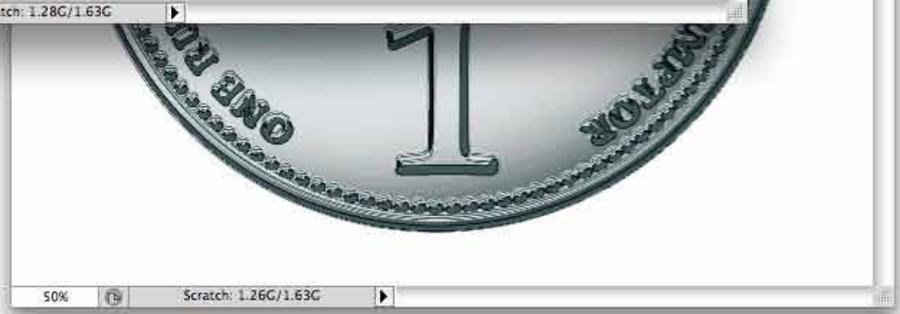




CHAPTER 1 Essential techniques



Color palette and Swatches panel.

LAYERS | PATHS | CHANNELS

Pass Through Opacity: 100%

- TimeMaster
- numbers
- second ticks
- smalticks copy 4
- smalticks
- ticks copy
- ticks
- inner bevel fx
- Effects
 - Inner Shadow
- face fx
- Effects
 - Inner Shadow
- watch base copy 4
- watch base copy 3
- Brightness/Co...
- Color Balance 1
- Curves 1
- composite invert outer
- composite 10x blur
- composite
- ring fx
- Effects
 - Bevel and Emboss
- watch base copy 5 fx

Selection tools

All Photoshop work involves making selections of one kind or another. Here's a quick primer on how to get the most out of using the tools.

The Move tool



The **Move tool** is used for selecting and moving layers around.

You can access the Move tool when any other tool is active by holding **ctrl** **⇧**.

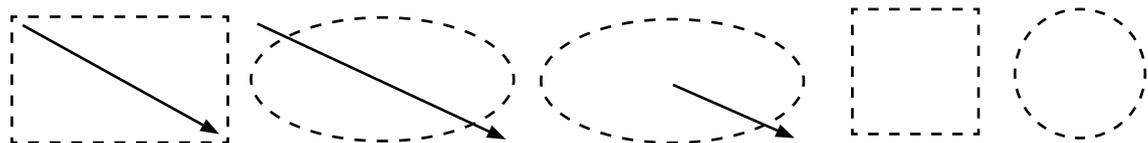
Click here to select a layer or group as you click on it. If **Auto Select** is not active, hold **ctrl** **⇧** to select a layer when you click on it.

Click to display transformation handles around each layer as it's selected.

Alignment controls, used to align two or more selected layers.

Distribute controls, used to apply equal space between three or more selected layers.

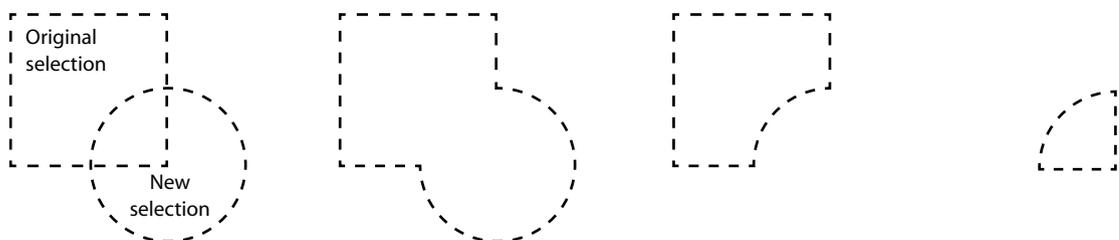
Drawing rectangles and ellipses



Both the **Rectangular Marquee** and the **Elliptical Marquee** tools draw from corner to corner. This can be tricky when drawing ellipses, as they have no corners; hold **alt** **⇧** after you start to drag to draw from the center out instead.

Hold **Shift** after you start to drag to constrain a rectangle to a square, and an ellipse to a circle.

Modifying selections



Hold **Shift** before you make a second selection to add the new one to the old.

Hold **alt** **⇧** before you make a second selection to subtract the new one from the old.

Hold **alt** **⇧** **⇧** to produce an intersection of the new and old selections.

Feathering selections



Use **Select > Modify > Feather** to soften a selection. The original selection, filled with gray, is shown on the left; the feathered selection is shown right.

Spacebar

Hold the **Spacebar** while you're drawing a selection to move it around. When you release the Spacebar, you can continue to reshape the selection. This makes it much easier to fit selections such as ellipses.

Painting with the brush

We'll use the Brush tool to paint a lot of the objects in this book, so the essentials are shown here.

QuickMask is a great way to make selections by painting them, rather than tracing them. But the default behavior is an awkward way of working; see below for how to change this so that selected areas are highlighted in red.

The Brush tool

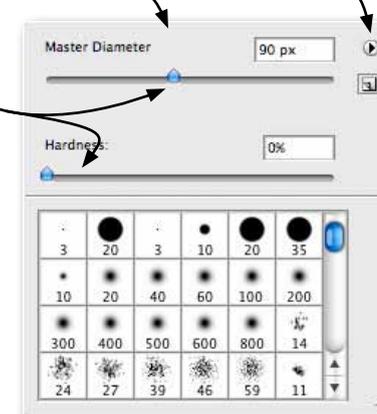
Right click (**ctrl** click) with the **Brush tool** for the Brushes panel

Click the arrow...

...to set how the thumbnails are displayed

Drag to change the size and hardness of the current brush...

...or use **]** and **[** to make the brush smaller and larger, and **Shift** **[** and **Shift** **]** to make the brush harder and softer.



Hard-edged brush



Soft-edged brush

Photoshop comes with a wide variety of preset brushes. Choose a brush library and manage your brushes here.

New Brush Preset...

Rename Brush...
Delete Brush

Text Only

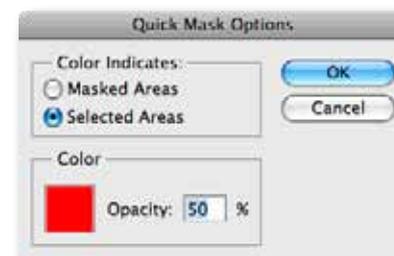
✓ Small Thumbnail
Large Thumbnail
Small List
Large List
Stroke Thumbnail

Preset Manager...

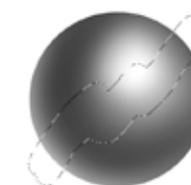
Reset Brushes...
Load Brushes...
Save Brushes...
Replace Brushes...

Assorted Brushes
Basic Brushes
Calligraphic Brushes
Drop Shadow Brushes
Dry Media Brushes
Faux Finish Brushes
Natural Brushes 2
Natural Brushes
Special Effect Brushes
Square Brushes
Thick Heavy Brushes
Wet Media Brushes

QuickMask



Enter **QuickMask** by pressing **Q**. Painting in QuickMask (left) produces a corresponding selection (right) when we leave QuickMask by pressing **Q** again.



We can use a soft-edged **Brush** to paint feathered selections. The hard and soft strokes in QuickMask (left) produce these results (right) when we leave QuickMask and delete the selection.



QuickMask is used to paint selections. The default behavior is to show Masked Areas, so everything *outside* the selection is highlighted.

A better way to work is with Selected Areas highlighted. To change this, double-click the QuickMask icon at the bottom of the **Tool Panel**, and click the button to change the behavior.

Working with layers

We'll create a lot of layers in the course of this book. Locking transparency, the basics of Free Transform, and see how to load up a layer's pixel area as a selection. On the facing page we'll show how to use Layer Masks, Adjustment Layers and Clipping Masks.

Locking transparency



Normally, when we paint on a layer, we can paint freely within the canvas area.

If we lock the **Transparency** of the layer, we can't paint outside the layer bounds.



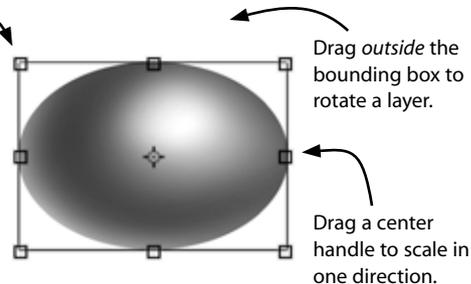
To lock the Transparency, click the first icon in the **Lock** section at the top of the **Layers Panel**.

The other icons lock the layer so it can't be painted on at all; so it can't be moved; and so it can't be modified in any way.

Free Transform

Use **Free Transform** to change a layer's size, shape or rotation. Use **⌘ T** (**ctrl T**) to enter Free Transform mode, then press **Enter** to apply the transformation.

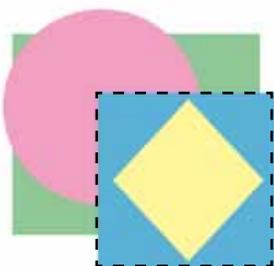
Drag a corner handle to scale a layer from the opposite corner; hold **⌥ alt** to scale from the center.



Drag *outside* the bounding box to rotate a layer.

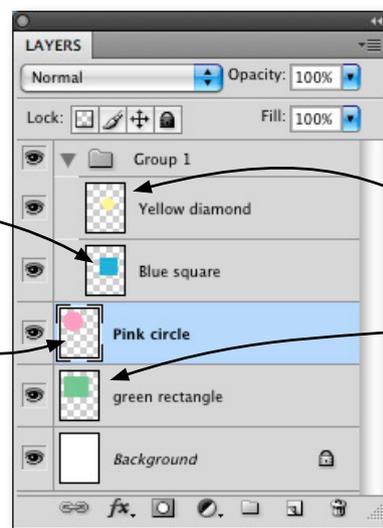
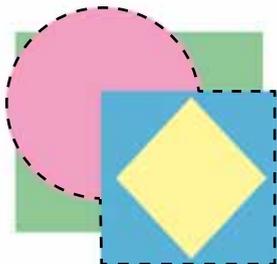
Drag a center handle to scale in one direction.

Loading layers as selections



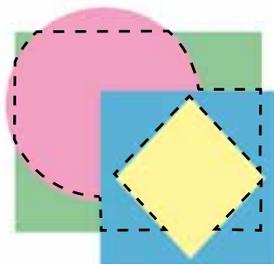
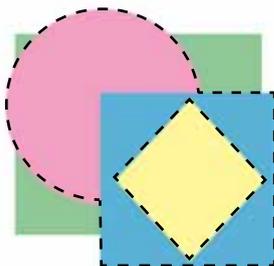
1 Hold **⌘ ctrl** and click a layer's thumbnail to load it as a selection.

2 Hold **⌘ Shift ctrl Shift** and click to add a layer to the selection.



3 Hold **⌘ ⌥ ctrl alt** and click to subtract a layer from the selection.

4 Hold **⌘ ⌥ Shift ctrl alt Shift** and click to intersect selections.



Layer Masks

Using an **Eraser tool** is an irrevocable step: once part of a layer has been erased, it's gone forever.

Using a **Layer Mask** is a better option: it's created by clicking the icon at the bottom of the **Layers Panel**, or choose **Layer > Layer Mask > Reveal All**.

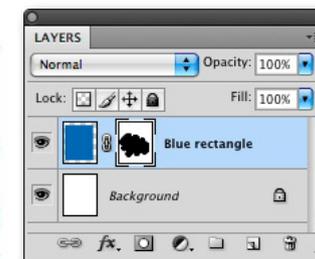
Painting in black on the Layer Mask hides the layer, and painting in white reveals it again. We can paint in gray, by lowering the opacity of our brush, for partial transparency.



1 This is our original layer, a simple blue rectangle.



2 When we paint in black on the layer mask, we hide the layer.



3 This is the **Layers Panel**, showing the mask next to the layer. The black area is the active mask, which hides the layer. We can disable a **Layer Mask** temporarily by holding **Shift** and clicking on its thumbnail.

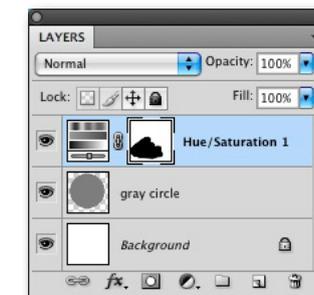


4 If we paint with gray instead of black, we can partially hide the layer.

Adjustment Layers



Adjustment Layers let us apply contrast, color and other adjustments to layers that are editable, and can even be turned off entirely. The advantage of Adjustment Layers is that we can apply changes that we can later adapt easily; we're also able to copy adjustments between layers. Adjustment Layers are selected from the pop-up menu at the bottom of the **Layers panel**.

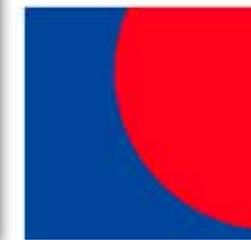


All Adjustment Layers come with a **Mask**, so we can paint out areas where we don't want the adjustment applied.



Clipping Masks

Clipping Masks are layers that constrict the visibility of the layer above. Here, the Red circle layer uses the Blue square layer as a clipping mask, so it's only visible where the two layers overlap. Multiple layers can be stacked up this way, using the bottom one as a clipping mask.

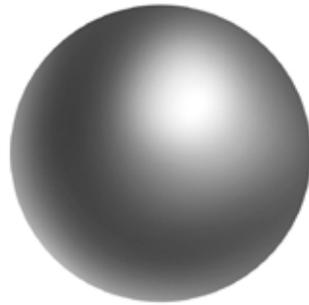


To make a Clipping Mask, select the uppermost layer and choose **Layer > Create Clipping Mask**. There are two alternative methods: use the shortcut **⌘ alt G** (**⌥ alt G**), or hold **alt** and click between the two layers in the **Layers panel**.

The Curves adjustment

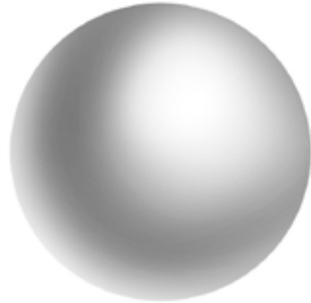
We'll use Curves many times to adjust a layer's brightness, contrast and color. It's a complex dialog, so here's a quick tour of its main features. Like all Adjustments, Curves can be applied directly or as an Adjustment Layer (see page 7).

The original object

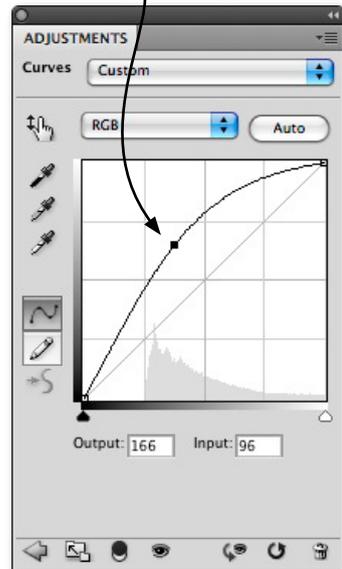


- This is the original object that we'll be applying **Curves** to. Open the **Curves** dialog using **Image > Adjustments > Curves**, or use the keyboard shortcut **⌘ M** / **ctrl M**. The dialog shown here is the **Curves Adjustment Layer** (see previous page), but the graph works the same in the main adjustment as well.

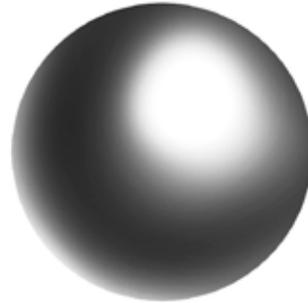
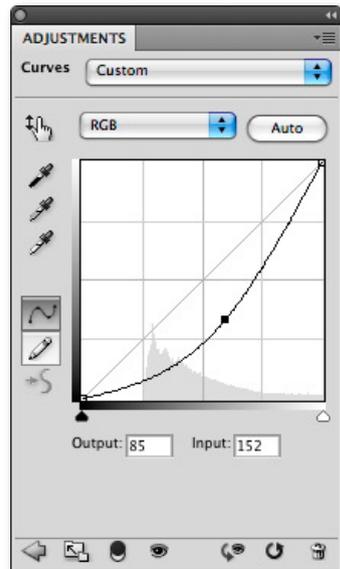
Basic Curves operation



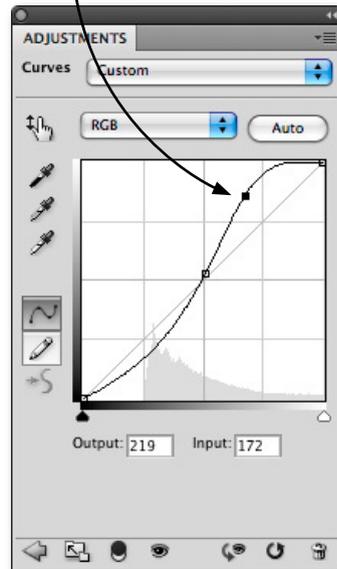
- The graph starts as a straight line. Click in the middle of the line to make a new **anchor point**, and drag upwards to brighten the midtones of the layer.



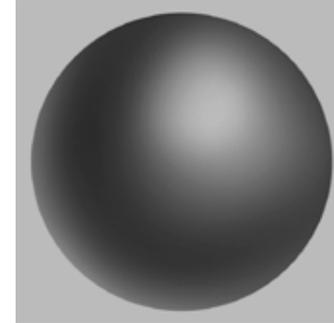
- Drag down to darken the midtones. The Curves adjustment can be quite dramatic: usually, only a small drag is needed to create the desired effect.



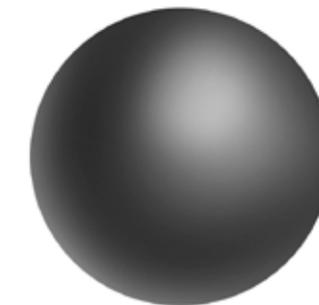
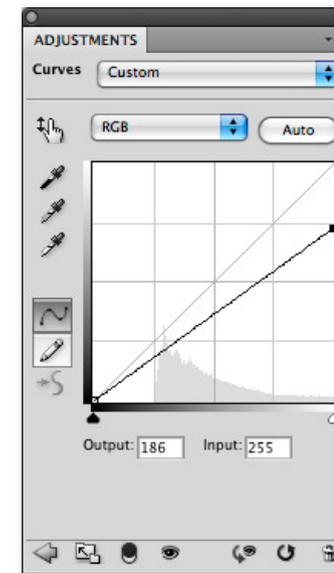
- To increase contrast, first click in the center of the graph to 'pin' the mid point, then drag up on a higher point in the curve.



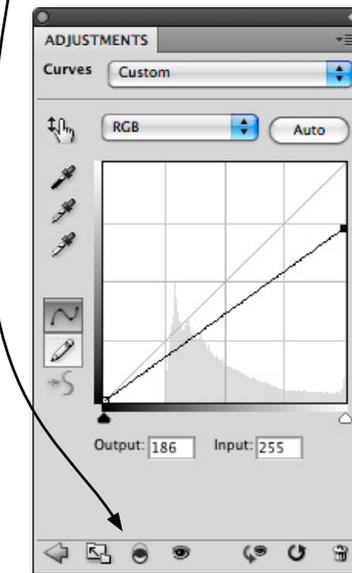
Further adjustments



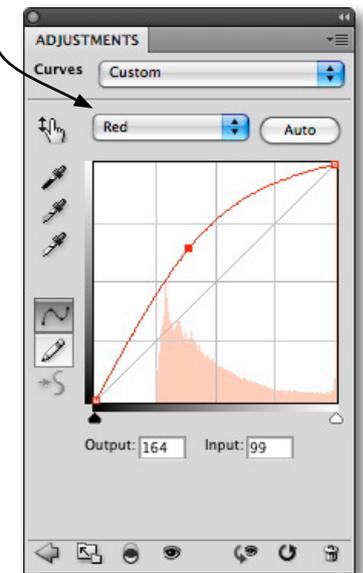
- Dragging the top right **anchor point** down reduces the brightness. Because this is an **Adjustment Layer**, it affects the whole artwork beneath the current layer.



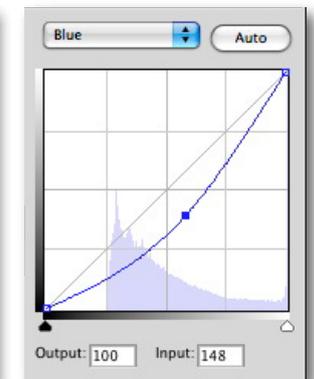
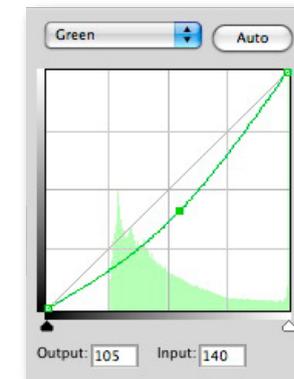
- We can make an **Adjustment Layer** operate just on the underlying layer by clicking the **Clipping Mask** icon. Now the background is not affected.



- We can adjust the color using Curves, as well. Choosing the **Red Channel** allows us to brighten the red content of the layer, so adding a red tint to it.



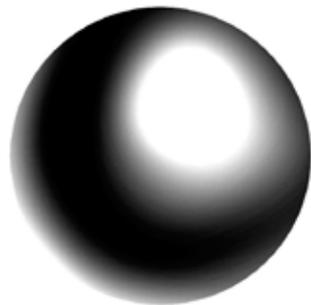
- Adding red is one way to add color. But it tends to be rather washed out with this method. An alternative approach is to add red by reducing the amount of **Green** and **Blue**. We can do this by dragging down on the curve for both these Channels.



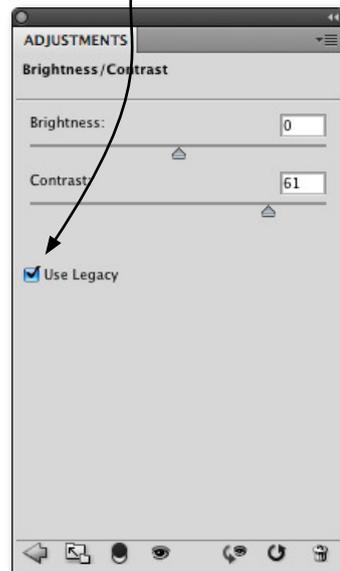
More image adjustments

Although we can perform a wide range of adjustments with just Curves (see previous pages), there are other adjustment methods that can be quicker and easier to use for a simple effect.

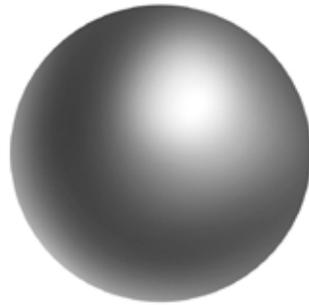
Contrast



2 The **Brightness/Contrast** adjustment is a quick way to fix the contrast of a layer. Check the **Use Legacy** button for a less restrained version of the effect.

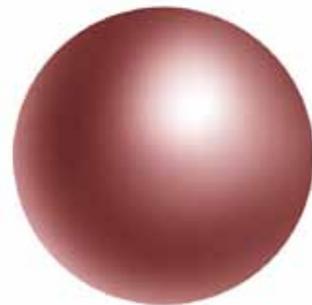


The original object

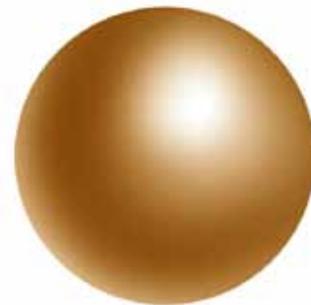
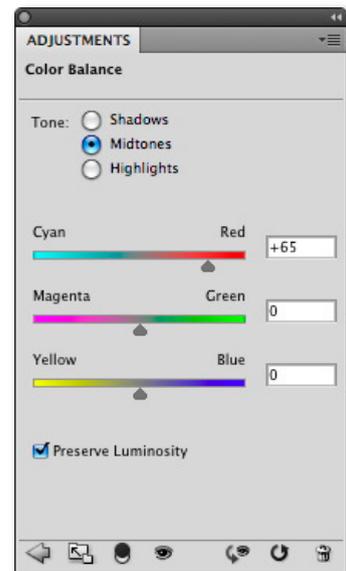


1 This is the original object to which we'll be applying all the adjustments on these pages. All the adjustments can be accessed using **Image > Adjustment** and then the name of the specific adjustment. The dialogs shown here are their **Adjustment Layer**⁷ equivalents, because the dialogs are neater and take up less space on the page.

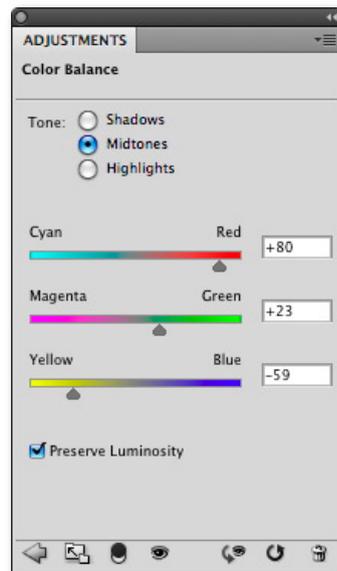
Color Balance



3 Use **Color Balance** to add color to a grayscale layer, or to adjust a layer's color. Drag the sliders to the right or left to move the hue towards the color indicated.



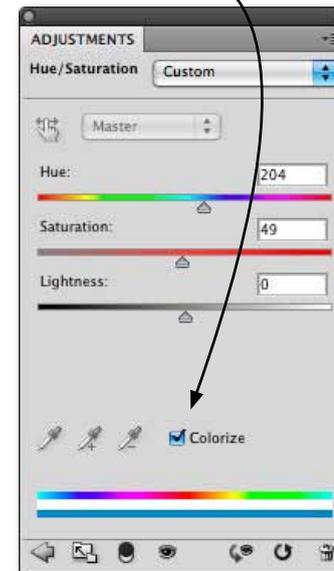
4 We can vary the color considerably by adjusting two or more sliders. Here, we create a simple matte gold effect.



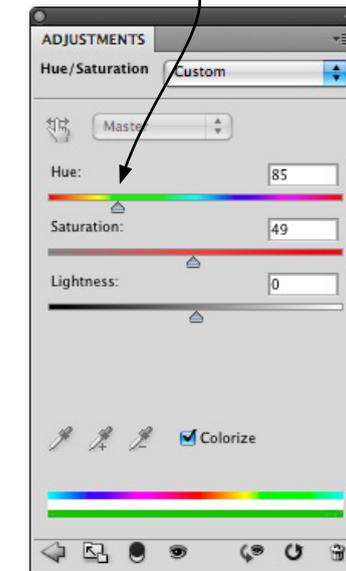
Hue/Saturation



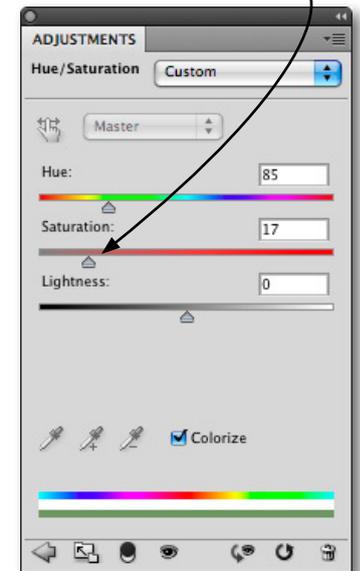
5 The **Hue/Saturation** adjustment adjusts an object's overall color. Check the **Colorize** box to add color to a grayscale object or layer.



6 Dragging the **Hue** slider lets us adjust the overall color of the object. Moving it left and right moves us through the visible spectrum.

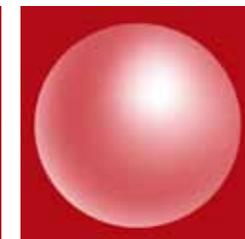
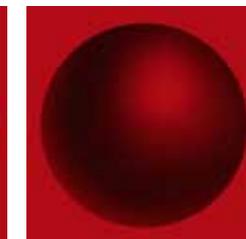
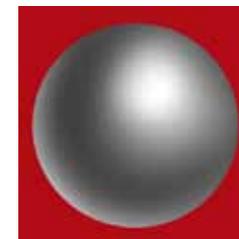


7 Dragging the **Saturation** slider allows us to adjust the strength of the color. Normally, we'll want to use a low saturation setting for a more realistic appearance.



Layer modes

1 We can change a layer's **Mode** to alter the way we see through it to the layers beneath. Use the pop-up menu at the top of the **Layers Panel** to change the mode. The default is **Normal**, shown here. We'll look at the main three of the other layer modes here, but check out the rest for yourself.



2 In **Multiply** mode, the sphere darkens the layer beneath; the result is a darker than both layers.

3 **Screen** mode is the opposite of **Multiply**, producing a result brighter than both.

4 **Hard Light** is a mode which retains highlights and shadows, while hiding the mid tones.