

# Using Adjustment Layers

## About Adjustment Layers

Adjustment layers let you experiment with color and tonal adjustments to an image without permanently modifying the pixels in the image. The color and tonal changes reside within the adjustment layer, which acts as a veil through which the underlying image layers appear. Keep in mind that an adjustment layer affects all the layers below it. This means that you can correct multiple layers by making a single adjustment, rather than making the adjustment to each layer separately.

## Adding Adjustment Layers

To create an adjustment layer or fill layer do one of the following:

- Click the New Adjustment Layer button at the bottom of the Layers palette, and choose the layer type you want to create.
- Choose Layer > New Adjustment Layer, and choose an option from the submenu. Then name the layer, set other layer options, and click OK.

The available Adjustment Layers in Adobe Photoshop CS2 are: Solid Color, Gradient, Pattern, Levels, Curves, Color Balance, Brightness/Contrast, Hue/Saturation, Selective Color, Channel Mixer, Gradient Map, Photo Filter, Invert, Threshold and Posterize.

To confine the effects of the adjustment layer or fill layer to a selected area, make a selection, create a closed path and select it,

or select an existing closed path. When you use a selection, you create an adjustment layer confined by a layer mask. When you use a path, you create an adjustment layer confined by a vector mask.

## Editing an Adjustment Layer

Once you create an adjustment or fill layer, you can easily edit the settings, or dynamically replace it with a different adjustment. You can also edit the mask of an adjustment layer to control the effect that the layer has on the image. By default, all areas of an adjustment layer are “unmasked” and, therefore, are showing.

To edit an adjustment or fill layer:

1. Do one of the following:
  - Double-click the adjustment layer’s thumbnail in the Layers palette.
  - Choose Layer > Layer Content Options.
2. Make the desired adjustments, and click OK.

To change the content of an adjustment or fill layer:

1. Select the adjustment layer or fill layer that you want to change.
2. Choose Layer > Change Layer Content and select a different fill or adjustment layer from the list.

## Adjustment Layer Controls in the Layer Palette

### Adjustment Layer Thumbnail

*indicates that this is an Adjustment Layer. In this example, it is a Curves Adjustment Layer.*

### Layer Mask Thumbnail

*Adjustment Layers come default with a white Layer Mask, thus revealing all areas of the adjustment. You can edit the Layer Mask to control which areas of the layers below are effected.*

### Eye Icon

*Indicates that the Adjustment Layer is visible. You may turn its visibility on or off like any other layer..*

*In this example, the black edited areas are masking the effects of the Adjustment Layer. The white areas reveal the effects. For more information see the Using Layer Masks handout.*

### Link

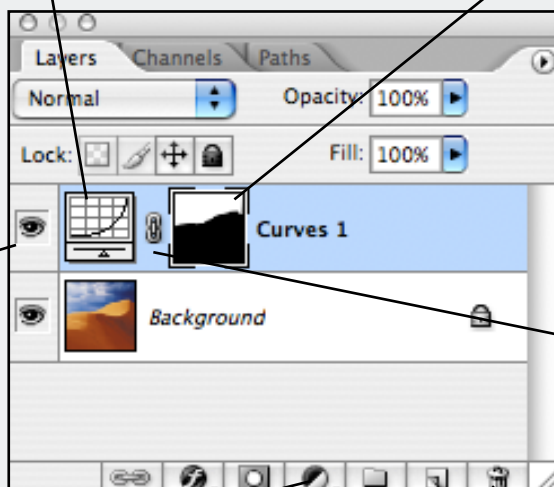
*Indicates that they movement of the Layer Contents and the Layer Mask are linked. If this is not visible, the Layer Contents or Layer Mask may be moved independently.*

### New Adjustment Layer Button

*Clicking this button brings up a menu with which you can add an Adjustment Layer above whichever Layer is active. If there is an active selection, it adds a Layer Mask with the effects of the Adjustment Layer visible within the selection and the rest hidden.*

### Trash Can Button

*By dragging the Adjustment Layer here, or clicking it with the layer selected, you can permanently delete the Adjustment Layer.*



# Types of Adjustment Layers & Instructions for Use

## Solid Color

Specify a color.

## Gradient

Click the gradient to display the Gradient Editor, or click the inverted arrow and choose a gradient from the pop-up palette. Set additional options if desired. Style specifies the shape of the gradient. Angle specifies the angle at which the gradient is applied. Scale changes the size of the gradient. Reverse flips the orientation of the gradient. Dither reduces banding by applying dithering to the gradient. Align with Layer uses the bounding box of the layer to calculate the gradient fill. You can use the mouse to move the center of the gradient by clicking and dragging in the image window.

## Pattern

Click the pattern, and choose a pattern from the pop-up palette. Click Scale and enter a value or drag the slider to scale the pattern. Click Snap to Origin to position the origin of the pattern with that of the document window. Select Link with Layer to specify that the pattern moves with the fill layer as it is relocated. When Link With Layer is selected, you can drag in the image to position the pattern while the Pattern Fill dialog box is open.

## Levels

Specify values for the highlights, shadows, and midtones. Drag the black and white sliders toward the center to add contrast. Move the gray (gamma) slider right or left to darken or lighten the image.

## Curves

Adjust the intensity values of pixels along a 0-255 scale while keeping up to 15 other values constant. A good place to start is by adding a point in the center of the graph. Drag the slider up diagonally left or down diagonally right to lighten or darken the image.

## Color Balance

Drag a slider toward a color you want to increase in the image; drag a slider away from a color you want to decrease in the image.

## Brightness/Contrast

Specify values for Brightness and Contrast.

## Hue/Saturation

Choose which colors to edit, and specify values for Hue, Saturation, and Lightness.

## Selective Color

Choose the color you want to adjust, and drag the sliders to increase or decrease the components in the selected color.

## Channel Mixer

Modify a color channel or mix all three to create a custom grayscale channel.

## Gradient Map

Choose a gradient and set gradient options.

## Photo Filter

Make color adjustments by simulating the effect of a filter in front of a camera lens.

## Invert

Inverted adjustment layers don't have options, they simply invert the image's colors.

## Threshold

Specify a threshold level.

## Posterize

Specify the number of tonal levels for each color channel.