

Blend Modes Review

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The most useful/practical categories of Blend Modes are:

- **The Darken Modes:** Darken, Multiply, Color Burn, Linear Burn
- **The Lighten Modes:** Lighten, Screen, Color Dodge, Linear Dodge
- **The Contrast Modes:** Overlay, Soft Light, Hard Light, Vivid Light, Linear Light, Pin Light, and Hard Mix

Note: Hard Mix will reduce your photo to 8 colors.

Scroll up and down the blend modes to see how each mode will change your photo. To do this, click on one of the Blend Modes to activate the modes. Hold down the Shift and Alt. key and scroll up and down using the + or - arrow keys

If your photo is too DARK:

- Hit Control-J to duplicate the background layer. The dupe layer is named Layer 1.
- With Layer 1 active, change the blend mode to **SCREEN** and the entire photo will be lightened.
- Control the exposure with the Opacity.
- Another duplicate screen layer can be added, if necessary.

If your photo is too LIGHT:

Perform the same operation as above, but change the blend mode to **MULTIPLY** to darken the entire photo.

If your photo needs more CONTRAST:

Perform the same operation as above, but change the blend mode to **OVERLAY** or one of the other contrast blend modes.

A Self-Blend

The most common blend is a self-blend. This is simply the background layer and a duplicate layer (Control-J) that is blended by means of any of the various blend modes. The blend layer is usually altered in some way. A Gaussian Blur is probably the most common alteration technique.

The most common self-blend: a soft focus effect

Apply a Blur-Gaussian Blur to the duplicate layer and set the blend mode to MULTIPLY. Pull the opacity back to about 50%.

Using the Rubber Stamp to lighten shadows or flaws on a portrait:

This technique is good to remove blemishes, light shadows on the face, and other flaws.

1. It is best to work on a separate layer. Do Ctrl-J to make a duplicate layer.
2. Activate the Rubber Stamp Tool: change the Blend Mode of the tool to “lighten”
3. Set the opacity between 8 and 40%.
4. Alt-Click on a clean light colored area close to the “too dark” area.
5. Paint with the Stamp Tool over the area you want to lighten. Start with a low % opacity.
6. Resample every time you move away from the original sampled area.

Note: The bracket keys will change the brush size.

Using the Rubber Stamp Tool to remove hot spots caused by too much flash:

1. Make a duplicate layer with Ctrl-J and activate that layer.
2. Select the Rubber Stamp Tool.
3. Set the Rubber Stamp Tool’s Blend Mode to DARKEN with opacity of 8-40%.
4. Alt-Click on a dark area close to the hot spot and paint over the hot area to remove the shine.

Note: If you remove too much shine, pull back on the Opacity.

Using the Paint Brush Tool to Burn and Dodge using the OVERLAY Blend mode:

1. Choose: Layer - New – Layer.
2. Select Overlay for Mode
3. Check the Fill with Overlay-neutral color 50% gray box.

You will now have a separate layer filled with 50% gray above your background layer. It won’t show because gray is a neutral color with the contrast modes.

1. Activate the Brush Tool: Set the brush at Normal Mode. Choose a soft brush. Lower the opacity to between 8 and 40%
2. Set the color box to white and paint to **DODGE** or lighten part of your image.
3. Set the color box to black and paint to **BURN** or darken part of your image.

Start working with the opacity set low. You can always paint over and over. If you make a mistake, delete it on the history palette and do it again.

How to Make a Pencil Drawing from your Color Photo

1. Begin with a cropped and optimized color photo.
2. Desaturate your background layer with Hue/Saturation.
3. Press Ctrl-J to create a dupe layer: Layer 1
4. Press Ctrl-I to invert the dupe layer: Layer 1. The image on Layer 1 is now a negative.
5. Change the blend mode of Layer 1 to Color Dodge.
6. Because the upper blend layer is already very light, the resultant Color Dodge blend will be nearly pure white.
7. With Layer 1 active, select Filter-Blur-Gaussian Blur to bring back the detail. Move the Gaussian Blur arrow to the right. Stop when the sketch looks good to you.
8. Play a bit more with the sketch...burn and dodge...etc.