

Make Crop Circles in Photoshop

Create an unexplained phenomenon in a simple photo.

By [Bert Monroy](#)

The new movie, "Signs," starts on Friday. Since the movie has put crop circles in the minds of the general public, how about learning how to create your own crop circles in Photoshop? Catch today's show to see how it's done.

Here are before and after pictures.

The instructions

1. The crop circle can be any shape you imagine. To demonstrate this point on the show I used text as my shape.
2. The layer of text was rasterized (click on the Layer menu, point to Rasterize, then select Type) to turn it into pixels that can be distorted.
3. Using the Distort tool, the layer to be the crop circle is distorted to match the perspective of the scene.
4. The contents of the layer are made into a selection (Command-click on Mac or Control-click on a PC over the layer in the layer's palette).
5. The selection is saved to an alpha channel (Select > Save Selection). It will name it Alpha 1. You can name it, but for the sake of this tutorial, let it be.
6. Duplicate the alpha channel in the channel's palette. It becomes Alpha 1 copy.
7. Turn the eye icon on for both alpha channels.
8. Make the channel Alpha 1 copy the active one and with the Move tool, lower it slightly to create an overlap between the two channels.
9. In the Calculations function (Image > Calculations), choose Alpha 1 copy for the Channel in Source 2.
10. Choose Subtract for the Blending and click OK.
11. Go back to the RGB composite channel.

12. Create a new layer above the layer with the crop circle.
13. Make the alpha channel a selection (Select > Load Selection). Choose Alpha 2.
14. Fill the selection with any color you wish.
15. Create another layer.
16. Select a square that encompasses the entire shape of the crop circle with a little extra on the sides.
17. Fill the selection with a color picked from the surface of the area where the crop circle appears.
18. Apply the Add Noise filter (Filter > Noise > Add Noise) with a high amount of at least 100.
19. Apply the Motion Blur filter (Filter > Blur > Motion Blur) in a vertical direction with a distance of about 30.
20. Make a Clipping Group between the layer with the motion blurred noise and the layer with the edge shape by Option (Alt on a PC) clicking between these two layers in the Layer's palette.
21. Make the background layer that contains the wheat field active.
22. Select a square that encompasses the entire shape of the crop circle with a little extra on the sides.
23. Choose New Layer Via Copy from the Layer menu.
24. Move the layer in the palette so it is on top of the layer with the crop circle.
25. Make the layer a selection by Command (Control on a PC) clicking on it in the layer's palette.
26. Apply the Radial Blur filter (Filter > Blur > Radial Blur) in Spin mode with an amount of about 10.
27. You might want to increase the detail a bit with the Levels command (Image > Adjustments > Levels).
28. Like you did with the original crop circle shape, distort it so it matches the angle of the crop circle.
29. Make a clipping group between the layer with the radial blurred image and the layer with the layer of the crop circle shape by Option (Alt on a PC) clicking between these two layers in the Layer's palette.

Bert Monroy is the author of "Photoshop Studio with Bert Monroy," which is

available at the techtv store.

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