

Make Photoshop Magic

with celebrity host Russell Brown!

You've never had this much fun with Photoshop, unless you've seen one of Russell Brown's high-energy teaching sessions at a conference or tradeshow. Now, at last, he's distilled that creative approach in *The Photoshop Show Starring Russell Brown*, a book/CD-ROM combo that lets you experience the same magic without leaving your desk. We've compiled some of Russell's more practical tips in this short cheat sheet, but you'll need to buy the book to really enjoy the show!



*The Photoshop Show
Starring Russell Brown*
by Russell Brown
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Blending for Effect

When you use more than one layer in Photoshop, the pixels in the top layer either override or interact with the pixels in the layers beneath it. The Normal blending mode, which is the default, hides the pixels beneath the top layer unless the layer is partially or fully transparent. Each of the other blending modes let you control the way pixels in the layers interact with each other.

It's often a good idea to apply each blending mode to see which gives you the effect you're looking for. But your search will go more quickly if you understand a little about what each mode does. Use these descriptions as a starting point, but experiment on your own images to get a feel for the effect of each mode. (In the following, the underlying colors are the base color, and the color in the top layer is the blend color.)

Dissolve: Randomly replaces pixels with either the blend color or the base color, depending on the opacity of each pixel. The top layer appears to dissolve into the underlying layers.

Darken: Replaces pixels in the base color with those in the blend color wherever the pixels in the blend color are darker. The resulting color is always darker than the original.

Lighten: Replaces pixels in the base color with those in the blend color wherever the pixels in the blend color are lighter. The resulting color is always lighter than the original.

Multiply: Multiplies the base color by the blend color. The resulting color is always darker than the original.

Screen: Multiplies the inverse of the base and blend colors. The resulting color is always lighter than the original.

Color Burn: Darkens the base color to reflect the blend color by increasing the contrast.

Color Dodge: Brightens the base color to reflect the blend color by decreasing the contrast.

Soft Light: Darkens or lightens the colors, using the blend color as if it were a diffused spotlight shining on the image.

Hard Light: Multiplies or screens the colors, using the blend color as if it were a harsh spotlight shining on the image.

Pin Light: If the blend color is lighter than 50 percent gray, pixels darker than the blend color are replaced. If the blend color is darker than 50 percent gray, pixels lighter than the blend color are replaced.

Difference: Subtracts the blend or base color from the other, depending on which one is brighter.

Hue: Replaces only the hue with that of the blend color, but retains the luminance and saturation values of the base color.

Saturation: Replaces only the saturation of the base color with that of the blend color.

Color: Replaces both the hue and saturation of the base color with those of the blend color.

Luminosity: Replaces only the luminance of the base color with that of the blend color.

Brush It Your Way

You can create a brush tip from any part of an image in Photoshop. Just use the rectangle marquee to select part of an image, choose Edit > Define Brush, and name the brush. Why would you want to do this? See, I knew you were going to ask that—and there are many wonderful answers. Here are a few hints. Now, go experiment and have fun!

- Make a brush from a shape you use frequently—an octagon, for example, or your logo. Then, you don't need to draw or import the image each time; just brush it on!
- Create a brush from a texture to get an interesting effect. How the strokes look depends on the spacing value you select when you paint.
- Paint letters in a swirl or swoosh when you work with a custom brush made from text.
- For a "natural" effect, create brushes from images of trees, leaves, grass, and other natural objects.
- Create fireworks, smoke, fire, or other images with custom brushes paired with color or shape dynamics.



A Cure for What Ails You—the Healing Brush Tool

Some things in Photoshop seem like magic—and the Healing brush tool is definitely one of them. This tool is amazing. It's like the cloning tools, in that you use it to paint sampled pixels from an image or a pattern. But it's so much smarter! It matches the texture, lighting, and shading of the sampled pixels to the source pixels, so the repaired area blends seamlessly into the rest of the image. You can use this tool to repair all kinds of blemishes, from creases on a photo to scars on a face. Remove that pesky telephone pole, or make yourself instantly younger!

Here are some things to keep in mind when you use this tool:

- Always work on a copy of your image, so you don't alter your original.
- Take snapshots in the History palette so it's easy to go back to earlier states if you don't like the results you're getting.
- Adjust the brush size for different areas.
- Use the Sampled option if you want to grab pixels from the current image or another open image.
- When the pixels you want to sample don't exist, remember that you can heal from a pattern. Create the pattern first, as we did in the digital shaving project.
- Don't forget to select Aligned in the options bar if you're using a pattern. You can also use it to keep the current sampling point when you stop and resume painting.
- If you use a pressure-sensitive tablet, you can vary the size of the brush over the course of a stroke. Choose Pen Pressure or Stylus Wheel from the Size menu in the Brush Options palette.
- If there's a strong contrast at the edges of the area you're healing, make a careful selection before using the tool, precisely following the boundary of contrasting pixels. Otherwise, the Healing brush tool will be affected by the contrasting colors, which will bleed into the blend.



Two Filters Are Better Than One

You've probably played with many of the filters in Photoshop, but did you know that you can create a wider variety of textures when you team them up? Use Clouds with other filters and commands for the following effects:

Clouds + Posterize + Emboss = topographical map (1)
(Choose **Image > Adjustments > Posterize**)

Clouds + Emboss = soft rock (2)

Clouds + Glowing Edges = large fiber texture (3)

Clouds + Plaster = oil blobs (4)

Clouds + Texturizer = stippled wall texture (5)

But don't limit yourself to Clouds! For example, if you add noise to a blank page, and then apply **Motion Blur** and **Auto Levels**, the effect is similar to **Brushed Metal** (6).

Experiment with your own combinations to create other cool effects.

