

COVERS  
PHOTOSHOP

3.0

024

# Photoshop Techniques

How to

## MASK A PHOTO USING A CLIPPING GROUP.

There are many times you will need to trim a photo inside another shape. A common example of this is shown below with a photograph trimmed inside a piece of type. We could just as easily trim the photo inside any other shape we desired.

This issue makes use of a new feature in Photoshop 3.0 called *clipping groups*. If you already use drawing software, you may be familiar with similar tools:

**Adobe Illustrator:** Using Clipping Paths.

**Macromedia FreeHand:** Pasting Inside a shape.

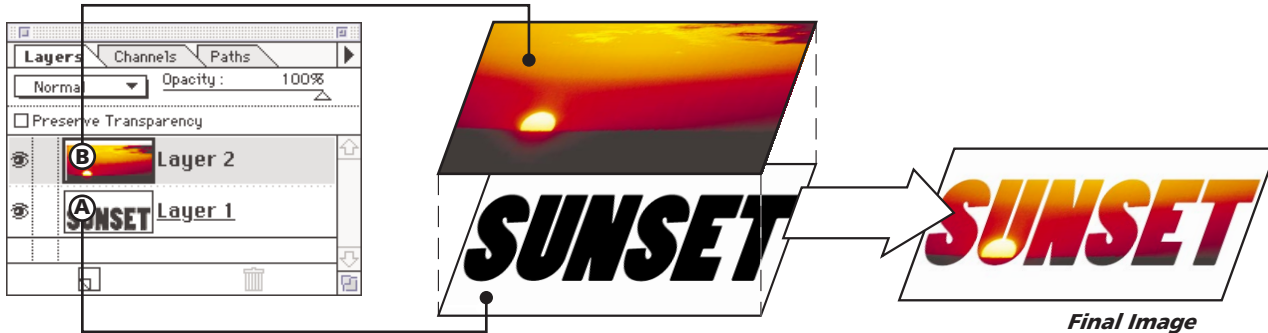
When you set up a clipping group in Photoshop, grouped layers are all trimmed by the shape in the bottom layer. This may be a difficult concept to grasp at first. Glance at the diagram on the next page and follow the steps. A few times through and you should start to see how this might apply to your work.



## Diagram of grouped layers

This diagram may help you visualize how clipping groups work.

- Ⓐ Layer 1 is the bottom layer of the clipping group.
- Ⓑ Layer 2 holds the photo you want to trim inside the type.



The bottom layer of a clipping group controls the transparency for all the grouped layers above it. In this example, the sunset is trimmed within the type on the bottom layer.

## Trimming a photo inside type

### Step 1

#### Create a new, empty document.

We will start with a new, empty Photoshop file.

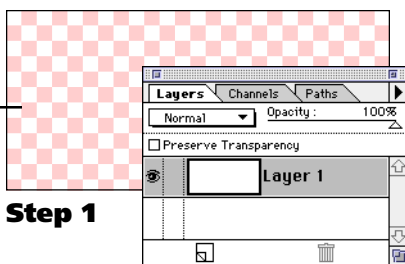
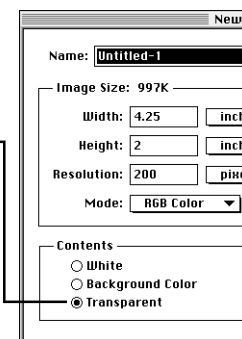
#### A: Choose New from the File menu.

Enter the size and resolution for the document you want to create.

#### B: Set the Contents to “Transparent.”

Click OK to create the new document.

**Note:** To use your trimmed image over an existing background, replace Step 1 with the following: Open an existing document; Click on the New Layer icon in the Layers palette; continue with Step 2 of this technique.



### Step 1

#### Transparency Note:

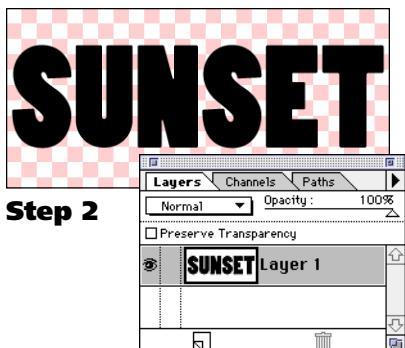
Photoshop displays transparent areas as a checkboard pattern. Choose Preferences → Transparency from the File menu to change this pattern.

### Step 2

#### Create or place your type.

#### Choose Place from the File menu.

**Note:** In this example we created our type in Adobe Illustrator. You can also create type using Photoshop's type tools, or use another program like Macromedia FreeHand.



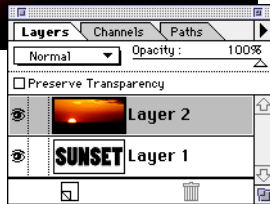
### Step 2



**Step 3A-B (OTHER FILE)**



**Step 3C-E**



### Step 3

#### Copy a photo onto a second layer.

**A:** Open the photo to be trimmed inside the type.

**B:** Copy the photo to memory.

*Macintosh:* Select All (⌘-A); Copy (⌘-C).

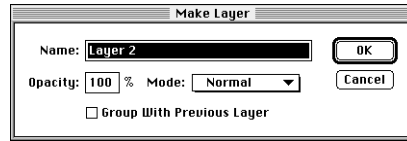
*PC Users:* Select All (CNTL -A); Copy (CNTL -C).

**C:** Switch back to the original image.

Switch back to the document you created in Step 1.

**D:** Choose Paste Layer... from the Edit menu.

A box will appear that allows you to name your new layer. Name the layer if you wish and click OK.



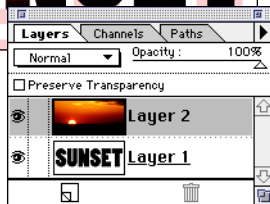
*Note:* Check that Layers palette looks similar to the example at left before continuing.

**E:** Position the new photo with the move tool.

Use the Move tool to drag the photo where you want it.



**Step 4**



### Step 4

#### Group the two layers.

**A:** Option-click between the two layers.

*PC Users:* Hold down the ALT key.

Move your cursor between the two layers and press the Option (ALT) key. Click to group the two layers.



After you click, a dotted

line should appear between the two layers. On the screen, your photo should be trimmed within the type from the bottom layer.

**B:** Use the Move tool to position the top image.

You can continue to move and adjust the top photo even after you have grouped the layers. Select the top layer in the Layers palette and use the Move tool to drag the image around within your clipped outline.



### Option #1: Adding a shadow to the final image

Use the steps from issue #021 to add a drop shadow or glow to your final image. The example at left shows an added drop shadow.

## Option #2: Applying Filters to the bottom layer

The bottom layer of your clipping group controls how the photo is trimmed. You can apply filters to this layer for some interesting effects.

### Step 1

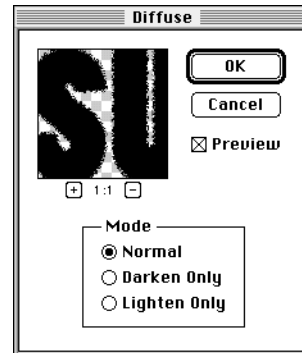
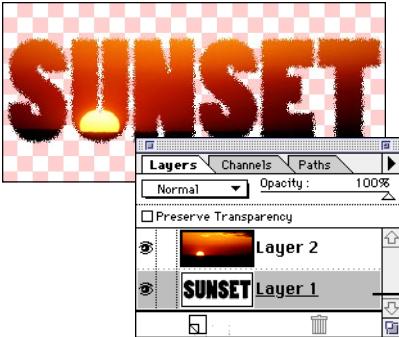
#### Apply filters to the bottom layer.

##### A: Click on bottom layer of the clipping group.

This selects the bottom layer. It should be highlighted in the layers palette.

##### B: Apply filters to the layer.

In this example, we've applied the Stylize → Diffuse filter several times.



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