

MASTERING PHOTOSHOP CC LAYERS

PROFESSIONAL STRENGTH PHOTO EDITING

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Mastering Photoshop CC Layers 2nd ed
Professional Strength Photo Editing

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INTRODUCTION



Why a book about Photoshop Layers?

Quite simply layers are one of the most powerful features in Photoshop. They were introduced in version 3, back in 1995, and quickly transformed Photoshop into the photo editing tool of choice for professionals

Today, most serious photo editors use layers in some way in their work. They allow them to better manage their work and make changes to images they can continue to refine, keeping the background image unchanged. But layers and their power go much deeper than supporting non-destructive photo editing. Used correctly, layers can make your photo editing much simpler and enable you to create effects that would be difficult or even impossible any other way.

This book provides comprehensive coverage of Photoshop layers and how you can use them in your photo editing. It's deliberately concise to avoid you wading through pages of worthless text and is packed with valuable example exercises. These example exercises are extremely important as they demonstrate vital points that help you learn. Please

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be sure to download the example images (more on that shortly) and use them to follow the exercises. Reading the book alone may fill out your knowledge, but by applying the information to examples you will develop your skills.

Who is this book for?

Whilst this is an introductory book to teach Photoshop layers, it isn't a beginners book. It assumes you have a working knowledge of Photoshop and that you know how to do things like changing the layout of Windows. If you don't yet have a good foundation of Photoshop photo editing skills, you would be better initially reading my book *Essential Adobe Photoshop CC*.

Although this isn't a book for Photoshop beginners, it is a book for Photoshop users new to or struggling with layers. If you find layers difficult to understand or want to expand your knowledge in that area, this is the book for you. It assumes no prior knowledge of layers and covers a broad range of related topics. By the end of the book, you will advance your layer editing knowledge to an intermediate level. It won't make you an expert (that takes practice over time), but it will equip you with the tools you need to become an expert.

I won't go into detail about how the book is organised here. You can see that from the contents page. I like to keep my books concise and not waste your time reading irrelevant information. The structure of the book is however important as it's been carefully laid out to avoid repetition. This means in your initial reading you should follow the chapters sequentially in the order they are presented. Please don't be tempted to skip ahead or miss sections, even if you think you already know something. It's quite possible you will miss important information and could easily find yourself struggling to understand later sections

As a final point, please be sure you have calibrated your monitor as many of the examples include colour adjustment. A monitor display

that isn't accurately calibrated could make some examples difficult to follow. If you don't have a monitor calibration unit, or you are unsure about calibration, you may find this article "How to Calibrate your Monitor" on my website helpful (<https://lenscraft.co.uk/photography-tutorials/calibrate-monitor-for-photography/>).

IMPORTANT



Before we get to the first chapter, there are some important points to emphasise. These points will help you to enjoy the book whilst gaining the maximum benefit. Please take a moment to read them carefully.

2nd Edition

When I first published this book, it was called “Photoshop Layers: Professional Strength Image Editing”. In this 2nd edition, I’ve changed the title because the book has been completely rewritten from the start. Whilst a couple of images may remain from the first edition, the text is completely new and much improved

If you purchased the original book, thank you and I hope that it helped you. What you have in this book is a far more complete view of layers including some of the Photoshop improvements that have been made since the earlier edition.

IMPORTANT

American/English Spellings

Many terms used in photo editing and Photoshop use American spellings, which differ from the English spelling. Probably the most obvious examples are colour and color as well as grey and gray. As I was born and live in the UK, I use the English spelling in the text UNLESS it relates specifically to a feature of the software. For example, I may ask you to fill a layer with a midtone grey colour which uses the English spelling. But if I refer to the Photoshop option “Fill with Overlay-neutral color (50% gray)”, I will use the American spelling as that’s what appears in the software.

I wanted to highlight this because I do like readers to contact me with errors so I can amend future versions of the book. But please don’t email me with a list of American spellings you would like to change to English or vice versa. If you do find any genuine mistakes (and there will be some in a book of this length no matter how many reviews we do) please email me using robin@lenscraft.co.uk.

Photoshop Version & Layout

In preparing this book I used the Mac version of Photoshop CC 21. This is the latest available version of Photoshop which is release 22.3. As Adobe regularly releases updates it’s likely there will soon be a later release. But this doesn’t mean that the book is out of date. Most changes to Photoshop in new releases add features and it’s rare for something to be removed. And often these “new” features are an attempt to simplify something to make it easier to use for less experienced users.

The reality is, most of the features relating to Layers have been in Photoshop for years and have changed very little over that time.

Supporting Image Downloads

The next point to highlight is that this book includes many practical photo editing exercises. These exercises are designed to help you understand the Photoshop software and how it works. You will get far more value from the book by following these exercises. This means you will need to download the accompanying image files from my Lenscraft website. You will find these on the Downloads for Books page which you can access in the website menu or with the page link <https://lenscraft.co.uk/learn-photo-editing-books/useful-downloads-books/>.

This page contains the download links to files for all my books. Scroll down the page to find the book you want and then use the relevant download button or link. The images will download in a single compressed zip file which you will then need to open and extract on your computer. Both Mac and Windows computers have support for the zip file format so this shouldn't cause any problems

Note for Windows Users

This book was developed using an Apple Mac computer and the Mac version of Photoshop. If you are a Windows PC user, you may notice some differences in the screenshots and what you might see on your own computer. The good news is that the software and shortcuts are largely standardised across both operating systems and differences are minor. Where possible I have included both the Mac and Windows versions of keyboard commands in the text so you should have little difficulty following the book whichever computer system you use.

Trademarks

Throughout this book I have referred to various organisations and their products. Where reference is made to any trademarks or product names it is purely in an editorial capacity. There is no intention of

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copyright infringement, and all trademarks are recognised and respected

Disclaimer

Whilst I have made every effort to ensure the information in this book is accurate, up to date and factual, it does represent my views and approach to editing. Some may disagree with the information I present but I have not intentionally made any omissions or errors. If you do find something you believe needs correcting, please contact me by email using robin@lenscraft.co.uk.

Thank you and I hope you enjoy this book.

Robin Whalley

LAYER FOUNDATIONS



Layers are one of the most, if not the most important tools in Photoshop. Without layers, many of the advanced editing techniques like compositing, Blending Mode effects and Masking just wouldn't be possible. This first chapter provides you with an introduction to the basics of layers in Photoshop. This is to ensure you have the required level of understanding to benefit from the rest of the book. Even if you feel you already have this, please don't be tempted to skip ahead. You could miss important information that you might not realise you don't know.

What are Layers?

Probably the best way to understand layers and how Photoshop uses them, is by looking at an example image containing layers.

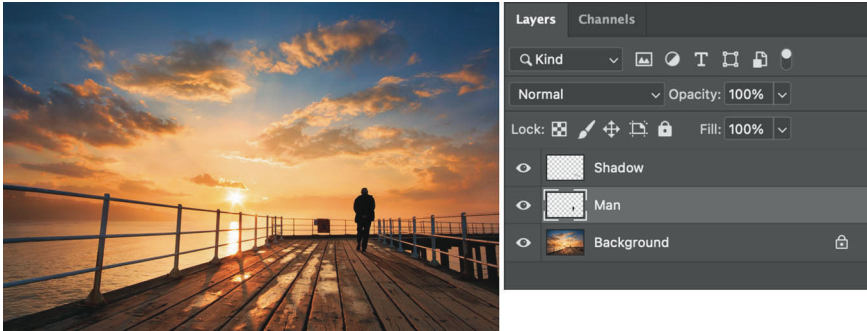


Figure 1 - Image with layers in the Photoshop Layers Window

Here we can see an image of a man walking along a pier at sunset. The scene didn't happen as you see it here. The man didn't walk on the pier at sunset but earlier in the day. This is a composite photo where different elements are combined or created from different photos

To the right of the image, you can also see a screenshot of the Photoshop Layers Window. The Layers Window displays the different layers present in the open image, although not all image types will support layers. The JPEG format is an example of an image format that doesn't support layers whilst TIFF and the Photoshop PSD both support layers. For this reason, when you open a JPEG file, there is only ever one layer.

In the screenshot here, you can see there is the "Background" layer at the bottom. This is the default layer when you open an unmodified image. Above this are two other layers which in this example are called Man and Shadow. The shape of the man was cut out from a second photograph taken earlier in the day and then added to this image as a separate layer.

The man's shadow was then created using a second copy of the man, on another layer. Whilst it's a little more advanced, you can see how the shadow was created in this YouTube video (<https://youtu.be/W9n6N7YOgpc>).

Let’s now look at a short exercise to help better understand how layers work and explore some of their features.

Exercise 1.1 – Layer Basics

For this exercise, please use the supporting image “Understanding Layers.psd” which is included in the accompanying image files for the book. If you haven’t done so already, you can download this from my Lenscraft website on the “Downloads for Books” page. The following is a direct link to the page (<https://lenscraft.co.uk/learnphoto-editing-books/useful-downloads-books/>). You will find links to download the supporting files for all my books on this page.

Open the “Understanding Layers.psd” file in Photoshop. You should see in the Photoshop Layers Window that it contains the three layers mentioned above (Background, Man, Shadow). If you can’t see the Layers Window, it may be hidden. You can toggle its visibility on and off using the Photoshop menu “Window | Layers...”.

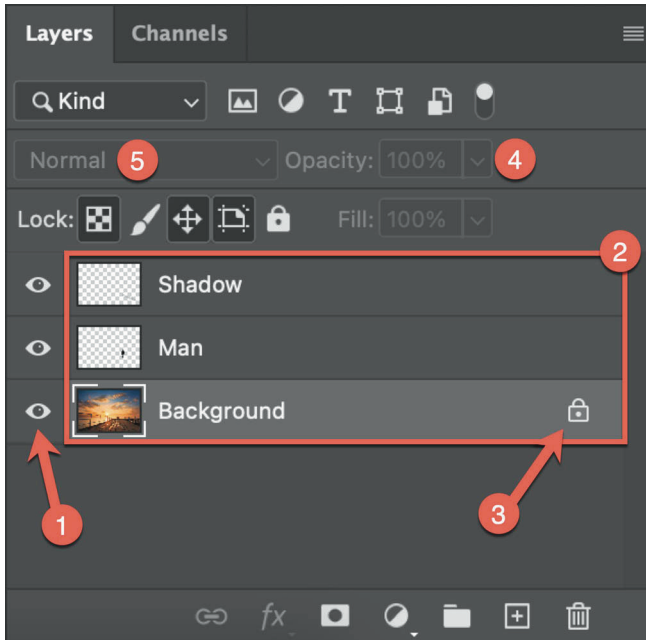


Figure 2 - Elements of the Photoshop Layers Window

In the Layers Window you will see there is a small eye icon to the left of each layer (number 1). This controls the visibility of the layer. Clicking it will toggle the visibility of the layer off and on. Try clicking the Shadow layer eye icon once to hide the shadow. Next hide the man and then finally the Background layer.

After hiding the Background layer, you should see the image area turn to a grey and white checkerboard pattern. This shows the transparent areas of the image and is called the canvas. If you click to toggle the visibility of the Man layer on again, you will see it only covers part of the checkerboard pattern, but the rest remains transparent. This is because there are only pixels on the layer where the man appears. When he was cut from another image, he was placed onto a transparent background.

Now turn on the Background layer. This completely covers the transparent area of the image canvas, but it doesn't cover the man. That's because the layer with the man sits above the Background layer in the Layers Window. The bottom layer is Background and the layer above it is the Man layer. When we have layers stacked up like this, we call it the Layer Stack (number 2). The position of each layer within the Layer Stack is important and contributes to the effect it produces in the image. The image preview you see in the main area of Photoshop is the combination of the visible layers in the Layers Window or Layer Stack. It's possible to reorder the layer to create a different result.

Earlier we said the Background image is a layer, but that isn't entirely correct. There are some things that you can't do with the Background "layer" until you convert it to a regular layer. For example, you can reorder layers in the Layer Stack by clicking and dragging them with your mouse. But if you try to click and drag the Background Layer to move it you will find you can't.

To convert the Background "layer" to a regular Layer, click the small padlock icon (number 3) which you will see at the right side of the layer in the Layers Window. Alternatively, you can double click on the Background layer thumbnail in the Layers Window, or select "Layer |

New | Layer from Background...” in the Photoshop menu. Choose whichever method you feel comfortable using.

After converting the Background image to a Layer, you will see its name in the Layers Window change to “Layer 0”. You will find you can now click and drag Layer 0 to reposition it above the Man layer in the Layer Stack. As you move the layer into position, you will see the new position becomes highlighted in blue. You can then release the mouse button to drop the layer into position.

When you position Layer 0 above the Man layer in the Layer Stack, the man will vanish. This is because the pixels of the man are now covered by the pixels of Layer 0.

One way to show the man again without repositioning the layer is to reduce the Opacity of Layer 0. To do this, click on Layer 0 in the Layers Window to select it. Then at the top of the Layer Window you will see the Opacity control (number 4) which is set to 100%. Click the control and reduce the slider to 50%. This causes the pixels in Layer 0 to become semi-transparent. You will then see the man through the transparent image. As you will see later, reducing the Opacity of some layers can be a great way to control the strength of their effect.

Unfortunately, with pixel layers like in this image, the result doesn't look convincing. Return the Layer 0 Opacity setting to 100% and then reposition the layer at the bottom of the Layer Stack. You can also turn on the visibility of the Shadow layer so that all three layers are visible in the image again.

Click the Man layer in the Layers Window to select it. Look to the top of the Layers Window and to the left of the Opacity slider. There you will see a dropdown showing “Normal” (number 5). This dropdown is called the Blend or Blending Mode and is something we can set for each layer in the image. This controls how the pixels of the man blend with the pixels in the layer or layers below it in the Layer Stack. When set to Normal, the pixels of one layer will cover and hide the pixels in the layers below it.

Next, click the Shadow layer in the Layers Window to select it. If you check the Opacity of the layer, you will see that it's set to 86%. This allows the boards of the pier to show through the pixels, helping to create the shadow effect. If you reduce the Opacity, it makes the shadow lighter but if you increase the Opacity, it becomes darker.

Whilst we can control the strength of the shadow using the Opacity slider, it's not the only control being used. Notice at the top of the Layers Window the Blending Mode is set to "Multiply" rather than "Normal". This causes the pixels of the Shadow layer to blend with those of the lower layers, allowing us to see through the layer. Change the Blending Mode in the dropdown to "Color Burn" and you will see the shadow darken. Change it again to "Darken" and the shadow is a little lighter

Each of the Blending Modes uses a different method of blending the pixels of that layer with the layers below it, but all are based on mathematical calculations. In a later chapter of the book, we will look in depth at the different blending modes and explore some ways you might use them in your editing. For now, return the Shadow layer to the Multiply setting.

At this point we'll end the exercise. You should now understand that layers can be used to build up the overall image. In the example we looked at, the image was created from three different layers, each of which contained a component of the image.

Common Layer Types

Now it's time to expand our understanding of image layers by looking at some of the different layer types.

So far, we have only considered pixel-based layers. These are layers that are filled (or partially filled) with pixels. One characteristic of this type of layers is that when the pixel layer is placed above another in the Layer Stack, the pixels will cover the lower layers, hiding them. There are three ways to avoid this happening:

1. Use a Layer Mask attached to the upper layer. This then hides the pixels allowing the lower layers to be seen. You will find an introduction to layer masks later in the book.
2. Reduce the Opacity of the upper layer. This increases the transparency of that layer, allowing any lower layers to show through
3. Apply a Blending Mode to the upper layer. This controls how it blends with the layers below it. We will be looking at Blending Modes in depth later in the book.

This point is important. When working with layers, their order will affect the results and when a pixel layer covers other layers, it can produce unexpected results. You may find yourself scratching your head at times, wondering why an adjustment doesn't seem to be working. If you find yourself in this position, check the effect of the pixel layers in the image by turning them off and on using the eye icon in the Layers Window.

The second type of layer to consider is an Adjustment Layer and there are several types. We will be looking in detail at the different Adjustment Layers in Photoshop in a later chapter.

Adjustment Layers don't have content like pixel-based layers, but instead adjust the content of layers below them. They do this by applying mathematical calculations that can change the colour and/or tone (how light or dark something is) of the image pixels. Fortunately, you don't need to understand any maths to be able to use them.

One big difference between an Adjustment Layer and a Pixel Layer is that an Adjustment Layer won't cover or hide the layers below it. In this way, it's possible to build up different adjustments using multiple Adjustment Layers. Each layer then acts on the layer or layers below it.

Sometimes you may find that you only want an Adjustment Layer to affect one of the layers in the Layer Stack. You can achieve this by creating something called a Clipping Mask. This restricts the effect of the Adjustment Layer to the layer that it's clipped to.

Let's look at an exercise to demonstrate how this works

Exercise 1.2 – Adjustment Layers

For this exercise, please use the support image file “Understanding Layers.psd”. This is the same file that we used in the previous exercise. If you made any adjustments to the image in that exercise, close the file, without saving it, to start again.

With the image open in Photoshop, click the “Shadow” layer (1) in the Layers Window to select it. You can then click the “Add new adjustment layer” icon (2) at the bottom of the Layers Window.

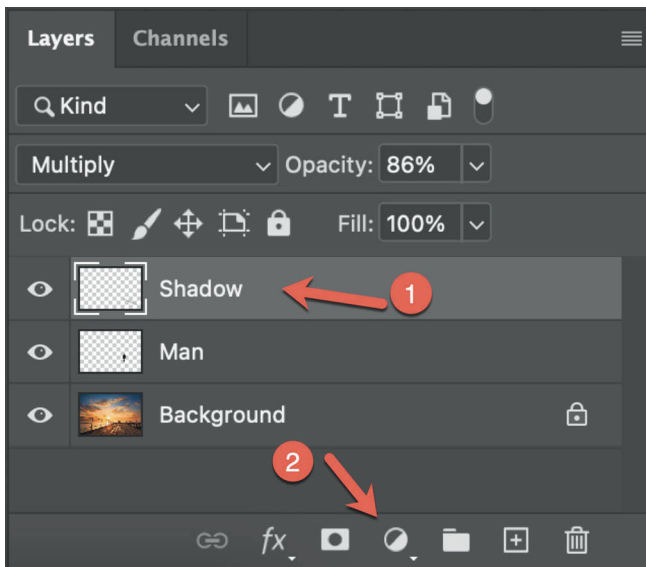


Figure 3 - Adding an Adjustment Layer to the image

When you click the “Add new adjustment layer” icon, Photoshop displays a list of available Adjustment Layers you can select. In the list, click the “Levels” Adjustment Layer. You will then see the new Levels layer appear in the Layers Window, above the layer that was selected.

If you select the Levels layer in the Layers Window by clicking it, you will see its controls in the Properties Window. If you can't see your Properties Window open in Photoshop, check the "Windows" menu to ensure the "Properties" option is ticked. If not, click it to toggle the visibility of the window on.

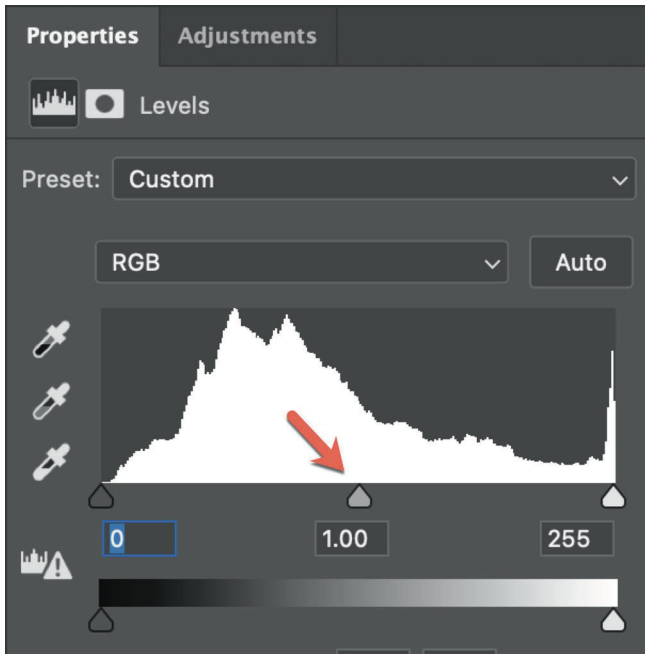


Figure 4 - Adjusting the midtone Level of the Levels Adjustment Layer

In the Properties Window, you will see a histogram with a pointer at either end and a third in the centre. Click the centre pointer with your mouse and drag it to the right. As you do this you will see the image become darker. Notice the Levels Adjustment Layer is affecting the three layers below it in the Layer Stack, causing them all to become darker

Now in the Layers Window, click the Levels layer and drag it down the Layer Stack to drop it above the "Man" layer. You should then have the

Levels layer sandwiched between the Shadow and Man layers. Notice that when you drop the layer in its new position, it stops affecting the Shadow layer. It's only the layers below the Levels layer that are affected by the adjustment. If you didn't notice the change to the Shadow layer, you can drag the Levels layer back to the top of the Layer Stack and then repeat the process.

When the Levels layer is sandwiched between the Shadow and Man layer, it's still affecting the Man layer and the Background layers, causing them to darken. As we don't really want to darken the Background layer, we can create a Clipping Mask. This clips the Levels adjustment to the Man layer so that it only affects that layer.

To create a Clipping Mask, right click on the Levels layer in the Layers Window to display a popup menu. In the menu, select the option "Create Clipping Mask". You will immediately notice the Background layer becomes lighter as the Levels layer now isn't affecting it. When creating a Clipping Mask, it's important to right click on the correct area of the layer in the Layers Window. Depending on where you click in the window, different menu options are displayed. The best location is to right click on the layer's name.

Because it can be difficult to see the effect of the Levels layer on the man, try moving the centre pointer all the way to the left. This will make the Man layer much lighter and easier to see the effect.

If you click the eye icon on the Levels layer to toggle its visibility off, you will see the Man layer return to its original state. Click the eye icon again to toggle the effect of the Levels layer back on.

Now click the eye icon for the Man layer to toggle the layer's visibility off. Notice this causes the eye icon for the Levels layer to turn grey. If you then click the eye icon on the Man layer, it makes the layer visible again and the Levels layer icon turns white. Alternatively, if you click the Levels eye icon when it's grey whilst the Man layer is hidden, it also makes the Man layer visible.

When you create a clipping mask with an Adjustment Layer, the layer it's clipped to the layer immediately below it in the Layer Stack. You can also identify a clipping mask layer as it has a small downward pointing arrow icon on the layer, just to the right of the eye icon.

To remove a Clipping Mask from a layer, right click on the layer and select "Release Clipping Mask" from the menu options. As before, be sure to right click on the layer name in the Layers Window.

To finish the exercise, delete the Levels Adjustment Layer. You can do this by clicking and dragging the layer using your mouse, dropping it on the trashcan icon at the bottom right of the Layers Window.

Other Layer Types

We now have three different layer types to consider which are the Fill Layer, Text Layer and Shape Layer. These aren't used as frequently in photo editing as the Pixel and Adjustment Layers, but we should cover them for completeness.

The Fill Layer is like a Pixel Layer, but it's filled with pixels of either colour or a pattern. There are three versions of the Fill Layer which are:

- Colour – the layer is filled with a single solid colour which you can change.
- Gradient – the layer is filled with a gradient where you can define the colours, for example running from black to white.
- Pattern – where the layer is filled with a repeating pattern which you can select

In all three of these examples the Fill Layer acts like a pixel layer in that it covers and hides the layers below in the Layer Stack.

The Text layer is created automatically when you add text to an image using the Horizontal Type Tool. You will find the Horizontal Type Tool in the Photoshop Tools Palette. After clicking the Horizontal Text Tool icon, click on the image and you will see the words "Lorem Ipsum"

appear on a new Text Layer. You can then select and change the words to any text as well as changing the text characteristics like colour, font, and size

When you select a Text Layer in the Layers Window by clicking the layer, you will see options to control the text characteristics displayed in the Properties Window.

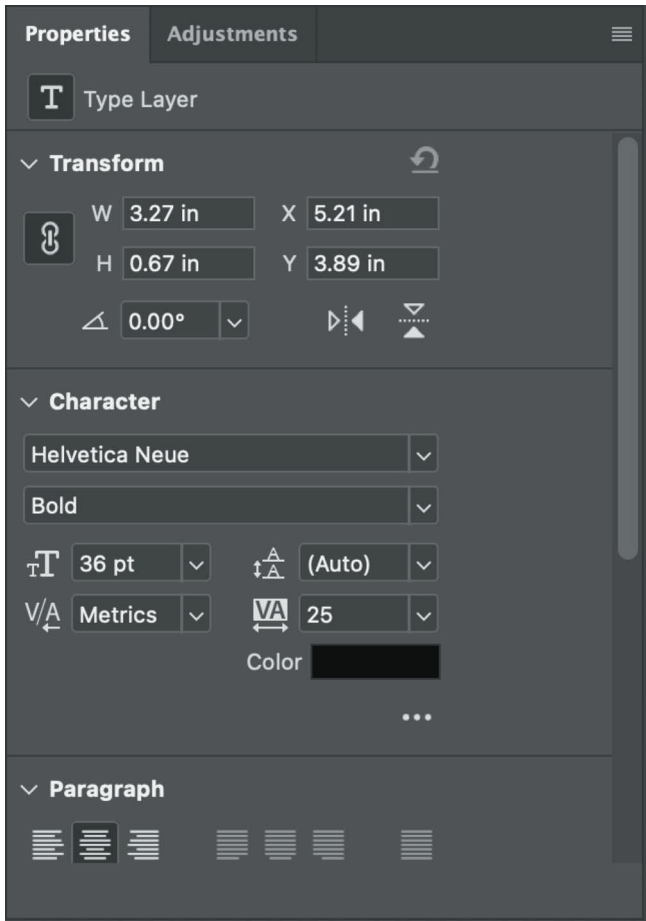


Figure 5 - Controlling the Properties of text on a Text Layer

This is quite a long Window if all the individual sections are expanded, and it provides a high degree of control over the text. Notice in the screenshot that there is a vertical scrollbar in the Window, indicating you need to scroll down to access all the controls.

Having added text to an image as a Text Layer, if you then click again with the Horizontal Type Tool, the process repeats, adding additional text on a new Text Layer. It's possible to configure and control all the text on a layer using the Properties Window, but all the text on the layer will have the same characteristics. But, if you click on existing text using the Horizontal Type Tool, clicking, and dragging to select some of the text, you can configure that text with different properties.

As with the Fill Layer, the text on a Text Layer will cover and hide the pixels of the layers below it in the Layer Stack. The same is also true of the Shape Layer.

To create a Shape Layer, click one of the shape tools in the Photoshop Tools Palette, for example Rectangle or Ellipse tool. When you then click on the image, it adds that shape on a new layer, which appears in the Layers Window. When you have the shape layer selected in the Layers Window, the characteristics of the shape are then displayed in the Properties Window which you can adjust.

Let's look at a quick exercise to consolidate everything.

Exercise 1.3 – Other Layer Types

For this exercise, please use the support image file “Understanding Layers.psd”. This is the same file that we used in the previous exercise. If you made any adjustments to the image in that exercise, close the file without saving it to start over.

With the sample image open, add a new Solid Colour Fill Layer to the top of the Layer Stack. You can do this by clicking the top layer in the Layers Window to select it and then choosing “Layer | New Fill Layer | Solid Color...” in the Photoshop main menu.

When the New Layer dialog is displayed, enter the new layer name as “Red” and click the OK button. This will add the new layer which will be filled with a colour, but it probably won’t default to red. At the same time, the Color Picker dialog opens where you can define the colour to be used to fill the layer.

Find the RGB section of the dialog and enter a value of 255 for R and 0 for both G and B as shown here.

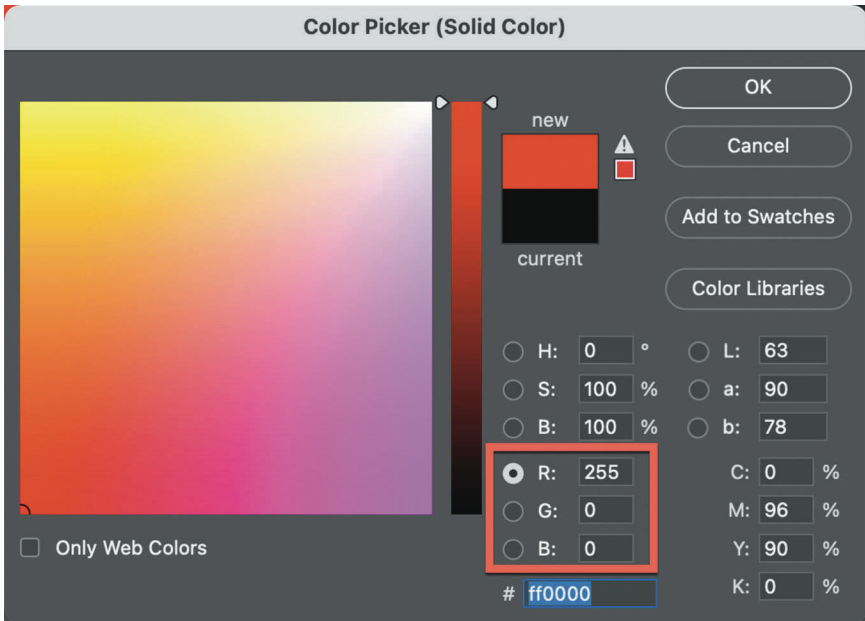


Figure 6 - Defining an RGB colour in the Color Picker Dialog

You should now see the Solid Color Fill Layer turn red and you can click the OK button to close the dialog. You can reopen the Color Picker dialog at any time to change the colour by double clicking the Fill layer in the Layers Window.

Having added a Fill Layer to the top of the Layer Stack, the layer is now hiding the layers below it. Click and drag the Fill Layer to reposition it in the Layer Stack, above the Background layer. This will hide the Background image layer but leave the Man and Shadow layers visible.

Next, we will add some text to the image using the Horizontal Type Tool.

Select the Horizontal Text Tool by clicking its icon in the Photoshop Tools Palette. After selecting the tool, you will see its controls appear in the Photoshop Context Sensitive Toolbar along the top of the screen (below the menu bar). Find and click on the colour square or swatch to open the Color Picker dialog. In the RGB section enter the value 255 for R, G and B to select white.

After closing the Color Picker dialog, click on the image with the Text Tool. You will then see the words “Lorem Ipsum” appear and a new Text Layer added in the Layers Window.

Type in the words “The Man from U.N.C.L.E.”. To complete entering the text click the small tick icon in the Photoshop Context Sensitive toolbar along the top of the screen.

Having added the text, it's possible to reposition it on the image using the Photoshop Move Tool. You will find the Move Tool at the top of the Photoshop Tools Palette; its icon shows a four-way arrow. When you select the tool, you will see a box appear around the text. You can then click and drag the text to position it at the top left of the image

Let's now edit the text again so that the word “U.N.C.L.E.” appears on a separate line to the other words. You can do this by selecting the Horizontal Text Tool again and then clicking on the existing text, just after the word “from”. Be sure to click on the existing text or you will create another new Text Layer. With the cursor set to edit the text, press the return key on your keyboard to add a carriage return. This moves the word onto a new line. You can then click the tick icon in the toolbar to commit the change

Although the wording is in white and now appears across two lines, the font, size, and alignment will depend on your existing settings. Let's change these to ensure we produce the same result.

If you don't currently have the Text Layer selected, click on it in the Layers Window. Then in the Properties Window, find the "Paragraph" section and click the icon to left align the text.

In the Character section change the font to "Helvetica Neue", but if you don't have this installed, Arial will do. Then set the weight of the Text to be "Bold" and the size to be "48pt" and the "VA" dropdown to be 25.

Now let's make the word "U.N.C.L.E." the same width as the words on the line above it. To do this we first need to select the word using the Horizontal Type Tool. After selecting the tool, position your mouse pointer over the start of the word. You can then click and drag with your mouse to select the rest of the word.

Having selected the word, change the font size to be "60pt" in the Properties Window. Notice that you have only changed the size of the selected text and not all the text.

At this point the word should almost be the same length as the line above it. To make the two the same size we can change the spacing of the word. This is what the "VA" number controls. When you set this to be "75" the length of the two rows should be a close match.

As a final step, try adding a horizontal black line to the image to suggest a horizon. You can do this by selecting the Line Tool in the Photoshop Tools Palette and using this to draw the line. When you click and drag out a line using the tool it will automatically create a new Shape Layer in the Layers Window.

You should now have an image that looks like the following.



Figure 7 - Image after applying the described adjustments

Having covered the main layer types, we should briefly mention another type of layer which is something called a Smart Object. Smart Objects are incredibly useful in photo editing. In fact, they are so useful that an entire chapter is dedicated to them later in the book. We'll therefore leave the subject until that point, other than to say they appear as a separate layer in the Layer Stack.

The Layers Window

By this point you should have a reasonable grasp of the different types of layers in Photoshop and how they can combine to produce an image. It's now time to take a more detailed look at the elements of the Photoshop Layers Window which can help you when editing and working with Layers.

You will probably find the Layers Window on the right side of the interface, but this will depend on which Photoshop Workspace you are using and if you have made any changes to the layout. Photoshop is

extremely flexible and all the windows including the Layers Window can be undocked or moved. It's also possible that you may have hidden the Layers Window, in which case you can toggle its visibility in the Photoshop main menu under the "Window" heading.

Having located your Layers Window, let's break down its elements into several logical groups to help us understand the tools

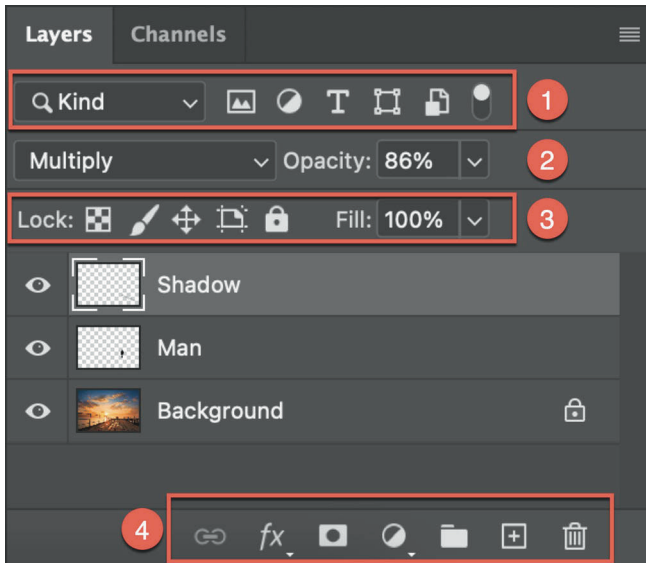


Figure 8 - Controls in the Photoshop Layers Window

The controls in the Layers Window can be divided into four separate groups

Layer filters (1)

You can use these options to filter the list of layers displayed in the Layers Window. This can be useful when you are working on an image with lots of different layers and types.

The controls in this section include a dropdown followed by six icons. The final icon on the right is a switch which you can click to toggle the rest of the section controls off and on.

END OF SAMPLE

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