



→ PHOTOSHOP • ILLUSTRATOR

PHOTOCOPIER EFFECTS

Fresh from her appearance in this year's *Computer Arts Graduate Showcase*, talented illustrator Susan Burghart reveals the techniques she uses to add gritty texture to her clean vector illustrations

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Click here to download the files you need to complete this tutorial

TIME NEEDED

3 hours

INFO

Originally from the US, Susan Burghart is a London-based illustrator and designer. Having worked in graphic design for seven years, she moved to London and graduated this year with an MA with Distinction in Illustration from Camberwell College of Arts. Susan's clients include Worth Global Style Network (WGSN), R.E.D and Spunky Clothing UK. Find out more by visiting www.susanburghart.com.

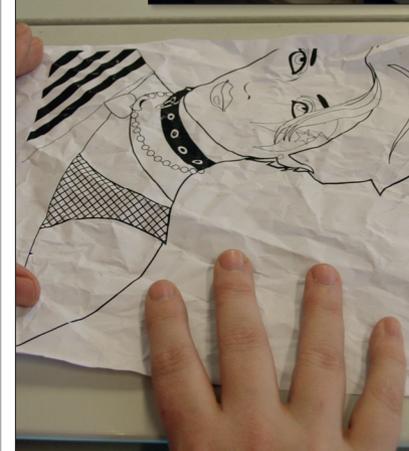
→ The beauty of popular vector-based programs such as *Illustrator* or *Freehand* is their ability to create smooth, clean, streamlined imagery that is mechanically perfect. But what if you decide that your resulting work is too clean and sterile, and you want to add a grittier touch to your vector work instead?

Sometimes it's a case of not being sure of where to begin or not having the time, budget or access to the right equipment, such as a screen-printing lab. It's also possible that you have already tried to add texture and age to your work by using filters in *Photoshop*, but weren't completely satisfied with the results.

In this tutorial, I'll show you an easy and effective way of adding texture and distress to your work, giving it an old screen-printed look. All you need is access to a laser printer, a photocopier and a basic knowledge of *Photoshop*, particularly working with Layer Masks. I've experimented with both screen printing and working with photocopies to add texture and distress to my vector work, and for me, photocopying produces equal, if not better, results.



1 Begin by creating your preliminary image in either *Illustrator* or *Freehand*. Alternatively, use the image provided on this issue's CD ([sb_tutorial.ai](#)). In this tutorial we'll work with more than one version of the vector file: the positive image, consisting of black lines on a white background, and the negative image – an inverted version of this.

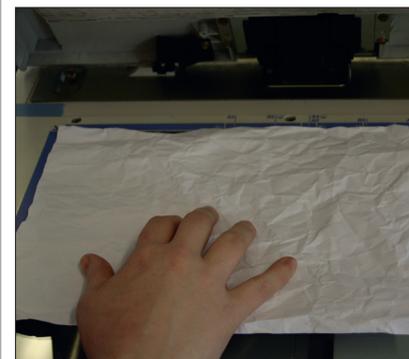


3 Next, crumple your positive image printout into a ball before flattening it back out. The toner from the laser printout will start to fall off where the paper creases, creating wrinkles and distress marks.

Illustration and tutorial by Susan Burghart
www.susanburghart.com



2 Now print each vector file – a standard laser print works best. Sometimes when the printer's toner is low you will notice that streaking effects start to appear, which can give your image an interesting look and actually work to your advantage.



4 Take the flattened printout and copy it on a photocopier, experimenting with the lightness and darkness settings depending on what kind of effect you want, and depending on the quality of the photocopy. I find the less pristine the photocopies are, and the older the photocopying machine, the better the outcome. →



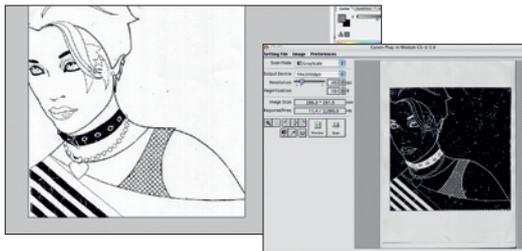
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5 Take the reproduction of your positive image and make a photocopy of it – repeating the process of photocopying the photocopy. After a series of second and third-generation photocopies, the image will look distressed and warped. You could skip the crumpling process and still get some distressed effects through multiple photocopying.



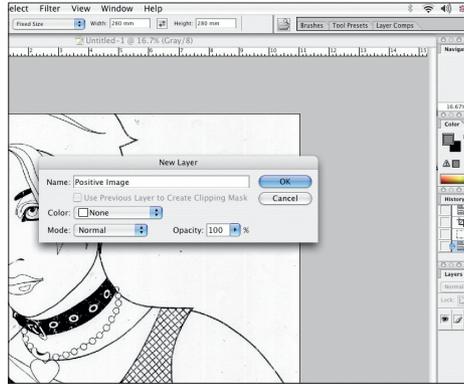
6 Repeat exactly the same printing, crumpling and photocopying process for the negative image.



REUSABLE MASK

If you don't have access to a photocopier and are pushed for time, you can go through the print, crumple and photocopy process with a single black page printed out on a laser printer. You could then keep it as a Layer Mask for later use.

7 Scan both your positive and negative image reproductions at a minimum of 300dpi, saving them as TIFF files. You'll want to scan the size and resolution according to the size of your final image. Sometimes, scanning a fairly small reproduction of an image at a higher resolution can result in some interesting effects.



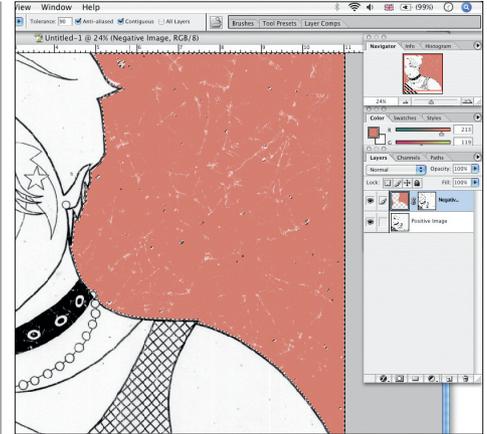
8 Open or import your positive image in *Photoshop*. Double-click the italicised background layer so that you can change the layer order, and rename the layer Positive Image. Create a transparent second layer, give it a Layer Mask and name the layer Negative Image. This is your primary image file.



9 Open or import your negative into *Photoshop*. This negative image will serve as a mask in your primary image file. Select All (Apple+A) and Cut (Apple+C). Go to the Layer Mask on the second layer in your primary image file and paste the negative image into it. Now invert the selection. This mask will be duplicated and used in subsequent layers. Finally, ensure that you're working in RGB mode.



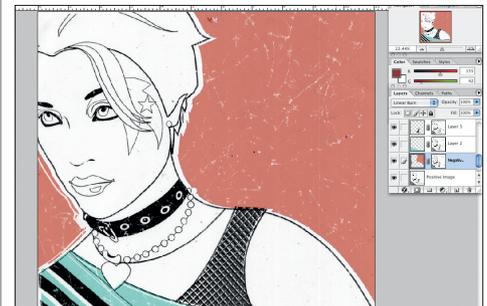
10 Using the Path or Wand tool, start selecting the areas where you want to add colour. If you're using the Positive Image layer as a guideline to create selection areas with your Wand tool, move back up to the Negative Image layer (and later, subsequent colouring layers above it) while the selection is still active but before filling it with colour.



11 Use the Fill tool to fill the selected area with a colour of your choice. You will notice the mask created with the negative image printout gives the area of colour a textured appearance.



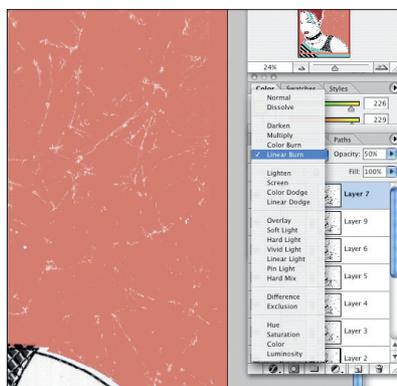
12 After making your fill, you may want to play around with the positioning of the mask and areas of colour until you achieve a composition you are happy with. Later on, you can return to each mask and erase and modify it as you see fit.



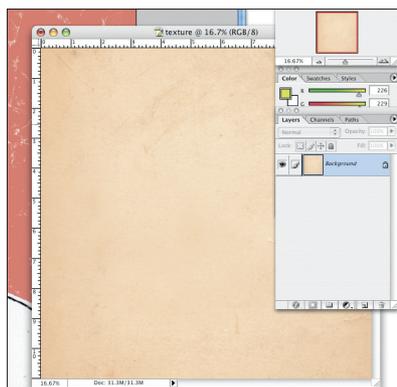
13 Start creating duplicate layers with the same mask as you used in the Negative Image layer. Again, use the Wand or Path tool on each layer to select the area you want to colour. I like to experiment with various Layer Modes and opacities by keeping each coloured area on separate layers.



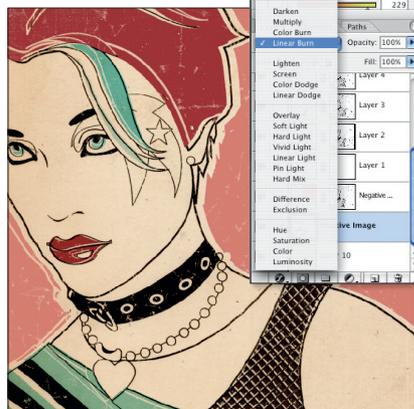
14 Again, you can experiment with the positioning of the colour area, layer mask, or opacity on each layer.



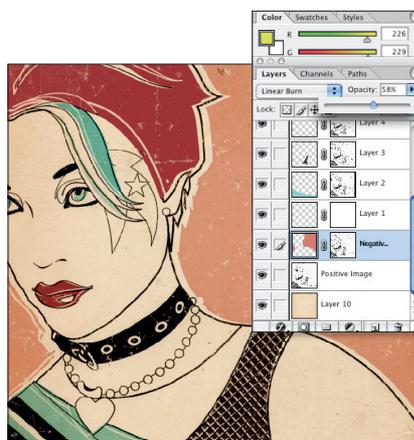
15 Once you've finished colouring each area, change the Blending Mode of each layer to Multiply or Linear Burn.



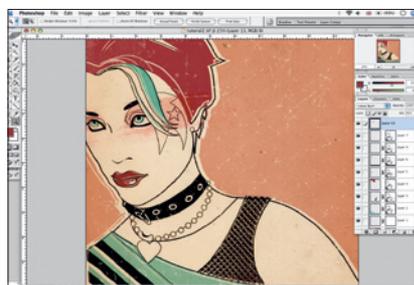
16 Scan in a textured background of your choice. This texture will provide a background that gives the image an even more aged or distressed look. You could also import photographs of aged surfaces at this stage if you prefer.



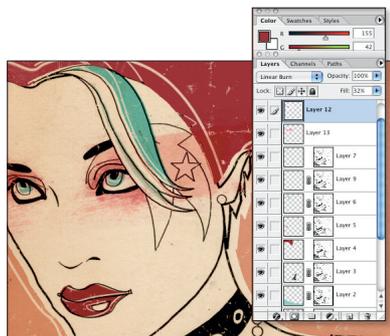
17 Copy the textured background and Paste it into your document, moving the layer below your Positive Image layer. Be sure that the Blending Mode of the Positive Image layer is set to Multiply or Linear Burn.



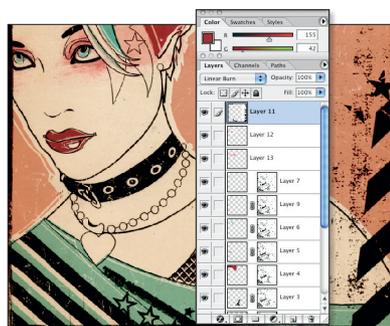
18 You may find that some of your colours look different when importing your textured background. Adjust the Opacity or experiment with effects that occur when you change the Blending Mode of your layers.



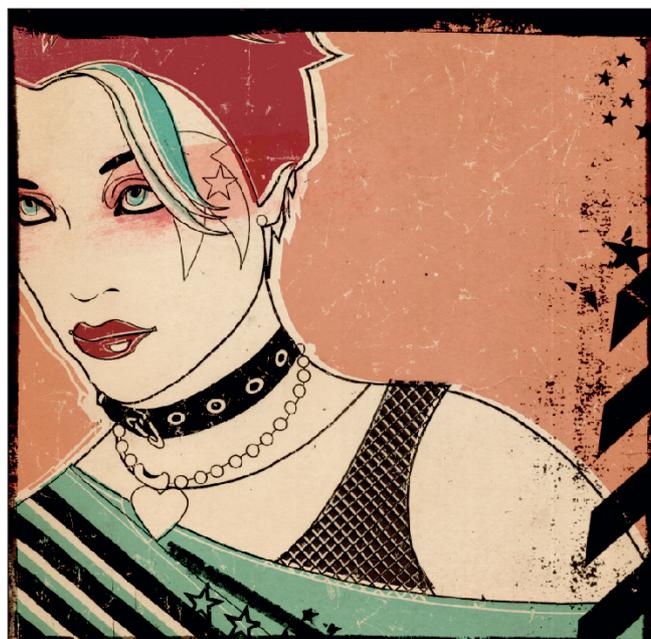
19 At this stage, you can import various textures, such as paintbrush strokes or other patterns, to add a little extra flair. Play around with the girl's eyeshadow, importing paint strokes to colour them a pale pink. Try giving this addition a Linear Burn Blending Mode and then reduce the Opacity.



20 To add extra depth to the eyeshadow, duplicate the layer and give it a darker raspberry colour. You can then go in and mask out parts of the layer.



21 To add a last unifying element to the piece, import a textured border. This layer should be placed on top and given a Linear Burn Blending Mode.



22 To finish the image off, go back and reposition the masks, colour areas and transparencies until you're happy, and complete any fine-tuning or cleaning up where necessary. **arts**

CUSTOM BRUSHES

Selected areas of the veined effect that appears on surfaces as a result of the crumple and copy process can be converted into some very handy custom *Photoshop* brushes if you wish to add more distress and cracked effects to your finished document.

CONTROL-CLICK

Use this handy shortcut to quickly view just your Layer Mask. Press the Control key and click directly on the Layer Mask of your choice. This shortcut is especially handy when you want to be very precise and direct when editing your Layer Masks.