

# Beckham Digital Video Tutorials

## Photoshop CS4 - The Key to Layers for PC & Mac



Layers are the Holy Grail of image editing and this makes them a **MUST KNOW** part of any version of Photoshop. If you are working with Photoshop and not making full use of layers it is like driving your car without any tyres. Sure, a car without tyres will make some progress, but we will have little or no control and we will soon grind to a stop.

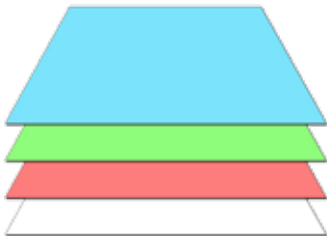
Practically everything we do in Photoshop requires layers or should we say that layers makes the job easier to accomplish. In this Video Tutorial DVD we start with the concept of layers first and this is one of those times where a few graphics help us to explain just how layers work.

Then we move onto the practical exercises and take you through many aspects of layers. We cover the simple to the creative, including techniques on Replacing Skies, using Adjustment Layers, Layer Blend Modes and much more.

We include most of the starting images we use in this DVD and many of the finished ones too. We use a DVD solely to take advantage of the large storage capacity of DVD's. This disk is not designed to play on domestic DVD players through a TV.

We have also included videos rendered in Quicktime for Mac users, but you will need to locate the videos manually from the Mac Video folder on the DVD.

### The Concept of Layers 14:28 mins



Everyone has some difficulties with Layers when they first start using Photoshop and that includes us too. We had the same mountain to climb, but be assured it is well worth the effort.

Having some difficulty with layers has nothing to do with intelligence or age, it is just a part of the software we need to learn and understanding the concept is the first stage.

Once we feel reasonably comfortable with that first stage, the practical demonstrations will make the rest fall into place.

### The Parade Ground 44:38 mins

Photoshop is not an easy program to break down into categories such as basic, intermediate and advanced. There are too many grey areas where things overlap and we find our first one of those here.



Much of what we do in Layers involves transparent or semi transparent layers and also objects floating on a transparent layer. So, how can we demonstrate Layers without explaining how to extract an object from another image and leave it floating on its own transparent layer.

Well, we clearly can't do that so this tutorial first covers how we was able to remove the soldier from its original image and then how we can use layers to create this final images, called "Drummed Out" This image really enables us to cover a lot of ground regarding layers and it makes a great first project for this DVD.

## The Lucky Photographer - 11:14 mins



There is another huge benefit to understanding Layers that we don't first appreciate. In this short demonstration all will be explained. All we will say at this point is that a good knowledge of Layers makes for a Lucky Photographer.

However, is it luck or does the knowledge of Photoshop Layers make us a better Photographer. You decide!

## A Unique Filter Effect Part 1 - 22:14 mins

There is little doubt that newer users of Photoshop find the filter pretty quick and there is nothing wrong with that. However, after we have used them a few times they do get a little monotonous and they do look the same as other peoples filtered images.



The answer is to create something more unique and here we use layers to help us to do that. You will not see the charm of this filter technique in this small image, but we include the full final image on the DVD that you can open up into your version of Photoshop.

Look at the image at print size and you will see an effect that you cannot achieve with a one press filter effect

## A Unique Filter Effect Part 2 - 22:32 mins

Once we have produced our filtered image, we then take a look at how we can use layers to make derivatives of that image and here, the only limit is your own creativity.

## Image Presentation - 40:12 mins

Layers opens up all sorts of presentation techniques for prints, projection or web use.



*Newmarket Gallops*

In our small example here it is difficult to show just how effective these techniques are.

In our example to the left we have created a Matt effect and it is so real when printed we have seen people running their fingers over the edges of our prints to feel the indentation that is not really there.

However, there is a lot more to presentation than just this one effect and here we demonstrate just a few ideas that you can explore using Photoshop CS4 Layers.

Remember that you can create your own dedicated mount for your images and print that mount as well as the picture. We have been doing this for some years and our results on large prints speak for themselves.

## Adjustment Layers - 29:17 mins



Adjustment Layers are probably one of the most versatile ways of working in Photoshop.

The Adjustment Layer gives us a number of advantages, the first is that the Adjustment Layer never actually allows any changes to be made to our original image, everything is done within the Adjustment Layer.

The second is that the Adjustment Layer can be re-opened and changed at any time. The third is that we are provided with a layer mask to restrict any changes we do make to just the part of the image we want. If we wanted a definition of the best of all worlds, then this is probably it.

Our video demonstration here shows you just a glimpse of what Adjustment Layers can do for you.

## Soft focus Effects with Layers - 11:37 mins

We did cover this technique in another of the CS4 DVD's in this series, but how could we leave it out of a dedicated Layers tutorial.



This soft focus technique is the equivalent of having 50 soft focus filters in your camera bag, because the effect is so controllable.

You can decide on just how soft the image is and you even get to decide if any areas of the image need to remain sharp.

This is another case where Photoshop gives us the best of all worlds.

Remember too that soft focus is traditionally the domain of female portraits,

but try these effects on flowers, children, or even landscapes. The soft focus end result is so controllable we can almost make the soft focus fit any situation

## Replacing a Sky - 33:28 mins



Here is a question that we have been asked a thousand times. How can I put a more interesting sky into my landscapes. What makes our reply a bit tricky are the words "It Depends"

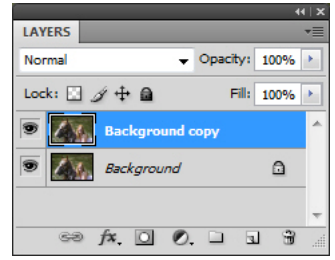
However, it does depend on a number of factors and unfortunately we do not have a one size fits all solution. The route we take will depend on the image we start with, the lighting at the time, the sky we wish to use and more importantly the content of our landscape.

In this video tutorial we apply a number of different skies to our original landscape top left and layers features in them all



## Locks and Layer Controls - 11:37 mins

In this short section we take a look at the locks and layer controls that help us to work on our images and projects more effectively.



## Creating a Montage - 28:38 mins

Creating a Montage can be one of the more rewarding things we do with Photoshop. Everything is in our control, the composition, the images used and the colour balance all play a part in the final image.



Here we use layers and just a couple of images to demonstrate the montage technique. Whether we are using 2 images or 22 the techniques are the same.

Here we take you through a real life project and make our adjustments using layers based on what we see on screen and what we want to achieve. Looking at our thumbnail of the finished image to the left, we can see that much of the charm has been lost to the reduced size. You can use our images to follow the tutorial and open up our full resolution finished image in your version of Photoshop. Make sure you view the image at print size to see it at its best.

## Multiple Exposures Using Layers - 16:41 mins

We can use Photoshop's Layers to do what we used to do in camera with a subject like fireworks. i.e create a multiple exposure shot.



It's not easy to capture a firework shot in one frame that has that wow value, but we can use Photoshop Layers and create a multiple exposure later on in our PC using as many fireworks as we want.



The techniques allow us to do this quickly and easily and if we want to we can apply the fireworks in the night sky over a building.

## The Patch Technique - 21:46 mins

The Clone Tool and Healing Brush tool can handle most of what we want to do in our manipulations, but there are times when the area is too large or even too tricky for effective cloning.

For many years now we have turned to another technique, which we devised ourselves as a way of getting the job done. Over a long period of time we have used this technique hundreds of times, so it is a practical and important technique that we can use in a variety of ways.

Here we demonstrate two examples and show you a few more before and after results from our earlier images using this same technique. Of course Layers plays a vital role and without layers the whole technique would be dead in the water.



## Smart Objects - 12:37 mins

We were not sure whether to include Smart Objects into our dedicated Layers DVD for Photoshop CS-4, but as they are becoming more and more important we thought we would include this introduction.



Smart Objects are a little like Adjustment Layers, in that they allow us to make changes to our images and keep those changes live all the time we save our file as a Photoshop document. By live we mean the ability to click back into the changes we have already made and update those changes.

In addition Smart Objects also offer us an automatic mask and by this stage of our DVD, we will see how important they can be to almost everything we want to do. Some editing is closed off to us while using Smart Objects, but we predict that with future upgrades, more and more tools in Photoshop will be able to be applied as Smart Objects.

When we come to our Photoshop CS-4 - Shooting Raw DVD, you will see Smart Objects feature much more.

## Extras

When we demonstrate Photoshop we try to keep to the title and brief of the particular technique we have in mind, but it is difficult to do that with most tutorials. What gives Photoshop its power is how the tools link together and quite often we will need to use 2-3 different tools to get the result we need.

This means that as we go through our videos and demonstrations we will bring in lots of tips and tricks that are not directly related to the topic in question, but there is no getting around this. The good news is you do get a great deal of information for your money and we hope you enjoy the DVD.

We have included a number of images on this DVD, but the copyright of those images does remain with Beckham Digital. They have been included on the DVD to allow you to follow the tutorials with our images if you wish. These images should not be re-used in any way in part or whole.

## Digital Audio Visual

Also included on this DVD are some slide show sequences that have been included for your enjoyment. Digital Audio Visual is one of the fastest growing areas of digital photography and the sort of software we use to make these slide shows makes the perfect partner to Photoshop.

The software used for all our AV work is PicturesToExe 5 and that software is available from our web site and there are direct links to the software and tutorials on the DVD.

The software alone costs \$84.00 Australian dollars, which is about £40.00 or US\$ 59.00. This is one of the best ways you will find to show your images. Put together a quick presentation with animation too if you wish, or spend more time and create a piece of work that evokes an emotion.