



## Creating Drama with a Soft Spotlight

This is a great technique that lets you focus attention by using dramatic soft lighting. The technique I'm showing you here I learned from famous nature photographer Vincent Versace. I had been getting a similar look by filling a layer with black, making an oval selection, feathering the edges significantly, and then knocking a hole out of the layer, but Vincent's technique, using the Lighting Effects filter, is so much easier that it's just about all I use now.

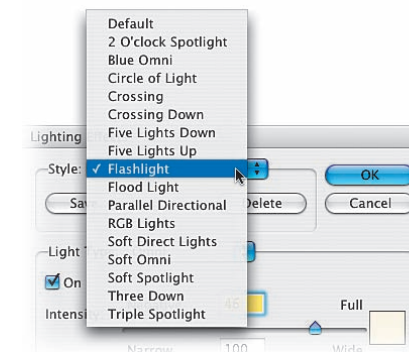
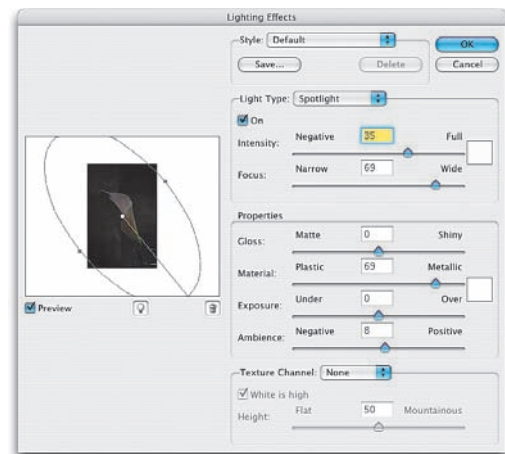
### Step One:

Open the RGB photo to which you want to apply the soft spotlight effect. In this example, I want to focus attention on the top center of the lily, and away from the background and vase the flower is sitting in.



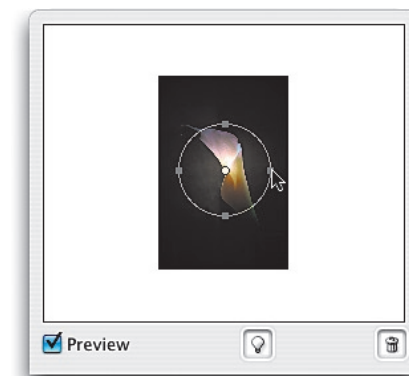
### Step Two:

Go under the Filter menu, under Render, and choose Lighting Effects. I have to tell you, if you haven't used this filter before, it's probably because its interface (with all its sliders) looks so complex, but luckily there are built-in presets (Adobe calls them "Styles") that you can choose from, so you can pretty much ignore all those sliders. Once you ignore the sliders, the filter is much less intimidating, and you can really have some fun here. The small preview window on the left side of the dialog shows you the default setting, which is a large oval light coming from the bottom right-hand corner.



### Step Three:

For this effect, we're going to use a very soft, narrow beam, so go under the Style pop-up menu at the top of the dialog (this is where the presets are) and choose Flashlight.



### Step Four:

Once you choose Flashlight, look at the preview window and you'll see a small spotlight in the center of your image. Click on the center point (inside the circle) and drag the light into the position where you want it. If you want the circle of light a little bit larger, just click on one of the side points and drag outward.



### Step Five:

When you click OK, the filter applies the effect, darkening the surrounding area and creating the soft spotlight effect you see here (the final photo is shown using the "Poster Presentation" technique from my CS2 book, similar to the "Fine Art Poster Layout" technique in Chapter 12). If the Lighting Effect filter seems too intense, you can remedy it immediately after the fact by going under the Edit menu and choosing Fade Lighting Effects. Drag the Opacity slider to the left to reduce the effect of the filter. The farther you drag, the less the intensity of the effect. You can think of this Fade command as "undo on a slider."

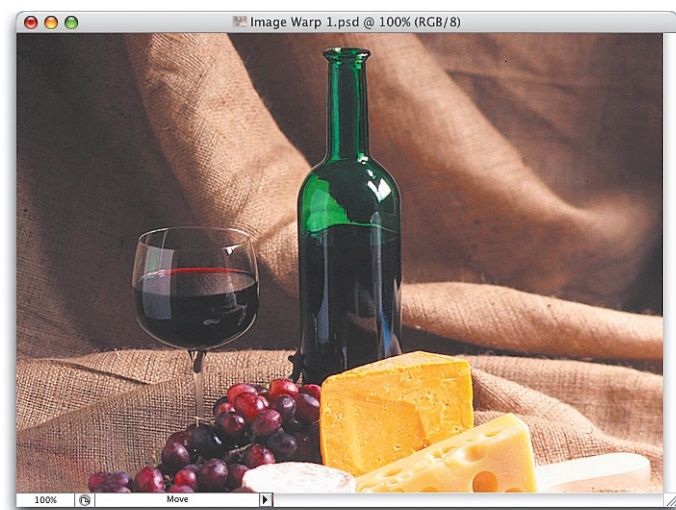


## Mapping One Image onto Another (Image Warp)

If you've used previous versions of Photoshop, you're probably familiar with the Warp Text feature, which lets you bend type in a number of preset shapes. Well, in CS2 Adobe found a way to apply basically the same technique to photos, and it's now one of the most amazing things in Photoshop. It's even better than the Warp Text feature in that you can customize your wrap, which makes the chore of mapping one image onto another a breeze.

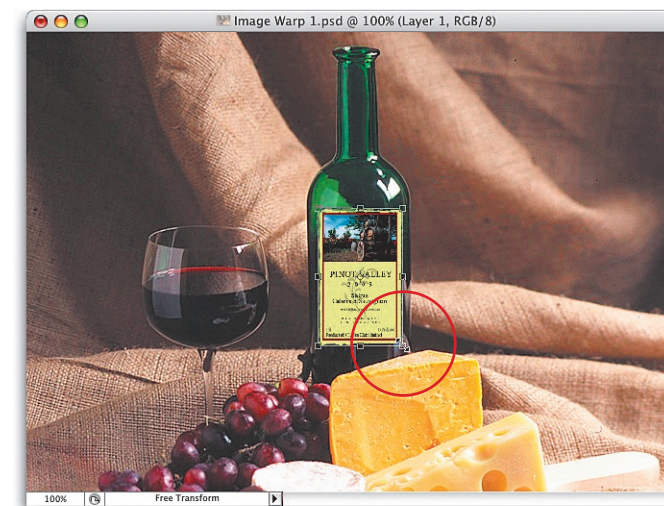
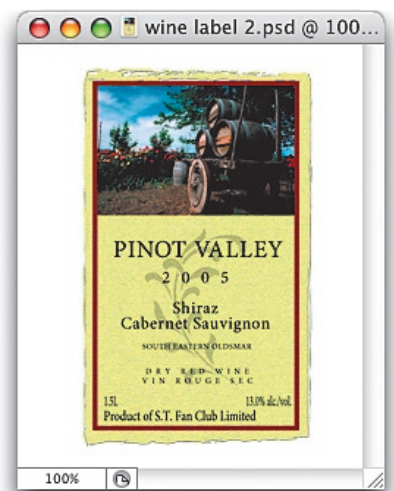
### Step One:

Open the photo that has an object you want to map another photo onto (in this case, I want to add a label to the wine bottle in the photo, and I want it to follow the curvature of the bottle realistically, so it doesn't look "stuck-on-in-Photoshop").



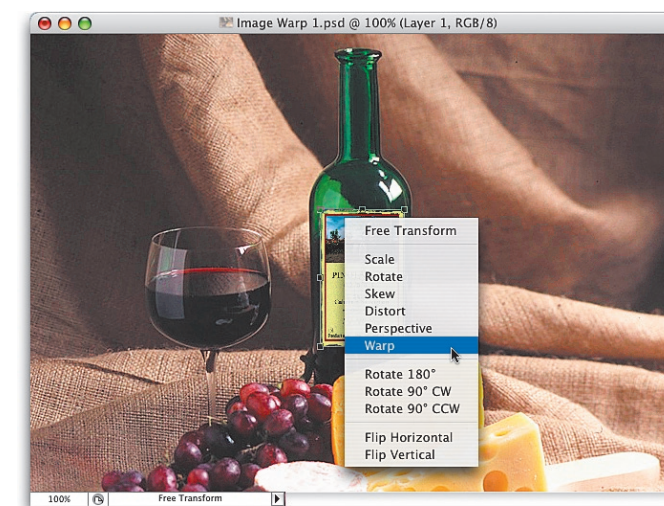
### Step Two:

Open the photo you want to map onto the bottle (in this case, we're using a wine label created in Photoshop). You can create your own custom wine label in Photoshop, or of course, you can download the wine label shown here from my CS2 book's website. *Note:* If the label isn't on its own layer, press Shift-W to get the Magic Wand tool, click once on the white background, and then go under the Select menu and choose Inverse. This allows you to select just the label without the white background.



### Step Three:

Press V to get the Move tool and drag the label onto your wine bottle image. Press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to bring up Free Transform. Press-and-hold the Shift key, grab the bottom-right corner point, and drag inward to scale the label down so it fits easily on the front of the bottle. Then, click-and-drag within the bounding box to position the label in the center of the bottle. As you can see, the label looks very flat, very "stuck-on-after-the-fact" because it doesn't follow the contours of the bottle, and it covers the highlights of the bottle. It couldn't look more "faked."



### Step Four:

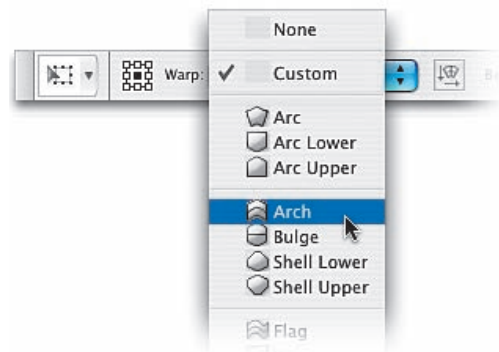
While Free Transform is still in place, Control-click (PC: Right-click) within the Free Transform bounding box and a contextual menu of transformations will appear. Choose Warp from the menu.

Continued



**Step Five:**

When you choose Warp, the Options Bar gives you a list of options for warping your image. From the Warp pop-up menu in the Options Bar, choose Arch. This will arch your label, adding the curvature you need, but the default arch has the label bending the wrong way (you'll fix that easily in the next step).



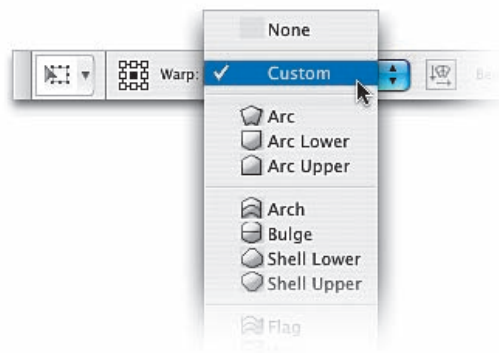
**Step Six:**

Once you choose Arch, a grid appears over your label, with a control point at the top center of the grid. This control point lets you drag the entire arch up or down (there's also a field in the Options Bar that lets you type in a number, but seriously, come on—we're Photoshop people. "We don't need no stinkin' numbers!"). Click on this center point and drag straight down. Keep dragging until the arch is bending downward. Now, you can see the effect coming together.



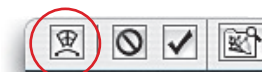
**Step Seven:**

You have only one control point—that point at the top center—but you can actually tweak every point on the grid individually using control handles (similar to the Pen tool's handles for controlling Beziér curves). To do this, go back up to the Warp pop-up menu in the Options Bar and choose Custom.



**Step Eight:**

Once you choose Custom, points appear at all the outer intersections, and you can adjust them individually, or you can just grab the grid in the center and start dragging it around (try this once—it's pretty darn slick). In the example shown here, I wanted to add more curve to the bottom of the label, so I clicked on the bottom control handles and dragged each down a little to add some bend.



**TIP:** If you're warping a photo and you need to switch back to Free Transform for just a moment to tweak something (like adjusting the overall size or perspective), you can do that by clicking on the little Warp icon that appears in the group of four icons on the right side of the Options Bar (while Warp is engaged). To toggle back to Warp from Free Transform, just click on the icon again.



**Step Nine:**

When you have the label warped to your satisfaction, press Return (PC: Enter) to lock in your warping. Then, to bring back some of the highlights on the bottle, go to the Layers panel and lower the Opacity setting of the label layer to around 80%, which completes the effect. This allows the highlights to show through and helps sell the idea that the label is really on there.

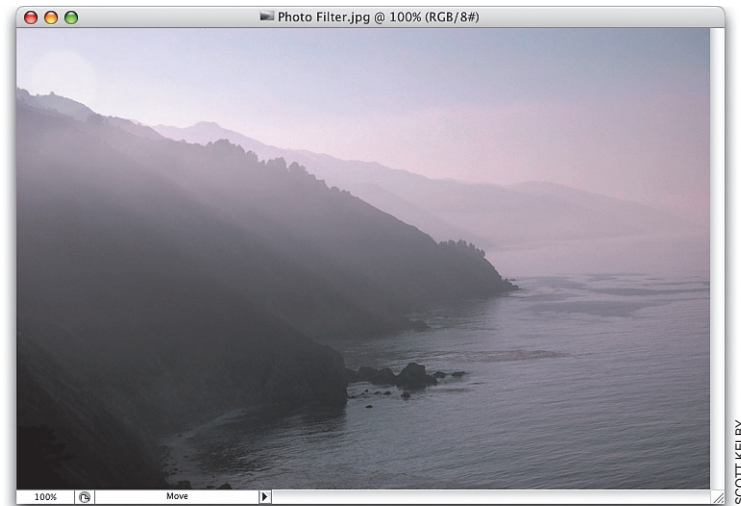


## Replicating Traditional Photography Filters

This is a totally digital way to replicate some of the most popular photography filters, such as the 81A and 81B Color Correction filters used by many photographers. These are primarily used to warm photos, especially those taken outdoors where a bright sky radiates to give photos a bluish cast, but they can also be used to create a dramatic statement using color, as we'll do here.

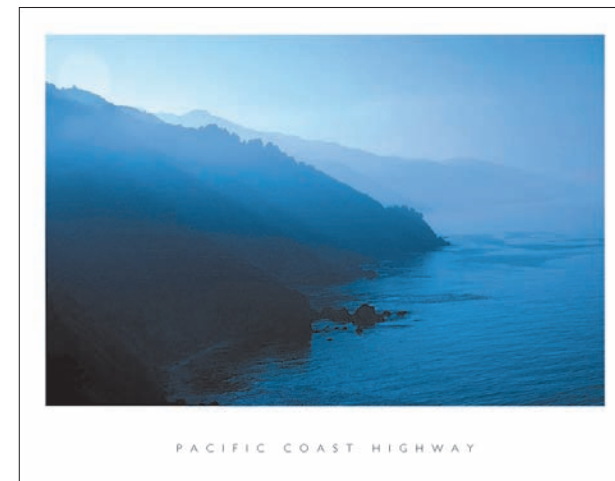
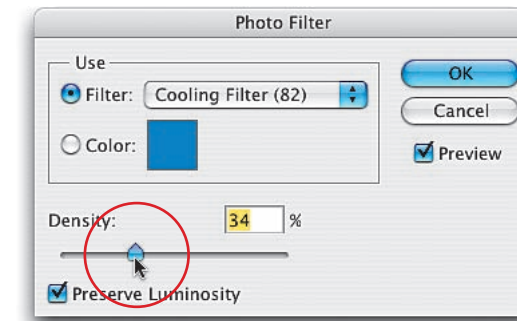
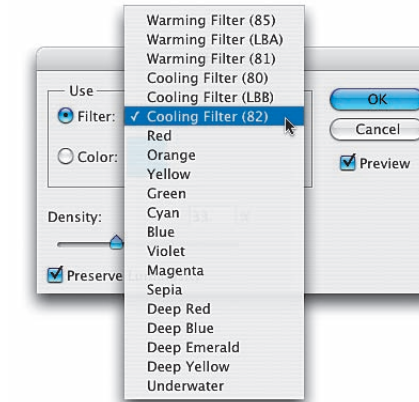
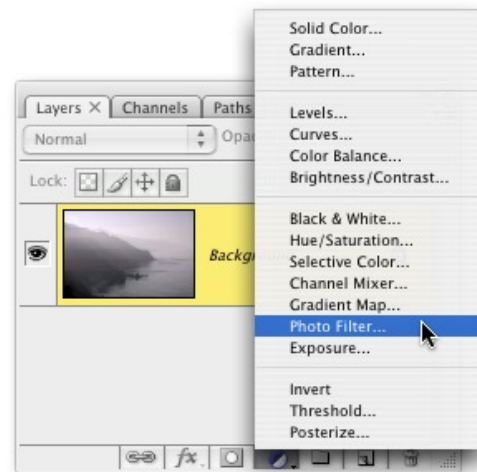
### Step One:

Open the photo that you want to apply a lens filter effect to. In this case, we have a shot taken along California's Pacific Coast Highway, but the image is kind of grayish and bland, so we'll add a photo filter (after the fact, in Photoshop) to give the photo more interest and life (basically, to make it look more like it did when I was actually there taking the shot. After all, while I was there I didn't say to myself, "Hey, this looks grayish and bland—let's shoot it!" It looked beautiful and spectacular, and I want to bring back the essence of what made me take that shot in the first place).



### Step Two:

Choose Photo Filter from the Create New Adjustment Layer pop-up menu at the bottom of the Layers panel (it's the half-black/half-white circle icon).



### Step Three:

The Photo Filter dialog will appear. Click-and-hold on the Filter pop-up menu and a list of filters will appear. Since we're trying to add a blue effect to our image, choose one of the Cooling Filters (in this example, I chose Cooling Filter [82] simply because I liked it best, after trying all three blue Cooling Filters). So, choose Cooling Filter (82) (or whichever one you like best).

### Step Four:

If you want a more intense effect than the default, drag the Density slider to the right. The default setting was 25%, so I cranked it up a little to 34% so the blue looked even more intense.

### Step Five:

When you click OK, the entire photo gets a wonderful blue filtering effect. (The final effect is shown here, incorporating the "Poster Presentation" technique from my CS2 book.) If you decide you want this blue to affect only certain parts of your photo (for example, let's say you wanted to leave the mountains as they were before the filter), just press B to switch to the Brush tool, choose a soft-edged brush, press X to set black as your Foreground color, and paint over the areas you don't want cooled by the filter. As you paint, those areas will return to the original color (which is why it's so great that Adobe created Photo Filters as adjustment layers—they're adjustable!).



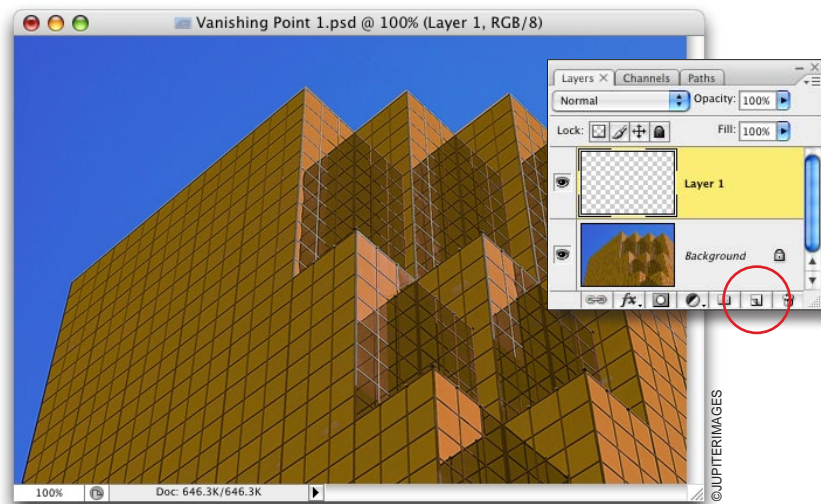


## Perspective Pasting with Vanishing Point

In Chapter 8 we used Photoshop CS3's incredibly cool Vanishing Point filter to clone someone out of a picture, and Vanishing Point cloned him away in perfect perspective (and keeping that perspective would have been incredibly hard to do with just the regular Clone Stamp tool). Well, one of the things that makes Vanishing Point so "incredibly cool" is that it's not just for removing things—here's how to add a photo to an object in perfect perspective (by the way, this works great for type as well as photos).

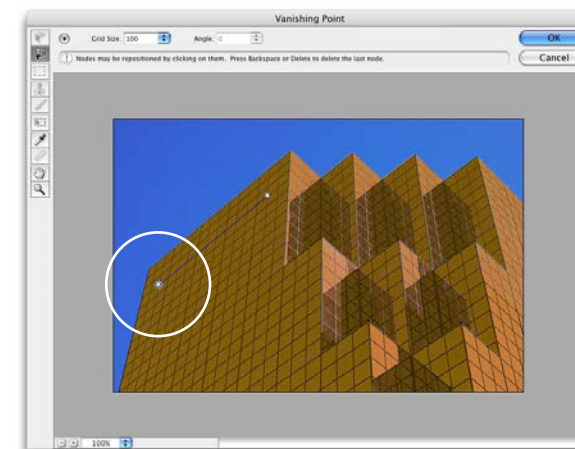
### Step One:

Open the photo you want to add an object into. In this case, it's an office building, and we're going to add a photo to the angled front side of the building—more importantly, we want it to perfectly match the perspective of the building. You start by adding a new blank layer by clicking on the Create a New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers panel.



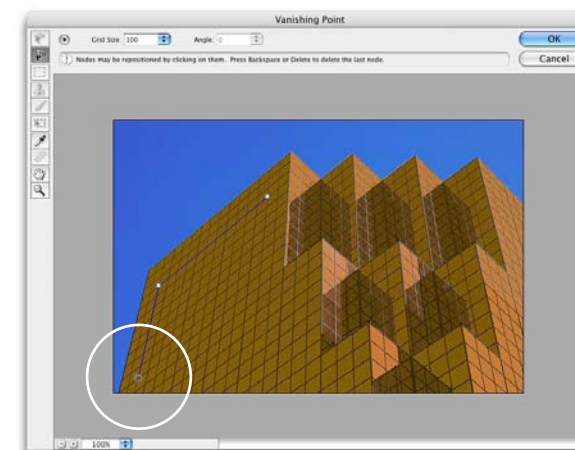
### Step Two:

Now open the photo that you want to appear on the side of the building. Press Command-A (PC: Ctrl-A) to put a selection around the entire photo, and then press Command-C (PC: Ctrl-C) to copy this photo into memory. Since it's copied into memory, you can close this photo now.



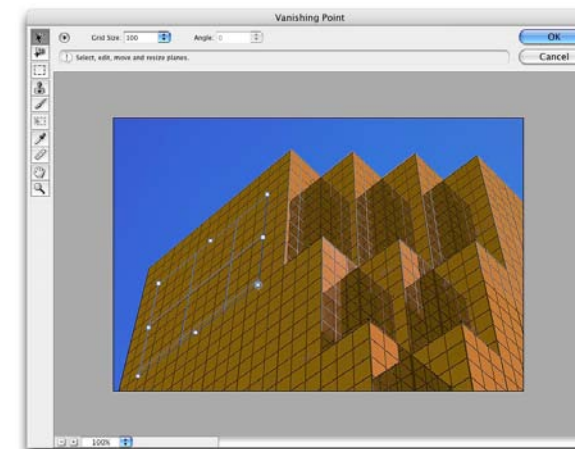
### Step Three:

Go under the Filter menu and choose Vanishing Point. Here's what you're going to do: You have to tell Photoshop where you want the photo to go by mapping out the perspective (don't worry, it's easier than it sounds). Start by getting the Create Plane tool (it's the second tool from the top in the Toolbox on the left side of the dialog). Click once on the front-right side of the building (two windows in near the top-right corner), then drag across to the left side and click again to make an angled line.



### Step Four:

The Create Plane tool kind of acts like the Polygonal Lasso tool, so now you can just move down along the left side of the building, click again, and it will create a straight line back to your last point. You can pretty much see what you're going to do, and that's draw a rectangle along the side of the building. To make it easier, follow along the windowpane lines that separate the rows of windows.



### Step Five:

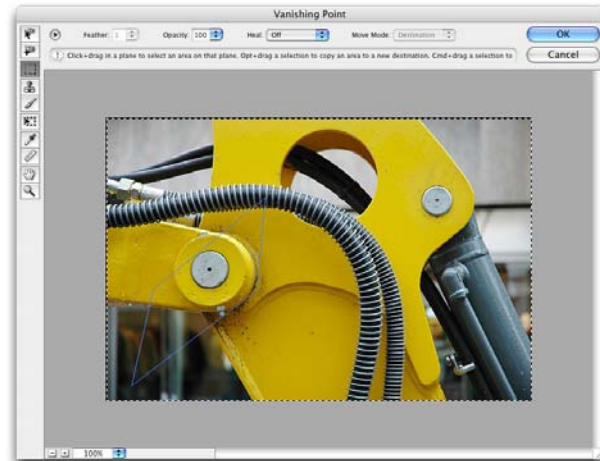
When you click the bottom-right corner, it finishes the other side for you, and a blue grid will appear (it's blue if you drew the perspective right). If it's yellow, get the Edit Plane tool (it looks like an arrow in the Toolbox) and adjust your points until it turns blue. If your grid outline turns red, it's a bad grid (your perspective isn't right), and you'll need to tweak the points a bit.

Continued



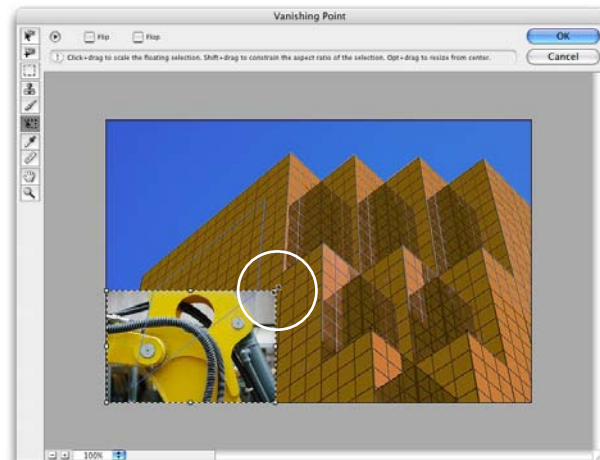
**Step Six:**

Once your grid is in place, it's time to bring in the photo you want placed on the building. Press Command-V (PC: Ctrl-V) to paste the photo into Vanishing Point. In this example, the photo we pasted in is way too large to fit on the side of the building, but luckily Vanishing Point lets you resize your pasted image using Free Transform, so press Command-T (PC: Ctrl-T) to bring up the Free Transform bounding box.



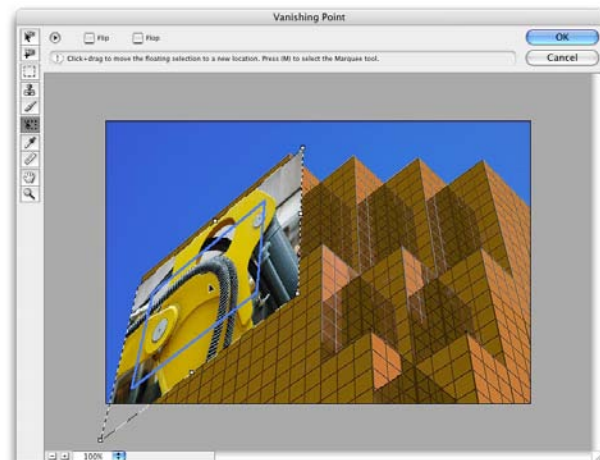
**Step Seven:**

Press-and-hold the Shift key, grab a corner point, and drag inward to adjust your photo to approximately the size you want (it doesn't have to be right on the money, because of course you can always tweak the size later). Now, *don't* hit Return or Enter, just get your image down to size and leave the Free Transform handles in place.



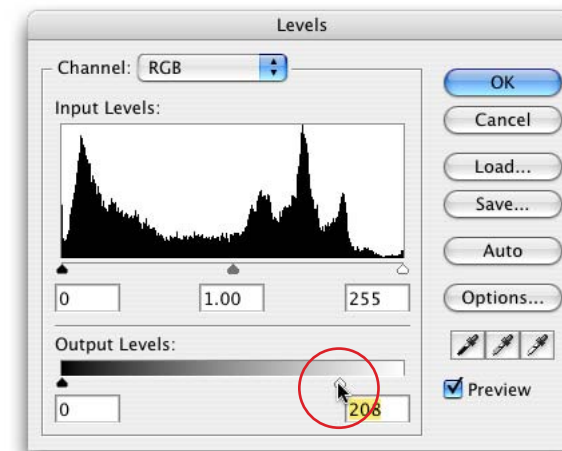
**Step Eight:**

Click in the center of your photo and drag it up to where the faint outline of the grid is. When your cursor enters the grid area, your photo will immediately snap onto the grid in perfect perspective. Since Free Transform is still in place, click on a corner point and scale the photo to fit into your grid area (it likely won't fit perfectly, so just get it close). If you don't see the corner points, click on the right-facing arrow next to the Toolbox and choose Clip Operations to Surface Edges to turn it off.



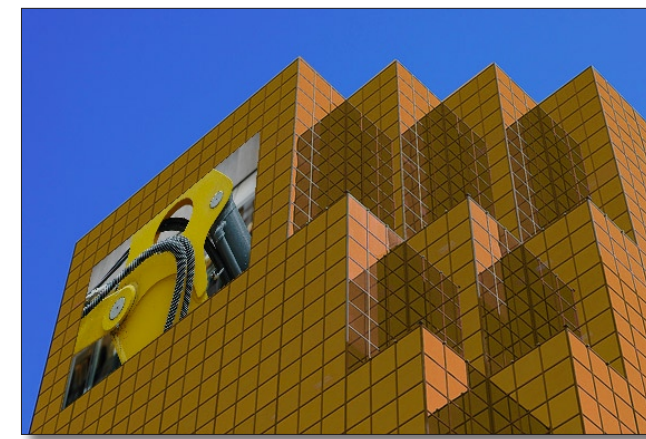
**Step Nine:**

When it's sized the way you want it, click the OK button and your photo is transformed with the proper perspective. You can now see why we created a new blank layer in Step One. Without it, the perspective photo would be applied directly to the Background layer, and you'd have no real control over it after you applied Vanishing Point. On a separate layer, you can change blend modes, opacity, etc.



**Step Ten:**

To make the pasted-in photo better match the tone of the main photo, we're going to darken it up a bit (after all, we pasted it onto the side of a building that's in shadows). Press Command-L (PC: Ctrl-L) to bring up Levels, then drag the bottom right-hand Output Levels slider to the left to darken the photo until you feel it matches the tone of the shadow side of the building.



**Step Eleven:**

Click OK and the final image is completed. The pasted photo matches both the perspective of the building and the overall tone of the image.

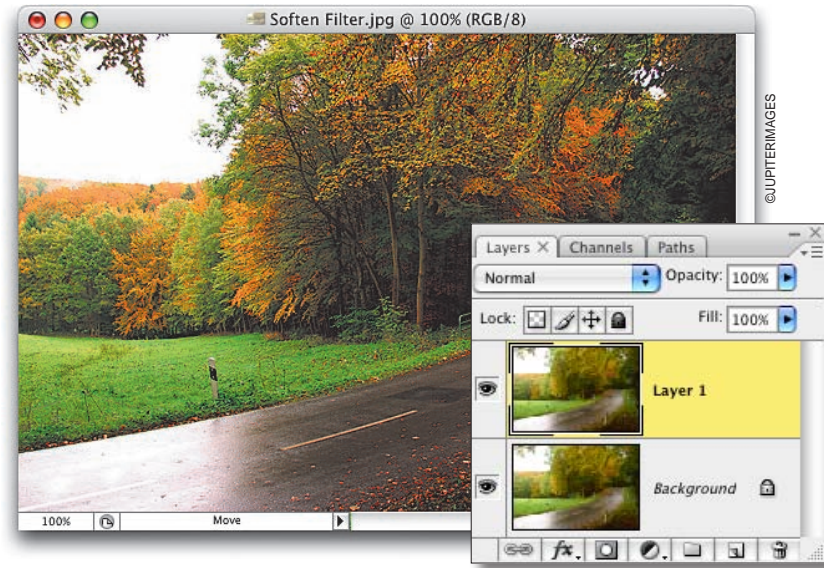


## Soft Focus Effect

This is a quick way to emulate the effect of a soft focus filter on your lens. Besides being quick and easy, what I like about this effect is the soft glow it gives your images. Try this technique on a sharp photo of some trees and you'll love what it does for the image.

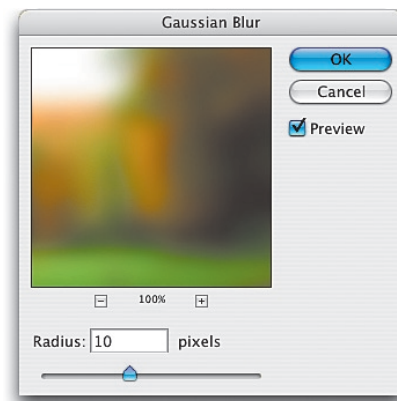
### Step One:

Open the photo to which you want to apply a soft focus effect. Duplicate the Background layer by pressing Command-J (PC: Ctrl-J). By default, this duplicate layer is named Layer 1.



### Step Two:

Go under the Filter menu, under Blur, and choose Gaussian Blur. For high-res images, enter about 20 pixels (for low-res images, try 6–10 pixels instead) and click OK.



### Step Three:

That amount of Gaussian Blur will blur the entire image so much that it'll be hard to see any detail. So, to bring back the detail, go to the Layers panel and lower the Opacity setting of this blurred layer to 50%.



### Step Four:

Lowering the Opacity setting allows the detail to come back, but along with it comes a soft glow that gives the image a dreamy, almost painted look, which completes the effect.



## Using Match Color to Fix Pano Exposure Problems

When you're shooting panos, you can really get burned by using the automatic exposure setting on your camera because at least one of your segments will wind up either lighter or darker than the rest, creating very obvious seams in your pano. The way around this (when taking the shot) is to compose the first segment, hold the shutter half way down to set the exposure, then memorize that exposure setting, and switch to manual. Now shoot all the segments in manual mode, using that exact exposure. If you didn't do that, here's what to do in Photoshop:

### Step One:

Open the segments of your pano (taken using auto exposure mode) and examine them for color shifts. If you're not sure if the colors are off, do a quick Photomerge (go under the File menu, under Automate, and choose Photomerge, then crop it down), and when the photos are stitched together, the problem will be pretty obvious. In the example shown here, you can see that the third segment from the left is underexposed, making the pano unusable). Although Photomerge now adds an Auto-Blend to the pano, you can see it still couldn't blend that underexposed image in.



### Step Two:

Go ahead and click Cancel to delete the test pano you just created, and then, from the segments you already have open, click on one of the photo segments that is properly exposed.

**TIP:** In the intro above, I recommended turning off auto exposure when shooting panos. Another tip that will make things easier is to turn off auto focus as well, and manually focus each segment—that way, both your exposure and focus will be consistent from segment to segment.



SCOTT KELBY



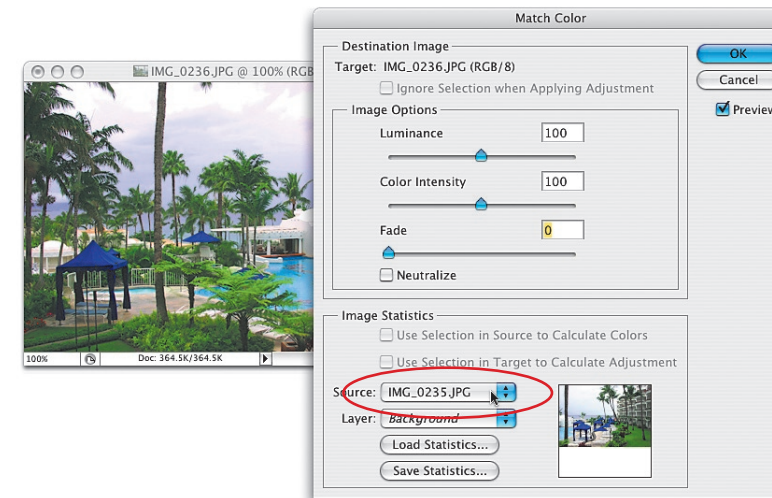
### Step Three:

Click on the open photo segment with the exposure problem (this one is underexposed, compared to the other segments taken within seconds of each other).



### Step Four:

Go under the Image menu, under Adjustments, and choose Match Color. When the Match Color dialog appears, from the Source pop-up menu at the bottom of the dialog, choose the photo segment you clicked on in Step Two (the one you want to match it to), and you'll instantly see an onscreen preview of how the tones have matched. In the example shown here, the match came out a little bit too purple, so you can drag the Color Intensity slider to the left just a little bit until the two images match even closer. You can now click OK, and the tone of the two segments will match up pretty darn closely.

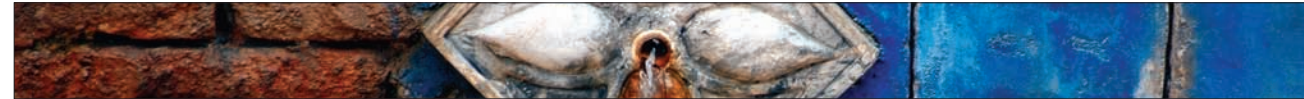


### Step Five:

Now you can use Photomerge again to merge all four photos into one panorama, where all four segments match up perfectly.







## Manually Stitching Panoramas Together

Manually stitching panoramas together in Photoshop is fairly easy, if you follow two simple rules before you shoot your pano: (1) Use a tripod to keep things level. That's not to say you can't shoot panos handheld, but the consistency a tripod brings to panos makes a world of difference when you try to manually stitch the photos together. And (2), when you shoot each segment, make sure that part of the next segment overlaps at least 20% of your previous segment (you'll see why this is important in this tutorial).

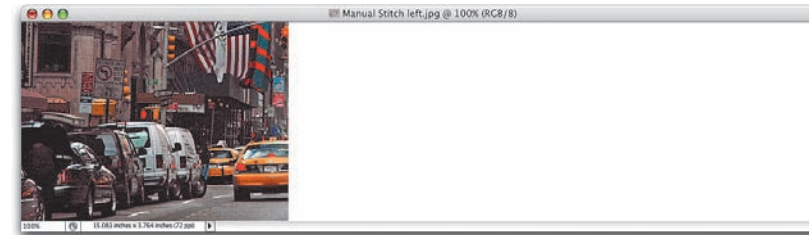
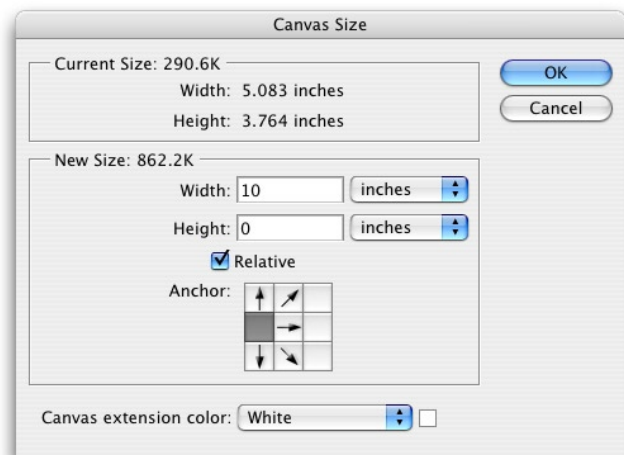
### Step One:

Open the first segment of your pano. The photo shown here is the first of three segments that we'll be stitching together.



### Step Two:

Next, go under the Image menu and choose Canvas Size (or press Command-Option-C [PC: Ctrl-Alt-C]). In the capture shown in the previous step, you can see the width of the first segment is about 5". We're stitching three segments together, so we'll need to add enough blank canvas to accommodate two more photos of the same size, so make sure the Relative checkbox is turned on, then enter 10" as the Width setting. This extra blank canvas needs to be added immediately to the right of your first segment, so in the Anchor grid (at the bottom of the dialog), click on the left-center grid square. Then, change the Canvas Extension Color pop-up menu to White.



### Step Three:

Click OK and about 14" of white canvas space is added to the right of your photo (if it doesn't look like the capture shown here, press Command-Z [PC: Ctrl-Z] to undo, then go back and check your Anchor grid setting to make sure you clicked on the left-center grid square).



### Step Four:

Now, open the second segment of your pano. Notice that part of the taxi on the far right of the first segment also appears on the left side of the second segment. That's absolutely necessary because now we have common objects that appear in both photos, and we can use the taxi as a target to align our panos.



### Step Five:

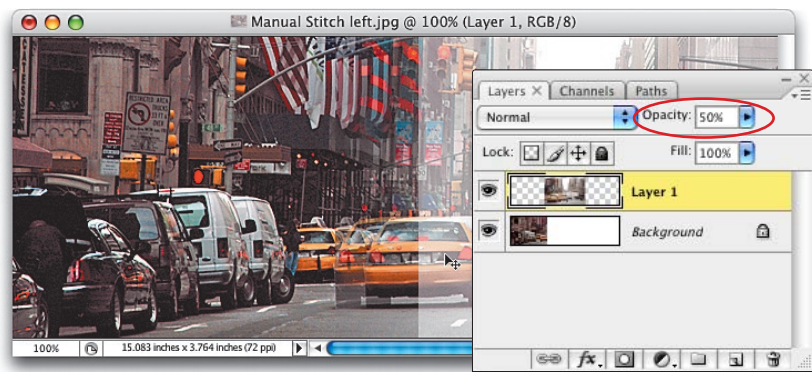
Press the letter V to get the Move tool from the Toolbox, and click-and-drag your second segment into the first segment's document window. Drag the second segment over until it overlaps the first segment a bit. If needed, zoom in so you can see the two segments overlapping.

*Continued*



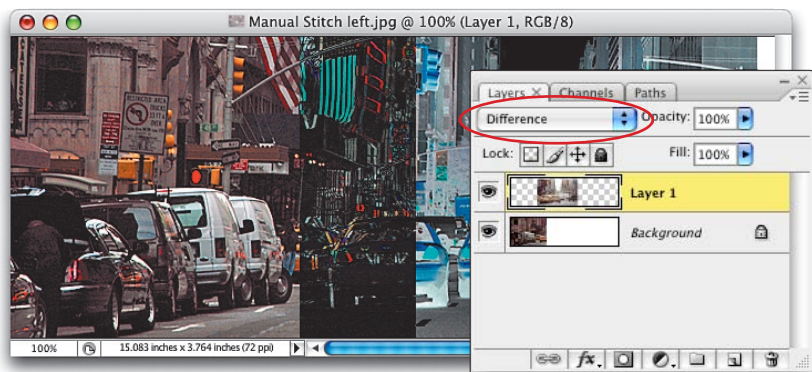
**Step Six:**

In the Layers panel, lower the Opacity of this second segment's layer to 50% so you can see through your top layer to the layer beneath it, which makes lining up the two taxis much easier. This is pretty much the secret of manually stitching panos. As the two taxis (your target objects) get closer in alignment, take your hand off the mouse and do the final aligning using the Left and Right Arrow keys on your keyboard. At first, the taxis will look blurry, but as the two target objects get closer to each other, the blur lessens.



**Step Seven:**

If you're still having trouble lining things up, try this trick: raise the Opacity back to 100%, then change the layer blend mode of your top layer to Difference in the Layers panel. Now use the Arrow keys on your keyboard to align the taxi on the top layer with the one on the bottom. As long as you see color in the overlapping area (as you do here), it's not yet perfectly aligned.



**Step Eight:**

Keep nudging with the Arrow keys until the overlapping area turns solid black. When it's black (meaning no colors are showing in the overlapping center area), it's perfectly aligned.



**Step Nine:**

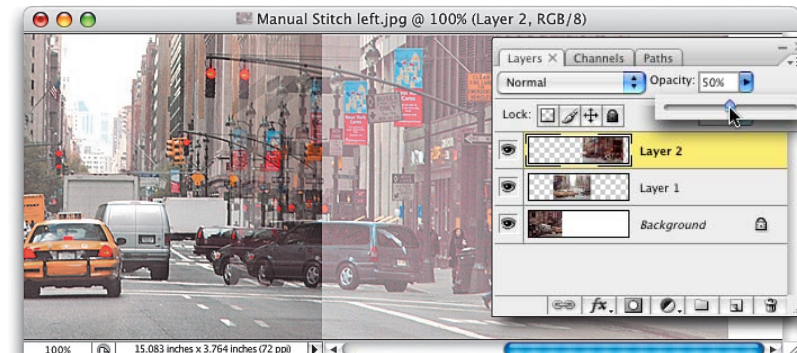
Go to the Layers panel and change your blend mode back to Normal (that is, if you set it to Difference, otherwise just raise the Opacity to 100%) to see how your stitch looks. The two images should look like one (that is, if you shot them using a tripod and didn't bump the camera along the way).

**TIP:** If you see a hard edge along the left-hand side of the top layer, press E to switch to the Eraser tool; choose a 200-pixel, soft-edged brush by clicking on the Brush thumbnail in the Options Bar; and lightly erase over the edge. Since the photos overlap, as you erase the edge, the top photo should blend seamlessly into the bottom photo.



**Step Ten:**

Now, open the third segment of your three-segment pano.



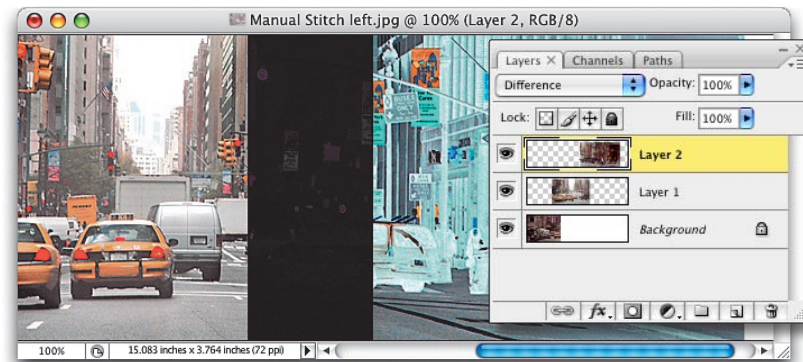
**Step Eleven:**

Repeat the same technique of dragging this photo into your main pano, lowering the Opacity of this layer to 50%, and dragging the segment over your target object. (In this example, we're overlapping the van turning onto the street.)

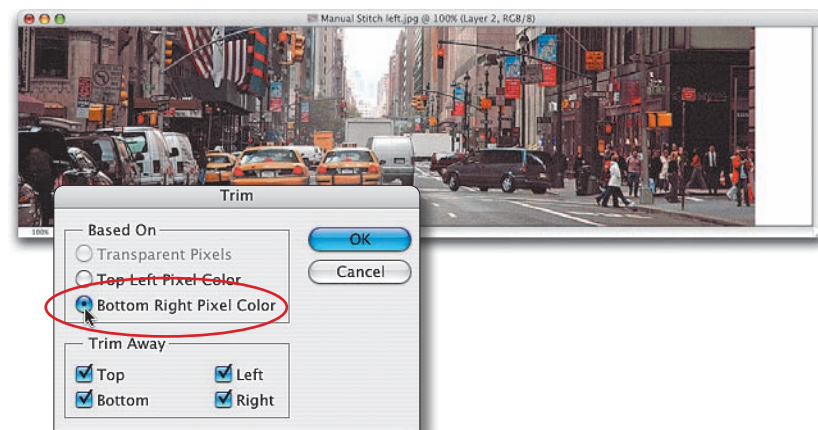
*Continued*

**Step Twelve:**

Don't forget, as you get close to aligning the vans, take your hand off the mouse and use the Arrow keys on your keyboard to align these last two segments. (Don't forget to try changing the layer blend mode to help you align the two segments.) Again, after you raise the Opacity of the top layer back to 100% (or change the blend mode back to Normal), if you see a hard edge between the two, use a soft-edged Eraser to erase away any seam.

**Step Thirteen:**

Here the three segments are stitched together, but I overestimated how much canvas size we'd need, so there's some blank canvas space to the right of my pano. To quickly get rid of it, go under the Image menu and choose Trim to bring up the Trim dialog. The area we no longer need is on the right-hand side, so in the dialog, under Based On, choose Bottom Right Pixel Color, which will trim away everything outside your photo that is the color of your bottom-right pixel (which is white).

**Step Fourteen:**

Click OK in the Trim dialog, and the excess canvas area is trimmed away, completing your pano. Now, this was an ideal situation: You shot the panos on a tripod, so the stitching was easy; and you didn't use a fisheye, so there wasn't much stretching or distorting to deal with.

