



Type and Background Effects

PART TWO

Last issue we discussed how to use Photoshop's basic type and layer effects. From here on the effects will be a little more involved and, therefore, will either not update when you edit the text, or will require you to convert the Type into a normal layer.

There are so many filters in Photoshop (about 100) that you can create an infinite variety of type effects. The best way to familiarize yourself with the filters is to just dive in and experiment to your heart's content. Here are a few to get you started.

These effects involve filters and therefore cannot be applied directly to a Type layer. That means you'll have to enter the text, edit as necessary, and then render the layer by choosing **Layer>Text>Render Layer**. After rendering a Type layer, we'll no longer be limited to Layer Effects; so we'll be able to achieve more radical results such as better glows, curved type, and type wrapped around a circle.

GLOWS

You can create a simple glow around the edge of some text by choosing **Layer>Effects>Outer Glow** and messing with the settings that are presented to you. But, you'll find this is rather limited because if you want a bright, intense glow, you have to turn the Opacity and Intensity settings all the way up to 100%. That would be okay as is; but then if you try to make the glow larger, your only option is to increase the Blur setting. After a certain point, the glow just gets too blurry. Well, there is a solution.

Adjust the settings for the outer glow until the glow is about as blurry as you'd want it to be, then choose **Layer>Effects>Create Layer**. This will create a new layer below the text that contains the glow you just created (see figure

1). To make the glow larger, click on the name of the layer that contains the glow, then choose **Filter>Other>Minimum** and play with the Radius setting. You should be able to make the glow just about any size you want (see figure 2).

If you want the glow to become smaller instead of larger, choose **Filter>Other>Maximum** and mess with the Radius setting (see figures 3 and 4).

If you'd like to create a two-tone glow, you'll need to duplicate the glow layer by dragging it onto the New Layer icon (folded paper icon). Next, change your foreground color to the second color you would like to use; then type **Shift-Option-Delete** to fill the glow with your new color. If you would like the edge to fade out more, choose **Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur**. Finally, choose **Filter>Other>Minimum** to make the glow larger (see figure 5).

You can make things a little more interesting by applying one of the filters found under the **Filter>Distort** menu. I also occasionally choose **Filter>Stylize>Diffuse** to create a slightly noisy look,



FIGURE 1. Text with Outer Glow layer effect applied.



FIGURE 4. After applying the Filter>Maximum filter.



FIGURE 2. After layer effect is converted into layers, then Minimum filter applied.



FIGURE 5. Two-color glow effect.



FIGURE 3. Original glow effect.



FIGURE 6. Ripple filter applied to layer containing red portion of glow effect.



FIGURE 7. Created in RGB mode and converted to CMYK without flattening.

FIGURE 8. Created in RGB mode and flattened when converting to CMYK.

as in figure 6.

Any time you create a bright-colored glow on a black background, the result will look much better if it is created in RGB mode. If you need to convert an image that contains a glow into CMYK, be sure to flatten the image when prompted, otherwise, the glow will look rather washed out (see figures 7 and 8).

TYPE ON A CURVE

What I have tended to find is that most people use Adobe Illustrator to bend text along a curve. Well, I don't always find it convenient to have to switch between programs to achieve such a simple effect, so I'll show you how to do the same thing in Photoshop. The Shear filter will do the job for us, but there is one little problem — this filter is able to bend things only vertically (see figures 9 and 10).

All you have to do to make the filter bend things horizontally is to rotate the layer you are working on. You can do this by choosing **Image>Transform>Rotate 90° CW** (see figure 11). But before applying the filter, you'll need to choose **Layer>Text>Render Layer** to turn the text into pixels; otherwise, you won't be able to apply a filter to it (see figure 12).

After you have bent the text, all you need to do is rotate the layer back to its original position by choosing **Image>Transform>Rotate 90° CCW** (see figure 13).

TYPE ON A CIRCLE

With this technique, we'll bend some text around a circle. If you want to bend your text around a perfect circle, you'll need to start with a document that is perfectly square.

Enter the text at the bottom of the document, then choose **Layer>Text>Render Layer** (see figure 14). To bend the text, choose **Filter>Distort>Polar Coordinates** and use the Rectangular to Polar setting (see figure 15).

NOTE
You can change the size of the circle the text is wrapped around by placing the text higher in the document. Also, remember you can change the spacing between the letters of the text by using different tracking settings (in the text dialog box).

FIGURE 14. Original Image.



FIGURE 15. After applying Polar Coordinates.

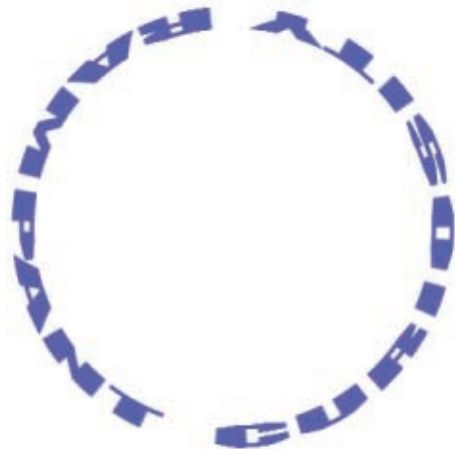


FIGURE 9
Original image



FIGURE 10
Shear filter.

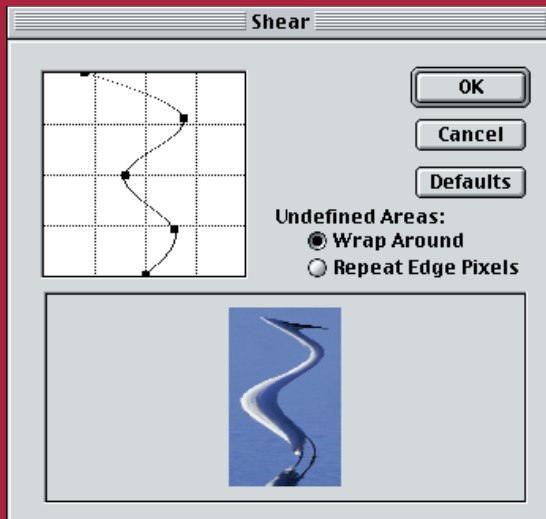


FIGURE 11
After rotating.



FIGURE 12
After rendering and applying Shear filter.



FIGURE 13
End Result.





PHOTO-REALISTIC FILTER EFFECTS

The steps used to create these effects may not always seem logical, but just stick with me until you see the result. I came up with them after many hours of experimentation.

If you would like to create your own type effects, I suggest you start by getting a basic understanding of what each of the filters in Photoshop does. Each one applies its own unique brand of magic and there's no end to the possibilities. Once you're on familiar terms with the filters, and you create something interesting, you might be able to think of the perfect filter to enhance the end result. The way I got used to the filters was to commit to experimenting with one side menu each day (distort, pixelate, and so on). I did this day after day until I could actually predict the result I'd get from most of the filters. Now I can create some interesting effects without having to go through the time-consuming task of randomly applying filters.

3D TYPE

Before we jump in and create some great 3D effects, I'm going to explain why you need to be careful when creating them. To create 3D type, you're going to need to use the Emboss filter. Since the Emboss filter gives you weird color artifacts when you work on color originals, we'll just use shades of gray, then colorize them later.

The first thing you need to do is use the Type tool to create some black text. Then, because we're going to distort this text in ways that aren't possible with a Type layer, you'll need to choose **Layer>Text>Render Layer**. Next, open the Layers palette and turn on the Preserve Transparency checkbox to make sure we don't end up with any residue around the edges (see figure 16). Preserve Transparency will prevent you from modifying the empty (trans-

parent) areas of the layer. Now, Command-click the name of the layer to select everything that is on the layer (see figure 17).

Next, we need to add a light-gray rim around the edge of the text. To accomplish this, change your foreground color to a light gray. You don't have to be too particular when picking the gray, just make sure it's not really dark. We need to have the gray rim slowly blend into the text, so choose **Select>Feather** and use a setting of three (any number between one and ten will work, I'm just picking a number off the top of my head).

To add the gray rim, choose **Edit>Stroke**, set the Width to the same setting you used when feathering the selection (three in my case), and set the Location to Inside. This should add a nice light-gray, soft-edged line around the edge of the text, as in figure 18.

Now, to get the 3D look, all we have to do is choose **Filter>Stylize>Emboss** and mess with some settings. When the Emboss dialog box appears, I like to type Command-H to hide the edges of the selection so you get a clear view of the result. The angle setting determines which direction the light source is coming from, so click and drag the line until it matches the angle of the light that is hitting the image you are placing the text on top of. If creating the image from scratch, I'd choose an angle of 135 because most light sources are above the objects they illuminate. The Amount settings determine how much space the 3D edge takes up. This setting is dependent on the previous steps, so set the Amount to one number higher than what was used when you feathered the selection (3+1=4 in my case). The Amount setting determines how much contrast you'll end up with. I usually move this slider around until I have as much contrast as I can get without making the brightest areas pure white (see figure 19).

Once you are done embossing the image, you can choose **Select>None** because you shouldn't need the selection anymore.

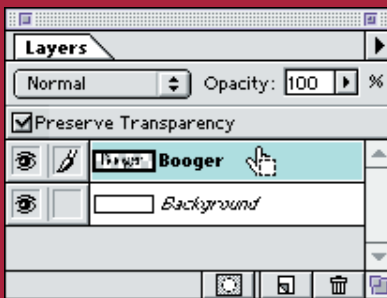


FIGURE 16. Command-click the layer that contains the text.



FIGURE 18. Result of adding gray rim to the text.



FIGURE 19. After applying the Emboss filter.



FIGURE 21. Result of colorizing.



FIGURE 22. Two-tone colorizing effect.



FIGURE 17. Result of Command-clicking.

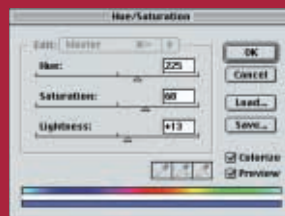


FIGURE 20. Hue/Saturation dialog box.



FIGURE 23. Wild colorizing effect.



Now you should have some nice-looking, grayscale 3D type. In figure 20, I used a setting of three for most of the steps. You can use any number between one and ten to create different 3D looks (the Emboss filter maxes out at ten).

COLORING 3D TYPE

Now that you have some 3D type, let's explore a couple of options to add a bit of color. The easiest way to colorize the text is to choose **Image>Adjust>Hue/ Saturation** and turn on the Colorize checkbox (see figure 20). By moving the Hue slider, you can change the basic color of the text. Moving the Saturation slider will change how intense the color appears (from gray to a very vibrant color). You'll also occasionally need to adjust the Lightness slider a bit to tweak the brightness of the text (see figure 21).

If you would rather have some two-tone, 3D type, change your foreground color to one of your desired colors, then choose **Edit>Fill**. In the dialog box that appears, choose **Foreground Color** from the Contents pop-up menu, change the blending mode to **Difference**, and turn on the **Preserve Transparency** checkbox. The result will include the color you chose and its exact opposite, just as if you chose **Image>Adjust>Invert** (see figure 22).


Okay, one more method for colorizing your text. We could go on for days (literally), but I'll just throw in an interesting technique that gives you multicolored text. First, make sure you are working on the layer that contains the text and the **Preserve Transparency** checkbox is turned on (that will make sure you don't color outside the lines). Next, double-click the Paintbrush tool and set its blending mode to **Difference**. Now, choose a really bright, intense color and paint across the text. Repeat this process using different bright, intense colors until you get an interesting result (see figure 23).

CHROMING YOUR 3D TYPE

Before creating chrome, you'll need to create some 3D type by using the technique we just went over. After you've created 3D type, be sure to choose **Select>None** to make sure you're working on the entire layer, then choose **Image>Adjust>Curves**. We're going to want to create a pretty weird curve, so click on the Pencil icon at the bottom of the Curves dialog box, then start scribbling in the grid area. By drawing different shapes, you'll end up with different types of metal (aluminum, chrome, pewter, and so on) or plastic-looking type. To create chrome, you usually need to create either a big "W" or a big "M" (see figures 24 to 27).

After you have a result that's looking pretty good, you can click the **Smooth** button to smooth out the shape you drew, then click the **Curve** icon (right next to the Pencil icon) to convert your curve into a normal curve. To fine tune the curve, move your cursor out of the Curves dialog box (but don't click OK yet), and click any area of the image that you don't like. A circle should appear in the Curves dialog box indicating which area of the curve would need to be changed to affect that area (see figure 28). Once you've got the shape to your liking, be sure to click the **Save** button and give that setting a name. That way the next time you create 3D type, you'll be able to turn it into chrome in no time by choosing **Image>Adjust>Curves**, then clicking on the **Load** button.

After applying Curves, you should end up with something that resembles chrome. To add even more realism, you might want to add a little bit of color to the type. To accomplish this, choose **Image>Adjust>Hue/Saturation** and turn on the **Colorize**

WARNING 

All type and background effects that use the Emboss filter should be applied when the image is in RGB mode. You'll end up with a brown result if you work in CMYK mode because the Emboss filter is not smart enough to add the proper amount of cyan to the image.



FIGURE 24. Result.



FIGURE 26. Result.

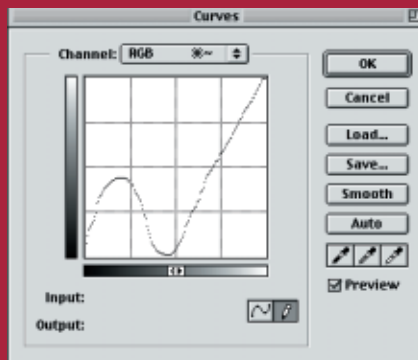


FIGURE 25. Experimenting with the curve.

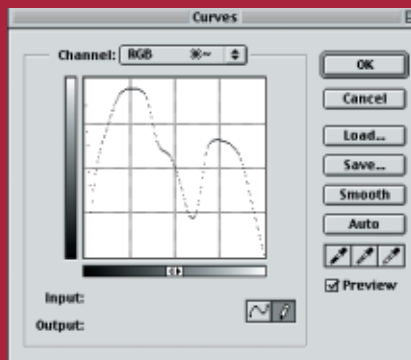


FIGURE 27. Creating a large "M" shape.

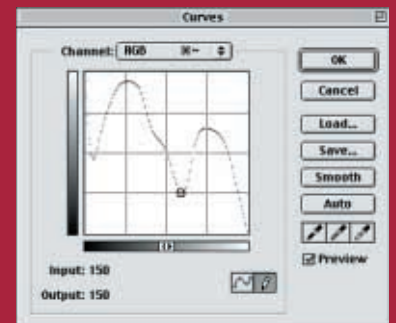


FIGURE 28. Click anywhere in the image window to find out which area of the curve is affecting that area.



FIGURE 29. Chrome type colored to add a little blue to the image.

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checkbox. Adjust the Hue slider until the text appears light blue; then move the Saturation slider to the left until you can barely see the blue because you just want a hint of color (see figure 29).

LIQUID TYPE

To create liquid type, you'll need to start with 3D type. After you've created your 3D type (using the technique shown in the previous section), apply the Emboss filter a second time using the same settings used to create the 3D type. Then, to get a liquid look, choose Filter>Artistic>Plastic Wrap. You can experiment with the settings, but I usually set the Highlight Strength to 18, the Detail to 11, and the Smoothness to 11 (see figure 30).

If you want the liquid to look a little more ripply, just apply the Plastic Wrap filter multiple times (see figure 31). After you've achieved the look you want, you can add some color by choosing Image>Adjust>Hue/Saturation and turning on the Colorize checkbox (see figure 32).

WATER DROPLETS

Now let's find out how to create some water droplets to go with our liquid type effect. First, create a new layer, then change your foreground color to black. Next, choose the Paintbrush tool, then choose a hard-edged brush from the Brushes palette. Click around the image wherever you would like your water droplets to appear. You should end up with a layer that contains a bunch of black circles (see figure 33).

To turn them into water droplets, just go through the exact same steps you used to create 3D type earlier (and use really low settings, such as two) as shown in figure 34, and then apply the Emboss filter a second time (see figure 35). You can also choose Filter>Artistic>Plastic Wrap to create a softer look.

Now that we've looked at how to create special effects with type, in the next issue we'll examine ways of making interesting background effects using a few of Photoshop's many filters. ■

Ben Willmore is the founder/president of Digital Mastery, a U.S.-based training and consulting firm; details on courses and services at www.digitalmastery.com.



Dweeb

FIGURE 30
Liquid type effect.



Dweeb

FIGURE 31
Apply the Plastic Wrap filter a second time for an extra ripply liquid type effect.



Dweeb

FIGURE 32
Result of coloring by using Hue/Saturation dialog box.




FIGURE 33
Start by creating black circles on a new layer.




FIGURE 34
Result of applying 3D type effect.




FIGURE 35
After applying the Plastic Wrap filter.