

BURN & DODGE USING A GRAY MASK

In a traditional darkroom the photographer uses an enlarger to cast light through a lens and expose the photographic paper. The photographer uses two tools to control the amount of light that reaches the paper. The dodge tool is used to prevent as much light from reaching a section of the paper and a burn tool is used to bring more light to a selected section of the image. In a traditional darkroom the photographer exposed photographic paper to light for a set amount of time. However, if the photographer wants to increase or decrease the light that reaches a certain section of the image he can use a dodge tool to decrease the light and a burn tool to increase the light.

Photoshop offers you those same tools, however the Dodge Tool and Burn Tool are very blunt instruments. Essentially they darken or lighten all of the pixels selected, permanently changing (and perhaps damaging) those sections of the image. A far better way to burn or dodge is by using a Gray Mask. Here's how you can do it.

On the upper menu bar select Layer>New>New Layer.

A Dialogue Box titled New Layer appears. Provide the following information.

For Mode: select Overlay.

Underneath Mode check the box that says "Fill with Overlay-neutral color (50% gray).

Now click OK.

You will see that a new layer is displayed in your Layer Palette and that is a uniform gray. You can "dodge" portions of your image by painting white over the areas of the photo that you want to lighten.

You can "burn" portions of your image by painting black over the areas that you want to darken.

On the upper menu bar you can change the size and opacity of your paint brush allowing you a great deal of control..

