



Working with Layers

Unit 4 Lesson 2

Working with Layers

- Layers are good for:
 - allow a photo editor much more freedom to edit and change parts of a photo without effecting other parts
 - allow you to mix elements from different pictures and place them in one photo creation
- The best way to think of layers is that each layer is a separate sheet of transparency that is clear until something is added
- These layers are stacked on top of each other and the result is the final picture

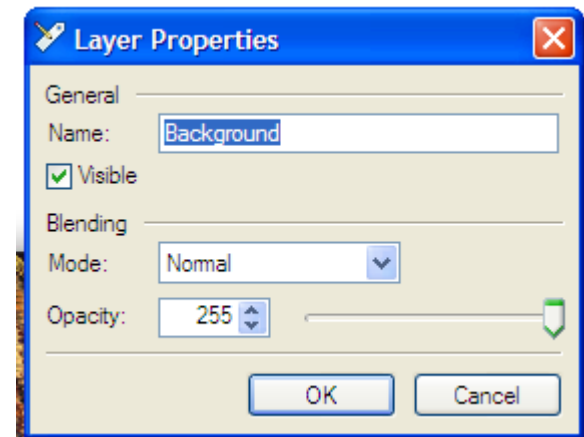
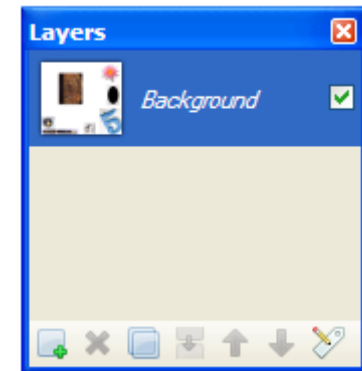
Working with Layers

- Every picture has at least one layer, the default name is *background*
- In Paint.Net we work with layers by using the Layers window
- You can have the layer window visible or hidden
- You can turn the layer window on and off by using the Window menu or pressing F7

Working with Layers

The layers window has the following commands:

New Layer ↑
Delete Layer ↑
Copy Layer ↑
Merge Layer Down ↑
Move Layer Up ↑
Move Layer Down ↑
Properties ↑
Visibility Check Box ↑



Working with Layers

- Exercise: Introduction to Layers
 - Open 05Start.pdn from the Lessons 5 folder
 - If the layers windows is not visible choose Windows → Layers or F7
 - Notice the background layer is highlighted, this is the active layer. Any changes you do will only effect this layer.
 - Each layer has a thumbnail image that shows you what is on that layer
 - Notice the Check this specifies that a layer is visible
 - Most images that you open will start with only 1 layer
 - As you work you must save a file your files in Paint.Nets native file type
 - If you save as a different type your layers will be lost
 - This is called flattening an image, this means all the layers are merged together

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Adding a layer
 - Open Door.jpg
 - Select the entire image and select Edit → Copy
 - Go back to 05Start, under the edit menu select the option Paste into New Layer
 - You now see that image inserted as a new layer, rename it with the title “Door”

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Editing a Layer
 - Make sure the door layer is selected
 - You may wish to hide the Background
 - Using what we have learned about selections delete the white around the door.
 - Do the same with the Doorway layer
- Exercise: Rearranging Layers
 - We can change the order of our layers, this is known as stacking order
 - To do this select the layer you wish to move and use the up or down arrows to change the order
 - Move the Door layer up above the Doorway layer

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Changing Opacity and mode of a layer
 - You can reduce the opacity of the door to allow layers underneath it to be seen through it
 - Open the properties for the Door layer
 - Change the opacity to 123 (50%)
 - Change the blending to Lighten
 - Blending controls how the colour pixels in the layers mix together

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Adding a gradient to a layer
 - Add a new layer
 - Name the layer “Gradient”
 - In the colors windows select any shade of purple
 - Using the paint can fill the layer with colour
 - Select the gradient tool
 - Choose a linear gradient
 - Choose transparency mode
 - With the gradient layer active drag the gradient tool from the right margin to the left margin. Use the shift key to keep it straight
 - In the properties of the gradient layer change the opacity to 153 (60%)

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Adding Text
 - Create a new layer and call it text
 - Make all layers but the text layer invisible
 - Select the text tool and select a font of your choice at size 60
 - Select centre alignment and bold
 - Click somewhere in the window and enter “Jardin” hit enter and type “2010”
 - NOTE: When working with text in Paint.Net you may only adjust your text while entering it. Once you choose a different tool you will no longer be able to edit your text
 - Move the text to be inside the arch

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Adding Text continued
 - You can change the appearance of the text by playing around with Effects and opacity.
 - Test a few different options to see how they affect the text.

Working with Layers

- Flattening a file
 - When you have completed working with a file you will need to save the file in a format that is more easily used by other programs
 - When you do this you merge, or flatten, all the layers into one layer
 - This significantly reduces the size of the file
 - Remember once a file has been flattened all the layer information is lost
 - Paint.Net allows you to save files into numerous formats

Working with Layers

- Softening the edges of a selection
 - You can smooth the edges of a selection to make it look more natural by using feathering
 - Your selection needs to be on a layer of its own
 - Once a selection has been made use the feather option under Effects → Selection
 - This effect will cause detail loss along the edge of the selection as the image is mixed with transparency on the edges to allow for a gentler transition

Working with Layers

- Exercise: Using feathering
 - In the image we have been working select one of the layers (ie Statue Head) apply feathering and notice the change in appearance.

Working with Layers

- So far we have used the adjustments options to change the brightness and contrast of an image
- This can also be done using layers and the blending mode
- Exercise: Fixing exposure issues by using layer blending
 - Open 05_01.jpg from the Sample Images folder
 - Duplicate the layer
 - Change the blending to screen on the top layer

Working with Layers

- **Blend Modes**
- A layer's blend mode specifies how it is blended with the layers below it.
- Not all blend modes are easy to understand in classic or intuitive terms, and because of this you need to experiment. Each blend mode is described in the following website along with an image composed of the two layers with the respective blend mode selected and the opacity set to 255.
- <http://www.getpaint.net/doc/latest/en/LayersAndBlendModes.html>