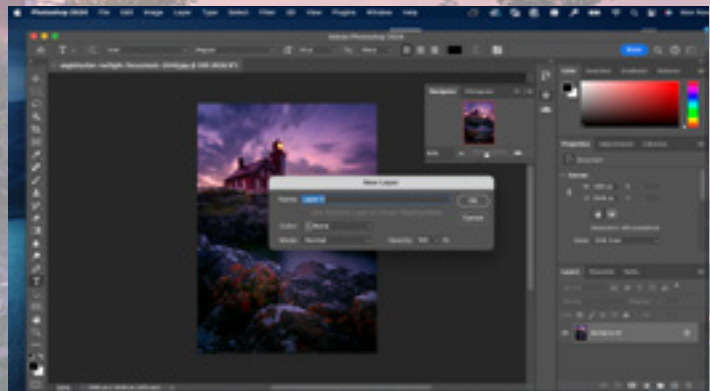
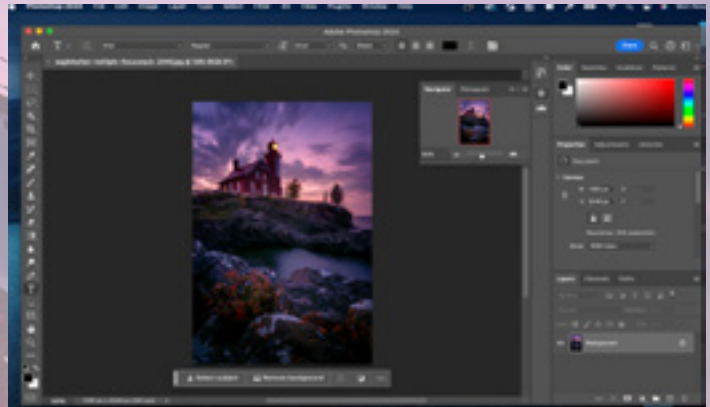


Color Channel Masking

In Adobe Photoshop

1. Open your Foreground image
2. Double click on the thumbnail in the layers panel to convert “Background” to “Layer”
3. A pop up dialouge will appear asking you if you want to create a new layer. Click “OK”.
4. Click on the “Channels” Tab.
5. Look for which color channel gives you more separation between the sky and the foreground. Usually it is the blue channel, but not always.

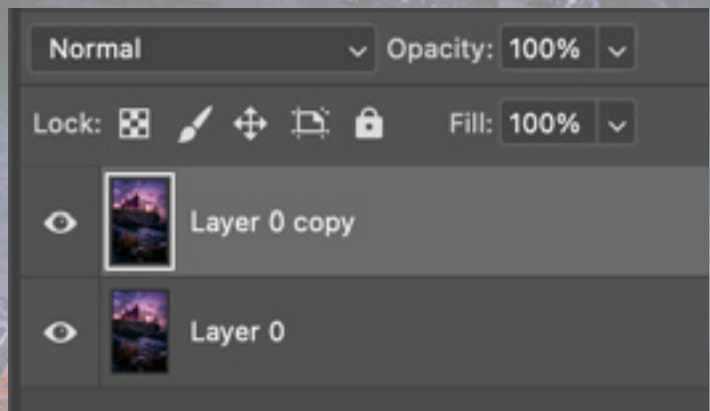


Tips!

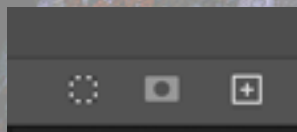
These are your Color Channels. RGB is the full color image.

The greyscale thumbnails below RGB indicate pixels located in each of the individual color channels. If you were to make any changes to these, it will impact the master RGB channel.

This is why is it imparative that you make a copy by dragging the channel you pick and drop it in the “create new channel” (the square with the “+” icon. The copy DOES not effect the RGB channel.



From left to right:
“Load Channel as Selection”
“Save selection as Channel”
“Create New Channel”

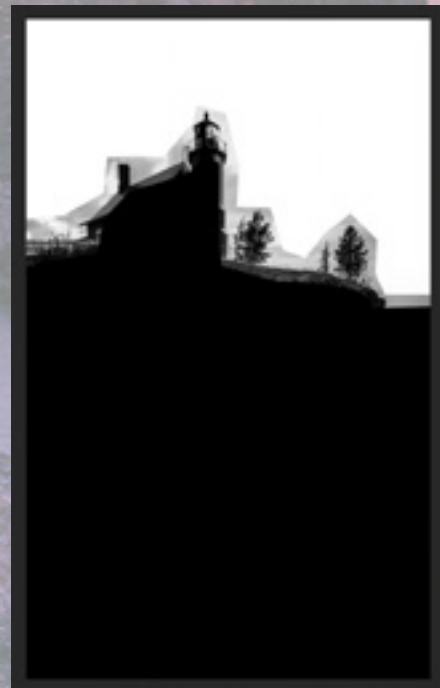
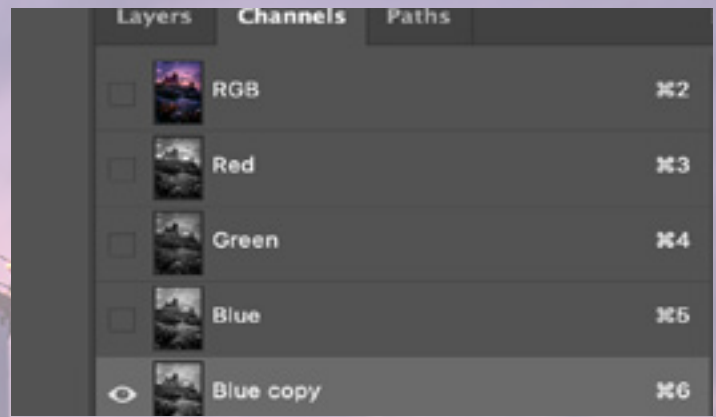


6. Make a duplicate of that channel. All edits will be done on this duplicate channel.

7. The goal here is to create a mask. So you want a white (reveals) and black (conceals) end product. Doesn't really matter which on is which right now, as you can flip them back and forth.

8. Head up to the Images > Adjustments > Brightness/Contrast control.

9. Use the sliders to create more of a black and white separation. Sometimes this won't help as much, especially if you have a lot of brighter clouds or snow, but its always worth trying.



10. Use the polygon lasso tool to select the larger portions of the foreground and sky to completely fill in as white or black. Again, we are making a mask, and really only concerned with the transition line between the sky and land.

Now let's work on that transition line!

11. Grab the dodge or burn tool. (again, the order doesn't really matter, and sometimes you'll need to make several passes at this)

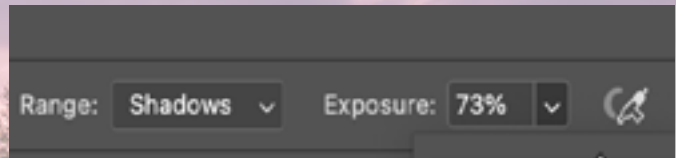
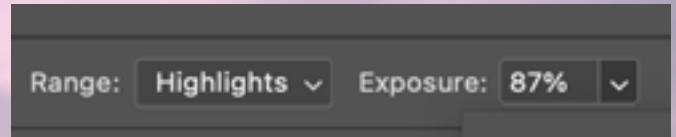
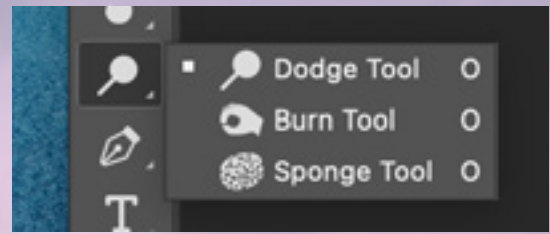
12. On the dodge tool, crank "highlights" up to 60-80%. Then paint over the white portion.

13. On the burn tool, crank "shadows" to 60-80%,. Then paint over the black areas.

14. This will create the transition line, and it will grab very fine details like tree branches and hair.

15. One done, hold command (Mac) or Alt (Windows), and click on this mask layer. It then will select the white pixels by default.

16. Now, click on the RBG channel, and then click back to "layers".



Tips!

Notice the two images to the right.

The top one shows the results after using the dodge and burn process. Take note on how well this process picks up on the very fine details of the fence, railings and trees!

The bottom image is a close up to show the "marching ants". This is Photoshop's way of showing you what is selected. Here you can see how it picked up all those fine details. If you do not see the "marching ants", then you do not have anything selected.



17. Click on your duplicated foreground layer, and hit the “washing machine” looking icon, i.e. the mask tool, and voila! That mask you just created will be applied to that layer.

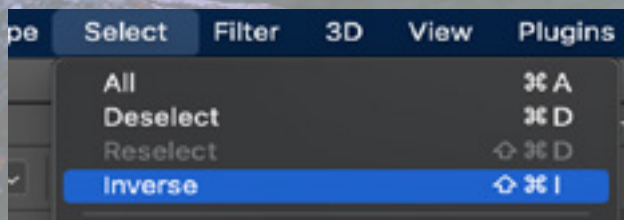
18. You may have to invert this, but it's not a big deal.

19. Now you can combine your sky image with your foreground!

Tips!

The “checkerboard” pattern you see in the image to the left indicates a transparent section. If you place another image in a layer below; that image will show where the checkerboard pattern is.

If you need to invert the mask:
Select > Inverse



Questions?

Feel free to email me!
dodgeshadowchik@yahoo.com

Or visit my website:
www.shelbydiamondstar.com