

Adobe Photoshop CS

Tips and Tricks from the Experts



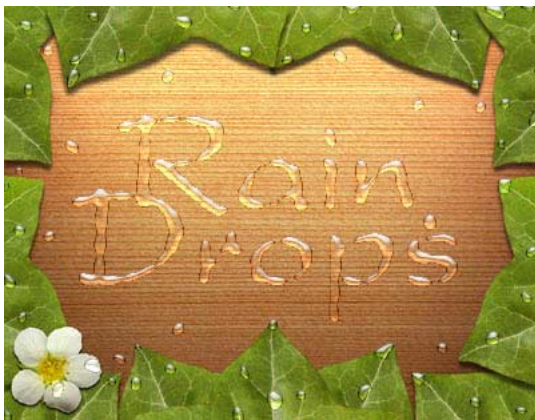
Rain Drops

Greg Vander Houwen Adapted from the website <http://www.photoshoptechniques.com>.

Greg Vander Houwen is the creator of PhotoshopTechniques.com. He is one of Adobe's "Digital Masters" as well as a member of their "Magnificent 7." He is an artist at heart, an illustrator by trade. His work can be seen at <http://www.netcandy.com/interact/>.

I was experimenting with some of the more advanced features of the Layer Styles dialog box and discovered some very handy techniques that can be used when you are creating transparent effects. The sequence for this "water" effect is done entirely in a single Layer Style. So once it has been created it can be saved and applied to any layer that has hard-edged opacity against a field of transparency. This also means you can paint on the styled layer and the effect will render "live", so it's pretty to watch.

Recommended Font and Doc specs. The technique uses a number of pixel based filters and point based type so these specs are important to reproduce the effect. Image Specs: 1117 x 865 pixels at 266 dpi, RGB color. Font Specs: Present, Regular, 60 point.



1. Add a new layer above the layer you want to make wet and paint an initial drop shape.

Now go to Layer > New > Layer... and click OK, or click on the Create a New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. This will create Layer 1.

Press (D) for default colors so black is in the foreground color chip.

Activate the Brush tool (B) and then in the Options Bar above, set it to a 19 pixel, hard edged brush, Normal, Opacity 100%.

Now paint a bit of black on Layer 1 and wiggle your brush a bit as you paint. This will be the initial shape we will use to build the layer style on.

Activate the Zoom tool (Z) and click on your paint drop to zoom in for a closer view.



2. Build the Layer Style by reducing the Fill Opacity.

Double-click on Layer 1 thumbnail in the Layers palette to open the Layer Style dialog box.

Go down to the Advanced Blending section and change the Fill Opacity to 3%. This reduces the opacity of the fill pixels but retains the shape of the paint on the layer.

Note: This step will make the black you painted on Layer 1 almost disappear.

3. Add a small, intense, drop shadow.

Click on the Drop Shadow name (not the check box) in the list of effects on the left side of the dialog box.

In the Drop Shadow section to the right, set the Opacity to 100%, change the Distance to 1 px and the Size to 1 px.

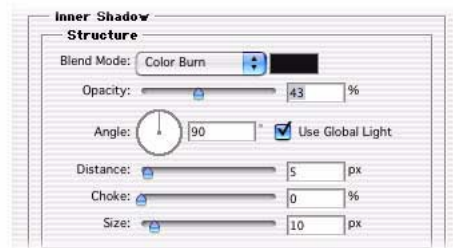
In the Quality section, click on the small down arrow to the right of the Contour curve thumbnail and select the Gaussian curve. It's the curve that looks like a soft, sloping (S).



4. Add a soft interior shadow.

Click on the Inner Shadow name in the list of effects on the left side of the dialog box.

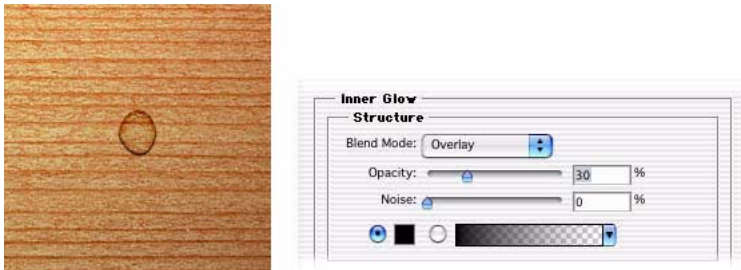
In the Structure section set the Blend Mode to Color Burn, the Opacity to 43%, and the Size to 10 px.



5. Add an additional interior shadow around the edge of the shape.

Click on the Inner Glow name in the list of effects on the left side of the dialog box.

In the Structure section set the Blend Mode to Overlay, the Opacity to 30%, and the color chip to black. To change the color chip, click on it to open the Color Picker, drag the cursor to black and then click OK.



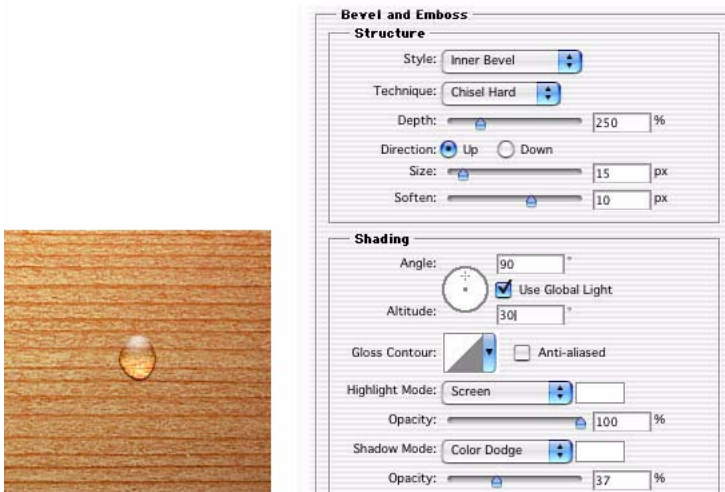
6. Add a highlight and interior glow to the shape.

Click on the Bevel and Emboss name in the list of effects on the left side of the dialog box.

In the Structure section set the Technique to Chisel Hard, the Depth to 250%, the Size to 15 px, and Soften to 10 px.

In the Shading section, set the Angle to 90, the Altitude to 30 and the Highlight Mode Opacity to 100%. Then set the Shadow Mode to Color Dodge, its color chip to white and its Opacity to 37%.

This completes the Layer Style but don't click OK just yet.



7. Save this Layer Style for future use.

Click the New Style button on the right side of the Layer Style dialog box. This will open a dialog box where you can name it and then click OK to save.

Note: After it has been saved you can find it under Window, Show Styles, in the last thumbnail position.

Now click OK to leave the Layer Style dialog. In the Layers palette, click the arrow next to the Layer Style (f) icon to hide the style.

Note: You can paint additional drops on Layer 1. Just makes sure your brush tool is active (B) and paint where you want the drops to appear. You can also use the Eraser to edit or remove existing drops.

8. Add a text layer to the document.

Activate the Type Tool (T).

In the options bar above, click on the Palettes button to open the Character palette.

In the Character palette select your font. Set the color to black. Then click on the Paragraph tab and click on the Center Text button in the upper left section of the palette.

Now click in the center of the document and enter your “Rain Drops” text. To reposition your type move your cursor beyond the text until it turns into a move icon, then click drag.

To apply the text click the check mark in the upper right of the Options bar or press the Enter key (Mac), Control-Enter (Windows). This will render the Type layer, Rain Drops.

9. Add a new, white layer below the Type layer and then merge the Type layer.

With the Rain Drops text layer active, create a new layer under it by holding down Command (Mac) or Control (Windows) and then clicking the New Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. This will create Layer 2.

Fill Layer 2 with white by pressing the (D) key to load default colors. Then go to Edit, Fill, Background Color or press Command-Delete on the (Mac) or Control-Backspace (Windows) to fill with the Background color.

Click on the Rain Drops layer to activate it.

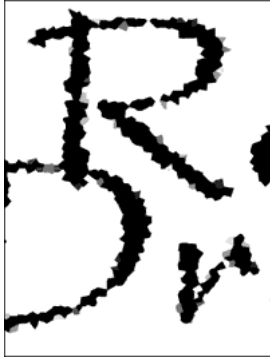
Go to Layer, Merge Down or press Command-E (Mac) or Control-E (Windows). This will remove the Rain Drops Layer as it merges down onto Layer 2.



10. Roughen the edge of the merged layer with a filter.

With Layer 2 active go to Filter, Pixelate, Crystallize.

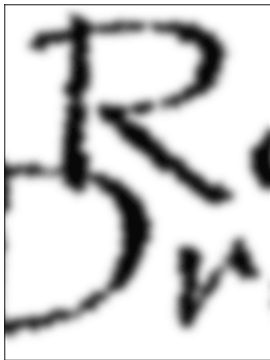
Set the Cell Size to 10 and click OK.



11. Blur the roughened text/image.

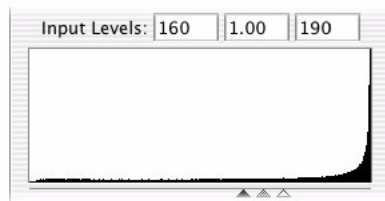
With Layer 2 active go to Filter, Blur, Gaussian Blur.

In the dialog, set the Radius to 5.0 pixels and click OK.



12. Take the softened text image and harden the edge by adding contrast.

With Layer 2 active choose Image > Adjust > Levels. In the Levels dialog set the Input Levels to 160, 1.00, 190 and click OK.



13. Load a selection from the text/image and delete the white areas.

To load a selection from Layer 2 press Command-Option-~ (Mac) or Control-Alt-~ (Windows). This can also be done by clicking the Channels tab, then Click the Load Channel as Selection icon at the bottom of the palette.

The selection loads with the white areas selected. Press Delete (Mac) or Backspace (Windows) to remove the white areas around the black text. Now deselect by Select > Deselect.



14. Apply our saved Layer Style to the black text layer.

With Layer 2 active go to Window, Show Styles to bring up the Styles palette.

Locate your saved Rain Drops Style at the end of the list of thumbnails and click it to apply the Style to Layer 2.

