

PC (4.0 only): Every time I pop my Photoshop CD into my CD-ROM drive, a screen appears with four options (Explore the CD, Photoshop Overview, Install Photoshop, and Quit to Desktop). I find this annoying and time consuming, and occasionally it even makes my computer freeze up. Is there any way to stop this thing from popping up every time I insert the CD?

Yes. You can override the Photoshop CD's autoplay feature by holding down the Shift key as you insert the CD (you may have to hold the Shift key down for ten seconds or longer, depending on your system). Once your system recognizes the CD, open Windows Explorer or the My Computer icon on the desktop, right-click on the CD-ROM drive, and choose Explore from the pop-up menu. The Photoshop CD should open up in the Windows Explorer. Don't double-click on the CD-ROM icon; that's what causes the autoplay feature to start up.

Can I run Photoshop on a DEC Alpha?

Sorry, there is currently no version of Photoshop for the DEC (Digital Equipment Corporation) Alpha processor. Although DEC has created an emulation package that allows Windows NT applications to run on DEC Alpha systems, Photoshop was not written for that platform. Because Adobe didn't test Photoshop on the DEC hardware, we cannot support Photoshop running under this configuration.

PC/Mac: I just added a scanner to my system and it's great, but a colleague tells me I'm scanning at too high a resolution. My files do seem to take a long time to work with at

1,200 dpi. What's a good rule of thumb for what resolution to use when scanning?

We're glad you asked. Working at an appropriate image resolution is critical in Photoshop, and it's important to know what your maximum output image resolution needs to be before you begin to scan, create, or import an image in Photoshop.

Ultimately, how you'll use the image will determine what resolution is best. One widely accepted rule of thumb for print output is to use an image resolution (described in pixels per inch) that's twice the line-screen frequency of your final output device. Screen frequency (also called screen ruling) refers to the number of halftone dots or spots per linear inch, and is expressed in lines per inch, or lpi—not dots per inch, or dpi. (This formula assumes you're working with color or grayscale images to be output on a PostScript printer; black-and-white bitmap images are the exception and can be scanned at the resolution of the output device.)

For example, if your printer's screen ruling is 85 lpi, typical for newspaper printing, you'll get good results with images that are scanned at around 170 pixels per inch (assuming you don't shrink or stretch them in the layout of your document—if, for example, you plan to stretch the image by 50 percent, you should increase the resolution that you scan at by 50 percent). Screen frequencies for most PostScript printers typically range from approximately 65 to 180 lpi. Check with your printer for appropriate settings for the job at hand before you start scanning in earnest.

An appropriate resolution for images to be displayed only on a computer screen, such as images for a Web page, is even lower, and is based on a one-to-one match with the pixels on the monitor—typically 72 to 96 pixels per inch.

It's a common and understandable instinct to want to use the maximum pixel resolution of your scanner or your printer when creating images (the more the merrier, bigger is better), but it should be curbed. Using maximum resolution almost always results in files that are needlessly—sometimes stunningly—large. This fills up your hard disk, slows down Photoshop and printing, and, in some cases, may crash your system—all with no improvement in image quality.

For more information, refer to "Getting Images Into Photoshop" in the *Adobe Photoshop 4.0 User Guide* or "Scanning, Importing, and Exporting Images" in the *Adobe Photoshop 3.0 User Guide*.

PC/Mac: Sometimes when I try to open an Illustrator file in Photoshop, I get an error message that says something about the source rectangle being empty. I also occasionally get a similar message when copying objects from Illustrator to Photoshop, and sometimes there's no message but elements simply don't show up in my Photoshop document. Any idea what's going on here?

It sounds like you're trying to import objects from a print-disabled layer in Illustrator 6.0 or 7.0. Photoshop won't accept such objects, either in an imported Illustrator document or over the Clipboard. When it encounters such objects, it might return the warning message "Could not complete your request because the source rectangle is empty."

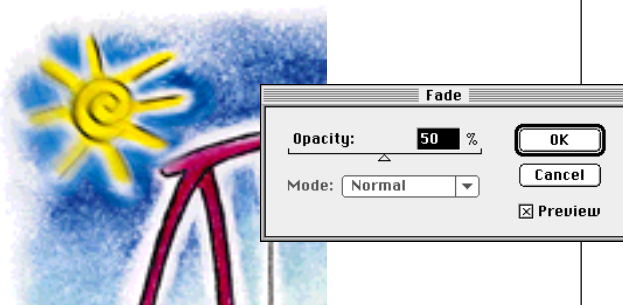
To get around this error, open the file in Illustrator and enable the layer to print by double-clicking the layer name, selecting the Print option, and clicking OK. Then either resave the document and reopen it in Photoshop or select the desired objects and copy and paste them into Photoshop.

Tip: PC/Mac

Fading fast

Photoshop 4.0 introduced the fade-filter feature: immediately after running a filter, you can modify the opacity and blending mode of the filter you've just applied (by selecting Fade [filter name] from the Filter menu). Photoshop 4.0.1 (available online) expanded this new function to include painting tools.

Of course, you can achieve many of the same effects of the Fade function by combining the opacity and blending options in your Paintbrush Options palette. But you'd have to plan ahead and set them up before you actually put the pixel to the page. The Fade function is more forgiving; it lets you experiment without making a commitment. Try it and see how much fun it can be.



PC/Mac: I sometimes scan color negatives and bring them into Photoshop, but the color seems all wrong. If I simply invert the color, it's still wrong. It looks like there's an orange/blue cast from the negative material. I've tried adjusting the colors manually, but it still doesn't always come out right. There must be a better way to do this, right?

Right. But before we tell you about it, here's some information about the problem you're encountering. It's caused by the orange medium of color negatives. Simply inverting the colors (using the Invert command) doesn't compensate for the orange negative material. You can try using Photoshop's color-adjustment tools to remove the orange cast, but you may not be able to get satisfactory results unless you're very experienced at color correction and have a well-calibrated monitor.

There's a simpler way to fix this: use Cytopia Software's CSI Negative plug-in, which is designed for this very purpose. Contact Cytopia Software at (415) 364-4594 or through their Web site at www.cytopia.com. Or find out if your slide-scanner software can automatically compensate for the color of the negatives.

PC/Mac: When I remove a feathered object from a white background and superimpose it on a different background, the composited object appears with an unnatural "halo" of pixels around it. How can I fix this?

A good way to spirit away these unwanted pixels—we call it "defringing" the object—is to use Photoshop's Layer Options.

To do so manually, try this. In a multilayer document, open the Layer Options dialog box (double-click the object's layer, or, in Photoshop 4.0x, choose Layer Options from the Layer menu). Be sure that the Preview box is checked, the Opacity is set to 100%,

the Mode is set to Normal, and the Blend If pop-up menu choice is set to Gray. Drag the white triangle at the right end of the This Layer slider toward the center. This causes white pixels to begin to drop out, and allows the background pixels (or those on the layer underneath) to show through. (The image doesn't update dynamically as you move the slider; you'll see the effects only when you release the mouse button to let go of the slider.)

You control the "drop-off" point (that is, how much of the white edge disappears) by moving the slider from side to side; carefully slide the triangle far enough to the left to make all the white fringe pixels disappear.

Sometimes, however, the edge of your image stands out in stark contrast to the background, making the composited image look almost as artificial as it did with the fringe pixels (not to mention the eerie effect if you push it so far that non-edge pixels start to drop out, too). Fortunately, with a simple keystroke, you can split the blend sliders, effectively doubling the number of controls you have to help refine your blending process. Splitting the controls allows you to soften the edge of the transition. To split any of the sliders in the Layer Options dialog box, press the ALT (Windows) or Option (Macintosh) key while you drag the slider. (After splitting a triangle, you'll see two values displayed above the slider where previously there was only one.)

In this example, we'll need only one more slider to control the range of white (and nearly white) pixels that we want to drop out. After you've dragged the entire white triangle in the This Layer slider to the left, hold down ALT or Option, click on the right side of the white triangle, and drag it back to the right.

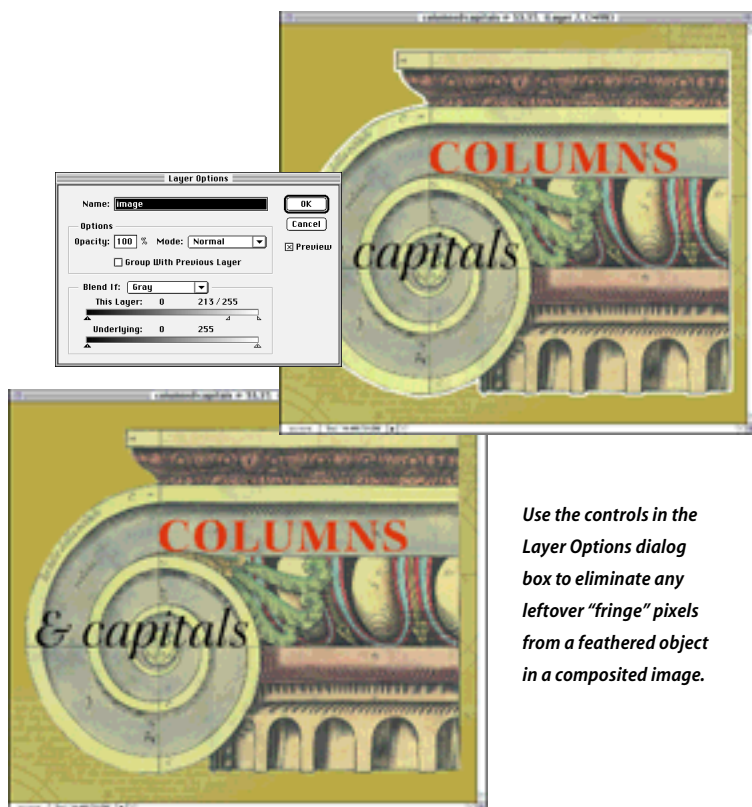
It may require some experimentation, depending on the nature of your image, but with a little practice you should be able to get the white fringe pixels along the edge of your pasted image to drop out, leaving a soft, natural-looking transition along the edge. And, of course, you can use this same split-control technique in a variety of ways—notably, with combinations of opacity settings and blending modes—to give you greater control over layer compositing.

PC/Mac: Photoshop keeps giving me a message telling me that my scratch disk is full, even though I know I have plenty of space. What's up?

When you get a message from Photoshop saying your scratch disk is full, it's usually telling you the truth. (A scratch disk is an amount of space on your hard disk that Photoshop uses to perform its operations.) The exact amount of space it needs depends on several factors, but in most cases you can use the following guideline for a rough estimate: you'll need approximately three to five times the size of your document for scratch-disk space.

Keep in mind that the size of the file referred to here is the size of the file once it's open in Photoshop. (One notable exception to this rule is 1-bit, black-and-white files in Photoshop's bitmap mode: these files can require up to ten times the file size for scratch-disk space.) Don't forget that file formats that use compression will appear much smaller when you look at them in the Windows Explorer or the Macintosh Finder than when they are opened in Photoshop. File formats supported by Photoshop that sometimes or always use compression include Photoshop's native PSD format, TIFF, JPEG, GIF, PNG, and PICT. And bear in mind that file sizes viewed within the operating system don't always reflect the file's true size due to a variety of reasons, most notably the

Micro Tip
Toggle Preserve Transparency on or off for any nonbackground layer using the Forward Slash (/) key.



Use the controls in the Layer Options dialog box to eliminate any leftover "fringe" pixels from a feathered object in a composited image.

way your operating system allocates space on a hard drive. To get a more accurate idea of how large your file is when it's open in Photoshop, take a look at the number reported by the Document Size option in the lower left corner of your image window.

Also, be sure that you have your scratch disk designated on the drive where you think it is; don't just assume. Ideally, it should be on a fast, defragmented, local (that is, not networked), nonremovable media drive. Check your scratch-disk designation by choosing Preferences from the File menu, and then choosing Scratch Disk (3.0.x) or Plug-Ins & Scratch Disk (4.0.x). (A secondary scratch disk "kicks in" when the first one is full, so it's a good idea to choose one if you have multiple drives available.)

There is one relatively obscure situation in which Photoshop will incorrectly report that your scratch disk is full even if it's not: if you have more RAM allocated to Photoshop than you have available scratch-disk space. The solutions for this would be to allocate less memory to Photoshop, which may make it run slower, or—preferably—to free up more disk space. Note that this would affect you only if you have lots of RAM and very little free disk space, and it's likely that in this situation you'd be about to run out of disk space anyway, so freeing up some disk space (or buying some more) is the hands-down best solution, regardless of how much RAM you've got.

PC/Mac (4.0x): When I write a PDF file directly from Acrobat Distiller, I have options for compression and other settings, but when I write a PDF file from Photoshop it never asks me to choose any of that stuff. What settings does Photoshop use for writing PDF files?

Photoshop automatically creates PDF files using JPEG compression—equivalent to the "high" quality compression setting (6) that you can select when saving a JPEG from Photoshop—and Adobe Acrobat 2.1 compatibility.

Mac: I recently upgraded my system software, and now the sliders in my Gamma Control Panel no longer have any effect. Isn't the Gamma Control Panel compatible with my new system software?

Some combinations of system software and video hardware cause the controls in the Macintosh Gamma Control Panel to stop working. Fortunately, you should be able to get around this limitation. Using the Monitors & Sound Control Panel (or Monitors Control Panel, depending on what version you're using), temporarily switch to a different color depth. For example, if you're running your monitor at the Millions of Colors setting, switch to the Thousands of Colors (or the 256 Colors) setting. Adjust the Gamma controls, and then, when you're done, you can switch back to your preferred color depth.

Mac: I just upgraded to Mac OS 8 and can no longer use my Epson scanner in Photoshop. Sometimes I get a message telling me that I don't have enough memory, and sometimes the system just freezes up. Isn't Photoshop compatible with Mac OS 8?

You bet it is—but when you upgrade system software you may also have to update your plug-ins, Twain data-source files, or other third-party components for full compatibility. Contact the developer of any third-party component that's giving you trouble for information on the availability of an update. Updated Twain

files are now available from Epson.

You might also want to use ScanTastic from Second Glance Software (360-692-3694 or www.secondglance.com). This Photoshop scanning plug-in lets you scan directly into most programs; it works fine with Mac OS 8, Photoshop, and Epson scanners (as well as HP and Apple scanners).

Tip: PC/Mac

Change your background layer

Have you ever wanted to add a new background layer to your document? There are several ways to add a new layer in Photoshop, but most of them result in a transparent, nonbackground layer.

To add a nontransparent background layer, you can create a nonbackground layer and then flatten or merge down to change that layer into a background layer. But here's an easier way.

- 1. Choose Layer from the New submenu of the Layer menu in version 4.0, or New Layer from the Layers palette menu in version 3.0x.*
- 2. Click on the Mode pop-up menu in the New Layer dialog box. Scroll to the bottom of the list. You should see an extra mode called Background. Select the background mode option, and then click OK. The new layer you've just created will automatically appear as a nontransparent background layer.*

Of course, the choice for background mode will be available only in a document that currently has no Background layer; since a document can have only a single Background layer, you can't add a second one.

Mac (4.0.x): When I click on the Build Tables Using Apple ColorSync button in Photoshop's Separation Tables dialog box, nothing happens. On a friend's Mac, this brings up a color-management dialog box. Why is mine broken?

You're probably missing the CMS (color-management system) support files that need to be installed in your System Folder (you also need the ColorSync Extension, of course).

Make sure that you have installed either the PSLABPCS.ICM (Photoshop 4.0) or PSLABPCS.PF (Photoshop 4.0.1) file, in addition to at least one CMYK printer profile and one monitor profile, in the ColorSync Profiles folder (located in the Preferences folder within your System Folder).

If you find that one or more of your color-management files is missing, the simplest way to make sure you have what you need is to do a custom installation of Photoshop and select ICC Profile support from the plug-ins section of the installer program. Make sure that your ColorSync Extension is enabled when you install Photoshop. (Photoshop doesn't install the extension, so if you don't have it, check your System CD-ROM, or download it from www.colorsinc.apple.com.) ♦