the Adobe® photoshop® book

for digital photographers

Scott Kelby

EDITOR, *PHOTOSHOP USER* MAGAZINE

New Riders

VOICES THAT MATTER™

kelbyone.com   CONTENTS

CONTENTS

kelbyone.com

Chapter 03

Masking Miracles

067

kelbyone.com CONTENTS

CONTENTS

kelbyone.com

Chapter 06
Making Selections

kelbyone.com # CONTENTS

CONTENTS

kelbyone.com CONTENTS

Chapter 11
Photoshop Effects *289*

CONTENTS

Seven Things You'll Wish You Had Known Before Reading This Book

It's really important to me that you get a lot out of reading this book, and one way I can help is to get you to read these seven quick things about the book that you'll wish later you knew now. For example, it's here that I tell you about where to download the images I used here in the book so you can practice with them, and if you skip over this, eventually you'll send me an email asking where they are, but by then you'll be really aggravated, and well…it's gonna get ugly. We can skip all that (and more), if you take two minutes now and read these seven quick things. I promise to make it worth your while.

#1: You don't have to read this book in order.

I designed this book so you can turn right to the technique you want to learn, and start there. I explain everything as I go, step by step, so if you want to learn how to remove dust spots from an image, just turn to page 46, and in a minute or two, you'll know. I did write the book in a logical order for learning Photoshop, but don't let that tie your hands. Jump right to whatever technique you want to learn—you can always go back, review, and try other stuff.

#2: Practice along with many of the same photos I used here in the book.

As you're going through the book, and you come to a technique like "Creating Panos," you might not have a set of pano shots just hanging around, so in those cases, I usually made the images available for you to download so you can follow along with the book. You can find them at **http://kelbyone.com /books/ps23** (see, this is one of those things I was talking about that you'd miss if you skipped this and went right to Chapter 1).
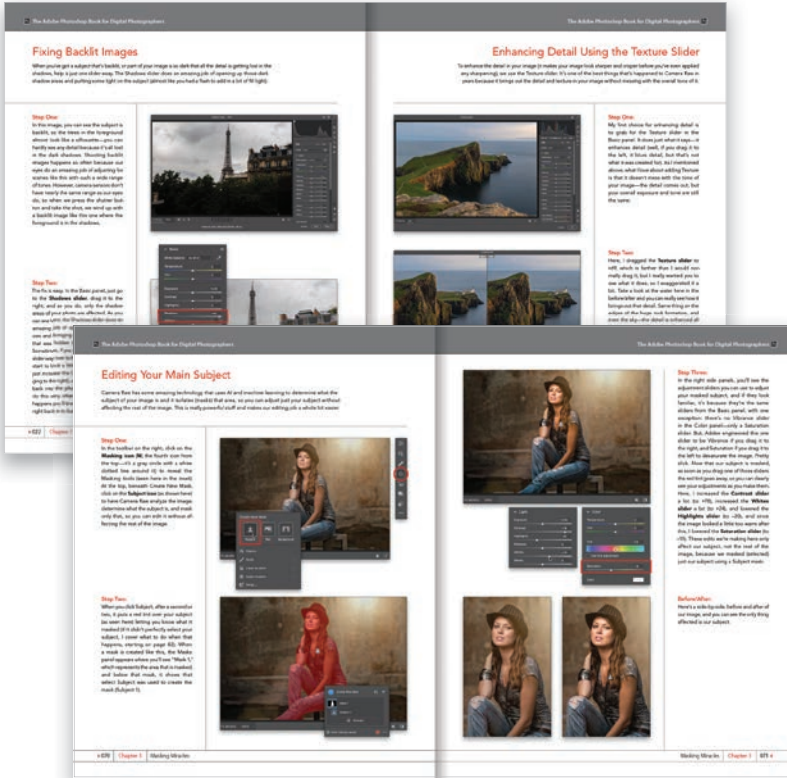
#3: You'll be using a lot of Camera Raw, even if you don't shoot in RAW.

The photographer's workflow in Photoshop has evolved greatly over time and, thus you'll wind up doing a *lot* of stuff in the Adobe Camera Raw part of Photoshop. Don't worry, you do *not* have to shoot in RAW to use Camera Raw. It works with JPEGs or TIFFs just fine. One big reason is because Adobe has been adding most of Photoshop's new features for photography into Camera Raw and they only exist there, including the new game-changing AI masking features, and much of today's photography workflow in Photoshop is based around Camera Raw. I wanted you to know this up front since we'll be going to Camera Raw, either at the beginning of the process, or just using it as a filter, quite a bit throughout. It's a key part of the modern workflow, and like I said, you absolutely don't have to shoot in RAW to use Camera Raw—it works with great with JPEGs, too.

#4: Warning: The Chapter Intro Pages Are Pretty Whacked!

In a normal book, the intro page at the beginning of each chapter gives you some important insight into the coming chapter. But, mine really don't. These brief, quirky, rambling intros have little to do with what's actually in the chapter. They're designed simply to give you a "mental break" between chapters, and they've become a tradition in all of my books. A lot of folks love them (so much so, that we published an entire book of nothing but these chapter intros. I am not making this up), however some "serious folks" hate them with the passion of a thousand burning suns, so I'm warning you now in case you're one of those serious folks who hate stuff like that. If that sounds like you, I'm begging you, please just skip the chapter intros altogether, because the rest of the book is really straightforward.

#5: There are things in Photoshop and in Camera Raw that do the exact same thing.

For example, there are lens corrections in Camera Raw's Optics panel, and there's a Lens Correction filter in Photoshop. In my own workflow, if I can do the exact same task in Camera Raw and Photoshop, I always choose to do it in Camera Raw because (a) it's faster (there are no progress bars in Camera Raw—everything happens in real time), (b) it's non-destructive (so you can always change my mind later), and (c) if you shot in RAW, it applies the edits to the RAW 16-bit image, which has a wider tonal range, and even heavy amounts of editing will do less visible damage to the image. So, if I'm showing you something in Camera Raw that can also be done in Photoshop, I may mention it, but I'll only show it in Camera Raw (since that's how I do it).

#6: Where's the Adobe Bridge stuff?

Adobe hasn't done much with Bridge for years now. I don't want to say it's abandoned, but kinda. I'm thinking the future of Bridge is not bright, and since it hasn't changed much in years (and it's slower than an asthmatic three-toed sloth covered in molasses, going uphill on a sand dune), I'm no longer including it here in the book. But, if you're brand new to Photoshop, you don't use Lightroom, and you think you might need Bridge (please, rethink it), I did write two entire chapters just on Bridge and put them for you on the book's download page for you to download for free. You'll find these at **http://kelbyone.com/books/ps23**, along with two other bonus chapters on printing and editing video (see, I care).
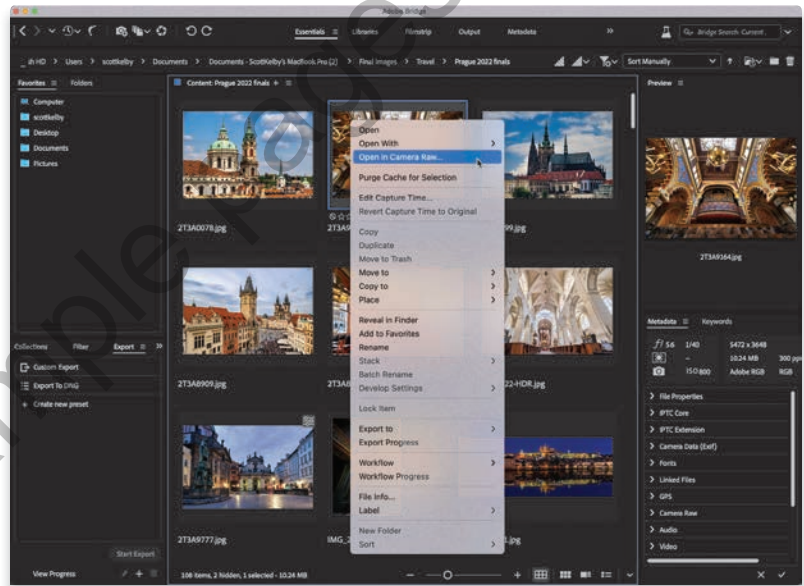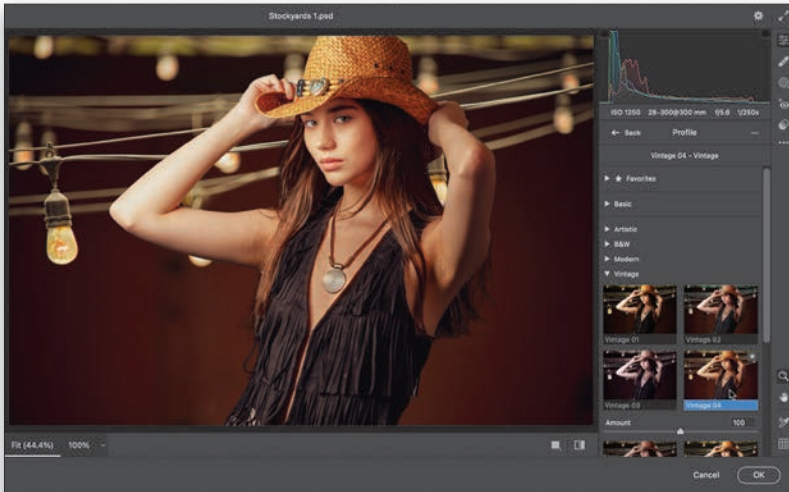
#7: There really isn't a seventh thing…

…but saying "Six Things…" won't get anybody to read anything. Seven is kind of a magical number (especially when it comes to book introductions), so I hope you'll forgive me for exaggerating the number of important things. Okay, you're ready to get to work. Time to unleash the magic and mayhem that is the wonderful world of Photoshop. Let's go!

Exposure: 0.4 sec | Focal Length: 28mm | Aperture Value: ƒ/11 | ISO: 100

Working with Layers

Okay, it's another chapter and another opportunity to provide an invisible chapter name from a movie or song (though I don't think we've actually named any chapters after a song so far). Ya know, this process of writing chapter intros is more complicated than you'd think, and it usually takes longer to write one of these chapter intros than it does to write one of the tutorials in a chapter. The reason is: it doesn't really matter if the tutorials work or not because, at this point, you've already bought the book (and more often than not, they don't work at all, but that's not why you bought the book. It's for these intros). But, these chapter intros are complex. They have to be spell-checked and need approximately 70% of the grammar to be at least in the ballpark, plus they need commas and stuff, and well, quite frankly, they're a lot of trouble. Writing these intros is a process, and I have to be in the right frame of mind to write at this low/high level. So, if you're thinking that when I write these, I'm sitting in my wife's art studio in a cozy chair, with a throw blanket, with my feet up and a cold glass of Diet Coke on ice within reach on a small side table, with the dogs curled up napping on the floor as a warm instrumental jazz Spotify playlist is playing softly in the background, and sunlight fills the room on a warm Florida day, boy are you way off. Geesh, you don't know me at all, and that's disappointing because here we are at, what is this, like Chapter 5, and I thought by now we'd be close, like best buds. Well, to give you a peek into what my writing life is really like (so we can bond over it), here's how I write these intros: First, I'm usually in a national park, probably Yosemite, and I'm sitting cross-legged under a tree, wearing a hand-woven Guatemalan pancho, with Yosemite falls roaring gently in the background, as a fawn scampers by after picking up the acorns and apples I had carefully laid out for her. The soundtrack for my writing is "Fantasia de Mon Triste" from *La Compagna* played on the lute. I nibble on wild berries, walnuts, and other healthy snacks as I sip cool, fresh water from the falls in a hand-crafted, eco-friendly cup carved from a burl of a birch tree. One reason the chapter intro writing process takes so long is that I don't write on my laptop. I exclusively write by hand using a Caran d'Ache Ecridor retro palladium-coated fountain pen on crisp, white, feathery sheets of A4-sized Clairefontaine Triomphe stationery with a thickness of 90g/m2. So, if that's what you were picturing when you think of me writing these chapter intros, you totally "get me." This closeness we share is sometimes scary. It's often hard to know where you start and I begin. #truth

Getting Started with Layers

Layers are one of the most powerful features in Photoshop because they do so much. A layer lets you add something on top of your image and position it wherever you'd like. For example, say you'd like to add a graphic or type to a wedding book page, or you'd like to blend two photos together for a fine art effect, you can do this with layers. Plus, we use layers for everything from fixing problems to special effects. Here are the basics on how layers work:

Step One:
Open an image and if you look over in the Layers panel (it's found under the Window menu if it's not already open), it will appear as the Background layer (as seen here). Let's add some type here to appear over our image.
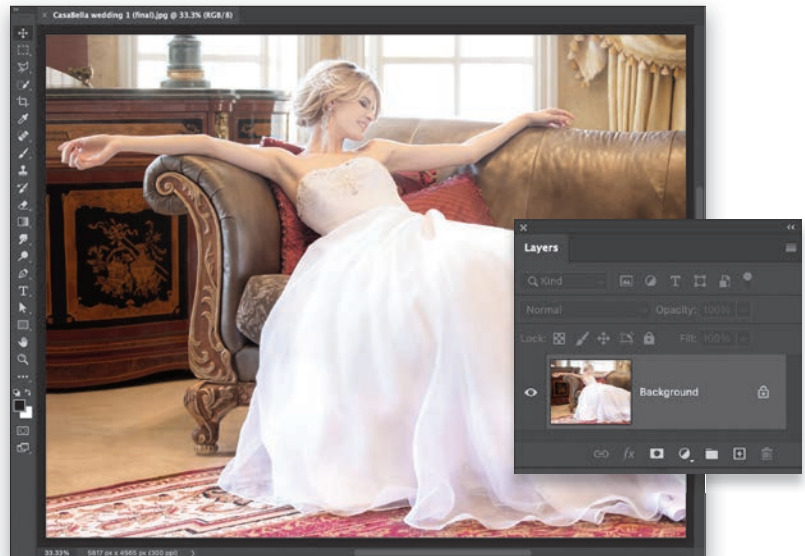
Step Two:
Get the **Horizontal Type tool (T)** from the Toolbox (as shown here), then click on your image and start typing. This creates a Type layer and you can see this over in the Layers panel (it's the one stacked above the Background layer; the letter "T" thumbnail lets you know at a glance that this is a Type layer). Type in the phrase "always and forever…" (as shown here). The font I'm using is called "Cezanne" from the font developer P22, but you can use any script font you'd like (you choose your font and font size from the Options Bar near the top of the interface. You'll see a font pop-up menu and a size field there where you can type in the point size you'd like. You can also choose the color here).
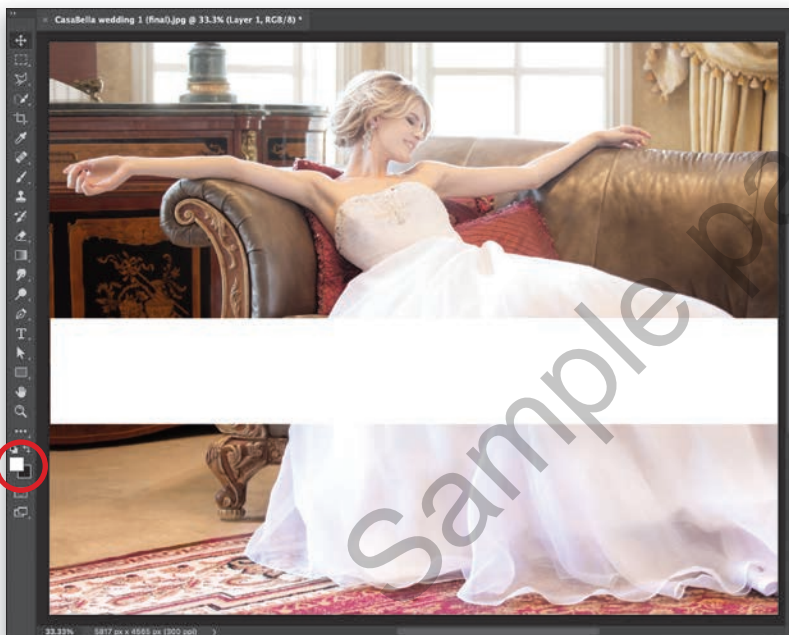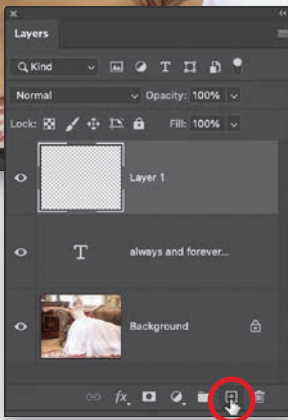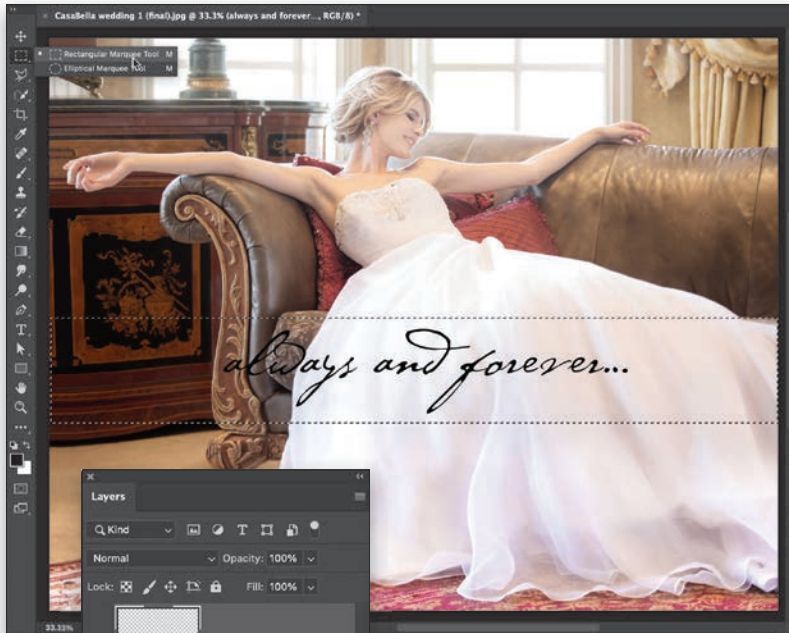
Step Three:

Once you've got your type in place, it's floating above the background on its own separate layer, so you can easily reposition it by switching to the Move tool in the Toolbox and just clicking-and-dragging it (the Move tool is the topmost tool in the Toolbox). If you look at the type here, the left side of it is kind of hard to read because it blends in with the sofa, so let's put a white bar behind the type to make it stand out. To add a new blank layer, click on the **Create a New Layer icon** at the bottom of the Layers panel (it's circled here in red). Now, get the **Rectangular Marquee tool (M)** from the Toolbox and click-and-drag out a thin, wide rectangle from side to side. Make it a little larger than the text, like you see here. Next, we want to fill this rectangle with white, so we need to set white as our Foreground color.

Step Four:

An easy way to do that is to first set your Foreground and Background colors to their default settings by pressing the **D key**. That makes black your Foreground color and white your Background color. However, we need to swap those two colors, so white is the Foreground color and black is the Background color (you can see their swatches near the bottom of the Toolbox). To do that, just press the **X key.** Now, to fill our rectangular selection with white, press **Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace)**, and then Deselect the selection by pressing **Command-D (PC: Ctrl-D)**. This white bar now covers our type because it's "above" our Type layer in the Layers panel (the bride image is at the bottom of the layer stack, the Type layer is on top of that, and the white bar is above the Type layer, so it covers it up). We need the white bar to appear behind our Type layer, not covering it up, so we just need to change the order of the layers.

Step Five:

Go to the Layers panel, click on the top layer (the white bar; Layer 1) and drag it down below the Type layer. Now, the type is visible again because the Type layer is at the top of the layer stack (as seen here, in the Layers panel). So, the stacking order has changed. The bride is still on the Background layer, the white bar layer is in the middle now, and the Type layer is on top. Let's go ahead and rename Layer 1 (the white bar), so it's easier to keep track of. In the Layers panel, double-click directly on the words "Layer 1" and it highlights so you can type in a new name (I named mine "White Bar." I know. How original). By the way, Type layers automatically name themselves with the first few words you typed, so you don't have to rename them unless you really want to.

Step Six:

We could leave the white bar solid white, but one of the nice features of layers is the ability to change their opacity. Let's make that white bar a bit transparent, so you can see the image behind it. It will still do its job of making the type easier to read, but it won't block as much of the photo if it's a bit see-through. To do this, go near the top right of the Layers panel and you'll see an Opacity field. By default, it reads 100%, but if you click on the little down-facing arrow to the right of its field, a slider appears and you can drag that slider to the left to lower the **Opacity** of that white bar (here, I lowered it to 60%). Now you can see through that white bar a bit, so it's not covering as much of the image on the Background layer.
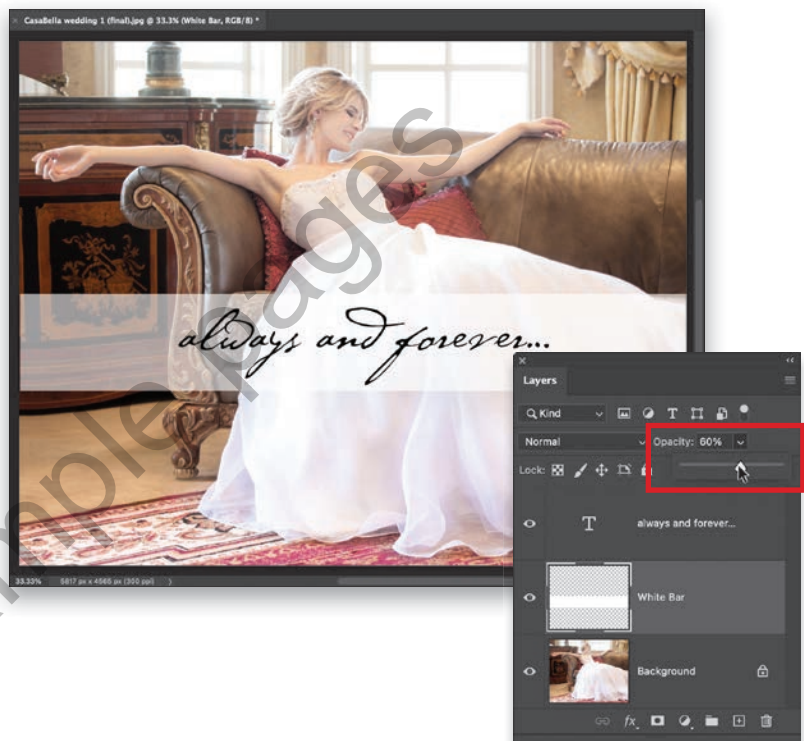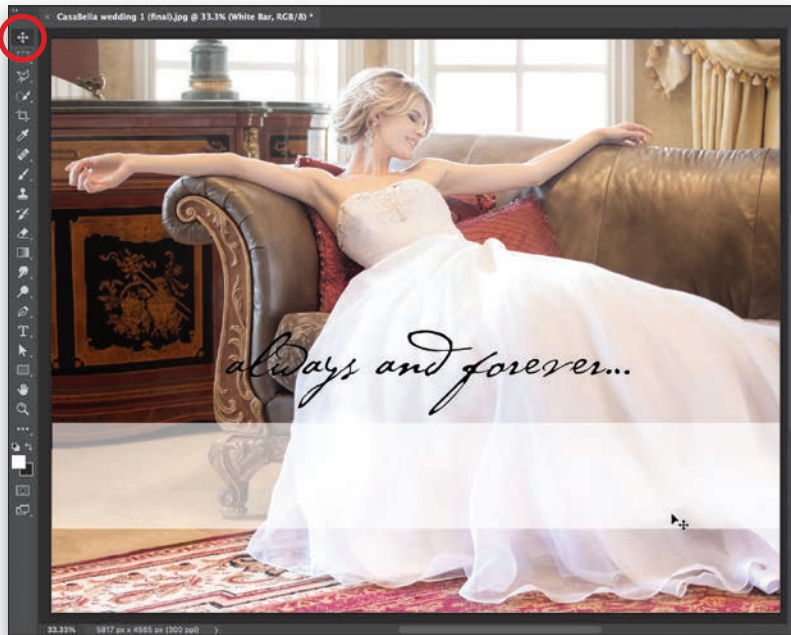
Step Seven:

It seems like our type and our white bar are maybe a little too high up in the image, so let's fix that. Get the **Move tool (V)** from the Toolbox (it's circled here in red), and in the image window (not in the Layers panel; it's already our active layer), click directly on the white bar and drag it straight downward a couple of inches or so (like you see here). By the way, to make it drag perfectly straight down, press-and-hold the Shift key while you drag. Next, we'll do the same thing with our Type layer.

Step Eight:

To move the Type layer, we'll have to go to the Layers panel and click on that layer to make it the active layer (so things we do now will affect the Type layer, and not that white bar layer where we had been working). Once you click on the Type layer, with the Move tool still selected, click-and-drag the type on the image straight downward, so it's over the white bar again. Now that we have it down there, let's try something different: If you drag the text over to the right a bit, so it's fully over her dress (like you see here), we don't need that white bar at all, so let's get rid of it. We can either hide it from view by clicking on the eye icon to the left of the layer's thumbnail in the Layers panel, or we can delete it by hitting the **Delete (PC: Backspace) key**, or we can click-and-drag that layer down to the trash can icon at the bottom of the Layers panel (shown circled here in red). Okay, there ya have it—the basics of working with layers. Now you know how to add new layers, add a Type layer, reorder your layers, change their opacity, and delete them. We're off and running.

Blending Two or More Images (Intro to Layer Masks)

I'm sure you've seen many examples where one image blends smoothly and seamlessly into another image. Well, thanks to layers and layer masking, it's super-simple to do. When you add a layer mask, you're telling Photoshop, "I only want to show part of what's on this layer," and then you can use either the Brush tool or the Gradient tool (my favorite) to pick which parts of that layer you want visible and which parts you want hidden. Using a large, soft-edged brush, or the Gradient tool, can make the blend between images really nice and smooth. Just as a heads-up as we get into this: any parts of a layer mask that appear in black, that part of the image will be hidden (concealed), and any parts that appear in white will be visible (revealed). A phrase we've been using since prehistoric times to help us remember this is: "Black conceals and white reveals." This will make more sense shortly.

Step One:

We're going to blend three images to-gether here. I usually pick one to start with as my "base" image, and in this case, I chose this image of a restaurant menu.
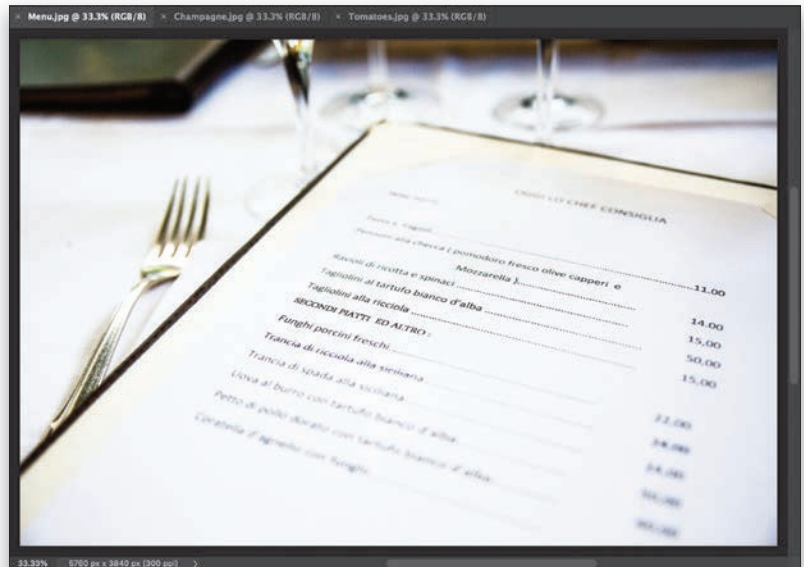
Step Two:

Open the first image you want to blend with the menu image—in this case, it's a photo of a champagne bottle. We need to get this image over onto our menu image, and the easiest way to do this is to copy-and-paste this layer over into the other image (yes, you can copy-and-paste layers between documents). The only problem is, it doesn't let you copy-and-paste Background layers (ugh!), so we'll just convert this Background layer into a regular layer. We do this by simply clicking once on the little **lock icon** to the right of the word "Background" (as shown here). That's it. One click and it's a regular layer (I know, it seems like it should be more complicated than that). Now, press **Command-C (PC: Ctrl-C)** to Copy this layer into memory.
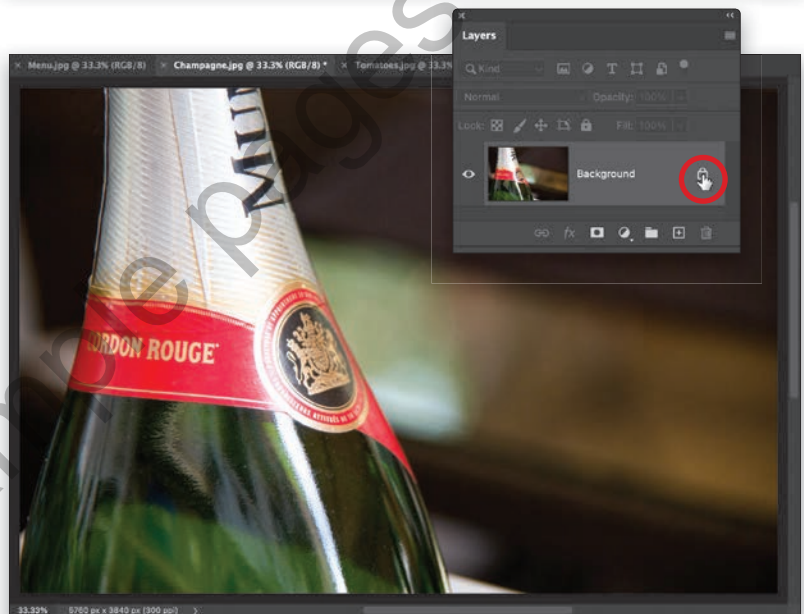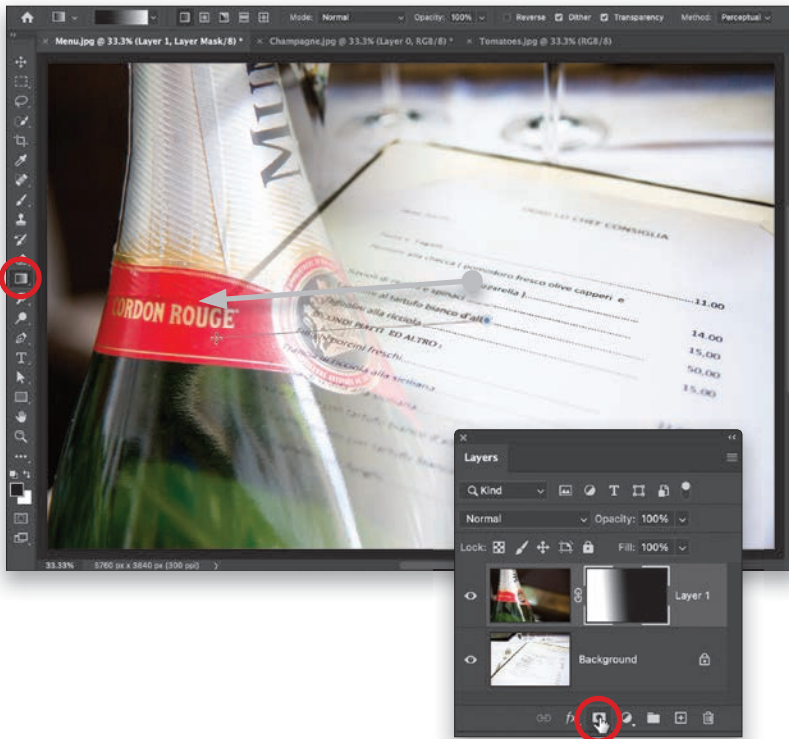
Step Three:

Go back to the menu image and press **Command-V (PC: Ctrl-V)** to Paste this champagne bottle image right over the menu image. Of course, when you do this, the champagne image will cover up the menu, and that's okay (that's how it's supposed to work). We're going to add a layer mask to create a smooth blend between the two images, and it's just three easy clicks: (1) Click on the **Add Layer Mask icon** at the bottom of the Layers panel (it's shown circled here in red). Then, (2) get the **Gradient tool (G)** from the Toolbox (it's circled in red, too). Lastly, (3) take that Gradient tool, click it where you want our champagne bottle image on the top layer to be transparent, and then drag over to where you want it to be visible. Here, I clicked to the right of the bottle (where I want the menu to be visible), and then I dragged over to the bottle, and it made a smooth transition between the menu and the champagne bottle.
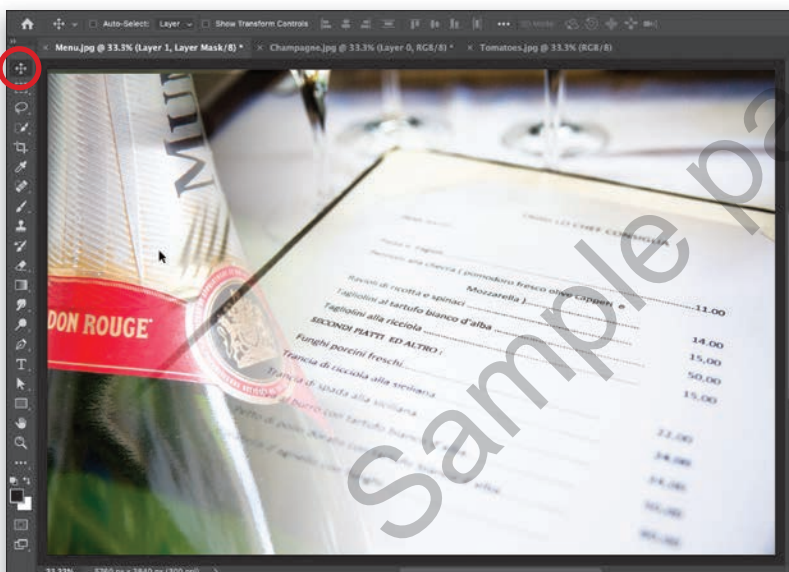
Step Four:

Take a look at the Layers panel in the previous step, and you'll now see a second thumbnail to the right of the original champagne bottle layer's thumbnail. That's the layer mask thumbnail. See how it's black on the right side? That's showing you that part of the bottle image is hidden from view (concealed), and as it graduates over to white on the left, the bottle becomes visible (revealed). That's why we say, "black conceals and white reveals." Okay, that bottle seems a little too far into the image, so get the **Move tool (V)** from the top of the Toolbox, click on the bottle, and drag it over to the left a bit, so it's not so far into the image (as seen here). Next, let's add the third image.

Step Five:

Let's open the image of a fresh tomato and mozzarella caprese salad. Let's first convert it to a regular layer by going to the Layers panel and clicking on the **lock icon** (when you do this, the name changes to "Layer 0" and the lock icon disappears, as seen here, in the inset). Now we can Copy this layer into memory by pressing **Command-C (PC: Ctrl-C)**.

Step Six:

Go back to the menu image document, and then press **Command-V (PC: Ctrl-V)** to Paste the caprese salad layer into our menu document. Now, using the **Move tool**, slide that image over to the right (as shown here). Okay, the image has a hard edge on the left and it doesn't blend, so in the next step, we'll create that smooth blend using a layer mask and the Gradient tool.
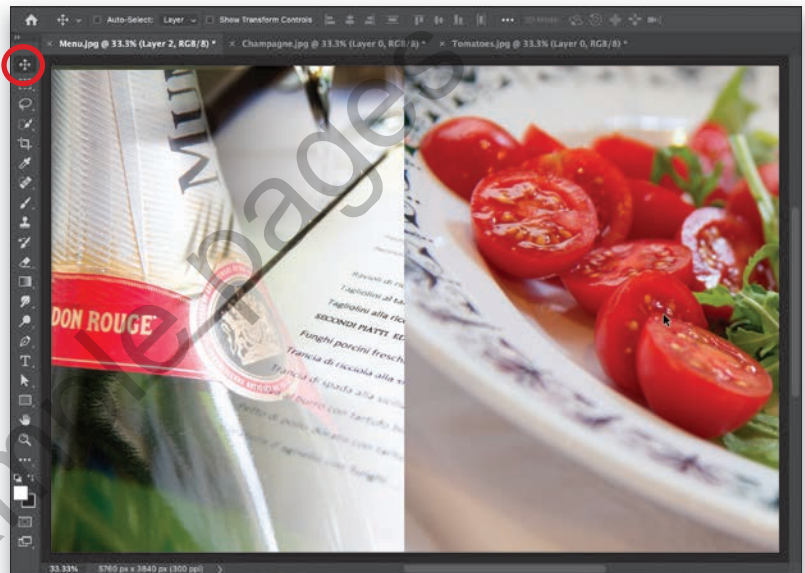
Step Seven:

Click on the **Add Layer Mask icon** at the bottom of the Layers panel, and then get the **Gradient tool** again from the Toolbox. Now, click the Gradient tool where you want the image on the top layer to be transparent, and then drag over to where you want it to be visible. Here, I clicked on the plate (I want that part to be transparent), then I dragged over to the middle of the tomatoes, and it'll create that smooth graduation between the menu and salad (as seen in the next step).

Step Eight:

Here you can see the smooth blending of the images, thanks to those gradients on the layer masks. Now, let's get the **Move tool** again, and drag both the champagne bottle and the salad out over toward the edges a bit, so they don't overtake the image too much. Here's the final image, and your introduction to layer masks for blending. By the way, as I mentioned in the introduction, you can also use the Brush tool the same way. If you paint in black, it would hide any areas you painted over. Or, if, for example, here you wanted to see more of the tomatoes, you would paint over them in white. Use a large, soft-edged brush to keep all the edges soft and blending smoothly.

Getting Started with Layer Blend Modes

Layer blend modes are awesome because they let you choose how the layer you're working on blends with the layer(s) below it. When your layer blend mode is set to Normal, it doesn't blend—whatever's on this layer covers up whatever's on the layer(s) below it. But, when you choose a blend mode, now it blends, and it looks different based on which blend mode you choose. Besides Normal mode, there are 26 different blend modes, but to be honest, in your day-to-day work, you're really only going to use four of them: Multiply, Screen, Overlay, and Soft Light. There will be a time here and there that you'll wind up using one of the others, maybe for a special effect or a retouching task, but for the most part, it's just those four. Here's what they do and how they work:

Step One:

You need to have a layer to get layer blend modes to work, so open an image, and then press **Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J)** to make a duplicate of the Background layer (you can see this new layer, named "Layer 1" by default, in the Layers panel). Now, near the top left of the Layers panel, you'll see a pop-up menu set to Normal, by default (as seen here in the red rectangle).
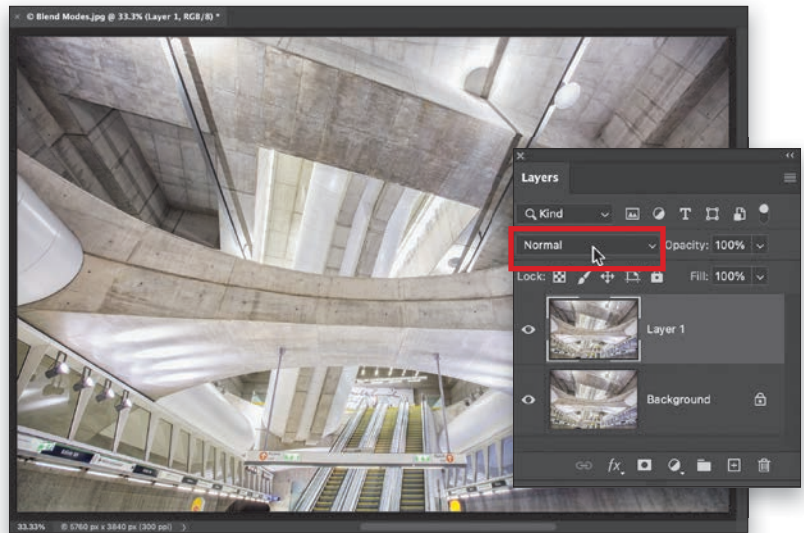
Step Two:

To see the different layer blend modes, click-and-hold on the word "Normal," and the pop-up menu of blends modes appears (as seen here). To see how this top layer would look with a layer blend mode applied, scroll over any of the blend modes in this menu, and you'll see the results of each one appear on-screen. You can also use the **Up/Down Arrow keys** on your keyboard to scroll through the menu to sample each one. Here, I chose **Multiply**, which is a mode that multiplies the color in the image, making it look much darker. I use this mode quite a bit when I'm editing an image to see how it would look darker and more dramatic.
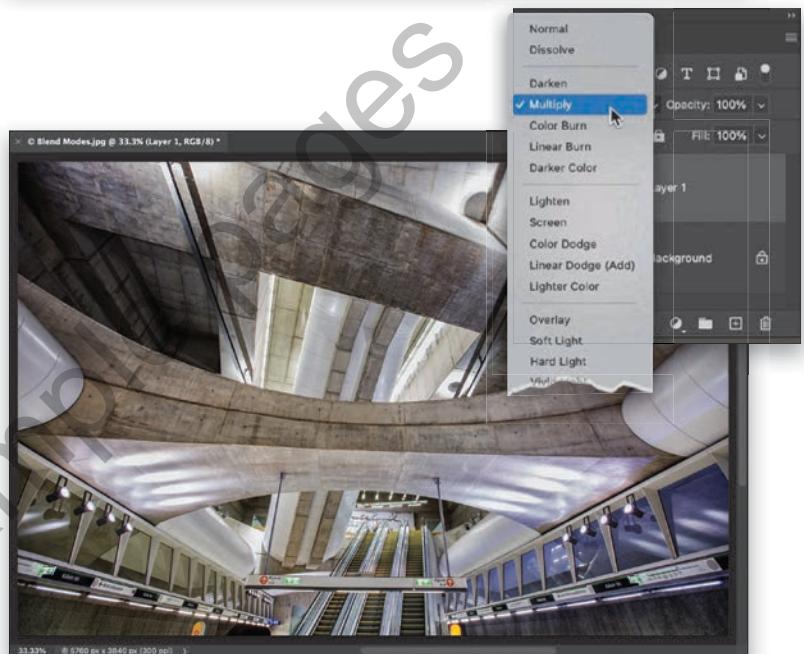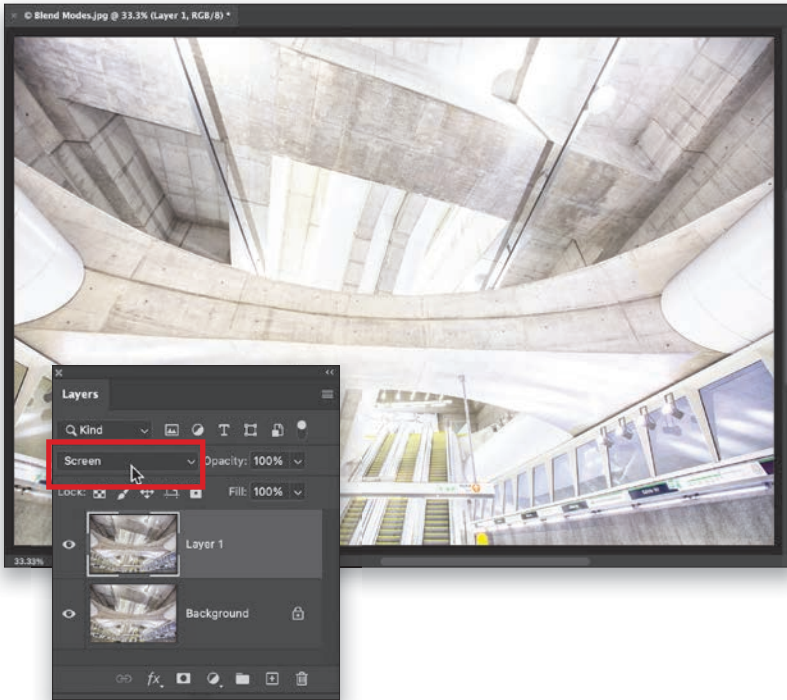
Step Three:

Here's another one of the four most-used blend modes: **Screen**. It makes your image appear much brighter (as seen here). This is a great way to quickly see how your image would look with a bright high-key look. If you apply a blend mode and think it's too intense (in this case, it's too bright), you can simply lower the Opacity amount for this layer (up near the top-right corner of the Layers panel) to dial back the amount of the effect (so, if you want this to look less bright, lower the Opacity).

TIP: Another Way to Audition Layer Blend Modes

You don't have to click-and-hold on that pop-up menu—you can scroll through and audition any of the blend modes by pressing **Shift-+** to move forward through them, or **Shift--** to scroll backward through them.
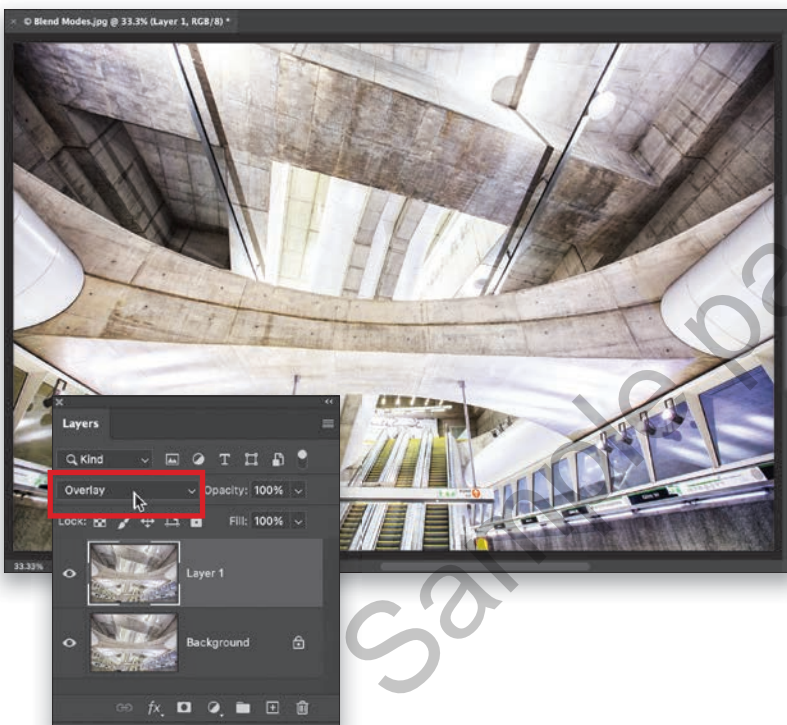
Step Four:

Next, let's switch to **Overlay mode**, which adds a lot of contrast to your image (as seen here). Now, didn't I say there were four most-used blend modes? Yes, but the last one is pretty much like this one. It's Soft Light, which is pretty much a less powerful version of Overlay. If there were a fifth most-popular layer blend mode, it would probably be Color, which lets you add a color to your image without covering the layer with color—the color blends in with the image below it.

Five Layers Things to Know Before We Move On

These are some of those things you'll want to know before we move on because we use a lot of these things in our day-to-day layers work.

#1: How to Duplicate a Layer

To duplicate a layer, click on the layer in the Layers panel and **press Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J)**. This works whether it's a regular layer or the Background layer. Weird thing: if you duplicate the Background layer, it names the duplicate "Layer 1" (as seen here). Not weird yet. If you duplicate that layer, it doesn't name it "Layer 2." It names it "Layer 1 copy." Weird.
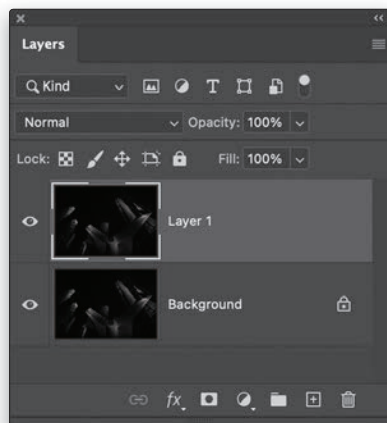
#2: Moving Multiple Layers

If you want to move multiple layers in your image at the same time, there are two ways to do this: (1) Click on the first layer you want to move, then press-and-hold the Command (PC: Ctrl) key, and then click on the other layers you want to move at the same time to select them (I've Command-clicked on three layers here, and all three are highlighted). Now, when you drag any of those layers in your image, all of your selected layers move as one unit. That method moves them only as long as they're selected. If you want something more permanent, you can Command-click on the layers you want, and then click the **Link Layers icon** at the bottom of the Layers panel (shown circled here). Now, those panels stay linked to each other until you click that icon again.
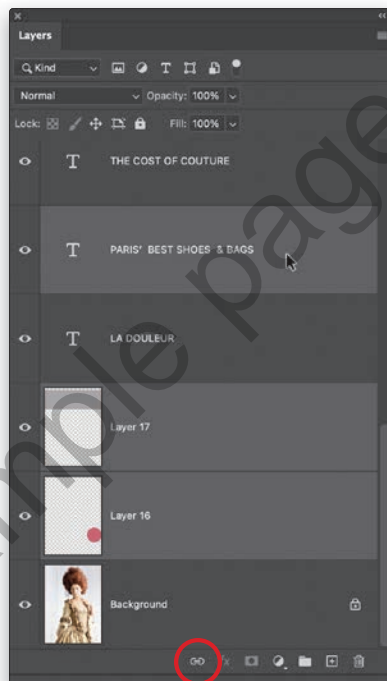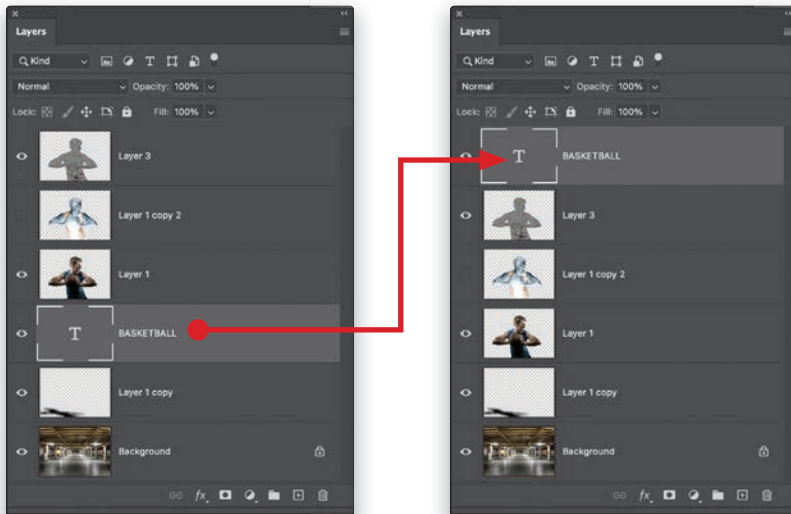
#3: Quickly Move a Layer in the Layer Stack

If you want to quickly move a particular layer to the top of the layer stack (as seen here on the right), click on the layer, and then press **Command-Shift-]** (Right Bracket key; **Ctrl-Shift-]**). You can move any layer to the bottom of the stack using the same shortcut, but just use the Left Bracket ([) key instead.
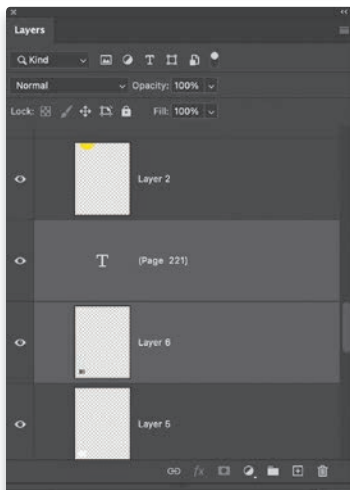
#4: How to Merge Two or More Layers

If you have two layers that you want to be just one, click on the top layer and press **Command-E (PC: Ctrl-E)**. If you want to merge more than two layers together, press-and-hold the Command (PC: Ctrl) key, click on the layers you want to merge into one, and then press the same keyboard shortcut.
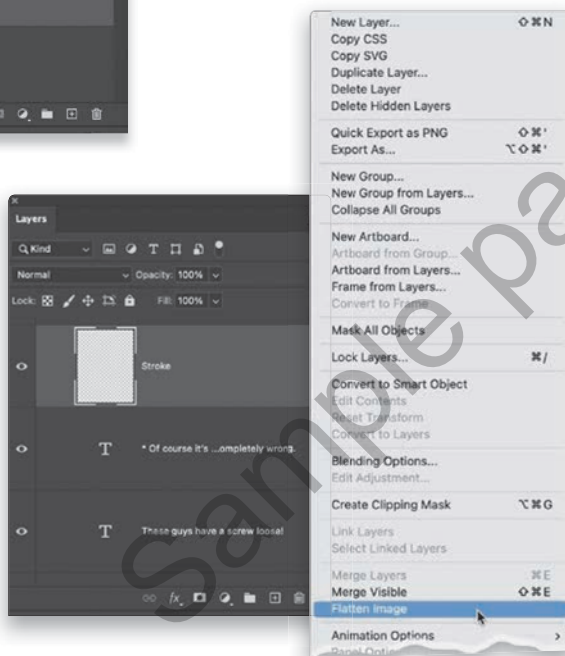
#5: How to Flatten Your Layers

When you're done working with your layers and you want to flatten your image—keeping the same look as your current image—go to the Layers panel's flyout menu (at the top-right corner of the panel), and down near the bottom, choose **Flatten Image** (as shown here).

Adding Drop Shadows and Other Layer Effects

What's interesting (and important) to know about adding layer effects, like a drop shadow or a glow, is that it doesn't just apply the effect to your object (in this case, we're applying a drop shadow to a guitar), but instead, it applies the effect to that entire layer. So, anything you do on that layer will have a drop shadow added to it. For example, if you grabbed the Brush tool and painted a few red strokes on your guitar layer, those strokes would have the exact same drop shadow you applied to the guitar applied to them. That's why they're called "layer effects" and not "effects." Whatever you choose, it gets applied to the entire layer.

Step One:

Open an image you want to apply a drop shadow to (in this case, it's a guitar. Don't forget, you can download this same practice image from the book's companion website. The URL can be found in the book's introduction). Since the guitar is on the Background layer, we can't add a layer effect to it—it's technically not a "real" layer yet, but we can fix that. First, go under the Select menu up top, choose **Subject**, and it will select our subject (in this case, the guitar). Next, press **Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J)** to put that selected guitar up on its own separate layer, minus the white background because we selected just the guitar itself (as seen here, in the Layers panel. That checkerboard pattern you see on Layer 1's thumbnail shows you the areas on that layer that are transparent—all those areas around the guitar).

Step Two:

To apply a drop shadow (or any one of the 10 different layer effects), click on the **Add a Layer Style icon** (the fx) at the bottom of the Layers panel (it's the second one from the left), and from the bottom of the pop-up menu, choose **Drop Shadow** (as shown here).

Step Three:

When you choose Drop Shadow, the Drop Shadow options appear in the **Layer Style dialog** (seen here), and it applies a drop shadow to any objects on this layer. The default settings were made a long, long time ago when file resolutions were much, much lower, so these settings are so subtle you probably won't even be able to see that a drop shadow has been added (as seen here. Don't worry, you can set your own defaults from here on out, but for now, your drop shadow is nearly invisible).

Step Four:

The first thing we're going to do is choose where we want our drop shadow. There are Angle and Distance settings to figure out the exact proper angle, but unless you're a nerd, there's a better way: a visual way where you put the shadow exactly where you want it without the math. Just move your cursor outside the Layer Style dialog, right out onto your image, and click-and-drag on your image to drag the shadow right where you want it. Here, I clicked on the guitar (since the shadow was hidden behind it with the default settings) and dragged the shadow down and to the right, so we can now at least see it. As a general rule, the farther away the shadow is from the object, the higher it appears off the background. You'll notice the shadow is hard-edged, so we'll need to soften it up a bit in the next step.

Step Five:

The Size slider controls the softness of the shadow (I know. Why isn't it named blur or softness? Don't get me started). Here, I increased the **Size slider** (softness) to 133 pixels and you can see the shadow looks much softer (it goes up to 2,000 pixels). You control the darkness of the drop shadow using the Opacity slider up near the top. Here, I increased the **Opacity slider** from 35% (the default) to 43% to make the shadow darker. One more thing before we move on: Notice that Use Global Light checkbox? What that means is, if you add more layers in this document, it will apply this same shadow, with the same angle and distance. If you were to change the angle or direction on any layer, all the other layers you applied a drop shadow to will all move, as well. The shadows move together—globally. Okay, let's take a look at a different effect just to say we did.
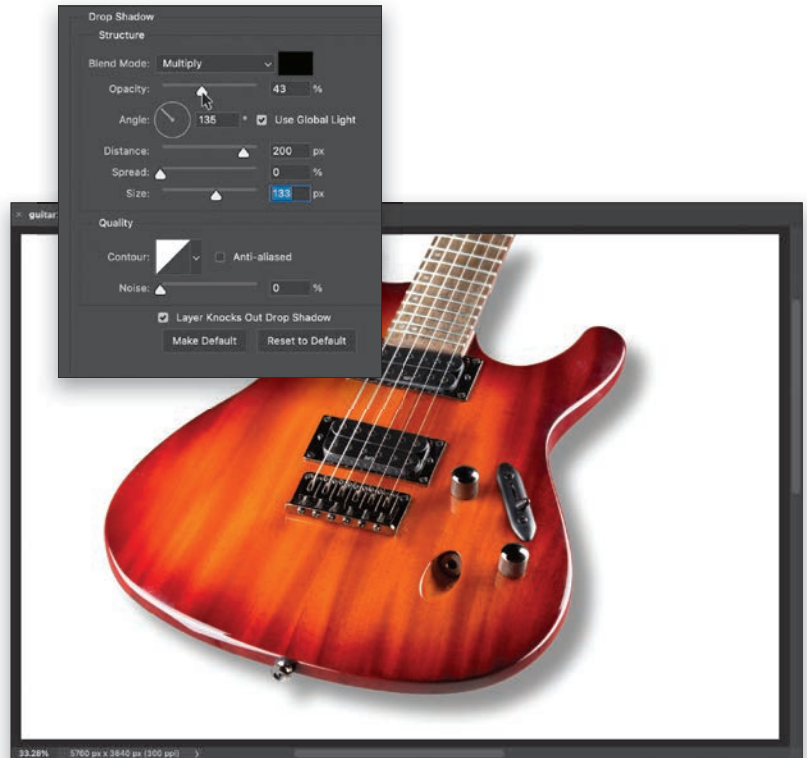
Step Six:

Let's turn off the drop shadow effect for now. You see that list of effects along the left side of the Layer Style dialog? Turn off the **Drop Shadow checkbox** (as seen here, below left). Okay, now that it's off, let's try an outer glow effect. But first, click OK at the top right to close the dialog for a minute. In the Layers panel, click on the Background layer to make it the active layer (as seen here, below right), press the **D key** to set your Foreground color to black, and then press **Option-Delete (PC: Alt-Backspace)** to fill the Background layer with black. This way, we can clearly see the glow once we apply it. While we're here, take a look in the Layers panel and notice that the word "Effects" appears right below the guitar layers's thumbnail (that lets you know a layer style was applied), and below that is the name of the effect (Drop Shadow). More on this in a moment.

Step Seven:

To apply an Outer Glow layer style, click back on Layer 1 in the Layers panel, then click on the **Add a Layer Style icon** again, choose **Outer Glow**, and it applies the glow effect, which you can barely see because (once again) the defaults were created a long time ago for much lower-resolution images. Speaking of defaults, once you come up with some settings you like better (trust me, it won't be hard), click the Make Default button near the bottom center of the Layer Style dialog and now your new settings are the new defaults. So, when you apply an outer glow it will apply your new defaults, instead of Adobe's old ones. Same thing for the other layer styles. Okay, let's tweak that glow a bit.

Step Eight:

To increase the size of the glow, drag the **Size slider** to the right (here, I dragged it over to 196 pixels). To make the glow more visible, increase the **Opacity slider** (as I did here, to 75%). The various layer styles have a lot in common, so once you learn how to use one, the others have many familiar sliders and checkboxes. Also, take a look over at the Layers panel, below the guitar layer, and you can see under the word "Effects," it now shows that two layer styles have been applied to this layer (you can apply all 10 if you want). But, also look to the left of Outer Glow—it has an eye icon. That lets you know that effect is visible. The Drop Shadow doesn't have an eye icon here because we hid it earlier by turning off its checkbox in the Styles list. You can show or hide effects right from the Layers panel by clicking on those eye icons, or the eye icon next to Effects to hide/show them all. After you click OK and apply these effects, you can bring back the Layer Style dialog to make changes by going to the Layers panel and double-clicking right on the layer style's name.

Resizing Something on a Layer

You'll learn in another chapter how to resize your image document, but what if you don't want to resize the document, just something on one of the layers? It's super-easy, but not really obvious if you haven't done it before.

Step One:

Open an image that has a Background layer and an object, some type, or a photo on its own layer above the back-ground image. In this case, we have a passport stamp graphic that appears on its own layer above the Background layer (as seen here). That's the object we want to resize. So, start by going to the Layers panel and clicking on the stamp's layer to make it the active layer.
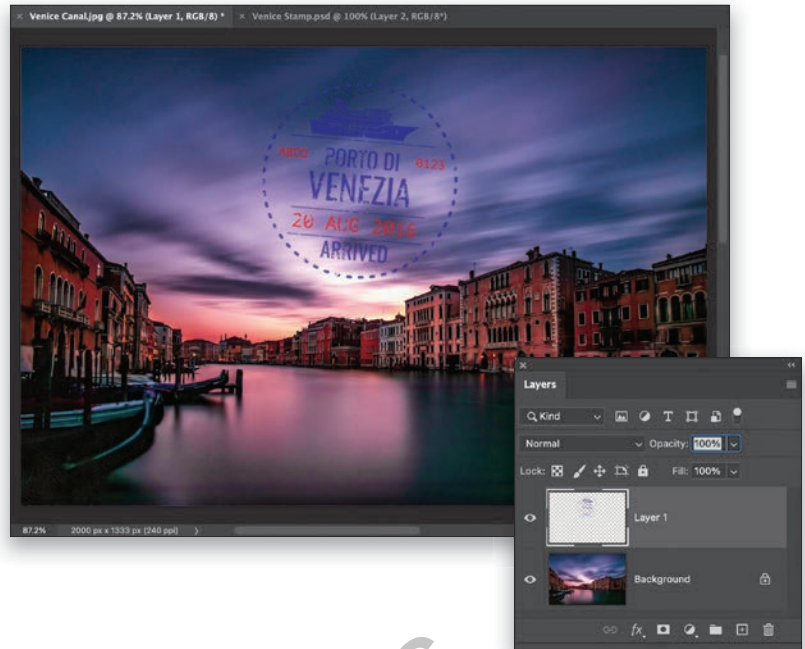
Step Two:

To resize (scale) this graphic image down in size, press **Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T)** and it brings up the Free Transform boundary box—you'll know it's in place because it puts control handles all the way around whatever is on the layer (as seen here). To make the stamp smaller (scale it down in size), click on any of the corner handles and drag inward (as shown here). The farther you drag, the smaller the stamp on this layer becomes. You can scale things down with hardly any visible loss of sharpness, but if you make something larger (more than 20% or 30% larger), it might start to look a little soft and pixelated. Just a heads-up, so you don't go scaling things way up and then wonder why they look really soft. When you're done resizing, press the **Return (PC: Enter) key** to lock it in.
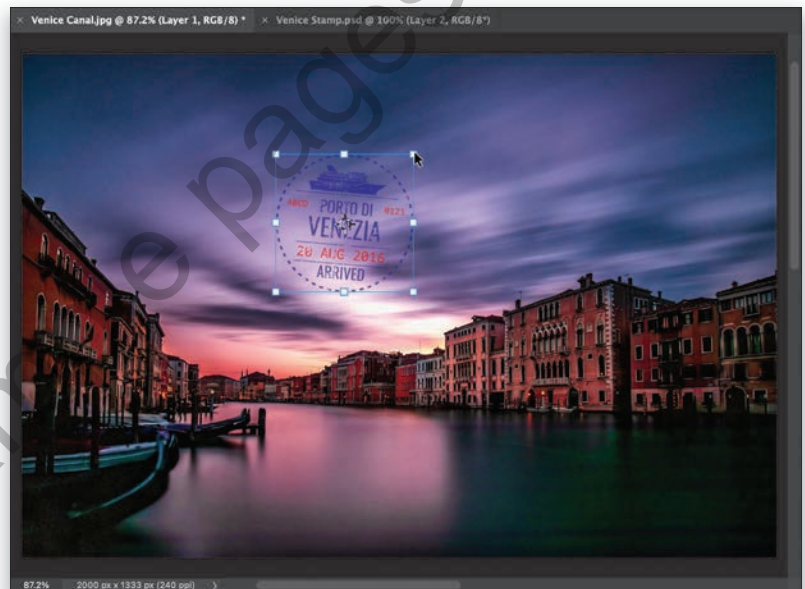
Organizing Your Layers

When you create a bunch of layers, your Layers panel starts to get really long, and you'll end up scrolling up and down a long list just to find the layer you want. But, there's a very easy way to cut down on all the clutter and bring some sanity back into your Layers panel when you have a bunch of layers in there.
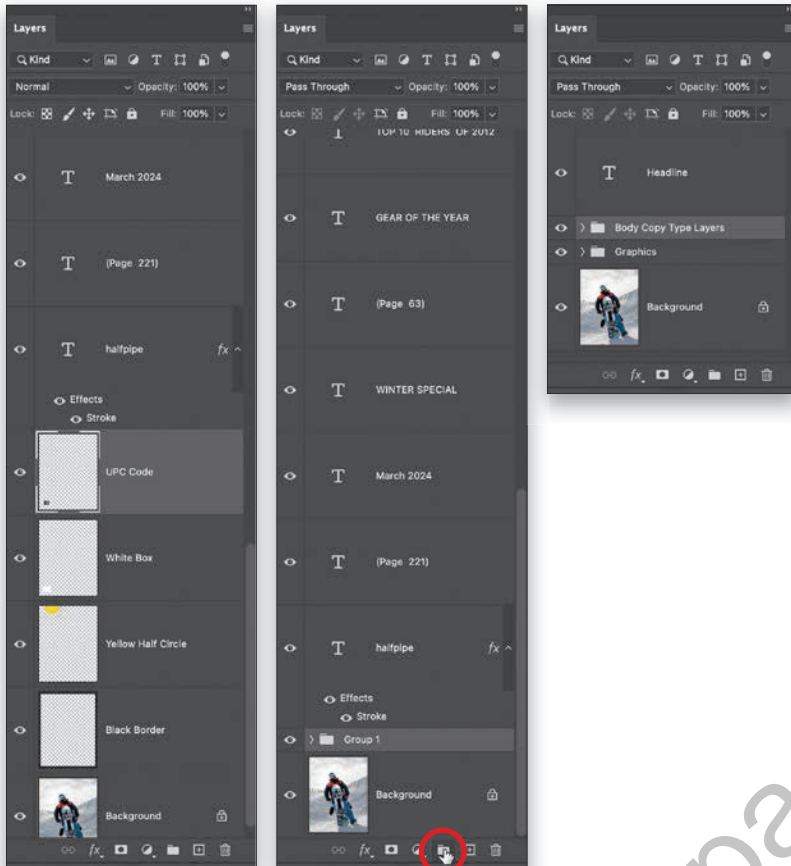
Step One:

There are 21 layers in the document I'm working on here. If you look at the Layers panel on the left, you can see the long, scrolling list of layers, and believe it or not, it doesn't take long to wind up with 21 layers—I've had documents with 50–60 layers. Luckily, just like we have folders on our computers to stay organized, we can have folders for layers, too, but they're called "groups." So, a bunch of layers in a folder is called a "layer group." To create one, select the layers you want in a group by Command-clicking (PC: Ctrl-clicking) on them in the Layers panel. Then, at the bottom of the panel, click on the **Create a New Group icon** (it looks like a folder), and it puts those selected layers into a group (as seen here, in the middle, where I selected all my graphic layers and put them into a group). By default, it's named "Group 1," but I recommend renaming it something more helpful (just double-click directly on Group 1, and it highlights the text, so you can type in a new name). Look at the Layers panel on the right, and you can see what it looks like once I also put all my Type layers in a group and renamed it. It's nice and easy to get around now. To look inside a group (to see all its layers), just click on the little right-facing arrow to the left of its name to expand it. To remove a layer from a group, just click on the layer and drag it out of the folder.
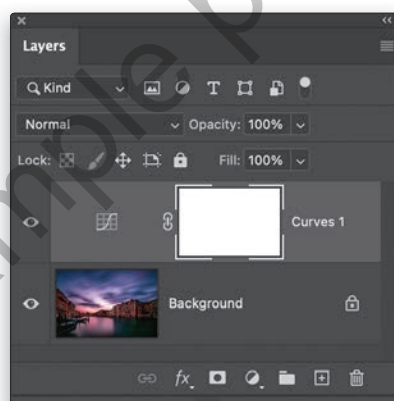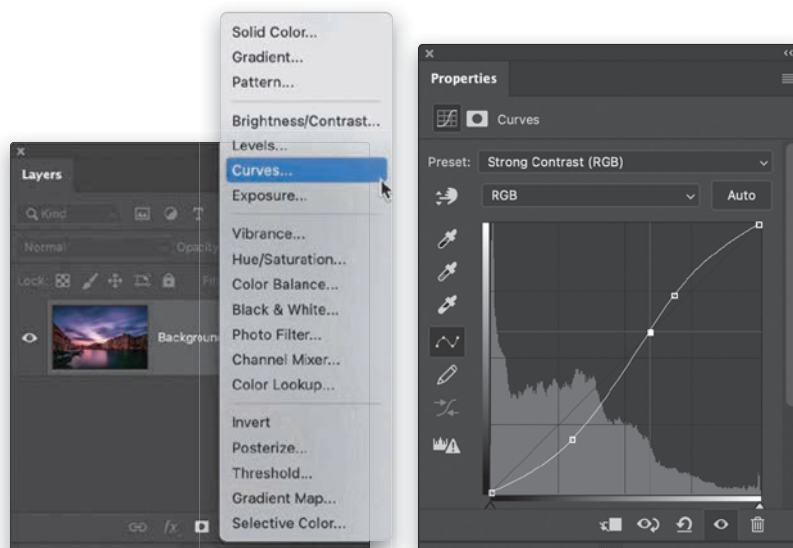
Adjustment Layers

Adjustment layers allow you to not only have an "undo" for any tonal adjustments you make (like brightening or darkening your image, or adding contrast, etc.), but they also give you the ability to edit those things forever. Think about this: You have a certain amount of undos while you're working in Photoshop, right? But, what happens when you close that document and reopen it later? Those undos are gone, right? Well, that's just one of the benefits of these non-destructive adjustment layers—you can use them as undos that last forever. So, if you reopen that same document a week or a year later, you can still edit or even completely undo those tonal changes.

Step One:

To see the adjustments you can apply as adjustment layers, click on the **Create New Adjustment Layer icon** (the half white/half black circle) at the bottom of the Layers panel. In the pop-up menu that appears, choose the adjustment you want (I chose Curves here), and the Properties panel appears, with that adjustment's options (as seen here on the right). Creating an adjustment layer adds a new layer to your Layers panel with a little icon, so you know which adjustment you applied (you can see the little Curves icon in the next step).

Step Two:

A nice feature of adjustment layers is that they come with a layer mask, so you can use the Brush or the Gradient tools if you only want parts of your image to get this adjustment (see page 120 for more on layer masks). To re-edit the curve (or whichever adjustment you chose), double-click on this layer and the Properties panel reopens with the last settings applied still in place so you can edit them, or you can delete the layer altogether by dragging it onto the trash icon at the bottom of the Layers panel. You can change the amount of the adjustment using the Opacity setting for this layer, and you can change its look by changing its layer blend mode. Plus, because this is a layer, when you save the file as a PSD (a Photoshop document), the adjustment layer is saved with it, so it gives you an undo that lasts forever.

Smart Filter Layers

Smart Filter layers are much like the adjustment layers you just learned about on the previous page, but instead of just giving you infinitely editible (or deletable) tonal adjustments, like Curves and Levels, these layers let you do pretty much the same thing with most of Photoshop's filters, including applying Camera Raw as filter. Once you create a Smart Filter layer, the filter you apply takes on all the same features as an adjustment layer, and the big thing is, it's also non-destructive—it's always undoable and re-editable, or you can delete it altogether. Here's how to use them:
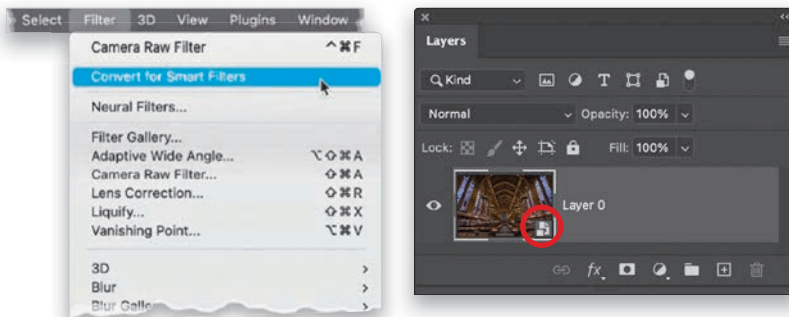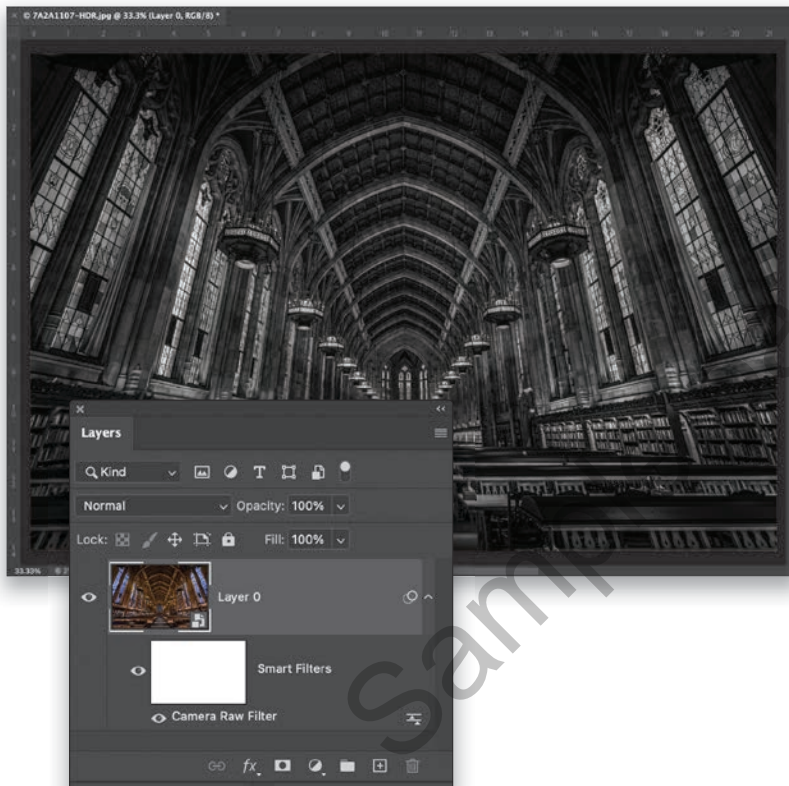

Step One:

To create a Smart Filter layer, go under the Filter menu, and up near the top, choose **Convert for Smart Filters**, which converts your regular layer (in this case, our Background layer) into a Smart Object layer. You'll see a little page icon in the bottom-right corner of the layer's thumbnail letting you know it's a Smart Object Layer. You can now apply any of Photoshop's filters from the Filter menu.

Step Two:

I chose Camera Raw Filter, which lets you apply Camera Raw as if it was a filter. In Camera Raw, I clicked on the B&W button for a quick black-and-white conversion of the color image seen in the thumbnail in Step One, and tweaked a few other settings. If you look at the Layers panel here, you can see right below the image layer, there's now a layer mask, so I could leave part of this image in color by painting on that mask. I can hide this filter by clicking on the eye icon to the left of "Smart Filters," and if I double-click on "Camera Raw Filter," it reopens the Camera Raw Filter window with all my previous settings still in place. I can also delete this layer altogether (hence the non-destructive part) by dragging it onto the trash icon at the bottom of the panel, and I can save this document as a PSD to keep this editable feature for use in the future. Again, these are very much like adjustment layers, but for filters.

Making a Simple Composite

Making a composite, where you take your subject (or part of one image) and put them on an entirely different background is incredibly popular and surprisingly easy. There are a few things you need to watch out for, and there are a couple of little tricks you can do to help make the final composite look realistic, but they really make a big difference. Here, we're going to create a simple composite where we have Photoshop select our subject for us (with it doing all the work), then we'll copy-and-paste our subject onto a different background, and then we'll use a little color trick to bring it all together.

Step One:

Here's our background image. I like this particular background because we have a foreground area that's in focus (the light bulbs right up front), and then the background behind them is nice and out of focus, so it'll make a realistic background for a composite. So, step one is to open a background image (and, of course, I made this image available for you to download on the book's companion webpage. You can find the download link in the book's introduction).

Step Two:

Next, let's open the subject image we want to composite onto the background. In this case, our subject was shot on a gray roll of seamless paper, and Photoshop loves a neutral color like that (or just any solid-colored wall) when you're trying to remove someone from a background. That's one reason why I shoot on gray seamless paper so often—it makes removing my subject from the background really easy. In fact, all you need to do is go under the Select menu and choose **Subject** (as shown here) and Photoshop will use its AI power to recognize that it's a person in the photo and put a selection around them for you, hair and all, and it does a pretty decent job of it (although, in a later chapter, we'll go in-depth on taking tricky hair selections up a big notch, but for everyday stuff like this, Select Subject does a decent job).
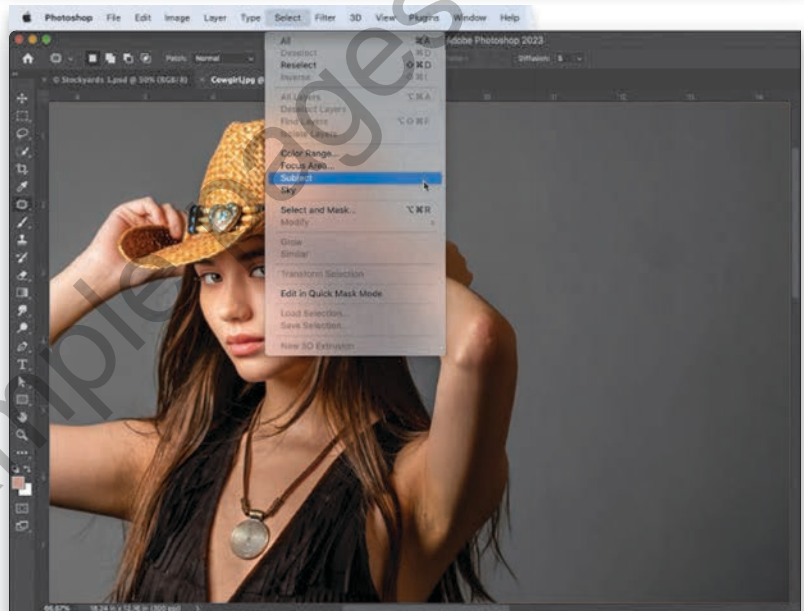
Step Three:

Now that our subject is selected, press **Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J)** to put her up on her own separate layer above the Background layer. It's hard to see that our subject is isolated while the original Background layer is still visible, so go to the Layers panel and click on the **eye icon** to the left of the Background layer to hide it from view (as seen here). Now we see our subject on a transparent background (that gray-and-white checkerboard she's on indicates the transparent areas). You'll notice it did a decent job on her hair here, but in the next step, we'll do a little trick I've been using for years that fills in any gaps, particularly around the edges, and makes the selection that much stronger.

Step Four:

The trick is to duplicate the subject layer twice (so you have three layers in all), so press **Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J)** twice. This "builds up" any pixels that tend to fall out along the edges of the hair, and it does a great job of just filling things in (as seen here). By the way, at this small size, it might not be as apparent, but when you try it on your own computer, you'll really see the difference I'm talking about. This is so worth doing. Now that we have this buildup, we want to combine these three subject layers into a single layer, so press-and-hold the Command (PC: Ctrl) key, and then in the Layers panel, click on the other two subject layers (Layer 1 copy, and Layer 1). With all three selected, press **Command-E (PC: Ctrl-E)** to combine them into a single layer. Now, let's Copy that subject layer into memory by pressing **Command-C (PC: Ctrl-C)**. Okay, that's the hard part (I told you this was simple); now onto the fun part.

Step Five:

Now, let's go back to our background image document and press **Command-V (PC: Ctrl-V)** to Paste our subject onto that background. Get the **Move tool** from the top of Toolbox (you can press the **V key** on your keyboard as a short-cut), and let's click-and-drag her up a little in the image, so that the top of her hat extends out of the top of the frame (as shown here). In the Layers panel, you'll see a new layer with her on it. Now, if you look at the right side of the image, you'll see that the ends of her hair have a bit of a glow or fringe around them, but there are a couple of quick tricks we can do that will generally help in situations like this (again, we'll cover tricky hair selections later on).
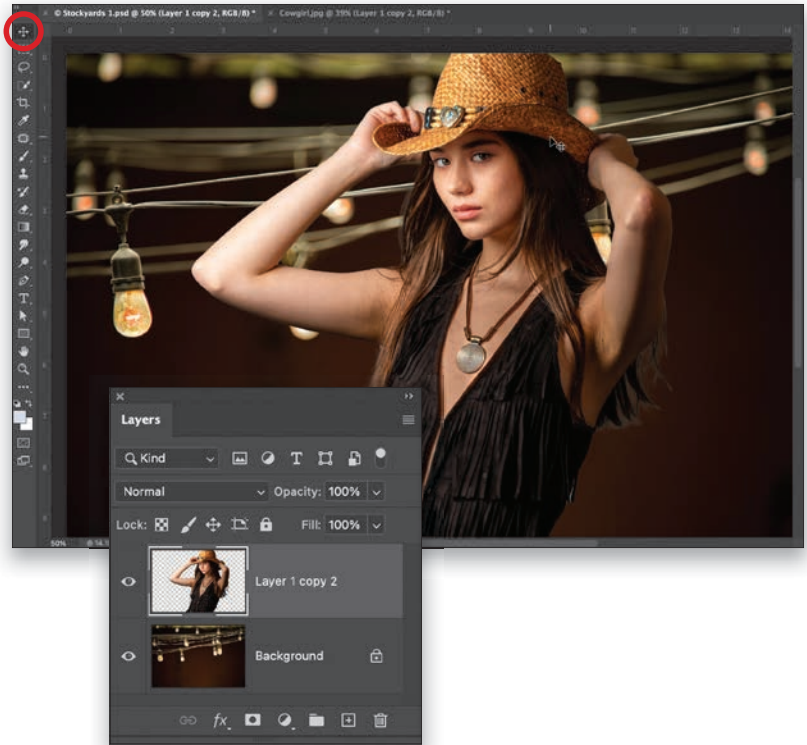
Step Six:

The first thing I would try is a feature that often helps remove that glow or fringe look. So, go under the Layer menu, and at the very bottom, under Matting, choose **Defringe**. When its dialog appears, enter 3 pixels for starters (as seen in the inset), click OK, and see if that does the trick. If it's not enough, press **Command-Z (PC: Ctrl-Z)** to Undo and try it again with a higher number (like 5 pixels or 10 pixels). In this case, while it did help, it didn't totally fix it, so let's undo it and try another method. Go under the Layer menu again, under Matting, but this time choose **Remove White Matte** (as shown here), and it replaces those lighter edge pixels with a darker color. In this case, that worked pretty well, but it just depends on the image (sometimes it's awesome; sometimes it's awful. Again, it just depends on the image).
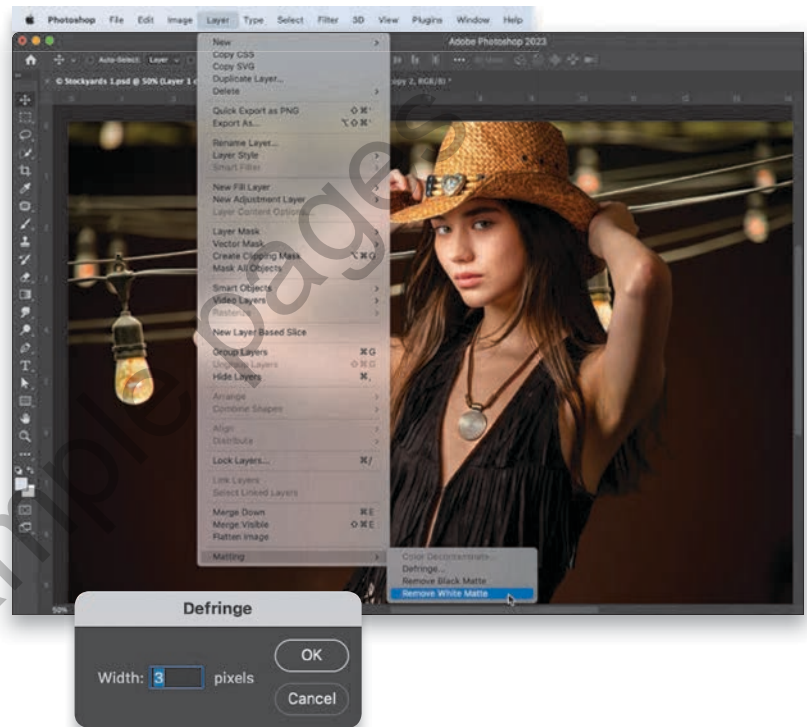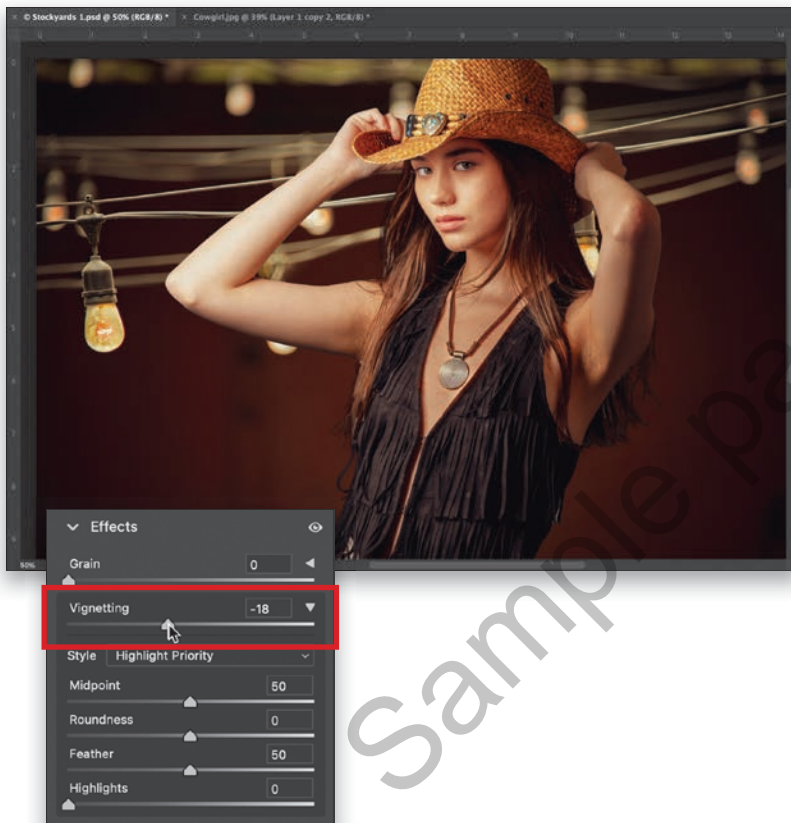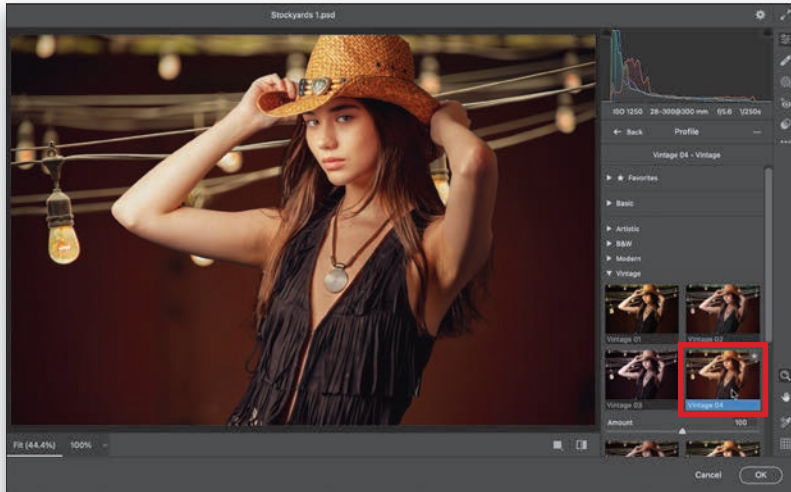
Step Seven:
When I'm toward the end of a composite, I do a little move that unifies the subject with the background, which helps make the subject look more like they're really in that scene. What I do is, I apply a color toning to the entire image, and it really brings things together. We'll use the Creative Profiles inside Camera Raw to do this, but first, we need to merge the two layers we have into a single Background layer, so when we apply the effect, it applies it to both at the same time. So, with your subject layer active in the Layers panel, press **Command-E (PC: Ctrl-E)** to merge it with the Background layer below it. Now, we can go under the Filter menu and choose **Camera Raw Filter**. When its window appears, in the Edit panel, to the right of the Profile pop-up menu, click on the icon with the four small squares. This brings up the Profile browser (as seen here). There are four sets of Creative Profiles and you can see a live onscreen preview of any one of them by just hovering your cursor over a thumbnail. Here, I went down to the Vintage collection of profiles and the one I liked best was **Vintage 04** (as seen above). When you click on it, it applies that color toning to the entire image, which helps to visually unify your subject in the foreground with the background.

Step Eight:
After you've applied the profile, click on the Back arrow at the top left of the Profile browser to close it. Then, to finish things up, let's add a finishing move that I do to nearly every portrait to help focus the attention on the subject. Go down to the Effects panel and drag the **Vignetting slider** just a bit to the left to subtly darken the outside edges all the way around the image (here, I dragged it to –18). Click OK to close Camera Raw and we're done with our simple composite.

Four MORE Important Layers Techniques

These are a few more of those thing you'll want to know to make your layers life more complete (and it'll keep you from having to scour the web to find out how to do them). Here we go:

**#1: Create a Layer That Looks Like You Flattened It (But Didn't)**

Sometimes you want to apply an effect to the entire image, but you don't want to flatten your image and lose the flexibility of having all your layers. This shortcut creates a new layer on top of your layer stack that looks like a flattened version of your image (as seen here), so you can apply your filter or effect or whatever to it. But, below it, are all your original layers. So, if you need to go back for any reason, you can hide this merged layer, or even delete it, and below it, your original layers are still there. The shortcut is **Command-Option-Shift-E (PC: Ctrl-Alt-Shift-E)**.
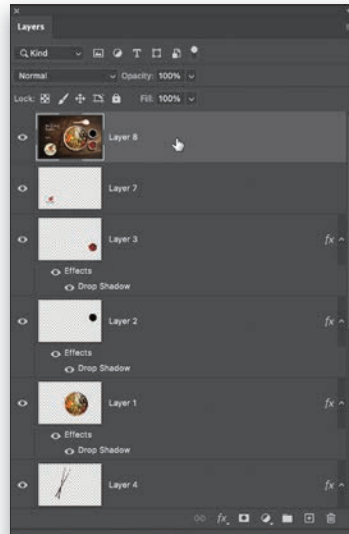
**#2: Skip the Trip to the Layers Panel and Just Jump to Any Layer You Want**

This is a shortcut I use everyday because it saves you a trip to the Layers panel when you want to change to a different layer. Just press-and-hold the Command (PC: Ctrl) key, and in the image itself (not in the Layers panel), click right on the object you want to work with and it jumps to that layer. Here, you can see my cursor clicking on the bowl and, instantly, that becomes the active layer in the Layers panel. So now, it's just a quick Command-click (PC: Ctrl-click) right on the image and—boom—you're on that layer.
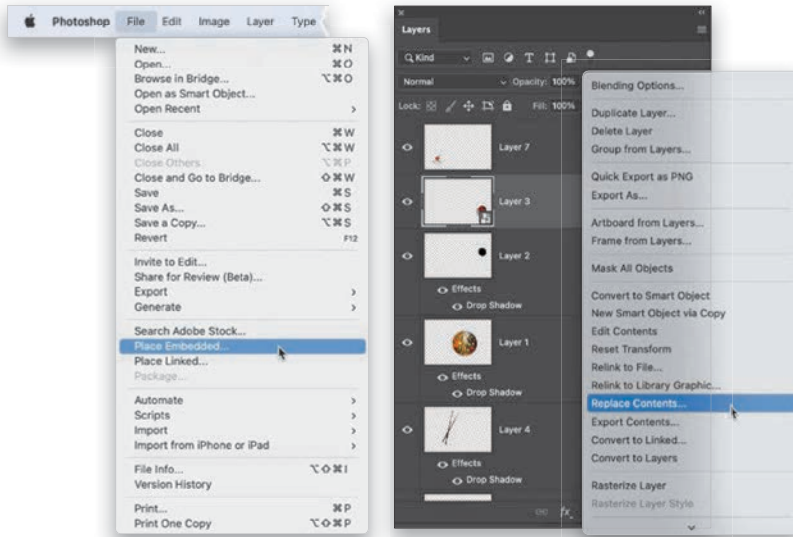
#3: Why Smart Object Layers Rule!

We looked at creating a Smart Object layer (on page 135), where if you applied a filter to your layer, you could always go back and edit that filter or even delete it at any time. Well, another big benefit happens when you resize something on a layer. Scaling something down in size on a layer isn't an issue, but if you make it larger, your image can become blurry and pixelated. However, if you bring an image into your document using **Place Embedded** (under the File menu), it becomes a Smart Object layer and embeds a copy of the original high-res file inside your document. That way, if you scale the image on that layer up in size, it calls on that embedded high-res version, so the quality is maintained. They're also super-handy for making templates because you can Right-click on a Smart Object layer, choose **Replace Contents**, then choose a different image, and it will appear in that exact same size and position in your document.
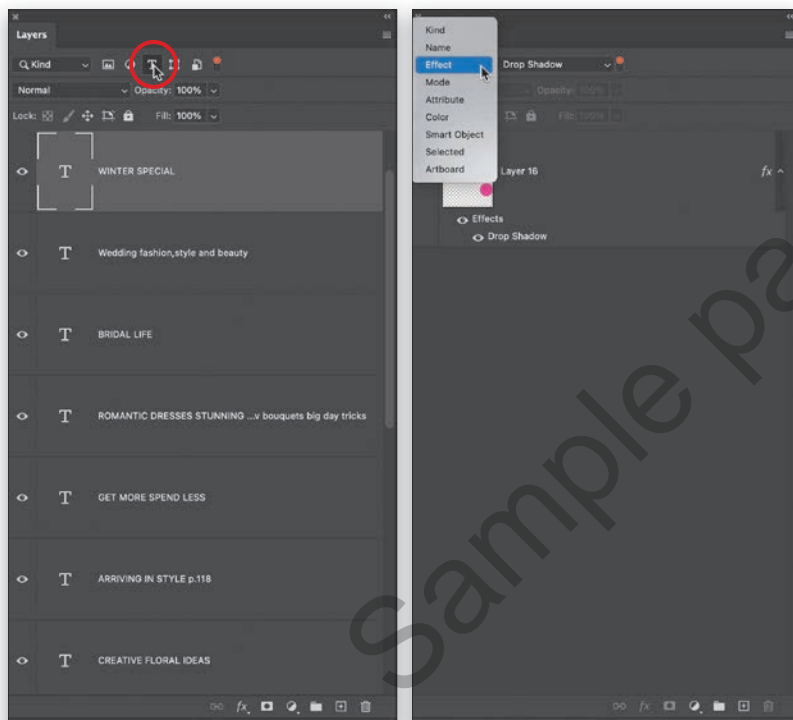
#4: See Just the Layers You Want (Filtering Your Layers)

Once you get a lot of layers, things can look really messy in your Layers panel, but there's a filter you can use to help cut the clutter. The row of icons at the top of the panel let you see only a particular type of layer. Let's say you just want to see your Type layers (no others). Click the **Type Layers icon** (as shown here, on the left), and now you only see Type layers. These icons are for filtering for (L to R): Image layers, Adjustment layers, Type layers, Path layers, and Smart Object layers. Another way to filter is by using the **Kind pop-up menu**. Here (on the right), I chose to see just layers with a Drop Shadow effect. You can even search by a layer's name (choose Name from that pop-up menu, and a text field appears for you to type in the layer's name). By the way, that red switch to the right toggles the filter on/off.