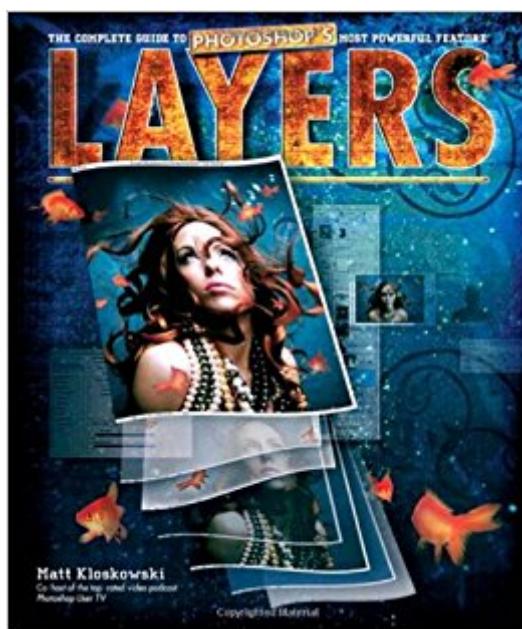


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# Layers: The Complete Guide To Photoshop's Most Powerful Feature



## Synopsis

When Photoshop guru Matt Kloskowski was asked why he wrote this book, he replied, "It's simple: I wanted to write the Photoshop book that I wished was around when I was learning Photoshop." You've always known that layers were the key to understanding Photoshop, and now you have a resource to show you exactly how. With Matt's clear, easy-to-follow, and concise writing style you'll learn about: Working with and managing multiple layers Building multiple layered images Blending layers together Exactly which of the 25+ Blend Modes you need to worry about (there's just a few) Layer Masking and just how easy it is. Using layers to enhance and retouch your photos All of the tips and tricks that make using layers a breeze. If you want to finally understand layers in Photoshop, this book is the one you've been waiting for.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

No photographer can unleash the full power of Photoshop to make an image look like the photographer's vision without understanding the power of layers. (At the very least layers allow the Photoshop user to make selective adjustments to an image, without actually changing the underlying data.) Yet many Photoshop books treat layers in bits and pieces rather than as an integrated whole so that the photographer has a hard time grasping the overall concept. That's where a book aimed solely at layers comes in. Matt Kloskowski's book deals with all the major applications of layers. The subjects include the nature of layers, blending layers, adjustment layers, layer masks, type and shape layers, enhancing and adjusting photos with layers, layer styles and

smart layers. It's all here, but in a short simple quick form. (I'm sure there are more esoteric things to learn about layers; at least one pair of authors has a book on layers that is over 750 pages long!) Most photographers will find that this book has all they need to know about the subject. The author's text takes the form of tutorials. One can either download files for these tutorials or work with one's own pictures. The tutorials are short, well illustrated and have plenty of white space. If you make a mistake at an early step you won't have to backtrack through twenty or thirty steps to find out where you went wrong. Even if you work out each tutorial, this book will not take more than ten or twenty hours to complete, and it will teach you almost everything you need to know about the subject. Along the way, Kloskowski teaches the reader about other Photoshop tools, as when he integrates a discussion of gradients into a lesson on blend modes, or deals with selections in a tutorial on layer masks.

I'll be honest, Photoshop has scared me to death for quite awhile. I love digital photography, but I always felt the whole post-processing end of it was way too complicated and would take me years to learn. A friend of mine would take photos that I had taken and work his PS magic on them, and I would thank him, not really knowing what he did to correct exposure, color, etc. I picked up Photoshop Elements 6, but I still never really understood the whole layers and masks thing, although I loved the editing aspects of it. But then I saw an episode of PhotoshopUser TV on the web and was introduced to some of the tips, tricks and new features of Photoshop CS5. All of it explained in detail, with some good doses of humor thrown in, by Matt Kloskowski, Scott Kelby and Dave Cross. They made Photoshop less intimidating and much easier to comprehend. So I got a copy of Photoshop CS5 for myself, determined to learn this program and start using it to its potential. I was all set to purchase the first edition of Matt's Layers book, but he mentioned that he was revising it with new emphasis on CS5, so I decided to wait and get the newest edition. Matt has a great style of teaching the use of layers in Photoshop. Another reviewer mentioned that Matt wrote in a "juvenile" style, but I found it refreshing and helped make what can be a dry subject interesting. Watching Matt on the web, or attending one of his seminars, will show you that he writes as he speaks. He doesn't talk down to his audience and makes sure you know the subject matter before he moves on.

I'm one of those Photoshop users who knows too much to want to read a book mainly for beginners, not because of ego considerations but because I would be bored and skip around. But there are also huge gaps in my haphazard Photoshop education. This book gives absolute beginners what

they need without slowing down the more experienced user. It's long enough to cover what it aims out to cover without being so long that you look at it and say, someday I'm going to go through that book but not today. I was attracted to this book because of who wrote it (I watch Matt's Killer Photoshop and Lightroom tips all the time), the topic, which of course is central to knowing Photoshop, and because of the great cover. I'm a small press publisher and believe me, covers matter. Many good books languish because they don't appeal initially to the eye. And a Photoshop book should have a good design. It's also well-edited, a welcome plus in today's publishing world. Anyway, what's between the covers is just as delightful. I think the word I would use to best describe this book is methodical but not in a boring way. It's comprehensive, but the way it's laid out never overwhelms you. I know that when I go through this book a couple of times, I'm going to be flipping my way through layers like a maniac but a maniac who knows what she's doing and knows what layers can do for her. And, I LOVE the last page of each chapter, the "How do I...." question and answers. It gives me one place to go to immediately find all those absolutely essential shortcuts and critical pieces of knowledge without which one wouldn't really be able to say they had a good basic understanding of layers.

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