

Chapter 2: Fooling around with Photoshop

Layer Masking n' Blending Modes n' Opacities

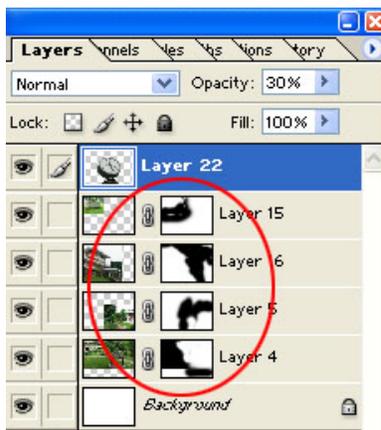
Layer masking enables us to create wonderful and nice smooth collages. Opacities and Blending Modes are functions to play with to create different layers interactions. Together, they are our best friends for collage creations.

Here's my recent collage creation:



The composition is made up of five images on five different layers.

Look at the layer palette:



The black and white layers that are linked to the individual image layers are layer masks.

How to create Layer Masks?

Layer > Add Layer Mask > Reveal All

All you have to remember about layer masks is that "Black Hides, White Reveals".

Using a airbrush and with your foreground colour as Black, paint away areas or hard edges that you will

want to blend in. Using white as foreground will enable you to reveal hidden layer portions that you will like to reveal again.

Again, this takes quite a good amount of trial and errors before you can really create a nice composition with layer masking.

All the following layers has different opacities:

- ✂ Layer 4 has Master Opacity 40%, Fill Opacity 100% in Normal Blending Mode
- ✂ Layer 5 has Master Opacity 80% and Fill Opacity 100% in Normal Blending Mode
- ✂ Layer 16 has Master Opacity 50% and Fill Opacity 100% in Normal Blending Mode
- ✂ Layer 15 has Master Opacity 50% and Fill Opacity 100% in Normal Blending Mode
- ✂ Layer 22 has Master Opacity 30% and Fill Opacity 100% in Normal Blending Mode.

These different opacities allow a certain degree of translucency in your layers for layers below to show. It creates a 若隐若现 kind of feeling that will arouse viewers' attention and interest.

Blending modes and opacities both help in layers interactions. Here's an example of the clock set into multiply mode:



The difference is relatively little but still obvious in a way that the clock is entirely rendered translucent and its colours multiplied on top of the below layers.

Here are some tutorials by **Colin Smith (PhotoshopCafe: www.photoshopcafe.com)**, please view them and study through them on your own as it would be terribly out of my scope to cover the whole details on Collages.

Background collage secrets

Part 1: BG Prep Grids, Blur and scan lines

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/backgrounds/backgrounds.htm>

Part 2: Shapes and text

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/backgrounds/backgrounds2.htm>

Part 3: blended clouds

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/backgrounds/backgrounds3.htm>

Part 4: 3D text

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/backgrounds/backgrounds4.htm>

Part 5: High Tech Shapes

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/backgrounds/backgrounds5.htm>

Part 6: Tiny Paragraph text

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/backgrounds/backgrounds6.htm>

Collaging in Photoshop

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/collage/collage.htm>

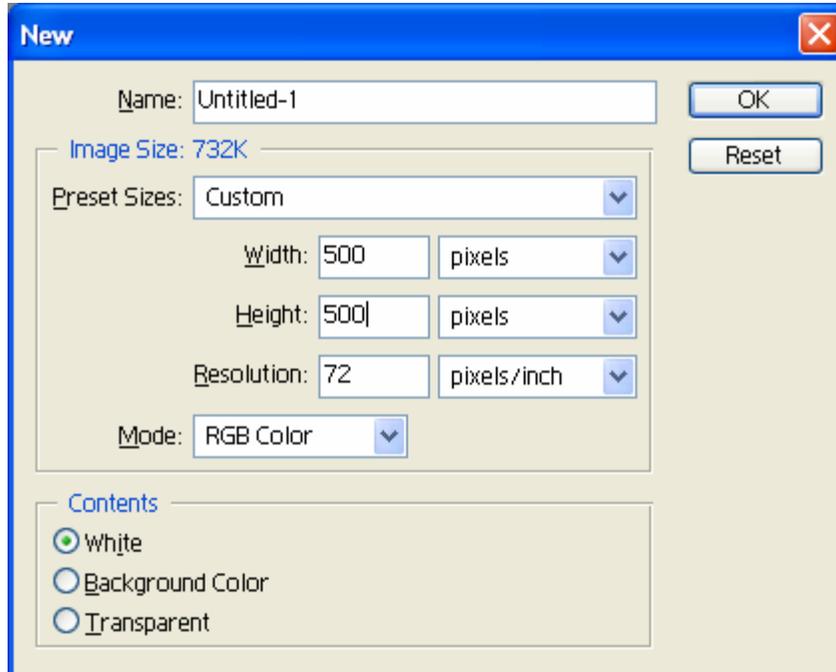
Layer mask Blends

<http://www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/blend/blend.html>

Here are two tutorials on rendering photorealistic clouds and blue space that will serve the motive of teaching you screen blending mode. Blue space is a modified tutorial from clouds. Experiment with Photoshop and you get all these great goodies and surprises. These two tutorials aims to show you how the screen blending mode works for yourself because all talk is nothing unless you see it and to introduce you to some filters.

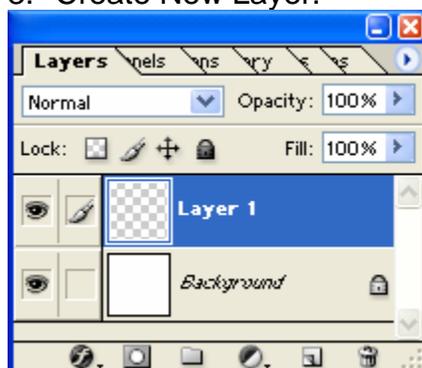
Tutorial 1: Clouds

1. Create New Document

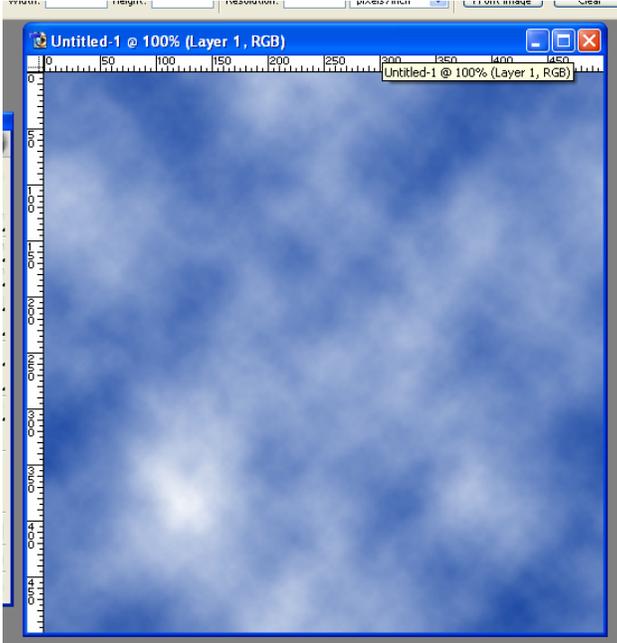


2. Set Foreground Colour to #003399 and background colour to white #FFFFFF.

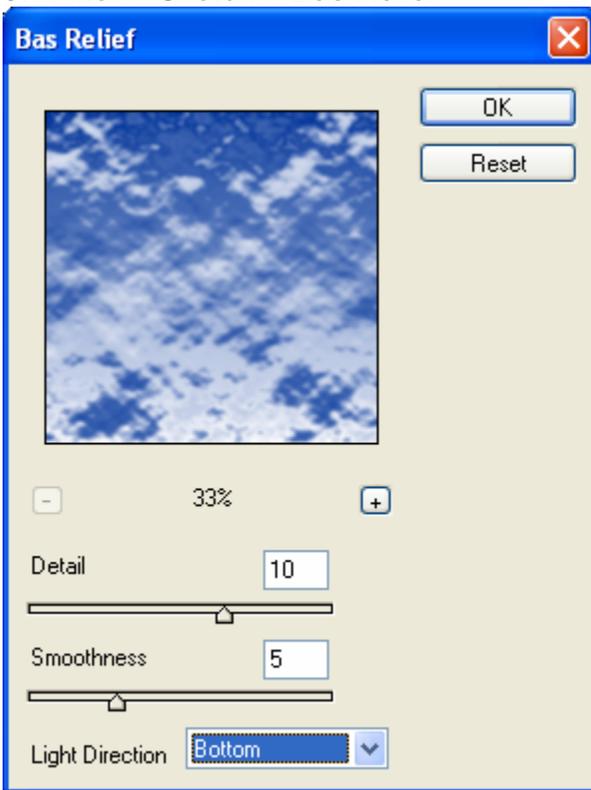
3. Create New Layer.



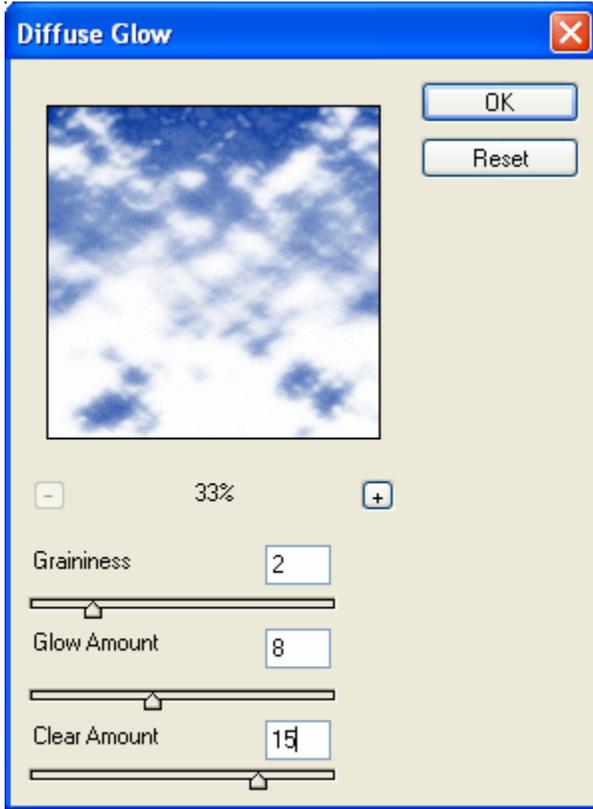
4. Filter > Render > Clouds



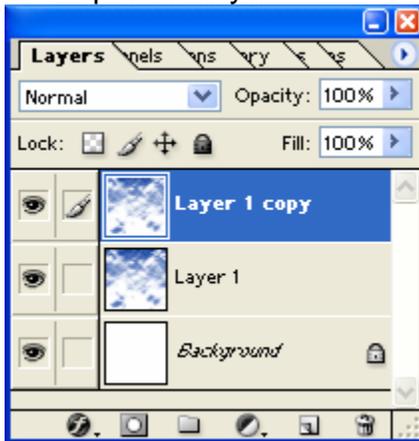
5. Filter > Sketch > Bas Relief



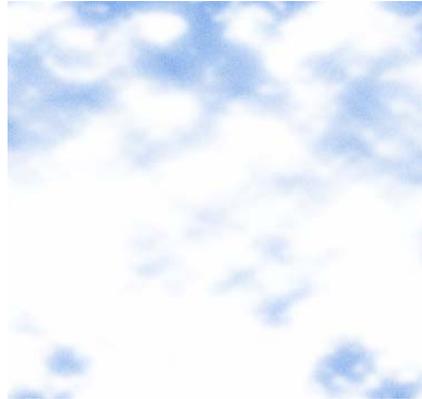
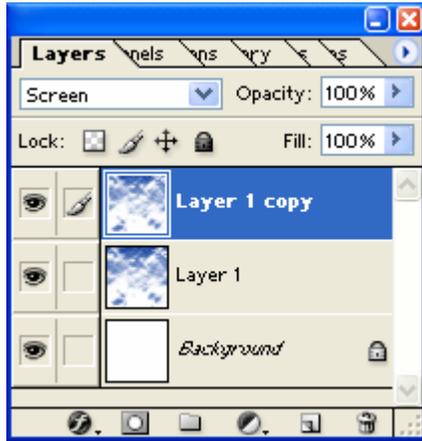
6. Filter > Distort > Diffuse Glow



6. Duplicate Layer 1.

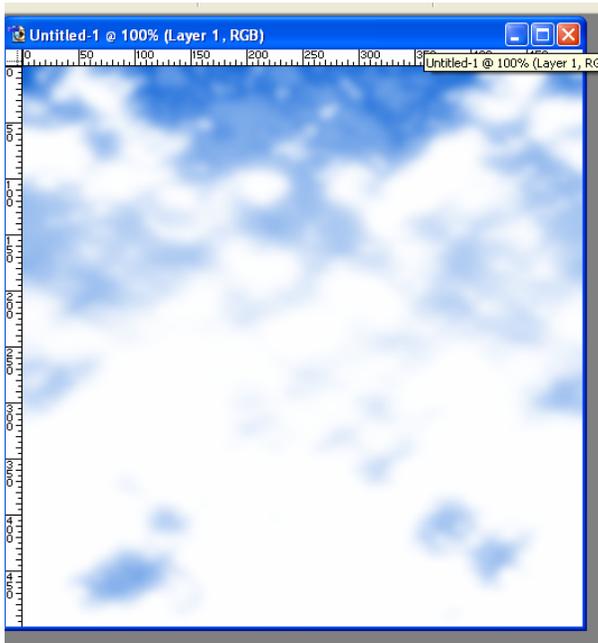


7. Turn Blend Mode of layer 1 copy to Screen. What the screen blending mode does is to show only the effects of the layer and not the colours.



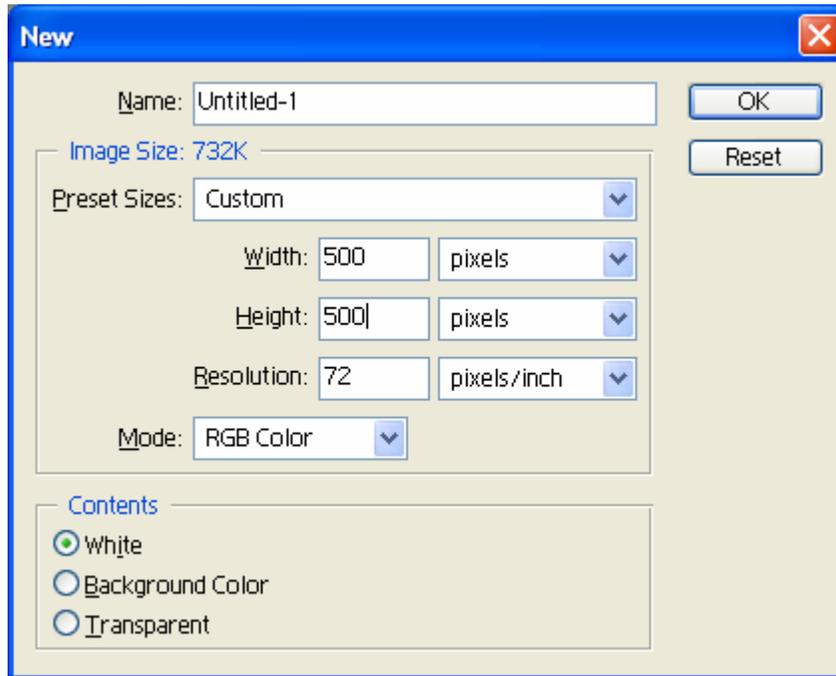
8. Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blue to soften the clouds, experiment and get your best settings.

Final Image:



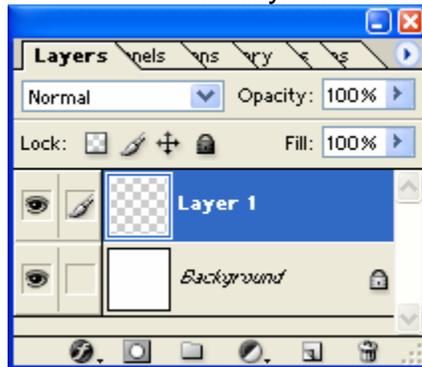
Tutorial 2: Blue Space

1. Create New Document

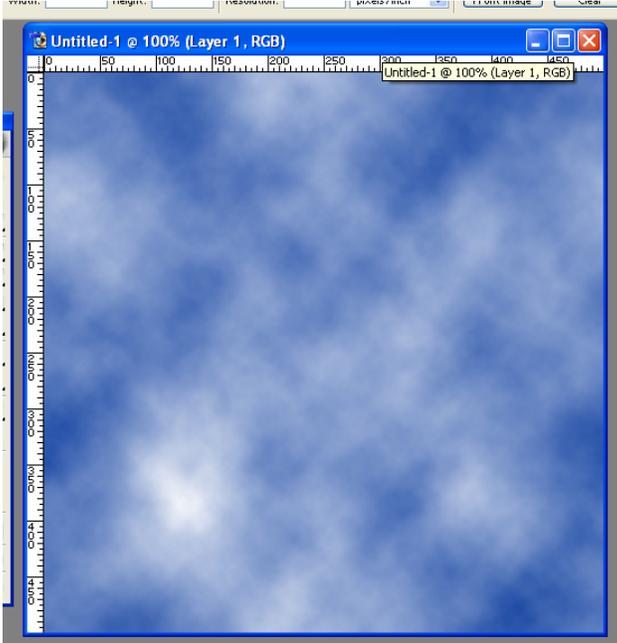


2. Set Foreground Colour to #003399 and background colour to white #FFFFFF.

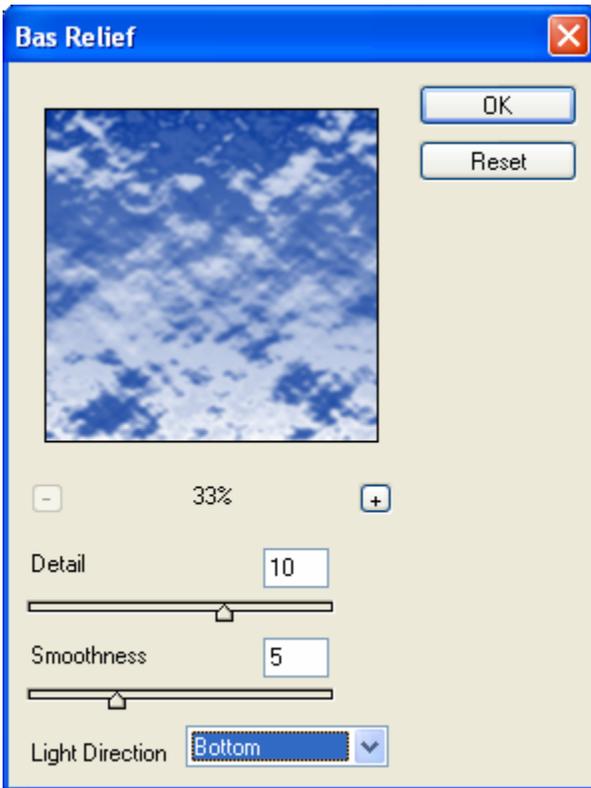
3. Create New Layer.



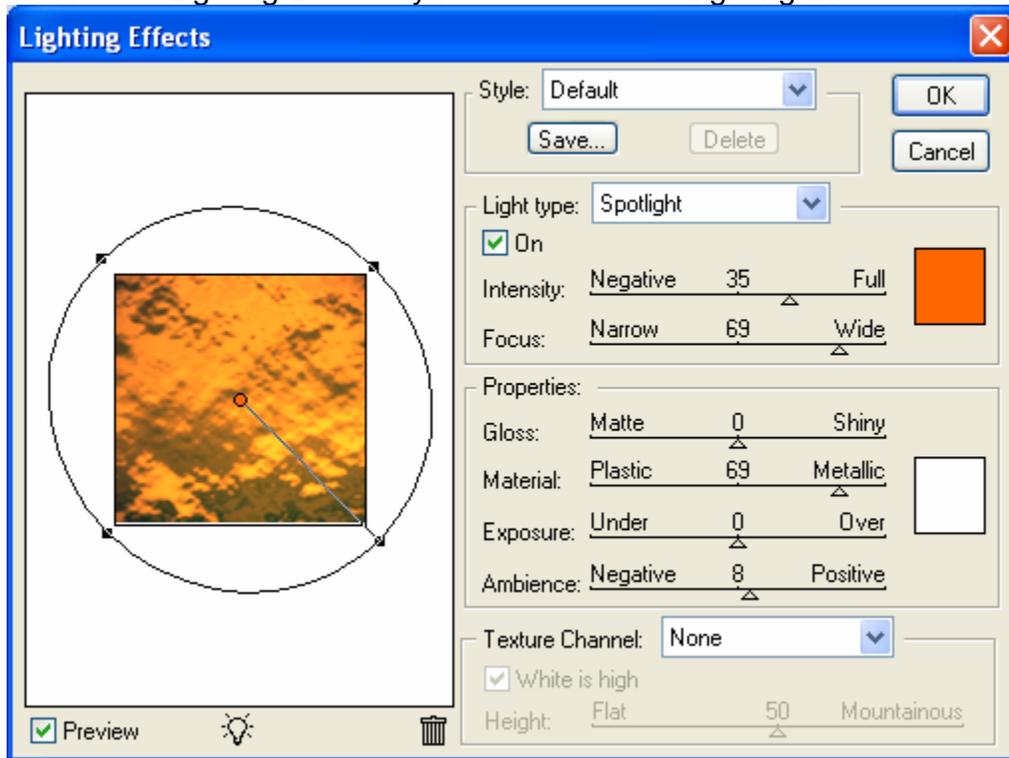
4. Filter > Render > Clouds



5. Filter > Sketch > Bas Relief

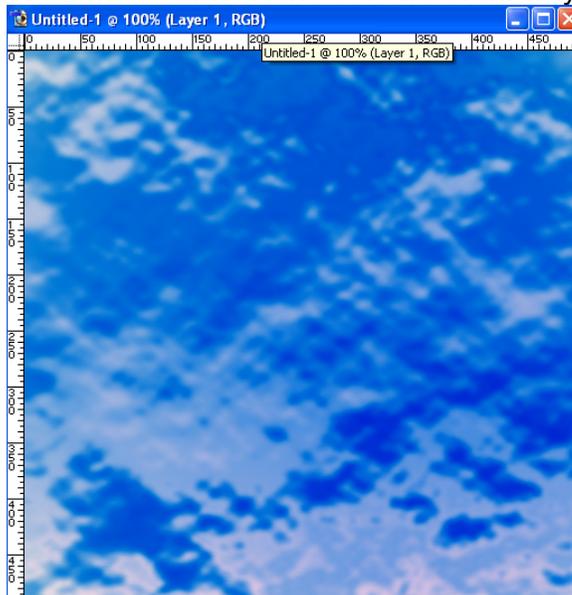


6. Render Lighting Effects by Filter > Render > Lighting Effects

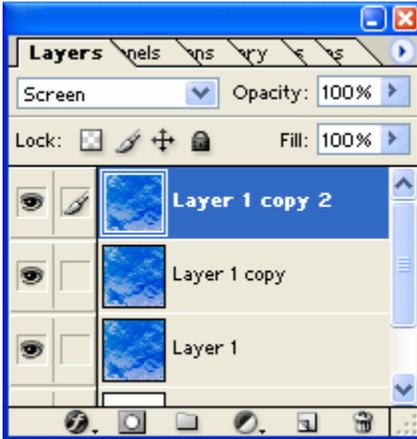


Orange Colour used here is #FF9900.

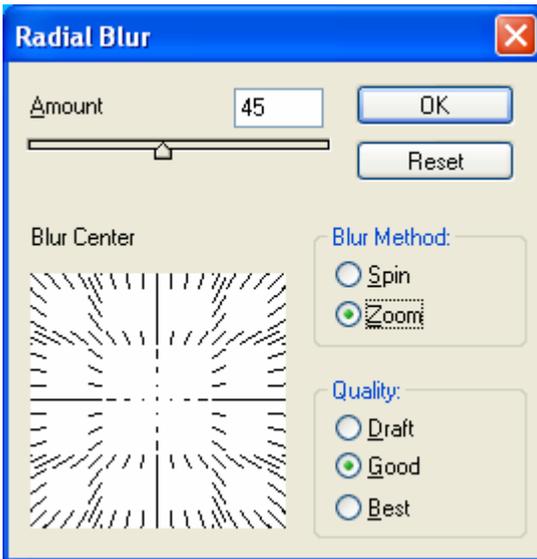
7. Ctrl – I to invert the colours of this layer. This is what you should get:



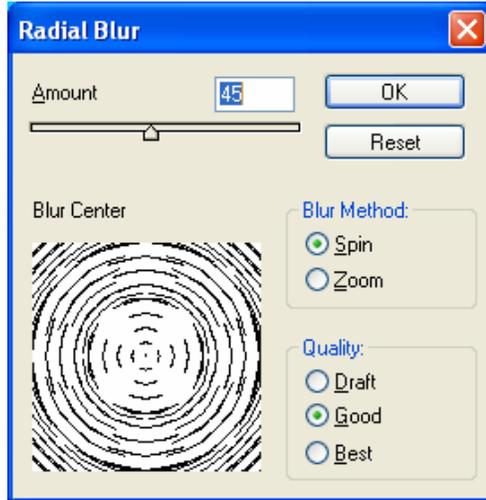
8. Duplicate this layer twice and set both the duplicate layers to screen:



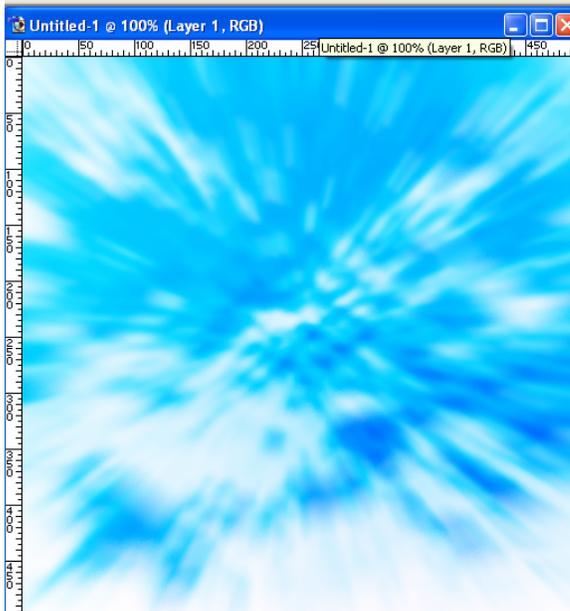
9. Apply Radial Blur to Layer 1 copy and Layer 1 copy 2:



10. Apply another radial blur to Layer 1:



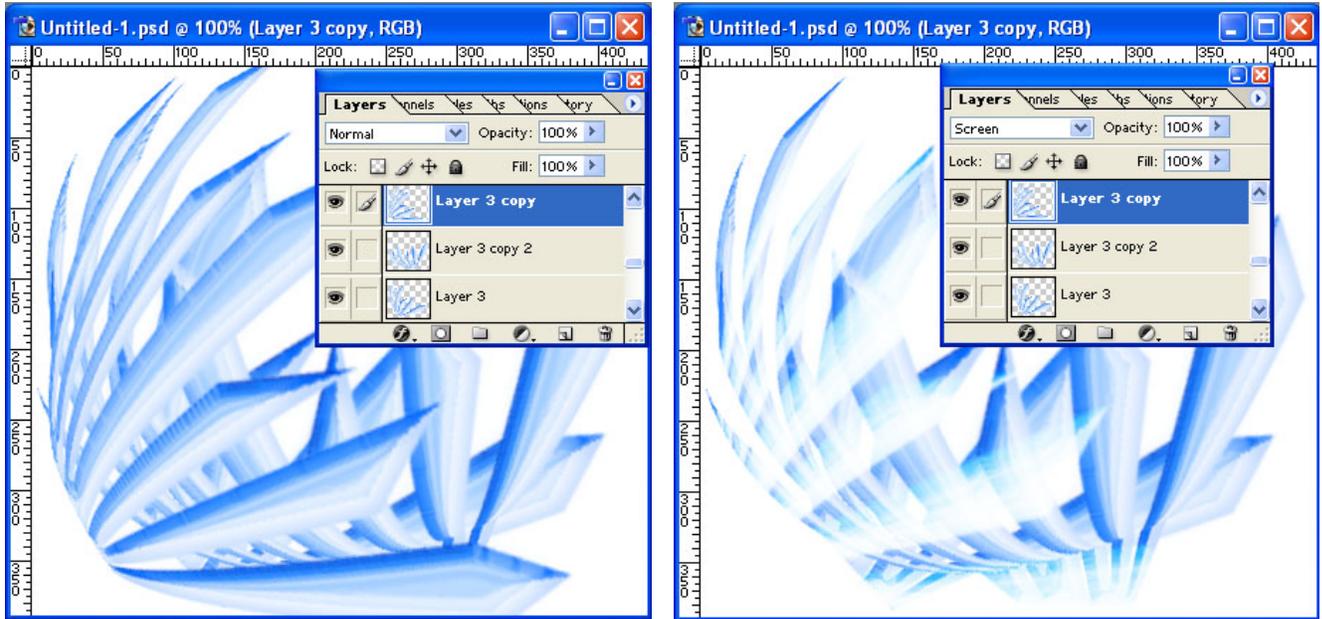
Here's your final image:



I hope that these two tutorials are clear and easy to follow, introducing you well to the screen blending modes and to certain filters e.g. Gaussian blur, radial blur, diffuse glow, clouds, lighting effects and Bas relief.

Here is a simple illustration of screen mode:

The Image on the Left has the third crystals layer in normal blending mode while the image on the right has the third crystals layer in screen blending mode.



Blending modes are fun to play around with and for experimentation. Play around with it and you may just stumble upon a nice blending option to use whenever you want to. The screen blending mode, multiply blending mode, normal blending mode and colour blending mode are the most common blending modes used.

I will give a brief illustration on the **colour blending mode** here, since I have just mentioned it and it is the first time I mentioned it.



This is the pre image without the colours.



I added two layers of gradients in the shape of the borders in the previous image.



This is the final image with the two layers of colours turned to the colour blending mode.

Next, we will be moving on to a section where there will be three tutorials for your fun and entertainment sakes. It is hoped that in the midst of having fun and being entertained, you practiced Photoshop skills and learn about filters.