

## Digital Image Blending

### Method 1 (Blend If):

1. Layer an over and under exposed image into PS. Place the over exposed (brightest) image on the bottom.
2. Double click on or to right of thumbnail of the dark exposure or Layer>Layer Style>Blending Options. This brings up the Layer Style dialog box.
3. At the bottom of the Layer Style box you see the blend if panel with the underlying layer. Snap the little arrow to left side of this in half by holding down the CTRL + ALT (CMD + Option on a Mac) then left clicking and sliding this arrow to the right (**be sure to grab just the little arrow and not both of them**). Slide it all the way to the right to complete the blending process and press OK. If image is still too dark, reduce the opacity of the dark layer.

### Method 2 (Image>Apply Image):

1. Layer 3 exposures in Photoshop (PS). Do this by going File>Scripts>Load files in stack - select files and hit OK. They will come into PS as layers. Place darkest on the bottom, brightest on top and normal (base) in the middle. (Order is your choosing)
2. Press eye icon next to top brightest image to make it invisible and create a layer mask on this layer. Now add a layer mask on the normal (base) exposure and leave that layer visible.
3. With the mask on the normal (base) exposure selected, go to IMAGE>APPLY IMAGE. In dialog box that appears, make sure Layer = Merged, Blending = Multiply and check the invert box. A mask has now been applied to the base exposure. It has now blended with the darker image. **Apply Image is a tool for blending 2 images or layers of the same size. It's one of the fastest ways of creating a mask from an image. Important -It makes global changes and is destructive so use it on a duplicate layer to save the original image)**
4. Next make the top layer visible by clicking on eye icon. Select that mask and do the same thing you just did to the base exposure in 3. You may have to reduce the opacity of the brighter exposure so the blend looks natural.

### **Method 3 (Gradient Mask):**

#### **This method works best with a flat horizon like the ocean**

Works in a similar manner as graduated neutral density filters. They smoothly blend multiple exposure but are most effective when you have a straight horizon line. We will seamlessly blend the sky from an image with the foreground of another image.

1. Bring the over and under exposed into PS and move the overexposed layer on top.
2. Open up a layer mask on top layer by holding down Alt key making the mask invisible.
3. Open up the gradient tool and make sure opacity is set to 100% and you select the linear gradient and the foreground color is set to white.
4. Hold down shift key to draw a straight line about 1/3 down to 2/3 and let go of the shift key. Presto - sky is now looking great.