

photoshop zen

by mohammed jogie



How this tutorial series hangs together

This booklet is very easy to navigate and work through. The contents page lists all there is in it and it's clickable. There are two ways you can work through the stuff. Simply recreate the steps as listed. This is for advanced pxl_shfters who want to get to mains without starters. For the rest of us there's a description of each step with pretty screengrabs to boot.

There are many ways to achieve the results you want in Ps. Try these and be sure to experiment. I do make the assumption that you know how to work Photoshop though and if you're very new to the software, I'd recommend starting with more basic exercises to hone your skills.

Save trees. Don't print this if you don't have to. I am working on a video tutorial series which will be on sale soon. Ping me if you'd like more.

Enjoy!

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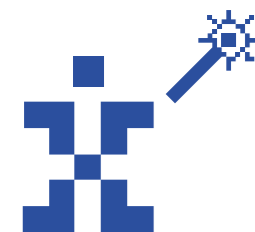
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Starting a Photoshop Fire.

They say we're hairless because of our mastery of fire!
Well, what are you waiting for? Strike a match!

Step 1 – New Doc

Create a new document. Choose File > New. Fill with black. Fire works best on dark backgrounds.

Step 2 – Place your copy

Type your copy with the type tool. Pretty obvious right? Fill with white. Rename the layer "Textotius".

Step 3 – Glow

Apply an outer glow. Make the outer glow white from the sickly default yellow in the dialogue.

Step 4 – Duplicate that layer

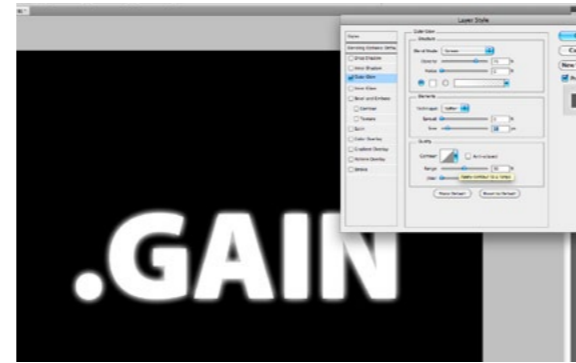
Duplicate the layer and delete the out glow on the duplicate layer. Rename the layer "le blur de gaussian". Grow a tiny French moustache.

Step 5 – Gaussian blur the duplicate

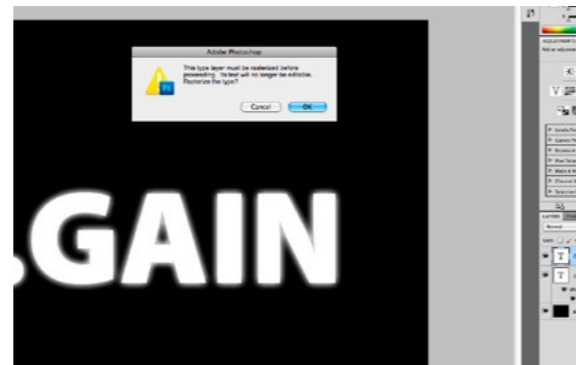
Use Gaussian Blur to feather the "le blur de gaussian" layer. Photoshop will warn you about it rasterising the layer. Apply the three-second rule, click OK.

Step 6 – Smudge

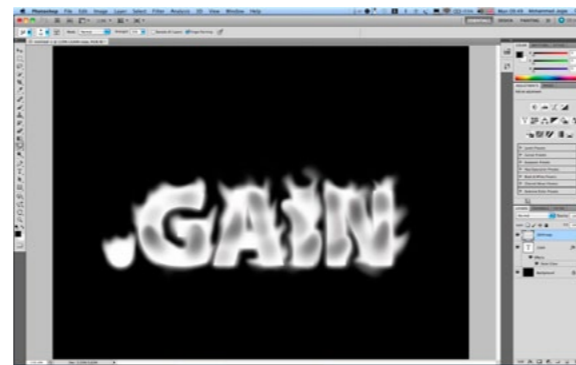
Select the Smudge Tool (pointy finger) off the toolbox and smudge upwards in circular strokes. Be sure to toggle between black and white so you have good inflections of tone in your smudging endeavour.



Step 3 - Outer Glow



Step 5 - Gaussian Blur



Step 6 - Smudge

Step 7 – Create a snapshot

When your happy with your smudging, create a snapshot from the history panel. It's a safety net because the next step is destructive.

Step 8 – Go greyscale

Choose Image > Mode > Grayscale

Step 9 – Go Index Colour

Choose Image > Mode > Index Colour

Step 10 – Change your colour table

Choose Image> Mode > Colour Table > Black Body.

Step 11 – Congrats! You're Done.

Optional Steps

If you find that you need to bring in more flame into the text body, do the following.

Step 12 – Choose your channel

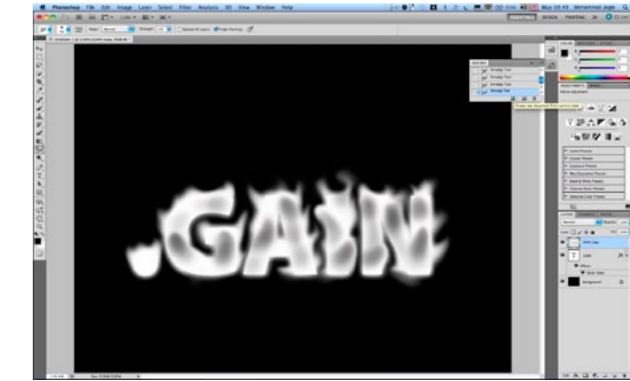
Convert to RGB. Choose the channel with the most contrast (blue) and make a selection of it. Apple/Control Click it.

Step 13 – Create a new layer

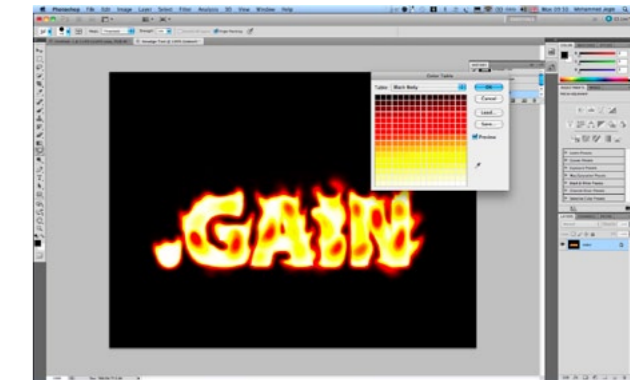
Click on the new layer icon

Step 14 – Soften the edges

Choose feather and smooth from Refine Edge



Step 7 - Create a snapshot



Step 10 - Black body colour table



Step 15 – Render Clouds

Choose your flame colours and choose Filter > Render > Clouds

Step 16 – Gaussian Blur

Gaussian blur till you feel a happy thud in your ribcage.

Step 17 – Create a reflection if you wish

Choose the content on the Background Layer by holding Apple/Control on your keyboard

Step 18 – Flip it!

Choose Edit > Transform > Flip Vertical. Then move it into position.

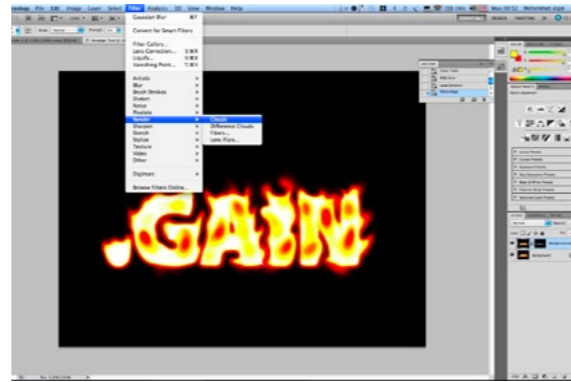
Step 19 - Transform it

Hold down Apple/Control + Alt + Shift And pick up a corner to create a perspective distort. Pick up the midpoint with no keys selected and make it way shorter

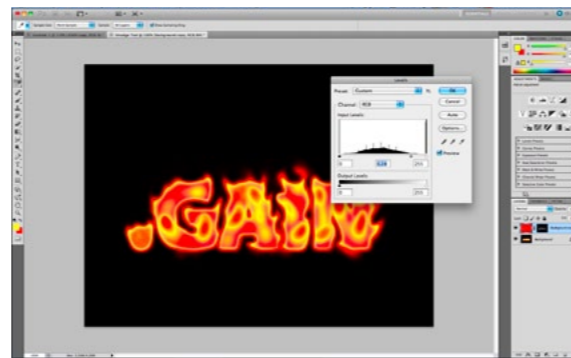
Step 19 – Fade it.

Choose black as your foreground colour, choose the gradient tool, choose foreground to transparent as the gradient option. Create a layer mask on flipper. Click and drag upward with the gradient tool.

Step 20 – Take the rest of the day off and watch some sport.



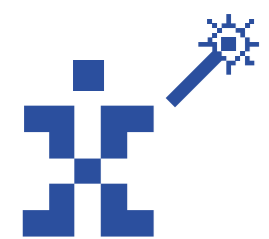
Step 15 - Render some clouds



Step 16 - Increase contrast



Step 19 - Use layer masks for fading the reflection



Environmentally friendly woodmaking

The trick to woodmaking in Photoshop is creating the grain and knots. You get this right, you got wood!

Step 1 – New doc with black

Create new document and fill it with black

Step 2 – Gradient tool and radial gradients

Choose the Gradient tool. Choose foreground to Transparent from the Gradient Selector and place a few random gradients on the canvas. Your FG should be white

Step 3 – Apply the Fibres (sic, American spelling y'all) Filter

Choose Filter > Render > Fibres. Hit Randomise till you get one that you dig.

Step 4 – Fade back the Fibres filter

Choose Edit > Fade and pull back the Fibres filter you applied quite drastically. Between 5 and 10%. Blending should be normal.

Step 5 – Run a High Pass Filter

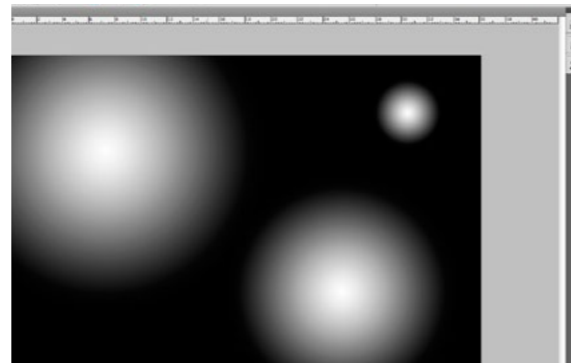
Choose Filter > Other > High Pass. Default settings does it nicely.

Step 6 – Transform big time

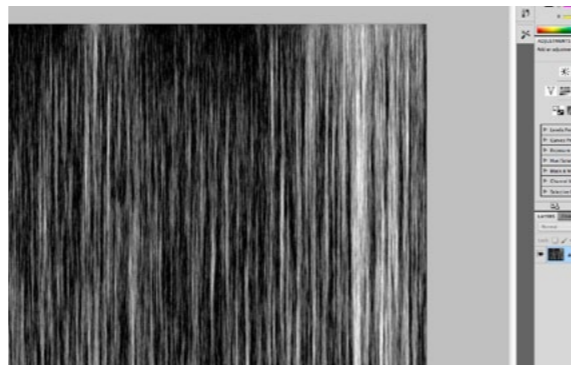
Transform the wood layer on the vertical axis only. Around 300-400%.

Step 7 - Lay down a colour adjustment layer

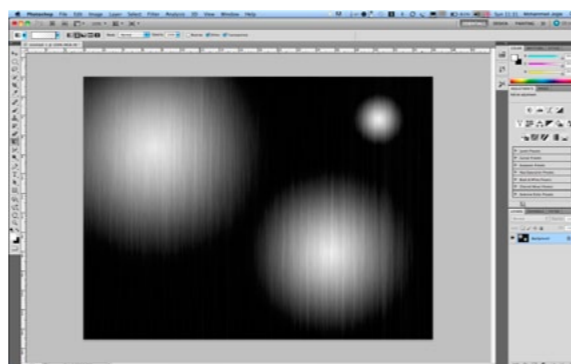
Place a brownish colour solid colour layer on top of your wood grain to colour it. Change the layer blend mode. Overlay, darken, soft light are good options.



Step 2 - Gradient universe



Step 3 - Fibres



Step 4 - Fade

Step 8 - Slap yourself on the back

We're done, now for some lighting (optional)

Step 9 - Let there be light

Create a new layer and fill it with white

Step 10 - Apply some light

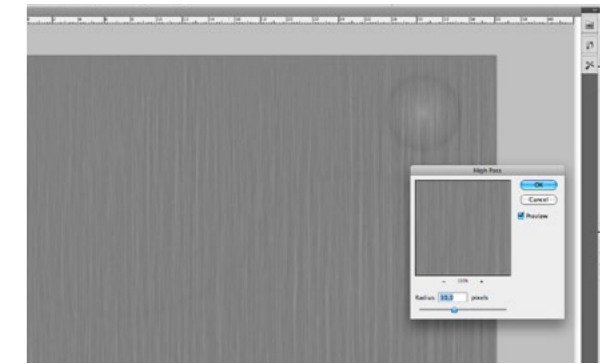
Choose Filter > Render > Lighting. NB: Not available in CS5 64-bit. You have to run Ps in 32-bit mode to get access to this filter.

Step 11 - Change the layer blend options

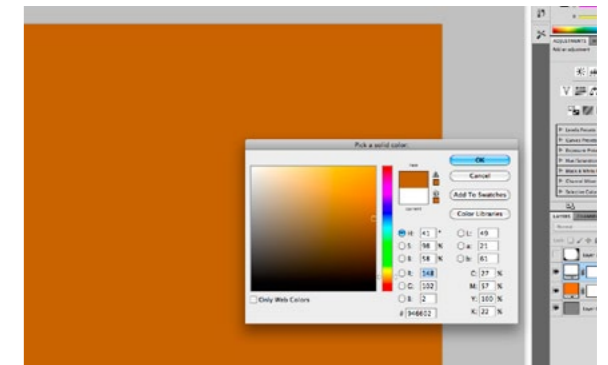
Don't confuse this with the layer blending mode found at the top of the layers panel. Cruise down to the bottom of the layers panel instead. Choose the fx icon off the bottom > Blending options.

Step 12 - Blend 'em layers agin

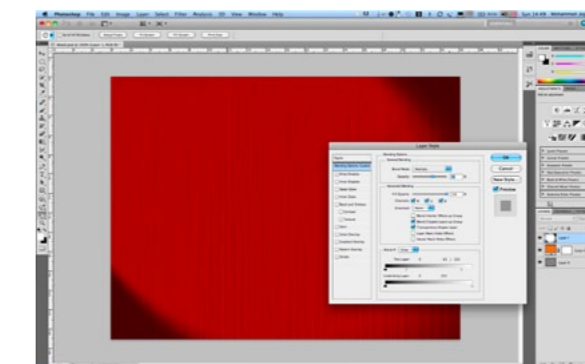
Back to the layers panel and swing it to Multiply. Then adjust the opacity till you feel a happy blanket embrace you. Done.



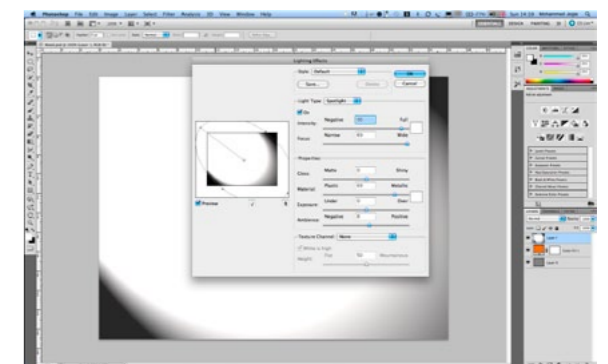
Step 5 - High Pass



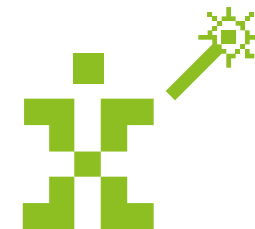
Step 6 - Solid Colour Layer



Step 11 - Adjust layer blending



Step 10 - Render some lighting



aich-too-oh

Water is all about layer effects.

Step 1 – Place your text

Use the Horizontal Type Mask Tool.

Step 2 - Round out your type

Click OK and run a smooth to round out your type corners. Choose Select > Modify > Smooth. I find the Refine Edge option applies an undesirable softening as well, so I prefer the blind Smooth option.

Step 3 - Apply Torn Edges and Stamp filters

Roughen out the edges by applying Torn Edges followed by Stamp. Choose Filter > Filter Gallery > Sketch.

Step 4 - Fill selection with colour

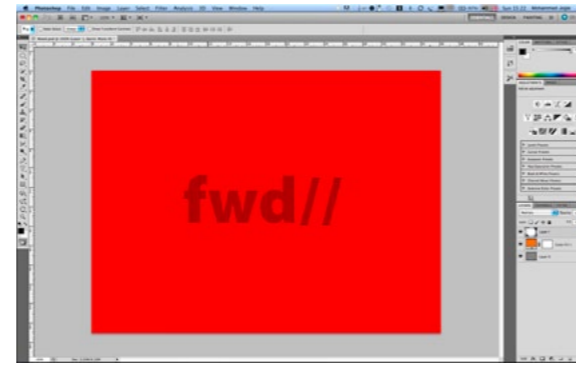
Fill your selection with colour. Then choose Blending Options from the Layers Panel. Take the Fill Opacity slider to 0% under Advanced Blending.

Step 5 - Go bos with effects

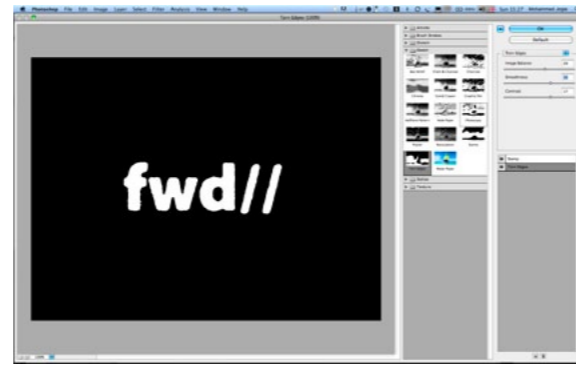
Apply inner shadow, inner glow, drop shadow and bevel and emboss. Remember to disable the "Use Global Light" option when adjusting the individual effects. Be sure to move your lights to around 90°. It's 85° in my case.

Step 6 - Create water droplets [Optional]

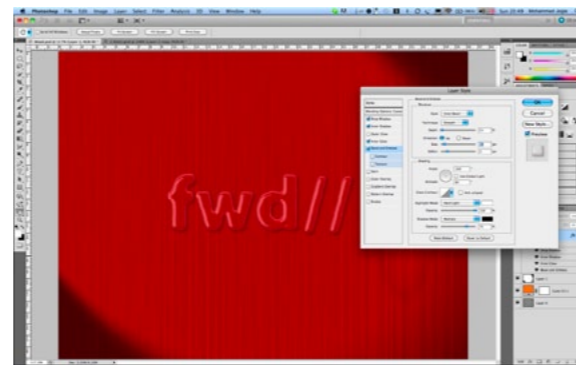
Create a new layer, fill with white, then add noise. Set your options at full value (400), Gaussian and Monochromatic.



Step 1 - Type select tool



Step 3 - Torn Edges & Stamp



Step 5 - Going effects mad

Step 7 - Make it blurry

Choose Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur. Blur till you can make out clumps of darker areas.

Step 8 - Run Threshold

Choose Image > Adjustments > Threshold. Move the slider till you get the droplet pattern you like.

Step 9 - Remove the highlights then make da pixel bigger

Choose Select > Colour Range > Highlights. Delete these. Then Scale up to around 300%. Be sure to deselect. It will look hecatically pixelated.

Step 10 - Smooth your selection

Hold down Apple / Ctrl and click on the droplets layer, choose Select > Modify > Smooth. I used a setting of 5 in the example.

Step 11 - Delete your droplets layer

Seems ridiculous but it's safe to do so. You can hid it from view if you're nervous.

Step 12 - Fill with colour on Type layer

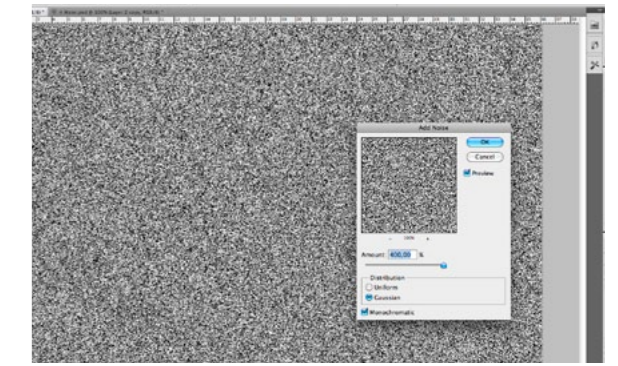
Fill the droplets with colour on the type layer. It will pick up the type style and have all of the layer properties.

Step 13 - Refine your result

Clean up your artwork by alternately painting and erasing as you deem appropriate. Awesumness!

Step 14 - Duplicate

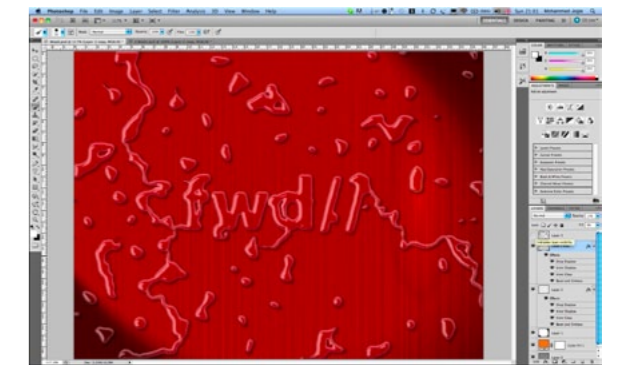
Duplicate the layer if you want a stronger result. Be sure to pull back the transparency slider. I brought it down to 17% in our example.



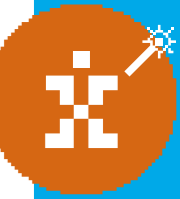
Step 6 - Make noise



Step 8 - Crossing the theshold



Step 14 - Duplicate if needed



Brushed metal and glass type

Like our previous example, we're going to create two effects simultaneously

Step 1 - Making metal

Create a new document. Then choose your Gradient tool.

Step 2 - Apply a copper grad from top to bottom

Choose Copper from the default list of grads and the Linear option.

Step 3 - Make some noise

Apply some noise. A lot less than the last example. Around 10ish

Step 4 - Apply Motion Blur

Run a motion blur. Set the direction to 0. Scale horizontally to remove repeated pixels on the edges. Hold in Alt to go both ways simultaneously.

Step 5 - Hue/Saturation

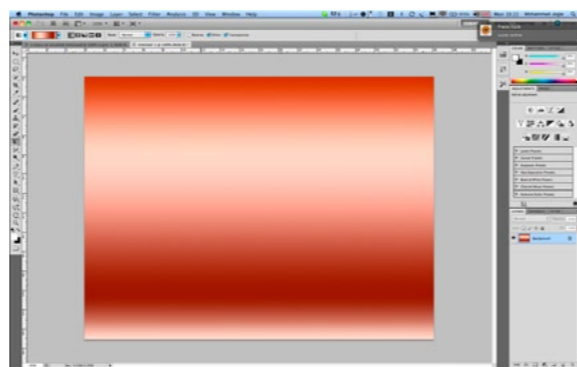
Nuff said. Swing the hue slider to a bluish tinge, yank down the saturation slider and lighten if necessary

Step 6 - Lighting [Optional but advised]

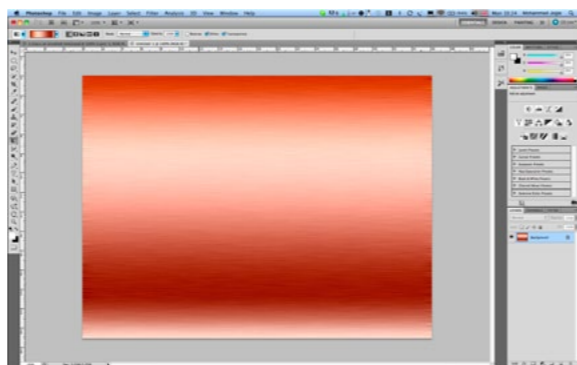
Choose Filter > Render > Lighting. NB: Not available in CS5 64-bit. You have to run Ps in 32-bit mode to get access to this filter.

Step 11 - Change the layer blend options

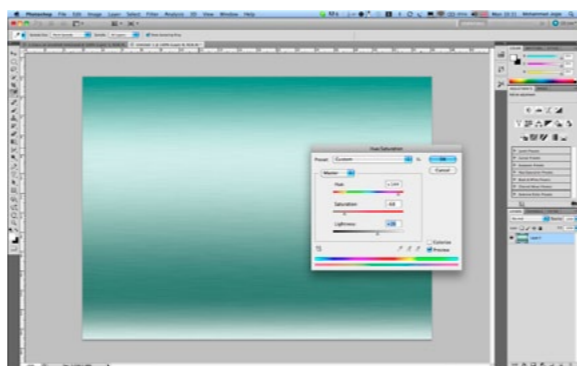
Don't confuse this with the layer blending mode found at the top of the layers panel. Cruise down to the bottom of the layers panel instead. Choose the fx icon off the bottom > Blending options.



Step 2 - Grad from the top



Step 4 - Noise and motion blur



Step 5 - Hue/Saturation

Step 12 - Blend 'em layers agin

Back to the layers panel and swing it to Multiply. Then adjust the opacity till you feel a happy blanket embrace you. The metal's now done.

Step 7 - Place your type

Use the Type Mask tool and lay down something intelligible. Reason being we want to round off the edges per our previous example.

Step 8 - Be smooth

Choose Select > Modify > Smooth. I used around 3 pixels in the example.

Step 9 - Fill your text

Create a new layer and fill your rounded type selection with white.

Step 10 - Choose Glass from the Styles Panel

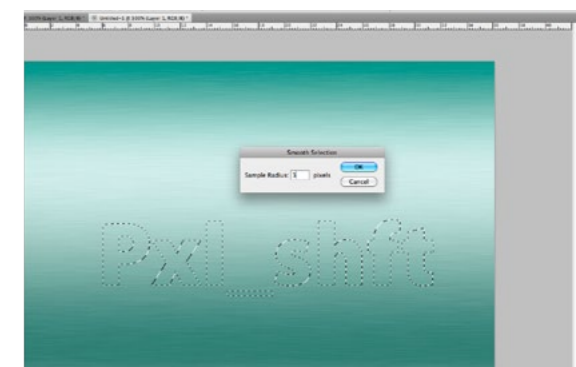
If you're using CS5, here's another disappointment. They killed it in the default install! Not to worry though. Follow the settings in the screengrab alongside to get the result we looked at during Pxl_shft or mail me and I'll send you the PSD. I've included individual screengrabs of my settings over the next page too.

Step 11 - Apply some refraction

Inverse your selection so you have everything but the type selected. Create a new layer, choose a soft brush and paint along the edge opposite to the light direction with a colour sampled from the glass.

Step 12 - Apply Gaussian Blur

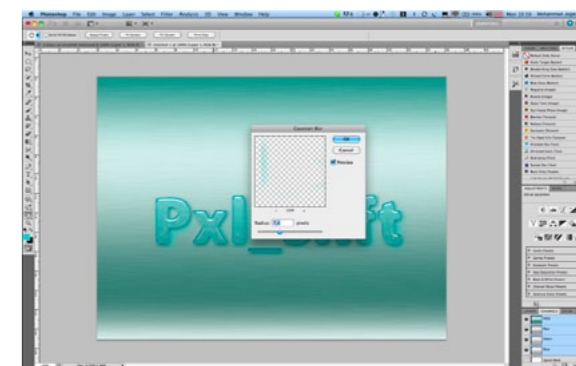
With your selection still active, hide the edges. Choose Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur and soften your strokes till you feel happiness. Done. Coffee break.



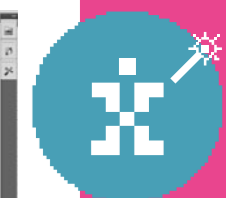
Step 8 - Smooth around 3 pxls



Step 9 - Choose the glass style

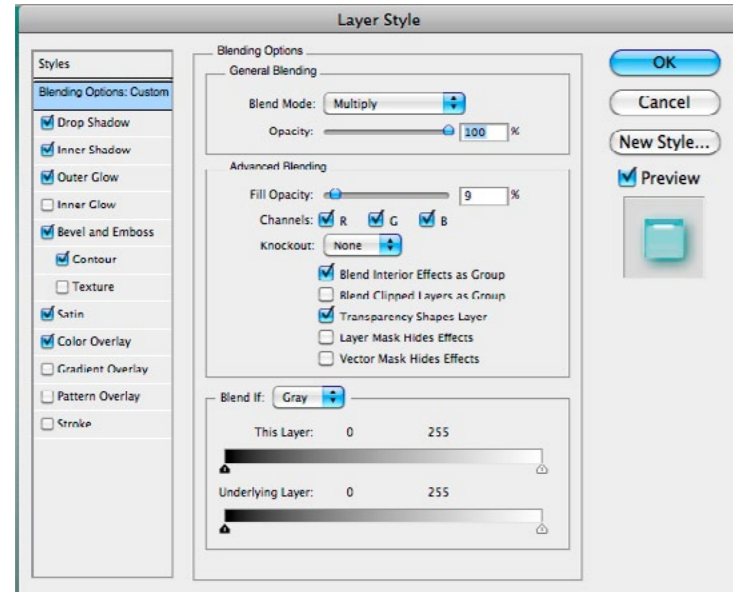


Step 12 - Gaussian blur

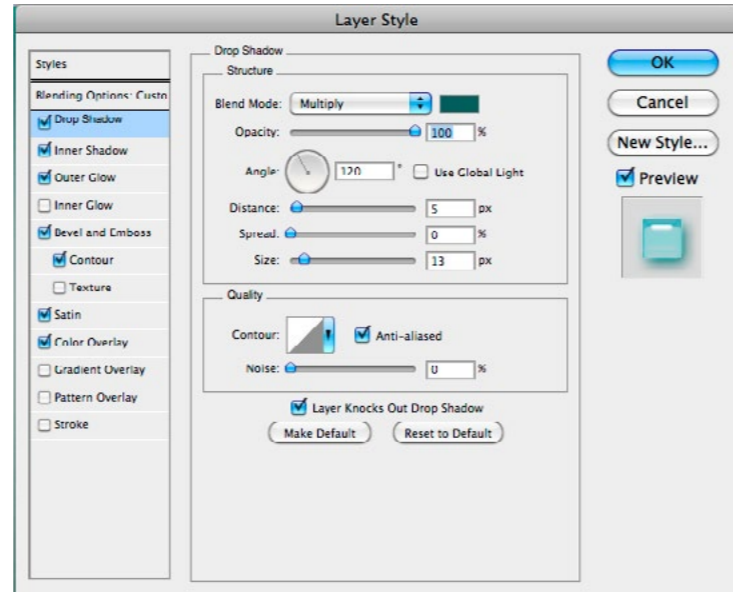


How to make your glass style from scratch

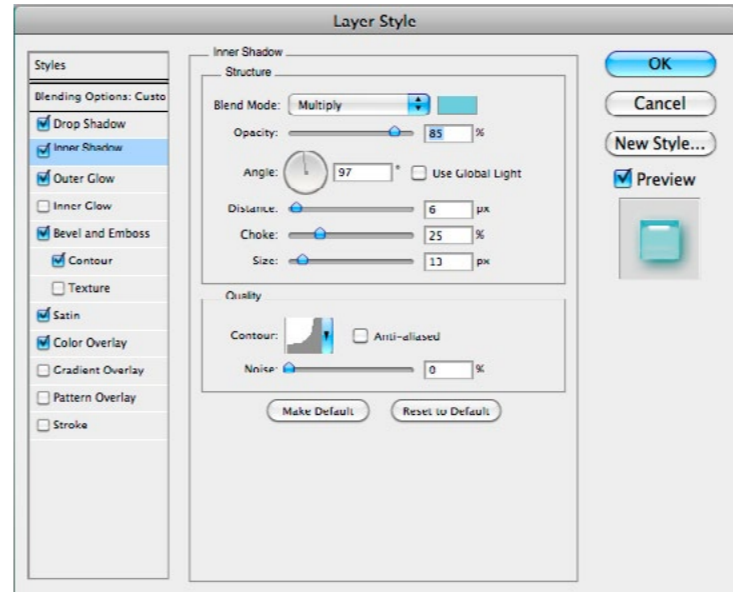
Here are the screengrabs as promised for your glass style if you are on CS5.



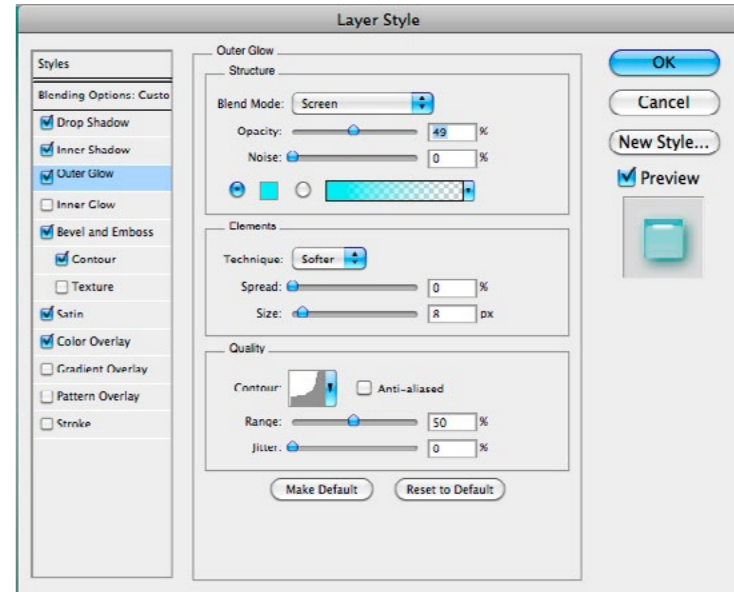
Drop fill opacity to around 10%



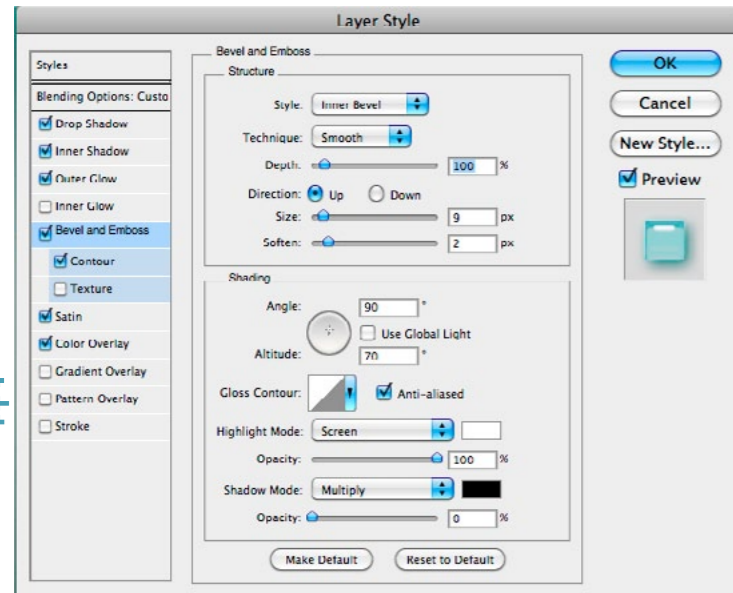
Change drop shadow colour to dark bluey



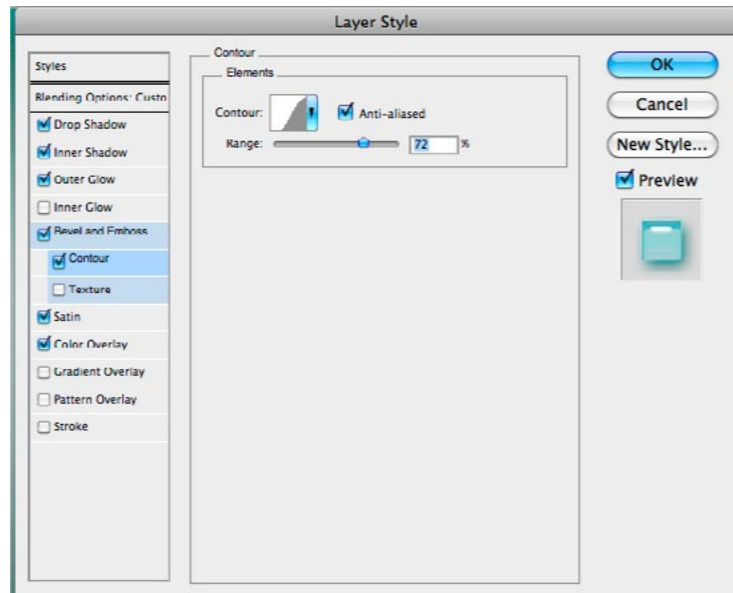
Apply lots of choke to your Inner Shadow



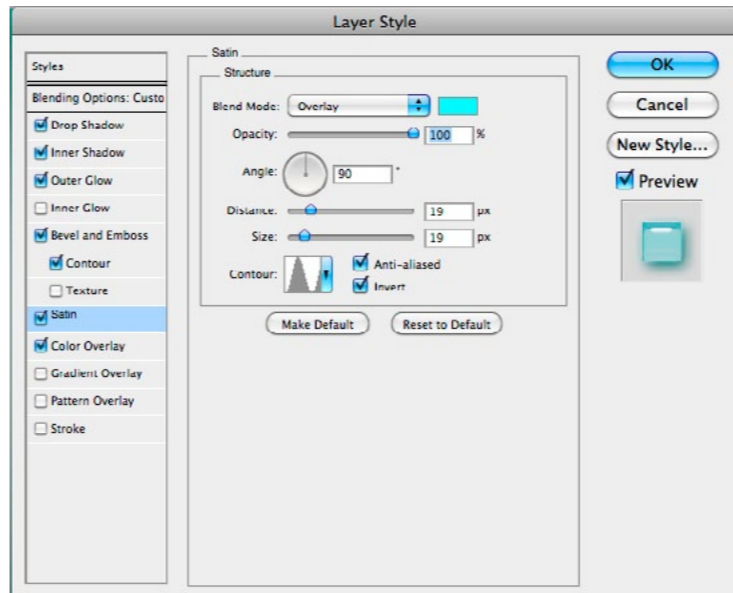
Choose Cove Deep for your Outer Glow



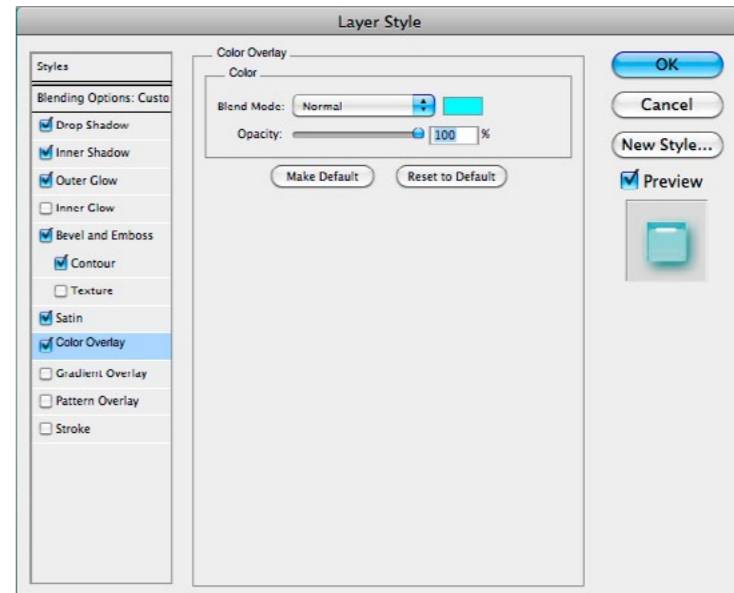
Pay attention to Size and Soften



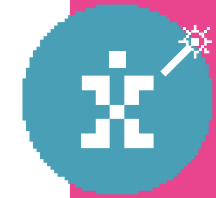
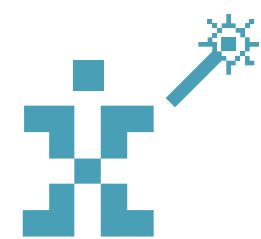
Choose Gaussian from Contour



Choose Ring for your Satin Contour



Finally, choose a bright turquoise colour for your colour overlay



Nicotine-free smoke

There are many crappy smoke tutorials out in the ether. This one requires a bit of PT, but it's worth the OT.

Step 1 – Create a new doc

Dark backgrounds work best for this stuff

Step 2 - Place your type

I've used the Type Mask Tool so that we can warp it without worrying about fills at this point.

Step 3 - Warp it!

Choose Edit > Transform > Warp. Distort your type using the handles and points so that it appears to drift.

Step 4 - Save your selection as a channel

Go to your Channels Panel and choose the Save Selection as Channel icon. You'll need it for later.

Step 5 - Paint some strokes

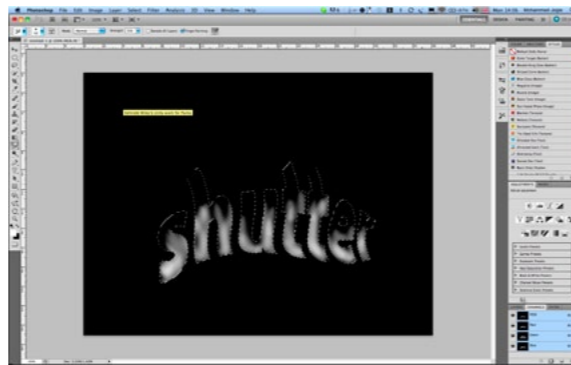
Paint some random strokes from the top to bottom of your text. Set your opacity low so that the strokes are able to build on top of one another.

Step 6 - Liquify

Deselect, and choose Filter Liquify. Pull your strokes in an upward direction so you get wisps coming off your strokes.



Step 3 - Warping in action



Step 5 - Stroke painting



Step 7 - The Liquify Dialog

Step 7 - Smudge your strokes

Choose your Smudge tool (pointy finger), enable finger painting on your control palette and soften out your smoke tendrils.

Step 8 - Toggle between Liquify and smudging

You'll have to do this a couple of times, so be patient. It's actually loads of fun. Not so much when you have the client breathing down your neck.

Step 9 - Lock and Load

Load your saved selection from the Channels panel, create a new layer and fill it with white. Then choose Layer blending options off the bottom of the Layers panel. Take your Fill opacity to 0%. This will eliminate your fill colour.

Step 10 - Now Glow

Then choose Inner glow. Change the colouring to white and up the softening by changing the Size slider. I used 5 in the case of our example.

Step 10 - Smudge some more

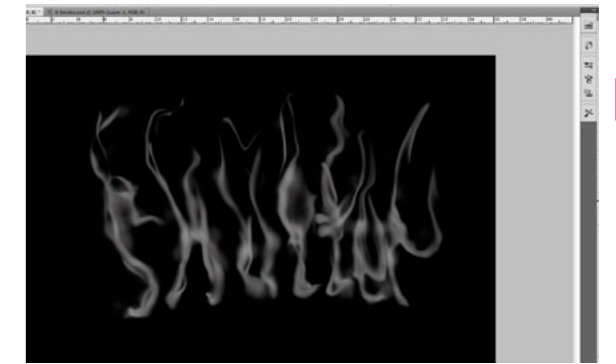
Gently smudge back the lines so they soften and fall back a little.

Step 11 - Mask it

Apply a layer mask. Delicately paint in areas around the top of the type so they appear softer.

Step 12 - Hue/Saturation Adjustment Layer

Place a Hue/Sat adjustment layer and choose Colorize. Then move the slider to a bluish tint. Pull back the Saturation and Lightness. Voila! Ve are how du yoo say in eeengleesh, dun.



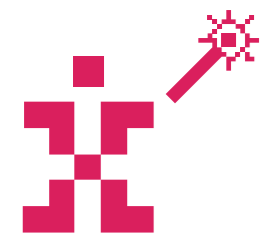
Step 8 - Pro toggling



Step 9 - Selection with white



Step 12 - Hue/Sat completed



Making mad metal type

“But MJ, I love you, I don’t love you, I love you, I uh, who are you again? You guessed it, some Spiderman type is in the offing.

Step 1 – A new doc, Doc

Dark backgrounds work best for this stuff too. We’ll create a gradient for this one as we’re going to create a highly glossy Apple-style reflection.

Step 2 - Throw down some type

Using the Type tool for this artwork. Fill with white.

Step 3 - Apply a gradient overlay

Remember to kern. Then Choose the FX icon off the bottom of the Layers panel. Apply a Gradient overlay. Dark grey at the top and a lighter grey towards the bottom. Sort of imitating the background but lighter.

Step 4 - Glow inwardly

Apply an Inner glow, make sure you go to white from the sickly yellow default and tighten up the Choke and Spread. I used 9 and 8 respectively.

Step 5 - Select and expand your type

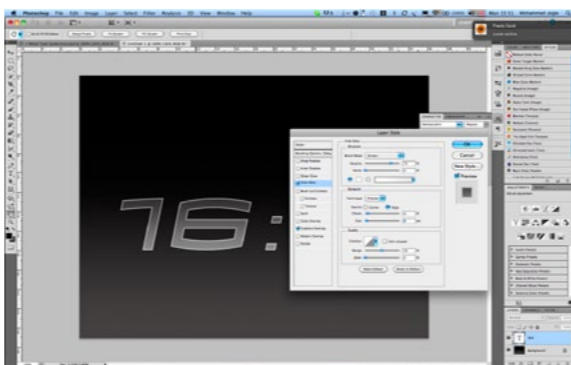
Select your type on the type layer (Apple/Ctrl + Click) then choose Select > Modify > Expand. I chose 5 pixels in our example.

Step 6 - Fill and emboss

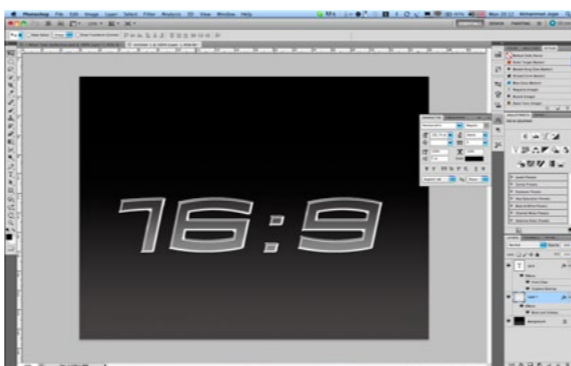
Create a new layer, move it below your text layer and fill the expanded type selection with white, then apply an Emboss. Choose Ring from the Gloss Contour option to get your emboss to pop.



Step 2 - Your type, all white



Step 3 - Grad overlay applied



Step 5 - Expanded Type layer

Step 7 - Excentuate the metal with airbrush

We will get the metal to take on a more realistic feel by paint selectively on the selfsame layer with black. A fat, soft brush is recommended. I applied a 3 pixel outer glow to give it extra oomph.

Step 8 - The reflection [Optional]

Create a new layer that is a copy of the two type layers. Do this by selecting both layers, the holding down Alt and choosing Merge Layers from the Layers panel pop-up menu.

Step 9 - Just flip it

Give it a vertical flip from the Edit Menu. Because the Type is slanted , we’ll have to transform it so that it looks correct visually.

Step 10 - Mask it to hide it

Add a Layer mask. Then choose a linear gradient, make sure Black is the Foreground colour, then choose foreground to transparent from the Gradient Selector. This done, Apply your gradient on the Layer mask as many times as you need to. Cut opacity and you good to go.

In conclusion

I hope you enjoy this tutorial set as much as I’ve enjoyed putting it together. I am working on books and a video series which will be available in the coming months. Be sure to look out for those.

Happy pixel shifting.

Mohammed Jogie

Founder, Creative Week

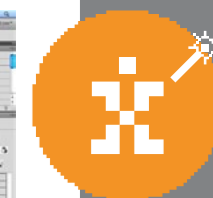
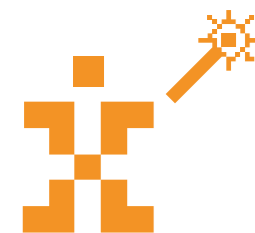
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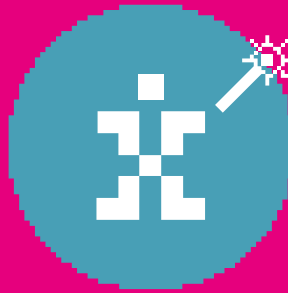


Step 9 - Flipping out



Step 10 - All masked out





made exclusively for Pxl_shfrs