# Create the Perfect Sunset Shot

Capturing the beauty of sunset (or sunrise) is sometimes a little trickier than it appears. Because of the wide range of light, it's difficult for your digital camera to accurately record the details of the foreground and the background. The easiest way to get the perfect sunset photo is to take two photos — one exposed for the darker foreground and one properly exposed for the lighter background, and combine them using Paint Shop Pro. For this tutorial, download the sample images provided and follow along. Once you understand the concepts of combining photos, you'll be able to use the skills you learn here on your sunset photos.
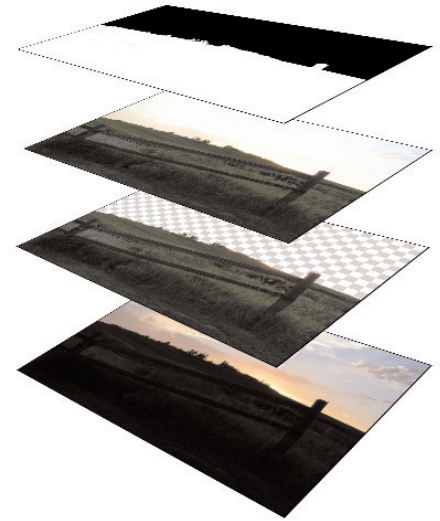
What you'll need:

■ Sample Sunset foreground image
■ Sample Sunset background image
■ Jasc® Paint Shop™ Pro®

When you complete this tutorial you'll be able to:

■ Copy a photo
■ Paste a photo as a new layer on top of another photo
■ Rename layers
■ Copy a layer
■ Transform a photo into a Mask Layer
■ Modify a Mask Layer
■ Combine two photos so that the best of both shine through

Note: The two sample images used in this tutorial were taken with a digital camera attached to a tripod. The intent was to take two identical photos using different exposure settings. The foreground photo was taken using an exposure setting of +1.0 (overexposed) and the background photo was taking using a setting of −1.0 (underexposed). Most digital cameras allow you to manually select an exposure setting. Refer to your camera's user guide for more information on Exposure Bracketing.

Open the Sample Photos

1. Choose **Start > Programs > Jasc Software > Jasc Paint Shop Pro**
   or double click the Paint Shop Pro Icon on your desktop to open Paint Shop Pro.

2. Choose **File > Browse** or click the **Browse** button on the Standard toolbar to open the Image
   Browser. Use the Image Browser to find the sample photos you downloaded with this tutorial.

3. Paint Shop Pro's Image Browser works like Windows Explorer. On the left, navigate to the folder
   containing the photo you want to use. On the right, double-click **Sunset foreground** and then the
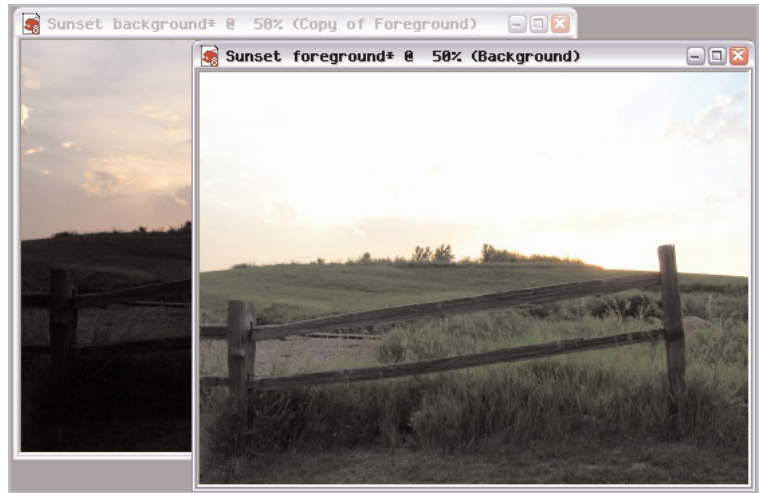   **Sunset background** photos to open them.
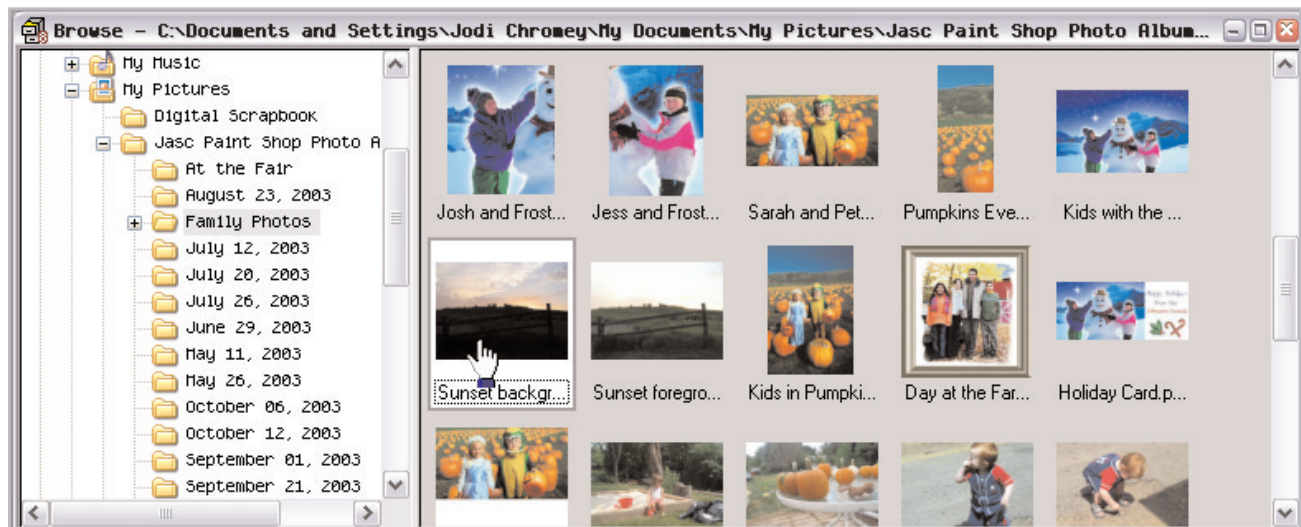
Tip: After opening both photos, you may want to reduce their zoom level to 50 percent or less to free
up more screen area for your work.

Copy the Foreground and Paste it into the Background

4. Before you get started you'll want to make sure the Layer palette is displayed.
   Choose **View > Palettes > Layers**.

5. Click the **Sunset foreground** photo to make sure it's the active image, and then copy it to the clipboard by pressing <**Ctrl**>+**C** (or choose **Edit > Copy**).

6. Now click the **Sunset background** photo to make it the active image and then press <**Ctrl**> + **L** (or choose **Edit > Paste > Paste as New Layer**). This pastes the **Sunset foreground** photo on top of the **Sunset background** as a separate layer (called Raster 1).

> **Tip:** When you need to copy an entire image to the clipboard be careful when using <**Ctrl**>+**A** (or **Selections > Select All**) if the magnification level is such that part of the image is off screen. <**Ctrl**>+**A** will only copy the visible portion of the image, which may not be what you intended. Using <**Ctrl**>+**C** will copy the entire image every time.

Rename Layers

7. In the Layer palette, right click the Raster 1 layer and choose **Rename**. Enter the word **Foreground** and press **Enter**, this will make it easier to keep track of what each layer contains.
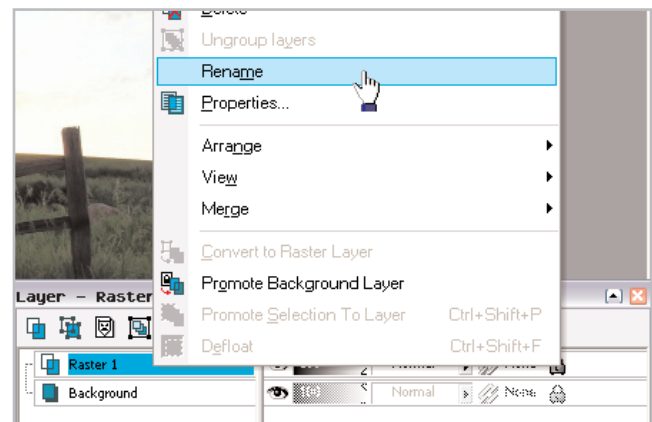
8. Now, in the Layer palette, right click the Foreground layer and choose **Duplicate** (or click the **Duplicate** button at the top of the Layer palette). This creates a new layer called Copy of Foreground.
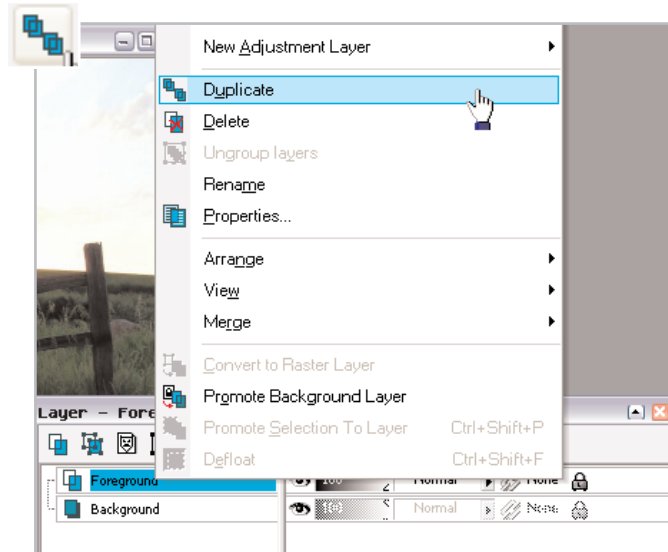
9. Rename the Copy of Foreground using the same method in **Step 7**, only this time call the layer **Mask Source.**

> **Tip:** Use new layers to make edits. This prevents the original layer (Background layer) from being altered.

Convert Mask Source to Greyscale

10. Now we're going to adjust the saturation level of the Mask layer, essentially turning it into a greyscale image needed for the mask. Choose **Adjust > Hue and Saturation > Hue/Saturation/Lightness**, or press <**Shift**>+**H**.
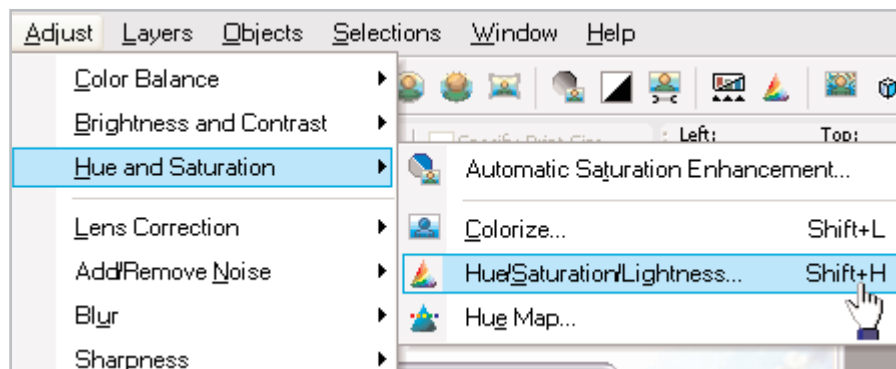
11. On the Hue/Saturation/Lightness dialog, leave the Hue and Lightness values at **0**, but set the **Saturation to –100.** Click **OK** to apply the settings.
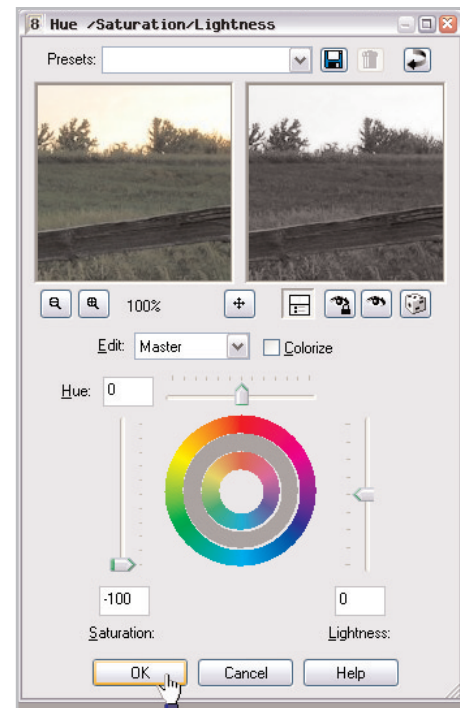
Convert Mask Source to Black and White

12. With the Mask Source layer still active (click it in the Layer palette to be sure), we'll turn the greyscale image into a black and white. The goal is to create an all white background and an all black foreground. Choose **Adjust > Brightness and Contrast > Brightness/Contrast** or press <**Shift**>+**B**.
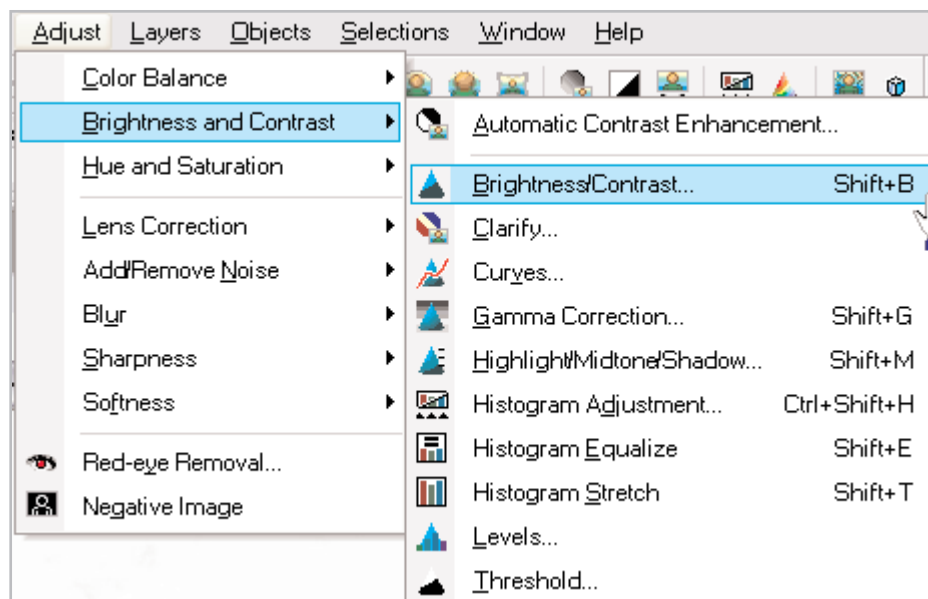
13. In the Brightness/Contrast dialog, set the Brightness value to **–10** and set the Contrast to **60**. These settings work well for this image, but you can experiment with the adjustments if you desire. Click **OK** to apply these settings to your Mask source layer.

> **Note:** Masks are greyscale images applied to layers. A Mask layer's black pixels will completely hide underlying pixels, while the white pixels reveal underlying pixels. Depending on the lightness their lightness level, pixels that are varying shades of grey will partially hide or reveal the underlying pixels.
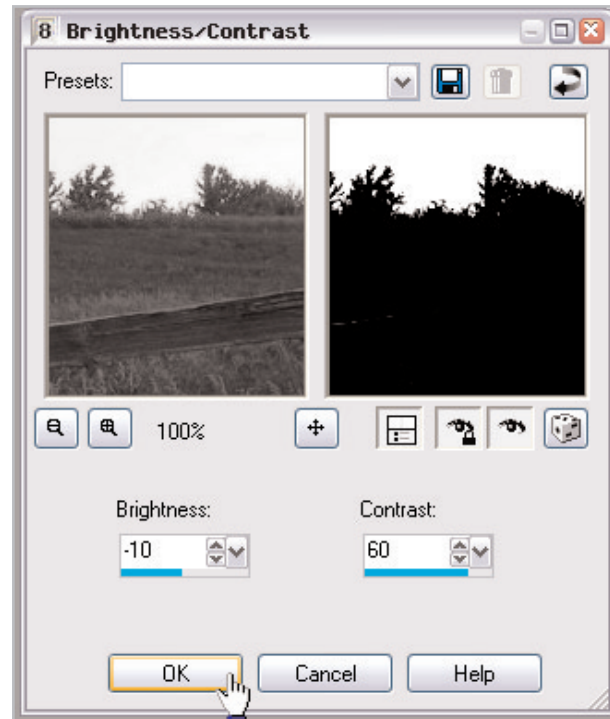
Create a Mask

14. In the Layer palette, click the Foreground layer to make it active.

**15.** Now choose **Layers > New Mask Layer > From Image**.
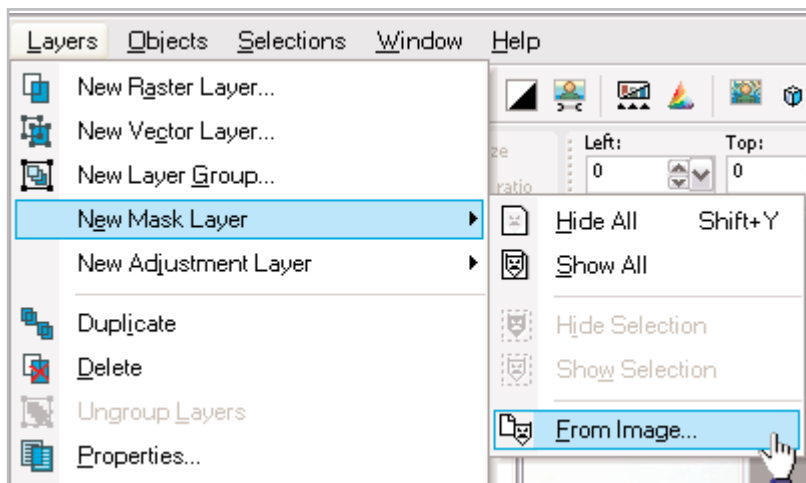
16. In the Add Mask from Image dialog, Sunset background is already in the Source Window field — don't change this. In the middle section of this dialog, choose the **Source Luminance** option (this uses the luminance/lightness value of the mask layer pixels to determine what hides and what shows through). At the bottom of the dialog, mark the **Invert mask data** box (this will reverse the transparency of the mask data to hide the undesired part of each image and reveal the desired part). Click **OK** to apply your settings. Your layer palette should look similar to the one shown here.
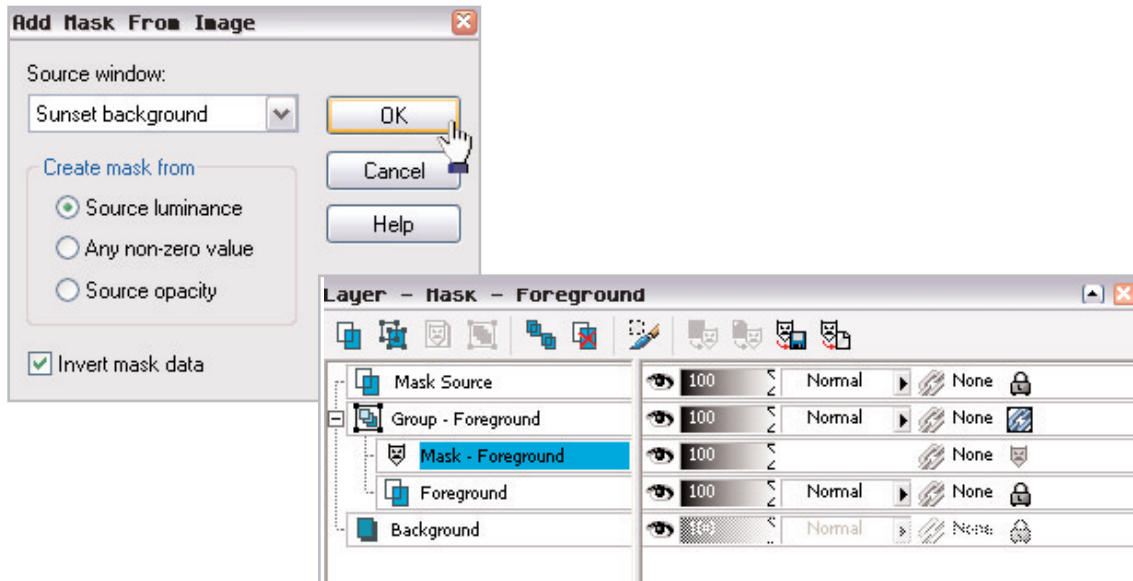
View the Results

17. In the Layer palette, click the layer named Mask Source and then click the Visibility Toggle (the eye icon) so the red X appears over it. Turning off this layer reveals the overall image, which because of the mask layer seamlessly combines the desired background with the desired foreground.
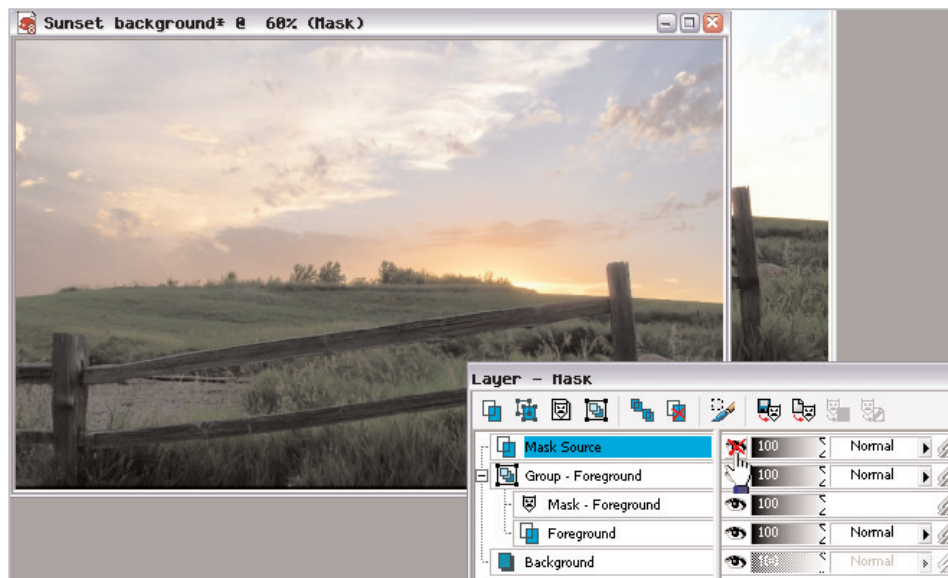
Save Your New Image

18. Now that you're done, you save your image. Choose **File > Save As**. In the File Name field give your photo a new title. In the Save as type field save it as Paint Shop Pro Image to retain the layer information, or you can save it as a jpeg if you want to e-mail it to friends and family and show them what you've accomplished with Paint Shop Pro.

Next Steps:

By practicing the techniques you've learned here, as well as experimenting with other Masking techniques, you'll quickly realize the power this feature holds. You can use masking to combine all kinds of photos to create sophisticated collages. Refer to the Paint Shop Pro User Guide for more detailed information.

If you'd like to see the Mask feature in action, watch the **Photo Collage** movie in the Paint Shop Pro 8 Product Tour (in the application, choose **Help > Product Tour**), and in the Photo Features section of the Tour, choose the **Photo Collage** movie.