

# Advanced Dodging And Burning.

By Brian Clarke. 2009

## Introduction.

Experienced monochrome printers often have a wide selection of weird bits of card stuck onto the ends of wire and pieces of card, having various shaped cut outs that allow or prevent light from reaching parts of the print to balance the final exposure.

Digital printers have the same Dodge and Burn tools to hand but they appear to be seldom used, maybe the reason for this is the results are often far from being satisfactory if used over large areas of the image. Photoshop's Dodge and Burn tools are very effective over small areas of the image, but if you need to make tonal adjustments over larger areas we need to look at a different method of tonal adjustment.

The method about to be described gives you a level of control that Photoshop's Dodge and Burn tools cannot offer.

Open an **RGB** or **Monochrome** image that requires burning and dodging to achieve a well-balanced image.

Go to the **layers palette**, from the palettes fly out menu choose new layer.

The reason for taking this route rather than just clicking onto the create new layer icon is that we need to access the new layer dialogue for this method to work. When the new dialogue appears, change the mode to **overlay** then right below it, choose fill with **overlay-neutral colour (50% grey)** this is normally greyed out. Click **ok**.

This creates a new layer filled with **50% grey** above your background layer. When you fill a layer with **50% grey** and change the mode to **overlay**, Photoshop will ignore the colour. You will see a grey thumbnail in the layers palette, but the layer will appear transparent in your image window.

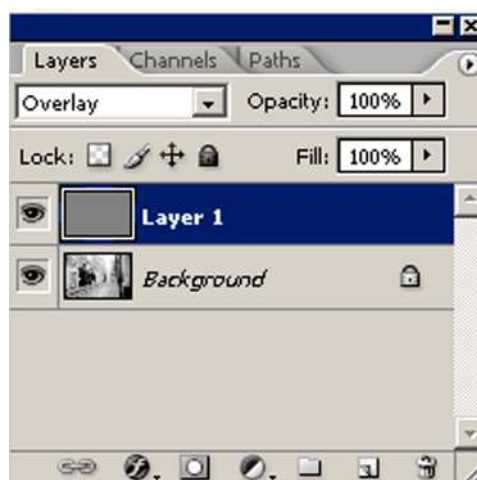
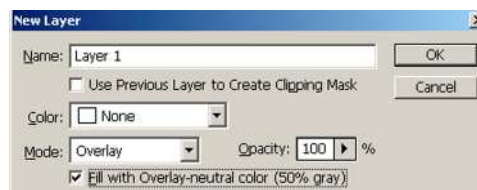
Press key **B** for the brush tool.

In the options bar click on the thumbnail to the right of the word brush and choose a medium soft edge brush (try **35** pixels for starters) next lower the brush tools opacity to approximately **30%**.

Press key **D** then **X** to set the foreground to **white**. Begin painting over areas that you want to lighten.

Press key **D** to set the foreground colour to **black**. Begin painting over areas that need darkening.

If you look in the layers palette you will see that the overlay layer has all sorts of white, grey and black strokes over it.



The start image is rather flat and uninteresting. We will begin by burning in the image generally then selectively lightening selected areas such as the sign outside of the pub. This area is rather dark and lightening the sign will make it stand out on the final print.

The amount of burning in will be allowed to tail off towards St Paul's in the distance.



Final print. Showing all of the corrections made by burning and dodging.

Try this technique on your own system at home, I think you will be pleased with the results.

It works extremely well on colour images as well as monochrome images.



**Quick tip use the [ ] keys to alter the brush size.**