



AdvPhotoShop

Advanced PhotoShop concentrates on layers which let you edit specific areas of your image without affecting any other data.

Understanding layers...

Think of layers as sheets of acetate stacked one on top of the other. Where there is no image on a layer, you can see through to the layers below. Behind all the layers is the background. All layers in a file share the same number of pixels, the same number of channels, and the same image mode (RGB, CMYK, or Grayscale).

You can draw, edit, paste, use masks, and reposition elements on a layer without disturbing any other layers in the image.

In addition, a special kind of layer, called an *adjustment layer*, lets you apply tonal and color correction effects to all the layers underneath. Thus, you can experiment freely with different combinations of graphics, type, special effects, opacities, and blending modes. Until you *merge* the layers, each one remains independent of the other layers in the image.

Using the layers palette...

This palette lists all the layers in the image, starting with the topmost layer. A thumbnail of the layer contents appears to the left of the layer name. This thumbnail is updated as you edit the layer.

Use the palette to create, hide, display, copy, merge, and delete layers. When you modify an image, the changes affect only the *active* layer, that is, the highlighted layer in the Layers palette. You select a layer to make it active, and only one layer can be active at a time. The name of the active layer also appears in the image window's title bar.

Creating a layered image...

PhotoShop lets you create up to 100 layers in an image, each with its own blending mode and opacity. However, the amount of memory in your system may put a lower limit on the number of layers you can have in a single image.

You can create new layers by using the New Layer button by dragging or pasting selections into your image, or by converting selections into layers.

When you drag or paste a selection into a document, the selection is automatically pasted into a new layer. The new layer is created using the default options of Normal mode and 100% opacity and appears above the active layer in the Layers palette. You can also convert a selection into a layer.

Showing and hiding layers...

You can make layers temporarily invisible to speed performance as you edit or print other parts of the image. Only visible layers are printed. When a layer is visible, an eye icon appears in the leftmost column of the Layers palette for that layer.

You can have an active layer that is not visible; in most cases, you will want the active layer to be visible.

Setting transparency preferences...

A layer is transparent until you add pixels to it. By default, the transparent areas of a document appear as a checkerboard pattern. You can change the appearance of this pattern.

Moving, copying, etc...

You can use the Layer menu or the Layers palette to change the stacking order of layers in an image. In the Layers palette, select the layer you want to move. Drag the layer up or down in the Layers palette. When the highlighted line appears in the position where you want to position the layer, release the mouse button. By default, the background cannot be moved and is always at the bottom of the layer list. To move the background to a different location, first convert the background into a layer by double-clicking the background name, typing a new name, and clicking OK. You can move the contents of a layer within its image window. You can also link multiple layers and move their contents together.

To move the layer contents in 1-pixel increments when the move tool is selected, press the arrow keys on the keyboard. To move the layer in 10-pixel increments, press Shift and an arrow key.

You can duplicate any layer (including the background) in the same image using the Duplicate Layer command or by dragging and dropping.

You can copy any layer or the background from one Photoshop image to another using copy and paste, drag and drop, or the Duplicate Layer command. The Duplicate layer command also lets you create a new image with the copied layer.

Using blending modes and opacity...

When you use the painting and editing tools to draw on a layer, keep in mind that the opacity and mode settings for these tools interact with the opacity and mode settings for the active layer, and that the actions affect the channel.

For example, suppose you have a layer that uses the Dissolve mode and an opacity of 50%. You paint on this layer using the paintbrush with a Normal mode and an opacity of 100%. As it is displayed on the layer, the paint appears in Dissolve mode with a 50% opacity because this is the maximum the layer can display.

On the other hand, if you were working on a layer created using Normal mode and 100% opacity, but were using the eraser tool with the paintbrush option

is set to 50% opacity, only 50% of the paint would disappear as you painted.

You use blending modes to determine how the pixels in a layer are blended with underlying pixels on other layers. By applying modes to individual layers, you can create a variety of special effects. For example, if you create a layer using Darken mode, the pixels in the layer that are darker than the underlying pixels are blended into the image.

The Layers palette modes include the modes that appear in the Options palette when you paint or edit an image.

Unlike the options for the line tool and paint bucket tool, you cannot select a Clear mode for layers. In addition, the Exclusion, Color Dodge, Color Burn, Lighten, Darken, and Difference modes cannot be used in Lab images.

Using adjustment layers...

An adjustment layer lets you experiment with color and tonal adjustments to an image without permanently modifying the pixels in the image. The color and tonal changes reside within the adjustment layer, which acts as a veil through which the underlying image layers appear.

When you create an adjustment layer, its adjustments affect all the layers below it. This lets you correct multiple layers by making a single adjustment, rather than making the adjustment to each layer separately. To confine the effects of an adjustment layer to the layer just below it, you can create a clipping group consisting of these two layers.

When you create a new adjustment layer, it appears above the last active layer in the Layers palette.

Deleting layers...

Because layers increase a file's size, it is important to delete layers that you no longer need. You can also delete floating selections.

To delete a selected layer or floating selection automatically, Option-Click (Mac) or Alt-Click (Windows) the Trash button at the bottom of the Layers palette. You can also drag the layer or floating selection name in the Layers palette to the Trash button.

Computing Services can be reached...

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