

5 Layer Styles

Layer Styles are graphic effects that may be applied to an object that's placed on its own layer, fig 5.1. The effects are applied non-destructively and the can be changed or removed at any time.

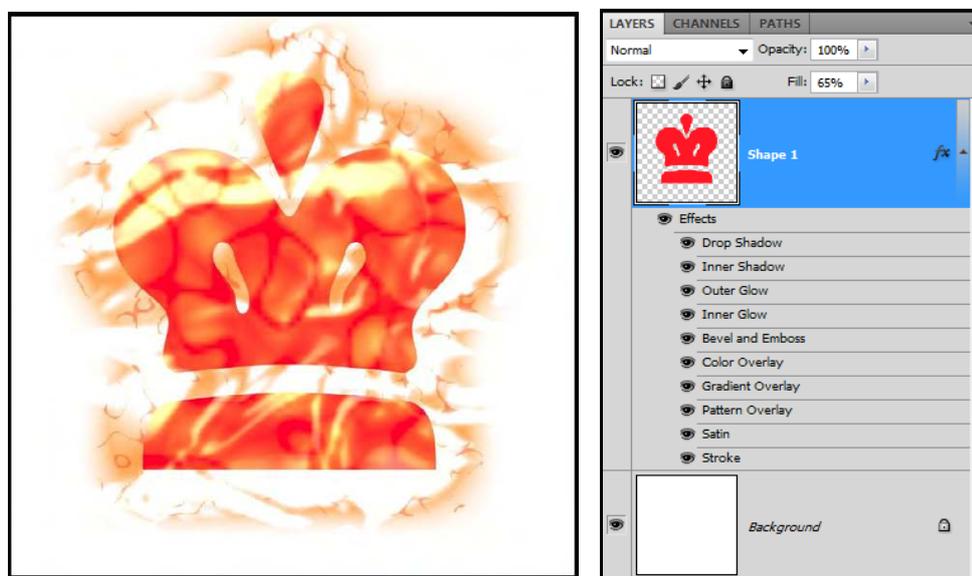


Fig 5.1 a crown shape with multiple Layer Styles applied.

Photoshop comes supplied with many complex Layer Style presets, which can be applied by clicking on one of the icons inside the Styles panel, fig 5.2. More Layer Style presets can be appended to the list, by adding them from the flyout menu in the top right-hand corner of the Styles panel. If you don't have the Styles panel open, it can be accessed from the Window menu.

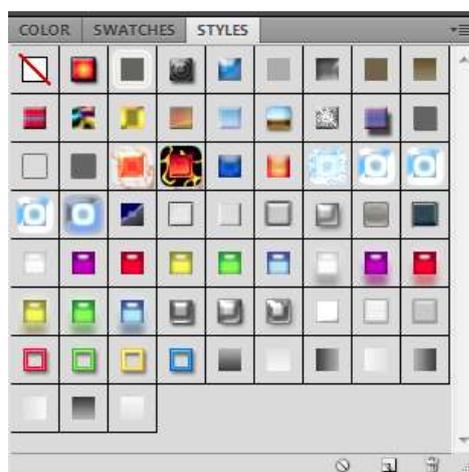


Fig 5.2 the Styles panel.

Creating your own Layer Styles

If you wish to apply individual Layer Styles to an object, click on the **fx** icon at the bottom of the Layers panel. This will reveal a list of the available Layer Styles, fig 5.3.

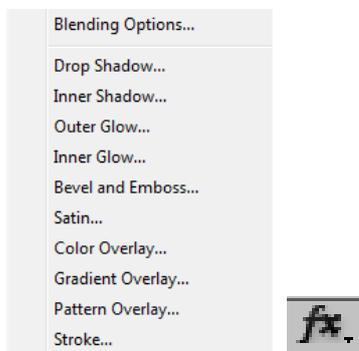


Fig 5.3 click on the **fx** icon at the bottom of the Layer panel to reveal the list of Layer Styles.

When you add a Layer Style to an object the Layer Style dialogue box will appear (fig 5.4) giving access to all of the parameters associated with the effect you have chosen. This dialogue box can be a little daunting at first, but if you have the Preview box ticked on the right-hand side of the dialogue box, you can play around with the sliders and watch the effect automatically update in your document.



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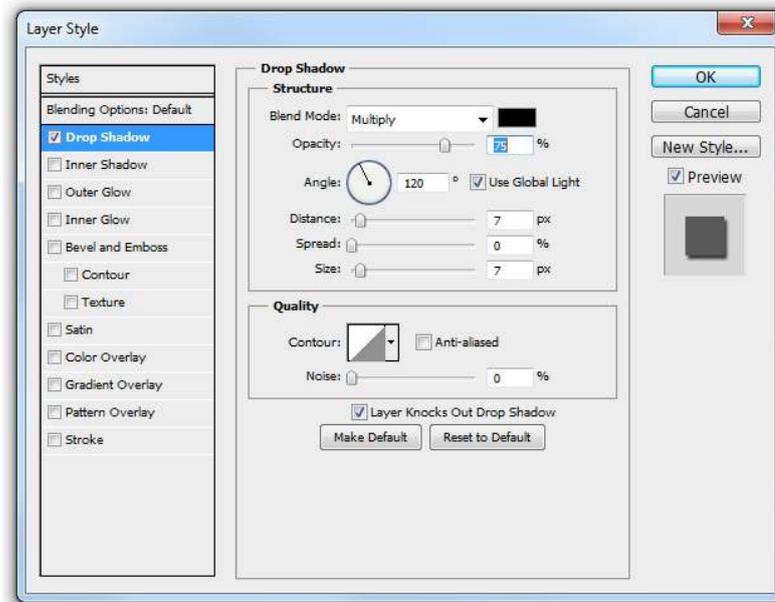


Fig 5.4 the Layer Style dialogue box.

To get the most out of the Layer Styles, it is useful to a good knowledge of what the various blending modes do, as all of the Layer Styles depend on blending modes. Changing the blend mode of a Layer Style can often dramatically change the appearance of the effect.

Blending Modes

To get the most out of the Layer Styles, it is useful to a good knowledge of what the various blending modes do, as all of the Layer Styles depend on blending modes. Changing the blend mode of a Layer Style can often dramatically change the appearance of the effect. In chapter 5 of the first book in this series, it was mentioned that blending modes are grouped together with respect to their effect.

Blending Modes	Effect
Normal Dissolve	The normal blending modes: the colours and contrast appear as normal. With Dissolve, any pixels that are less than 100% opaque will appear grainy and pixelated.
Darken Multiply Colour Burn Linear Burn Darker Colour	The darkening blending modes: the overall effect will be a darkening of the pixel values. These blend modes will not blend white with underlying colours. Colour Burn and Linear Burn produce very strong effects, but they can be useable at lower opacities.
Lighten Screen Color Dodge Linear Dodge (Add) Lighter Colour	The lightening blending modes: the overall effect will be a lightening of the pixel values. These blend modes will not blend black with underlying colours. Colour Dodge and Linear Dodge produce very strong effects, but they can be useable at lower opacities.
Overlay Soft Light Hardlight Vivid Light Linear Light Pin Light Hard Mix	The contrast blending modes: These blending modes will both lighten and darken the pixel values and may also have a strong effect on the colour. The first three modes are the most useful, the remaining four less so. These blend modes will not blend 50% grey values with underlying layers
Difference Exclusion Subtract Divide	The inversion blending modes: pixel values are inverted resulting in the opposite colour with the exception of the Divide blend mode. The Divide blend mode always results in a lightning effect.
Hue Saturation Color Luminosity	The component blending modes: these are the individual values that contribute to a pixels overall appearance. These blending modes allow you to only influence one aspect of the pixel value. The Color blend mode is a combination of the Hue and Saturation components.

Global Light

Many of the settings in the Layer Styles dialogue box have a setting called Global Light. Global Light ensures that there is continuity between the various effects with regards to the direction of light. If the design contains an image with an existing light source, your Global Light setting should be altered to match the existing light.

When you are using Layer Styles that use Contour settings, in effects such as Bevel and Emboss and Satin, the lighting position can play a massive role in the appearance of the effect, fig 5.5 and 5.6. As you can see, just changing the Altitude value slightly has completely changed the objects appearance with respect to how it is lit.

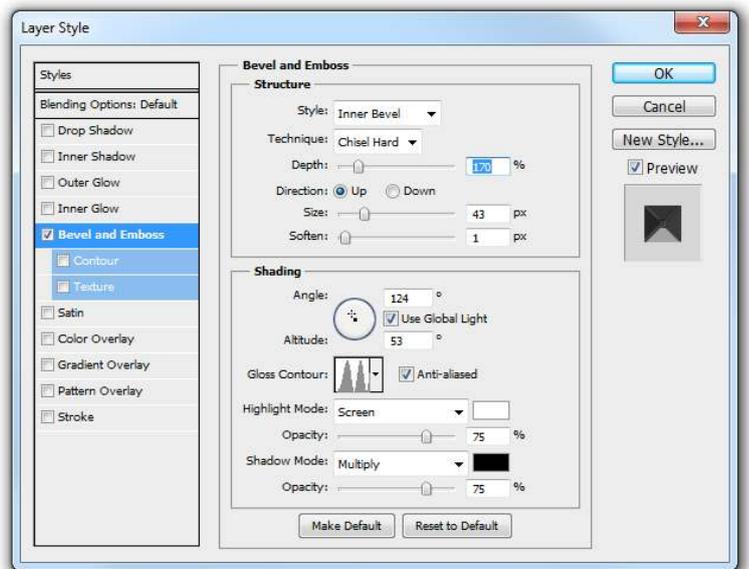


Fig 5.5 the Bevel and Emboss Layer Style, using an Angle of 124 and an Altitude of 53 in the Shading settings.

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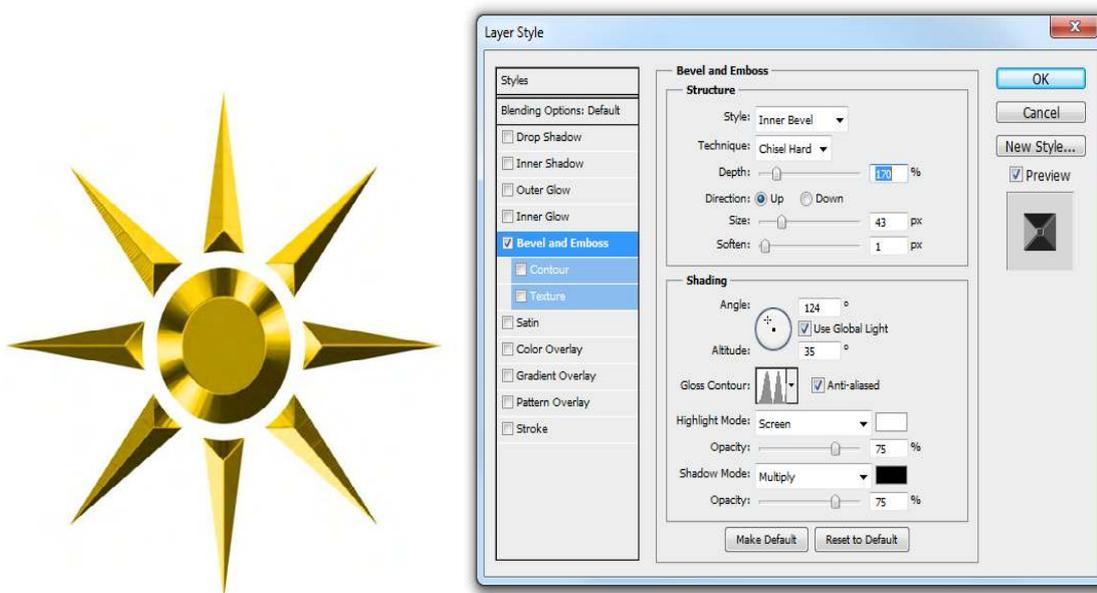


Fig 5.6 the Bevel and Emboss Layer Style, using an Angle of 124 and an Altitude of 35 in the Shading settings.

Saving and Copying Layer Styles

If you've applied a number of Layer Styles to an object and you wish to save the settings to use again in the future, with the source layer selected, click on the  icon at the bottom of the Styles panel. The Layer Styles associated with the chosen layer will be saved at a new preset in the Styles panel.

If you wish to apply the same Layer Style settings from one layer to another layer, there are a number of ways you can achieve it:

- Click on the source layer. Go to the Layer menu and choose Layer Style > Copy Layer Style. Click in the target layer in the Layers panel and to the Layer menu and choose Layer Style > Paste Layer Style.
- Right click on the source layer (not the thumbnail) and choose Copy Layer Style. Click in the target layer and choose Paste Layer Style.
- Hold down the Alt/Option (PC/Mac) key. Click and drag on the word "Effects" from the source layer to the target layer.

Opacity vs Fill Opacity

There are two different Opacity settings available for every layer; the Opacity and the Fill Opacity. For the most part they appear to perform the same function. However, when you have a Layer Style applied to an object they perform differently with respects to the Layer Style, fig 5.7.



Fig 5.7 Normal 50% Opacity 50% Fill Opacity

- Opacity – when the Opacity of a layer is reduced, both the object and any associated Layer Styles are reduced in opacity.
- Fill Opacity – when the Fill Opacity is reduced only the objects opacity is reduced, the associated Layer Styles remain unaffected.

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