



The **Aha!** newsletter is published for the benefit of professional photographers and graphic designers and for students. It provides tips, tricks and reminders related to the use of Photoshop software, scanners and digital cameras.

Some of the items presented here are undocumented features of the software

or hardware. More often they are useful hints found in manuals, periodicals, or at web sites. If you have discovered an interesting feature of this remarkable software or hardware, please do not assume that others in the group are already familiar with it. Share it with us.

Send it to: normftb@optonline.net for possible inclusion in future issues.



How to dodge and burn with greater precision

Dodging and burning, techniques used in traditional darkroom work, allow the photographer to alter the density of local areas within the image. Those methods are imitated with the tools called Dodge and Burn in Photoshop. Unfortunately, the tools have very limited controls. There is a more precise and flexible way to accomplish those effects. This is how to do it:

Open an image that would benefit from local areas being made lighter or darker. Key in the letter D to change the foreground and background colors to black and white in the Tools section. Go to Layer > New Layer and change the Mode to Overlay. At that point, a box at the bottom of the New Layer dialog box will be made available: "Fill with Overlay-neutral color (50% gray)". Click to put a check mark in that box and then click OK. This will create a new layer in the Layers palette, but since it is in the Overlay mode, the image will not seem to change. This layer acts as a type of mask.

Choose a Brush tool with a soft edge, and set the Opacity in the brush options bar to 10-20%. Paint with the foreground color set to black to burn in the local area, and set it to white (key in X to switch foreground and background colors) and paint to dodge back an area. Each time you dab with the brush you will intensify the burn or dodge. Gone too far? Switch the brush color and dab the area again.

