📖 Digital Scrapper Premier 2023, Volume 7

Lesson 1, Hard Light Blending

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Lesson 1, Hard Light Blending (Adobe Photoshop)
by Jen White

Use a little-used blend mode along with an adjustment layer to blend your favorite single-subject photo into a plain, textured background.

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NOTE: Please complete the lessons in the order they are provided.

For this lesson you will need:
- paper1 from the Class-Files folder.
- practice-photo1 from the Class-Files folder.
- mask1 from the Class-Files folder.

Quick Steps for Lesson 1, Hard Light Blending

Step-by-step instructions are below.

- Create a new document and reset the Color Chips.
- Add a background paper (paper1).
- Add a photo (practice-photo1).
- Clip a gradient map adjustment layer to the photo.
- Set the Blend Mode of the photo layer to Hard Light.
- Adjust the gradient map as needed.
- **Option 1: Fully Blended**
  - Resize the photo to fill the document.
- **Option 2: Blended & Clipped**
  - Clip the photo and Gradient Map layers to a clipping mask.
  - Set the Blend Mode of the photo layer to Normal.
  - Set the Blend Mode of the clipping mask layer to Hard Light.
- Group the photo layers.
- Move the photo group and lower the opacity.
- Save the document as DSP23-V7-Lesson-Page.psd in the Class-Files folder.

Step-By-Step for Lesson 1, Hard Light Blending

Prepare Your Workspace
- Create a new 12x12 inch document (File > New) at 300 ppi with a white background. Letter-sized documents will also work for this tutorial.
- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black over white.

Add a Background Paper
- Get the Move tool.
- In the Tool Options, uncheck both Auto-Select and Show Transform Controls.
- Open paper1 (File > Open) from the Class-Files folder.
- Holding down the Shift key, click and drag the paper onto the new document.
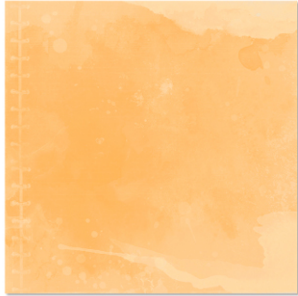
How To Choose a Good Paper for Lesson 1 and the Variations
NOTE: I recommend completing the lessons using the provided papers and photos before using ones from your own stash.
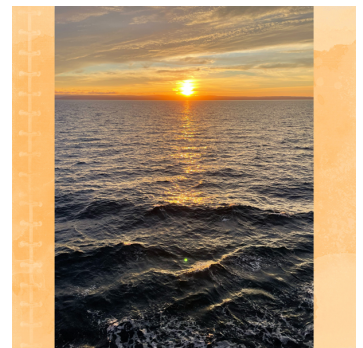• Choose a plain, textured paper that's light in color.
• Avoid papers that have a pattern.

To match a plain, textured paper to your photos, watch <u>2 Ways to Quickly Match a Paper to a Photo</u>.

Add a Photo
• Open practice-photo1 (File > Open) from the Class-Files folder.
• Holding down the Shift key, click and drag the photo onto the new document.

How To Choose a Good Photo for Lesson 1 and the Variations
NOTE: I would recommend choosing your own photo for this Lesson Page after you've completed the first two videos of Lesson 1.
• Choose a photo that has a single subject.
• Avoid photos with multiple subjects.
• The photo should have good exposure (be well lit).
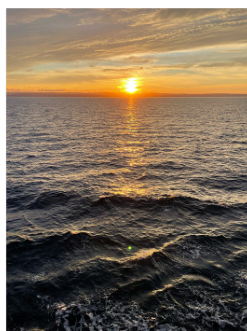
Add a Gradient Map to the Photo

NOTE: In the variations for this lesson, we will capitalize on the colors in your photo, but in this lesson, we'll use only black and white.

* In the Layers panel, click on the photo layer to activate it.
* Click on the Create a New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon and choose Gradient Map (not Gradient).
* In the Properties panel, click on the Clip Layer icon.

NOTE: By clipping the adjustment layer down, it will only affect the layer it's clipped to. If you don't have a layer mask applied to the Gradient Map layer, click on the Layer Mask icon in the Layers panel.

Blend the Photo With Hard Light

* In the Layers panel, click on the photo layer to activate it.
* Set the Blend Mode to Hard Light.

Adjust the Gradient Map

* In the Layers panel, double click on the thumbnail (not the layer mask) of the Gradient Map layer to open the Properties panel.
* In the Properties panel, click once on the gradient (not the dropdown) to open the Gradient Editor.
* In the Gradient Editor, click on either the Black or White Color Stop to get a Midpoint slider. Click and drag the Midpoint slider to the left or right to add more or less black to your image. I'll drag it to 60.
  * Dragging to the left will decrease the black pixels and make the image brighter.
  * Dragging to the right will increase the black pixels and make the image darker.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS

* If you accidentally click off of the Midpoint slider, you will create another Color Stop. If that happens, click Cancel and redo the steps to adjust the gradient map.
* If your gradient is not black to white (Foreground to Background), in Presets, open the Basics folder and click on the first gradient, Foreground to Background.

* Click OK to close the Gradient Editor.
* Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) on the tab of the panel and choose Close.

Which Blending Option Should You Use?
NOTE: I recommend only using single-subject photos for Lesson 1 and its variations.
• Photos with no clearly-defined subject (such as scenery photos) should only use
  Blending Option 1 or **Blending Option 2** (found in this video).
• Photos with a clearly-defined subject (such as a dog photo) can use any of the
  blending options (found in this video or the next).

Blending Option 1: Fully Blended
• In the Layers panel, click on the photo layer to activate
  it.
• Press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options.
• In the Tool Options, click and drag the Width icon to the
  right until the boundaries of the photo are wider than the
  boundaries of the document. Click the checkmark to
  commit the change.

Benefits of Blending Option 1
• You don't have to mess with the edges of the photo.
• It's easier and faster than all other options.
Drawbacks of Blending Option 1
• The photo covers up the texture in the paper.
• You won't have the opportunity to mask away parts of the photo you do not want to
  keep.

Blending Option 2: Blended & Clipped
• Press Ctrl Z (Mac: Cmd Z) to undo the last option.
• In the Layers panel, click on the paper layer to activate it.
• Open mask1 (File > Open) from the Class-Files folder.
• Get the Move tool.
• Holding down the Shift key, click and drag the mask
  onto the document.
• In the Layers panel, hold down the Alt key (Mac: Opt
  key) and hover your cursor between the photo layer and
  the mask layer until you see the clipping mask icon.
  Click to clip the photo to the mask.
• In the Layers panel, click on the photo layer to activate it
  and set the Blend Mode to Normal.
• Click on the mask layer to activate it and set the Blend
  Mode to Hard Light.
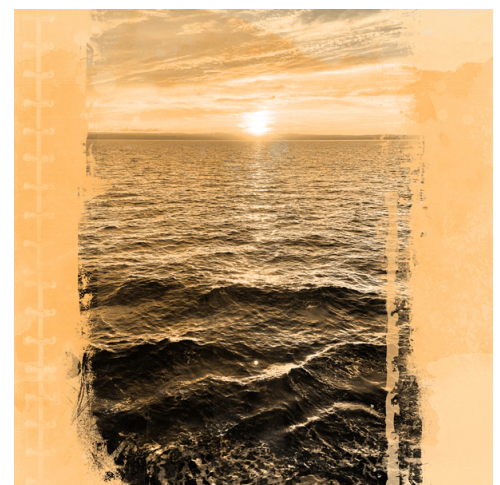
- If the layer mask extends past the boundaries of the image, press Ctrl T (Mac: Cmd T) to get the Transform options. Then on the document, hold down the Shift key, and click and drag the side handles of the bounding box inward until the photo covers the mask. Click the checkmark to commit the change. NOTE: Never transform a photo using this method. It will distort the photo.

Benefits of Blending Option 2
- The edges of the photo will have an artsy look.
- You don't have to have a photo with a clearly defined subject.
- It's faster than Blending Option 3 (found in the next video).

Drawbacks of Blending Option 2
- It's not as cool as Blending Option 3 (found in the next video).
- You will still have a hard time hiding parts of the photo you do not want to keep.

Create a Group for the Photo
- In the Layers panel, the mask layer should be active.
- Holding down the Shift key, click on the Gradient Map layer. Now three layers should be active.
- Click on the Create a New Group icon.
- Double click directly on the name of the new group, rename it HARD LIGHT PHOTO, and press Enter/Return to commit the change.

Move & Further Blend the Photo
- With the Move tool, on the document, hold down the Shift key and click and drag the photo group to the right so that it's slightly offset from the center of the document.
- (Optional) In the Layers panel, lower the Opacity of the group to 65%.

Save the Document
- Save the document (File > Save) as DSP23-V7-Lesson-Page.psd in the Class-Files folder.

NOTE: You'll be using this document in Lesson 2.