

Total time:
4-6 hours



Difficulty Level: Challenging

Skill Points:

- Learning how compositing works
- Discovering inexpensive alternatives to full programs like Photoshop
- Creating some composite images

COMPOSITING IMAGES

TO REACH NEW LEVELS OF CREATIVITY



Compositing is the combining of visual elements from separate sources into a single photograph. The idea behind the final photo may be to create something realistic or something more fantasy oriented.

KEY LESSON: Compositing used to be difficult since it used to require expensive layering programs like Photoshop. Now, you can composite images using phone-editing apps, which is a great way to get started - if you don't want to spend a lot of money on a full-featured editing suite. Our favorite phone editing apps for compositing are: *Photoshop Mix* (requires free Cloud account), *Snapseed*, *Photoblend Pro*, *Enlight*, *Blend Editor*, and *Fused*. They are either free or only cost a few dollars.

EQUIPMENT: Any camera including mobile | Any lens | **Software:** This requires a layer-based program such as Photoshop (Lightroom will not work), or an appropriate smart phone app.

SAMPLE PHOTOGRAPHS



Waterscapes: Here are two photographs that can be combined, through compositing, to create a stronger single image. If you're completely new to compositing, start with a simple app. For a beginner, we recommend *Fused*. Try each app since all have one or two composite techniques that they are really good at.



Red Light & Snow: With compositing, you can do what's called *overlay* imaging: where you "blend" parts of each image together. Many apps refer to compositing as *blending*. Here, the original was *blended* with a texture layer, and a semi-transparent teal colored layer, to create a final image that was far more interesting.



Window: When you begin compositing, you will start seeing objects, and scenes, as pieces to a puzzle rather than finished photos! There are two key factors to compositing: layers and masks. If your image file was created with a different camera, such as a DSLR, simply transfer the file to your app for editing (it may require a .jpeg file). Make sure that all of the resolution settings are set to the highest resolution: both for importing & exporting.



ACTION ASSIGNMENT!

- 1- For the purposes of this Action Assignment, we want you to use an app. Compositing in Photoshop requires a far deeper explanation (See Photzy.com for the Masking Guide). We encourage you to use the app "Fused" (easiest), Photoshop Mix (easier with full features), or Blend Editor (numerous creative options).
- 2- Pick two photographs to composite. One photograph should be simple and without a lot of detail. The other photograph should be a headshot of a friend or family member against a black background.
- 3- Blend the two shots using your apps. Try all the different settings to get familiar with them.

HOW DID YOU DO?

- Do you now have a basic understanding of what compositing is and how it works? Which app worked best?
- Are your composited photos visually stronger, and more interesting, than either of the individual photos used?

READY! SET! GO! **ACTION CARDS** - **STRETCH GOALS:** COMPOSITING