


Using Adobe Photoshop's Layers window

Click File > New, and create a new image of any size you desire.

The Layers window shows the various layers that your image is made up of.

 To make a new layer, click the New Layer button, as shown by the red arrow.


To work on a different layer, click on that layer. The eyeball will appear next to that layer.

You can drag layers up and down the list.

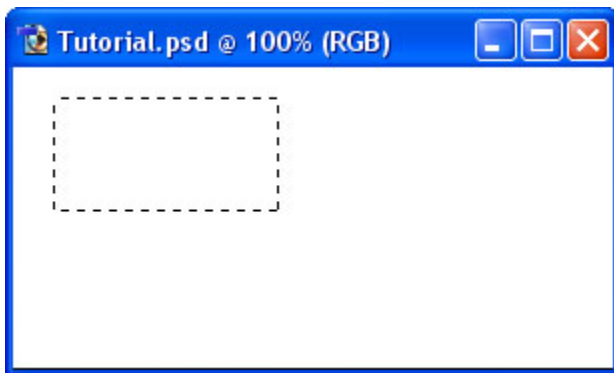
Remember – create a new layer for each part of your image. This allows you to go back and edit the layers individually. Every Adobe Photoshop novice at some time makes a masterpiece, only to find out that they did it all on one layer, and now they can't remove those pink clouds they put on it. :)

3 – Learning about Selection

One of the most important concepts in Adobe Photoshop is Selection.

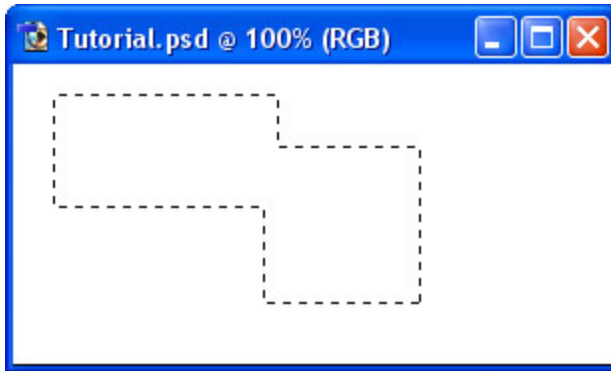
 This is the Rectangular Selection Tool.

Use this tool on your image to select an area of the image. This lets Photoshop know that that's the area you want to work on.



4 – Adding to a Selection and making a square


To add to a selection, hold Shift before dragging.



To make the selection exactly square, start dragging, then hold Shift.

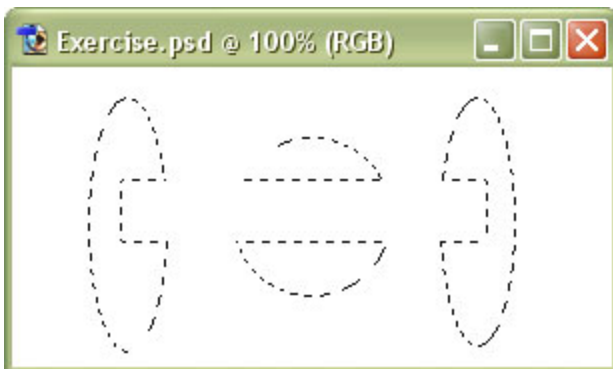
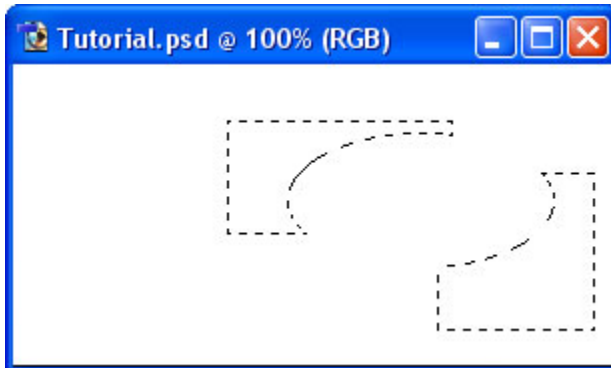
You can press Ctrl+D to "deselect" and remove the selection at any time.

5 – Elliptical Selections and subtracting Selections

 Hold down on the Selection Tool on the Toolbar, and choose the Ellipse.

To move the selection, just click inside it and drag.


Holding Alt while selecting subtracts that area from the selection. I've done that with the Ellipse Selection Tool.




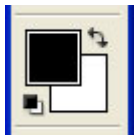
6 – A Selection exercise

If you're following this tutorial in Adobe Photoshop, see if you can make these shapes.

Other relevant Adobe Photoshop tools

 **Lasso Tool** – Allows you to draw a selection area with the cursor.

 **Magic Wand** – **Summons** elves. (Also believed to select an area of one color.)



7 – Choosing a color

Now that you know how to select an area in Adobe Photoshop, we can look at some tools that can do something with that area.

Before we get started on coloring your selection, you'll need to pick a color.

This part of the Toolbox is where you select your colors.

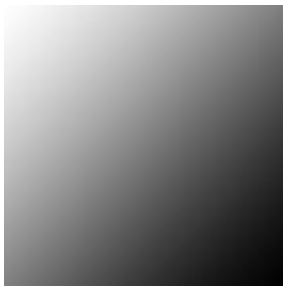
The top square is the foreground color. If you use a brush or paint bucket, it will apply this color.

The bottom square is the background color. It has various purposes, but it's also a good place to store a second color that you're using.

Click on either square to change its colour.


Click the arrow to swap the two colours.


Click the little squares to reset the colours to black and white.



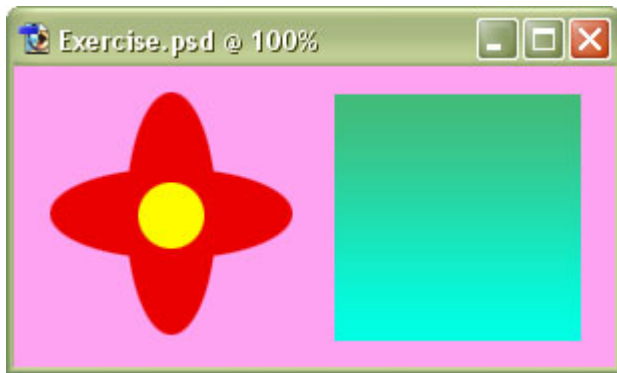
8 – The Paint Bucket and Gradient tools

These two tools are on separate buttons in Adobe Photoshop 5.0, but share a button in Adobe Photoshop 6.0 and Adobe Photoshop 7.0. To select one, click and hold.

 On a new layer, just click the Paint Bucket tool inside the area of your selection to fill it with the colour you've selected.

 Click and drag from one area to another to fill the area. The point where you started to click will be the colour of your foreground colour, and the point where you took your finger off the mouse button will be the colour of your background colour. The area in between will gradually change from one colour to the other.

In this case, I went from corner to corner, with the default white and black selected.





9 – A color exercise

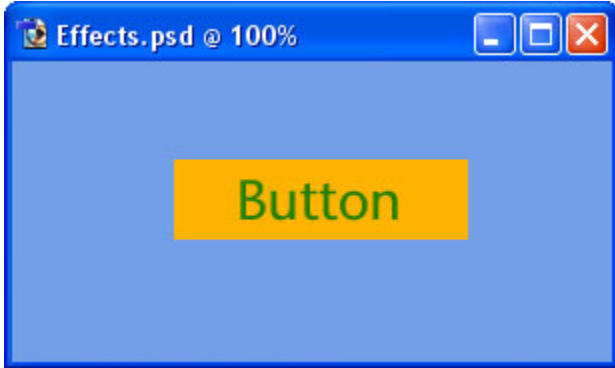
With what you've learned so far, you should be able to recreate this piece of hippy history. :)

Remember to create each step on a new layer.

Other Adobe Photoshop tools of interest include

 **The Text Tool** – Just click it wherever you want text to appear. Choose a font, colour, and size, and start typing.

 **The Move Tool** – Use this tool to drag things around. If you have a selection, it will drag the contents of the selection. If not, it will drag the contents of the layer you're on.



10 – Adding Effects

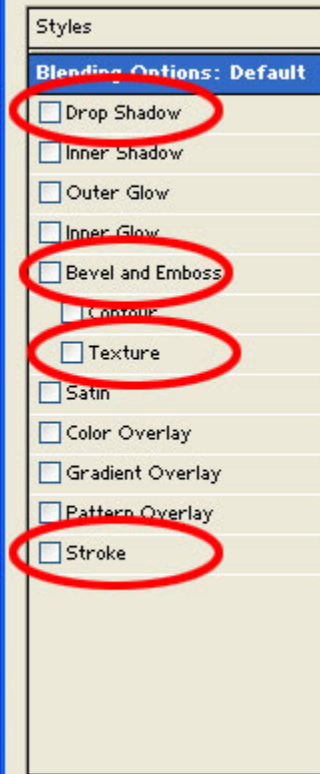
Now that you know the basics, it's time to start adding some easy special effects.

To demonstrate Adobe Photoshop's special effects, here's an unembellished button for a website.

Each part of this image is on a separate layer.



Layer Style



11 – Key Adobe Photoshop Blending Options

In the Layers list, right-click on a layer, and select Blending Options (Adobe Photoshop 6.0 & Adobe Photoshop 7.0) or Effects (Adobe Photoshop 5.0.)

This is a picture of the left-hand portion of the Blending Options window that will appear. (The window is much smaller in Photoshop 5.0.)

Drop Shadow

Selecting this option will make your layer cast a shadow on layers below it.

Bevel and Emboss

Makes the layer like a block of gold bullion - raised in the centre, with edges that slope down. (This is a good effect for creating buttons.)

Texture

Makes the surface of the layer look like it's made of wood, stone etc. Use the "Overlay" setting.

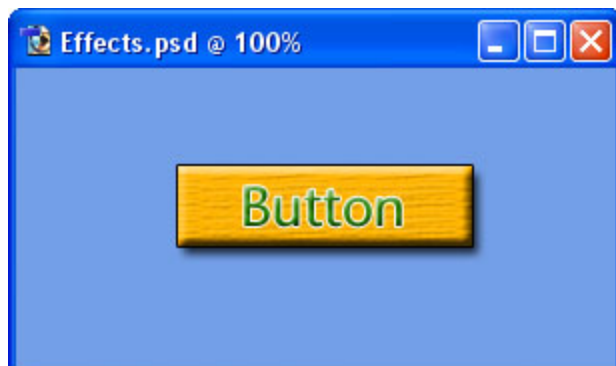
Stroke

Stroke is just another word for "outline". A Stroke is useful to make an object stand out from its background. (In Adobe Photoshop 5.0, this option doesn't exist. Use Outer Glow as an alternative.)

12 – The end result

Other than using some of the Blending Options, nothing else has been done to this button.

It's really that easy.





A final few Adobe Photoshop features

Zoom: Press (Ctrl and +) to zoom in. Press (Ctrl and -) to zoom out. This is very useful if you're a bit of a pixel pirate :)

Transformation: To Transform (resize/rotate/distort) an object, press Ctrl+T. To Transform a selection, click Select > Transform Selection. Use the Shift key while transforming to stop the image distorting.