

Helpdesk

TOP
TEN

We recap and resolve the most-asked Photoshop problems just for you. From calibration to customisation, it's all put to rest upon these pages **BY ADAM SMITH**

1 PRINT COLOUR ACCURACY

How do I resolve colour inaccuracies at the printing stage of my design workflow for perfect results every time?

Almost every time this problem will be due to poor monitor colour correction. Calibration can be achieved effortlessly by investing in easy-to-use monitor colour correction tools such as Pantone huey, which automatically adjusts the colour of your monitor. All you have to do is follow a step-by-step installation guide that works similarly for both Mac and PC platforms. The huey measures the ambient light in the room, once initiating the Room Light Monitoring feature. You are also supplied with a choice of colour presets, accessed from the Preferences dialog icon that appears on your toolbar. Step-by-step guides on internal management of calibration can be found at www.computer-darkroom.com.

2 PHANTOM FILTERS

Is there any trick or function that allows you to utilise filter effects in Photoshop when in RGB mode?

We are aware that this can become a problem as many of you have found, having to work in RGB only for the colours to change on-screen due to CMYK conversion. First, consider what output format your work is being produced for. If it is an on-screen image, CMYK conversion is already redundant so don't do it.



DOWNSIZE: Using a quarter less memory, this process serves as time efficient for those working on large size print projects



MAC SPECIFIC: Mac users can access a preference panel after installation, allowing them to alter settings for calibration

If your work is print-based, then there is an option to resolve this issue. With your image still set to RGB mode, select View>Proof Setup (Ctrl+Y) from the main options bar above. By selecting Working CMYK from the options you can access filter effects, yet all colour application will be registered as CMYK on-screen, so you can be assured of how it will look at conversion. The option also decreases file size, using a quarter less memory.

3 CUSTOMISING PHOTOSHOP

There are many shortcuts for many functions in Photoshop. Which specifically apply to filter effects?

A common misconception is that there is a shortcut for everything in Photoshop, but unfortunately this

SAVE SOME TIME: By setting your own shortcuts, you're sure to improve the efficiency of your workflow



SPECIAL TREATMENT: The Fill Path command also offers user options such as Feather and Blend Mode for diverse effects

isn't so. However, shortcuts can be assigned at any time. Simply select Window>Workspace, accessing the Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus options. Select the Keyboard Shortcuts tab, top left, and you'll have access to all of Photoshop's functions. You'll be able to easily apply a shortcut to any command, from filters to viewing options. Just be aware that Photoshop only has a certain amount of shortcuts to allocate and you may replace others. Ctrl/Cmd+Alt/Opt+'+' should give you a few, new options.

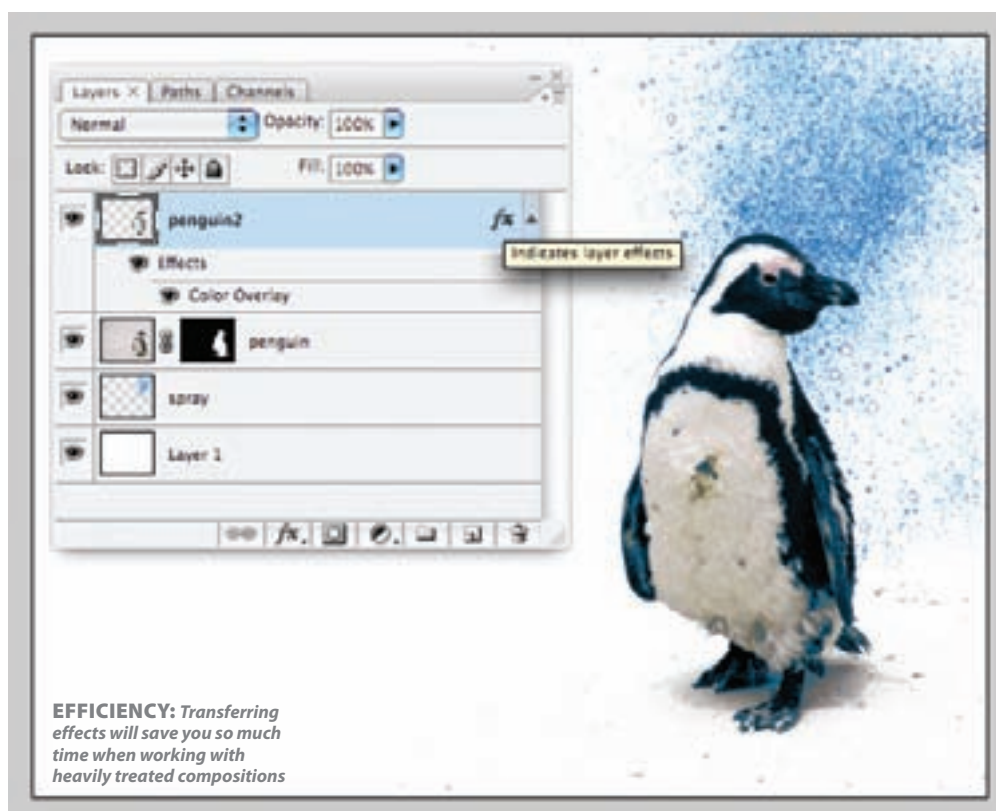
4 PEN TOOLS

After applying a Shape tool, is there any way of changing this into a path selection and vice versa?

Unfortunately, not to our knowledge. However, for all intensive purposes it's often best to simply have set and utilise the Paths Pen tool, accessible from the main toolbar. With this you can create active selection that can be saved and then applied as a Stroke Path to create line, or alternatively you can select the Fill option from the same accessed drop menu. This acts very much like the Layers Fill command and once applied will create the desired solid shape just like the Shapes Pen tool.

5 SCRIPTED

Is there a way of exporting multiple layers individually from a single image other than hiding all layers but one at a time and using Save As to separate?



EFFICIENCY: Transferring effects will save you so much time when working with heavily treated compositions

Saving multiple files separately is a job for Photoshop Scripts. These are a set of varied options and functions that all Photoshop users should really familiarise with. But we'll simply offer you the specific solution. With your file open and all layers visible, proceed by selecting File>Scripts>Export Layer to Files. Next, simply browse for your required destination (probably best to create specific folders first), pick a prefix name and select what file format you require. Once you visit this newly created folder you will find all your layers saved separately and accordingly.

6 LAYER STYLES

When working on multiple layered images is there any way of copying specific layer styles from one layer to another, without having to re-enter working values?

There are a few ways of doing this, which are quick to utilise. Begin by applying your layer style, be it Gradient Overlay, Overlay Color, etc, to the first layer. You'll now notice that an 'f' icon appears docked in your layer. To replicate this Layer Style you can Ctrl-click the treated layer, selecting Copy Layer Styles. Select the layer you wish to transfer your style to, Ctrl-click and select Paste Layer Style. Alternatively, you could always Alt-drag your 'f' icon to the desired layer.

7 3D FONTS

Is there a simple way of creating 3D text without the trials and tribulations of using the Shape and Transform tools?

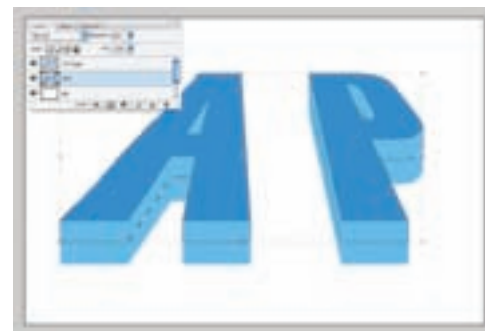
First of all, apply your text with the Text tool from the main toolbar onto your canvas. Ctrl-click this text layer and select Rasterize Type from the drop options. Select Edit>Transform>Perspective and adjust accordingly to fit the text into your design. Duplicate this layer and drop it beneath the first before Ctrl-clicking this copy layer's thumbnail. This will create a selection and then all you have to do is press Alt and direction key to duplicate 1 pixel at a time until you have produced a 3D font that looks like the image in the top-right of this page. You can then add layer styles to give it a more professional finish.

8 PREFERRED PREFERENCE

Is there a way of recording a concise logging of tools and applications within your working process without having to write them down separately?

Simply resolve such a dilemma by selecting your Preferences options. This is accessed by selecting Edit>Preferences in Windows and Photoshop>Preferences>General in Mac OS. In the General Preferences click the History Log box to activate the Save Log Items To options. You'll be presented with Metadata, Text File and Both. Essentially you'll need to select Metadata, and change your Edit Log Items to Detailed. This will embed all the specific application info you need in your file information, all you need to do to access this information is select File>File Info>History.

BIT EXTRA: You can apply gradients and other layer styles for good effects



9 PERFECT PIXELS

Is there an easy way to stop Photoshop brushstrokes aliasing when trying to create pixel art?

Although aliasing is there to help soften line edges and blend brushstrokes, it is an issue easily resolved for those of you that are keen pixel artists. Proceed by selecting Edit>Preferences>General to access the main dialog options and access the Image Interpretation drop options. These should be set to Bicubic by default. You need to set these options to Nearest Neighbor, in turn stopping the blending of all applied brushstrokes. Hence allowing artists to apply sharp, resolved pixel strokes.

10 AUTOMATION

How can I scan and then quickly crop my photography rather than individually having to crop one at a time?

Scanning in multiple photos is the quickest way to archive your collections and Photoshop provides options that allow you to organise efficiently, using its Crop and Straighten command. Lay out and scan your preferred images. Next, select File>Automate>Crop and Straighten Photos. Now Photoshop will analyse your photograph set and individually crop and align each image into separate documents. You can then save these as needed.

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.