

MAKING A NEW BACKGROUND

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for

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*Backgrounds
are important*

The background
might be the whole
reason to make
the photo



A Sense of Place



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A new portrait background



Construct a digital background

- ▣ 1 - File/New/Blank file: set to inches, 10x10, Resolution 300, RGB, and Transparent
- ▣ 2 - Add a gradient:
 - Layer/New Fill Layer/Gradient, Gradient diagonal B/W icon; Style: Radial, check Reverse, OK
 - Fade this layer's Opacity to ~20%
- ▣ 3 - Add a pattern:
 - Layer/New Fill Layer/Pattern, choose a fine pattern (Dirt), set its Scale high (~500%), OK; fade Opacity to ~15%
- ▣ 4 – Add a color: Layer/New Fill Layer/Solid Color
Click on the color you like, OK (can change it later)

Bring in your subject image

- ▣ Open the subject image and select subject
 - Use Magic Wand (W) or other selection tool to isolate the subject from its original background
- ▣ Copy this selection (Edit/Copy, or Ctl-C)
- ▣ Return to your background image
 - In Elements, click on the bottom “Photo Bin”, dbl-clk
- ▣ Paste your selection (Edit/Paste, or Ctl-V)
- ▣ Click on the Move tool (V) check Show Bounding Box, and drag corner handles to fit
 - You may have to zoom out to see the handles

Adjust the subject position

- ▣ Use Move tool, check Show Bounding Box and drag corner handles to fit the background edge
- ▣ Drag subject image to center the light spot behind the subject;
- ▣ Click Enter to commit the change
- ▣ Crop the overall image to your final size
- ▣ Merge the layers – Ctl-Shft-E
- ▣ Save as a PSD file to return for adjustments

Finish Up

- ▣ To tone down the background, add a Levels layer (Layer/Adjustment Layer/Levels) and:
 - squeeze the Output points inward for more contrast, or move the mid-tone slider for just lighter/darker
- ▣ To reopen any adjustment, double-click its layer thumbnail icon
- ▣ Optional: return to color layer and:
 - move Hue slider on the Color Picker, or
 - make a new Solid Color layer with a different color, etc. then turn on/off to see what's best

*A new background can liven
up a dull photo*

- ▣ Thanks for watching – have fun !!
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