



Corporate Flow



Illustration



Image Editing



Automation



Web



Text Effects

Canvas Tips and Techniques



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Creating Space with Canvas

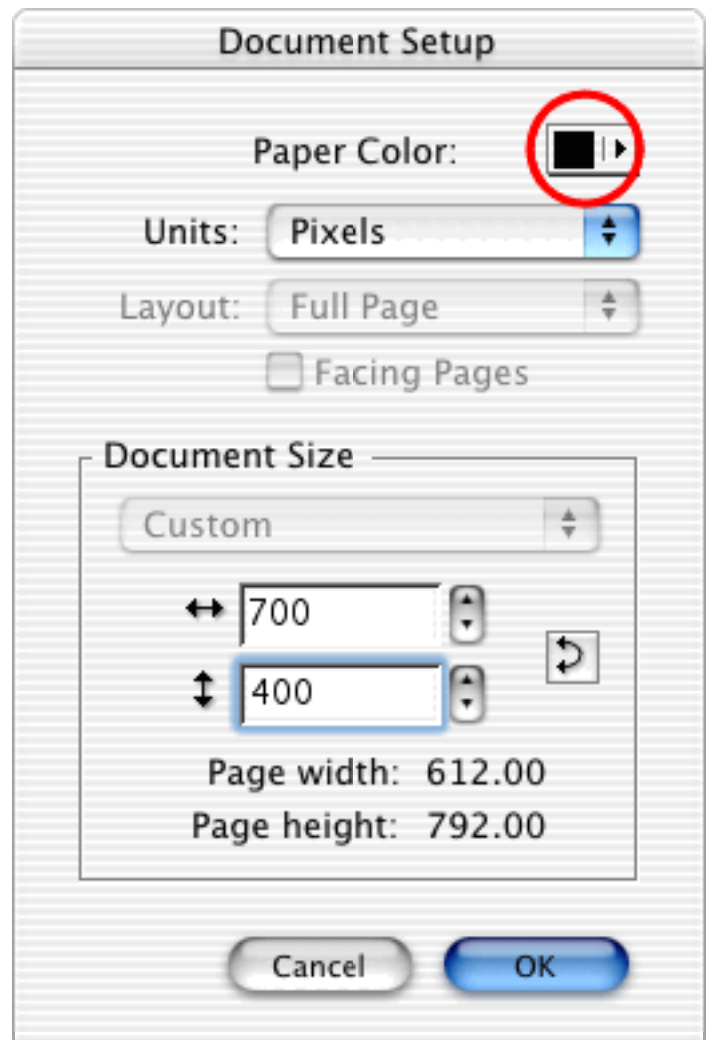
Illustrators often have to create realistic scenes straight from their imagination. So does your next project call for converting an interest in the "wild blue yonder" into a realistic space scene?

In this advanced tutorial we will take you through the process of creating interesting and exciting space images right out of a science fiction movie set. With Canvas' integrated tool set, a little practice and a wild imagination, think of the worlds you'll soon create! Beam me up Scotty...

Step 1

Setting up your document

Start by opening the Document Setup palette (see right). Since most of space is dark, you can save yourself some time and just change the Paper Color to black. And to have a panoramic view, make the document 700 pixels by 400 pixels wide.



Step 2

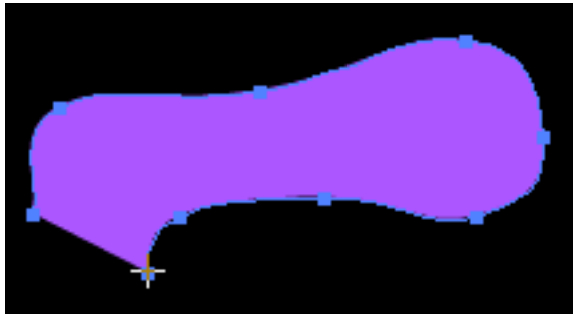
Create gas clouds

Space is loaded with gas and dust clouds, in this step you'll learn to create these clouds and how to use them as a back-drop for the space scene.

Let's start. First, select the AutoCurve tool for the Toolbar and create random elongated cloud formations, see example below. Experiment with different shapes, but keep them loose.



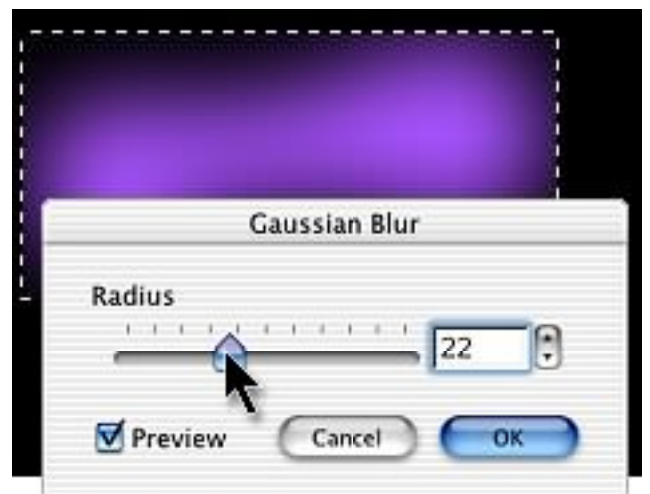
Note: It's a good idea to use a different color for each gas cloud to give them some separation.




Use the AutoCurve Tool to create the gaseous clouds.

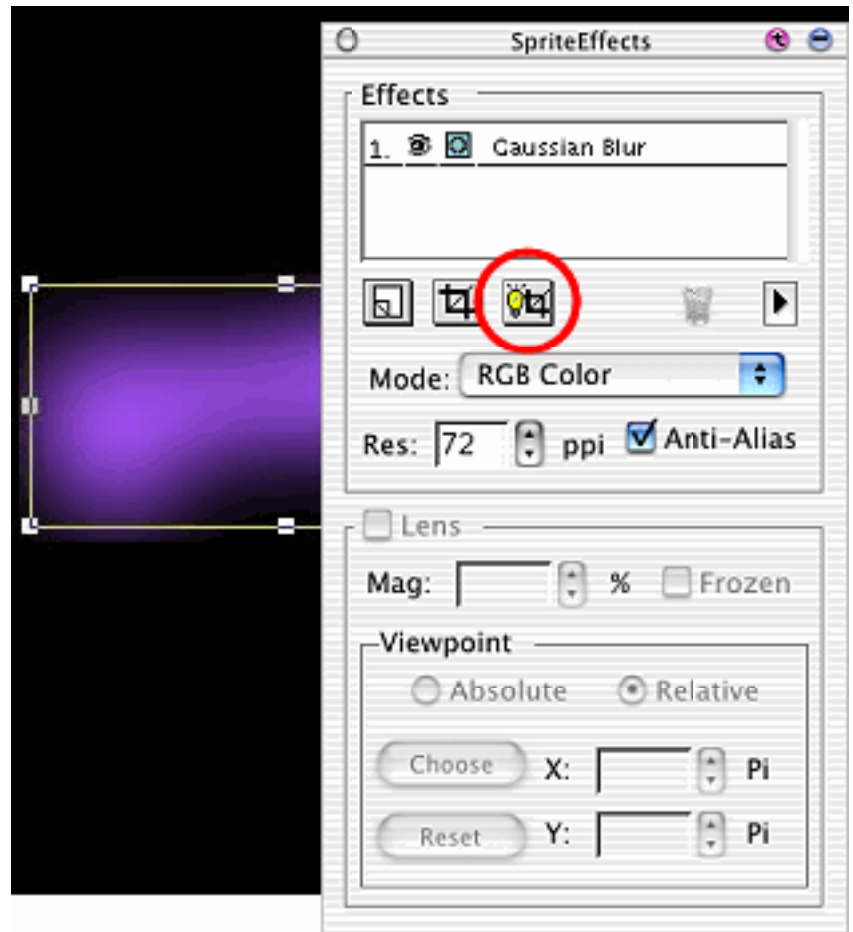
Blur the Objects

Now blur the object until you get a soft, "gaseous" edge, in this example I used a Gaussian blur (Object>SpriteEffects>Add Effect>Gaussian Blur) of 22 on a 72 Resolution SpriteEffect. Remember that the amount of Gaussian Blur required is affected by the resolution of the SpriteEffect.

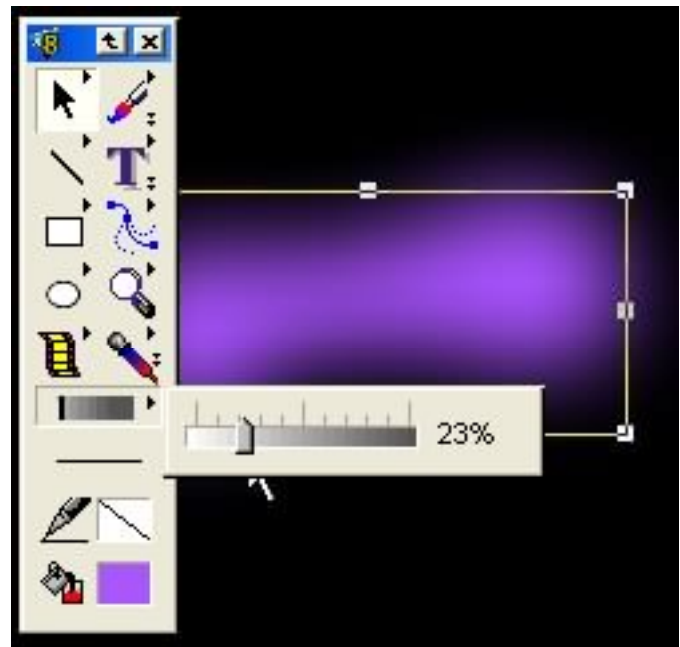


Creating Space with Canvas (Continued)

 **Tip:** Use the Smart Crop located in the Sprite Effects palette to keep the blurred object's edges from ending abruptly.



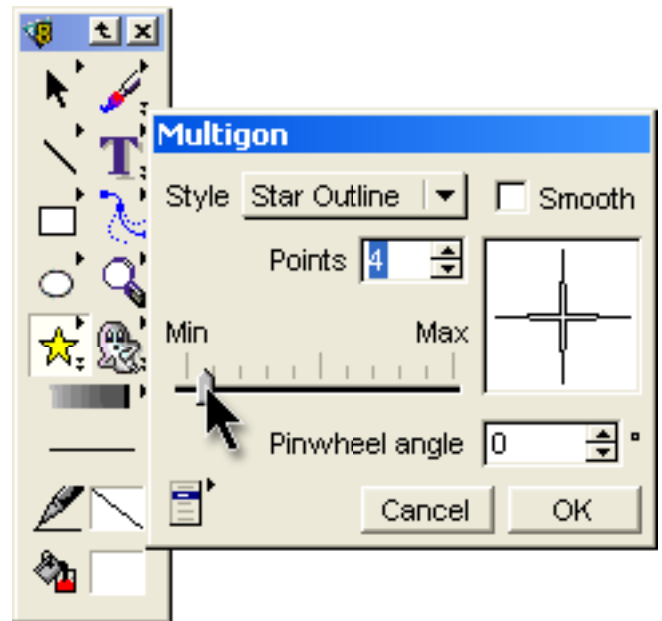
Now bring the opacity of the object down to a level (see right) where it is very subtle. You will be left with a very soft, transparent cloud. You will use these to add coloring to the background of your space scenery.



Step 3

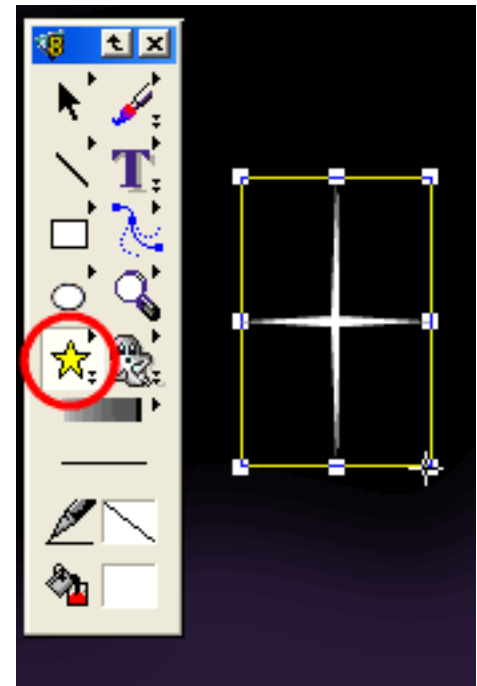
Create Distant Stars

Now you'll create the bright distant stars using the Multigon tool. First make sure the Toolbox default colors are set to white fill and null stroke. (Select the default colors with no object selected) Then select the Multigon tool from the toolbox, and double-click on it to access the manager. In the manager, select Star Outline from the Style pop-up and assign it 4 points. Now adjust the star thickness by moving the slider. Typically you want it as thin as possible with the center slightly thicker than the edges, so move the slider to the left. When the star properties are to your liking, click OK.



Now with the Multigon Tools selected, click and drag the star out to a reasonable size. Usually you will want to give it a little more height than width. You should end up with a star like the example on the right.

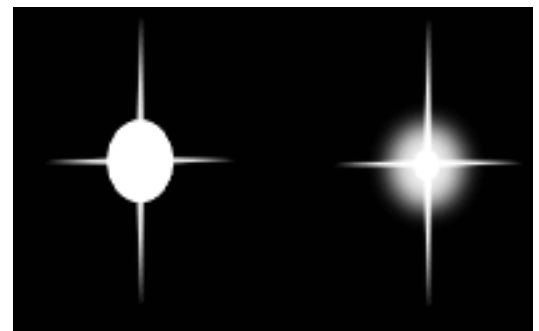
Next you'll need to convert the star object to paths (Object>Path>Convert To Paths.) At this point your star may look a little jagged. Apply a small amount of Gaussian Blur (Object>SpriteEffects>Add Effect>Blur>Gaussian Blur..) to smooth out the edges. Usually a Gaussian blur of 1 will suffice.



For the glow, create a small white circle using the Oval tool from the toolbox and center it over your star. (If you like symmetry, you can select both the star and the circle and choose Align... from the Object menu to center the objects exactly.) Now apply a Gaussian Blur (Object>SpriteEffects>Add Effect>Blur>Gaussian Blur..) to the circle using a radius of 12 to soften the edges. This gives the star a bright flaring appearance.



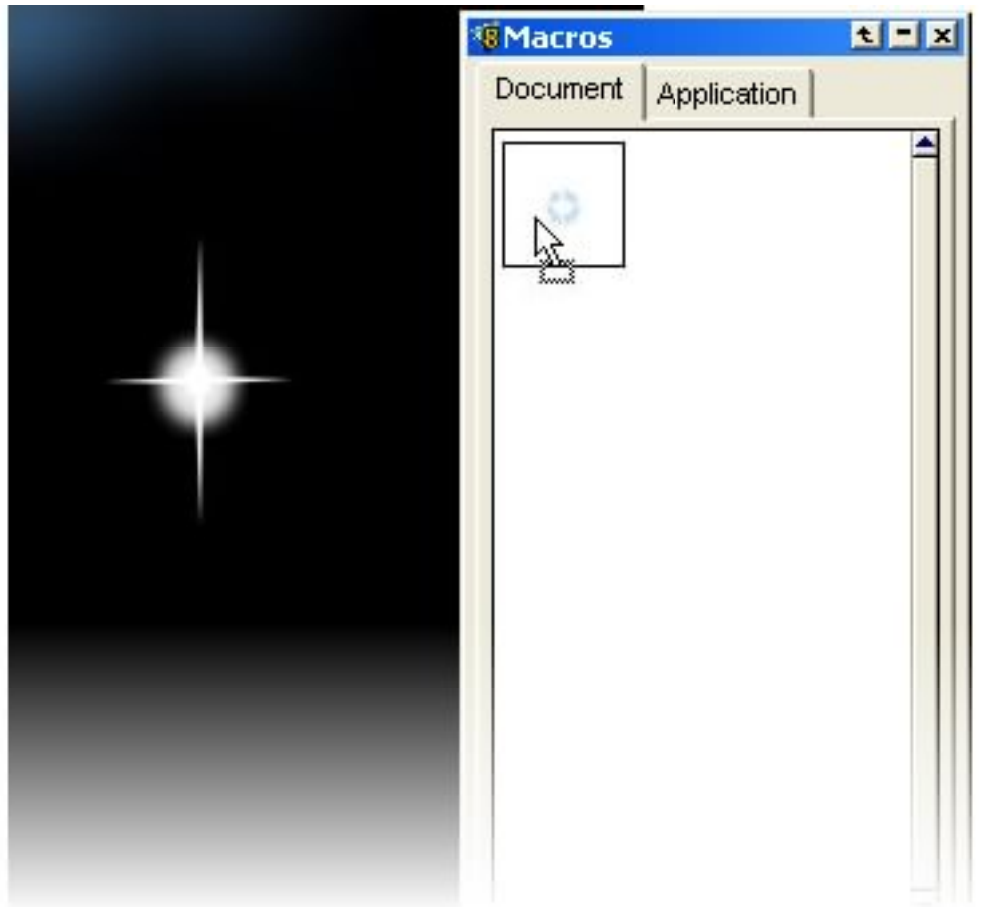
To make the star appear even brighter, create a larger, bright red circle, apply a Gaussian Blur of about 15. Place the red flare behind the star and white flare you just created. Your star should look like the one below.



Blur a white circle to create the star's shine.



Tip: Using the Macros could save you time and effort. Just open the Macros palette (Window>Palettes>Macros...). Select the group of objects that make up your star, and drag them into the Macros palette. Give the Macro a name when prompted, in this case call it "Star 1" and you're done. Now if you ever need to create a star, just open the Macros palette, click on Star and drag in to your workspace. Canvas also lets you save the Macros set to your desktop. This allows you to share your Macros with others or for future use.



Saving a variety of different stars as Macros can save you lots of time later.

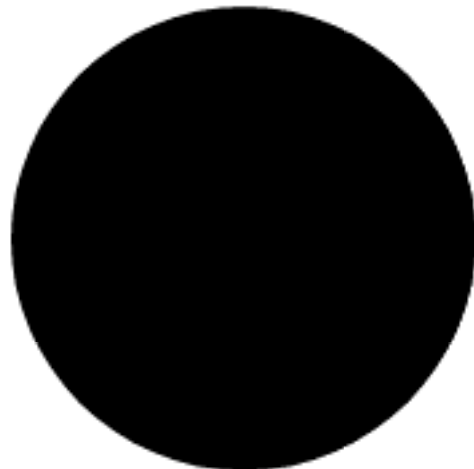
Step 4

Creating the Planets

Using the Oval Tool create a circle like the one on the right.



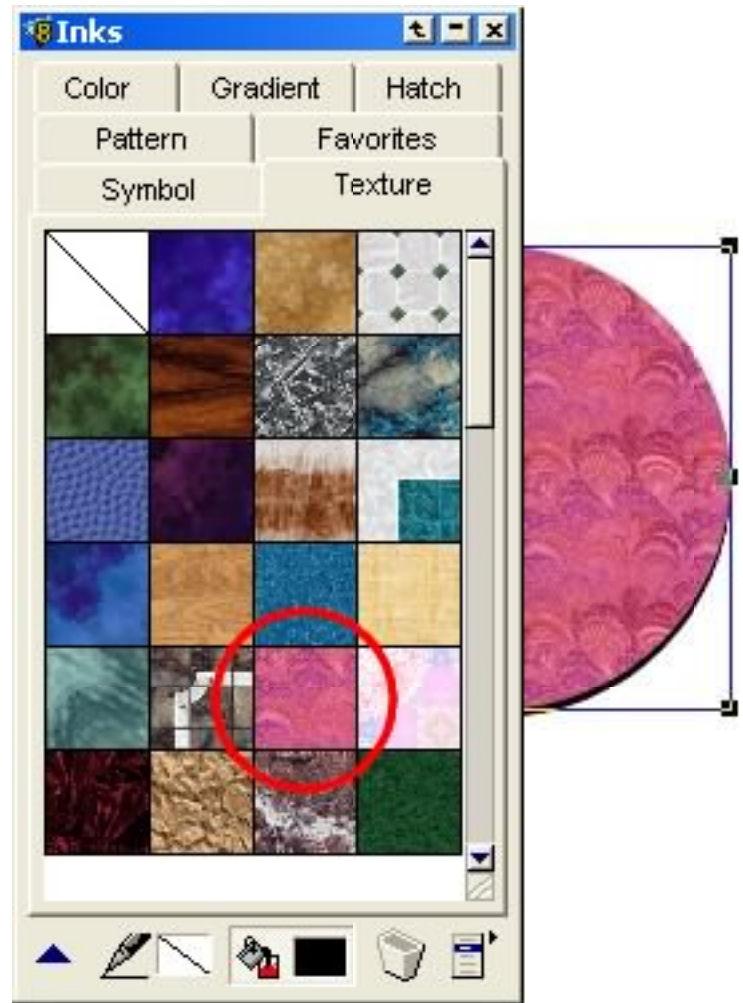
Tip: To create a perfect circle hold down the Shift key as you drag the Oval Tool.



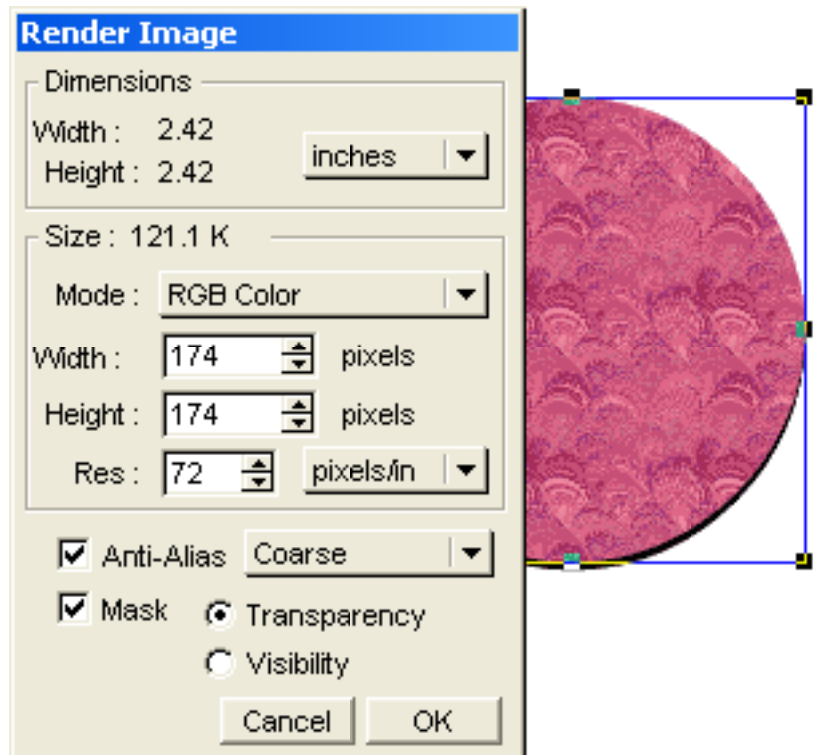
Create a circle.

Creating Space with Canvas (Continued)

Next, with the circle selected, apply a texture from the Inks palette. Any texture will work, experimenting with different patterns will result in a variety of planet colors.



Now Render the Object (Image>Area>Render...) you just applied the texture to. Make sure you check Anti-Alias and select Coarse from the pop-up menu. Also check Mask and choose the Transparency option for the mask. Click OK.




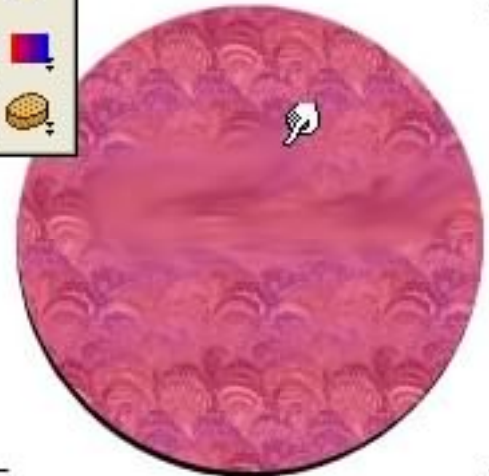
Apply a texture to the planet and then render it.

Creating Space with Canvas (Continued)

Using the Smudge Tool located in the Paint Palette, smudge the rendered image. (Access the Painting tools by tearing away the palette from the Toolbox.)




 **Note:** For best results use a large brush size and smudge outward and across. This will give your planet a swirling windswept appearance much like Saturn.



Drag the Smudge Tool outward

When you're done smudging, the image should look like the one at the right.

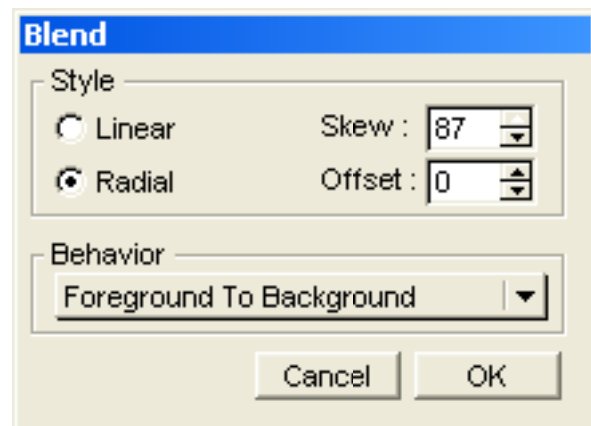
Finish this step by duplicating the image you just smudged (Windows: Ctrl + D, Mac: Command + D). This duplicated images will be used to give the planet a shadow and highlight effect in the next step.

 **Note:** The duplicated image must be perfectly centered over the original image.



Duplicate your smudged planet.

Next select the Blend Tool from the Paint palette, and double-click it to access the manager. Select Radial as the Style, set the Skew to 87, for the Behavior, select Foreground To Background (see example of settings at right). Now, make sure the Toolbox foreground color is set to Black and the background color is White before starting.

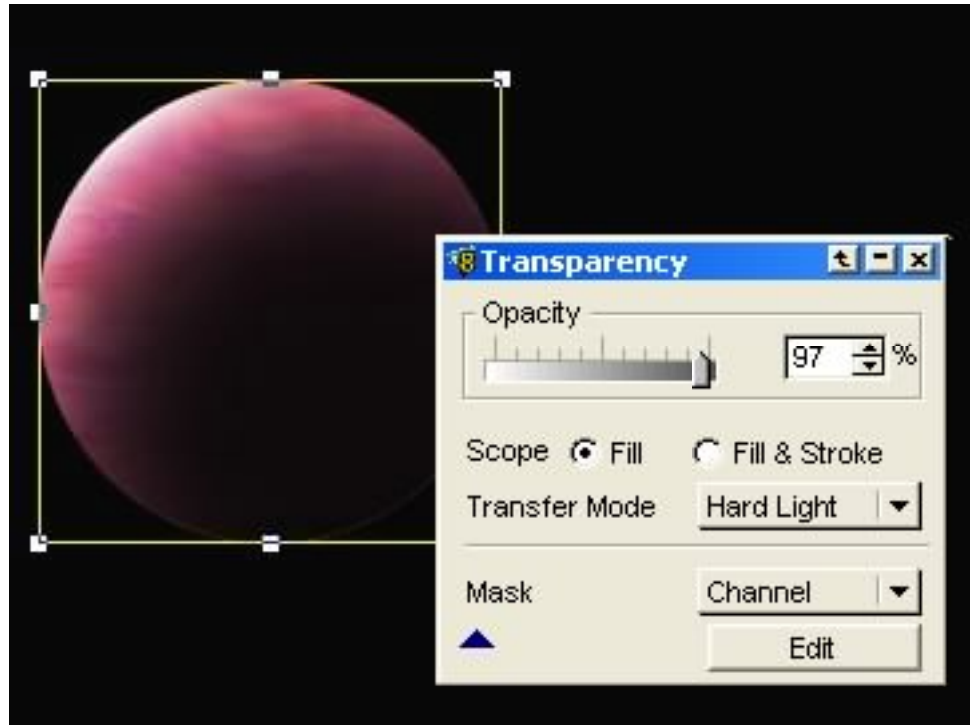


Creating Space with Canvas (Continued)

Drag the Blend tool from just off center to the top right, then open the Transparency Palette (Object>SpriteLayers>Show Palette) and change the Transfer Mode to Hard Lighting. The image should now start to look like a 3D planet, similar to the example on the right.

If the shadow didn't come out correctly you could reapply it or edit it as many times as you wish until you get the desired effect.

Note: For planets with forward lighting just change the foreground to White and the background to Black. That will produce an image like the one below.



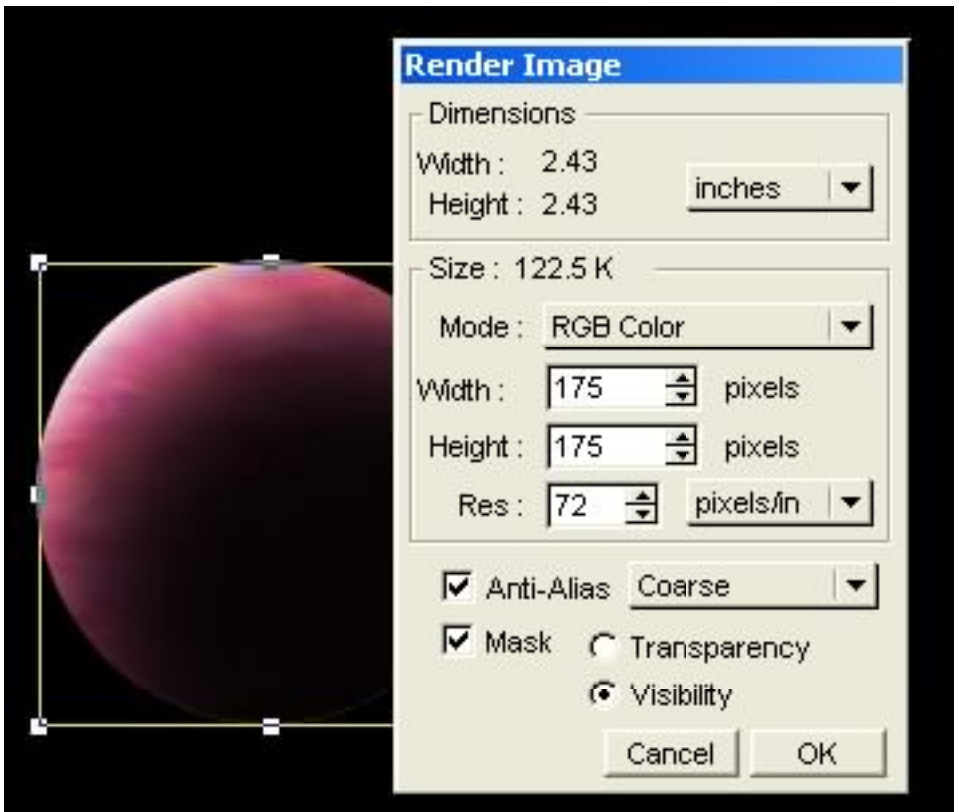
Change the Transfer Mode to Hard Light to simulate the lighting seen in space.

Step 5

Creating Rings

At this point you already have a pretty good looking planet but we are going to take it a step further and add a ring around it. The first thing you'll need to do is marquee-select all the images and object that make up the planet. With everything selected render (Images>Area>Render) the images. Make sure to select Anti-Alias, Coarse and Mask, Visibility. Click OK.

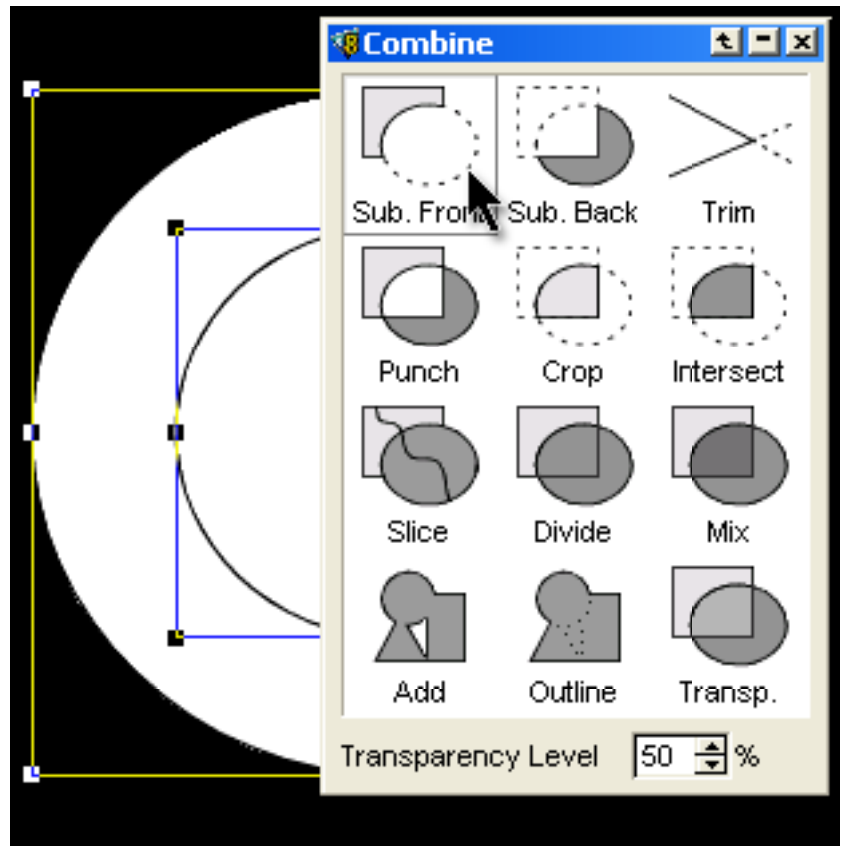
Once you have rendered you planet, move it away from the object and images you used to create it. There must not be anything left behind the rendered planet.



Render the planet.

Creating Space with Canvas (Continued)

To create the ring, first create a circle. Make it any color you like, in this example I chose white. Next create another smaller circle inside of the big one and shift-select them both. Use the Combine (Window>Palettes>Combine) to Subtract Front.



You should now have a donut ring shape.



Now compress the ring, the result should be a long oval.

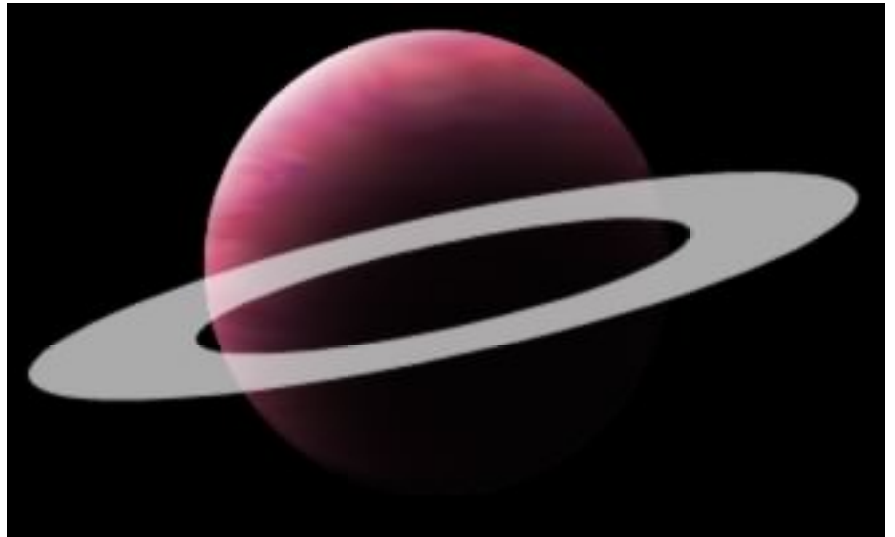


Compress the ring until it's an elongated oval.

Step 6

Wrapping the Ring Around the Planet

Place the ring over the image of the planet you just created. In this example I also rotated the ring slightly to the left (Effect>Rotate>Rotate Left>Other>Angle 10>OK) and lowered the opacity to about 70% using the Transparency slider from the Toolbox.



Place the completed ring in front of planet image.

Now select the planet image and duplicate it (Windows: Ctrl + D, Mac: Command + D). You should now have a ring with a planet image behind and in front. See example.



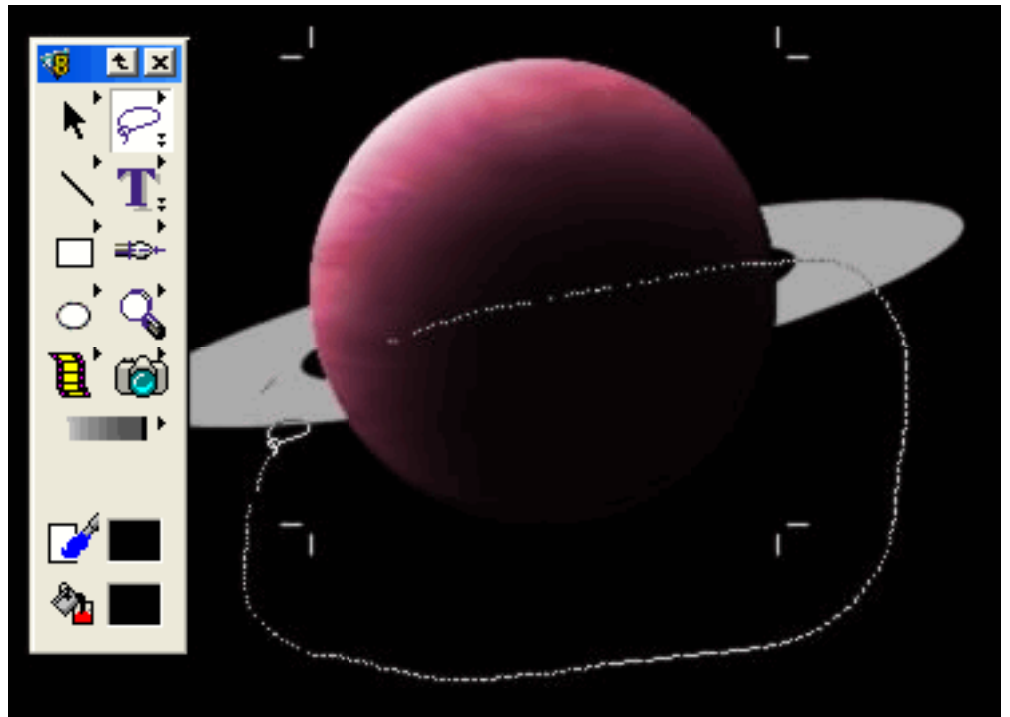
Note: The duplicated image must be perfectly centered over the original image.



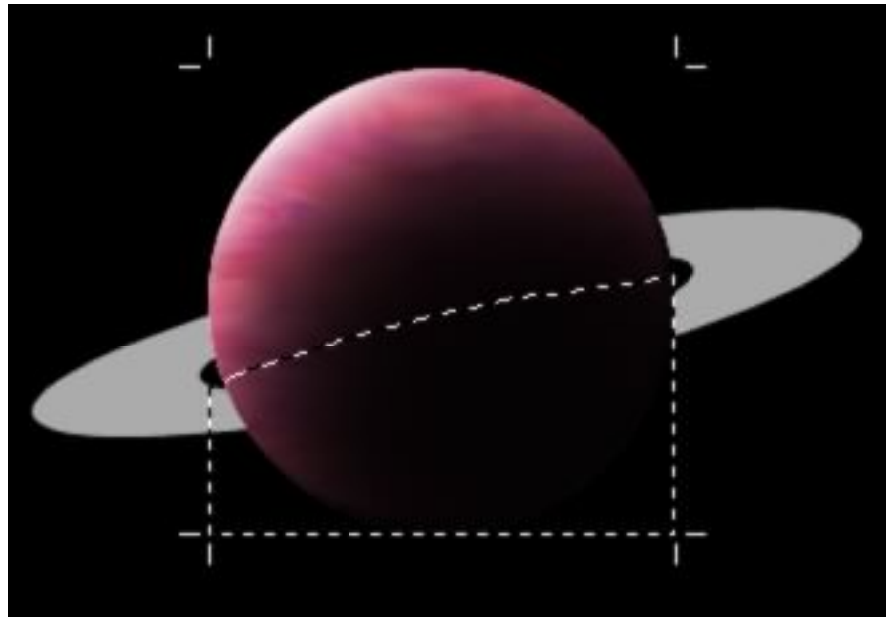
Duplicating the planet brings a copy in front of the ring.

Remove the bottom half of the planet

Double-click the top planet image to enter paint-edit mode. Use the Lasso tool to carefully select the lower half of the planet.



When finished, the resulting selected area (marching ants) will look like this.

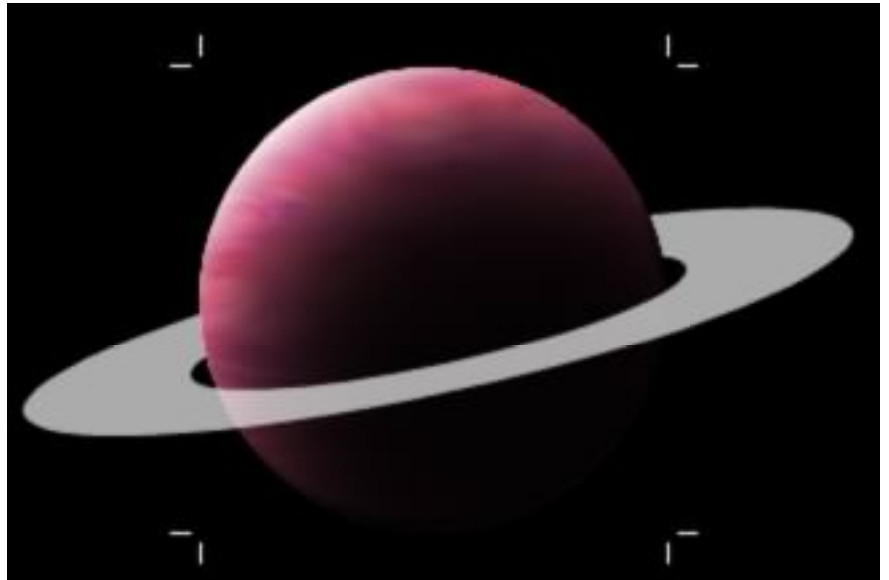


Creating Space with Canvas (Continued)

Now simply press the Delete key and viola! You have an awesome planet surrounded by a ring "a la" the planet Saturn.



Note: It's a good idea to group these images to prevent them from separating if you decide to move them around.



The completed planet with its gaseous ring.

Using the steps learned in this tutorial it's easy to put together exciting spacescapes like the one below, straight out of your imagination.

