

PaintShop Tutorials

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Custom Masks

PSPX₂ and PSPX₃

Level : Beginner/Intermediate

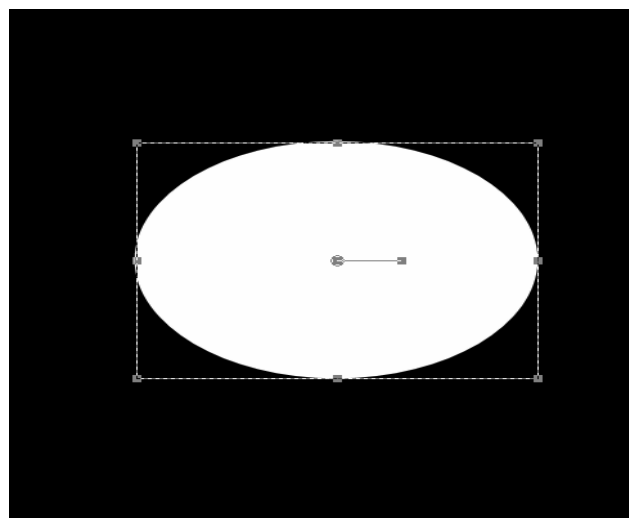
Materials Required: Photographs

Areas Covered: Rectangle tool, Selections, Layers,
Custom Brushes, Gradients.

[Brush Tips Zip for Download](#)

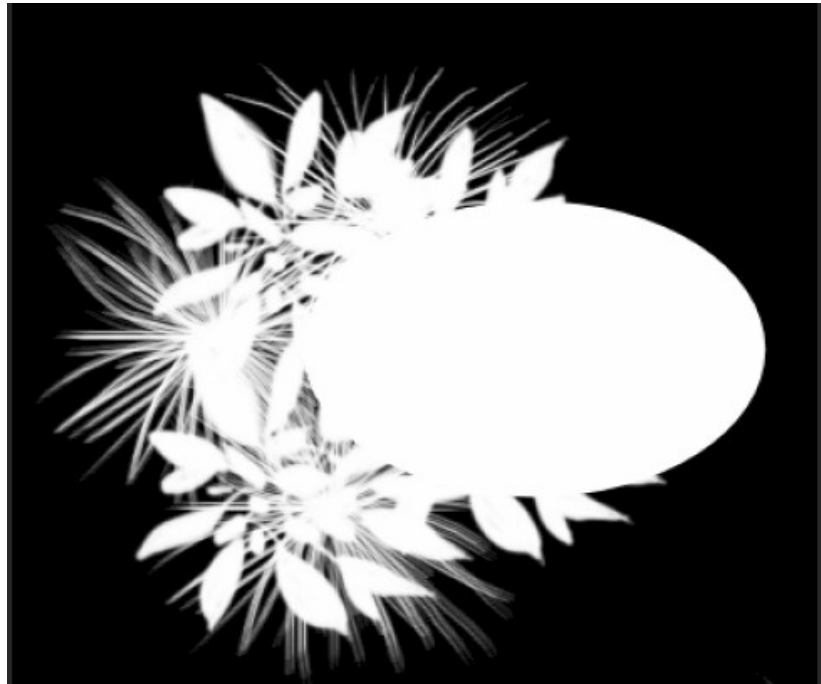
Open your version of PSP and select a canvas size of 400 x 400 with black background. In the Materials palettes make the foreground and background white. Draw an Elipse from the Elipse Tool (Q) to a deep oval shape. Do not cover the entire canvas with it otherwise there will be no room to paint.

You should now have a black background and a Vector 1 with a white elipse. Centre the elipse. You should have an image like below.



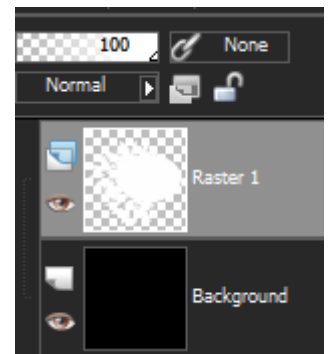
Materials, foreground and background colour white, select the brush. Choose a brush tip of your liking. You may have to experiment a little doing this until you get the right brush tip you want.

I selected a flower and arranged it as shown below. I also moved the ellipse over to the right a little to accommodate the large petals on the flower. You may need to dab the brush a few times to get a more solid appearance.



You can of course add any shapes you like, it doesn't have to be painted. However, I prefer the soft, floral look. I applied two brush tips, both of which you can download from above.

Look at the Layers palette and you should see the black background, and now a raster 1 layer rather than the vector layer, this is because you have applied brush strokes, the canvas automatically changes from a vector to a raster.

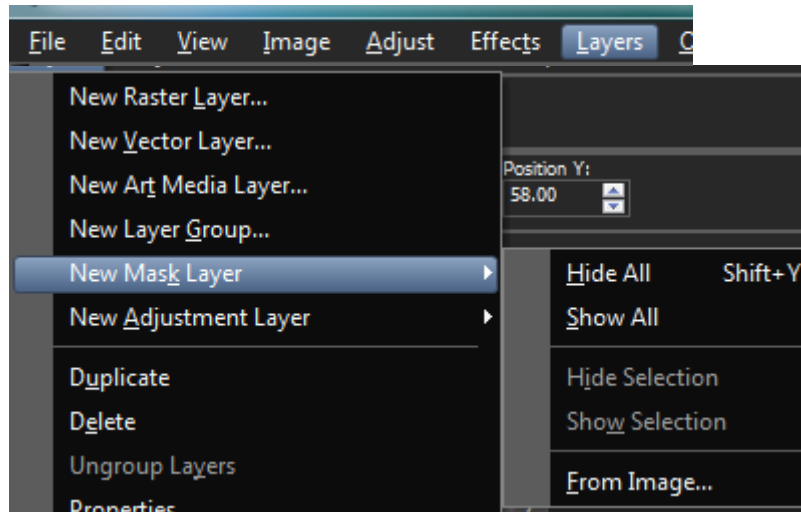


You can faintly see my white brush strokes on the transparent layer.

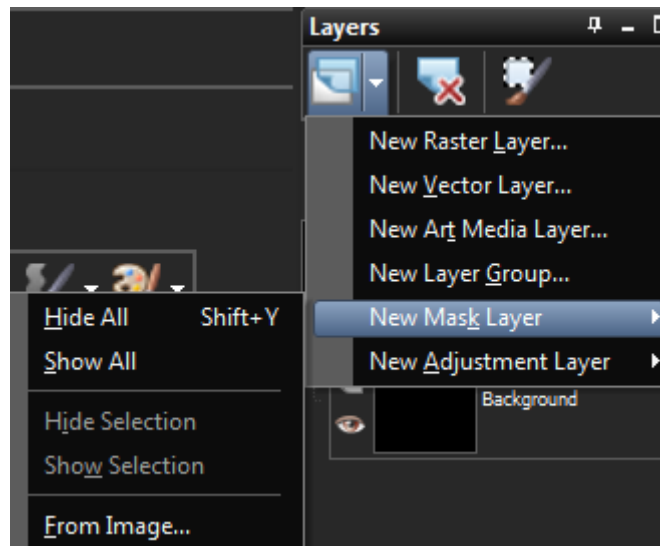
Change to the Pick Tool, go to Image and increase Colour Depth to RGB 16bits.

You can adjust the size of the mask, ie make it smaller or larger.

There are two ways to create a mask from an image, however both achieve the same result. One is using settings from Layers on the Menu bar

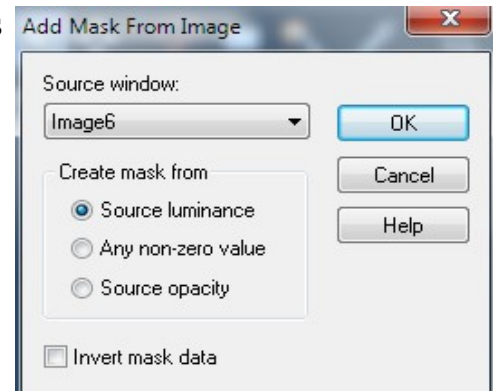


.... and the other is directly from the Layers palette, drop down box.

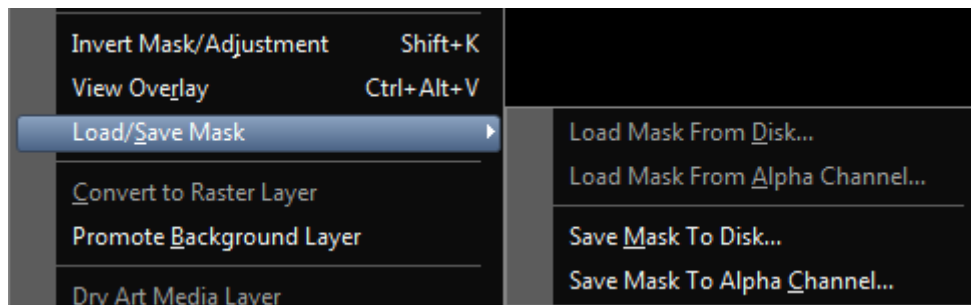


I use the Layers palette, just by force of habit.

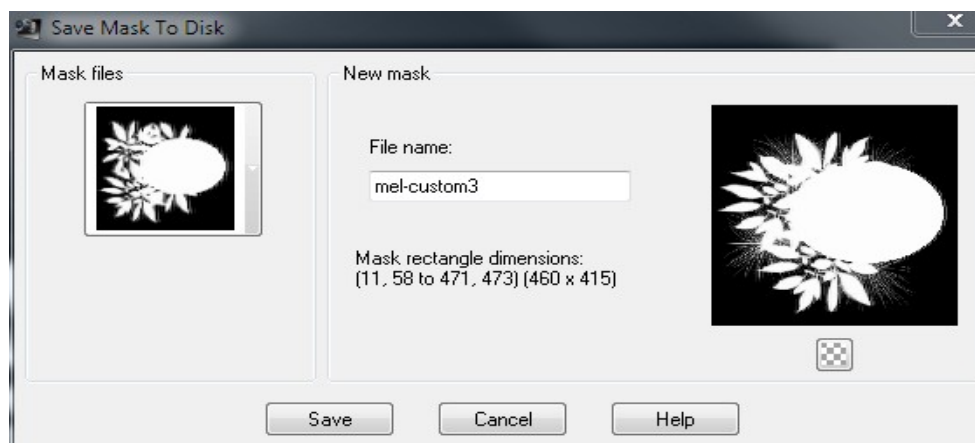
Click on New Mask Layer > From Image with settings as show here. Notice Invert mask data is unticked!



Click on Layers on the Menu bar; you have two options here, one to save Mask to Disk, which saves the mask in your mask folder in PSP. (not My PSP Files) Or, Save Mask to Alpha channel. For this mask we will save to disk.

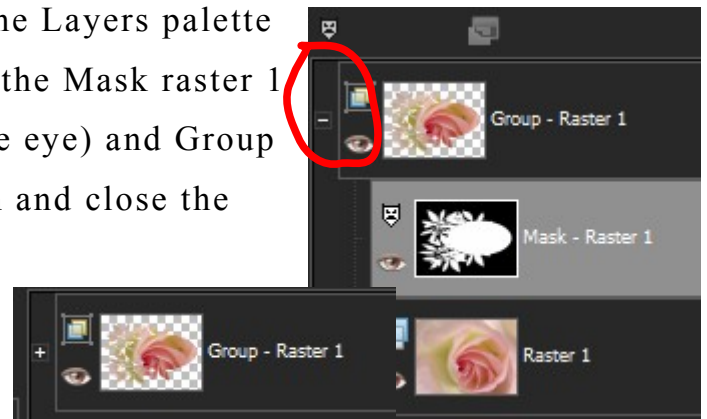


The Save Mask to Disk dialogue window will open. Give your mask a name then Save.



Open a pretty image to apply the mask to.

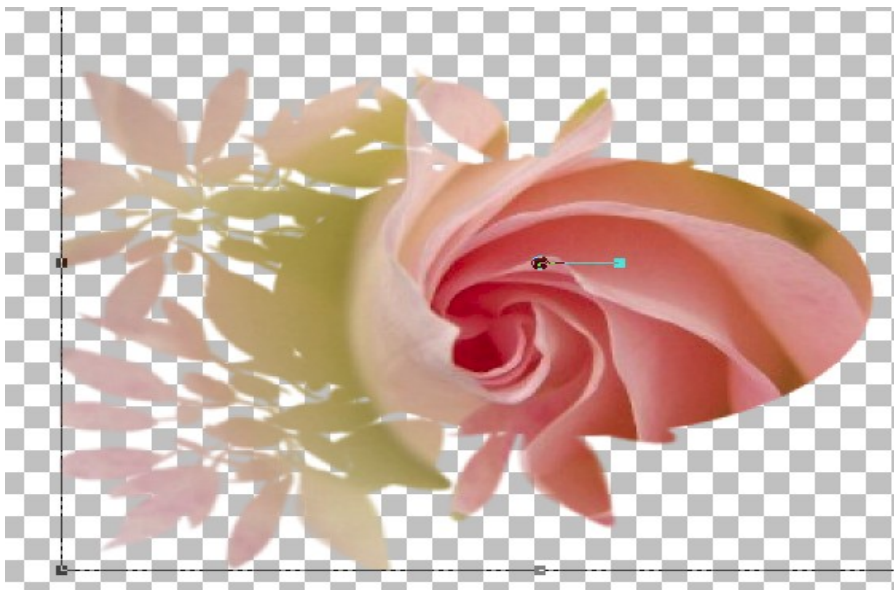
Click on Layers, Load Mask from Disk. The Layers palette will not show raster 1 with the base image, the Mask raster 1 (you can see the little mask image above the eye) and Group raster 1. This layer as a +/- so you can open and close the layers. Leave them open for the moment.



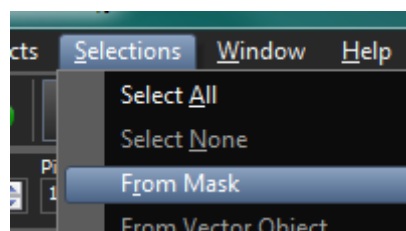
The Mask will now be in position, or will it?

Sometimes you may wish to adjust the image's position, so how can we do this.

Highlight the Raster 1 (image) and with the Pick tool, move the image around, increase or decrease the size. I moved the centre of the rose to be more visible.

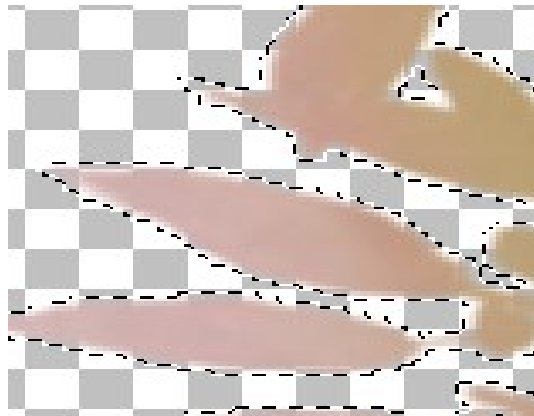


From the Layers palette highlight the Mask-Raster 1. Open Selections > From Mask

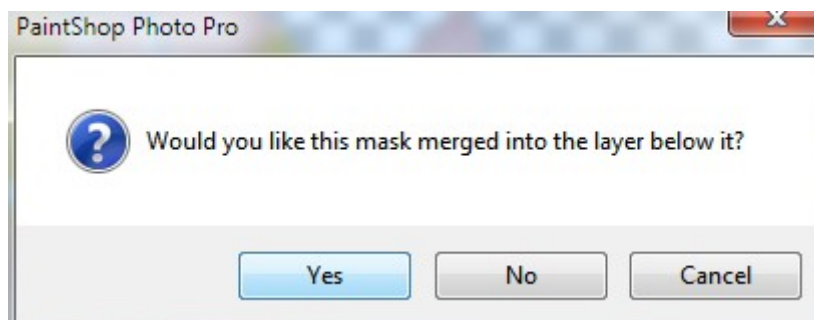


[Click here to view a small webVideo on this section](#)

The masked image will now be highlighted like a selection.



Whilst the Masked image is highlighted, right click and choose Delete. A dialogue window will open as shown below, select Yes



Do not deselect yet unless you wish to apply no further applications.

Adding a background shadow. Whilst highlighted, go to Effects > 3D Effects > Drop Shadow. I'm not giving you settings as you can choose what you like for this. However, I chose a pinky colour from my image as the colour for the shadow and applied 3 to each vertical/horizontal with a 34 opacity and 0 blur.

Deselect by clicking Ctrl+D. The mask is now complete. Save the mask as a .PNG with a transparent background.





The above mask was created with a rectangle preset and brush tips. When the mask was complete, I selected a brush with a contrasting colour, decreased the density to 55 and dabbed around the top of the masked image. 3D Effects, Drop Shadow with a darker green to make the image look blocked.

Applying effects, painting, colour fills and of course plugin filters depends on your imagination.

I hope you enjoyed this Masking tutorial.

Next Tutorial: Alpha Channels