

## MASKING

Masking is very easy in Affinity Designer. By using the techniques in this tutorial, you will be able to put some very fancy frames around your images by using masks.



### LET'S GET STARTED

For this tutorial, we have provided 4 masks for you to use while learning this technique. Two of the masks with "ml" in the file name are from my collection. The other two with the prefix "sc" were created by Sue Chastain whom some of you may remember for her work at About.com in years past.

Download and unzip the masks to a folder on your hard drive where you can find them. Along with the masks, we have also included 4 royalty free photos that you can use if you wish.

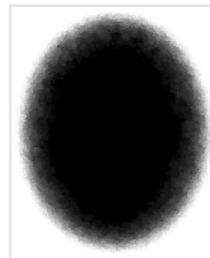
Not all masks are created in the same way. Look at the two masks below. They are just the opposite but the end results are the same. Using the first mask, the white area protected everything under it on the image. Using the second mask, the black area protected everything under it on the image. You'll learn how to do it both ways in this tutorial.



sc-edge020-jpg



result



ml-002-jpg



result

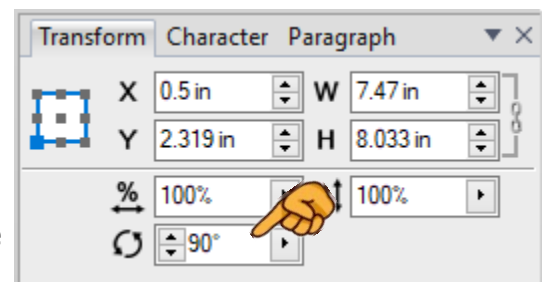
Start a new document in Affinity Designer in a size of your choice - 800x800 is a good.

### USING A WHITE MASK

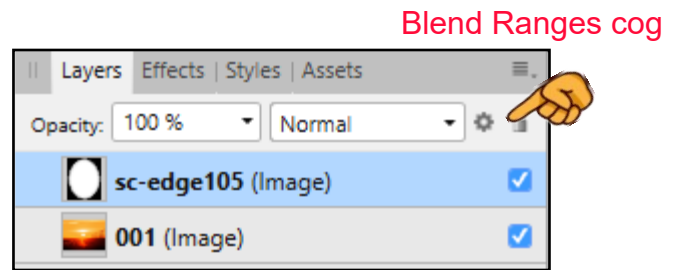
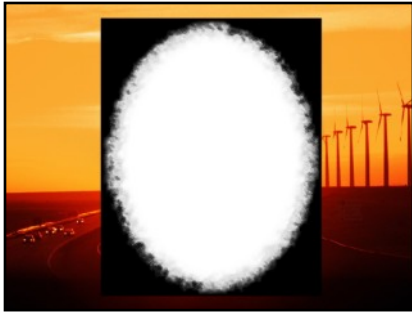
Use the **Place Image** tool  on the left toolbar to import a photograph.

Use the **Place Image** tool to open the mask named **sc-edge020.jpg** and place it on top of your photograph.

If you need to rotate either the image or the mask, select the one to rotate, then type 90 in the **Transform Rotation** box.



Move your image so the white area of the mask is over the part you wish to protect. The rest of the image will be removed in our final step. Your mask will be the top layer in the **Layers** panel.



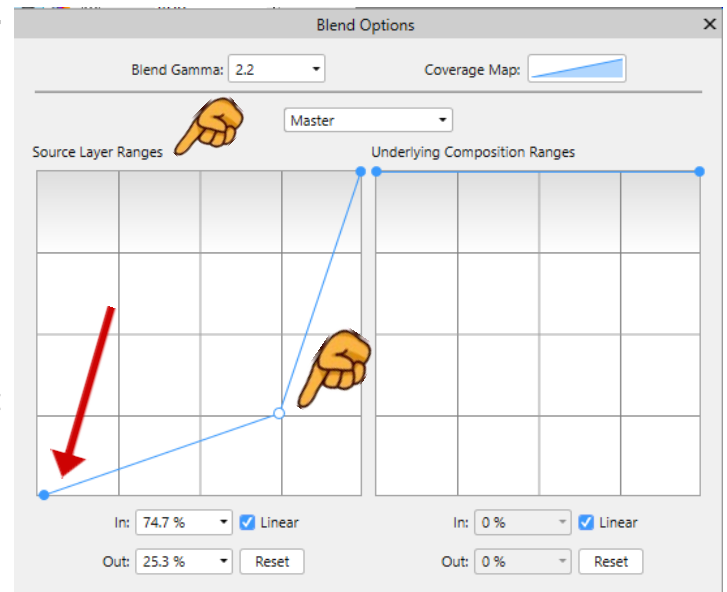
With the **mask layer** selected, click the **Blend Ranges** cog. This will open the following window. If the window is covering your image, move it out of the way so you can see what is happening.

Drag the top left node in the **Source Layer Ranges** all the way down to the bottom (red arrow shows where). Watch your image while doing this. You will see the black areas fading away.

Click on the diagonal line to add a second node. This node controls the edges of the mask. Drag it up and down to see what it looks like. You have full control over the edges.

You can add more nodes to change the effect but let's not do that now. These nodes can also be deleted like any other node.

When you're happy with the look of the mask, just close the **Blend Options** window.

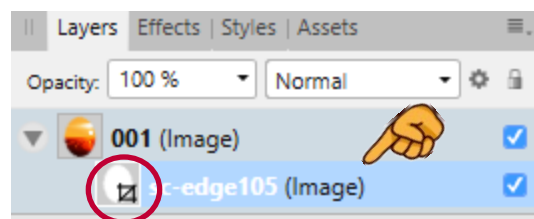


Now comes the magical part. **Right-click** on the top layer (the mask) and select **Mask to Below** from the pop-out menu. The results should be a beautiful masked image.

If you are not happy with the placement of the mask on your image, select the crop icon on the bottom layer and use the **Move** tool to re-adjust the position of your mask. That's it! Export your image as a .png file without the background.



After applying mask



After repositioning mask

## USING A BLACK MASK

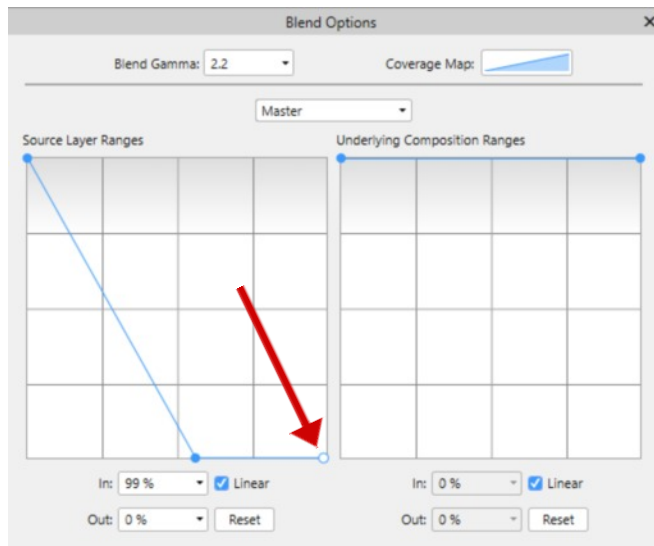
Okay, now that we know how to use a white mask to protect specific areas on our image, we're going to do the same thing but this time, we'll use a black mask to protect specific areas on our image.

Start a new document. Use the **Place Image** tool to open a photograph and the **ml-001.jpg** mask.

Just like before, position the mask over top of your photograph.



With the **mask layer** selected, click the **Blend Ranges** cog. This will open the window below. If the window is covering your image, move it out of the way so you can see what is happening. This time, drag the right node to the bottom and the white areas will fade away. Again, you can add a node so you can adjust the edges as desired. When finished, close that window, go back to the **Layers** panel, **right-click** the mask layer and select **Mask to Below**. You should now have another image with an interesting edge.



Just remember, use the **LEFT** node on the **Source Layer Ranges** if your mask is white and the **RIGHT** node if your mask is black. Many thanks to [Teejay Joyce](#) for helping me with this!!

If you have PhotoImpact or PSP, you already have a lot of masks. Just save them as a .jpg and you're ready to go. [Sue Chastain](#) has a collection of 125 masks that she was offering for free on About.com some years ago, but she is no longer works there. You can reach her via her web page and ask of she'll make them available to you. They are my favorites!

Try using some **Effects** on your masked image. You can get some interesting results.

Enjoy!

EXAMPLES



By Teejay Joyce

Here are a few mask collections that you can download by clicking on the image below.

This will give you lots of choices to play with when masking an image.



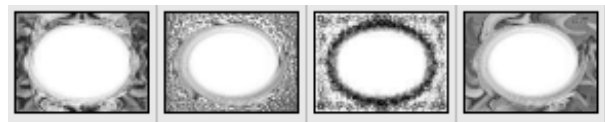
119 PhotoImpact masks



28 masks by Deb Dehaven



18 masks by Birgit



14 masks by Debbie Hardisty

---

**PIRCnet** invites you to join the **PIRCForum**. This is an active forum for Affinity Designer and Affinity Photo for Windows users. You'll find a wonderful group of warm, friendly, talented, and knowledgeable people who are ready and willing to share their expertise with you. There are creative activities for all skill levels. This forum is "family friendly", 100% free, and everyone is welcome.