

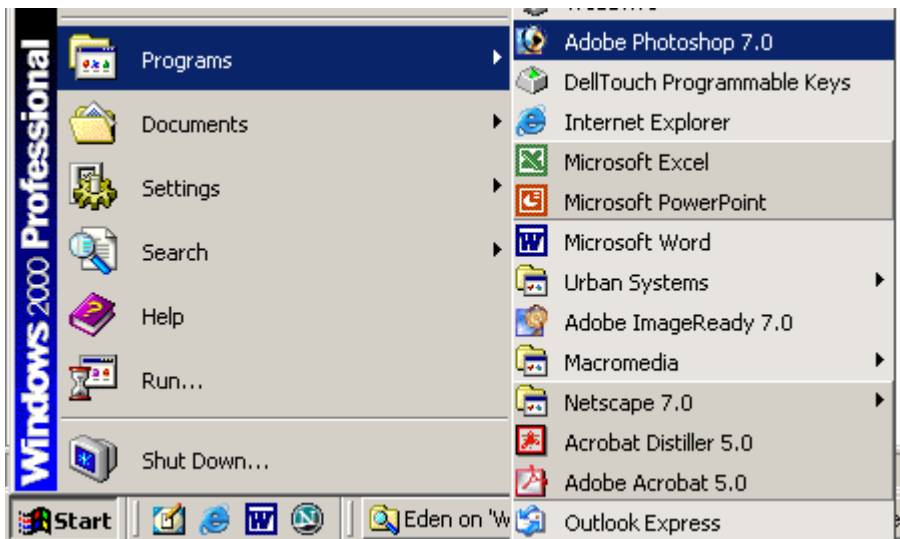
What is a Banner Image?:

"Banner Images" (or simply "banners") are commonly used on websites as the title or top of a page. Banners are usually very flashy in nature, and are meant to catch the immediate attention of the visitor.

Adobe Photoshop is a fantastic tool to use in the creation of banners. With Photoshop, you can edit images, add special effects, and combine them into one image for use on the web.

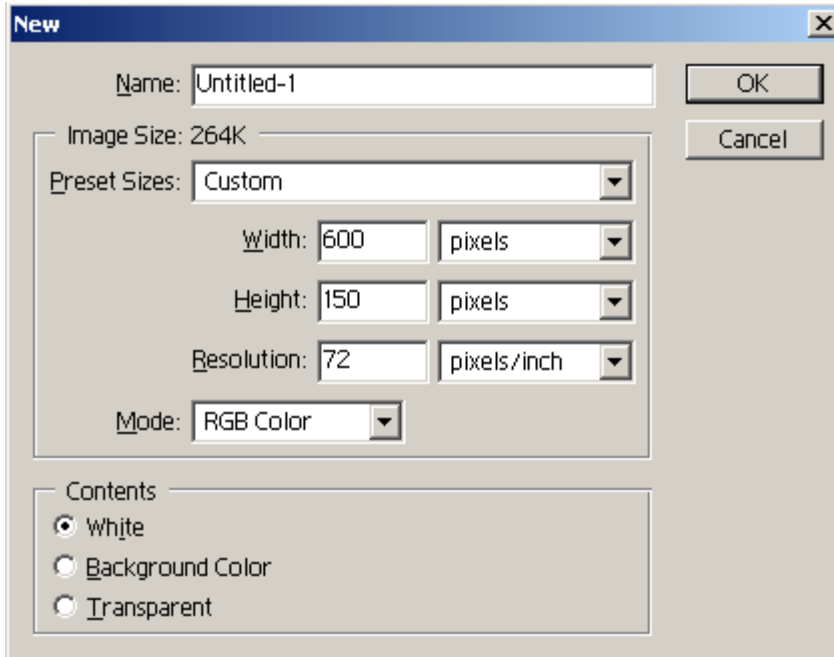
Opening Photoshop:

Starting from the desktop, select "Programs" from the "Start" menu, and locate "Adobe Photoshop 7.0" (it may also appear within an "Adobe" folder). There may also be an icon on the desktop you can double-click.



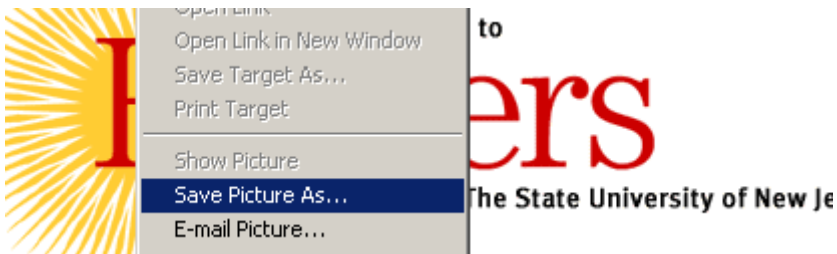
Beginning Your Image:

From the "File" menu, select "New." A new window will appear asking you to select the dimensions of your image. Banners generally never exceed 600 pixels in width or 150 pixels in height. For our banner image, let's create a 600x150 pixel image. Enter in 600 pixels for the width, and 150 pixels for the height.



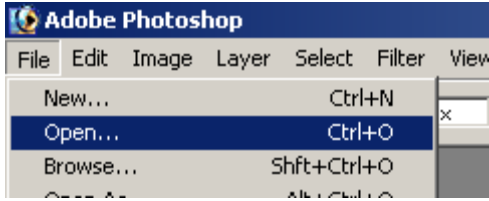
Finding a Picture to Use:

Right now you've got a blank image. Let's grab a pre-existing image from the Rutgers home page (www.rutgers.edu) to use in our image. Go to the Rutgers home page, and find the big image at the top of the page with the yellow sun. Right-click this image and select "Save As" or "Save Picture As." A new window will appear asking you to select a location on your hard drive to save the image. Pick a location and click "Save."



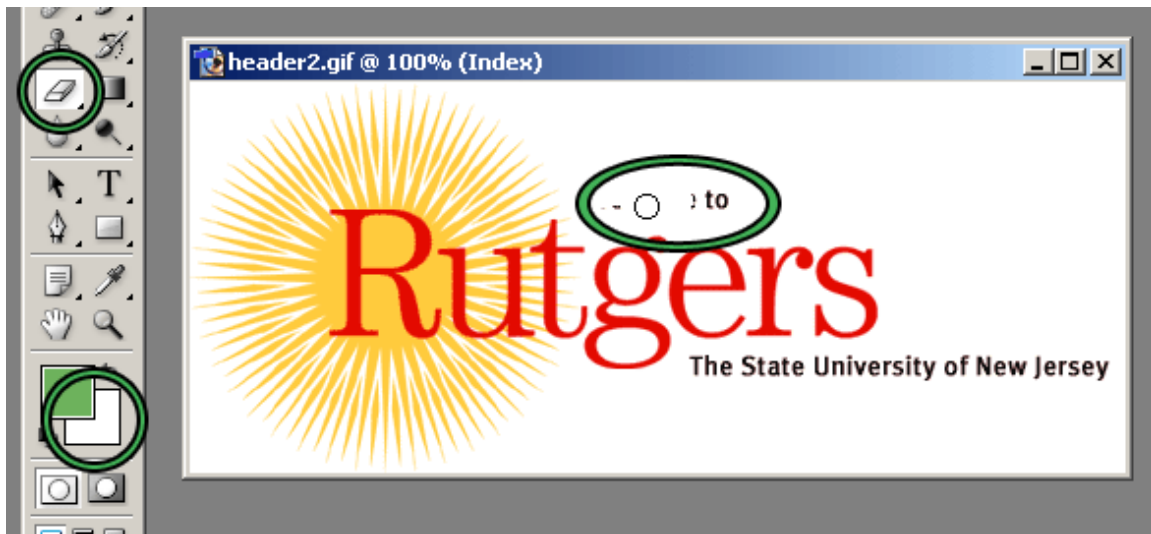
Back in Photoshop, select "Open" from the "File" menu, and find the image you just downloaded. Select the image, and click "Open." The image will now open in Photoshop. We're going to erase the black text so that only that sun and the word "Rutgers" remain, so we can use it in our banner.

NOTE: The Rutgers logo is not for everyday use, and is a copyrighted image. Since we are using it for a simple test site on Rutgers space, this is an appropriate usage. Keep this in mind for future projects, however.

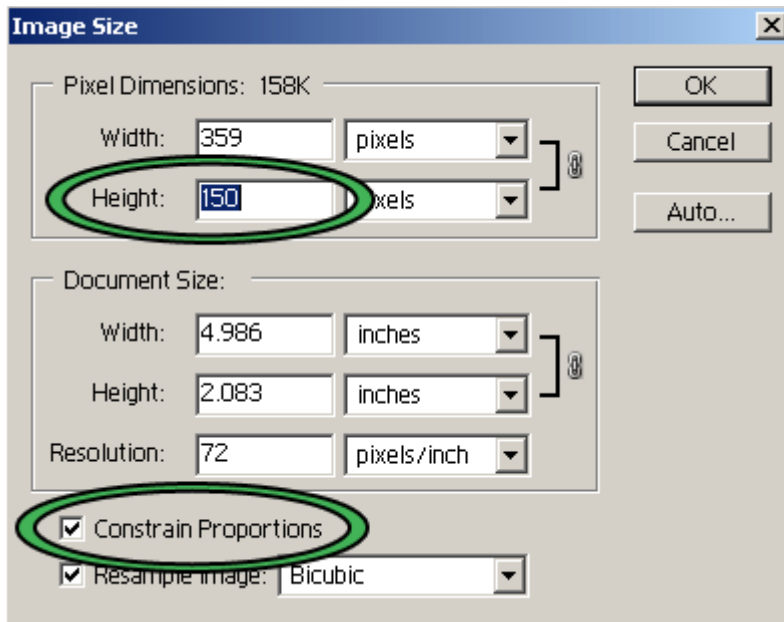


Editing Your Image:

Make sure that white is set as your background color. Select the Eraser tool from the tool box. Click and drag over the black text on the Rutgers image until all that remains is the sun and the word "Rutgers." If you make a mistake, you can use either the "Undo" function from the "Edit" menu, or you can click back in the "History" window to any previous state of the image.

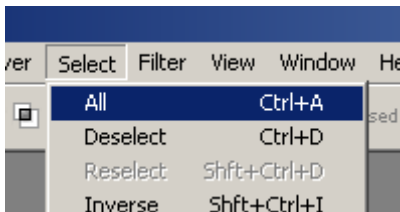


Now let's resize the image so we can use it in our banner. First we'll want to change the Image Mode from "Indexed Color" (which is used for GIFs) to "RGB Color"; RGB images resize much more cleanly than Indexed Color. Select "RGB Color" from the "Image" menu, and you're ready to resize the image. Then, select "Image Size" from the "Image" menu, and make sure "Constrain Proportions" is clicked. Change the height of the image to 150 pixels (which is the height of our banner), and click "OK."

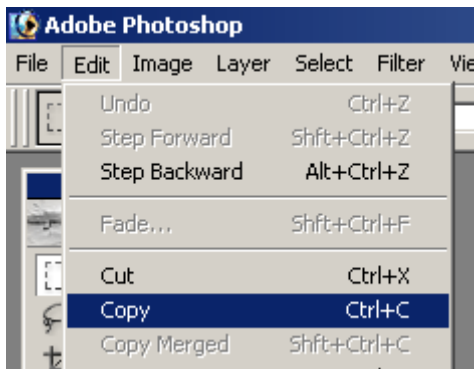


Working With Your Image:

With your resized image, you're ready to bring it into a blank canvas to work with. First you'll need to select your image. From the "Select" menu, click "All."



A glowing ring will surround your image. Now select "Copy" from the "Edit" menu (or press Ctrl+C on your keyboard). The image will now be copied to Photoshop's "clipboard," allowing you to bring it over to your blank canvas.



Click back over to the window with your blank 600x150 canvas, and select "Paste" from the "Edit" menu (or press Ctrl+V on your keyboard).

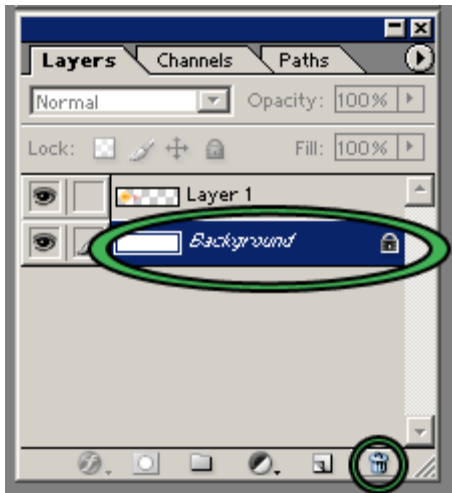


The "Rutgers" image with the sun should appear towards the middle of your blank canvas. Notice that pasting this image has created a new "Layer 1" in the "Layers" window. You can move this image anywhere you want with the Move tool; for now, let's move it to the left-most portion of the canvas.



Our first step will be to delete the "Background" layer in the "Layers" window. The background layer will be useless to us as we pile some layers on top with effects.

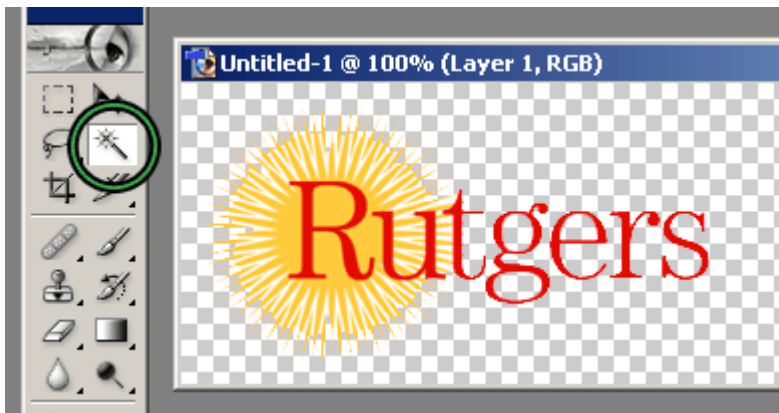
In the "Layers" window, select the "Background" layer, and click the little trashcan at the bottom of the window. You will be asked if you really want to delete the layer; say yes. The "Background" layer will be gone, allowing you to edit the important layers with no problems, now.



Advanced Editing:

Our second step is going to be to delete all the white space around the sun and letters. The reason we'll be doing this, despite it seeming like there's nothing there, is because there is something there: the color white. We're going to delete the white so that NO colors are there, which will allow us to place things BEHIND the Rutgers logo in our banner, and still be able to see anything.

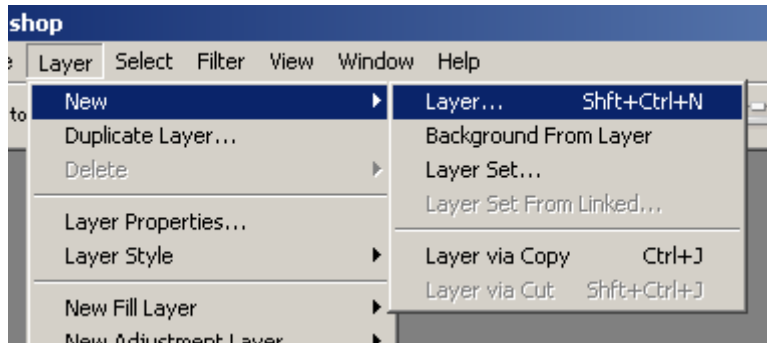
Select the Magic Wand tool, and click an area of the white space in your image. It should select with a circling dotted line. Press the "Delete" key on your keyboard to delete this white space. Because you've moved your "Rutgers" image, there may be additional white space on the right side of the canvas that's not immediately selected. Be sure to get this area, as well. The last place to delete white from will be within the "g" and "e" of "Rutgers." You'll know you've deleted white space by seeing the checkerboard background of Photoshop's canvas.



Adding a Gradient:

Now we're going to create a gradient background for our banner. A gradient is a color that goes across the length of the banner, and fades itself from a strong, full color on one side to a white, absent color on the other side.

We're going to be placing this gradient on a new layer, so we'll need to create this new layer. From the "Layer" menu, select "New" and "Layer" (or press Ctrl+Shift+N on your keyboard).

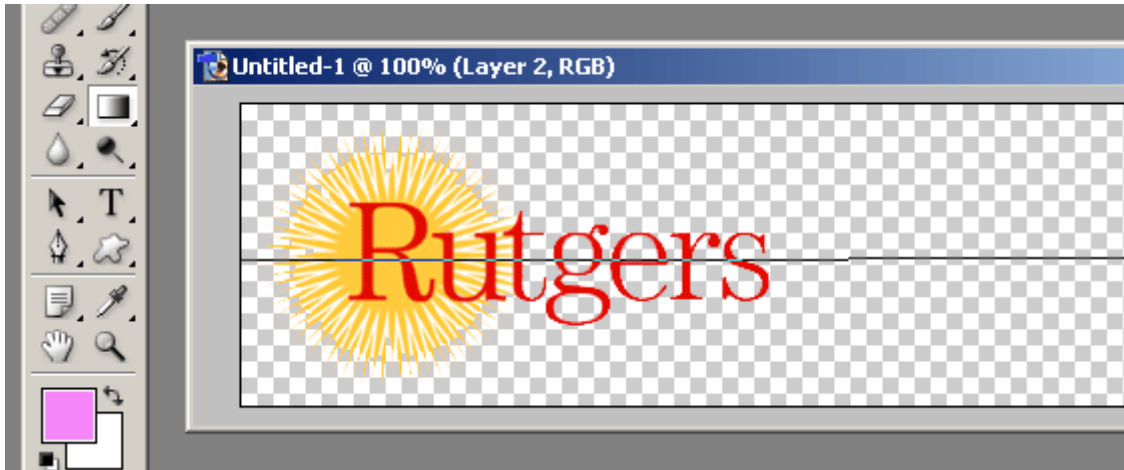


Click "OK" on the new window that appears. You'll notice you have both a "Layer 1" and a "Layer 2" in your "Layers" window, now. Make sure that "Layer 2" is selected. Now we're going to create the gradient background.

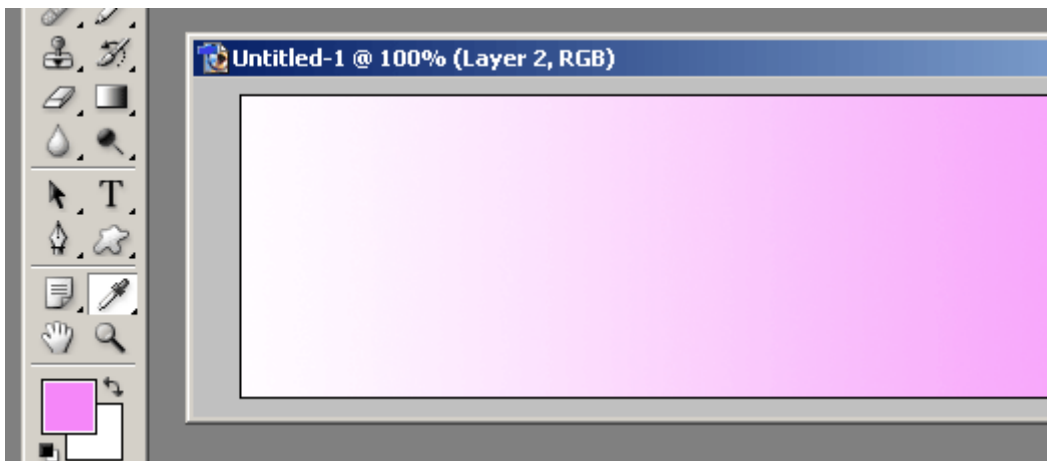
Click the Gradient tool, and select a foreground color (the color you choose will be the color of the gradient). Be sure to pick a color that won't clash too much with the Rutgers logo.



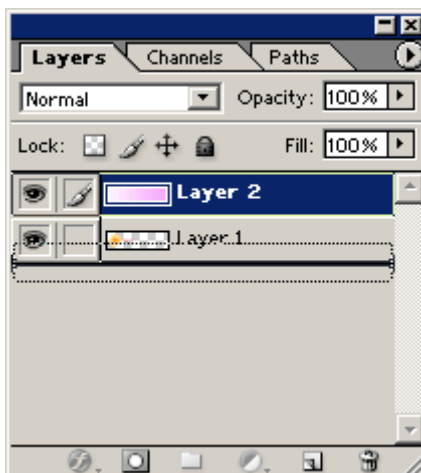
Click on the right-most side of your canvas, and drag the mouse across to the left-most side. This will make the gradient flow from white on the left, to whatever color you've chosen on the right (in this example's case, a light purple).



After you've dragged the cursor across, the result should look something like this:



Next we'll need to change the order of the layers so that the "Rutgers" logo is on top of the gradient. To do this, go to the "Layers" window, and drag "Layer 2" down below "Layer 1."



Your banner should look like this, now:



Adding Text:

Now let's add a little text over in the right-most area of the banner. Click the Text tool and select black as the foreground color.



In the new sub-main menu, choose a font and style for your text. For this example, we'll be using a 30-point, italicized Arial. You can set these options at the top of the screen once you've selected the Text tool.

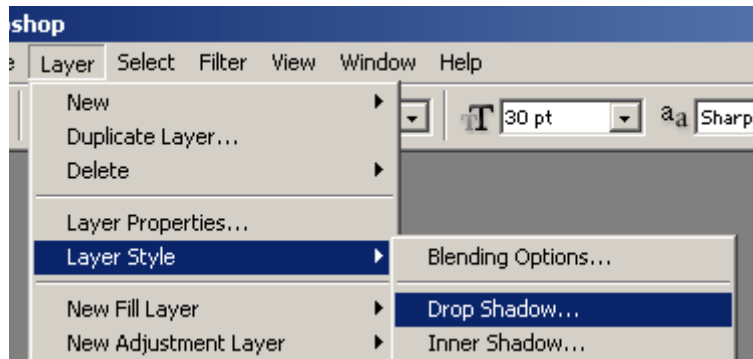


Click over into your banner with the Text tool. You'll notice that this creates a new layer. Type some text over in the empty right side. For this example, we've typed "How to Make a Banner Image." If you need to move your text, click the Move tool and just drag it anywhere on your canvas.

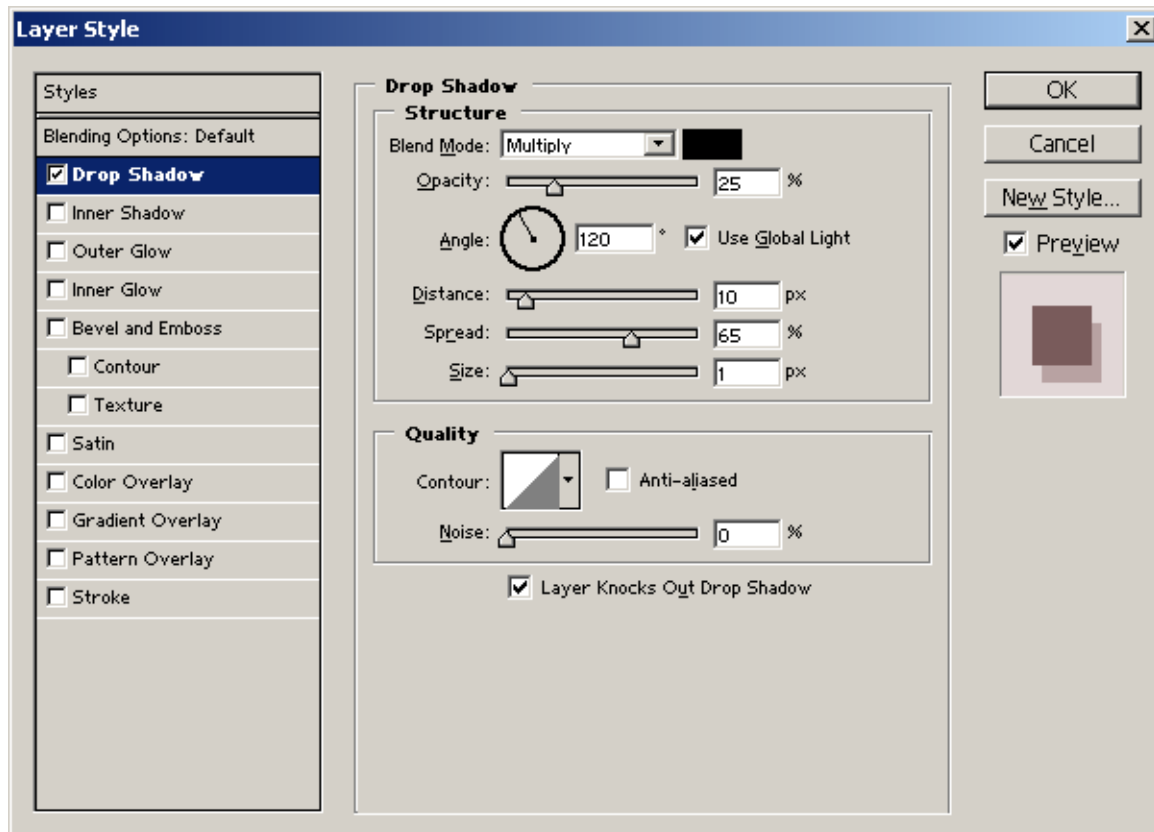


Layer / Text Effects:

That's very plain looking. Let's add some effects to the text. While still on the new text layer, select the "Layer Style" window from the "Layer" menu. A list of effects you can apply will appear. The most basic and widely used effect is the "Drop Shadow"; select this from the list.



The "Layer Style" window will appear set to the "Drop Shadow" window. As you make adjustments in the window, notice that you will be able to see all the changes directly on your canvas (none of these changes will actually stick and take effect, however, until you click "OK"). Play with the "Opacity" slider to set the desired transparency of the shadow. The "Distance" slider adjusts how close or far away from the text the shadow will be. The "Spread" slider adjusts how thick the shadow will be (with zero being the same size as the text), while "Size" adjusts what proportion to the original size (both height and width) the shadow will be. Below, you can also adjust the "Noise" slider, which will "break up" the quality of the shadow.



For example's sake, the image below is set to an opacity of 25%, distance of 10, spread of 65, and size of 1 (no noise set).

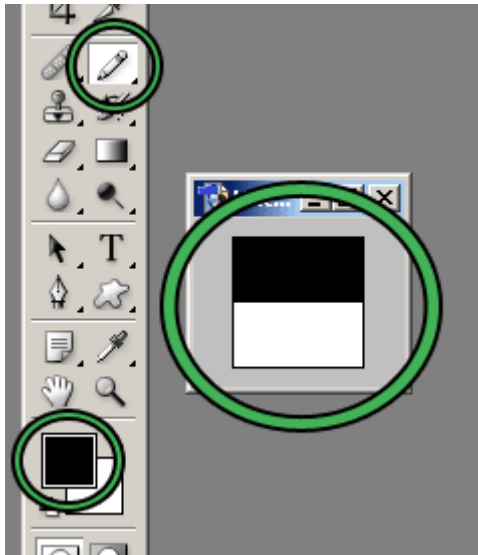


Fill Patterns:

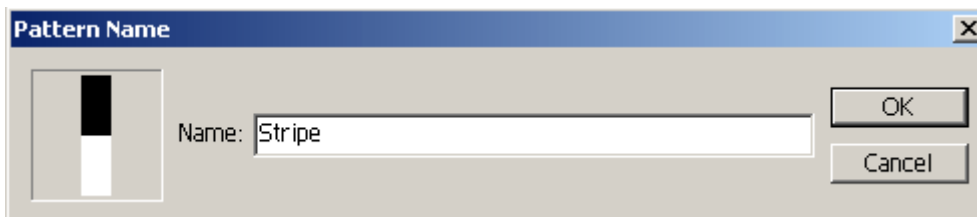
If you'd like, you can add a "fill pattern" to the back of your image. It's much more complicated than the previous steps, but can add quite a bit to the banner.

The first step is to create a brand new canvas of only 4 pixels wide by 4 pixels high. Once this is done, zoom in as far as you can on the image, and select the Pencil tool, and black as the foreground color.

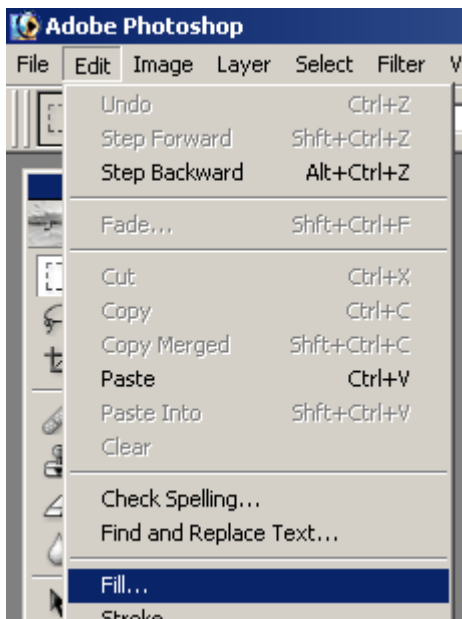
Paint the top two rows (top two pixels) black, leaving the bottom two white. Your screen should look something like this:



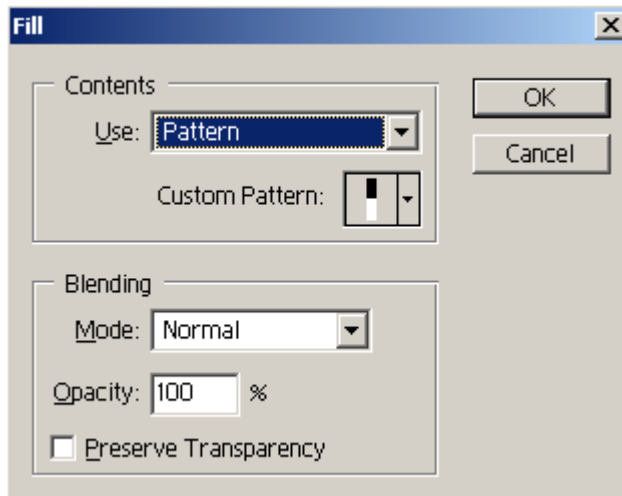
Once you've painted the pixels as such, choose "Define Pattern" from the "Edit" menu. Name the pattern in the window that appears (for example, "Stripe").



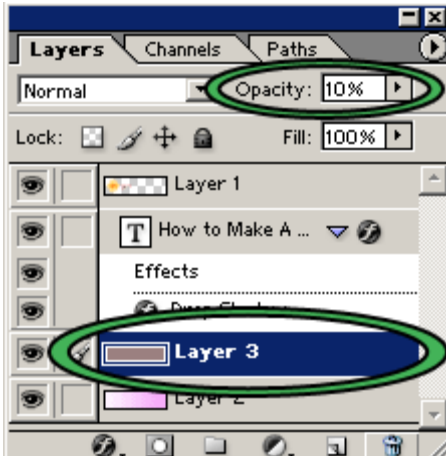
Go back to your banner image and create a new layer. Drag this layer above "Layer 2" (the gradient) and below the text layer. Select "Fill" from the "Edit" menu.



In the new window that appears, select "Pattern" from the "Use" drop-down menu. Click "Custom Pattern" below it and select the pattern you created ("Stripe"; you'll see a few other default patterns Photoshop provides, as well). Click "OK."



The pattern you've selected will initially appear very dark on your image. To change this, make sure your new layer is selected in the "Layers" window, and adjust the opacity to anything you wish (this example's fill pattern opacity is set to 10%).

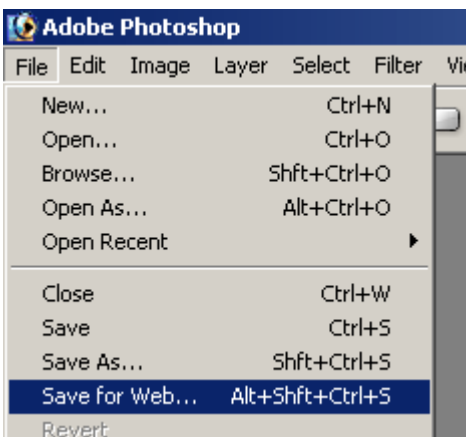


The final result should look something like this:



Saving Your Banner for the Web:

We'll be saving our banner image in the GIF format, since there are relatively few colors used in the image, which will allow for quick download time on the web. Select "Save for the Web" from the "File" menu.



Make sure "GIF" is selected from the first drop-down menu. We can reduce the number of colors to 16, since there are so few used in the image. The image is all set to save. Click "Save," and select a location on your hard drive or disk to save the image.

