

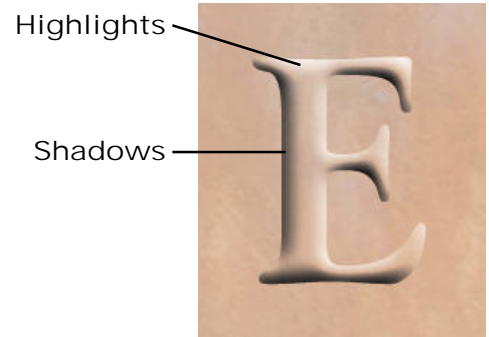
How to

CREATE AN EMBOSSSED OBJECT.

In traditional printing, you create an embossing object by making an impression in paper so that the embossed graphic appears raised.

The secret to reproducing an embossed look in Adobe Photoshop is creating highlights and shadows that work together to create the illusion of depth. Where you position these highlights and shadows can control the direction your light seems to be coming from.

This issue also continues to expand on the use of channels and masks in Adobe Photoshop. For an additional technique to "wrap" your background over the embossed shape, refer to *Photoshop Techniques #007*.



Cheat Sheet:

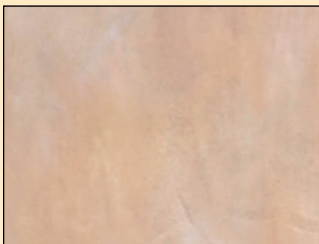


Image Channels
(Grayscale, RGB, or CMYK)



Object Mask



Shadow Mask



Highlight Mask

An introduction to channels

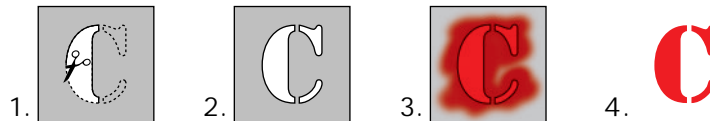
This page is an introduction to using channels. You do not have to read this section to successfully create your embossed graphic. Just follow the step-by-step instruction starting on the next page. Don't worry about grasping everything. You do not have to completely understand channels for this technique to work.

What are channels?

It is easy to add a new channel to a Photoshop document; just select New Channel from the Channels palette. It is harder to grasp what that new channel represents or what to do with it.

In a way, working with channels can be a lot like using a cardboard stencil and a can of spray paint.

Let's look at how you might use a stencil: 1) Cut a shape out of a piece of cardboard. 2) Lay this new stencil over a background you want to paint. 3) Using the spray paint, spray inside the stencil shape. 4) Remove the stencil. Voilà—you have trimmed the paint neatly inside the original stencil shape.



This is exactly how we will use channels in this technique. You will add a series of new channels to your original image. These will hold stencil masks for the highlights and shadows that will define your embossed shape.

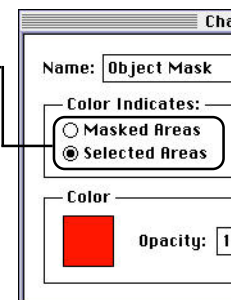
You have not changed the original image until the last step. It is in this last step you will use the channel masks to paint on highlight and shadow details.

Look at the channels shown on the left. These are the channels you will be creating with the following step-by-step instructions. The black areas on each channel represent the stencil shape you will apply to your image in the last step.

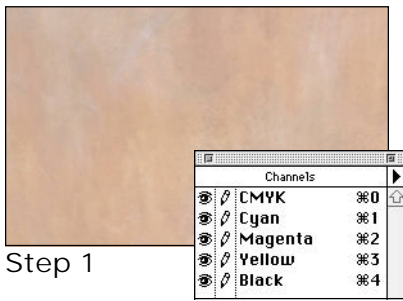
Channel note:

In Step 2, you will choose the "Selected Areas" option for viewing your channels. With this setting, Photoshop will use the darkest areas of your channels as the stencil shape.

Most Photoshop books use the "Masked Areas" option when working with channels. In these books, the channels look like a photo negative of the channels you make here.



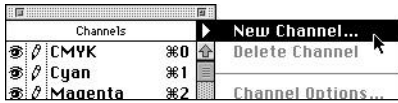
Embossing a simple black graphic



Step 1

Open the background you want to emboss.

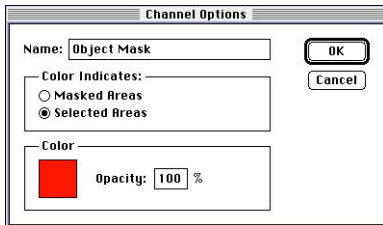
Scanned sections of fabric, marble or textured papers are useful to collect for this type of technique.



Step 2

Create the "Object Mask" channel.

This first channel will hold the artwork you want emboss into your background. Simple black and white artwork works best for this technique.



A: Choose New Channel from the Channels menu.

The Channels menu is on the right side of the Channels palette (see left). After choosing New Channel, you will be presented with the Channel Options dialog box.

Note: If the Channels palette is not visible, choose Show Channels from the Window menu.

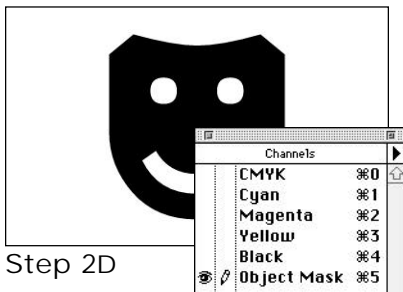
B: Name the new channel "Object Mask."

C: Choose the Selected Areas option.

Click OK to close the Channel Options dialog box.

D: Create the graphic you wish to emboss.

The example to the left is a placed graphic from Adobe Illustrator. The cover example uses text created with the text tool in Photoshop. We could have also brought in a logo or artwork from a desktop scanner.



Step 3

Create the "Shadow Mask" channel.

The Shadow Mask channel will hold the shadow areas for your embossed effect. We will use the Duplicate command here to create a new channel based on the Object Mask channel.

A: Choose Calculate > Duplicate from the Image menu.

B: Select your file in Source 1 and Destination.

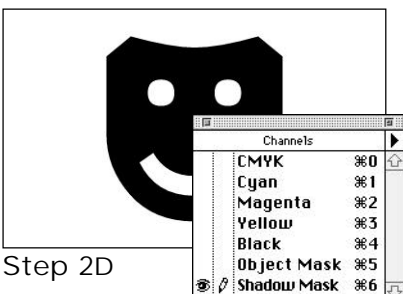
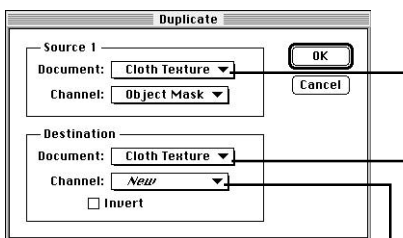
C: Set the Destination Channel to "New."

D: Click "OK."

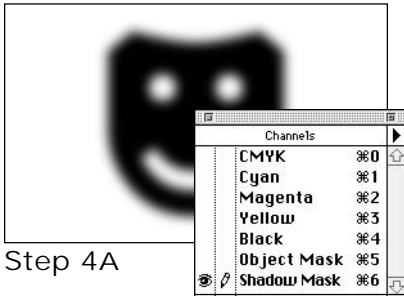
A new channel will appear in the Channels palette as "#6" when working in CMYK ("#5" for RGB, or "#3" for Grayscale).

E: Name the new channel "Shadow Mask."

Double-click on the new channel in the Channels palette. You will be presented with the Channel Options dialog box. Name the channel "Shadow Mask" and click "OK."



Step 4



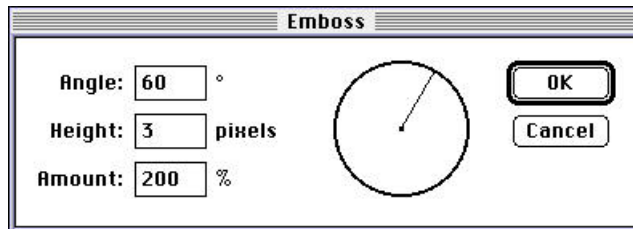
Step 4A



Step 4B

Create an embossed version of your graphic.

- A: Choose **Blur > Gaussian Blur** from the Filter menu. The example to left uses a radius of 6. The blur will keep your emboss looking smooth and rounded.
- B: Choose **Stylize > Emboss** from the Filter menu. The emboss filter will control the direction your light source will appear to be coming from (This example uses a 60° angle).



Choose an Angle for your light source; set the Height to half the blur amount Step A; set the Amount to 200%.

- C: Copy the embossed graphic to memory. Choose **Select All** from the Select menu; **Copy** from the Edit menu. To deselect your image, choose **None** from the Select menu.

Note: You will use this copied version again in Step 6.



Step 5A-B

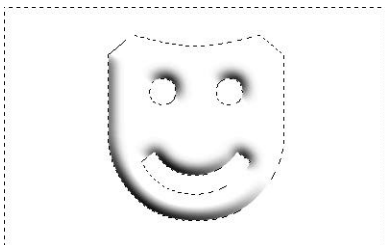
Step 5

Isolate and mask the darkest areas.

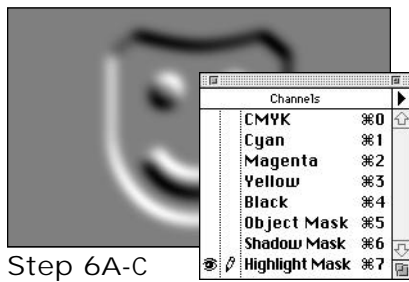
We will use the Levels command to isolate the darkest areas of your embossed graphic. You will then mask these dark areas inside the shape from your Object Mask channel.

- A: Choose **Adjust > Levels** from the Image menu. You will be presented with the Levels dialog box.
- B: Enter "128" in the third Input Level box. Everything that is 50% gray or lighter will become white. Click OK to apply the change.
- C: Choose **Load Selection > Object Mask** from the Select menu. This creates a selection outline based on the graphic you created on the Object Mask channel.
- D: Choose **Inverse** from the Select menu. This reverses the selection outline from the last step. Everything but the shape of your graphic should be selected.
- E: Delete the background. Press the Delete key. This trims your shadows within the graphic shape from the Object Mask channel.

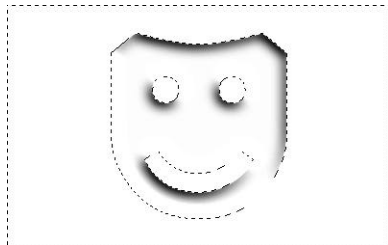
Note: Set your background color to white before deleting the background. Click on the Default colors icon in the Toolbox to quickly reset Foreground and Background colors to black and white.



Step 5C-D



Step 6A-C



Step 6D-E

Step 6

Create the "Highlight Mask" channel.

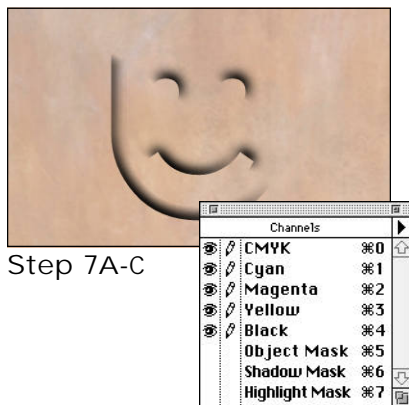
The Highlight Mask channel will hold the highlight areas of your embossed graphic. You will use the copy of your embossed graphic from Step 4 as a base for this channel.

- A: Choose New Channel from the Channels menu.
- B: Name the new channel "Highlight Mask."
The "Selected Areas" option should be selected as the default. Click OK.
- C: Paste the copy of your embossed object.
In Step 4c, you copied the embossed shape to memory. Now, you will use that image again to isolate the highlights for your embossed image.
- D: Choose Map > Invert from the Image menu.
By inverting the embossed shape, the highlight areas are now dark.
- E: Repeat steps for Step 5.
Step 5 will be used again to isolate and mask the darkest areas of your channel. Because you inverted this channel, the isolated areas can be used for your highlights.

Step 7

Apply the highlights and shadows to your image.

You will now paint your shadow and highlight onto your background image. To do this, you will use the Shadow Mask and Highlight Mask channels. Up to this point, the background image has not been changed by any of the channels you have created.

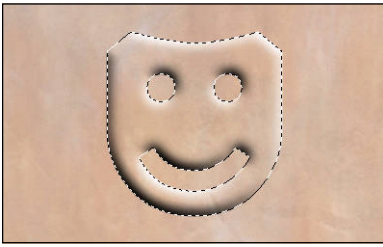


Step 7A-C



Step 7D-E

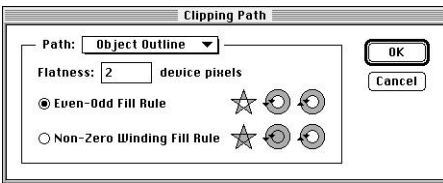
- A: Select the composite channel in the Channels palette.
The composite channel is always at the top of your Channels palette. It will usually be CMYK, RGB or Grayscale. Clicking on it should take you back to the original image you opened in Step 1.
- B: Choose Load Selection > Shadow Mask from the Select menu.
This creates a selection outline based on the darkest areas in the Shadow Mask channel.
- C: Fill your selection with black.
Set your foreground color is to black and choose Fill from the Edit menu, or press Option-Delete on your keyboard.
- D: Choose Load Selection > Highlight Mask from the Select menu.
This creates a selection outline based on the darkest areas in your Highlight Mask channel.
- E: Fill your selection with white.
Set your background color to white and press Delete on your keyboard.



Option Step 8A



Option Step 8B



Option Step 8C-D



Option Step 8F

Option: Isolating the object with a clipping path

With this option, you can create a beveled shape you can use without a background in your final page layout.

Add Step 8

Create a clipping path for your graphic

- A: Choose Load Selection > Object Mask from the Select menu.
This creates an outline selection of your graphic shape.
- B: Choose Make Path from the Paths sub-menu.
Enter a tolerance amount of 1 and click OK. Photoshop will process for a moment and build a path based on your selection.
Note: Choose Show Paths from the Window menu if the Paths palette is not visible.
- C: Choose Save Path from the Paths sub-menu.
Name your path "Object Outline" and click OK.
- D: Choose Clipping Path from the Paths sub-menu.
Choose Object Outline from the Paths pop-up menu.
Note: Path settings will be covered in detail in a future issue.
- E: Save your Image as an EPS file.
You can now place this saved EPS file into your page layout program.



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