trunk

Drag the Black & White Adjustment Layer to the top of the stack. Use Free Transform to scale the trunk to 56%. Rotate it by -3.44 degrees. Scale the hand to 19.73%. Rotate it by -9.94 degrees. Move the hand onto the trunk. Choose Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur. Set Radius to 3. Click OK. Add a mask to the trunk layer and paint out the background. Apply a Levels adjustment to the trunk. Set Output Levels to 58.



16 Go grey

Duplicate the blurred trunk layer and use a Layer Mask to blend it with the hand from 'hand3_before.jpg'. Reduce this tree's layer Opacity to 91%. To create more contrast in the flat greyscale tones, click on the Create a new layer icon. Drag the new layer to the top of the stack. Choose Edit > Fill. Set Contents to 50% Gray and click OK. Now set the grey layer's Blend Mode to Overlay.



17 Dodge and burn

Pick the Dodge tool and choose a soft round tip. Set Size to 400. Set Range to Highlights. Set Exposure to 39%. Click the grey layer and paint over the foreground hand's flat grey tones to lighten them. Grab the Burn tool. Set Range to Shadows and Exposure to 10%. Now paint over the creases and shaded fingers to darken them.



18 Create a border

Pick the Crop tool, hold down **Shift** to constrain the aspect ratio to a square, and drag to crop out the grey background. Hit **Enter**. Create a new layer and choose the Brush tool. Choose the Round Angle Low Stiffness tip. Set Size to 100. Click a corner, hold down **Shift** and click another corner to draw a straight black line between the two points. Draw the rest of the border using this technique.

PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Interpolation

► In Step 08, we could have scaled the hand up to fit the stump, but that would risk creating a lower quality hand. To make the hand bigger Photoshop would have to create (or interpolate) some extra pixels, which could look fuzzier than the originals. By scaling down the background we don't need to interpolate new pixels, so we can preserve image quality and get the hand and stump to merge effectively.

A look through the layers

Here's how we blended our components together using masking and transformation techniques

BORDERS

The Bristle Tips give a striking rough-and-ready border that complements the organic shapes in our surreal scene.

DODGE AND BURN

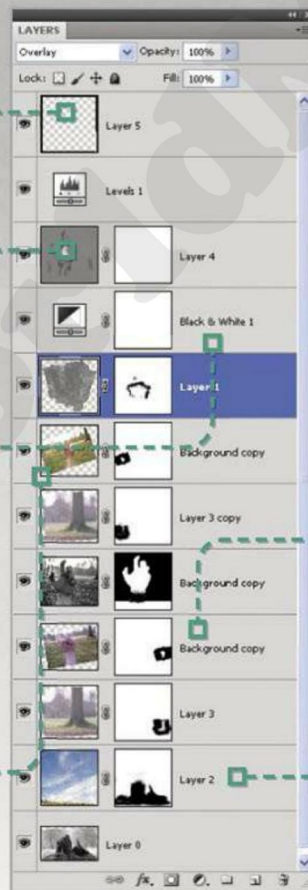
By dodging and burning onto a grey layer we can lighten or darken our grayscale tones in a non-destructive way.

BLACK AND WHITE

A Black & White Adjustment Layer turns our JPEG sourced images to monochrome. We used the Adobe Camera Raw editor's Convert to Grayscale tool to create black and white versions of our Digital Negative files.

TRANSFORMATIONS

The Free Transform command enables you to scale, rotate and position the hands so that they overlap the tree trunks.



FINAL IMAGE



FILTERS

To make this sharply focussed hand merge with the out of focus tree trunk on the layer below, use the Gaussian Blur filter.

LAYER MASKS

By painting black on a mask, you create a hole in it. Here we've hidden some of the sky to reveal the tree stump on the layer below.

GENIUS TIP! REMEMBER SETTINGS

► Our project will involve selecting several hands from their backgrounds, so we'll need to refine the edge of the selection for each one. As the hands in the various source images look similar, it makes sense to start off using the same slider settings in the Refine Edge command. To do so, tick the Remember Settings box once you've adjusted the sliders to select the first hand.

ARTIST INSIGHT

WHERE THE PROS SHARE THEIR SECRETS

FEATURED ARTISTS...



Andrew Gibson

Andrew is a freelance author and fine art photographer who writes about

the creative and technical aspects of photography.

www.andrewsgibson.com



Steve Caplin

A digital artist and author from London, Steve has his satirical photomontage work

published by newspapers and magazines worldwide.

www.stevecaplin.com



David Cole

Photoshop 5.0 inspired David, a traditional artist specialising in

watercolours, to move into natural media simulation via digital painting.

www.davidcolepictures.co.uk



Luke O'Neill

Art Editor of *Computer Arts Collection* magazine, Luke is able to turn

his hand to layouts, illustrations and branding projects.

www.computerarts.co.uk



Rob Carney

Rob Carney is editor of *Computer Arts* magazine - the leading magazine for creative

professionals. He has over 11 years experience of Photoshop work.

www.computerarts.co.uk

BIT DEPTH

What's the best way to preserve highlight and shadow detail?

asks *Helena Wick, Email*



Andrew Gibson replies...

Highlights and shadows can be tricky to manipulate in

Photoshop because it's in these details that you're most likely to see the negative effects of less-than-perfect post-processing.

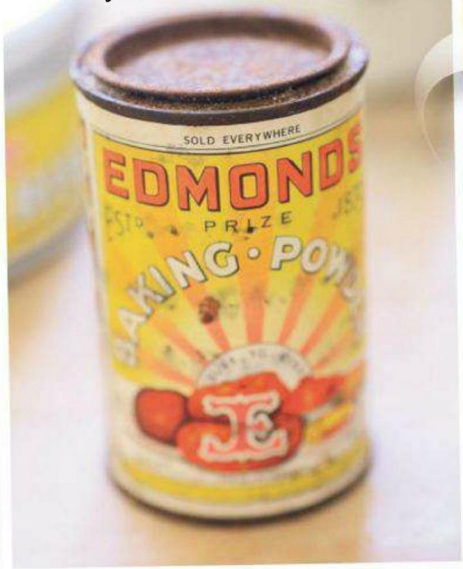
The problems begin when you use 8-bit files such as JPEGs and then adjust the brightness or contrast or start manipulating the

image curve. You can quickly lose detail in the lightest and darkest tones. To understand why this happens, we need to explore the topic of bit depth.

Computers, including the processing unit within your camera, use the binary number

system, which is a method of describing a decimal number using several registers that are set to either on (1) or off (0). An 8-bit binary number looks like this: 10111011 (this one represents the decimal number 187). The largest number possible in an 8-bit digit

Start image



Starting with a 12- or 14-bit photo results in a higher quality final image than if you'd started with a JPEG



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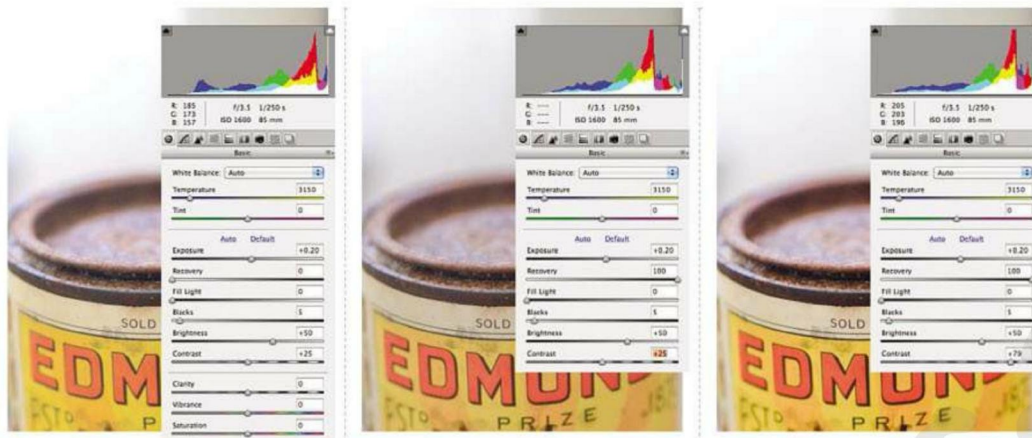
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Step-by-step Recover lost highlight detail



01 Check the histogram

Open a RAW file in Adobe Camera Raw. If the histogram is cut off on the right then there are over-exposed highlights.

02 Recovery slider

Move the Recovery slider to the right. Watch the detail in the highlights come back as you move it. The data in the histogram also moves to the left.

03 Increase the contrast

Using the Recovery slider reduces the contrast. Counter this by moving the Contrast slider to the right. Don't overdo it though.

is 255. The table on the right shows how the binary registers work.

If you set your camera to use the JPEG format, it saves images as 8-bit files with three colour channels – red, blue and green. Each pixel is represented by three 8-bit binary numbers (one for each colour channel).

The three channels together give a theoretical total of 16,777,216 colour tones (256x256x256) per 8-bit pixel. Experts say that the human eye can only perceive around ten million or so distinct colours, so clearly, JPEG files are more than capable of recording all the colours you could possibly need. Providing, that is, that you don't need to do any processing, which is unlikely. In real life most of us want to make at least minor tweaks to

	128	64	32	16	8	4	2	1
8-bit number	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	1
Decimal value	128 + 32 + 16 + 8 + 2 + 1 = 187							

the brightness, colour balance and contrast, even in images that look good straight out of the camera.

As you push the sliders and curves around, you're changing the colour values within each channel, and this can create gaps in the histogram, leading to posterisation and loss of important highlight or shadow detail. You can tell when this has occurred in an image by the 'picket fence' look of its histogram.

The solution is to shoot using your camera's RAW format. Most

cameras capture either 12- or 14-bit RAW files. Such files have greater colour depth than JPEGs, enabling you to make much greater changes to brightness, contrast and colour tone before you see any breakdown in the image quality. The table to the left shows how bit depth equates into tones.

When you process a RAW file in Adobe Camera Raw, you can save it as an 8-bit or a 16-bit file (the 12 or 14 bits of the RAW file are 'stretched' to fill the new 16-bit colour space). An 8-bit image is fine if you don't intend to do any more work with it, but if you want to process it further in Photoshop CS (Photoshop Elements can't handle 16-bit files), then you should save it as a 16-bit TIFF or PSD file.

This enables you to make further changes to brightness and contrast levels while minimising loss of detail in shadows and highlights.

	Values per channel per pixel	Total possible tones
8 bits per channel	256	Approximately 16.78 million
12 bits per channel	4,096	Approximately 68.72 billion
14 bits per channel	16,384	Approximately 4.39 trillion

PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Binary numbers

▶ Binary numbers use two digits: 1 and 0 (by contrast the decimal system uses ten digits). Each digit is called a bit, shortened from 'binary digit'. The largest number represented by an 8-bit binary number is 255, and a 14-bit number 16,383.

Bit depth

▶ Digital photos are a series of binary numbers stored in a file. Bit depth refers to the number of bits per colour channel in the photo. JPEG files are 8-bit images and contain eight bits per channel. RAW files contain 12 or 14 bits per channel.

Posterisation

▶ Banding caused by an abrupt transition from light to dark tones in areas of continuous colour. An 8-bit image is more prone to posterisation than a 16-bit one.

GENIUS TIP! RAW BENEFITS

▶ The extra bit depth in RAW files has some additional benefits. One is that you can adjust settings such as white balance without losing any image quality. Another is that you can process the RAW file yourself in Photoshop, rather than relying on the camera. Some photographers prefer to use the JPEG format to save time in post-processing – wedding photographers, who take thousands of photos during a wedding, and sports photographers, who need to send photos to their picture editors during a sporting event.



Start image

BLING

PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Layer Styles

► Layer Styles, chosen from the fx menu at the bottom of the Layers Panel, are a way of adding special effects to layers such as bevels, shadows, textures, gradients and more. The effects are applied non-destructively. This means that any appearance added using a Layer Style can be edited, altered or removed, even after the file has been closed. It makes it easy to experiment, balancing the different effects to see which combination produces the best results.

You can't overdo sparkles on a style like this. Disguise the copies by rotating and resizing them

TEXT EFFECTS

Can you tell me how to make 'bling' text effects?

asks **Beth Rourke**, Email



Steve Caplin replies...

Once the sole preserve of Jimmy Saville, bling has taken a detour through hip-hop before making it into mainstream fashion. Notable for its brash gilt and sparkling diamante, you'll see bling jewellery on sale everywhere.

Just about any shape can be given the bling treatment in Photoshop, and it isn't hard to achieve the effect.

We'll use the word Bling, set here in the curvy serif font Cooper Black, as our starting point.

Begin by loading up the pixels in the word as a selection by holding down **Cmd/Ctrl** and clicking the thumbnail of the Bling layer in the Layers Panel. This will produce a marching ants selection around the text. Use **Select>Modify>Expand** to make the selection larger. I've used a

25-point expansion because I was working on a high resolution image for print; but choose a size that fits your image.

On a new layer, fill this area with any colour you like, then load the text as a selection again and delete it from this layer. Next, use Layer Styles to add an Inner Bevel – use Chisel Hard as the Technique, and add an N-shaped Gloss Contour in the Shading section. Add a Gradient Overlay made of alternating light and dark brown stripes, at an angle, to make the gold effect, then add a drop shadow.

Now for the diamond texture. The easiest way to do this is to find a picture of a real diamond.

Any diamond will do, and it doesn't have to be high resolution. Make a rectangular selection of a small section of it, then use **Edit>Define Pattern** to make a new pattern from the selection.

On the original text layer, use Layer Styles to add a Pattern Overlay, choosing the diamond pattern just created. Make it very small: you just want an idea of texture. Then add an Inner Bevel to give the interior of the lettering some depth, using Chisel Hard once again to make the edges crisp. On a new layer, paint a sparkle in white, then duplicate it to a couple of places around the lettering, rotating them so each one looks slightly different.

“Just about any shape can be given the bling treatment in Photoshop, and it isn't hard to achieve the effect”

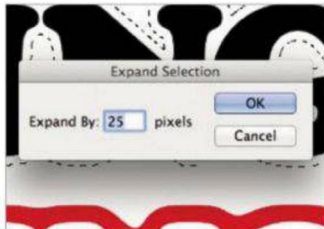
GENIUS TIP! ROUND IT UP

► When you expand the text outline, you may find that the edges of the selection are hard and boxy if you expand by a large amount. Use **Refine Edge** (Photoshop CS4 and later) to add a lot of Feather to the selection, with 100% Contrast to tighten it up again.

QUICK TIP To make the Gradient Overlay, make light and dark brown stops, then hold down **Alt** and drag to duplicate them

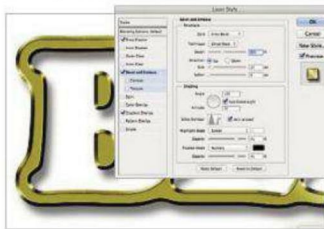
Step-by-step

Get the 'bling' text effect look



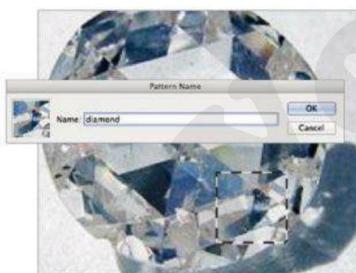
01 Expand the outlines

Load the text as a selection, and expand the selection to make the bling border. Fill this with colour on a new layer, and then delete the text area from the inside.



02 Add layer effects

Use the Layer Style Dialog Box to add an Inner Bevel with a Gloss Contour to raise the edge. Add a Gradient Overlay to make the effect look more like gold.



03 The diamond texture

Use any picture of a diamond - this one came from Wikipedia. Make a small rectangular selection, and turn this into a pattern to create the diamond texture.



Custom brush tip

DIGITAL PAINTING

Can I make my own bristly brush to use with the Pattern Stamp tool when I paint using a photo?

asks **Paul Webster**, Email



David Cole replies...

To make a bristle brush that works with the Pattern Stamp tool, we need to make a new brush tip.

First, create a new white document 500x500 pixels at 120ppi. Then use the chalk brush at size 9 loaded with solid black to make some small squiggles in a roughly round shape. These are the main bristles of our brush. Don't make them too small or numerous or the bristles in the brush stroke will be difficult to read. Then make a few more dots and squiggles over a wider area

using a light grey. These will reproduce colour at a lower Opacity in our brush stroke and add variety without detracting from the bristle effect.

Give the marks a little sharpening with the Unsharp Mask filter to crisp up the edges. Now use the Elliptical Marquee tool to select in a round shape, the area of the brush tip marks. Hold down **Shift** as you drag the Elliptical Marquee tool and the selection will be circular.

Go to Edit>Define Brush Preset and call it 'Creamy Bristle'. It will now be at the bottom of the Brush Preset Picker list.

If you now open up the Brush Tip Shape of the Brush Panel you

will see the basic characteristics of the brush tip. Most obvious is the concertina-like look shown in the Spacing. Reduce the value of the Spacing to 2%.

So that the size of the brush stroke will be sensitive to pressure - it will get bigger when you press down on your pen tool - we need to add another element. Select Shape Dynamics and set Minimum Diameter to 2% and the Control feature above it to Pen Pressure.

Finally, in the Brush Options Bar, set the Mode to Normal, the Opacity to 100% and the Flow to 66%. Save the brush as a Brush Tool Preset or as a Brush Preset, if you don't have Tool Presets.

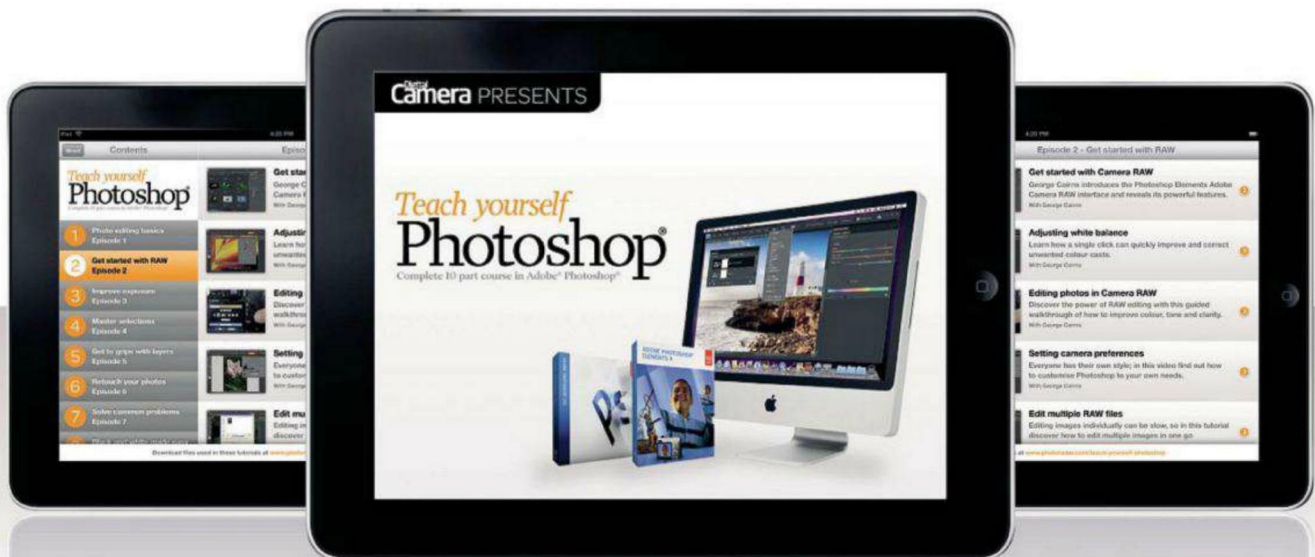
QUICK TIP

Use some white here and there to thin out the bristles if they are too thick



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PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Spherize

► Spherize is the filter that warps an image to give it a wrap-around 'globe' effect. It can have an overly 'Photoshopped' look to it if it isn't used carefully. As with any filter, be wary of being too heavy-handed, and try to think of how the effect that you're trying to create would look in the real world, then apply and edit the filter accordingly.

Align tools

► Whereas other programs in the creative suite are a lot more grid-based, the beauty of Photoshop is that it's very organic. However, you may still want to line things up perfectly sometimes. The Align tools enable you to do this by aligning the elements contained on different layers in a number of ways. The walkthrough below demonstrates how to align elements vertically or horizontally by distributing a number of elements evenly so that the spacing between each is exactly the same.

GRAPHICEFFECTS

How can I create spherical 3D objects in Photoshop?

asks **Peter Cavendish**, Email



Luke O'Neill replies...

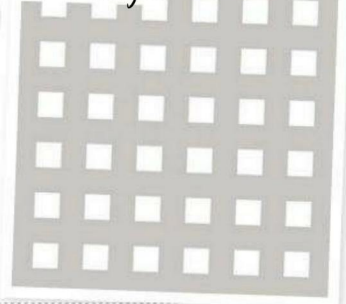
Basic 3D rendering tools are relatively new to Photoshop, but you don't necessarily need those particular features to create a fake 3D sphere effect in any version of the software. All we actually need is one of the Distort filters. What we've tried to do here is create the look of a crosshatched sphere so that we can see both the front and the inside of the sphere through the cross-hatching.

The technique shown below is quite straightforward and uses the Spherize filter and Layer Styles to trick the eye. To add a tangible sense of realism to the sphere, you may wish to further edit it by



You can enhance the realism of your scene by creating shadows beneath the spherical elements

Start image

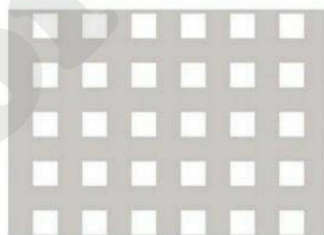


including a subtle inner shadow to the front face of the sphere. Change its colour to white, select Colour Dodge as its Blend Mode, and with a little adjustment, you should be able to give some depth to the skin of your 3D sphere.

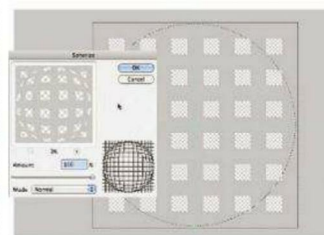
Step-by-step Make a fake 3D sphere

GENIUS TIP! FAKE REFLECTIONS

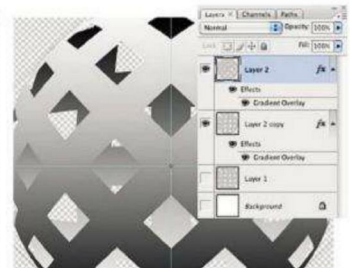
► You can give the impression that the surface of your 3D sphere is reflective by creating the sphere using the background that your object will eventually sit on as the starting point. With some trial and error, you should be able to trick the eye into thinking that the background is being reflected on the surface of the sphere. You could also try mimicking the properties of glass by lowering its Opacity.



01 Create a grid
Fill the Background Layer with grey. On a new layer, create a perfect square and fill it with white. Holding down **Alt** and **Shift**, duplicate this to create a row of six, then hit the Distribute Horizontal Centres button. Repeat this process to create a grid.



02 Spherize the grid
To create the cage effect, merge all of the white square layers, select each of them and then hit **Cmd/Ctrl+X**. Create a circular selection and go to **Filter>Distort>Spherize**. Choose 100% as the Amount and then set the Blend Mode to Normal.



03 Add Layer Styles
Copy and paste your circular selection onto a new layer and add a gradient overlay Layer Style to it. Duplicate the layer and edit the Layer Style by reversing the gradient. Now simply rotate the top layer to give it a basic 3D effect.

QUICK TIP

Be conscious of the surroundings that your 3D shape will sit in, and add shadows and highlights as appropriate

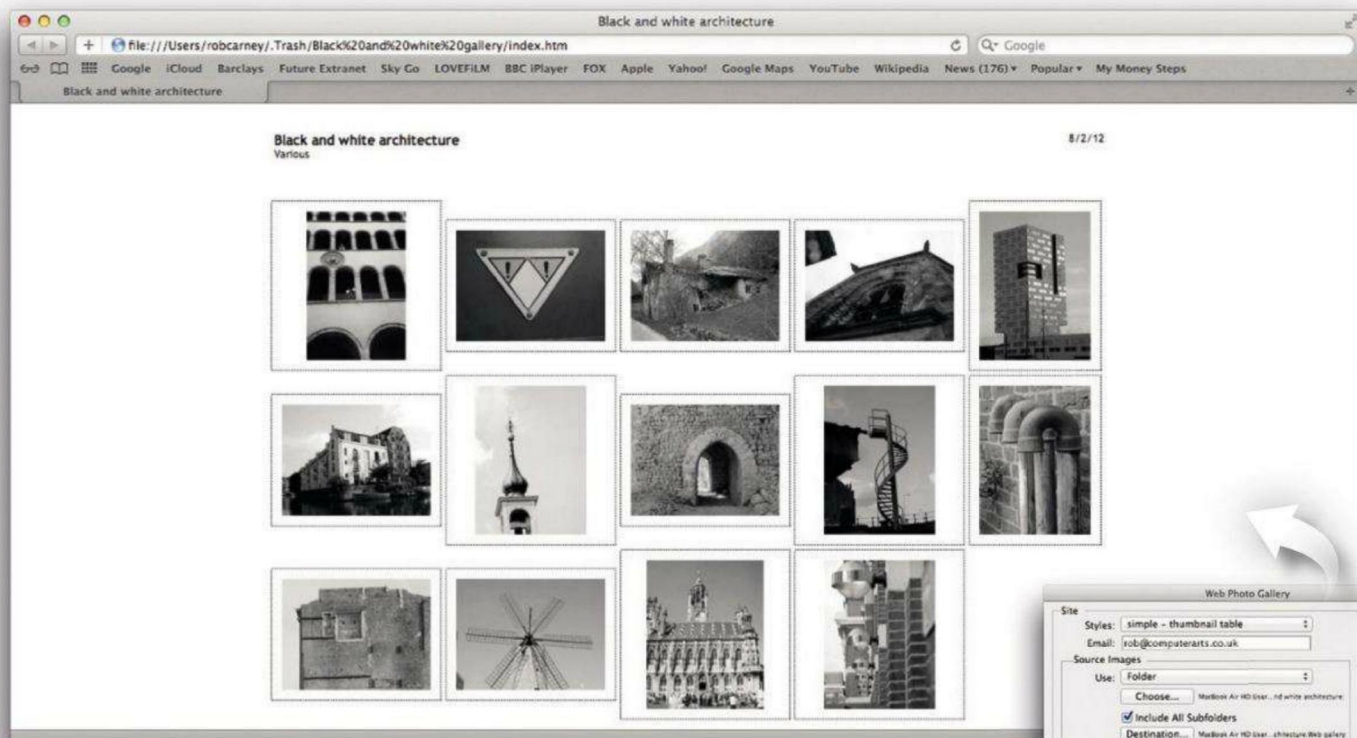


PHOTO TECHNIQUES

Can I quickly create a web gallery of my images in Photoshop CS5?

asks **James Clarke**, Email



Rob Carney replies...

Photoshop CS5 removed the ability to create a web photo gallery directly from the Automate menu, but you can still quickly make an HTML gallery of your images by installing a freely downloadable plug-in from Adobe, or by using Bridge, which comes free with Photoshop. HTML galleries are handy for quickly showing family and friends some of your images, or simply telling the world what you can do in Photoshop without having to learn any coding or web design skills. The galleries that Photoshop produces are simple, but refined in their

styling. The ones you can export from Bridge have more options.

1 Download plug-in set
Download the additional CS5 plug-in set (which includes the Web Photo Gallery option) at <http://adobe.ly/hnOYfY> (Mac) or <http://adobe.ly/d40asH> (PC). Put the CS5 Optional Automate Plug-Ins folder into your Photoshop plug-ins folder, move the Web Photo Gallery presets folder to the Photoshop Presets folder, and then restart Photoshop. If you're running the Mac version, hit **Cmd+I** on the Photoshop application icon and then check Open in 32-bit mode.

2 Make your gallery
Open Photoshop and go to File>Automate>Web Photo Gallery. Choose the folder containing your images in the Source Images options, and choose the style, or theme, you'd like to apply in the Styles drop-down menu. Choose a destination – which is where Photoshop will put the HTML and associated files and folders (you just copy this to your web server).

3 Add titles and credits
In the Options>General drop-down menu, you can pretty much leave things as they are. With the Banner options, you can choose to add not only the title of

the page, but also credits for the photographer and any contact info.

4 Custom colours
If you have large images in your folder, Photoshop will reduce them according to the options in the Large Images menu. Choose a thumbnail size in the next options, then finally, choose custom colours for the links if you desire.

5 Options in Bridge
If you want more options, check out the Web Photo Gallery options in Bridge. To find them, go to Window>Workspace>Output and then in the Output panel, choose Web Gallery.

QUICK TIP

To create a slideshow in Adobe Bridge that includes automatic transitions, simply adjust the Slide Duration and Transition effect

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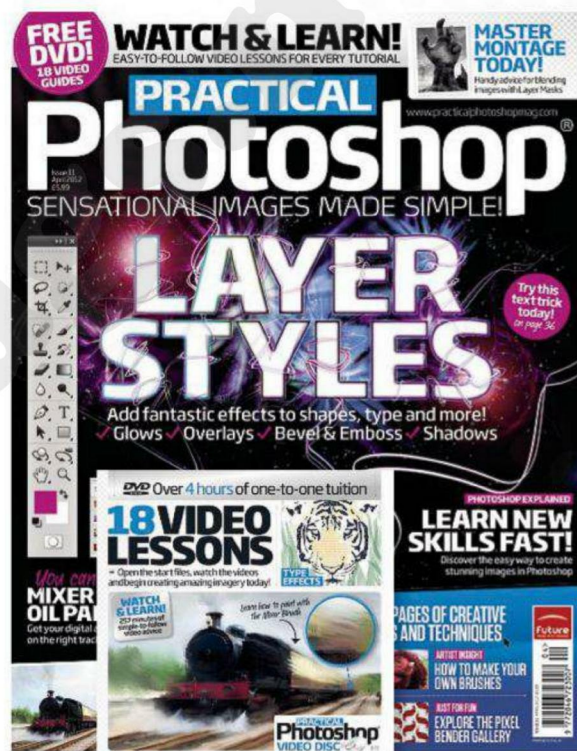
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IMAGE REVIEW

WHERE THE PROS RATE YOUR WORK

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The Dream Is Real

Daniel Lloyd, UK



About my image...

This represents my favourite recurring dream that I used to have about floating, but don't seem to have any more. I put my camera on a tripod and took two shots of my bedroom, one empty and another with me balancing on a record box on my bed. In Photoshop, I removed the record box and created a shadow beneath me to give the effect of levitation. I placed photos of clouds on the walls and birds in the air to give a surreal, dreamy atmosphere. To tie it together, I used a cooling blue photo filter and then added contrast and blur.

www.flickr.com/photos/dannylloyd

“ This represents my favourite recurring dream that I used to have ”

Expert verdicts

Ali Jennings says...



Daniel's visualisation of his dream works well, and shows good technical skill. The careful attention to detail and refinement of cut-outs has paid off, enabling a near-seamless composite with multiple images coming together well as a whole. Looking at the picture carefully, it's possible to see light areas in the joins for the sky overlay on the walls, and while he's added a shadow beneath himself, this is uniform and doesn't take into account the effects of the bright light streaming through the window. To reinforce the dream-like theme, I'd apply a heavier process to the image, boosting tone and contrast further for a fantasy effect.

Steve Harnell says...



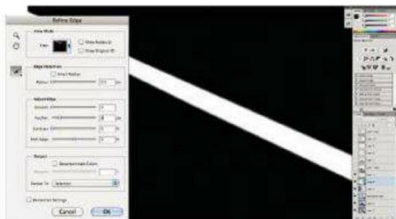
This is a great idea for an image, but there are two things I think could improve it. First, and this is only a minor niggle, but in my opinion the figure would work better if dressed in pyjamas, or at least something that doesn't cover his face. Second, I think the background would work better if there weren't seams between the wall textures. The seams make the room a closed space, making the birds look as if they are trapped, which I think works against the theme of freedom in the image. This would have been avoided if a single sky image had been used to texture the whole room.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

- ✓ Well thought out with images specially set up and shot
- ✓ This picture shows both technical and creative skill

- ✗ The blend of the sky overlays could have been improved
- ✗ The birds and walls work against the idea of freedom and space

Why not try... Going a little bolder



01 Clean up the walls

Start by clicking one of the sky layers and increasing the size slightly using Free Transform (**Cmd/Ctrl+T**). Select the Polygonal Lasso tool, select the top edge and Click Refine then feather by 3px. Repeat for the other edges of the sky layers.



02 Adjust the shadow

Select the shadow layer and increase Opacity to 40%. Click the Layer Mask icon and select a Foreground to Transparent Gradient. Take the foreground Opacity down to 60% and click OK. Draw a gradient right to left from the top of the bed to the bottom.



03 Apply fantasy effect

Select all, press **Cmd/Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E** and desaturate (**Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U**). Set the Blend Mode to Multiply, and Opacity to 50%. Apply a Gaussian Blur of 20 and add a Vignette of Darken -100. Create a new layer, fill it with grey and add noise of 50%.

MEET YOUR EXPERTS...

Ben Brain



Practical Photoshop's Editor Ben has used Photoshop since the early 1990s, finding it vital during his previous career as a professional photographer and for his art photography.

James Paterson



Having worked as a studio professional, our Technique Editor James has been using Photoshop on a daily basis for the past decade to enhance his portraits and create original imagery.

Steve Harnell



Practical Photoshop's Operations Editor Steve has been a journalist since the mid-1990s, and has used Photoshop in his newspaper page design work and personal photo projects.

Angela Nicholson



Our Head of Testing Angela is *au fait* with a huge range of photographic equipment, and has used Photoshop since version 4 to get the best possible results in her images.

Ali Jennings



Ali has been manipulating images in Photoshop for over 10 years, and is the Imaging Lab Manager for Future's photography portfolio. His bleach bypass tutorial starts on page 58.



Send us your own Photoshop creations and our team of experts will add a few professional touches

DANIEL'S ORIGINAL



Turtle Scene

Chad Walker, United States



About my image...

I used Photoshop CS5 and eight stock photos to make this image. I extracted what I needed from each photo and applied an Adjustment Layer to each so that I could tweak the layers throughout the image-editing process. To get the lighting correct on the turtle, I created a New Clipping Layer and painted black where I wanted shadows and white where I wanted lighter areas. I then applied a Gaussian Blur and set the Blend Mode to Soft Light to avoid losing any detail in the turtle. I adjusted the Opacity levels to make the shadows lighter or darker as necessary.

Expert verdict

James Paterson says...



The poor turtle in this apocalyptic scene looks a long way from home. I don't fancy his chances much! The photos chosen blend very well together, particularly in terms of colour, and I like the sweep from dark to light across the image, mirroring the direction of the turtle. I think you did a good job of swishing up the gravel behind the turtle's feet, too. I'm not convinced by the stream of oil, though,



Chad's turtle disaster image is almost there

which lacks correct perspective, and doesn't realistically flow over the undulating landscape. Given the difficulties that fixing this would entail, I would remove this element from the image. I'd also knock back the highlights on the shell, which make the turtle appear studio-lit. The skull in the sky is a great touch, and could be emphasised a little more.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

- ☒ A great blend of images that work well together
- ☒ A strong and obvious narrative that delivers a crystal clear message
- ☐ The oil stream and the lighting of the shell need some attention

Medieval War

Jorge Tuñón, UK



About my image...

I tried to learn Photoshop for a couple of years, but my skills were not improving. Thanks to *Practical Photoshop* I'm able to create this image. I took all the pictures myself because my passion is photography. The landscape I shot in the Scottish Highlands, and I found the medieval warriors in a shop. I used a lot of layers and masks. I played with selections, and the blur, render and liquify filters. The mounted warrior picture was sharp, but I blurred it to get the look of a limited DoF. I simulated the light conditions with a red gel when I shot the soldiers to have an easier editing job. I'm not fully satisfied with the image. What else can I do next time for a better result?

Expert verdict

Ben Brain says...



I think you've slightly overdone the clouds here. I'd like to see a more naturalistic version of the image without the red lighting. Perhaps you could crop in tighter on the figures, too, and have them closer together? This would take the attention away from the overpowering render clouds. Comping toy figures onto a landscape is a cracking idea, and it can't have been easy. All things considered, this is a good first-time effort, Jorge.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

- ☒ An experimental composite with some great ideas
- ☐ The sky is overpowering and the figures are a little small





Communication

Viveca Koh, UK



About my image...

I started with two exposures – one for the interior and one for the window, which I blended using a Layer Mask. I applied a photo of some cracked paint to add more texture to the typewriter, then added an old telephone bill and very selectively masked it out.

www.vivecakohphotography.com

Expert verdict

Ali Jennings says...



The textures and processes Viveca has applied to this derelict scene has worked perfectly to create a stark, contrast-filled image full of interest. Her technique shows an advanced understanding of how to get different exposures and overlays to work together to produce a successful end result. There are just a few touches that I would include...

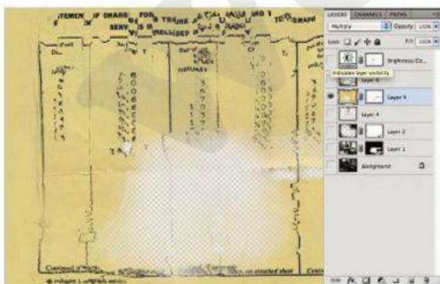
Viveca's subtle composite demonstrates her keen artist's eye



PRACTICAL Photoshop says

- ✓ Good use of layer blending and masking creates a successful image
- ✗ A few finishing touches would help to lift the image

Why not try... Tonal tweaks and border effects



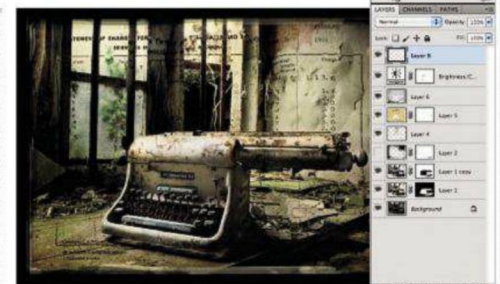
01 Displace the text

Copy and paste the text image into a new document, convert it to Grayscale, increase the contrast and save as 'Map.psd'. In the original image, select the text layer then go to Filter>Displace. Select 'Map.psd' and apply it.



02 Increase the contrast

Duplicate the second background layer, delete the Layer Mask then desaturate it. Change the Blend Mode to Overlay and reduce the Opacity to 20%. **Ctrl-click** the Layer Mask in the layer below, add a mask and invert it.



03 Add a border

Go to Image>Canvas and increase Width and Height by 1cm. Create a new layer and select a black Spatter 90px brush. Hold down **Shift** and draw around each edge. Reduce the brush Opacity by 20% and repeat.

PORTFOLIO SURGERY

Where you get the chance to have your body of work critiqued by a leading Photoshop expert



Meet the reader...

Dave Urwin is a retired IT consultant with a passion for creating composites using Photoshop CS5.

"When asked why I create composites, my answer has always been to be different, to engage the viewer, and to tell a story through the final image," Dave explains. "My philosophy when working on any composite is absolute attention to detail, with the different elements fitting together as seamlessly as possible to convince the viewer that they are looking at a real scene."

www.500px.com/daveUrwin



Meet the expert...

Ben Brain is *Practical Photoshop's* Editor. Since he graduated with a degree in photography in the early 90s, Photoshop has been a vital part of his workflow, whether on personal projects for his art photography or during his previous career as a pro photographer.

As a technique writer and editor for titles such as *Amateur Photographer*, *PhotoPlus* and *Digital Camera*, Ben has always believed that Photoshop should be used to make good pictures better rather than salvage duff ones.

1st portfolio image On Display

Dave says...

This began as an exercise to see if I could convincingly add myself into the display cabinet. By desaturating the figure, painting in shadows and shading, and then adding subtle reflections on top of the figure I think I achieved my aim quite well. It was then a matter of putting all that work to use and making a finished image, and in this respect I decided to add in the onlooking skeleton outside the display cabinet to create a reversal of reality with the exhibit on the outside looking in at the man on display.

Ben says...

This is a fantastic image both in concept and execution. The reflections and the shadows are spot on, which *almost* sells the illusion. The one thing working against it is the positioning of the figure. If you glance down at his left foot, then the face and arms look too far forward, as if they are on this side of the glass. The hands also look slightly angled away from the surface. It's a cracking effort though – really good work!

2nd portfolio image Anachronism Number 911

Dave says...

This is a juxtaposition of people, events or objects from different periods of time. It uses a shot I took at the Worcester County Museum and is a recreation of a typical 1960s lounge complete with old-fashioned furniture and ornaments. I thought it needed a focal point and some additional element to grab the viewers' interest, so I had the idea of adding in a TV picture that obviously doesn't belong to that period of time. In the end, I used the 9/11 Twin Towers attack, but no doubt other iconic scenes would have worked equally well.

Ben says...

The starting image you used in this comp is a great photo, well-exposed and composed, and full of irresistible little points of interest. The texturing effect you've applied works very well, too. I'm not sure about the Twin Towers image on the television, though. There's so much else going on in the image that I don't think it needs this extra layer.

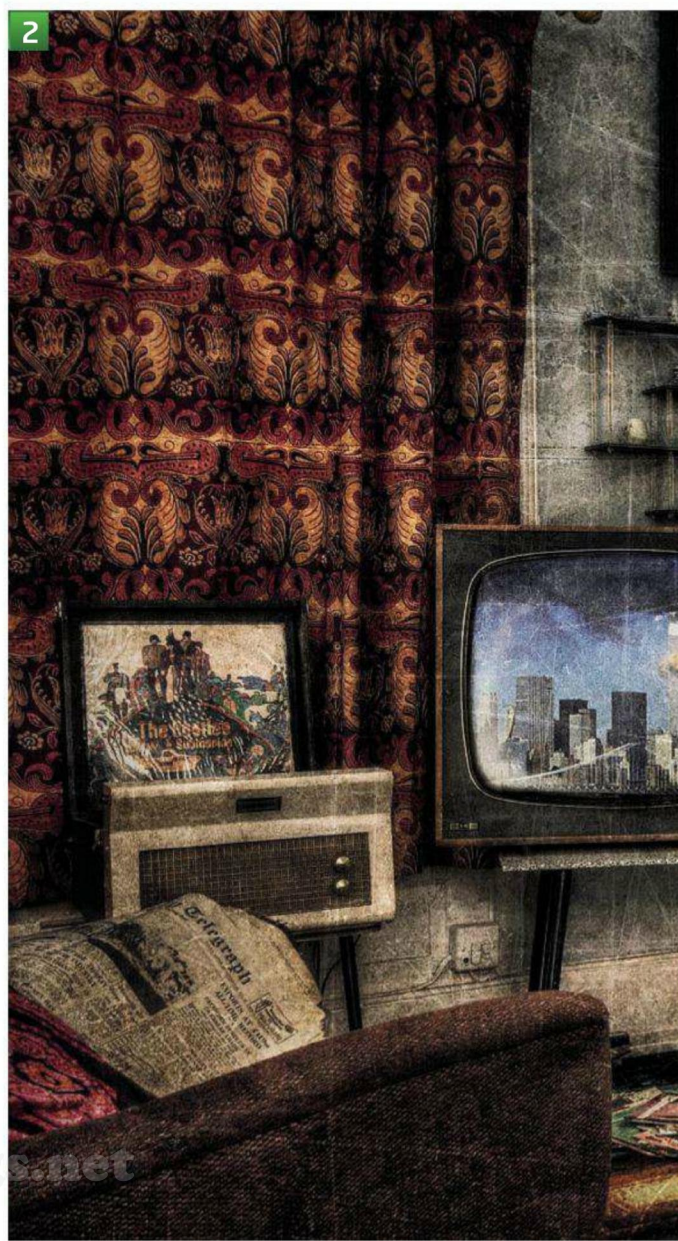


IMAGE REVIEW

PORTFOLIO SURGERY

3rd portfolio image

Loot

Dave says...

This was inspired by the UK city centre riots, looting and arson that occurred in August 2011. It's a self-portrait with me wearing my son's hoodie and one of my wife's scarves. The background is a shot that I took in Birmingham city centre. It's a pretty simple composite with just the three elements: the background, the figure and the overlay of the broken glass window. It's not meant to glorify or poke fun at looting – it's just a visual comment on the rather sad state of affairs in this country.

Ben says...

An arresting image with a strong focal point. The broken glass is fantastic, although it could do with a little more Opacity and maybe some reflected elements from the shop interior. A little less sharpness would have made it slightly more realistic, too.

See our
composite
tutorial on
page 68!

BEN BRAIN'S OVERALL VERDICT...

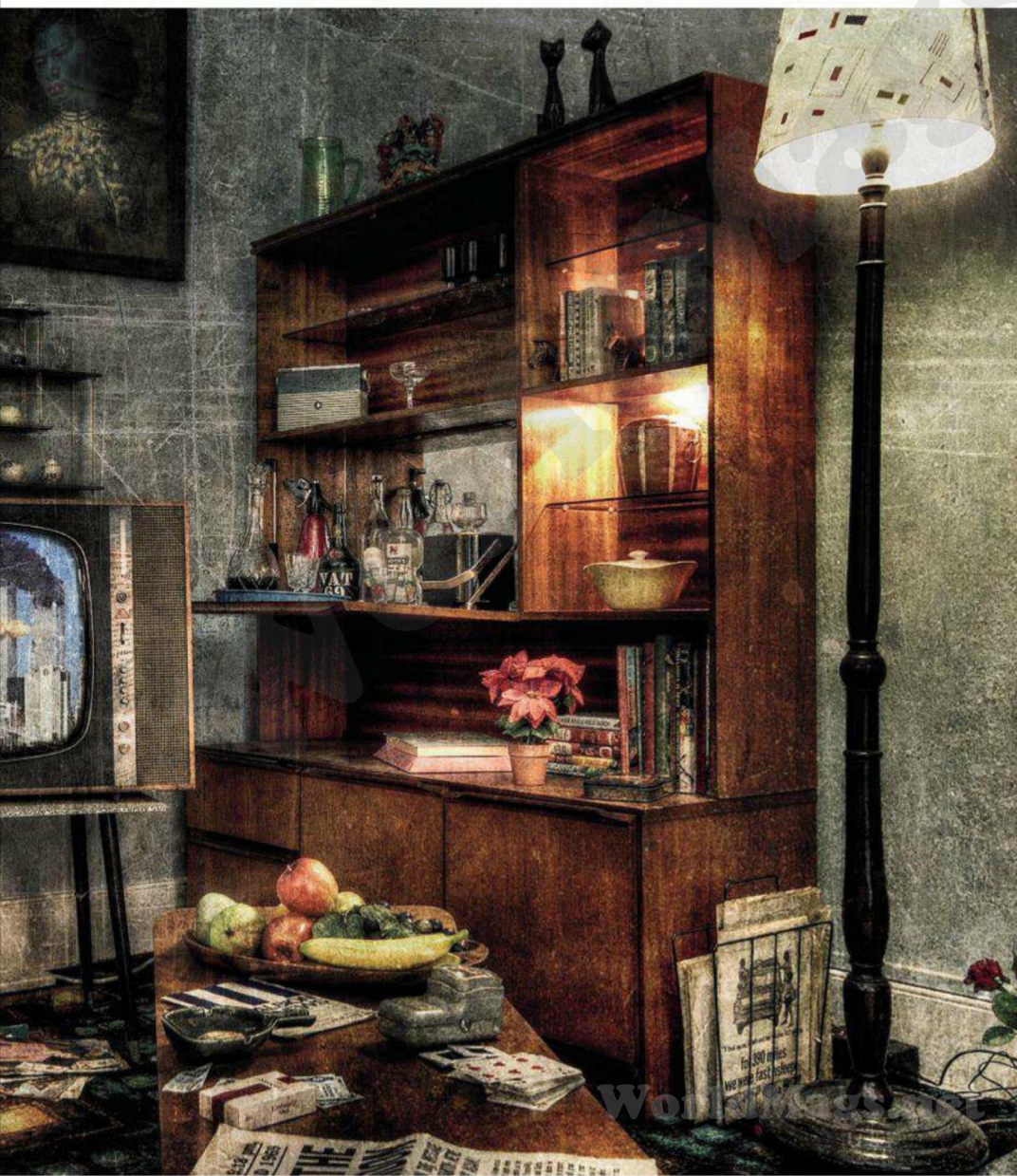


Dave is clearly a skilled photographer and Photoshop artist. Technically, his comps are almost flawless. His work is also varied, showing that he isn't afraid to try out new concepts or techniques. Definitely one to bookmark!

- ☒ Dave has a good eye for compositions that work
- ☒ His portfolio showcases a range of well-executed styles and effects
- ☒ His compositing skill will leave you guessing which elements are original, and which are comped in
- ☐ The glass in *Loot* is too cleanly shot to be totally convincing
- ☐ The Twin Towers element in *Anachronism* doesn't do it for me



3



Give a photo a blended oil look

Use the Mixer Brush tool to blend colours in your digital painting work

“ Photoshop’s painting capabilities got a big lift when CS5 introduced Bristle Tips and the Mixer Brush ”
John Beardsworth, digital artist

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**PRACTICAL
Photoshop**

PROJECT INFO

You'll learn

» How to blend colours with Photoshop's Mixer Brush tool

You'll need

» Photoshop CS5

It'll take

» 20 minutes

In the near certainty of not being alone on this issue, I'll come clean - I'm one of those photographers who would have loved to have been able to paint. I can cope fine with walls, doors, skirting boards and ceilings, but I really admire friends who can pick up brushes, mix colours and create a picture on a blank canvas.

I was reflecting on this recently when I stood in front of a well-known Turner painting in the National Gallery. The brushwork that I could identify, and the incredible watercolour-like blending of oil paints, got me thinking about how I might go about creating something in Photoshop that mimicked those qualities.

I'd have to start off with a photograph, but how would I create realistic brush strokes and get the colours to blend, smudge and smear into each other?

Photoshop's painting capabilities got a big lift when CS5 introduced Bristle Tips and the Mixer Brush. Bristle Tips try to simulate how real painting brushes have bristles of varying length and softness, while the Mixer Brush lets you pretend you're painting on a wet surface and mixes and blends colours as you work. These new tools really are astounding.

Before we get started, you may also want to think about how you interact with Photoshop.

A mouse is a blunt instrument, but we can use a tablet and pen just like a real pen or brush, tilting it, pressing harder or softer. If you have one of these devices, you have all the tools you need to create amazing work.



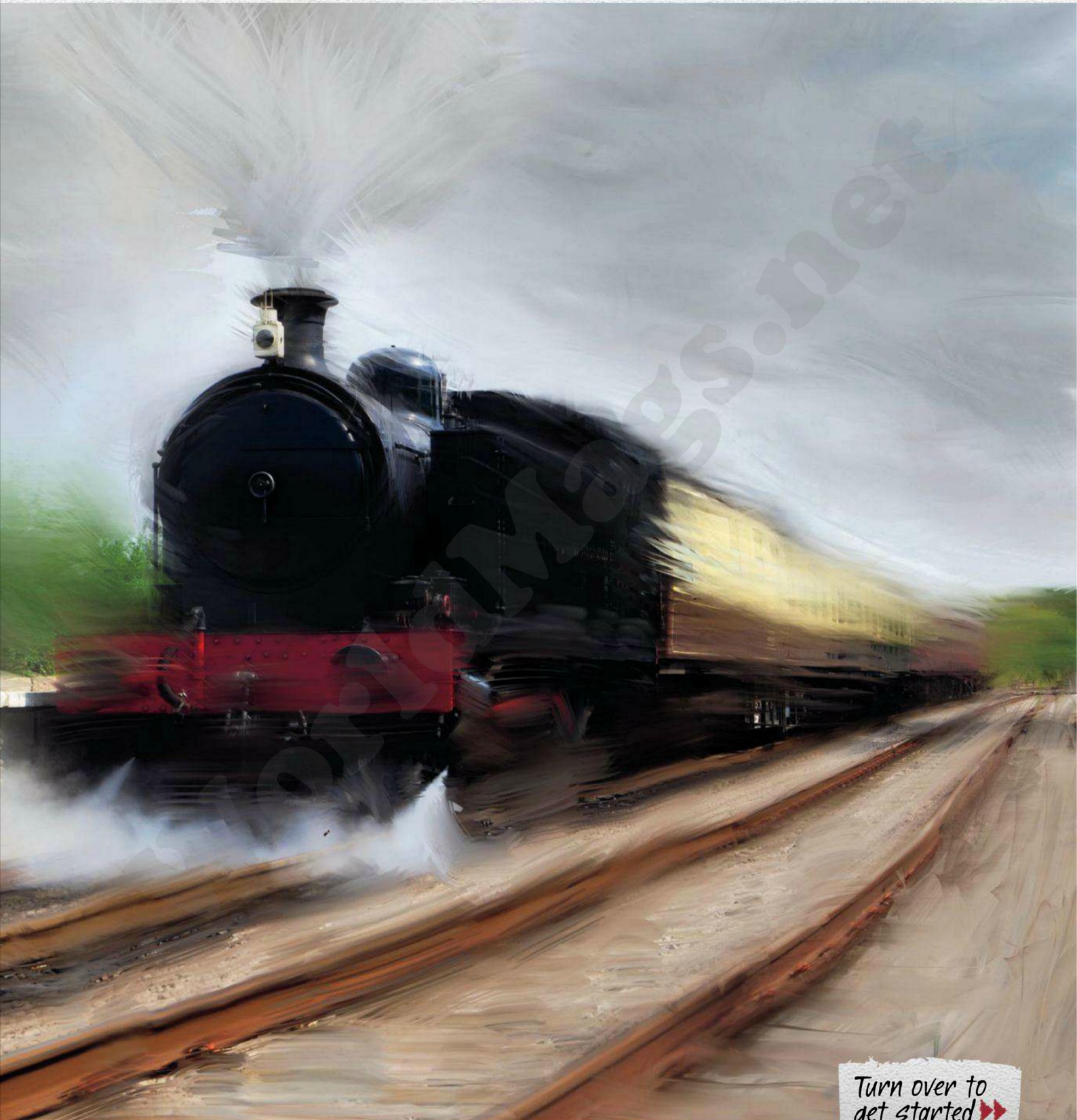
**YOUR
GENIUS**

John Beardsworth

» John Beardsworth is a photographer and author of eight books on Photoshop and Lightroom. The second edition of his book *Advanced Digital Black and White* is out in May. See more of his photography at www.beardsworth.co.uk and check out his new Lightroom site at www.lightroomsolutions.com



START IMAGE



Turn over to
get started ►►

PRACTICAL Photoshop Phraseology

Modifier keys

► A few times in this tutorial I refer to holding down the **Alt** key. This is known as a modifier key, and is much more prevalent in Adobe software than in examples from other developers, so their value will be less obvious if your background is using Microsoft apps, for example, where **Ctrl** is sometimes used but **Alt** is rare. Modifier keys often bypass irritating Dialog Boxes – if in doubt, try them!

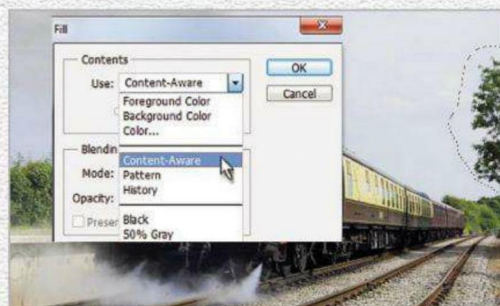
03 Try Blend Modes

Existing image elements can be added or strengthened as well as removed. Where something is translucent, the smoke for instance, it might be tricky to select on its own. So try selecting the general area with the Lasso tool, copying it into its own layer with **Cmd/Ctrl+J** and applying a Darken Blend Mode. It's worth trying Multiply, too, because it tends to ignore the lighter tones, such as in the sky.

GENIUS TIP! TRY AGAIN

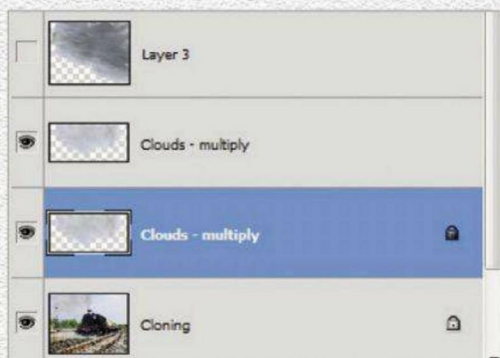
► Try starting from scratch two or three times and don't imagine everything will come together in a single version. Photoshop painting produces one-offs, and it mixes your own skills with happy accidents that you couldn't repeat no matter how many times you try. You might get the smoke perfect the very first time you paint it, but the tracks might become better with practice. So start over again, keep each version as a separate file, and combine the best bits from different attempts.

Step-by-step Blended oil painting



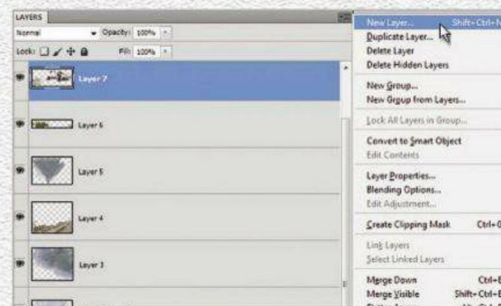
01 Prepare the image

The aim isn't an exact reproduction of reality, and our painting work may well cover up the photo, but nor are we starting from a blank canvas. It's helpful to retouch the image, so it's more of an idealised starting point. Here, the branches were distracting. When you have an intrusive distraction, try **Edit>Fill** and choose the Content Aware option.



05 Lock up your layers

It's very easy to paint directly onto an existing layer by accident, and you may only notice your mistake when it's too late. So remember that the Layers Panel allows you to lock down the layer's contents. Click the padlock on the right of the layer's thumbnail and you'll now get warning messages every time you try to paint on the layer. They may be annoying, but they're worth it.



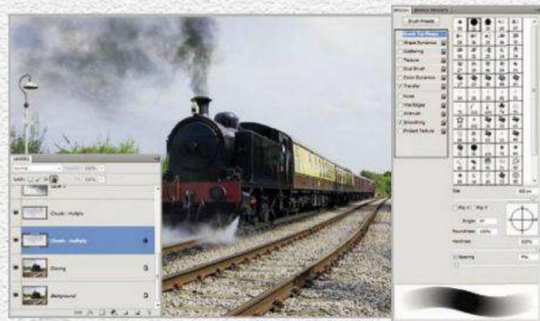
02 Always use layers

Carrying out your retouching work on a single layer is an enormous risk. Few of us get things right first time, and Undo and the History Panel are only useful if you complete the picture in one very long session or in relatively few steps. With any retouching work, and certainly with Content Aware Fill, you should always work on a copy of the photo layer.



04 Use conditional blending

We don't want the sky's lighter tones to be darkened by the Multiply Blend Mode, so double-click the Layers Panel and go to the Blend If slider. Drag the white point's slider to the left to limit the layer's effect to areas darker than the value of the slider.

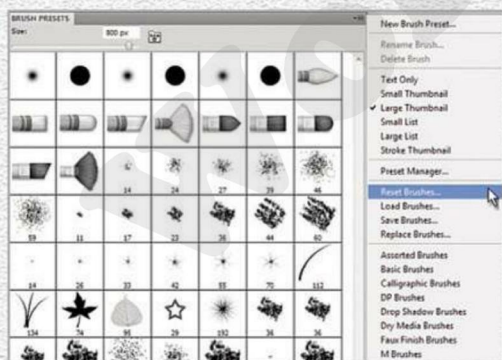
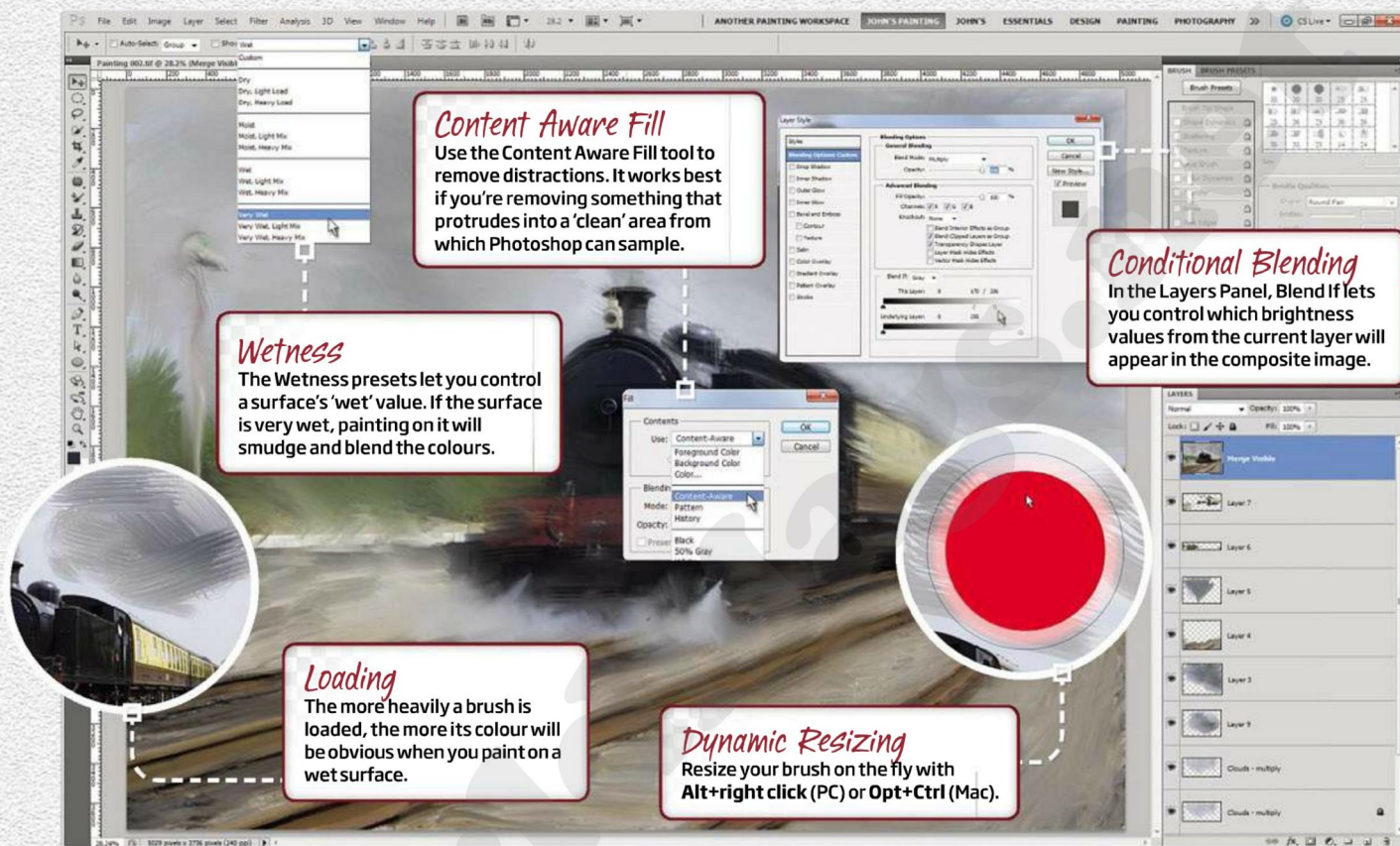


06 Prepare the workspace

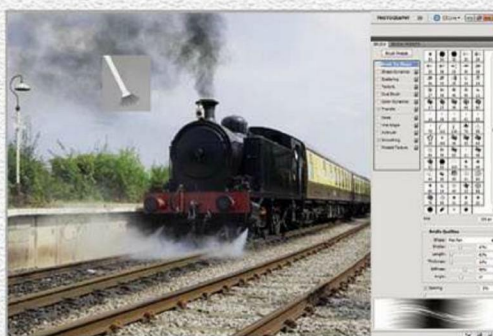
Painting is one activity where you use a small selection of Photoshop's many features, and it can make a lot of sense to hide the rest. The default panel set-up or workspace isn't oriented to painting, and while there's a built-in panel called Painting, it's a bit cluttered. Here, you'll see that I have a simple workspace called 'John's Painting', which keeps just the Brush Panel and Layers available.

Photoshop Anatomy

Here's a closer look at how we created our blended oil painting effect using the Mixer Brush



07 Switch between presets
Examine the Brush Panel and click the Brush Presets button. This opens a new panel showing previews of the brushes, and like all panels, it has a menu at its top right. Notice the different views of the brushes. I tend to use Stroke or Large Thumbnail, which gives you a good idea of the shape of the tip.



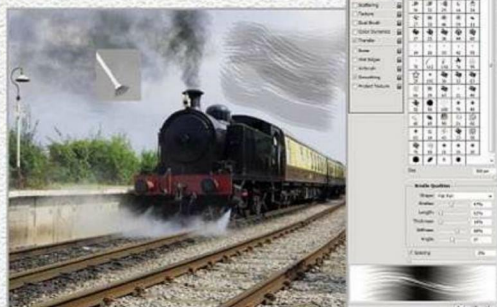
08 Identify Bristle Tips
Notice how Bristle Tip presets have distinctive icons that look like the stem of a real brush. Select one and return to the Brush Panel. Here under Bristle Qualities you have five sliders with labels. Choosing a Bristle Tip also activates a preview window that shows how you're holding the stylus. Notice how you can vary the angle of the stroke by tilting the pen.

GENIUS TIP! PEN PRACTICE

Using a tablet and stylus to make fine brush strokes may seem unnatural at first. So practice and play – do this as much as you want. The Bristle Tip presets behave like real brushes, and respond as you tilt the stylus in different directions. Knowing this is one thing – doing it is another matter. On occasions, I'll force myself to tilt the stylus and keep half an eye on the little brush preview, just to make sure I'm not getting lazy.

GENIUS TIP! BLEND MODE VARIATIONS

Blend Modes are very powerful when you want to restrict how the current layer contributes to the composite image. To make the current layer darken the image, choose Multiply or Darken, which works on darker tones. For this image, I chose Multiply to darken the smoke. Their opposites are Lighten and Screen, so for example we might paint steam onto a layer, and choosing one of these modes would make it stand out as though we were shining a light through it.



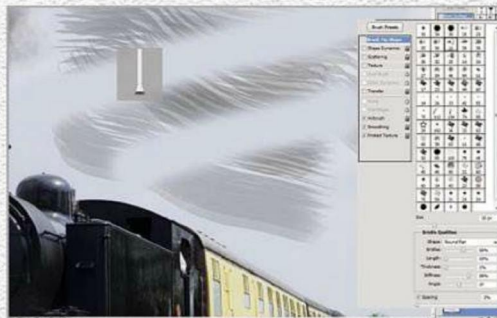
09 Bristles, Thickness and Stiffness

There are five sliders under Bristle Qualities. The ones I use are Bristles, Thickness and Stiffness. Increase the Bristles value, decrease the Thickness, and paint onto your new layer - and you can see the individual bristle strokes. Stiffness also works just as you would expect, so at higher settings it makes the brushwork appear more rigid and distinct, while at lower settings it's a lot looser and less defined. Don't use every conceivable setting, but make sure that you introduce variations as you paint.



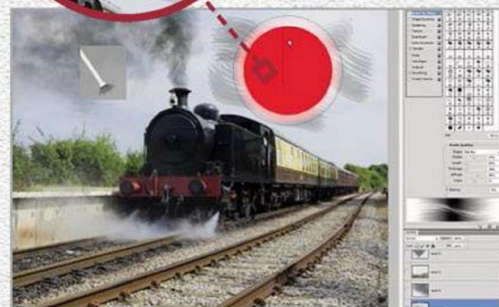
11 Mix your colours

Sometimes you may want the paint colours to blend and smudge together. This is what the Mixer Brush simulates. It's located in Photoshop's main toolbar under the Brush tool. Make sure to tick the Sample All Layers option, which is crucial when you are working on multiple layers.



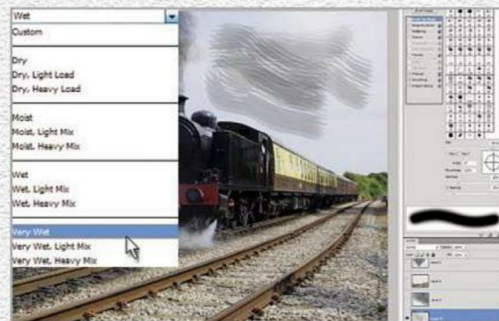
13 Dry mix

From the Presets drop-down menu, choose the Dry preset. Notice on the Options Bar that this sets the Wet percentage to 0, so you're now painting onto a dry surface. Put another way, the brush will now lay down paint as if the underlying colours have dried, so painting won't smudge or mix the paint.



10 Changing strokes quickly

Keep your eyes on the picture as you work and use the newer 'on image' ways to change the brush's Size and Hardness. On a PC, hold down **Alt** and right click, or on a Mac hold down **Opt** and **Ctrl**. Then drag the cursor - left and right controls the brush Size, up and down its Hardness. This is extremely useful for varying your brush strokes quickly.



12 Wait until it's dried

The key to using the Mixer Brush effectively is in the Options Bar - the preset drop-down box. Remember that all the references to wetness refer to the wetness of the surface on which you're painting - not the wetness of the brush. Once this becomes clear, using the presets is quite intuitive.



14 Wet look

When you want the colours to blend together and smear, that's when you would choose the Wet or Very Wet presets. Now it's as if you're painting onto colours that are still wet, so they are going to bleed into the colour the brush is laying down. Here, I painted up from the bushes and in points out into the sky.

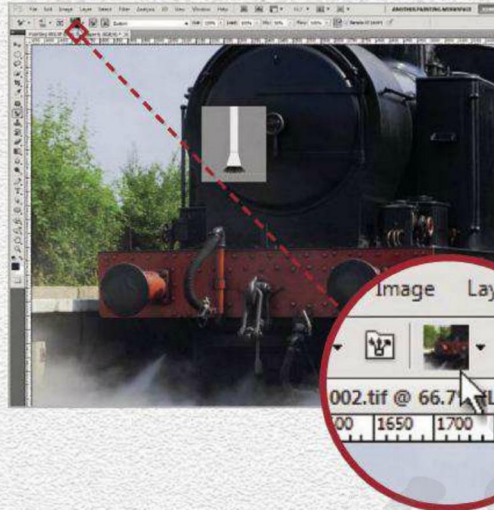
PRACTICAL Photoshop Using Elements?

► The techniques in this tutorial rely on Bristle Tips and the Mixer Brush, features that are only available in Photoshop CS5. Photoshop Elements does have brushes though, and you can easily separate painting work onto layers, with some Blend Modes, too, so you can use some of the ideas in this tutorial. When you activate Elements' Brush tool, the Options Bar has a drop-down menu that accesses the brush presets. Try those in the Wet Media group first, working on new layers. Keep the paint Opacity well below 100% and you can paint over colours, then apply effects to the layer - try Dry Brush and Paint Daubs.



15 Lightly loaded brush

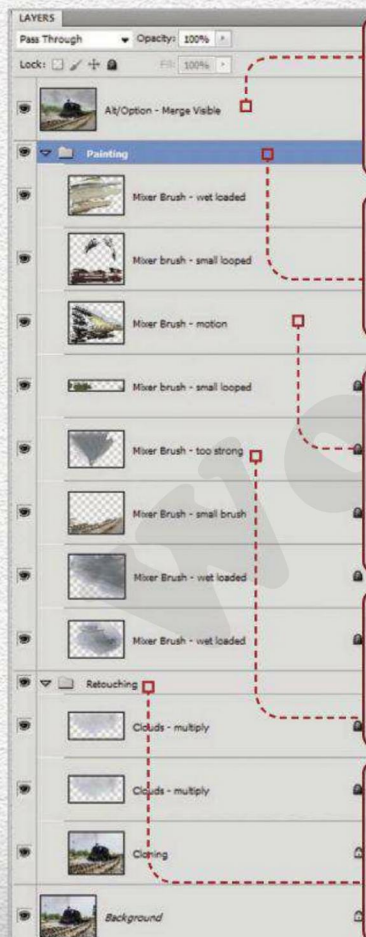
You have other controls in the Options Bar. Probably the most useful is Load, which again works as you would expect, so a lightly-loaded brush will lay down less of its colour on a 'wet' surface. In this picture you can use this behaviour to spread the smoke. I would start painting on the smoke and work outwards, smearing its colour into the sky.



16 Choose your colour
You obviously want to vary colours and possibly match those already in the image. One way is to click the Current Brush Load square in the Options Bar, click in the Color Picker, then use its sampler to pick up colour from the image. But there's a much easier way – hold down **Alt/Opt** and click. The brush temporarily becomes a colour sampler, so you can **Alt/Opt** click the buffers, for instance, and their red and black colours are loaded onto the Mixer Brush.

A look through the layers

Here's how we composed our digital painting using layers and the Mixer Brush tool



Alt/Opt - Merge Visible

Layer > Merge Visible is the quickest way to combine the layers for print.

Painting Layer Group

Naming layer groups can be handy if you may want to fine-tune the picture in the future.

Mixer Brush - Motion

The carriages needed careful work with a small Mixer Brush to introduce a sense of motion while keeping the yellow and brown stripes.

Mixer Brush - Too Strong

It's so easy to paint on the wrong layer. Notice how this is one of a number of locked layers.

Retouching Layer Group

You'll soon paint over it, but retouching the photo gives you time to think about what you want to do with the image.



17 Add extra layers

Add as many layers as you want, and remember about locking those that look just right. You can always unlock them or remove them if you change your mind. Here, I felt I'd been a bit heavy-handed with the smoke coming out of the chimney, so I simply dropped the layer's Opacity. That's the beauty of painting each main feature on a different layer.



18 Save it for later

When you feel your work is done, save the file and give yourself time to reflect. Don't flatten it – there's rarely any need nowadays to do so. Keep all your layers intact so that you can always return to the picture at a later date to improve or reinterpret it.

Next issue! Perfect Pointers

Mimic a Pointillist art style in your digital painting on sale 5 April, 2012

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Need a backup plan for your data? Here's three top picks

Our scores and awards explained

► *Practical Photoshop* is passionate about gear and all products are tested rigorously under real-world conditions. If we're impressed with a product we'll say so – if we're not, you can trust us not to pull any punches.

Our scores explained

- ★★★★★ Forget it
- ★★★★★ Below average
- ★★★★★ Good for the money
- ★★★★★ Very good in all areas
- ★★★★★ An amazing product

The Gold Award



Only five-star products receive the coveted *Practical Photoshop* Gold Award

LCD SCREEN

The 3-inch, 460,000-dot LCD is fixed rather than articulated but offers a wide viewing angle and touchscreen functionality.



FN1/FN2 BUTTONS

These buttons can be individually programmed to access a whole host of frequently-used settings of your choosing.



D-PAD

The four-way d-pad provides quick access to key functions including ISO, WB, Drive mode and AF mode options.



QUICK MENU

The Quick Menu allows you to alter settings like image quality, photo style, flash and metering mode.



COMPACT SYSTEM CAMERA

Price £469 (body only), £749 (with 14-42mm power zoom lens) Web www.panasonic.co.uk

Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX1

A sexy, sophisticated compact system camera for advanced enthusiasts that's packed with attractive features

THE SPECS

Sensor 17.3x13mm
16 million effective pixel
Live MOS
Memory SD/SDHC/SDXC
Maximum video resolution 1920x1080 60i (30fps)
ISO Range 160-12,800
Max Burst 4.2 fps
unlimited JPEGs, or 9 raw images
LCD Screen 3in 460,000-dot touchscreen
Weight 318g
Dimensions 116x68x39mm

▶ Aimed at advanced enthusiasts, the Lumix DMC-GX1 fills the void left by the acclaimed GF1, which sported a level of manual functionality that photographers missed with the subsequent launches of replacements: the GF2 and GF3.

In addition to Full HD movie recording, a 3-inch touchscreen, a virtual level, the option to add an electronic viewfinder and a robust all-metal body, the GX1 sports a 16mp Four Thirds Live MOS sensor.

Although the GX1 has the same sensor as the G3, it's accompanied by Panasonic's advanced Venus Engine VII HD processing engine that we saw in the GF3. The G3 impressed in the image quality department, so it stands to reason that the GX1 should be capable of putting in a similar performance.

The AF system is also the same 23-area, contrast-detect offering that we saw in the G3, which delivers a swift, accurate and responsive performance in a range of lighting conditions. It has Panasonic's Touch

AF and Touch Shutter features as well as Autofocus Flexible – which automatically switches between single and continuous AF wherever necessary. These elements all combine to create a versatile, easy-to-use and quick AF system.

Build quality & handling

Like the GF1, the GX1 sports a rectangular, rangefinder-esque silhouette. Its clean lines and metal body add a sleek look to this compact, sturdy-feeling camera, while the 14-42mm powered kit lens

offered by having both physical controls and touchscreen options, as well as a decent array of customisable buttons/icons means that the GX1 can be set up to suit your individual way of working.

As a result, the GX1 is simple to pick up and start shooting with right away: testament to the user-friendly nature of its interface.

Performance

The GX1's 16mp sensor is capable of resolving plenty of fine detail and noise is well-controlled, with clean

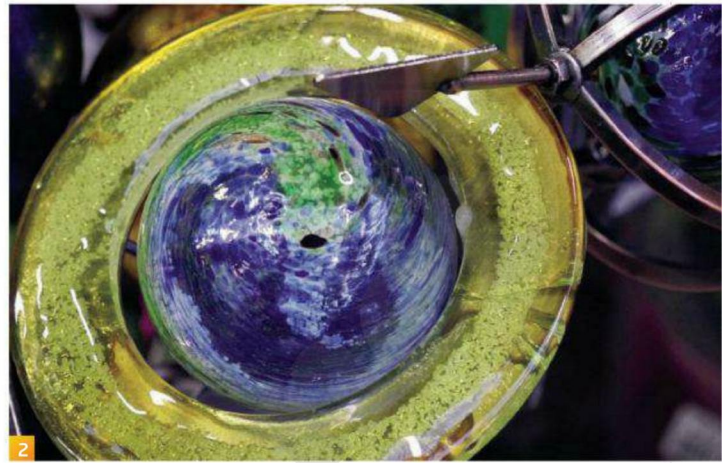
Image quality is an area where the GX1 impresses. Like the acclaimed G3, the GX1 delivers a reliable, high quality performance

feels well balanced. Its ergonomically-shaped, rubberised front grip pairs with a smoothly sculpted rear thumbpad to provide a comfortable and secure grasp on the reassuringly weighty body.

It's not perfect, but the flexibility

shots being produced throughout much of the camera's sensitivity range. In addition, the AF system performs well, locking onto subjects with consistent accuracy, even when presented with low-contrast and/or low-light scenes.

TEST SHOT FOCUS Results with the Lumix DMC-GX1



The GX1's metering system also proved to be accurate under all manner of conditions, rarely getting the exposure too wide of the mark. The dynamic range captured in most situations is also pretty impressive, particularly if you shoot raw files.

The colours recorded are generally true-to-life, save for the overly warm tones that tend to creep in when shooting with the GX1 under

01 Touchscreen focus point setting is useful for potentially confusing foreground objects

02 At ISO 1600 there's a little visible noise, but plenty of sharp detail

03 The GX1 has done a decent job of capturing the subtle colours of this lakeside autumn sunset

artificial lighting – a quirk that's easily remedied by setting the white balance yourself or taking a custom reading if pinpoint accuracy is required. The various creative effects and colour modes that the GX1 offers also present scope for some artistic in-camera processing, with most settings producing some very pleasing results.

The fact the GX1 offers a larger sensor than rivals like the Pentax Q and Nikon J1, for instance, means that it's better able to produce some nice shallow-of-field shots, albeit not quite up to the same level as you'll get from a rival CSC or DSLR with an APS-C-sized sensor.

to frequently-used functions makes the GX1 a joy to shoot with.

Image quality is an area where the GX1 particularly impresses. Like the acclaimed G3, the GX1 delivers a reliable, high quality performance in most situations, while HD movies are also clean, smooth and detailed.

It's a lovely little camera that's well matched by the 14-42mm power zoom lens.

MEET THE COMPETITION

The Panasonic Lumix DMC-GX1's rivals



Olympus E-P3

Price £599

Quality 12.3mp Micro Four Thirds offering. Body only price.



Sony NEX-5N

Price £479

Minimalist, but with a 16.1MP, APS-C-sized sensor. Body only price.



Samsung NX200

Price £543

An all-aluminium body and rangefinder-esque design. Body only price.



Our conclusion

In terms of features, the GX1 matches up well to the competition with all of the current technology you'd expect from a modern CSC. Its fast AF system and dual physical/touchscreen control interface, coupled with a pleasing amount of customisable buttons and shortcuts

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

WE LIKE... The top-notch image and movie quality makes this very attractive

WE'D LIKE... A bundled viewfinder plus a more responsive, articulated touchscreen

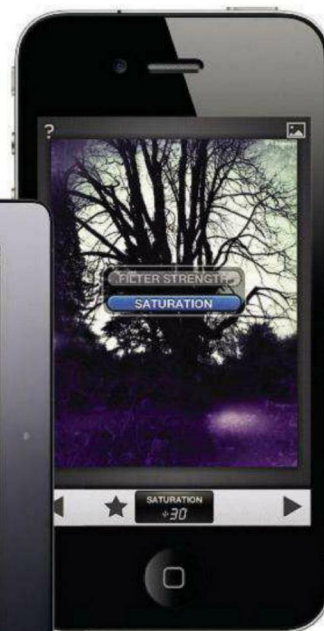
OVERALL VERDICT

A great choice if you're looking for a small, versatile camera with plenty of features that produces high quality images





Whether you're working on your phone, tablet or Mac, Snapseed offers a wide range of creative effects and selective adjustments



APP | Price £2.99 (mobile app) £13.99 (Mac) Web www.snapseed.com

Nik Software Snapseed



Make quick and easy adjustments and edits to your images with this superb app

THE SPECS

Platforms Mac: OS 10.6.8, 10.7.2, or later, requires 64-bit processor (Intel Core 2 Duo or later) 2GB RAM or more. Mobile: OS 4.2 or later; iPod Touch 3rd Generation (16 and 32GB), iPod Touch 4th Generation (8, 32, and 64GB), iPhone 3GS, iPhone 4, iPhone 4S, iPad, iPad 2, Android OS 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich) or later

▶ Nik Software makes some of the best Photoshop plug-ins on the market and regular Photoshop users will no doubt be familiar with their first rate products.

The introduction of the Snapseed apps sees Nik enter the mainstream market. Its heart is Nik's U Point technology that anyone familiar with their plug-ins will appreciate.

On mobile devices such as iPad and iPhone, the technology works well with the touchscreen interactivity. The intuitive controls allow you to easily make adjustments to your image. Click and drag to move the centre point, pinch to increase or decrease the affected area and drag the left and right sliders to adjust the intensity.

For simply getting the best out of your images, the basic tweaks in the Tune Image palette allow you to easily adjust white balance, saturation, brightness, ambience and contrast to the image as whole while the Selective Adjustment palette allows you to target specific parts of

an image and adjust brightness, contrast and saturation.

Other palettes allow you to make automatic adjustments, straighten wonky shots, crop, sharpen and convert to black and white.

However, it's the Customizable Grunge, Drama, Center Focus, Vintage and Tilt/Shift filters that give Snapseed its creative edge. The wealth of possibilities these offer is impressive and in a couple of swipes of the finger you can easily add a whole host of grungy textures and cool, arty colour palettes to images.

Sharing images from Snapseed is easy, too, and the options to email, print, upload to Flickr, Facebook or Twitter are one click away.

As an alternative to Photoshop, the desktop version is limited, but for the casual snapper who doesn't want to get bogged down with the hassle of learning complicated photo editing software it's perfect. The relatively small price tag is attractive, too.

This is a brilliant app, the best we've seen for mobile devices in a

long while. There's a great mix of image enhancement filters and a wide range of cool creative effects to jazz up mobile camera phone shots in a matter of seconds. If we were being picky, it would be nice to be able to save presets of your favourite settings, batch process multiple images at once and also zoom in, especially when using filters such as sharpening and film grain.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

WE LIKE... The ease of use and the wide range of creative effects

WE'D LIKE... To save favourite styles to presets and a mobile version zoom function

OVERALL VERDICT

Its intuitive controls are easy to master and the range of image enhancements and creative effects is impressive.



HARDWARE | Price £390 Web uk.asus.com

ASUS PA 246 monitor

Widescreen LCD display with wide-gamut coverage and some impressive functionality

► This 24in widescreen LCD display has impressive specifications and a few additional niceties thrown in, too.

The Professional IPS (P-IPS) display has a resolution of 1920x1080 (full HD) and is said to be capable of reproducing 98% of the Adobe RGB colour space, which equates to more than one billion different colours.

Meanwhile, its 178° horizontal and vertical viewing angle ensures

accurate reproduction is maintained regardless of viewer position.

One clever feature, potentially useful for photographers, is the QuickFit virtual scale, which cycles through common print and paper sizes in addition to centimetre and grid scales, as its dedicated button is pressed.

The display also swivels effortlessly around a pivot point to a portrait orientation, in addition to standard height and tilt adjustments.

In terms of performance, the menu system is easy to get to grips with – colour spaces and other



options are easily accessed using buttons on the base.

As promised, the monitor can still be seen at even obtuse angles, with the matte display doing well to minimise any reflections.

However, while colour and responsiveness are also good, a little flickering is noticeable.

Practical Photoshop says

We like the wide gamut coverage, flexible positioning but there is some flickering to the found.



THE SPECS

Dimensions 381x558x235mm
Max resolution 1920x1200 pixels

FLASH ACCESSORY KIT | Price £125 Web www.lastolite.com

Lastolite Strobo Kit Direct to Flash

Well-built Flash accessory kit that comes complete with gels and honeycomb grids

► The Strobo Kit Direct To Flash enables flashgun users to quickly mount and dismount a range of lighting accessories.

Provided in the pack is a selection of cooling and warming colour gels, along with more standard coloured options, together with a neutral density and heavy frost varieties.

These are joined by 1/4in and 3/8in honeycomb grids, as well as four metal creative masks, each with a different effect.

The gels and masks fit into supplied holders, which themselves fit onto the main adapter. This clips onto a flash

head and is secured with a Velcro strap. Cleverly, both the holders and the adapter make use of concealed magnets, so accessories can be quickly fitted and removed with minimal hassle. The honeycomb grids are encased in their own holders, so these simply need to be placed against the adapter in the same way.

The strength of the magnets means that accessories are in no danger of coming away from the adapter. The gels fit into the holders easily enough, although the masks take a little more persuasion to get inside.

While the set may appear



expensive, you do get a good selection of accessories and each individual item is constructed to an excellent standard.

Furthermore, Lastolite has included a Velcro-lined carry case with separate pockets to help keep all the items secure and free from damage while not in use.

Practical Photoshop says

Great construction and with a good choice of gels, magnetic parts allow quick mounting and dismounting.



ACCESSORIES | Price £65 Web www.intro2020.co.uk

Velbon Super Mag Slider

Solid and well-priced Macro stage which makes light work of fine adjustments

▶▶ Setting up a camera on a tripod for close-up photography can be a trying task, particularly when using a prime macro optic. This is where Velbon's Super Mag Slider comes in. Described as a macro stage, it allows a DSLR or similar to be mounted on its platform, and enables the photographer to finely adjust its position by way of two cogs which move the platform left and right over 30mm, and forwards and backwards over 60mm.

Two tripod threads on its base allow it to mount standard tripod

THE SPECS

Maximum extension 545mm

Weight 572g

legs, and despite only weighing 470g, the device boasts a solid magnesium alloy construction, with thick rubber knobs for movement control.

These knobs are perhaps the product's weakest link, partly due to their small size but also because the two can, at times, come into close contact with each other, which makes them a little awkward to turn.

Otherwise, the device is simple to use and effective. Very fine adjustments are possible, and even with heavier DSLR/lens combinations, the plate stays in place until manually moved by the user. As the plate stays fixed to the unit, the camera is released by unscrewing the cog underneath which holds it in



place. Some may prefer the Super Mag Slider to offer a greater degree of movement, although considering that it's designed with the intention of fine-tuning, the movement it offers is more than sufficient. Anyone who frequently shoots macro images will find this very useful.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

Very fine adjustments are possible and it's very well priced considering the excellent build quality



Media library

Steve Harnell shares his pick of the best new book releases

With its plethora of photo-editing tools usually hogging all of the spotlight, Photoshop's digital painting aspects can often seem a little overshadowed.

This month, we take a look at two comprehensive new books which aim to put that particular problem to rest.



For the newbies, **Digital Painting For The Complete Beginner (£14.99)** by **Carlyn Beccia**

does exactly what it says on the tin. Beccia – who is a multiple award-winner for her own children's books and illustrations – does a fine job in outlining the basics of digital brushes and

canvases before progressing onto teaching the essentials of working in a whole manner of styles including pastel and watercolour sketches and more complex experiments in oils and mixed media effects.

The tutorials and walkthroughs throughout are informative, orderly and easy to follow.

If you've already got a good grounding in the fundamentals, then perhaps **Digital Art Techniques For Illustrators and Artists (£19.99)** by **Joel Lardner** and **Paul Roberts** can take your skills to the next level.

The book explains the creative potential of digital imagery for

output to both print and screen, with detailed step-by-step lessons demonstrating key Photoshop skills as well as Illustrator and other pixel and vector-based software.

It's particularly strong on teaching artists how to make the software fit in with their own personal style. It's no good having the tail wagging the dog, after all.

Organised into four key sections, the book first sets out

the primary principles of digital painting before moving onto more conceptual areas, image-making techniques and finally a well presented section on how to launch your own career as a digital artist.

Specific Photoshop aspects such as using Blend Modes, Layer Masks, the secrets of making great cut-outs and vector art are uniformly excellent. There are even tips on making stop-motion movies and rotoscoping.

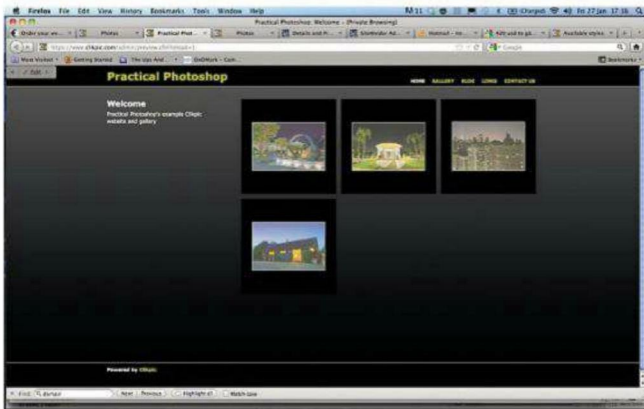
READ OF THE MONTH

Afterwards - Contemporary Photography Confronting The Past by **Natalie Herschdorfer (£29.95)**

▶ Here's an interesting twist on the traditional idea of photojournalism. Rather than capturing "the moment" itself, this focuses on the aftermath instead and investigates themes of loss, confusion, anger and desolation. Among the topics covered are the 9/11 bombings, genocide in Rwanda, holocaust survivors and the New

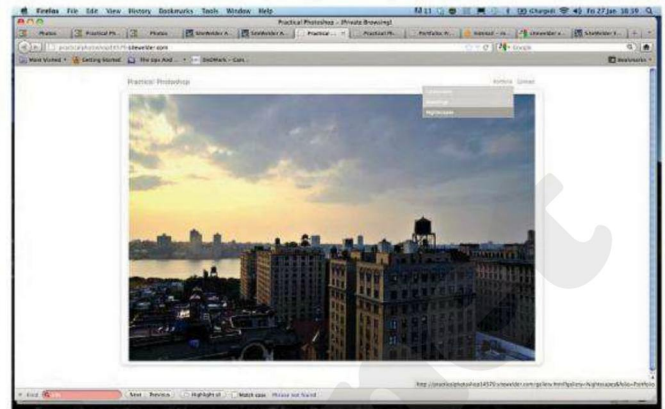


Orleans floods. Put in historical context, this collection of contemporary photographers is bleak but thought-provoking.



WEB BUILDS

Price £40-£180pa Web www.clikpic.com



WEB BUILDS

Price \$420pa + \$150 start-up Web www.sitewelder.com

Clikpic

VS

SiteWelder

Preset web designs that are easy to fill with image galleries and add relevant metadata

Plenty of design presets, galleries, integrated Flash slideshow creation and multimedia file formats

A variety of layouts are available to choose from and it's possible to customise fonts, colours or add a personal logo. Images can be uploaded and then fed into galleries.



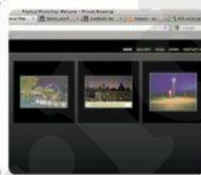
What is the range of tools like?



Clean, professional-looking presets, clear management system, bulk image uploader, public/private galleries, Flash slideshow generator, Paypal shop and extras such as FTP for client downloads.



The 13 design templates are simple yet work well for portfolio presentation after additional tweaking. The Preview button shows live, editable progress if you feel lost during creation process.



Are the results effective?



It's easy to make a portfolio thanks to the design presets, plus SEO optimisation for Google search is also included. However, the iPad/mobile site is restricted to a single layout.



Just using the presets is fine for beginners, while adding metadata, keywords, integrating Google Analytics, or using hand-coded CSS styles will appeal to more advanced users.



Is it suitable for beginners?



The visually-oriented layout of the management system is attractive and easy to use. However, there aren't more advanced features available such as manual CSS input.



£40pa for 150 photos, increasing to £180pa for 3,000 photos and a bulk upload system. Includes picture hosting, weekly stats and a shop facility if desired. Extra cost for domain name.



Is it worth the price?



\$420pa covers 1,000-capacity image bank plus domain registration, but \$150 start-up fee is a killer. Customer service support is included, and the ability to host a variety of media is attractive.



A quick and easy website creation for any ability level. However, the bulk image uploader is reserved for the top-price package, plus video and other media can't be hosted on the site. Simple, effective and affordable.



Practical Photoshop says

SiteWelder will set you on the path to making a great-looking site, but it's expensive and there's a lack of high-end customisation. Overall, it's a capable, polished system that can cater for a variety of media and is easy to use.



Good, Better, Best Hard drives

Need a backup plan for your data if your computer gives up the ghost? Here's our rundown of three great hard drives

► There are two types of computer user – those that have had a hard drive failure, and those that are going to have one. Although modern drives are more reliable than ever before, they're still delicate and prone to wearing out, potentially taking your valuable data with them.

There are plenty of software solutions for backing up your data to another hard drive.

Microsoft Windows has Windows Backup built in, and for Mac users, there's OS X's Time Machine. Third party applications such as Backup MyPC, Handy Backup and Second Copy for Windows,

Modern drives are more reliable than ever before, but they're still prone to wearing out

and Carbon Copy Cloner or SuperDuper for Mac OS are also available. Many external hard drives are bundled with backup applications, too.

But what sort of hard drive should you choose?

Portable drives are ideal for backing up your laptop on the move. Based on a 2.5-inch HDD, they're powered through their data connection with your computer, so there's no need for a separate power supply. But they're more expensive per GB than desktop drives and not

available in as large a capacity, though they're getting bigger over time.

Desktop external drives are excellent for backups. They're mains-powered, so make sure that you have a spare plug socket, and being based on a 3.5-inch drive, they're not as convenient to carry around. But if it's likely to sit under your desk backing up a desktop computer, portability isn't an issue.

Arguably the best backup solution is a multi-drive RAID enclosure. Powerful and versatile, with a correctly-configured RAID set-up you can remove and replace a faulty hard drive without losing data stored on the array.

They're definitely not portable and certainly not cheap, but if you value your data, they're without doubt the safest backup solution.

What it means...

GOOD A solid product at a competitive price. It won't let you down and offers great value for money, without being the best in its category

BETTER A very good product at a competitive price. It delivers results, offering a trade-off between quality and value

BEST A best-in-class and possibly even cutting-edge product for those who value quality of results above all else, and who don't mind paying a premium

GOOD BUY...



HARD DRIVE

Price £145 Web www.seagate.com

Seagate FreeAgent GoFlex 1.5TB

Well-priced, portable and highly upgradable

SEAGATE SAYS...

As a highly upgradable portable hard drive, GoFlex gives you the flexibility you need to extend your digital life. Upgrade cables make it easy to upgrade to USB 3.0, eSATA or FireWire 800 for up to 10 times faster transfer speeds.

WE SAY...

At 1.5TB, this is huge for a portable drive. If you don't need this much space it's also available in 320MB, 500MB, 750MB and 1TB capacities. But if you're looking for a backup drive, bigger is definitely better. FreeAgent GoFlex is ideal for backups on the move. This 1.5TB model is supplied with a USB interface, but the GoFlex system means that you can remove and replace it for a FireWire 800 or eSATA port. Backup software is bundled.

WE LIKE...

GoFlex is a brilliant idea, which allows you to use the best

possible connectivity method for your computer, without the expense of adding ports to the drive that you won't use.

WE'D LIKE...

We're promised a Thunderbolt version of the GoFlex cable in the future for those who are lucky enough to own a recent Apple computer, but at the time of writing, it's still not here.

VALUE VERDICT

For such a versatile portable drive with 1.5TB capacity, FreeAgent GoFlex is terrific value for money. At just £145, there's a lot to recommend it. A competitive price indeed.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

A capable and capacious drive that's perfect for backing up your notebook.



BETTER BUY...



HARD DRIVE

Price £195 Web www.wdc.com

WD My Book Essential 3TB

A 3TB hard drive for less than £200

WD SAYS...

My Book External drives are the world's best-selling drives. We've been making hard drives for 20 years and we know how to protect your data. With WD SmartWare, your data is automatically backed up every time you hit Save.

WE SAY...

Desktop external hard drives offer a better price per GB than portable units alternatives, so if your backup drive is destined to sit permanently under your desk, they represent the better choice. Western Digital's My Book Essential comes in 1TB, 1.5TB, 2TB and 3TB versions. The drive comes bundled with Western Digital's SmartWare software for Mac and PC, a drive management suite that includes easy-to-use backup software. The drive is NTFS-formatted out of the box, so Mac users should reformat before using it.

WE LIKE...

This drive is huge, and will last a very long time as a backup unit. SmartSoftware is great, too, offering backup, encryption and more.

WE'D LIKE...

Apple Mac users will no doubt bemoan the lack of a FireWire 800 port. Even Western Digital's My Book for Mac, which is preformatted for OS X, only offers USB.

VALUE VERDICT

A 3TB drive for under £200 is excellent value for money in anyone's books, especially a device of this quality.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

If you're looking for a desktop external drive for your backups, you can't go wrong with this one.



BEST BUY...



HARD DRIVE

Price £512 Web www.drobo.com

Drobo S

Meet the most expandable, future-proof solution to your data backup needs

DROBO SAYS...

In addition to fast transfer speeds for creatives and small businesses, the all-new Drobo S features USB 3.0 technology that delivers the most expandable, future-proof solution on the market today. An unbeatable combination of automated protection, instant expansion as well as high performance.

WE SAY...

Drobo is the last word in backup security. The Drobo S is a consumer-level five-bay enclosure for 3.5-inch SATA drives. Like all RAID drives, you can set it up with disk redundancy, meaning if a drive fails, you can remove and replace it without losing data. Its BeyondRAID technology means that unlike other RAID arrays, you can freely mix capacities without losing storage. You can even increase your disk space by removing the smallest HDD and replacing it with a bigger one.

WE LIKE...

Drobo has single- or dual-disk redundancy, so you can protect your data against a single or double drive failure, though the latter option sacrifices a little more capacity.

WE'D LIKE...

Thunderbolt connectivity would be a boon. Although this particular model isn't network-attached, others in the Drobo range, such as the Drobo FS and DroboPro, have this facility.

VALUE VERDICT

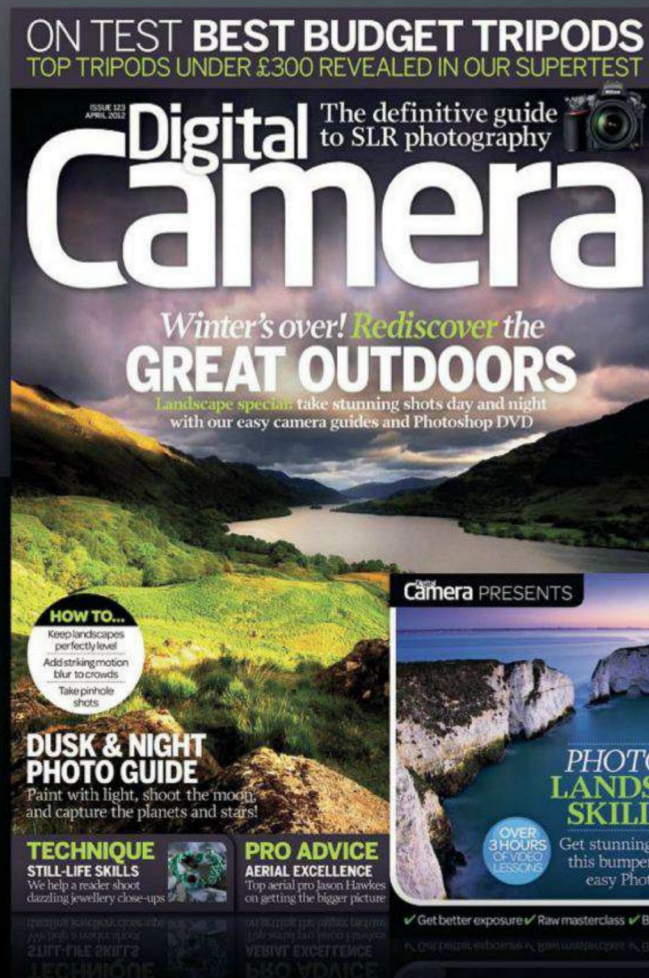
Drobos aren't cheap, but they're an incredible piece of technology that will last you for years. Well worth the price.

PRACTICAL Photoshop says

Power users and professionals who really value their data should definitely consider a Drobo.



Discover Britain's biggest and best photo magazine...



ON
SALE
NOW

Don't miss the packed April issue of Digital Camera
Make your landscapes look amazing with our **FREE DVD!**

Visit our website at www.digitalcameraworld.com

WorldMags.net

PRACTICAL
Photoshop
SENSATIONAL IMAGES MADE SIMPLE
P R E S E N T S

ESSENTIALS

YOUR PHOTOSHOP QUICKSTART GUIDE

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106 Introducing Photoshop

Find out which version is right for you and take a guided tour of the software

108 Image editing basics

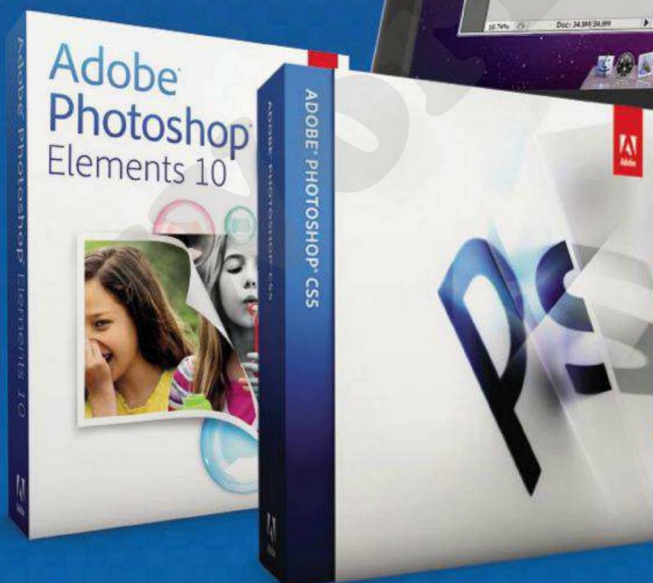
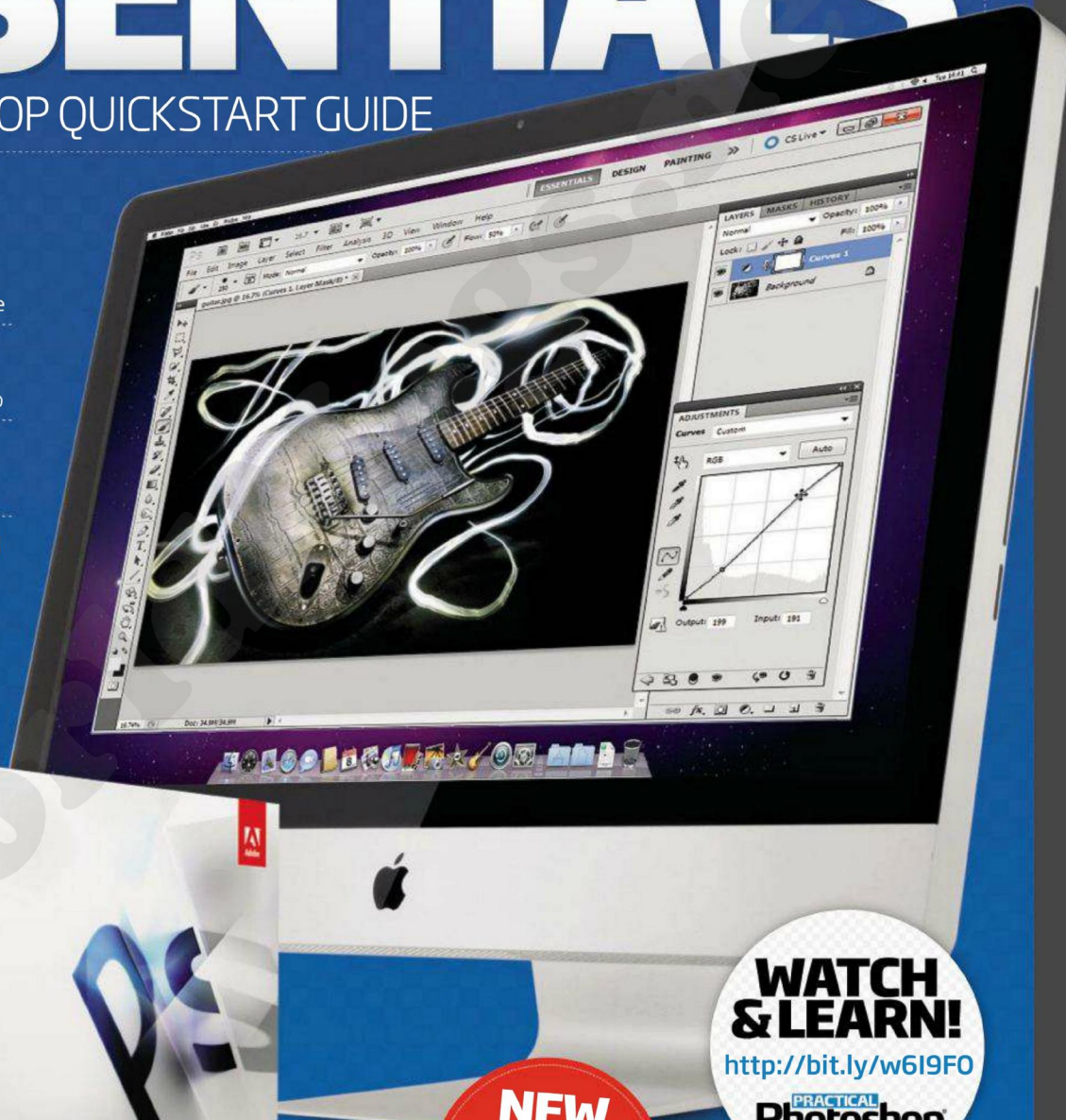
Discover the core skills you need to finesse any digital photo in Photoshop

110 Layers and Layer Masks

Get to grips with two of the most important elements of Photoshop

112 Advanced image editing

We explain why the extra power in Photoshop CS is ideal for digital art



**WATCH
& LEARN!**
<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>
PRACTICAL
Photoshop

**NEW
USERS!**
All you need to
get started is
right here

Whenever you see
this logo, you'll find
a supporting video
available to download!

Introducing Photoshop...

Just getting started with Photoshop? Discover exactly what it can do, why it's so powerful and which version is right for you with our guide

If you find the whole idea of using Photoshop to edit or enhance images slightly daunting, or just don't know where to begin, then you've come to the right place.

Over the next eight pages and on the accompanying videos, we'll give you an overview of what Photoshop can do and show you how to master some of its most useful tools in a way that's clear and easy to understand.

Photoshop essentially lets you edit, enhance and manipulate

images, seamlessly combine multiple images and add any number of creative effects.

At its most basic level it can be used to fine-tune things like exposure, colour and contrast in digital images (see page 109), but delve a bit deeper and you'll discover various features that let you create complex and highly creative digital works of art.

As you will see when you flick through this issue, how creative you can be is really only limited by your imagination.

ORIGINAL



With the basics mastered, you can start exploring Photoshop's other tools and really get creative

Photoshop's most basic tools provide quick, easy and fun ways to improve any kind of digital image

PHOTOSHOPPED

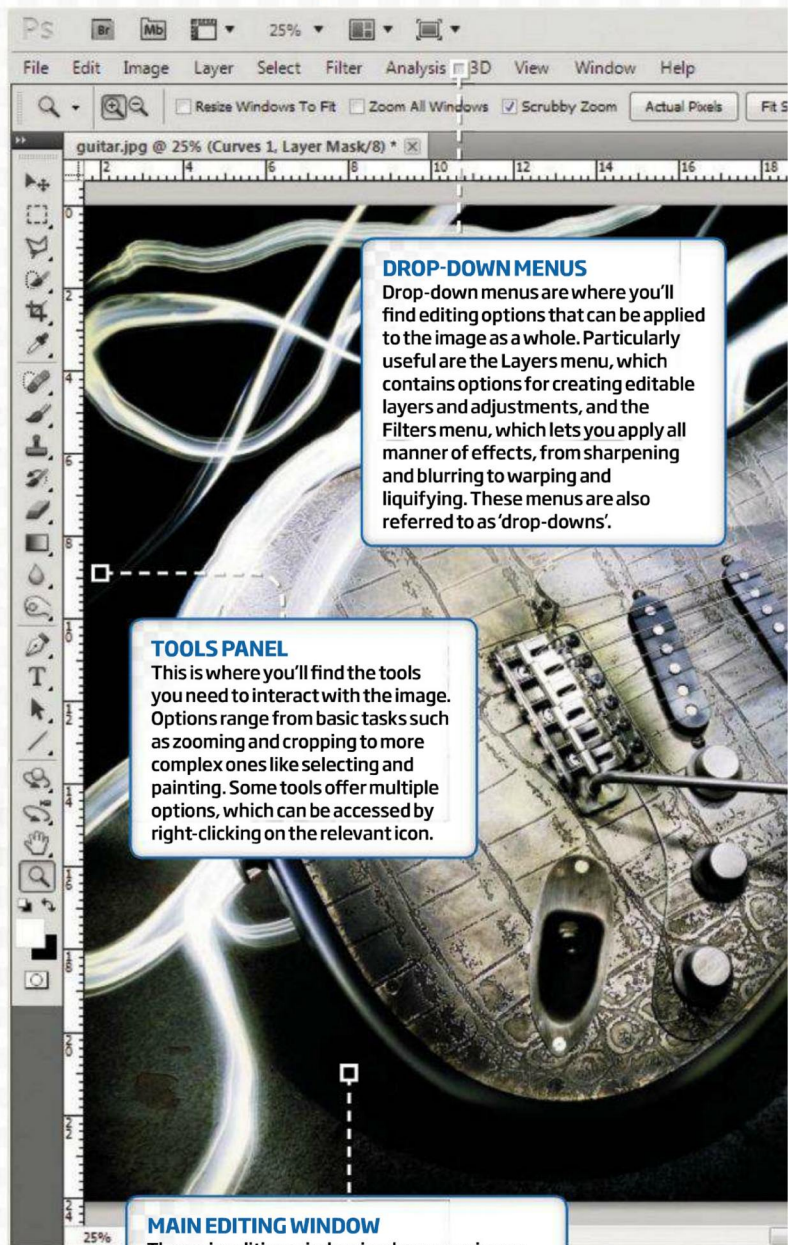


DID YOU KNOW?

Layers help to preserve your original image

▶ One of the features that makes Photoshop such a powerful creative tool and sets it apart from other image editing programs is that you can apply enhancements and effects to layers. Layers let you edit your image without affecting your original source file – any changes you make are in effect 'layered' on top. Without layers, any changes you make will be applied to the actual pixels of your source file and, once you save and close it, these changes will be permanent.

The Photoshop CS interface



DROP-DOWN MENUS

Drop-down menus are where you'll find editing options that can be applied to the image as a whole. Particularly useful are the Layers menu, which contains options for creating editable layers and adjustments, and the Filters menu, which lets you apply all manner of effects, from sharpening and blurring to warping and liquifying. These menus are also referred to as 'drop-downs'.

TOOLS PANEL

This is where you'll find the tools you need to interact with the image. Options range from basic tasks such as zooming and cropping to more complex ones like selecting and painting. Some tools offer multiple options, which can be accessed by right-clicking on the relevant icon.

MAIN EDITING WINDOW

The main editing window is where your image is displayed, and any changes you make to the image using the tools or drop-downs are visible here. You can press **Cmd/Ctrl+0** to fit the image in the window, **Cmd/Ctrl+1** to zoom to 100%, and the space bar to move around the image.

“ Delve a bit deeper into Photoshop and you'll discover various features that let you create complex and highly creative digital works of art ”

WATCH & LEARN!

<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>

PRACTICAL
Photoshop

PAINTING

PANEL BIN

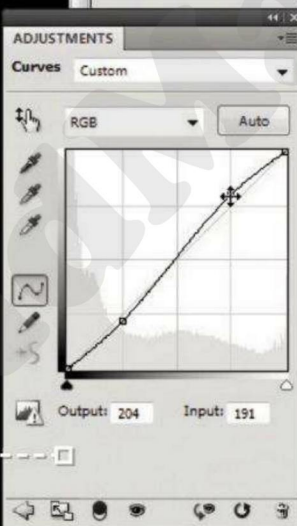
This is where you'll find the various editing panels that you'll need, such as Layers, Channels and Paths. The Layers Panel is the most useful and the one you'll tend to have open most of the time, given that layers form the basis of all advanced image editing. The icons at the bottom of this panel provide a shortcut to many of the commands in the Layers drop-down menu.

OPTIONS BAR

For every tool in the Tools Panel, there are various options that let you control more precisely how it behaves. For example, the Brush tool features a number of options that let you set brush parameters covering everything from size and texture to Flow and Opacity.

DIALOG BOX

A Dialog Box is a window that pops up when certain tools or commands are selected. It provides additional options that let you dictate the parameters of that particular tool or adjustment. Most of the drop-down commands have their own Dialog Boxes, and these often have extra options and drop-downs.



ESSENTIALS INTRODUCING PHOTOSHOP

CHOOSING A VERSION

WHAT VERSION OF PHOTOSHOP DO YOU NEED?



PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 10

PRICE £79 (\$120)

BEST FOR Amateur photographers who want to get the very best from their images on a

budget, and those wanting to try their hand at creating some basic digital artwork.

WE LIKE Guided edits and the user-friendly Dialog Boxes make Elements 10 the ideal starting point for Photoshop newcomers.

WE'D LIKE The key feature missing from Elements is a sophisticated Curves command. Curves lets you tweak shadows, mid-tones and highlights independently, with precision.



PHOTOSHOP CS5

PRICE £606 (\$650)

BEST FOR Demanding photographers who prefer to take full control of every aspect of the image-editing process, and

illustrators who want to create complicated and sophisticated digital art. Despite the hefty price tag, this is the version of Photoshop that we recommend readers use to achieve the best results.

WE LIKE The 'content aware' editing options that help fill in the gaps for you, and the Selective Adjustment brush in Camera Raw editor, which enables targeted Raw edits.

WE'D LIKE To be able to change the Blend Mode of multiple layers at the same time.



PHOTOSHOP CS5 EXTENDED

PRICE £887 (\$876)

BEST FOR Digital artists, illustrators and design professionals. This version offers all the editing and

compositing capabilities of CS5, plus some additional tools and features for creating 3D art and motion-based content.

WE LIKE Its powerful selection, painting and warping capabilities.

WE'D LIKE It's hard to see what more Adobe could include in the package.

INSTANT EXPERT

AFFORDABLE PHOTOSHOP

We recommend Photoshop CS5 but appreciate that £606 is a hefty price tag, even if it does compare favourably with some SLR lenses. Luckily, Adobe offers several ways to cut the cost. A subscription plan, where you pay £33.64 (\$35) per month when

you take out a 12-month contract, has just been launched (although this only grants you a temporary licence). A Student & Teacher Edition of CS5 Extended is also available for £190 (\$199). Find out if you qualify at <http://adobe.ly/h0PuIT>

EDITING MODES

Unlike CS5, Elements features a number of different editing modes, including the Quick Fix mode and the user-friendly Guided Edit mode. It also boasts tabs that allow you to organise, catalogue and keyword images. Improvements to these modes in the latest version include a stacking option to catalogue related shots, and a search option that enables you to find similar images, specific objects and even faces of individual people.

The Photoshop Elements interface

OPTIONS BAR

Many of the tools feature fewer or more limited options in Elements. For example, the Brush tool has fewer presets and is less customisable. The Smart Brush, on the other hand, is exclusive to Elements – it enables you to apply a variety of adjustments to areas as you paint over them, and Elements 10 boasts 30 new options.

CROP TOOL

One of the editing tools that's been updated in Elements 10 is the Crop tool, which now offers users the option to overlay a handy rule-of-thirds grid to assist with composition when cropping.

PROJECT BIN

Elements also features a Project Bin, which displays thumbnails of all the images that you have open, and enables you to switch between them quickly and easily. This is especially useful when combining images, but also has the disadvantage that it reduces the size of the main editing window.

ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

In CS5, you can choose from 18 different Adjustment Layers, while in Elements 9 you're limited to just 11. Among those missing are the Curves Adjustment Layer, which provides precise control over shadows, mid-tones and highlights; and the Black and White Adjustment Layer, which lets you dictate how different colours are converted to mono.

WATCH & LEARN!

<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>

PRACTICAL Photoshop

Image editing basics

Start improving your photos fast with this step-by-step guide to editing your images in Photoshop Elements

LAYER MASKS

Until version 9, Elements didn't feature Layer Masks, but their introduction allows for more flexibility when editing photos and creating more advanced imagery. It brings it much closer to the full version as you can mask out adjustments in selected areas (see this month's associated video files).

If you've got everything right when shooting – such as exposure, focusing and white balance – you might think your images don't need any editing. But chances are they'll still benefit from some tweaking in Photoshop.

When your camera captures a scene, it tries to create what it thinks is the best interpretation of that scene in terms of tone, colour, sharpening and so on – unless you're shooting in a Raw file format. It usually does a good job of

this, but it gives you no control over any of these elements, and what it comes up with is unlikely to be an accurate representation of the scene as you perceived it.

This is where Photoshop comes in. By giving you control over things like tone, colour and contrast, it enables you to fine-tune how your finished image will look.

Typically, shots straight out of the camera tend to be slightly flat, with muted colours and limited contrast. Photoshop lets you edit

the image so that it becomes more vibrant and punchy.

In this walkthrough, we'll show you six essential edits that can be applied to almost any image to give it a revitalising lift. We'll be using the latest version of Photoshop

Elements for this guide, given that it's primarily targeted at amateur photographers, but exactly the same principles apply when using Photoshop CS5, even if some of the menus and options are a little different in places.

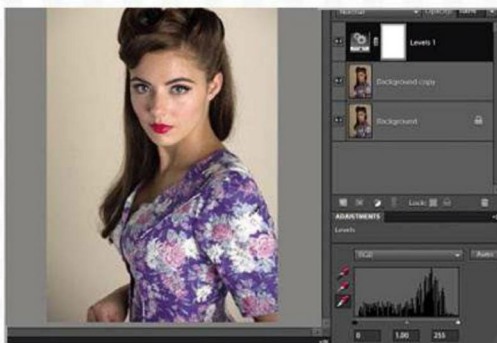
“ Photoshop lets you fine-tune how your final image will look, giving you complete control over things like tone, colour and contrast ”

Step-by-step Essential editing with Elements



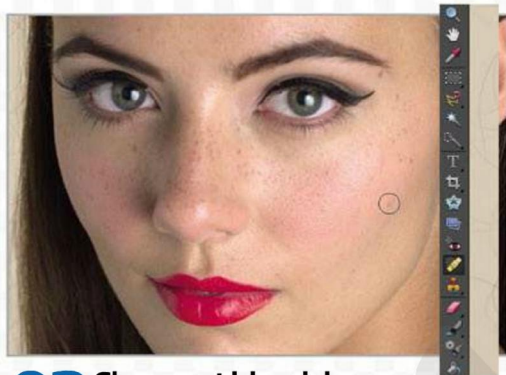
01 Adjust the exposure

The best way to evaluate and correct exposure problems is to create a Levels Adjustment Layer (Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Levels), and use the Shadows and Highlights sliders below the histogram to tweak these tones.



02 Tweak the colours

If the image has an unwanted colour cast - if it's been shot using the wrong white balance mode, for example - this can be corrected by selecting the white pipette in the Levels Dialog Box, and clicking on a part of the image that should be pure white.



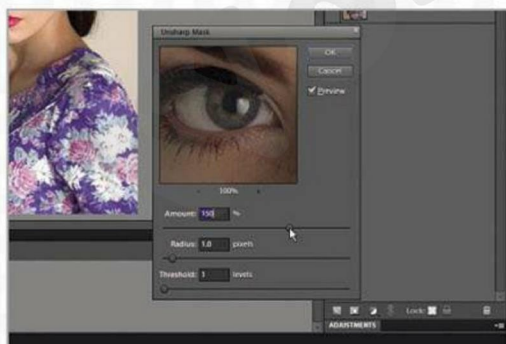
03 Clone out blemishes

Whether you're removing pimples from a portrait or sensor spots from a landscape, your first port of call should be the Spot Healing Brush, which evaluates surrounding pixels to clone out the blemish seamlessly. The Clone Stamp tool is also useful.



04 Crop in

Cropping couldn't be easier - simply grab the Crop tool from the Tools Panel, click and drag to select the whole image, and then drag in the corners to crop out any unwanted background. To rotate the crop, hover your mouse outside one of the corners and drag.



05 Sharpen up

Sharpening should always be done at the very end of the process, as sharpening works by boosting contrast along edges, so any edits made after you've sharpened may exaggerate the sharpening, making it look obvious. The key is to keep it subtle and not to over-sharpen.



06 Save it

Preserve your Adjustment Layers by saving your project as a Photoshop (.psd) or TIFF (.tif) file. The file size will be bigger than if you simply save it as a JPEG (.jpg), but you'll be able to go back and tweak individual layers at any time by double-clicking the cog in the layer thumbnail.

GENIUS TIP! GET EXTRA HELP WITH EDITING

If you want to familiarise yourself with the essential edits in Elements, the Guided Edit mode is arguably more effective than reading books or watching tutorials. It enables you to apply a range of basic edits and more advanced effects by using a step-by-step approach that introduces key Photoshop tools in an active context. Elements 10 boasts three new Guided Edit effects, including Orton, which adds an atmospheric glow to portraits, and Depth of Field, which enables you to blur out cluttered backgrounds using either a Radial Gradient tool, or by selecting the subject and then blurring out the area that isn't selected.

DID YOU KNOW? >>

Using the golden ratio

One of the other changes to the Crop tool in Elements 10 is that it's possible to overlay the golden rectangle on an image, which can help with composition. This rectangle can be described by quite complex mathematical equations, but it's essentially the width-to-height ratio that's thought to be most harmonious and pleasing to the human eye. The Ancient Greeks used it extensively in their building - the Parthenon in Athens is based on the Golden section - as did Renaissance painters.

Camera Raw explained

Discover how to guarantee the very best image quality by using Photoshop's powerful, built-in image converter – Camera Raw editor

When you shoot in JPEG format your camera compresses the file, resulting in an image that contains much less tonal and colour information than a so-called Raw file. Raw files, as the name suggests, contain every last pixel of tonal and colour information that was captured by your camera's sensor. As a result they boast much smoother tones – particularly in shadows, and wide expanses of colour, like skies – and if you need to adjust things like exposure and contrast, you can do so without worrying about the introduction of unwanted 'noise', which can be a real problem when editing JPEGs.

The disadvantage is that because this information hasn't been processed in-camera, images

appear flatter than they do in processed JPEGs, which means you have to do the processing yourself. This might sound daunting but Photoshop's Camera Raw editor is so easy to use, and its sliders are so intuitive, that once you've got the hang of them you'll never want to work with JPEGs again.

Compared with the standard editor, Camera Raw editor lets you fine-tune tone, colour and contrast, not to mention sharpening and noise, with a staggering degree of control. And what's more, because any edits you make are saved in a separate 'sidecar' file, your original Raw file is unaffected and you can go back to it and tweak things, or start again from scratch, at any time – just like a digital negative!

“ Photoshop's Camera Raw editor is so easy to use, and its sliders are so intuitive, once you've got the hang of them you'll never go back to JPEGs ”

JPEG FILE



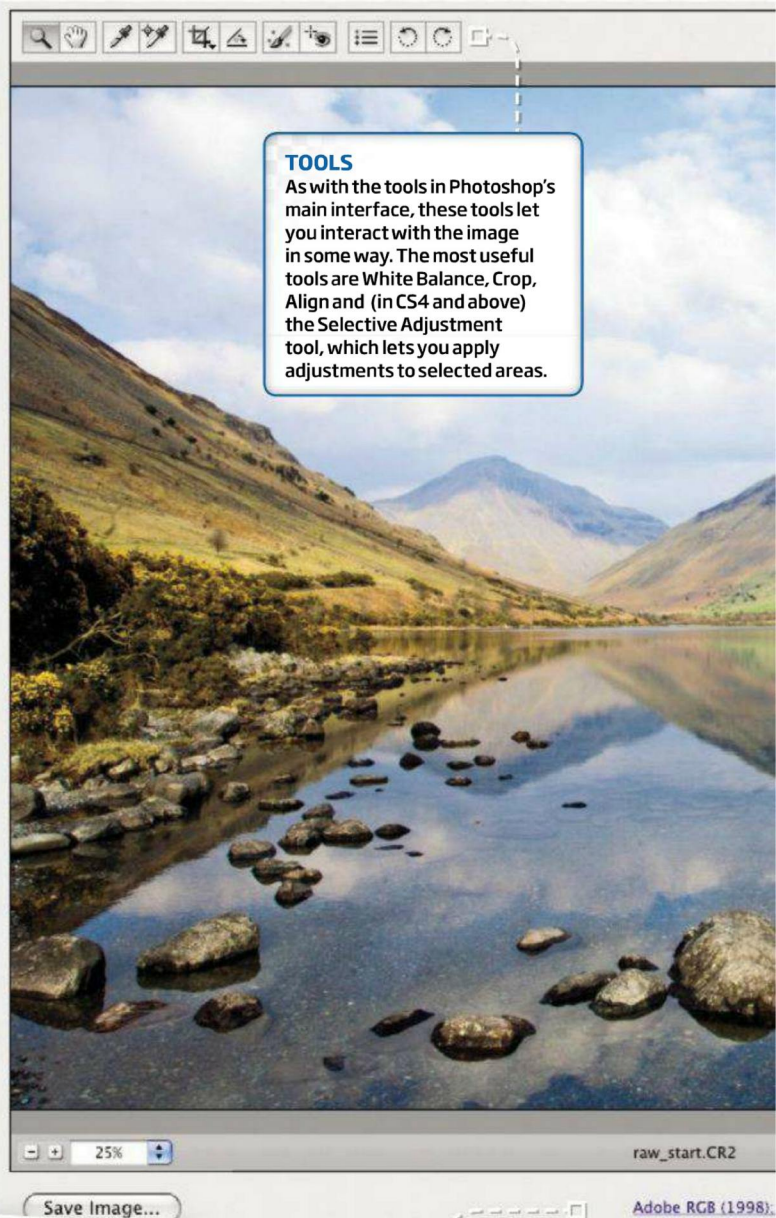
Working with Raw files also means you can retrieve more detail before 'noise' starts to creep into your images

RAW FILE



You can squeeze more detail out of a Raw file, resulting in images with smoother tones and stronger colours

The Camera Raw interface



TOOLS

As with the tools in Photoshop's main interface, these tools let you interact with the image in some way. The most useful tools are White Balance, Crop, Align and (in CS4 and above) the Selective Adjustment tool, which lets you apply adjustments to selected areas.

WORKFLOW SETTINGS

Click on the blue settings summary at the bottom of the Raw interface to access the Workflow settings. Here you can set things such as colour space, bit depth, and the size and resolution of your image (300dpi, or dots per inch, is the industry standard for most image editing and printing purposes).

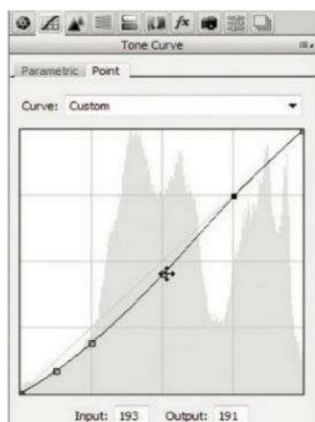
WATCH & LEARN!

<http://bit.ly/w6I9FO>

PRACTICAL
Photoshop

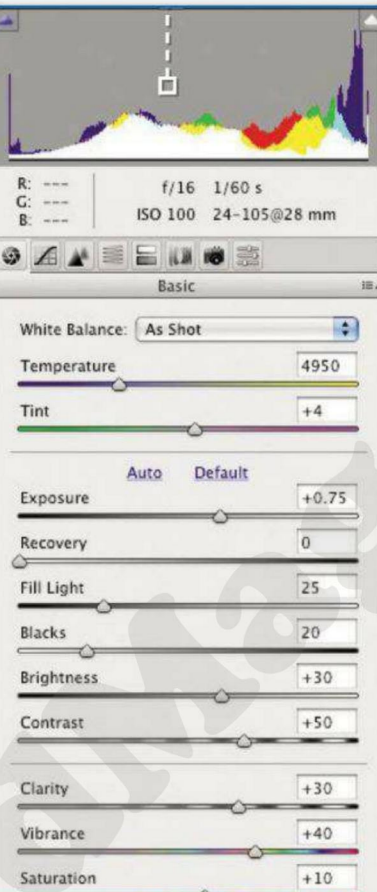
EDITING TABS

These tabs provide access to a variety of different editing panels. In addition to the basic panel, which features a variety of exposure, contrast and colour sliders, there are seven more tabs that let you fine-tune everything from sharpening and noise to the saturation and brightness of individual colours.



HISTOGRAM

This histogram is your first port of call when it comes to evaluating what adjustments need to be made in Raw. The small triangles at the top left and right are the Shadow and Highlight Clipping Warnings; clicking on these will reveal detail-free shadows or blown-out areas as patches of blue and red respectively.



OPEN IMAGE

Once you've made your Raw edits, you may want to make additional adjustments in the main interface, particularly if you want to combine multiple images or do anything creative; Open Image does just that. Cancel closes the image without saving your changes, and Done records the new settings but leaves the original Raw file intact.

Open Image

Cancel

Done

8 bit, 4368 by 2912 (12.7MP); 240 ppi

ESSENTIALS CAMERA RAW EXPLAINED

INSTANT EXPERT

HIGH DYNAMIC RANGE (HDR)

One of the challenges of capturing high-contrast scenes is getting the exposure right: expose for the bright lights and the background will be too black, expose for the background and the lights will blow out. The traditional workaround was to simultaneously take several shots of the same scene at different exposures and hope at least one would offer a suitable compromise between the two extremes.

Thanks to CS5's Merge to HDR option (File>Automate>Merge to HDR) you no longer need to compromise. By combining a number of different exposures you can create a composite image with a High Dynamic Range (HDR), which maximises detail in the shadows, mid-tones and highlights to create a hyper-realistic image with eye-popping detail and super-saturated colours. HDR isn't to everyone's taste, but done well it can be quite striking. Elements' Photomerge Exposure feature (File>Merge>Photomerge Exposure) does much the same, but offers fewer options.

EXPOSED FOR HIGHLIGHTS



EXPOSED FOR SHADOWS



HDR IMAGE



INSTANT EXPERT

PHOTOSHOP LIGHTROOM

One version of Photoshop we didn't mention on page 107 is Lightroom 3 (£237.60/\$299). Lightroom lets you tackle both the organisation and editing of Raw images from the same interface and without needing Bridge – so it's ideal for serious photographers who just want to 'develop' Raw files, but not suitable for advanced image manipulation or digital art.

Advanced image editing

If you want to apply heavy manipulation to your images or create digital art, you'll need the additional power Photoshop CS provides

Photoshop is the software of choice for most professional and non-professional photographers, but using it simply to edit and enhance individual photos is only the tip of the digital iceberg.

Beyond the standard photo-editing features, it boasts a vast array of more creative tools and filters. As with photo editing, layers are the key. Being able to generate dozens of different layers – and mask out selected parts of these layers – is what enables digital

artists to build up increasingly complicated and sophisticated images in much the same way as a painter might build up colour, texture and detail with oil paints.

The difference is that digital artists don't have to wait hours for pixels to dry and, more importantly, the layers in Photoshop files are independent, can be turned on or off or moved up and down, and are 100% editable, even if you close a file down and return to it at a later date. Let's look at the additional features available in CS5...

“ The difference between traditional and digital art is that you don't have to wait for pixels to dry and layers can be independently adjusted ”

You'll need Photoshop CS if you want to create...

COMPOSITE IMAGES



Masks are the key to Photoshop composites. They let you apply an adjustment, such as blurring, to a whole image and then 'mask out' the adjustment in selected areas so only non-selected areas are affected. Masks can be applied with pinpoint accuracy, made semi-transparent, and because they're independent of the layer, edited at any time.

Photoshop CS power features



PEN TOOL

One of the key differences between CS and Elements as far as digital artists are concerned is the Pen tool, which lets users make more precise selections and cut-outs than the standard selection tools.

ADVANCED TEXT EDITING

Elements has a basic text tool but it's not flexible enough to satisfy serious illustrators. Features like kerning (adjusting the space between letters) and other advanced formatting options are not possible in Elements.

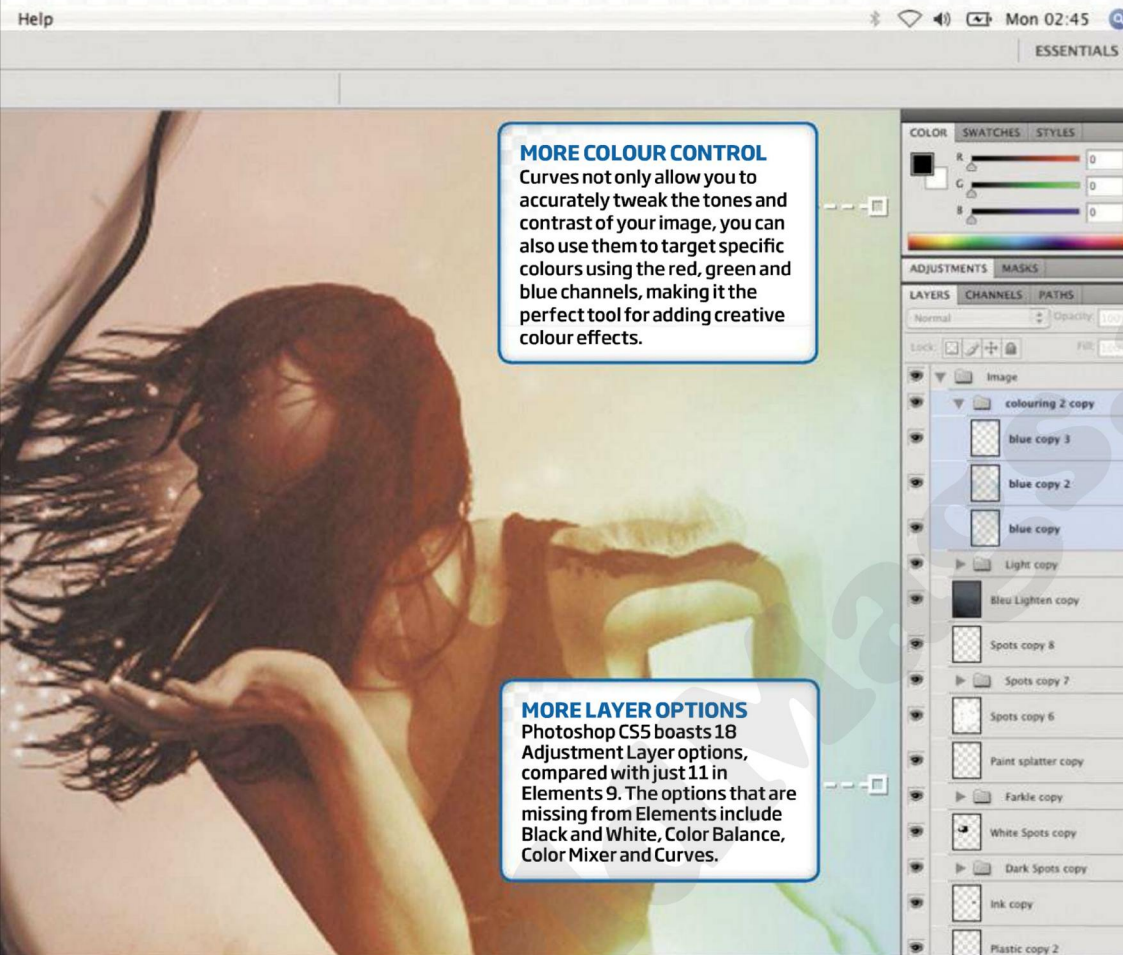
EXTRA CREATIVE OPTIONS

Photoshop CS5 features a number of advanced graphics and web options that are absent in Elements 9, including Curves and custom actions.

LEVELS AND CURVES



Photoshop provides a number of ways to making post-capture adjustments, but the Levels and Curves controls are two of the most popular and powerful. Both of these adjustments can be applied as Adjustment Layers, so it's possible to protect your original image, revisit your editing and then try some alternative treatments.



MORE COLOUR CONTROL

Curves not only allow you to accurately tweak the tones and contrast of your image, you can also use them to target specific colours using the red, green and blue channels, making it the perfect tool for adding creative colour effects.

MORE LAYER OPTIONS

Photoshop CS5 boasts 18 Adjustment Layer options, compared with just 11 in Elements 9. The options that are missing from Elements include Black and White, Color Balance, Color Mixer and Curves.

GENIUS TIP! CONSIDER A GRAPHICS TABLET

A mouse is fine for editing and enhancing photos, and can even be used to create basic composites of multiple images (when combining two or more exposures, for example). However, for those who want to get more creative, a tablet is a worthwhile investment. A tablet is essentially a touch-sensitive digital sketch pad that comes with a 'pen', or stylus. With the help of the Pen and Brush tool settings in Photoshop CS, the stylus can be used to create an infinite variety of lines, strokes and textures. It even behaves like a pencil and brush in that the harder you press, the more definite the mark on the screen. The industry leader is Wacom (www.wacom.com), which produces a range of tablets of different sizes. Prices start from about £40 (\$65) and go up to over £1800 (\$2900).



DIGITAL PAINTING



Photoshop's painting capabilities got a big lift when CS5 introduced bristle brushes and the Mixer Brush. Bristle brushes try to simulate how real painting brushes have bristles of varying length and softness, while the Mixer Brush lets you pretend that you're painting on a still-wet surface and mix and blend colours as you work.

FILTER EFFECTS



Of the 100 or so filters that are on offer in Photoshop, some are more useful than others. Some filters can be rather harsh, but others are well worth investigating. Here, we've used the Motion Blur filter to add excitement to an image of a racing car. This is a very effective way of adding a sense of energy and movement to your digital shots.



Stuffed Birds

London-based photographer Natalie Dybisz, aka Miss Aniela, shares the story behind a shot taken at one of her regular fashion photography workshops

“*Stuffed Birds* was created during one of my Fashion Shoot Experiences in London in November 2011.

I was influenced by fashion photographer Tim Walker, and inspired by some quirky birds in cases at our chosen location – a prop-filled factory floor – to produce something semi-surreal.

I wanted to shoot the model with the birds, but wasn't sure exactly how to make her interact with them. When I started editing

the image, darkening the whole picture drastically changed the mood, giving an unreal look to the model even before I had airbrushed her skin.

In Photoshop, I made the birds come 'alive', placing them around the model as if they were animated.

I enjoy doing weird and creative things in post-production to make my images more imaginative, but never like to approach them with the attitude that it can just be 'corrected' later. This gives me the

confidence to go with whatever happens. With this image, I was happy with the placement of the cases, the gaze of the model, and the level of the camera – but all of these aspects changed from one shot to the next, so I was careful to take lots of pictures to make sure I could choose the best later on.

I've only used very simple Photoshop tools here: altering Curves and Levels, airbrushing her skin with the Clone Stamp and Dodge tools, and using the Pen

and Feathering tools to make new layers from the birds and moving them into different places, making Layer Masks to blend them in.

It was important to shoot another close-up of the birds, so I had a high-quality picture from which to source these.

I always keep an open mind in both the shooting and editing of an image. The main cloud to creativity is negativity, and I too often impose this onto myself by thinking something won't work. But if you don't shoot it, nothing gets made. Some of my very favourite images have an accidental quality, or at least, were made when I just tried to do something, even though I might not have felt the conviction at the time.”



See more of Miss Aniela's work at www.missaniela.com, or to join one of her Fashion Shoot experiences in London, go to www.fashionshootexperience.com

GENIUS TIP! SHARPEN EYES

► “The eyes are a key place for a viewer to be drawn to in any composition. In the example of *Stuffed Birds*, I sharpened the model's eyes by drawing around her eye area and making a selection before copying it to a new layer. This subsequent new layer meant that I could work on reducing the Opacity of the effect afterwards if necessary. Then I used the Unsharp Mask for some additional detail that really enhanced the catch lights in the eyes.”

Next issue of Practical Photoshop on sale 5 April 2012 at all good newsagents

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🔍 style

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