

PHOTOSHOP 1: Filters and Adjustments

This tutorial takes you through the process of downloading an image, modifying its size and appearance in Photoshop, and dividing it into smaller images.

Step 1: Go to <http://sorapure.net/50e/design/images.html>. Choose one of the large images and download it to your desktop.

Open Photoshop and open the image that you just put on your desktop (File > Open).

Photoshop Interface

The **Menu Bar** across the top of the screen has nine menus: File, Edit, Image, Layer, Select, Filter, View, Window, and Help. Some menu commands have sub-menus, indicated by an arrow next to the command. Some commands have keyboard shortcuts, as indicated next to the name of the command in the menu.

The **Toolbox** has all of the basic tools; some tools have a tiny arrow in the lower right hand corner that reveals additional options for the tool (for instance, “under” the Pencil tool is the Brush tool). Hold your cursor over each tool to see its name and its keyboard shortcut. Toward the bottom of the toolbox are color swatches showing the foreground and background colors. Clicking on one of these swatches will pop up a color selection dialog box. The tiny arrow to the top right allows you to swap foreground and background colors. The tiny black and white swatch symbol to the lower left allows you to reset the colors to the default of black foreground and white background.

The **Palettes** are arranged on the right side of the screen. More palettes are available under the Windows menu at the top of the screen. The palettes are movable and can be docked together; some palettes are grouped together by default. The most important palettes to have open for this exercise are Layers and History.

Step 2: Arrange your workspace so that you have the Layers, History, and Info palettes open, along with the Toolbox. Close all other palettes.

Resizing and Cropping

The image you downloaded from the Web is purposely larger than what you need, so one of the first steps is to either make the entire image smaller or to crop some portion of the image.

To resize, go to Image > Image Size. The width and height of the image appear in the resulting dialog box (select pixels as the unit of measurement). Toward the bottom of the dialog box is a Constrain Proportions check box. You usually want to have this checked in order to avoid causing any distortion in the image.

Step 3: Type in a new height for the image; with Constrain Proportions checked you should automatically get a proportional new width as well.

After you’ve successfully resized the image, use the History palette to bring the image back to its original size.

To crop the image, select the Crop tool which is located in the Toolbox, beneath the Lasso tool. Draw a square on the canvas indicating that part of the image that you want to preserve.

After releasing the Crop tool, you can resize the preserved portion of the image by dragging on the small squares at the edge of the crop. Hit Enter or click on another tool to apply the crop. To undo the crop, use the History palette or Control-Z (PC) or Command-Z (Mac).

Step 4: Working with the full-size image, use the Crop tool to crop a portion of the image.

Use the Info palette to make sure that the size of the image after the crop will be 400 pixels wide by 100 pixels high.

Saving and File Format Options

The first time you save a file (File > Save or File > Save As), a dialog box appears with options. Under the Format menu, note that you can save the file in a variety of formats. The two formats that we'll be working with in class are "Photoshop" and "JPEG"; their differences are very important.

- **Photoshop:** this is Photoshop's native file format (.psd extension). Saving a file in Photoshop format preserves layers and other information, allowing you to go back to the file later and make changes to the image.
- **JPEG:** this is the standard format for photographs (.jpg extension). Saving a file in JPEG format will flatten all of the layers and will compress the graphic, reducing its quality somewhat. The first time you save a graphic in JPEG format, a dialog box will ask for a compression level; a higher compression level will give you a better quality graphic, but also a larger file.

The best strategy is to save your file as a Photoshop file until you're finished working on it, and then to save the file as a JPEG. Each time you save the file as a JPEG file you lose some quality due to compression. Remember that to save a file as a JPEG, you need to select JPEG from the dropdown Format menu in the dialog box that you get when you select File > Save As.

Step 5: Save the image as a Photoshop file. Be sure to select "Photoshop" in the dropdown format menu and to give the file a name with a .psd extension. Save it on the desktop.

Layers

Photoshop derives much of its power from the fact that it allows you to create images in layers. It's very important to keep an eye on your Layers palette and to use layers effectively.

Essentially, layers are like transparent sheets; when you paint on one sheet, you can still see through the unpainted areas to the sheet below. In addition, the work you do on one layer doesn't have any effect on the work you do on other layers. This is very helpful because you can modify parts of your graphic while leaving other parts untouched.

It's important to know which layer you're working on; that layer will be selected (its color will be blue) in the Layers Palette. The Layers palette lists all layers, layer sets, and layer

effects in an image. You can accomplish many tasks—such as creating, hiding, displaying, copying, and deleting layers—using the buttons in the Layers palette.

- To **create a layer**, select the New Layer button (next to the trash can) in the Layers palette.
- To **name a layer**, double click on its current name (probably “Layer 1”) and type in the new name.
- To **duplicate a layer**, select the layer and drag it onto the New Layer button.
- To **delete a layer**, select the layer by clicking on it and then click on the trash can (or drag the layer into the trash can) at the bottom of the Layers palette.

Step 6: Rename the current layer from “Background” to “original”. Duplicate this layer (and notice that this duplicate is automatically named “original copy”—you can rename it if you like).

As you create an image in Photoshop, it’s wise to work in layers; that is, put each item on its own separate layer. The reason for doing this is that when you apply layer styles, actions, and filters to a layer, these operations affect everything on that layer. Keeping separate parts of your graphic on separate layers gives you more control. You can make layers invisible to see what the entire graphic would look like without that layer, and you can lock layers to prevent any accidental changes from occurring:

- To **make a layer visible/invisible**, click on the eye icon to the left of the layer.
- To **lock or unlock a layer**, click on the lock icon at the top of the Layers palette.

You can also arrange layers on top of or below one another, and you can adjust the opacity of a layer so that layers beneath it are visible.

- To **move a layer** so that it appears on top of or below another layer, click on that layer and drag it to a new position in the Layers palette.
- To **adjust the opacity of a layer**, click on that layer and use the opacity scale on the top middle of the Layers palette.

Step 7: Lock the “original” layer and turn off its visibility.

Filters

Filters are used to achieve different kinds of artistic effects. Go to the Filter menu to view the categories of filters and to select from the sub-menus within each category. Note that selecting most filters will pop up a dialog box that gives you additional options for the filter. As you make selections in these dialog boxes, you can see how the image changes in response.

Step 8: Experiment with filters and their settings by applying different filters to the “original copy” layer of the image. Use Edit > Undo after each filter to undo what you’ve just done. Alternately, if you find a filter that you like and you’ve created an effect that you want to save, you can stop working on that layer and make another duplicate layer from the original layer for you to work on.

Note that some filters present you with a different interface than others. For now, you should avoid the Extract and Pattern Maker filters, as well as the Video filters and Distort > Displace. You should try out the Liquify filter, though, for some interesting and fairly easy effects.

Adjustments

Under Image > Adjustments, you have options for altering the colors in a layer. You can adjust the distribution of dark and light tones in the layer, the color balance, contrast, brightness, hue, saturation, and other color-related features. The options I use most often are Levels, Color Balance, Brightness/Contrast, and Hue/Saturation.

Step 9: In the Layers palette, select the layer you want to work on; turn off the visibility of all of the other layers. Experiment with different color adjustments using the options under Image > Adjustments.

Saving

Save your file in Photoshop format (.psd) and FTP it to your UMail or other account.