

Photoshop Advanced Techniques 1.

Layer Blending & Removing Halos : *Putting a new sky over a propeller driven aircraft as an example.*

1. Open the Foreground subject, the airplane, in photoshop.



2. Then open your sky image in photoshop.

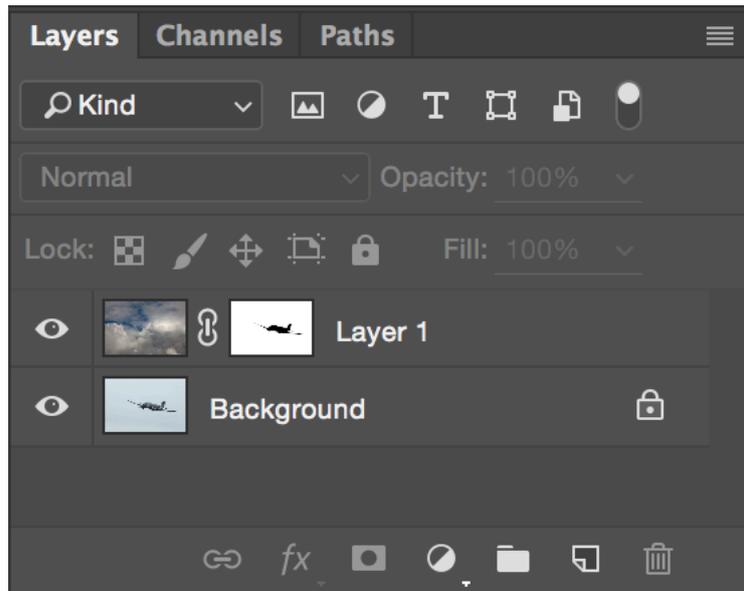


3. With the sky image active, select all and then copy.
4. Go to the airplane image and paste in the sky.
5. The sky should appear as a new layer that will be obscuring the airplane layer beneath it.
6. Now click on the sky layer to make this active (it should go light grey / become highlighted) and look for a grey box just above that will probably read "normal".
7. Click on this grey box and a raft of other options should come up in a dropdown menu.
8. Try each of the following to see which is "best": Multiply, Darken, Soft Light, Hard Light or Overlay. Some of these may look a bit weak or too strong but don't worry – this can be adjusted later*.
9. Having chosen one of these BLEND MODES now click on the airplane layer (labelled Background) and make a selection of the surrounding sky using a combination of the selection tools such as the magic wand, quick election tool and lasso. INCLUDE in the selection the spinning propellers and any sky that can be seen through the cockpit!
10. Now go back to the sky layer above this and hit the mask icon at the bottom of the layers palette> the white rectangle with a dark circle in it.
11. This should create a mask that stops the sky blend on the aircraft main body but still allows the full interaction with the propellers and through the cockpit.
12. If the mask is not a "good fit" click on the mask icon and then control click on it. This should bring up a dropdown menu from which you choose "Refine Mask"
13. Adjust the feather and Shift Edge sliders to get a better fit that will hopefully eliminate any haloing but if this is not 100% successful don't worry – it can be dealt with later.
14. IF the sky and plane do not seem to be a good lighting match* then:
 - a. Add an appropriate adjustment layer (curves, levels, hue and saturation) above the sky and then hold the cursor between the sky and adjustment layer whilst holding the alt key. This will tie the adjustment layer to the sky layer only and not influence the background layer too. Adjust accordingly to taste.
 - b. Placing an adjustment layer just above the background layer will only affect this layer. To do this, first click the background layer and then choose and adjustment layer.
15. Once you are happy with all of this but you have some residual haloing you will have to go to layers in the top menu and merge all visible.
16. Then select the clone stamp tool but set its blend mode to darken. Change the stamp tool size to quite small and clone from the sky just adjacent to the halo over the halo and airplane – you don't have to worry about overlap unless the airplane part is lighter than the sky from which you have cloned. This should eliminate all halos.

The final screen should look like this:



Layers Palette Close Up:



17. Finally, the whole image may look better in monochrome?
18. To see if it does, go to Filters (Top Menu), Nik Collection, Silver Efex Pro 2 and then try the presets and then adjust to taste with all the sliders on the RHS. This assumes that you have already downloaded the Google Nik Collection which is now free!



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