How to use

QUICK MASK TO CREATE SPECIAL PHOTO EDGES.

Channels and masks—the words can sound intimidating to the uninitiated Photoshop user. However, once you start to understand how to take advantage of them, a whole new world of techniques and possibilities opens up.

This issue of *Photoshop Techniques* introduces a quick and easy way to start learning about masks. The following technique shows how to use the Quick Mask tool to create special borders around existing photos.
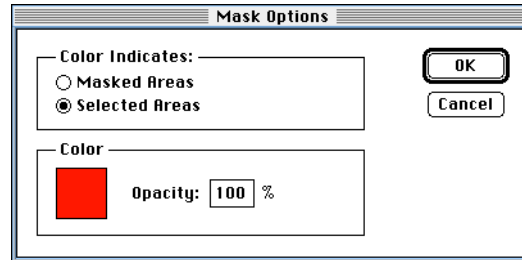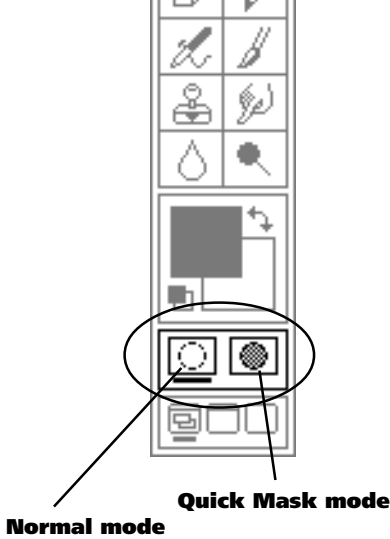
Many designers avoid such effects because they are not sure how to create them. Using the basic techniques covered here, you can quickly explore a number of options and open up some exciting new ways of working.

Filter combinations to create above effects can be found on Page 4.

Photoshop 3.0's Quick Mask feature.

The Quick Mask controls are found at the bottom of Photoshop's tool palette (see left). For this technique, double-click on the Quick Mask icon and enter the settings below:

Normal mode

Quick Mask mode

Mask Options

Color Indicates:
○ Masked Areas
● Selected Areas

OK
Cancel

Color

Opacity: 100 %

†Rubylith overlay:

Graphic designers often use a clear overlay on top of a traditional paste-up board to indicate the position of photographs to be stripped in later.

If this analogy means nothing to you, refer to Photoshop Techniques 004 for a more universal example.

You can use Photoshop's Quick Mask mode the same way a designer might use a rubylith overlay† in traditional paste-up. When you click the Quick Mask icon, Photoshop covers the selected parts of your photo with a red overlay.

While in the Quick Mask mode, you can change the shape of this red overlay without effecting your main image below it. When you click back on the Normal mode icon, everything that was covered with your red overlay is selected.

Steps to creating a textured edge.

Step 1

Step 1A-1D

Step 1E

Create a rectangular selection around your photo

In this step you will create a rectangular mask that will be used to crop your photo. Keep in mind that the filters used in Step 2 might soften the final edges of the mask, so do not crop too closely to the edge of your photo.

A: Open an image in Photoshop.

B: Enter the Quick Mask options shown above.
Note: The settings at the top of the page are not Photoshop's default settings. Make sure to change them before continuing.

C: Click on the Normal mode icon in the toolbox.
Shortcut: Press Q to switch between QuickMask and Normal mode.
The Normal mode icon is found in the Quick Mask area (See diagram in top left of page). This confirms you are in Normal mode before you start this technique.
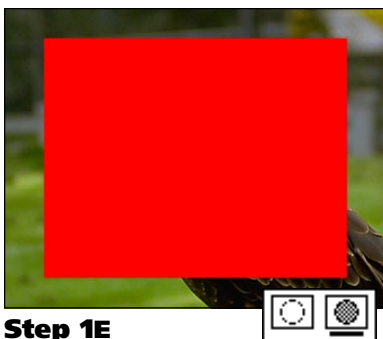
D: Draw a selection box with the marquee tool.

E: Click on the Quick Mask mode icon.
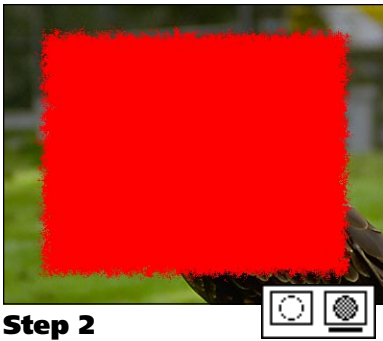*Shortcut: Press Q to switch between QuickMask and Normal mode.*
When you click the Quick Mask icon, Photoshop automatically replaces your selected area with a red overlay.
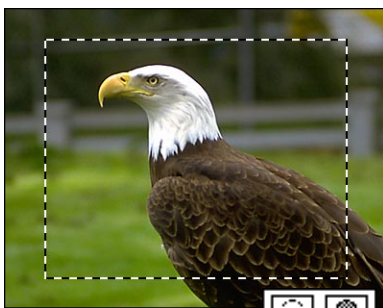
Step 2

Step 2

Apply filter(s) from the Filter menu.

While in the Quick mask mode, any filters you use will only change the mask overlay. The photograph below will not be effected until the mask is applied in Step 4. Experiment with different filter combinations to create a variety of effects.

On page four there is a chart with a number of different examples. The example to the left uses the following steps:

A: **Choose Stylize → Diffuse from the Filter menu.**

B: **Repeat the Diffuse filter several times.**
Shortcut: Command-F (PC: Alt.-F) to reapply the same filter again.

Step 3

Step 3

Click on the Normal mode icon.
Shortcut: Press Q to switch between QuickMask and Normal mode.

When you click back on the Normal mode icon, everything that was covered with the mask overlay becomes selected. You should see a selection outline indicating where your mask overlay was.

Step 4

Copy the selection into a new document

When you copy the selection, Photoshop only copies the area that was covered by your mask overlay at the end of Step 2. By pasting this copied selection into a new document, you create the equivalent of a window mask for your photo.

A: **Choose Copy from the Edit menu.**
Shortcut: Command-C (PC: Alt.-C).
This copies your selection into memory.

Step 4B

B: **Choose New from the File menu.**
Photoshop automatically enters the dimensions of your copied selection as the default size and resolution. Click "OK" to create a new blank document.
Note: Set the Contents to White.

C: **Choose Paste from the Edit menu.**
Shortcut: Command-V (PC: Alt.-V).
Your photo should paste into the empty window with the edge effects you created in your mask overlay. You can try a variety of effects to get a feel for working with masks.
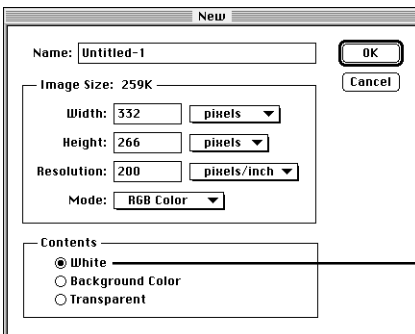
Step 4C

```
| A | B |
| C | D |
```

On the Cover

A *Stylize → Diffuse (20x)*

B *Blur → Guassian Blur;*
   Stylize → Crystalize

C *Blur → Guassian Blur;*
   Distort → Ripple

D *Blur → Guassian Blur;*
   GE Spray Stokes†

Blur → Guassian Blur;
Stylize → Color Halftone

Blur → Guassian Blur;
Stylize → Extrude

Blur → Guassian Blur;
GE Craquelure†

Blur → Guassian Blur;
GE Ripple†

†The Adobe Gallery Effects collection is an excellent source of additional filters (about $89 mail-order).

SWANSON TECH SUPPORT

www.swansontech.com