How to prepare photographs

Photographs are an integral part of a well-designed website and there are many options for presenting photos in a web page. In Adobe Fireworks CS6, you can mask photos with shapes or text, adjust feathering and tones so that your images will work well with an overall design or theme of a website (**Figure 1**).

**Figure 1** Masked and tinted photos and text

Masking photographs

Masking allows you to block out part of an underlying image. For example, you can paste an elliptical shape as a mask on top of a photograph. All areas outside the ellipse disappear as if cropped, showing only the part of the picture inside the ellipse.You can use masks to create cut-out effects or transparency effects on photos. You can also create interesting blending options for masked images. *Feathering* blurs the edges of a pixel selection and helps to blend the selected area with the surrounding pixels. Feathering is useful when you copy a selection and paste it onto another background.

To mask a photograph by using the Paste As Mask command:

1. Start Fireworks and open the photograph you want to mask.

2. From the Tools panel, select a drawing tool such as the Brush, Pencil, Rectangle, or Ellipse tool and draw a masking region on the photo (**Figure 3**).

3. Position the masking region so that it overlaps the image into which you want to paste the contents.

   The selection can be either in front of or behind the objects to be masked.
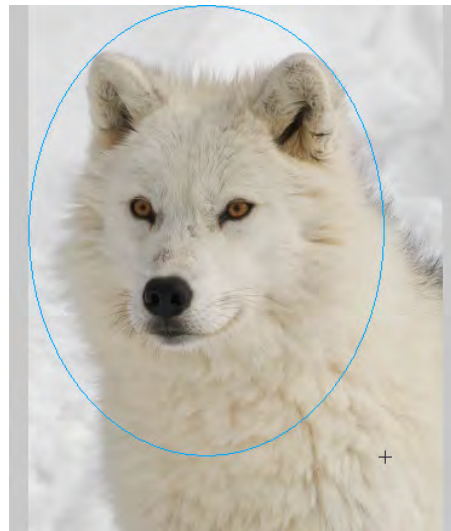
Figure 2 Masking region

4. Select Edit > Cut to cut the objects you want to use as the mask (**Figure 3**).

5. Use the Pointer tool to select the object or group you want to mask.

    If you are masking multiple objects, they must be grouped.

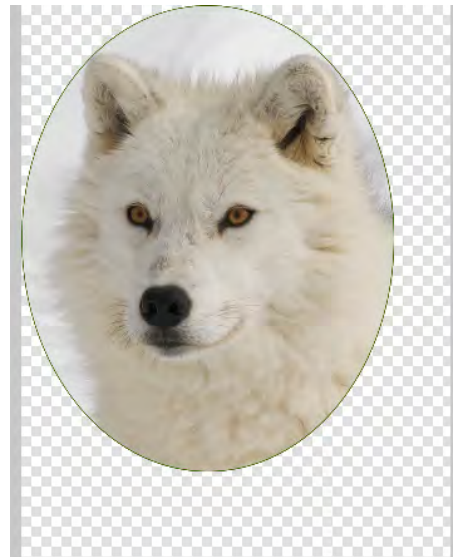6. Select Edit > Paste As Mask..

    The objects you pasted appear to be inside or clipped by the mask object (**Figure 4**).

7. Save the file as a Fireworks PNG.

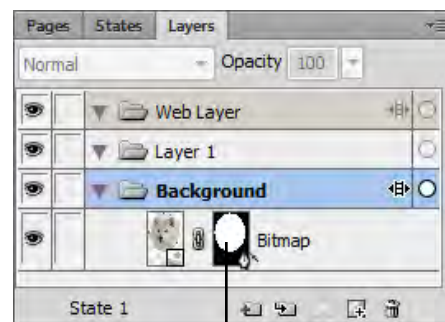   This will let you edit the mask later.

Figure 3 Select the object to cut

Figure 4 Photograph visible through mask

To feather and add effects to a mask:

1. Select the mask thumbnail in the Layers panel (**Figure 5**).

Mask thumbnail

Figure 5 Layers panel

2. In the Fill section of the Properties panel, select Feather from the Edge menu (**Figure 6**) and increase the Amount Of Feather by entering a higher number in the text box to the right of the Edge menu or using the slider.

3. Deselect the Show Stroke And Fill option.

    The edge of the mask is feathered (**Figure 7**). You can see the feathering better if you deselect the image.

4. To add a glow, select the image thumbnail (not the mask) on the Layers panel.

5. In the Property inspector, click the Add Filters (+) button and select Shadow And Glow > Drop Shadow from the pop-up menu (**Figure 8**).

    The Drop Shadow pop-up window opens (**Figure 9**).

6. Increase the Offset and Width of the glow until you can see it in the masked image.

7. Adjust the Softness, Opacity, and Color until you achieve the desired effect.

8. When you finish, click outside the window or press Enter (Windows) or Return (Mac OS) to close the window.

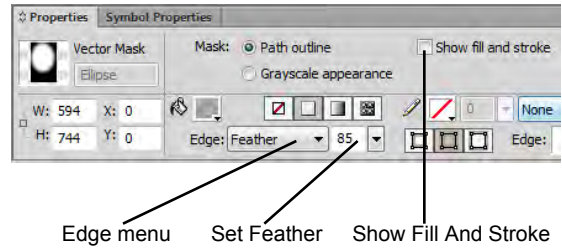9. Save the file and export the image as a JPEG or GIF file.
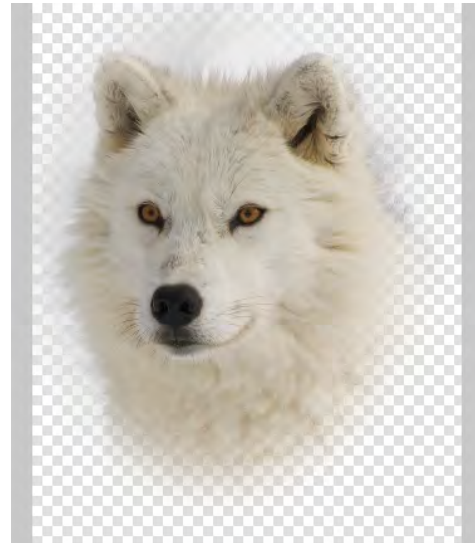

Figure 6 Properties panel

Figure 7 Feathered mask

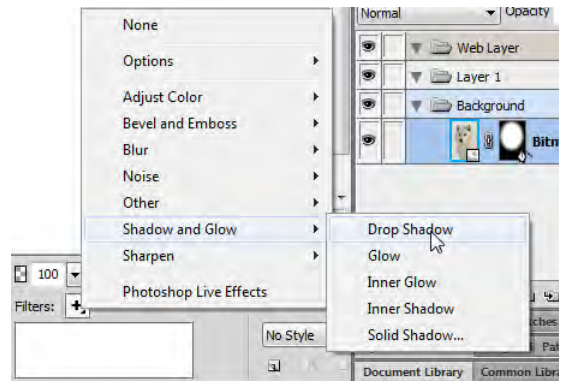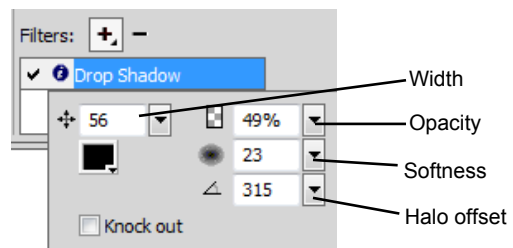**Figure 8** Add Filters pop-up menu

Figure 9 Drop Shadow pop-up window

To create a text mask:

1. Open the photo to be masked.

2. Create text to become the mask for the image (**Figure 10**).

3. Adjust the text size and font and select Edit > Cut to move the text to the Clipboard.

4. Select the photo and select Edit > Paste As Mask.

    Note: The image appears only in the area outlined by the text mask (**Figure 11**).

5. Click the image thumbnail in the Layers panel (**Figure 12**).

    A light blue handle appears in the center of the image (**Figure 13**).

    Note: If the handle falls within a light blue part of the masking region, it may be difficult to see. The pointer changes from a black arrow to a white arrow when it's over the handle; this can help you locate the handle within the masking region.

6. Drag the handle to rearrange the position of the image under the mask.

7. Export the image as a JPEG or GIF file.

Figure 10 Text to mask image

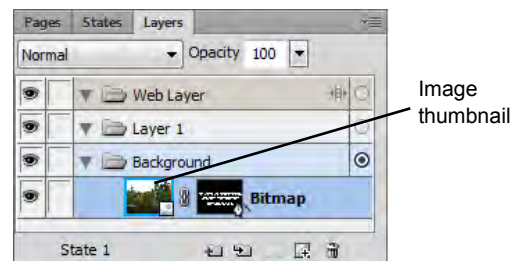**Figure 11** Photograph visible through text mask

Figure 12 Image thumbnail selected

Figure 13 Text mask with handle

Adjusting the color tone of photos

You can adjust the look of a photo by changing hue and saturation, or add interest by changing the photo to sepia tone or grayscale.

To adjust color tone:

1. Open the photo to be masked.

2. Select the bitmap image for color adjustments in the Layers panel.

3. Select Filters > Adjust Color > Hue/Saturation.

    The Hue/Saturation dialog box opens (**Figure 14**)

4. Make sure the Preview option is selected.

5. Drag the Hue, Saturation, and Lightness sliders to create the desired color feel for the photo.

    Note: As an alternative to dragging a slider, you can type a number in the associated text box.

6. To adjust the general color of the photo, select the Colorize option in the Hue/Saturation dialog box. When you are satisfied with your choices, click OK to close the dialog box.

7. To apply an antiqued look to the photo, select Commands > Creative > Convert To Sepia Tone.

8. To make the photo black and white, select Commands > Creative > Convert To Grayscale (**Figure 15**).

    The Hue/Saturation levels are adjusted to achieve a black and white image.
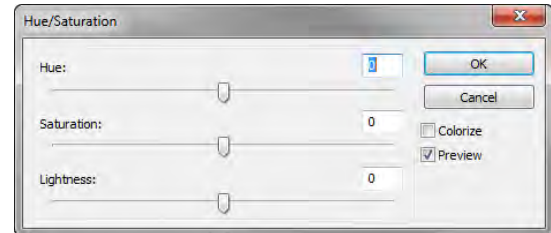
Figure 14 Hue/Saturation dialog box

Figure 15 Image converted to black and white