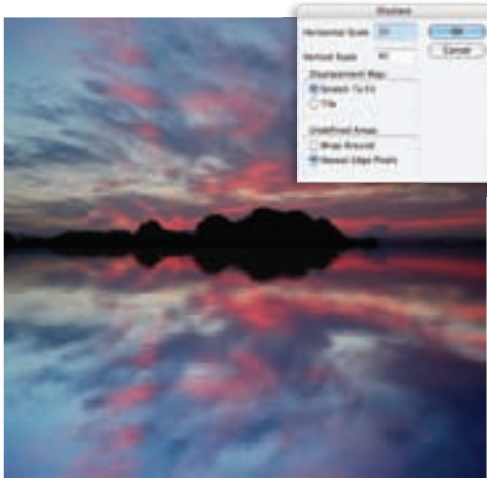


Helpdesk

Make Photoshop problems a thing of the past and let us help you with those creative headaches **BY ADAM SMITH**



MAKING WAVES

I am one of those persistent Photoshop enthusiasts fumbling in the dark, looking to learn cool new effects. I've had a lot of success with my experiments and am now interested in creating my own realistic water effects. It's something I have been interested in since I thought of an image I can use it in.

Can you offer any best practices in creating this effect? I am sure you're the best people to ask, because the magazine is such a great source of education.

Rachael, Milton Keynes

Of course we can help, Rachael. There are a few alternative ways to create this effect, so we tried them out, and found this one the most useful and, importantly, easy to follow. First open up a new document and then select Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Set your Amount to 13-15%, Distribution to Uniform, and activate Monochromatic. Now select Filter>Blur>Motion Blur, at an Angle of 3 degrees, 50 pixels Distance. Choose Filter>Sketch>Base Relief and set Detail to 15, Smoothness to 3 and Light Direction to Bottom. Before saving as a PSD file, use the Perspective Transform tool – Edit>Transform – expanding the width of the bottom of your image to between 300-400%, according to the image perspective.

Next, open up your image and double the height of your Canvas – Edit>Canvas Size – then duplicate the image. Use the Horizontal function, choosing Flip

Vertical. Now manoeuvre the images together at the edges. Create a new layer, filling it with an appropriate tone (bluish), then activate your duplicated image layer and select Filter>Blur>Motion Blur, setting it to 90 degrees, 50 pixels Distance. Now add a layer mask (at the foot of the Layers palette) to this layer, select the Gradient Tool, set at 20-30% and apply it to the layer mask.

Finally, activate this layer and select Distort>Displace. It's imperative that you saved your water effect as a PSD or you won't be able to apply it as a displacement map. Set your value appropriately, remembering that for best effects the Horizontal Scale value should always be 50% of the Vertical Scale value. Also set your displacement map to Stretch to Fit and Undefined Edges to Repeat Edge Pixels. Play with Layers upon completion for complementary exposure effects.

REWRITE

Hi *Advanced Photoshop* team members. I'm writing to you more out of laziness than desperation. But seriously, I'm an enthusiastic digital creative with a hand in freelance graphics. I love to use Photoshop, for layering and efficiency reasons. There seems to be a quick way to do anything once you have the know-how.

However, being an enthusiastic graphic designer I'm partial to applying typography. The only problem with this is that when you're working with layers of text, having to toggle

through layers and use the awkward Text Type tool to rectify or make changes can slow me down. Any ideas on how to speed this up?

Jacob, San Diego

You're right Jacob, Photoshop does have the knack of offering quick ways to do most things once the user knowledge is acquired and understood. The resolution to your problem is such a simple and quick one that it's often overlooked.

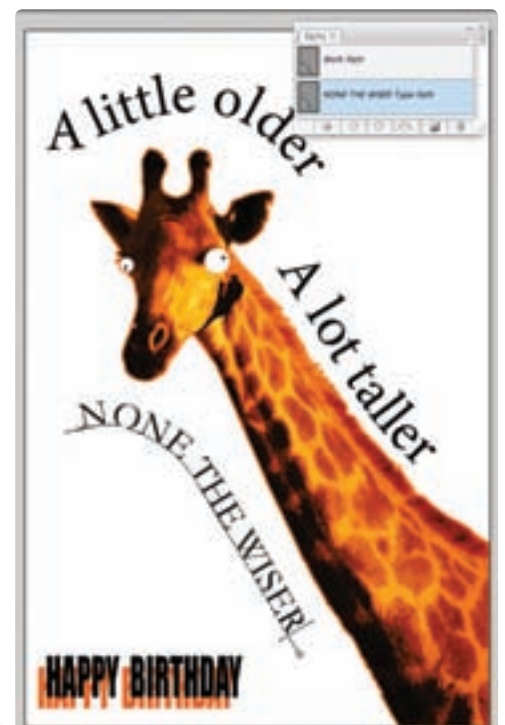
Since Photoshop 7.0, a word-based feature has been present called Find and Replace Text. By selecting Edit>Find and Replace Text, you can simply write in the 'Find What' box the word you want to edit, then write the word you want it replaced with in the 'Change To' box. Now click Find Next and the program searches and highlights the found examples. You then can change just the found words or all occurrences.

TYPE ON A PATH

Hi *Advanced Photoshop* team. I am a regular Photoshop user and use it a lot to produce birthday cards and keepsakes that I then sell to



QUICK AND EASY: The Find and Replace Text function does exactly what it says on the tin



friends and small retailers. It's fun and a great bit of income.

At the moment though, I'm a bit stuck because I'm producing a more intricate design where the text has to follow the edges of a figure. I have tried positioning the letters individually around the figure, but it's time-consuming and awkward. Is there a quicker way a self-taught user can do such a thing?

Namika, Orlando

If you have Photoshop CS2, this shouldn't be much of a problem, Namika. Those familiar with Illustrator packages will recognise the Text on a Path function. Begin by selecting your Pen Tool from the Tool bar and setting it to the Paths Pen function. Now apply your desired path or shape, and once finished make sure the path is active in the Paths palette. Now simply select your Type Tool, distinguish the size and font, and position the tool's pointer over the path. This pointer will change to the Type on a Path pointer, allowing you to do just that.

CUSTOMISE AND EXERCISE

I'm one digital creative who's all about speed and efficiency. I have been using Photoshop since version CS2, and although self-taught have pride in my work and am starting to develop a freelance career with some of my illustrations. I know there are these wonderful shortcut functions in Photoshop that allow instant access, but there don't seem to be many (that I know of) for the Filter functions. I use certain Sketch filters frequently and would love to access them quicker.

Tommy, Pennsylvania

Well, we're afraid to say it, but there are no shortcuts applicable to the Filter effects in Photoshop, Tommy. But that doesn't mean you can't designate some yourself. You didn't really think we'd leave you hanging did you? All you have to do is open up Photoshop and then select Window>Workspace. The option you are looking for is called Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus, then click the Keyboard Shortcuts tab, top left. Here you have access to all Photoshop's functions and can easily apply a shortcut to any, ranging from Filters to Viewing options. Just be aware that Photoshop only has a certain number of shortcuts to allocate and you may replace others. Ctrl+Cmd/Alt+key should give you a few new options.

SPEED UP WORKFLOW:
Create your own shortcuts using the Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus dialog



HDR

I am just beginning my venture into digital photography and am taking the whole thing very seriously, looking to perhaps obtain some freelance commissions if I'm lucky. A lot of people have been giving me some pointers, but I thought I'd go straight to the top and ask for your opinion.

I've heard that the HDR functions on Photoshop CS3 offer great visual quality and are easy to use. Is this true? Is this something I should consider and is it worth splashing out on the CS3 package?

Jill, Worcester

Well Jill, the 32-bit function of HDR in CS3 certainly does set itself apart when it comes to photographic quality. However, there are some things you should consider before using it. Of course, Photoshop tools make functions as simple as possible for users, but when using HDR remember that it's a sensitive option so you need consideration and patience. As a photographer, there is a lot of pre-production to consider.

Basically, what you will need to do is capture a series of regular images shot at different exposures that can be merged together. The best way to do this is to set up your tripod, capture in RAW file format and utilise your digital camera's +/- EV options.

It will be best if you simply manually set this Exposure Value when taking your photographs, and you can then obtain the required six or seven images which can be best used with the HDR Photoshop option. Increasing this value when shooting is suitable for underexposed images, while decreasing is suitable for overexposed images, and so you'll find that some of the images in your sequence may look shocking. However, don't worry, because HDR takes all the best bits and makes one really good image!

Also, if you have shot in RAW you will need to process your images into PSD or TIFF before merging. And using the same settings for whatever your RAW converter is will make for better merging.

In all, it's an innovative function, and this along with all Photoshop's other photo-editing functions makes it a piece of software that's well worth purchasing.



HELPDESK

CALL FOR QUESTIONS

Want help with Photoshop?

Send your emails to us at:

advancedpshop@imagine-publishing.co.uk

or post a message on our forum board at

www.advancedphotoshop.co.uk/forum.

Remember to specify whether you're using a PC or Mac and the version number of your edition of Photoshop.