

Introduction to Photoshop Assignment 5: Layer Mask

Due Monday March 21st by 11:59 PM

Upload to Google Drive folder Introduction to Photoshop → Assignment Uploads → Your folder in format of Lastname_FirstInitial (e.g., Doe_J)

What you will turn in:

1. Photoshop files with the following naming convention: Lastname_FirstInitial_Lesson5.psd
Example: Doe_J_Lesson5.psd
2. A text file associated with the Photoshop file with the following naming convention: Lastname_FirstInitial_Lesson5.txt (example: Doe_J_Lesson5.txt)

Conventions Used throughout the assignments:

Keyboard commands are placed between less than / greater than signs and brackets, e.g., <[]>

Mac command key (cmd) = Windows control key (ctrl)

Mac option key (opt) = Windows alt key (alt)

Keyboard commands are shown for both Mac/Windows, e.g., <[cmd / ctrl+o]> means:

"On Mac do a command+o key sequence / On Windows do a control+o key sequence"

Actions that you are to do start with a "==" sequence (no quotes)

"Menu" indicates a command selected from using the corresponding Menu sequence

1) Start Photoshop

If not already set up, have Photoshop record all activities to an external text file - see the following set of instructions or watch the tutorial on how to start the History Log:

On Mac

==> Apple Icon: Photoshop → Preferences → General

==> Make sure that the "History Log" is checked

==> Make sure that "Save Log Items To..." is set to "Text File"

==> Set the name of the output text file: Lastname_FirstInitial_Lesson5.txt

(example: Doe_J_Lesson5.txt)

(You can also rename the file at the OS level when done with assignment)

==> Make sure that "Edit Log Items" is set to "Concise"

On PC

==> Menu: Edit → Preferences → General

(Follow same set up instructions as for Mac above)

The images that you can use for this assignment are the ones that you downloaded for the second assignment on making selections. The assignment assumes that you have downloaded the zipped image file from the class website; feel free to use your own images or download images from the internet to use. If you use your own images, make sure that they are roughly the same dimensions (height and length).

Lesson: Layer Mask

1) Open two files of different images that you have on your computer or you get online. You can, if you want, use the sky.jpg and helicopter.jpg files that I provided to you when you did the selection tools. Select the background layer of one of the files (do a <[cmd / ctrl + a]> to select the entire canvas) and copy it into the other file as a new layer.

2) On the layer that you just copied in, add a layer mask. This can be done by either clicking on the layer mask button at the bottom of the layer panel, or through the Menu: Layer → Layer Mask → Reveal All : a white layer mask will be attached to the active layer.

3) Select the brush tool <[b]>, make sure you have a moderately soft brush (~ 50%). Set the opacity to around 20 - 25%; you will slowly build up the layer mask. Set the colors of the foreground and background to black and white; if they are not already set this way, press the <[d]> key then press the <[x]> key to bring black to the foreground color.

4) Select the layer mask by clicking on it, a border will appear around the icon. Now paint with the 20 - 25% black in the layer mask. As long as you do not remove your finger from the mouse button you will continue to apply this amount of paint in the layer mask. Removing your finger and restarting the painting process will deposit more black paint--if you paint over an area that you have already painted upon, it will become darker. The result is that as you paint over, more and more of the layer will become transparent, showing the layer below.

5) If you are unhappy with the result of your painting it is easy to start over again. With the layer mask active, go to the menu Edit → Fill and for "Contents" use White from the drop-down menu, click OK and the layer mask will be filled with white.

NOTE: You can just as easily start with a black layer mask and paint in with white, it all depends on the image and how much you want to hide or reveal. Sometimes it might be easier to start with a black mask to Hide All and then paint in with white than to start with a white mask that Reveals All and paint in with black. It all depends upon the images that you're using.

NOTE: If you do an <[option / alt]> click on the layer mask, it will come to the front so you can see what you've painted on at full size rather than trying to see the small icon. Click on the icon of the image to the left of the layer mask in the layer panel to dismiss the layer mask view. MAKE SURE you click on the layer mask to make it active again before painting, otherwise you will be editing the image and not the layer mask!!!

6) Close this file. Make the file active and then do:

==> Menu: File → Close or Keyboard: <[cmd / ctrl+w]> If you get a dialog box about saving changes, answer "Don't save".

7) Quit Photoshop

==> A) On Mac: Photoshop → Quit Photoshop or Keyboard: <[cmd+q]>

==> B) On PC: File > Exit or Keyboard: <[ctrl+q]>

In this lesson you have learned:

How to apply a layer mask and edit it to make portions of the layer transparent.

OPTIONAL WORK

You don't have to turn this in, but you may want to continue to play around with layer masks by using the gradient fill tool or running filters in the layer mask, such as Filters → Render → Clouds or Filter → Render → Fibers. You can also do Filters → Render → Difference Clouds (note: if you want to run Difference Clouds you A) need to run the Clouds filter first and B) you can re-run the Difference Clouds filter multiple times and it will build up on the previous iteration.)

Do get familiar in working with the layer mask, it is very powerful, simple to use, and allows for non-destructive editing.