

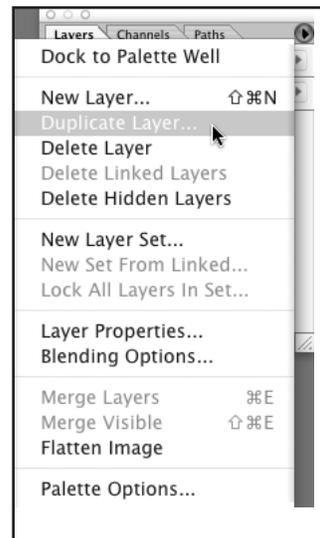
[MARKBERNDT]

BLURRING THE BACKGROUND USING LAYER MASK

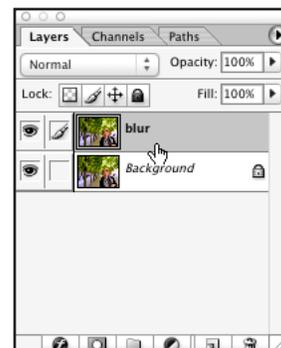
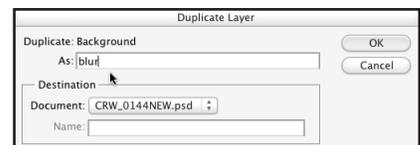
1. **OPEN** AN IMAGE FILE which needs to have the subject separated from the background by making the background out-of-focus.



2. **DUPLICATE** THE BACKGROUND LAYER (choose DUPLICATE LAYER from the Layer Palette DropDown Menu arrow in upper right corner of Layer Palette)

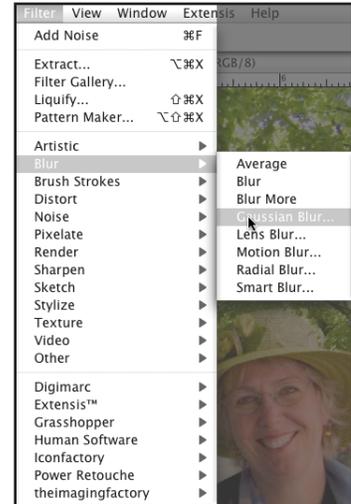


Name it "blur".

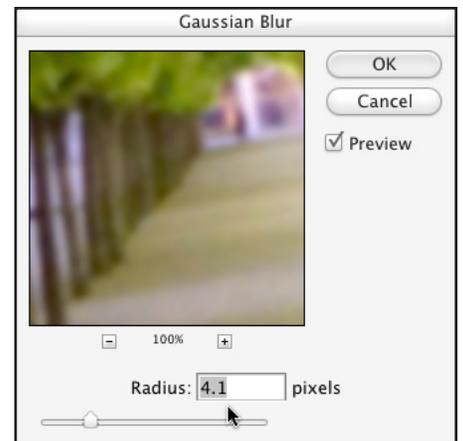


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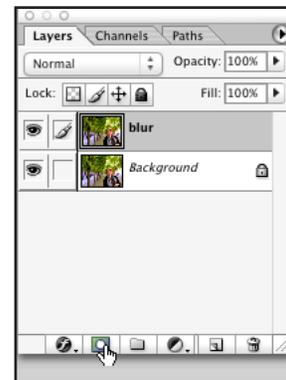
3. **BLUR** the new layer by choosing FILTER>BLUR>GAUSSIAN BLUR.



Adjust the percentage slider until the background areas of the image look properly out-of-focus. NOTE: At this stage, the entire image will be blurred.



4. Click the LAYER MASK icon at the bottom of the Layers Palette to ADD A LAYER MASK to the "blur" layer.



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5. Select the BRUSH tool, and choose a soft-edged brush.

6. Make BLACK your foreground color.

7. Select the LAYER MASK on the “blur” layer.

REMEMBER, IN A LAYER MASK:

WHITE PAINT = VISIBLE

BLACK PAINT = INVISIBLE

8. PAINT IN the subject of your image. As you paint, that part of the image should become sharp, leaving the background blurred, because PAINTING WITH BLACK IN A LAYER MASK MAKES THAT PART OF THE LAYER INVISIBLE.

9. This is what your finished layers palette should look like. The black shape in the layer mask is the portion of the “blur” layer that is no longer visible. In that area you see through the blur layer to the original layer below.

