

✧ Photoshop on the Fly ✧

Creating Fog



Screencast 002

Creative Effect: Fog

July 21, 2009

Episode Topic:

Creative Effect: Fog

Host: Kurt VanderScheer

Introduction:

Hello everyone! This is *Photoshop on the Fly* and I'm your host, Kurt VanderScheer. In today's screencast we will be using Photoshop to add a fog effect to your images. There are many ways to create fog/mist using Photoshop. This creative effect will use a variety of techniques and only a few layers to create surprisingly realistic fog.

Symbols

Mac	PC
⌘ - Command Key	Ctrl - Control Key
⇧ - Shift Key	⇧ - Shift Key
⌥ - Option Key	

→ - Arrow

Step 1:

The first step is to select an image suitable for the fog effect. In this screencast we'll use an image of a lake with most of the foreground being water. Other images can benefit from the fog effect; rainy scenes, streams...you get the idea. Start by opening an existing image in Photoshop and duplicating the background layer (⌘ - J).

Step 2:

This step is optional but will help to add character to the overall scene by adding a light mist effect to the image. Add a new Hue / Saturation adjustment layer on top of the background copy. Adjust the Saturation to -100 and the Lightness to +100. The image will appear completely white.

Step 3:

Select the gradient tool (G) and set it to a Linear Gradient, Foreground to Transparent. Set your foreground color to Black and select the Hue / Saturation adjustment layer you created above and draw a gradient from the bottom of the image to the top. Adjust the Hue / Saturation layer's opacity to your liking. You can also use the Brush (B) tool with a large, soft brush and paint with black on the layer mask to selectively mask out anything in the foreground where you don't want mist.

Step 4:

Create a new layer (⌘ - ⌥ - N) on top of the Hue / Saturation layer and name this layer 'fog'. Select the Lasso (L) tool and set the feather to approximately 80 pixels. In the fog layer, draw a rough oval shape in the area where you want the fog to appear. Set your foreground / background colors to white & black by pressing the (D) key. From the menu select Filter → Render → Clouds. Deselect the selection (⌘ - D).

Step 5:

Bring up the layer styles for the 'fog' layer by double-clicking to the right of the layer's name on the layer palette. Adjust the Blend If for the 'This Layer' to fade out the black from the fog by dragging the black slider to the right until you achieve the desired effect, approximately 0/240 to 0/250. Be sure to split the slider by holding down the Option (⌥) key when clicking on the black slider to create a smooth tonal feather in the fog. When your happy with the result close the Layer Styles dialog.

Step 6:

In order for our fog to look nature we need to do two things. First, we'll give the fog perspective so it appears to fade into the distance. Select the 'fog' layer and from the menu select Edit → Transform → Perspective. Drag the top handles of the transform toward the center of the image until your happy with the perspective. This may take some experimentation to get it looking correct. Save the transform. Next, we'll stretch out the horizontal scale of the fog. From the menu select Edit → Transform → Scale and in the transform toolbar enter 800% for the width (W: 800.0%) and save the transform. You should now have some fairly realistic looking fog.

Tips:

- Experiment with various blending modes for the 'fog' layer. Screen & Soft Light are good places to start.
- Reduce the opacity of the fog or mist layer if they're too bright.
- To intensify and add depth to the fog duplicate the 'fog' layer and adjust position and blending options.
- Add a layer mask to the fog and paint with black any areas where you don't want fog.