



029

Photoshop

Techniques

How to

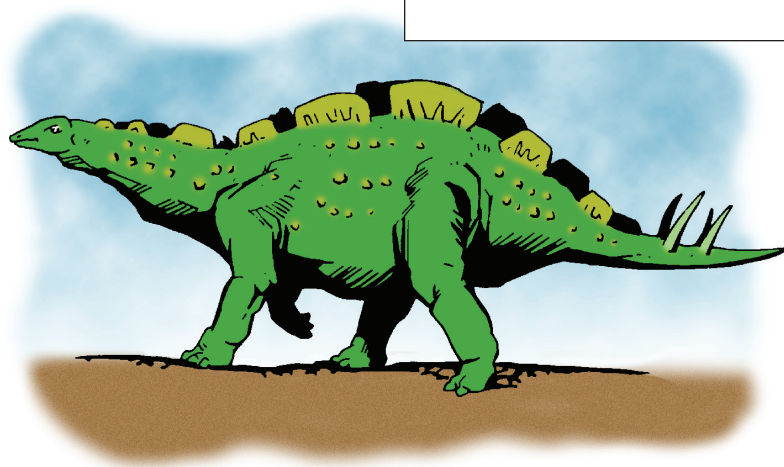
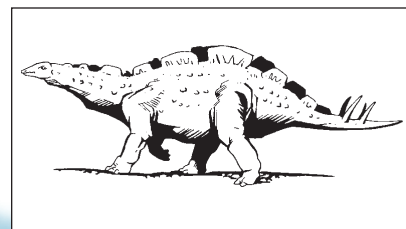
COLORIZE A LINE ART ILLUSTRATION.

This is a fun little technique. You never know when you may need to add some color to an old piece of line art you have laying around.

Many designers consider their old volumes of clip art books as extinct as the little fellow below. But they are not necessarily defunct just because technology has moved away from traditional paste-up.

Whether you are working with your own artwork, or someone else's, Photoshop can breath new life into plain black and white illustrations. Quickly and easily put the final touches on a comic strip, or update an old drawing from the company archives.

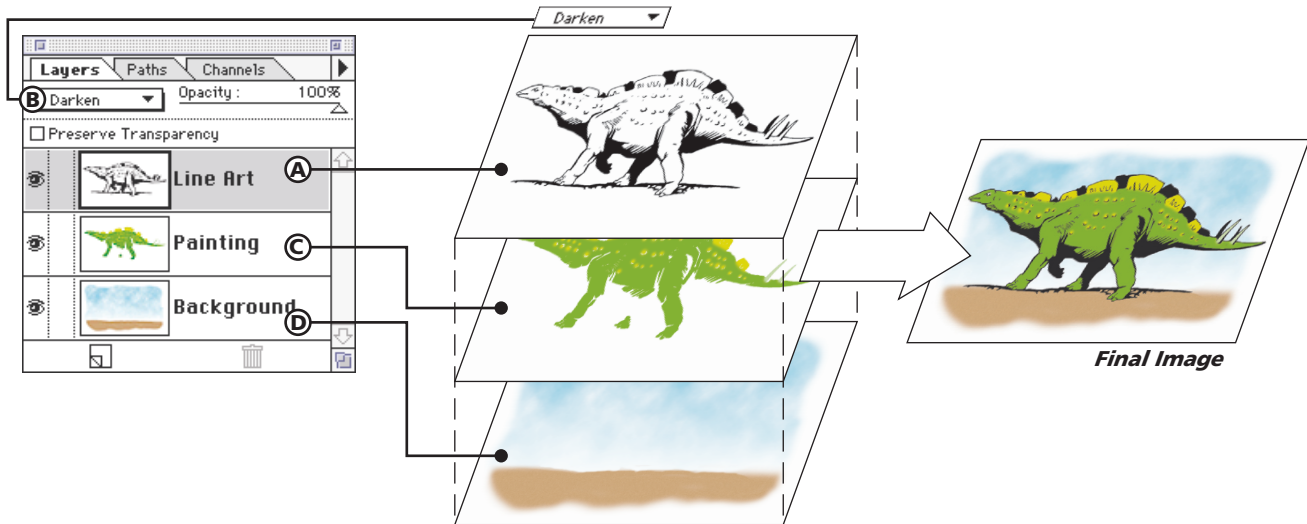
This technique explores yet another use of Photoshop's layering tools. Dig up some old clip art from around the shop, warm up the scanner and have some fun. You might learn something useful in the process



Layering the pieces

Again, we use Photoshop's layering abilities to make our technique more manageable. We've tried to break the diagram below into the basic three layers. Your project of course may have many more layers.

- a** The original line art is on its own layer at the top.
- b** The "Darken" mode lets the layers below show through the line art.
- c** The added color and details are on their own layer.
- d** On the bottom, add background details to complete the image.



Colorizing Line Art

Step 1

Prepare the original line art illustration.

A: Scan or open the original black and white line art.

We scanned this dinosaur from an old book of clip-art images. This technique assumes that you have scanned your images in a black and white line art mode.

B: Choose Grayscale from the Mode menu.

Before we can convert our image to color it must first be in a grayscale mode. Click OK in the following dialog box.

C: Choose CMYK from the Mode menu.

For many prepress jobs, you will want to work in CMYK. If you wish to work in RGB instead, that is fine.

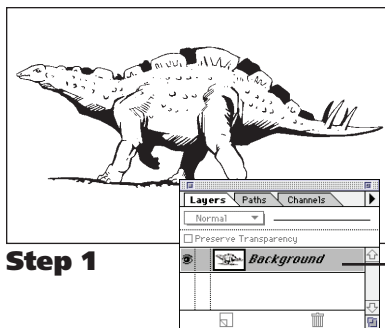
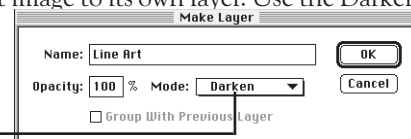
D: Double-click on the Background layer.

We must move our line art image to its own layer. Use the Darken mode to overlay it on top of the color we will add.

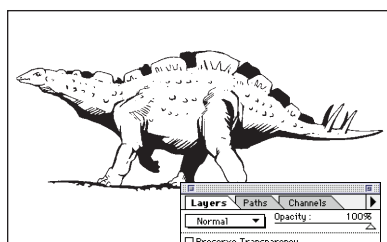
Name: Line Art.

Opacity: 100%.

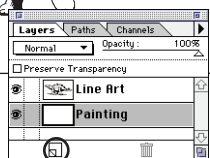
Mode: Darken.



Step 1



Step 2



Step 2

Create a “Painting” layer.

This layer will hold the base color for objects in our illustration.

A: Click on the New Layer icon.

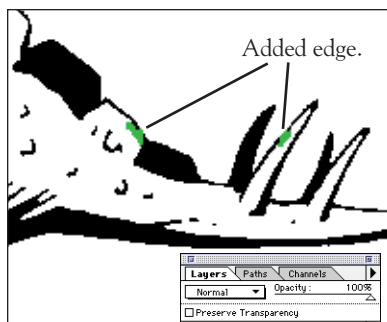
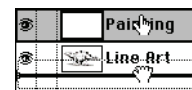
Name: Painting.

Opacity: 100%.

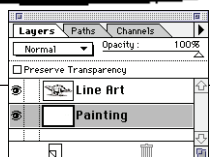
Mode: Normal.

B: Drag the “Painting” layer below “Line Art.”

Click and drag on the new layer. Watch for the thick line under the second layer before you let go of the mouse.



Step 3



Step 3

Carefully inspect the edge of your illustration.

In this step you will fill in any gaps along the edges of your object that might interfere with using the magic wand tool.

A: Choose a base color for your object.

Click on the foreground color in the tool palette.

Choose a color for the base of your object.



B: Select the pencil tool.

Shortcut: Press the P key.

C: Fill in any gaps along the edge of your shape.

Draw a line to fill in the gap. The “Painting” layer should be active, so you are not drawing on the line art image itself.

Step 4

Fill the object with a base color.

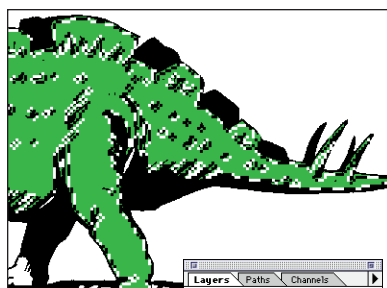
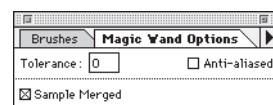
A: Double-click on the magic wand tool.

Along with selecting the magic wand, this should also bring the options palette to the front. Use these settings:

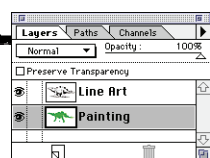
Sample Merged: Checked

Tolerance: 32 (default)

Anti-aliased: Not Checked



Step 4A-D



B: Click inside part of your shape with the magic wand.

Photoshop selects the connected areas of white.

Note: If the selection goes outside of your shape, repeat Step 3 and look for additional gaps.

Tip: Shift-click with the magic wand to select additional areas.

C: Choose Modify → Expand from the Select menu.

Expand by 1 pixel. By expanding the selection, we can tuck the new color slightly under the edges of our black outline.

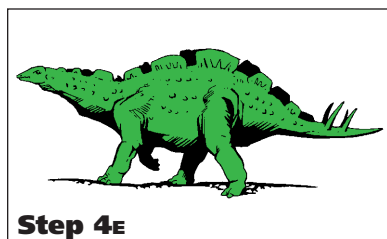
D: Press Option-Delete on your keyboard.

PC Users: Press CNTL-Delete.

This fills your selection with the base color from the previous step.

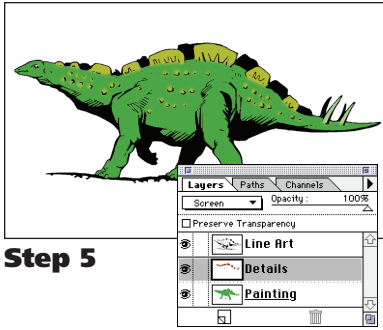
E: Paint in any remaining areas.

Look for areas that are still not filled with color. Use the pencil to fill in any missing areas.



Step 4E

Step 5



Step 5

Add details.

The details make or break this technique. Put as much or as little work into each image as you please.

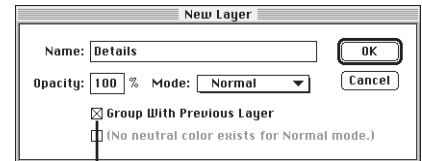
A: Click on the New Layer icon.

The name does not matter here so much at the “Grouped” option. Click this option on and continue.

Name: (Your Choice)

Opacity: 100%

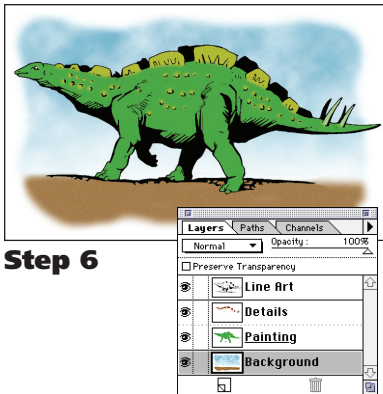
Group with Previous Layer: Checked



B: Paint details on the new Layer.

Don't worry about staying inside the lines. This layer you are drawing on is grouped with the “Painting” layer we created in Step 2. Any color you add will remain neatly trimmed inside the object.

Note: In the example to left, we are only adding minor color details. You can, of course, paint over large areas with a new color. Also, if you want parts of your object to be white, then paint with white ink.



Step 6

Step 6

Add a background.

You may also add an additional layer for the background as we have done in this example. In the example to left we have added a ground, and used Photoshop's Render → Clouds filter to create a sky.