

Adobe Photoshop

Using Liquify in Photoshop with Julieanne Kost
Software needed Adobe Photoshop 6.0 or later

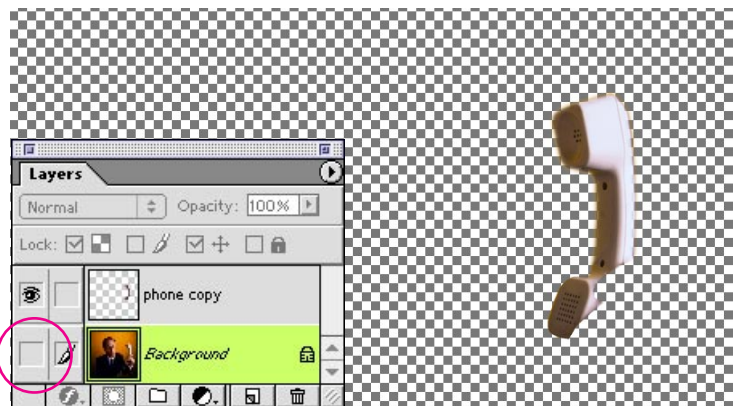


Photoshop 6.0 has a great new feature for creating custom distortions to an image called “Liquify.” This Tip and Technique will get you acquainted with all of the options available to you in this dynamic distortion and warping tool that enables you to interactively push, pull, rotate, enlarge and shrink any area of an image.

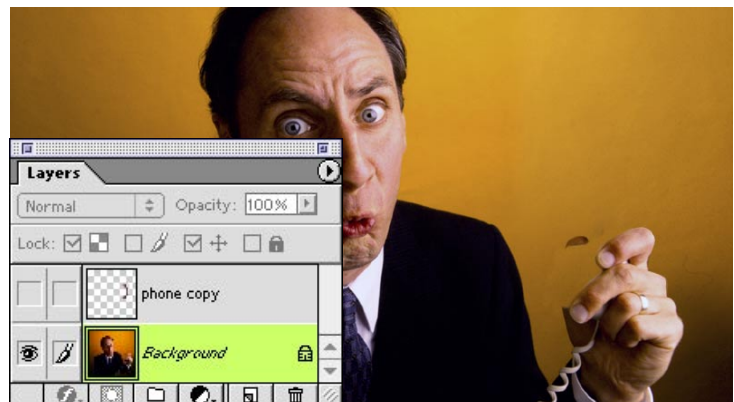
Open the image. In this case I’m going to open a file of a friend on the phone that I want to set on fire. (No, I’m not going to set the friend on fire, I’m talking about the phone!)



Separate the object from the background. In this photo, I want to distort only the phone, not the background. Select the phone with the Lasso tool and then choose Layer > New Layer Via Copy to place a copy of the phone on a new layer.



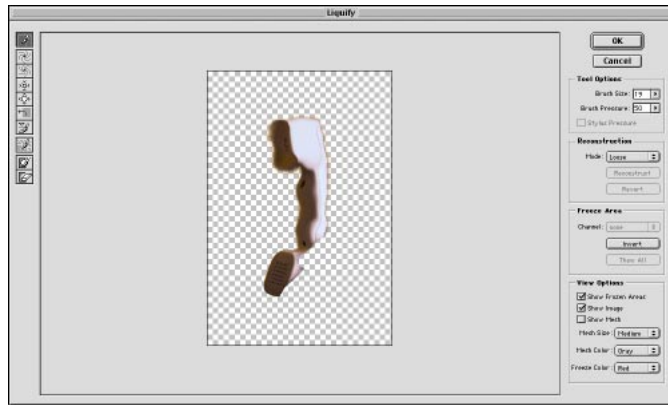
Remove the phone from the original background. Select the Rubber stamp tool and sample from areas of similar color and value areas in the Background to cover the phone. Note: it would have been easier to take two photographs at the time - one with the phone and one with out - but since I only had this image I had to use the Rubber Stamp to create missing information.



Select the area to liquify. Select the rectangular marquee tool and drag a rough selection around the area that you want to distort. This will cause Photoshop to zoom into the desired area when displaying the image in the Liquify dialog box. Note: While this step isn't mandatory, I find it's helpful to see a larger display of that area. There is no zoom tool in the Liquify window.



Select Liquify. Select Image > Liquify and choose from the numerous tools available. In this example, the Warp and Shift Pixels tools were used to give the phone its distorted appearance. Note: an example of each of these tools, is provided at the end of this tip.



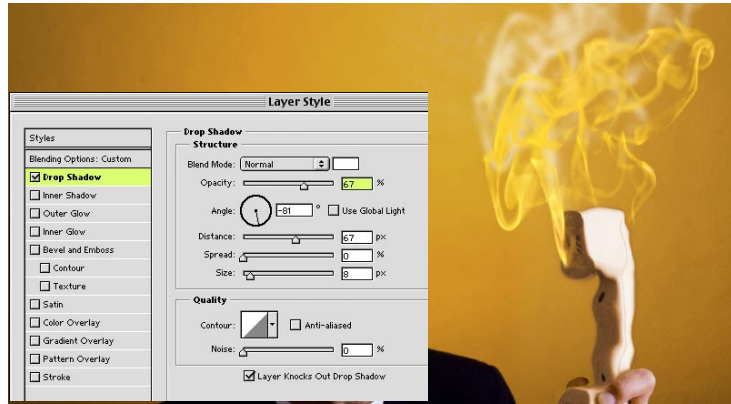
Adjust the color of the phone. In order to make the phone look like it was on fire, I selected Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Hue/Saturation. Check the option to Group with Previous Layer so that the adjustment only affects the phone and not the background. Dragging the Hue slider into the orange and increasing the saturation helped boost the color of the phone in this image.



Add the flames. In order to create the illusion of the phone melting, I added some flames from another image extracted using Image > Extract and choosing the Force Foreground option). Setting the Blend Mode to screen revealed the lighter flames and hid the darker flames.



Add some smoke. To add smoke to the flames, I double clicked on the flame layer and in the Layer Styles dialog box, added a drop shadow. Changing the color to white and the Blend Mode to Screen created the white smoke.



Adding more flames. To add more depth to the flames, I duplicated the flame layer by dragging it down to the new layer icon. Changing the Blend Mode to Multiply achieved the darker flames and I also added a slight blur by selecting Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur. To reposition it below the original flames layer, I lowered its position in the layers palette by using the keyboard shortcut Command (Mac) Control (Win) +] or .



Burn the phone. To make the top of the phone appear burned, click the new layer icon to add a new layer. Reposition it below the flames. Cmd(Mac)/Ctrl (Win) click on the phone layer to load it as a selection (so you don't paint outside of the phone) and use the paintbrush with a lowered opacity to slowly paint in the black area. If it looks too smooth, select Filter > Noise > Add Noise and increase the Amount until the textures match.



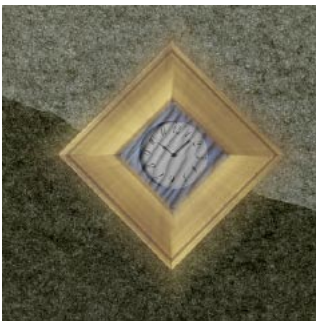
Distort the face. Finally, to make his face even more of a caricature, I target the background layer, drew a marquee around his face and selected Image > Liquify. Using the Bloat tool on his eyes made them larger while using the Pucker tool on his mouth made it shrink.



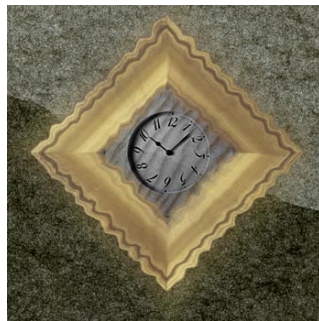
Variation One. Instead of using the Liquify feature for creating realistic effects, try playing with it to create surreal or painterly images. Here is the original image, the image with the Diffuse glow added and the final image after being distorted with the Warp brush in Liquify.



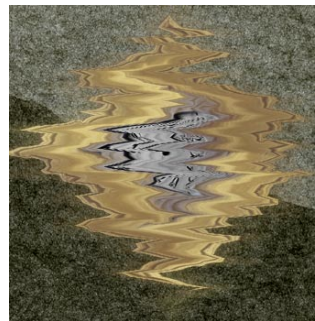
Other Examples. These illustrations show some of the other distortions possible with Liquify. In addition, the Freeze and Thaw tools allow areas of image to either be protected or distorted and the Reconstruct tool reverse the changes and lessens the distortion in the image. You can also create an alpha channel to use as a mask that defines frozen areas. Varying the brush size and pressure as well as the mode allows for endless possibilities. After clicking OK, you can select the Edit > Fade command to create even more effects!



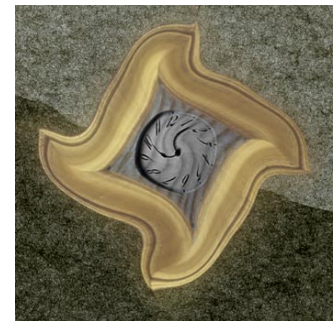
Original Image



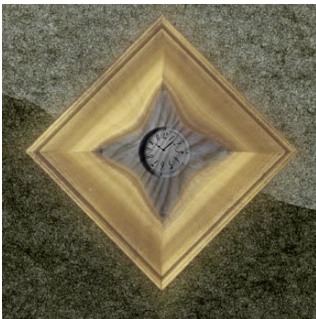
Warp tool (W), low pressure



Warp tool (W), high pressure



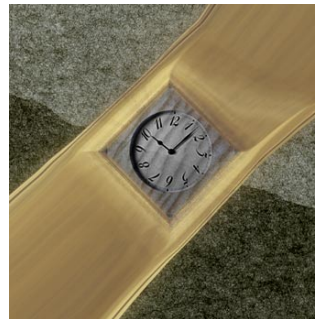
Twirl tool (C=R, CCW = L)



Pucker tool (P)



Bloat tool (B)



Shift Pixels tool (S)



Reflect tool (R)

Other Shortcuts:

Option/Alt + tool reverses direction for Shift Pixels and Reflect tools.

Option/Alt + drag in Preview with Reconstruct tool, Displace, Amplitwist or Affine mode selected continually samples the distortion.

Option/Alt +click reverts settings

[or] decreases or increases brush size

Left or Up Arrow when brush has focus, increases size or pressure by one. Right or down arrow decreases by one (shift increases/decreases by 10)

Tab cycles through controls on right from top; Shift+Tab cycles through controls on right from bottom.