

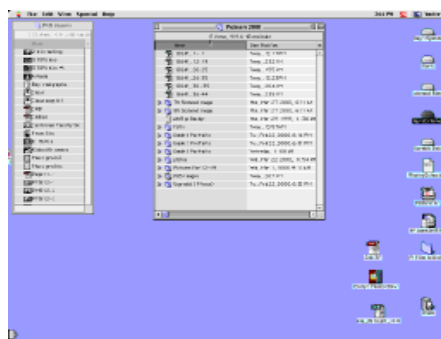
Photoshop According to Me: Clipping Groups

by Ray Campbell

Text with photos inside it is a very popular effect. To do this with film the "traditional way" is very involved and expensive. Photoshop may still require hours of playing to get a piece of artwork just right, but the control is in the hands of the designer and the possibilities become endless.

There are several ways to put images inside of shapes or text. This method allows the maximum flexibility. Even after everything is together every layer can still be adjusted.

This lesson uses a little known keyboard shortcut to link layers. Familiarity with the text tool, layers palette and the ability to take object off of backgrounds will be helpful. This is considered an advanced technique.



1. Begin by opening the Ducky, Guitar and Zebra files. Once you have the concept you can use any objects from any files. But for this lesson we will use these.

Note: If Photoshop palettes are not lined up neatly at the right side of the screen, go file>preferences>general and click on "reset palette locations to default".

2. Select the guitar and drag it into the Zebra file.

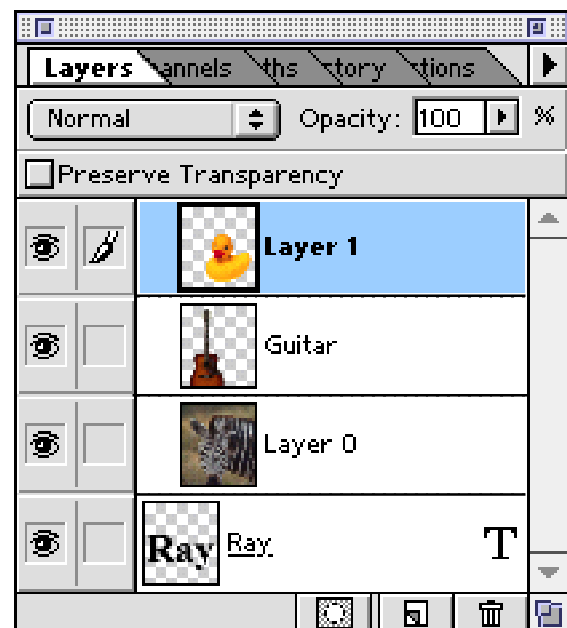
3. Select the Ducky and drag that into the Zebra file.

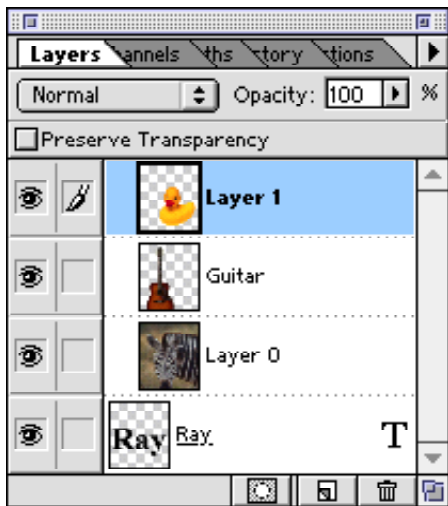
4. Double click on the background layer and rename it layer 0 in the Layer Options dialog box.

5. Type a word, perhaps your name. Select a bold face type and make it around 200 points. Depending on the type face a slightly smaller or larger point size is fine.

At this point it is useful to explain that we have changed the background because in order for your type to be the shape everything clips into, it has to be on the bottom. Imagine the clipping group as a container with a bunch of objects in it (the layers above).

6. Rearrange the layers so that the type is on the bottom, then the Zebra, Ducky and Guitar.





7. Now position the pointer in the layer palette so that the hand is pointing directly at the line between Layer 0 and your type layer.

8. Hold the option key (Alt on PC) and note that the hand should change into an icon that looks like this:

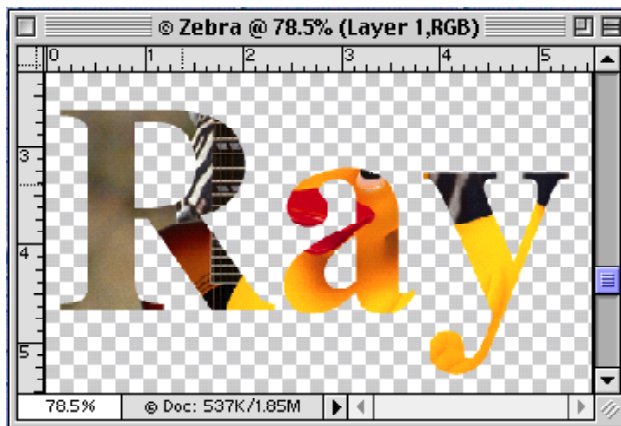
When you see this symbol, click. Notice that the line between layers becomes dotted. Do this again and again until all the layers have dotted lines. When this is done, you have "clipped" all the layers into your type.

Notice that you can still select layers and move objects within the group. You can also apply effects and change layer mode of separate layers. The bottom one is simply acting as a mask.

The final touch that completes the example on the preceding page is an inner bevel effect on the type layer. Try moving objects on the different layers, bring in additional layers and apply effects. This is a very popular effect and a useful technique.

Vocabulary: clipping group, mask, layer mode, layer effect, background layer.

Concepts: object selection, multilayering, plug-in, filter effect and layer mode.



Notice that in these examples the object inside the type have been moved.

