

## Class 1 & 2: Layer Masks

- **Layer Basics**
- **Layer Mask**
- **Adjustment Layer**

1. At this point you should be comfortable with the idea of a layer, how to create one and some basics things you can do with them. Watch the video that reviews layer basics and practice the project.

2. Watch video showing how to create and use a **Layer Mask** – then try to project.

A **Layer Mask** (in Photoshop Elements) uses the **Adjustment Layer** option to build the masks.

**Layer Masks** – prevents sections of a layer, or an entire layer, from being visible. Use the mask to show or hide sections of an image or an effect. When the layer mask (right thumbnail) attached to an adjustment layer is completely **white**, the adjustment effect is applied to all underlying layers. If you don't want to apply the effect to certain portions of the underlying layers, paint the corresponding area of the mask with black. When attached to a fill layer, the mask defines the filled-in area in the fill layer.

### DVD demo notes:

Open two photos – actually already the same size

Shift-drag one image onto the other (creates a copy exactly positioned – due to both images being the same size)

Close – without saving any changes – single layer image.

SaveAs new 2-layer image with a new name.

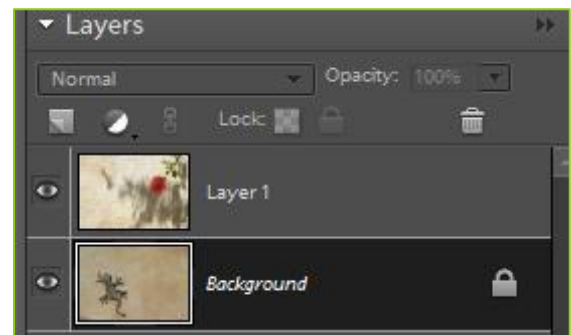
Good advice: always name your layers with meaningful names – not just layer 1 and layer 2.

No direct way to add layer mask in Elements (a basic option in full Photoshop program.)

### Work Around:

1. Select bottom image (lizard.)
2. In the Layer palette, directly above the top layer image is a small black & white circle:

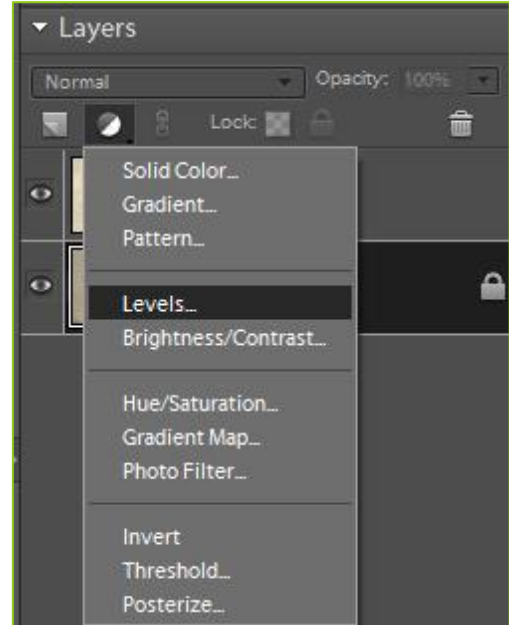
**The Create Adjustment Layer icon.**



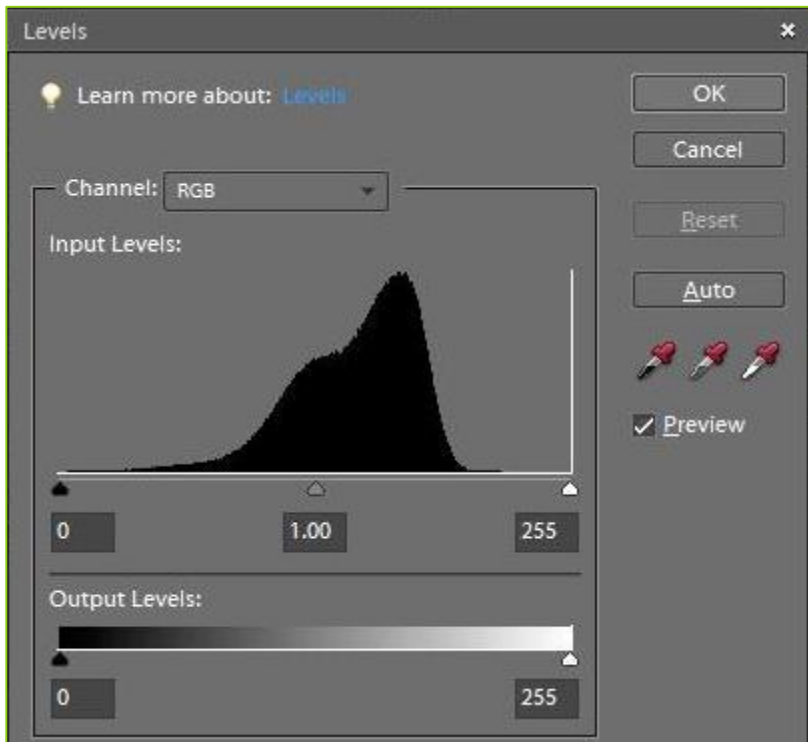
Step 1 - Select bottom image

Hold down on this icon for a drop down menu and select Levels.

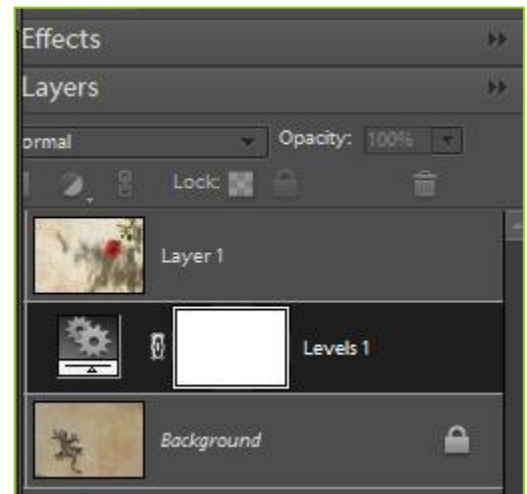
3. In the Levels dialog box, do not make any changes. Simply select the OK button. You just want the adjustment layer masks to work with.
4. The newly created adjustment layer should now be between the two layers.



Step 2: Select Create Adjustment Layer Icon and hold down to select Levels option.



Step 3: Levels Box – make no changes here, simply select OK



Step 4: New Adjustment Layer between lizard and plant

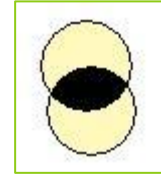
5. Clip the newly created **Adjustment Layer** to the top image:

Move the mouse over the line between the **Adjustment Layer** and the **top layer**.

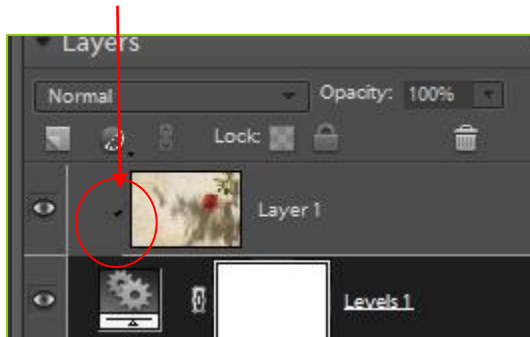
Hold down the **Alt** key until the cursor turns into a **Double Circle** image.

Left-click the mouse on the **Double Circle**.

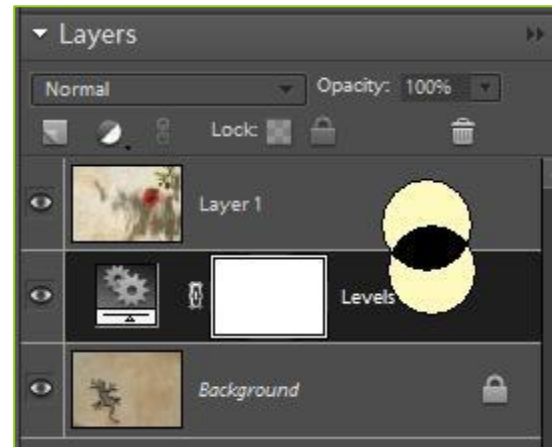
You should see a small downward triangle now on the left of the thumbnail of the top image in the Layer palette.



Step 5a: Double Circle Icon



Step 5c: Downward point triangle indicating Adjustment Masks Layer is clipped to this layer



Step 5b: Hold down Alt Key over line between Adjustment Masks Layer and Top layer

On the Adjustment Layer are two icons. The one on the left is the Layer Thumbnail ( looks like gears) and on the right is a white rectangle – this is the Layer Mask Thumbnail. As yet there is no mask, so you have nothing to view.

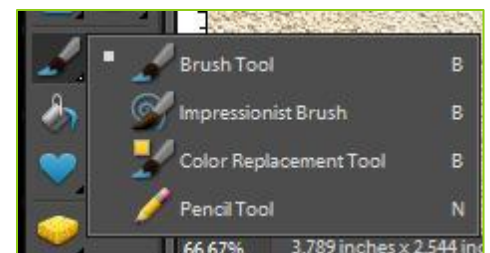


Adjustment Layer Icons: Left for Layer Thumbnail, Right for Layer Mask thumbnail; Image on left has not mask yet created, image on right shows mask (in black) that has been created on layer

### Creating the Mask

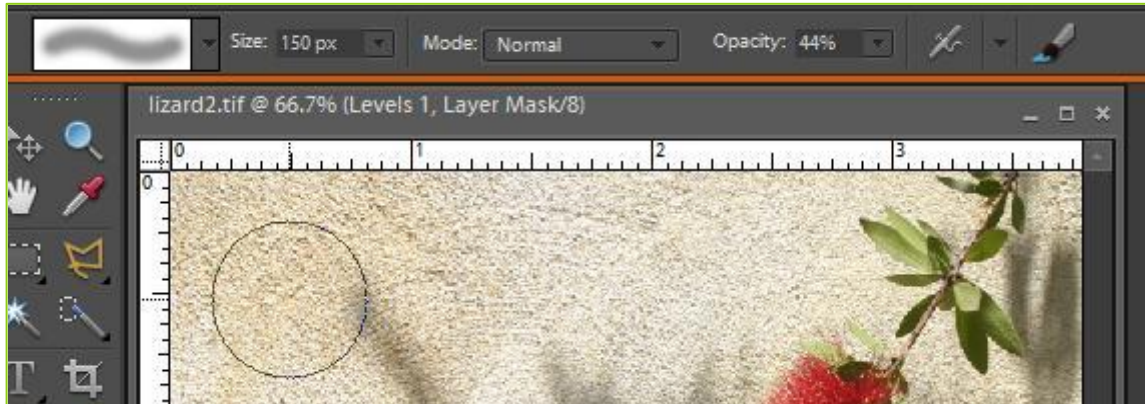
Select the white **Layer Mask Thumbnail** (click directly on it.)

In the toolbar, find the **Paint Brush** and select it.



Step 5: Select Paint Brush Tool

Make the brush a size that you can work with – not too small or too large. You can change the size in the tool options bar along the top. Here it is 150 pixels large.



Notice that at the moment the Opacity is set to 44%. You will need to make sure your opacity is set to 100%.

You can also increase and decrease the pixel size on the fly by selecting the bracket keys as you work. Larger= ]; Smaller= [.

Now draw directly on your image – you should see the mask shape (in black) appear on the Layer Mask Thumbnail.

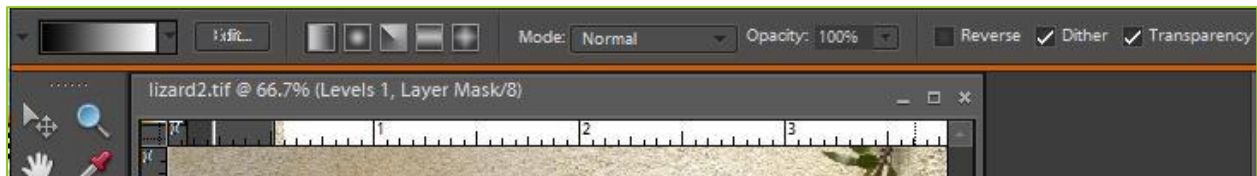
Using a Gradient

Select Gradient Tool

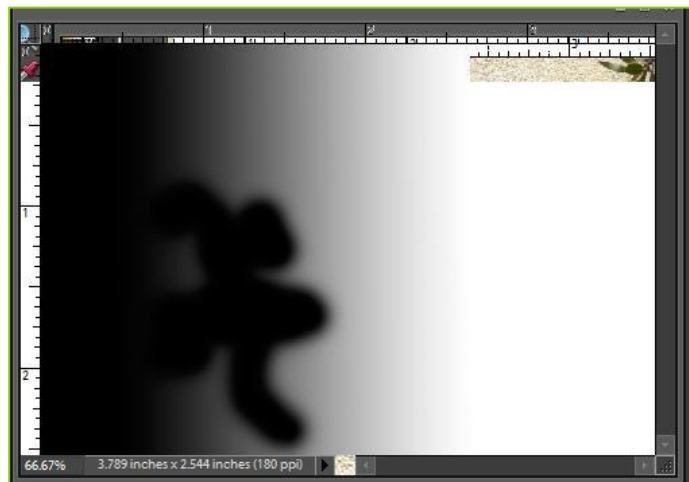
Choose a gradient from Black to White.



Draw a line from left to right across your image – the gradient will allow transparency where it is black.



To see that mask: Alt-click on the Layer Mask Thumbnail. This is an On/Off toggle so repeating this step will turn the mask off.



Notes from Adobe Help:

From web:

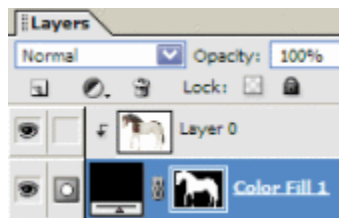
[http://help.adobe.com/en\\_US/PhotoshopElements/7.0\\_Win/WSae2ea3b149doc3591ae939f103860b3d59-7f88.html](http://help.adobe.com/en_US/PhotoshopElements/7.0_Win/WSae2ea3b149doc3591ae939f103860b3d59-7f88.html)

1. In Editor, select the adjustment or fill layer in the Layer palette.
2. Select the Paintbrush tool.
3. Viewing the Mask:
  - To view only the mask: Alt-click the Layer Mask's thumbnail (right one)
  - Alt-click the thumbnail again to redisplay the other layers.
  - To view the mask in red masking color (Rubylith) Alt+Shift and click the Layer Mask;s thumbnail(right one). Hold down Alt\_Shift and click the thumbnail again to turn the red display off.
  - To Constrain editing to part of the mask, select the corresponding pixels.
4. Edit the layer mask:
  - To remove areas of the adjustment effect or fill, paint the layer mask with black.
  - To add areas to the adjustment effect or fill, paint the layer mask with white.
  - To partially remove the adjustment effect or fill so that it shows in various levels of transparency, paint the layer mask with gray. (Single-click the foreground color swatch in the toolbox to choose a gray shade from the Swatch palette) The extent to which the effect or fill is removed depends on the tones of gray you select. Darker shades result in more transparency; lighter shades in more opacity.

Note Shift-click the mask thumbnail (layer's rightmost thumbnail) in the Layer palette to turn off the mask: click the thumbnail again to turn on the mask.

Practice Problems:

<http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/pselements/qt/layermasks.htm>



1. Layer masks are one of the features in Photoshop that Adobe did not carry over to Photoshop Elements. However, it's easy to duplicate this effect by grouping your layer with an adjustment layer. Here's how:

1. If the layer you want to mask is the background, first convert it to a regular layer, by double-clicking the background layer in the layers palette. Type a name for the layer and click OK.
2. Add a solid color adjustment layer using any color as the fill.
3. Drag the color fill layer **below** the layer you want to mask. in the layer's palette, select the layer above that you want to mask, and press Ctrl-G to group it with the color fill layer. Your layers palette should look like the image shown on this page.

4. Now the mask of the color fill layer will act as a mask on the layer above.
5. Paint or fill with black on the mask to erase, white to reveal.

Project 2

<http://www.photoshopessentials.com/basics/elements/fake-layer-mask/>

Project 3:

<http://www.alibony.com/pse/020708layer-mask.html>