

Mosaizer Pro Tutorial

Source mask with a background picture



Here you learn how to make a picture from existing photographs, on which a frame and a text were put.

We will show how to effectively apply a source mask in combination with a background picture. The use of a 32Bit Overlay is explained and how its transparency will influence the look of the frame.

Finally, we will demonstrate how the random settings in combination with a shadow can be used to create a photorealistic effect.

How to use a source mask on a background picture ?

About source pictures

A source picture is the basic picture from which the colors are derived to build a photo mosaic. Usually, the source picture is the picture that needs to be recognized in the result. Not in this case because a source mask is applied, where the **source mask** filters out any part of the source picture that is not required, leaving only the frame and text visible. When a background picture is active, the source picture may not even be visible any more. In this tutorial we actually use the **source picture** to color the frame, and the **background picture** will become the picture we would like to see.

Requirements

Required for making the photo-frame is:

- a background picture (here: the Yosemite photograph)
- the source mask (here: a mask with a white rim and text)
- the source picture (here: a photograph of a pink car in Warsaw)

Additional requirements:

- a bitmap editor (such as Paint.net, Photoshop or Paintshop Pro) to make the source mask.

The steps to create a basic result

Step 1: prepare the source mask

The source mask is a bitmap picture (jpg or bmp), where the black areas are ignored (thus transparent) and the white areas are used for the frame and text. We use Photoshop to make this mask. Don't make the mask too small because the text should be visible and recognizable.

All files should have the same size ratio (width/height) to avoid mask distortion. The actual size of our source mask is 800 x 600 px, and our background picture is 1200 x 900 px and source picture is 1536 x 1152 px.



Step 2: load the required pictures

Via 'File / Load' the source file and the background files can be loaded. If any of these files have not been used before, you need to select 'New source picture' and/or 'New background picture'. After loading in the program these pictures should be visible in the top right tabs.



Step 3: load the mask

The mask is loaded via the tab 'Masker'. If this is a new mask, it must be added first to the list of source masks. The best way to do this is via 'Tools | Settings manager', and then press the button 'Add source mask'. When loaded, the mask can be seen in the list s shown on the right. Use the standard parameters for F1 and F2 (16 and 0). To save these settings press the button 'Save changes', and to make sure all the settings are correctly taken into the application, also press 'Reload/restore all data'.



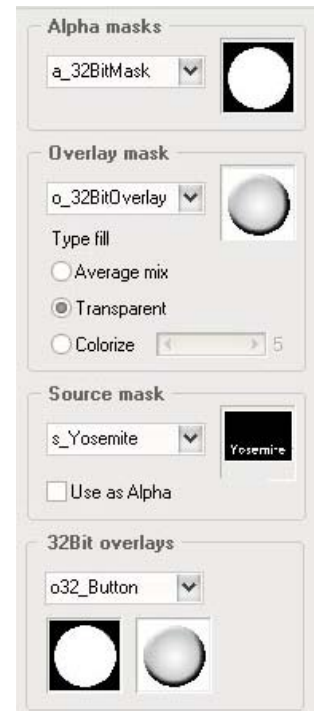
Step 4: activate the masks and make a first photo-frame

Two types of masks are needed to create our intended effect:

1. select the source mask from the pull-down box. We saved the mask as *s_Yosemite.jpg* and after step 3 this source mask is now available in the pull-down list
2. select the *o32_Button* 32Bit overlay. When selected, the Alpha- and Overlay masks are automatically loaded. These buttons can create a 3D-button effect.

Information: the 32Bit overlay mask consists of two sets of data: the alpha mask and the overlay mask. The alpha mask filters out the pixel of the cell that corresponds with a black pixel in the alpha mask (gray = shades of transparency), while the overlay mask creates a semi-transparent overlay on top of the cell.

Don't change any other settings of size and shape but simply proceed with the default settings. Press the 'Create' button.

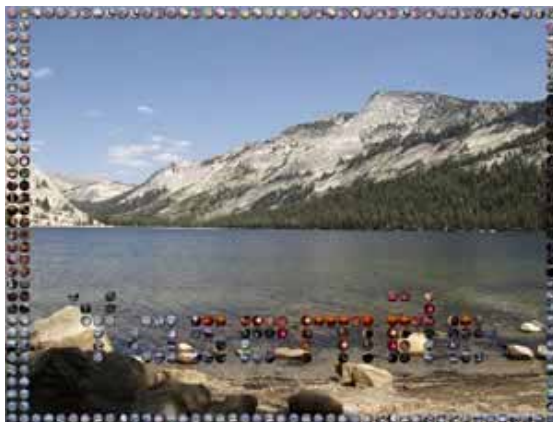
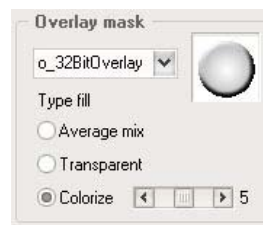


Left: initial result with default settings. It does not look very attractive, so some additional tuning is required.

Tuning the settings to the final picture

Step 5: change the color settings

The result with the default settings looks a bit simple: just a very few 3D-buttons, not randomly placed and the source mask text is not very readable either because library pictures were used to create the buttons. The default setting for the Overlay mask is 'Transparent'. Change this to 'Colorize' and press again 'Create'. This time the result looks a bit better because each of the buttons has now a solid color that was derived from the source picture (remember: the pink car in Warsaw).



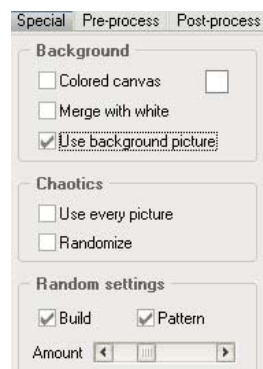
Left: the difference with the default settings is that each cell is now colored with the colors from the source picture, instead of a replacement with a picture from the library.

Step 6: randomize the 3D-button placement

Via the tab 'Special' the random settings are now changed by ticking both boxes (Random) 'Build' and (Random) 'Pattern'. Now the overlaid 3D-buttons are positioned randomly, and build



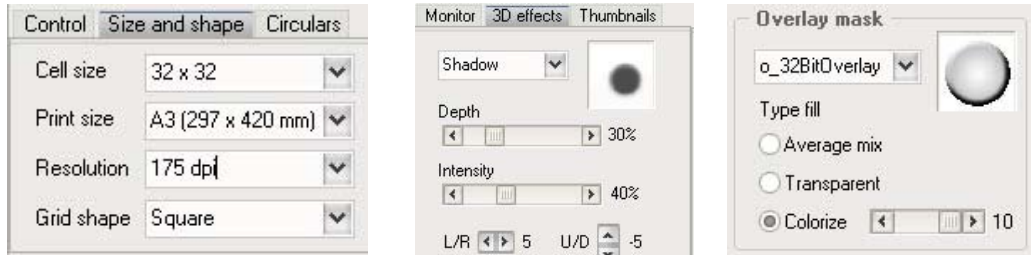
randomly. Building randomly means that the buttons appear to be randomly placed on top of each other (so: not from left to right). Don't forget to also increase the number of random buttons (use the slider 'Amount').



Left: the random placement greatly enhances the effect and thickness of the layers of 3D-buttons.

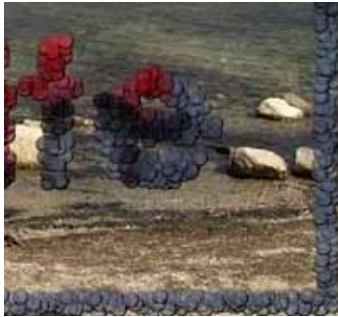
Step 7: increase the number of buttons, create a shadow for each button and get rid of the pale overlay colors

The number of buttons seems to be alright, but we would like to see a more 'robust' and solid picture frame. Therefore we increase the print density *dpi* from 125 to 175 (left picture).



To create a better photorealistic 3D effect, we apply the 3D effect 'Shadow' (middle picture). Use its default settings (5 pixels south, 5 pixels east etc.).

Finally (because the result still looks a bit pale) we change the colors of the buttons from slightly transparent (the Colorize value was 5) to fully opaque. Use the 'Colorize' slider and set its value to 10 (right picture). Now the buttons are fully opaque. From left to right the result has now been improved with each step:



Increase dpi to 175...



... apply shadow effect...



... opaque colors

The final result is now ready for printing and saving. When the 'Automatic result save' was checked in the tab 'Quick settings | Other settings', the resulting picture will be found in the '/Results' folder of Mosaizer Pro. If not, the result can be saved via 'File | Save'.

Mosaizer Pro

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