

MAKING MAP CAPTIONS

a detailed guide by

ALPHA ANON EDITS  **v1.0**

**In this guide will be for Photoshop newbies but also anyone looking for some tips
(the workflows and tips should still carry over to any image-editing software)**

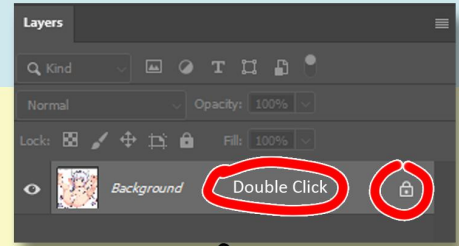
*The views expressed in this content are satirical and should not be taken seriously.
(I just want people to learn something)*

For this tutorial we'll create an edit of Kanna in a white bikini and a simple white background. This will be the easiest color to mask for recoloring

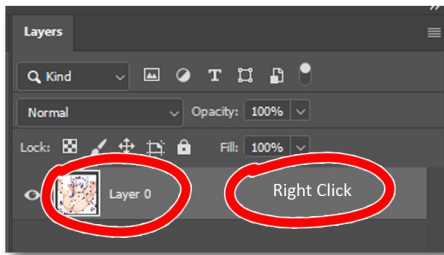
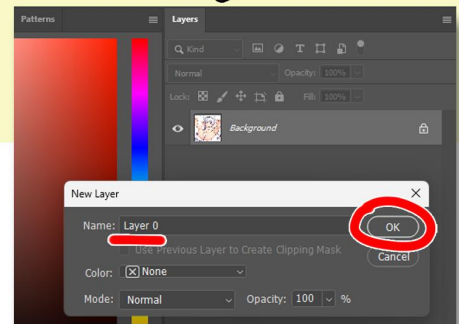
Setting up the image ready for masking



Dragging an image into Photoshop it'll appear as a locked Background so first we need to quickly convert it into an editable layer



Simply double click empty space on the Background layer to bring up the New Layer window (Here you can rename it anything) then click OK



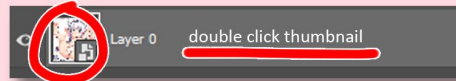
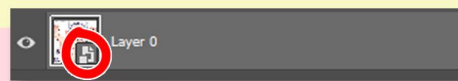
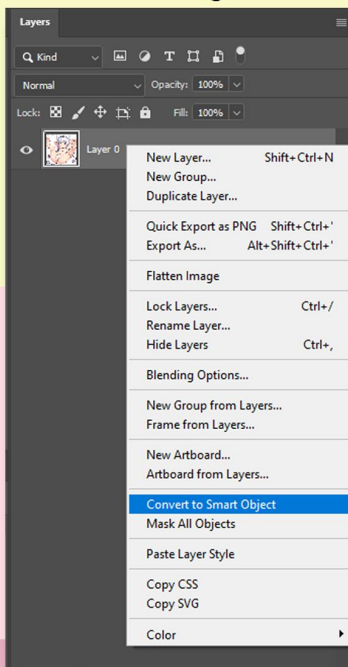
Currently it's a just raterized image

We need to convert it into a Smart Object so we can't mess up the original source artwork

If you ever need to get to the original raterized image (for inpainting/re-drawing elements) then you can just double click the thumbnail and it'll open up a new Photoshop window to access it

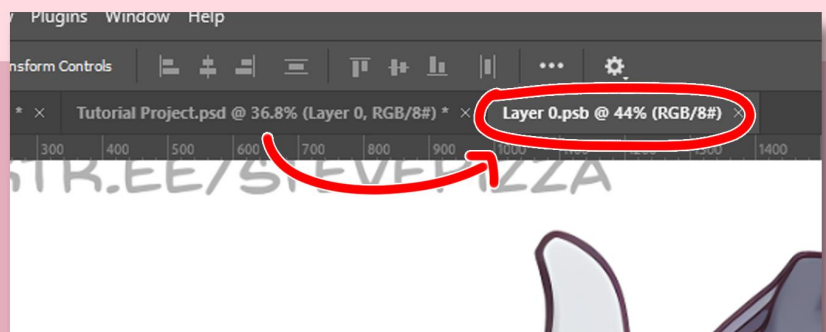
This is the same for anything you convert into a Smart Object

Now just right click the layer and select Convert to Smart Object



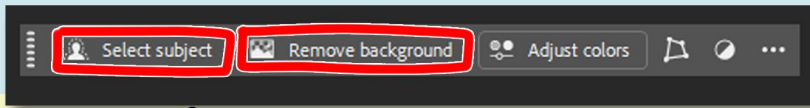
Any changes made to the original image will update the Smart Object in the main project once you save it

Simple press Ctrl+S (or File > Save)

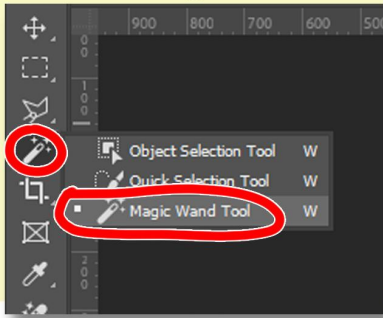


Separating the character from the background - Part 1

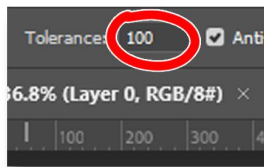
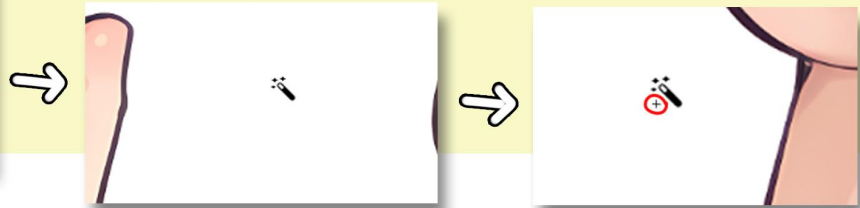
In recent versions of Photoshop they introduced some tools to help you mask out people, objects and remove the background for you. These would be great if they worked reliably for our use case but unfortunately they're not great for drawn characters.



Try them out if you're struggling and you can clean up the mask in later steps



For now we've got three tools we could use, however as the background is a simple white color and the characters outline is nice and bold, the Magic Wand tool is perfect for this task (for now)



Using the Magic Wand tool you'll want to select all parts of the background

Pressing the Shift key will allow you to add to the current selection

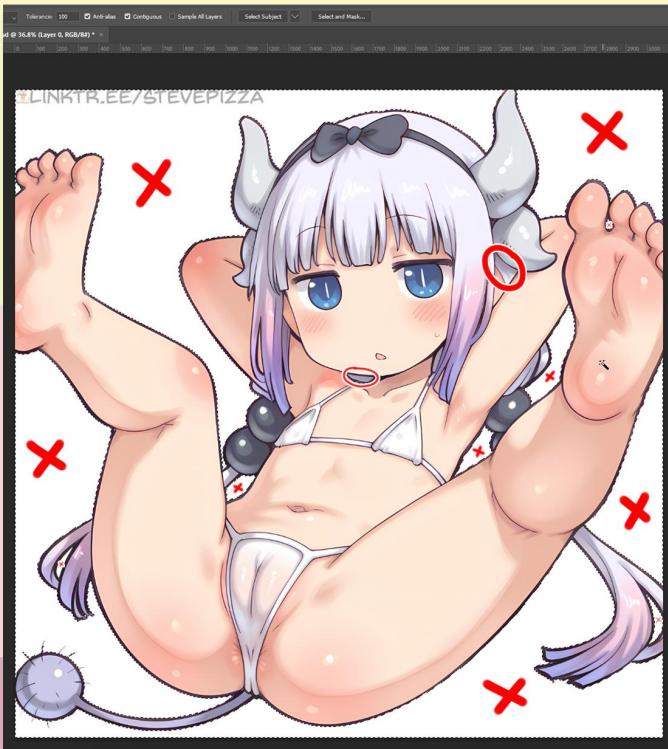
(Pressing Alt will do the opposite)

You might need to lower the Tolerance amount if some selections are too aggressive

Keep selecting all parts of the background until you're sure all white is selected

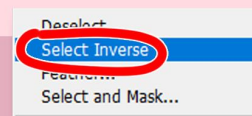


You will struggle to select these parts (Will be covered in next section so ignore)



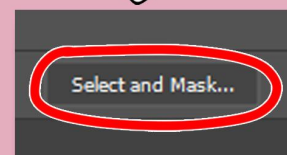
This technique is only selecting the simple background however we want to swap that to only selecting the character as we're masking the character from the background

Right Clicking on a selected area should bring up a drop down menu to allow you to Select Inverse



You'll know you've only selected the character if the dotted lines around the image boarder have gone leaving only ones around the subject

Now we can move onto making our Mask Layer (Click Select and Mask...)

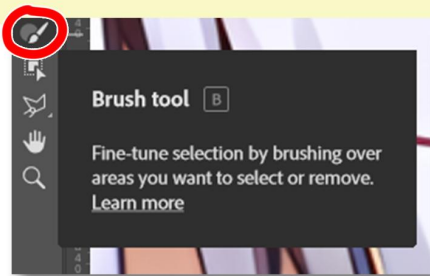
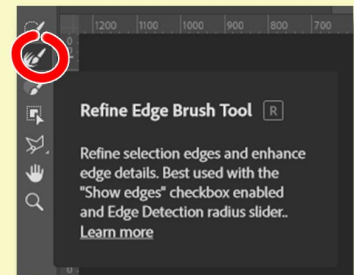
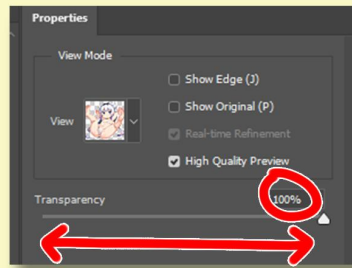


Separating the character from the background - Part 2

Now we're in the Select & Mask window we can start making adjustments to get the most out of our mask

As this is our only layer we can change the background transparency to 100% to see what's left to remove

Now switching to using the Refine Edge Brush tool we can go over those awkward areas where background isn't constant



It's never perfect as it can sometimes fade the outline of our character but we can repaint them in using the Brush tool

Using this tool we can paint around the edges of our character and you'll see the background started to fade away

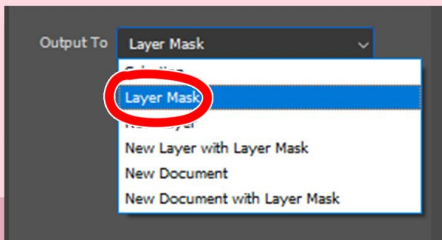
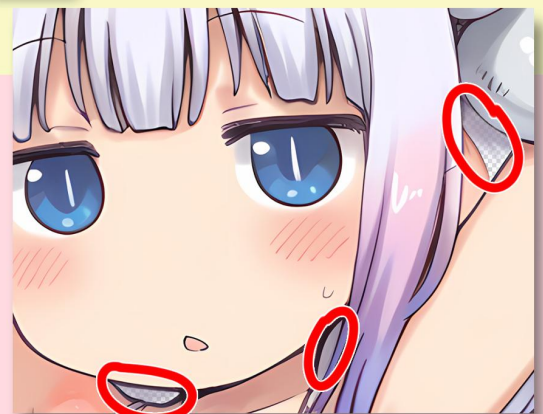
Brush Tips:
Holding down Shift or Alt will switch to + or - for any Brush



Use the Magnifier tool to help you zoom in and out

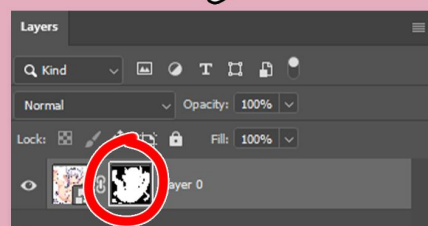
To Increase or Decrease the size of the Brush, hold down Alt + Right Click whilst moving your mouse left or right

When you're happy with removing all background elements we can Output our mask into Layer Mask



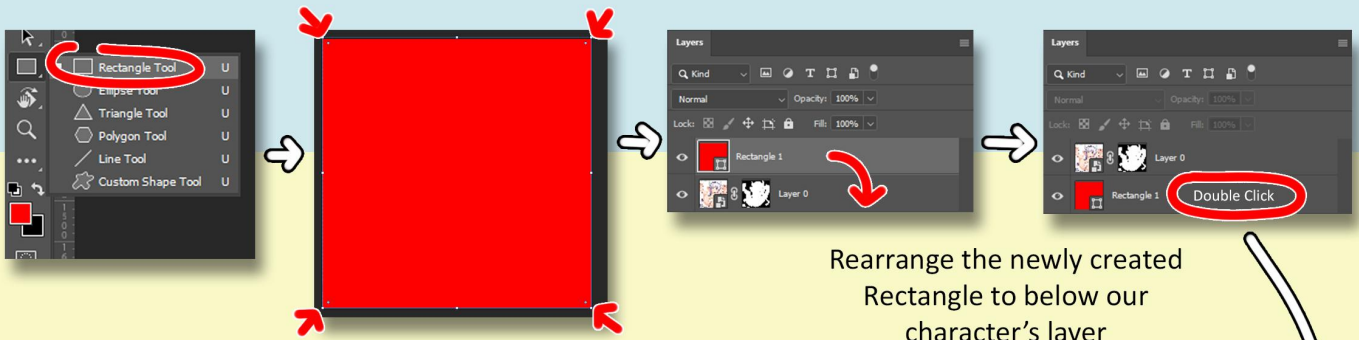
You can always go back into the mask to fix up any spots you've missed or could do better by Double Clicking the mask

This will bring up the Select & Mask window again



Adding a MAP colored Background

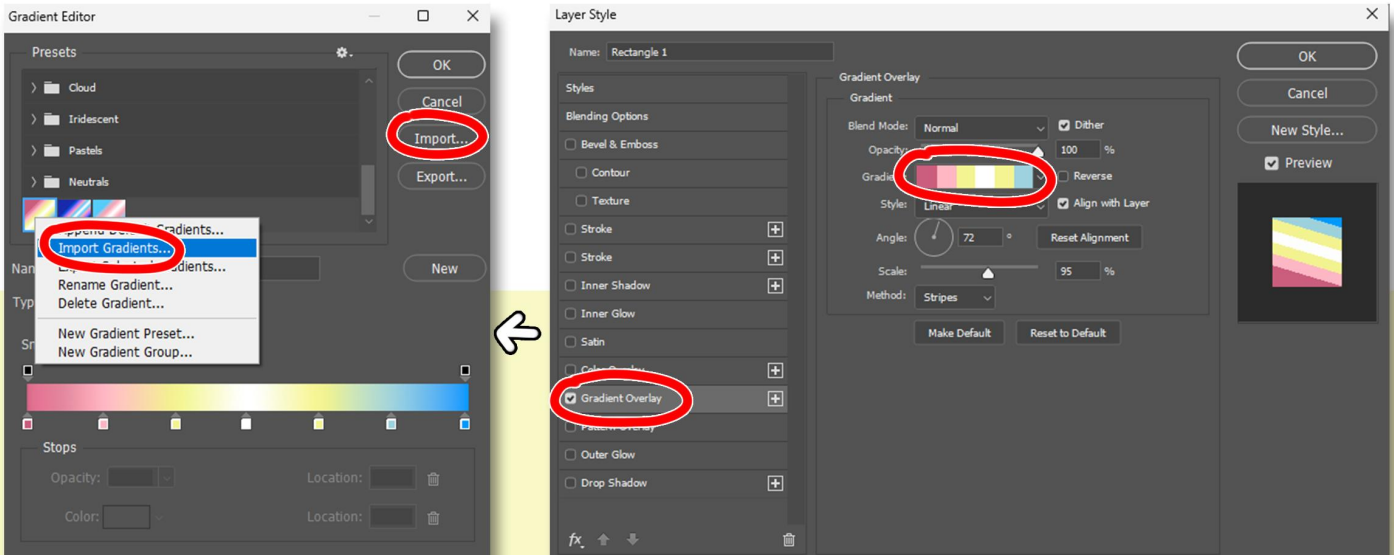
This is fairly simple once we've set it up once and created a template to use for any future captions. It'll also give us the MAP colors to be able to use for recoloring clothes and adding it to text or shapes



Using the Rectangle tool we're going to draw a one to the shape and size of our entire canvas (The color doesn't matter as we'll be placing an Overlay over it)

Rearrange the newly created Rectangle to below our character's layer

Next if we Double Click the empty space of the Rectangle layer it'll bring up that layer's Layer Style. Go down to Gradient Overlay as this will be where you can import my custom MAP Gradient to use



Once imported or you've created your own, you can start using the adjustments to alter how it appears as your background

Try adjusting these sections to make them appear in different ways
Style, Angle, Scale, Method, etc



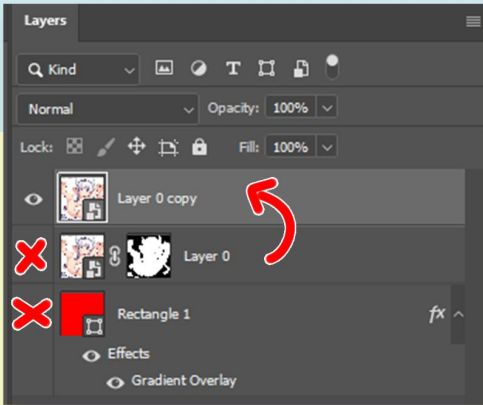
Align with Layer: Checked
Style: Linear
Angle: 90°
Scale: 100%
Method: Perceptual



Align with Layer: Checked
Style: Linear
Angle: 72°
Scale: 105%
Method: Stripes

Recoloring Clothing - Part 1

We're going to use some of the same processes we used to select the character from the background but just to select and mask out individual items of clothing

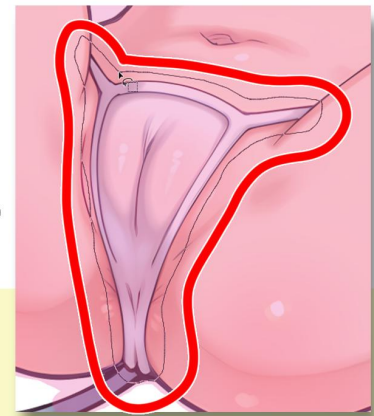
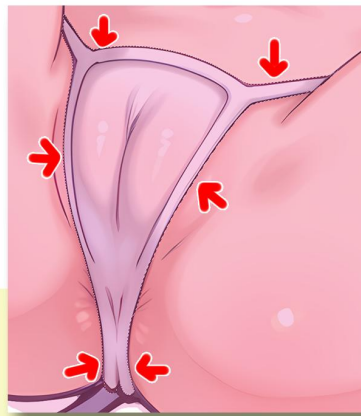
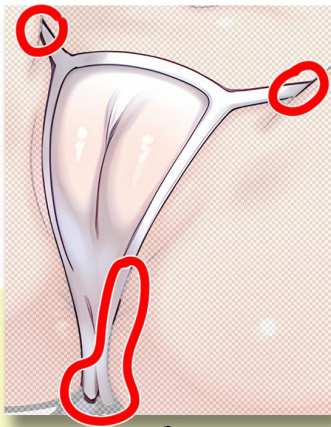
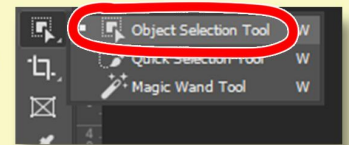


Make sure you Delete the layer mask for this next mask as we'll be making a new one (Also hide all other layers)

Now we need to duplicate the layer for each piece of clothing we want to mask for recoloring

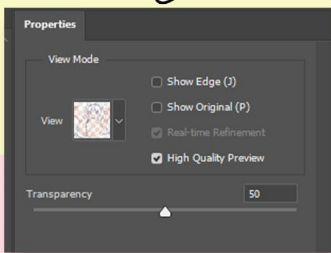
Right Click the layer and select Duplicate Layer or hold Alt and drag the layer above the main one

Using the Object Selection tool we're going to draw around her bikini bottom to create a new rough mask

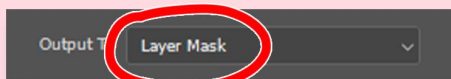
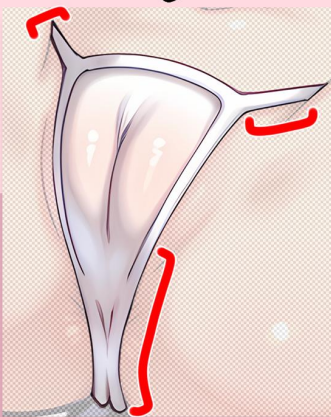


Make sure you see some dotted Selection lines around the clothes

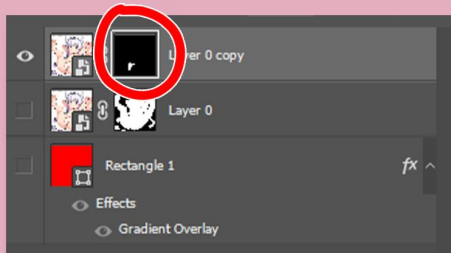
This just has to be rough as we'll use the Brush tool to paint in any bits that got missed



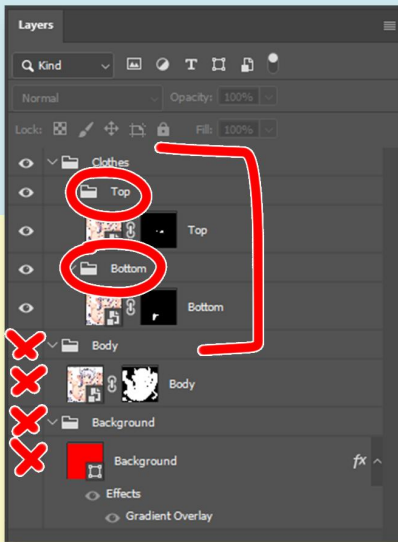
Once in the Select and Mask window change Transparency to 50% to better see where was missed



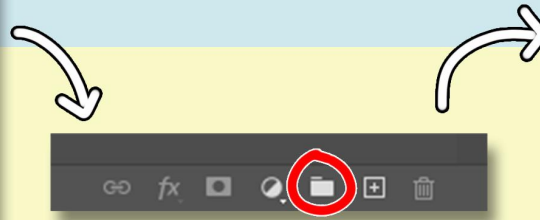
Clean up the mask using the Brush tool getting the whole outline (Just up to the black lines)



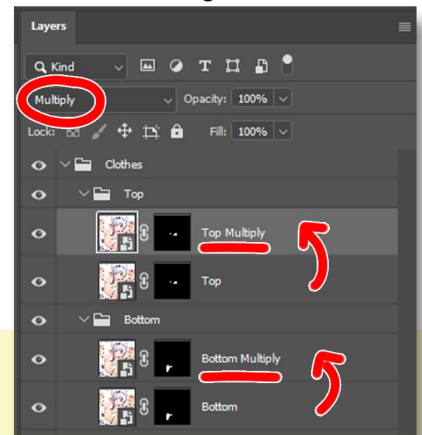
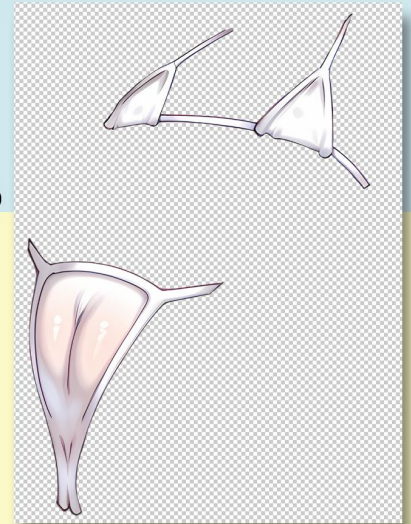
Recoloring Clothing - Part 2



Time to repeat the same process for her Bikini Top and anything else you might want to recolor

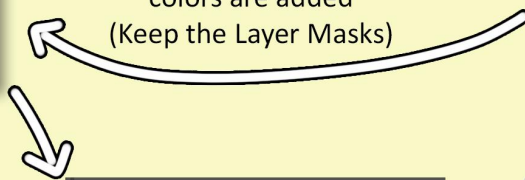
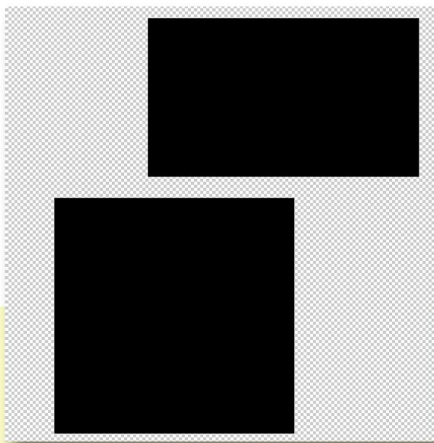


Organizing Tip:
It's a good idea to start putting items in Groups and renaming Layers



Once things are a little more organized, you should duplicate each masked clothing and place copy on top of each other. Then set the Blending Mode to Multiply

This is so we can use the above layer to retain extra details once colors are added (Keep the Layer Masks)

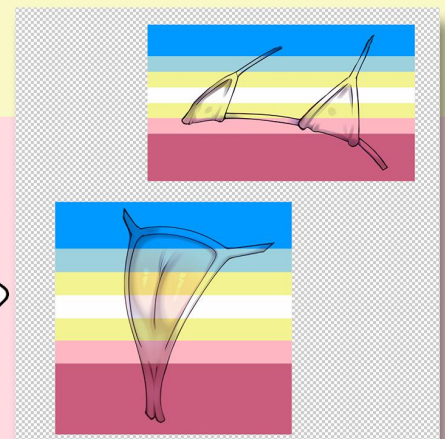
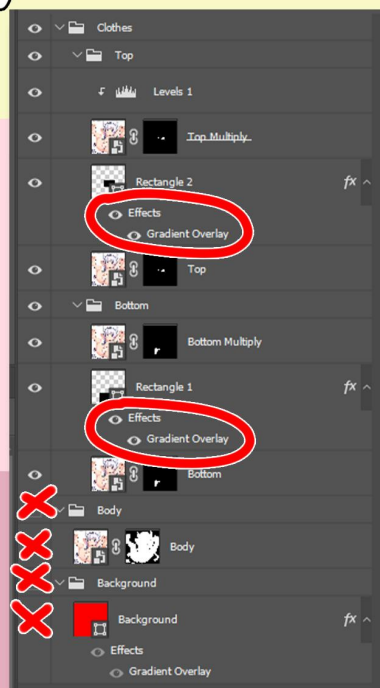


Time to create a Rectangle for each piece of clothing

Just get them in an approximate size and shape to fully cover each one

Place them in the middle of each set of clothing

You can now apply that same MAP color Gradient Overlay we used for the background



Make sure the Angle is set to 90° as we'll be rotating them in the next steps

It doesn't have to be Stripe you could also use one of the other Gradient Methods

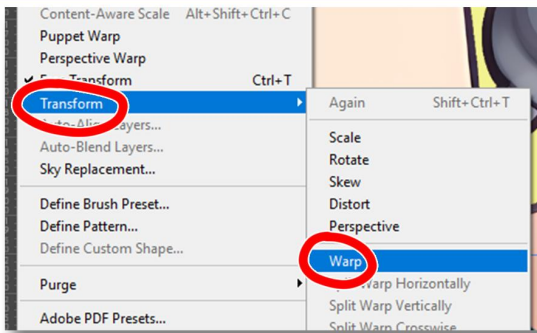
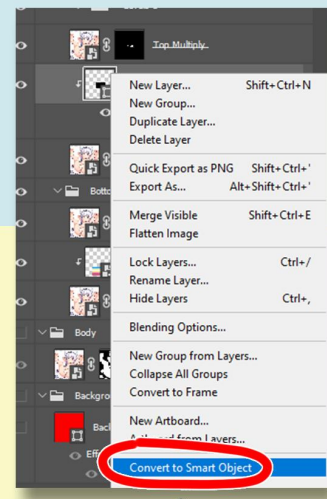
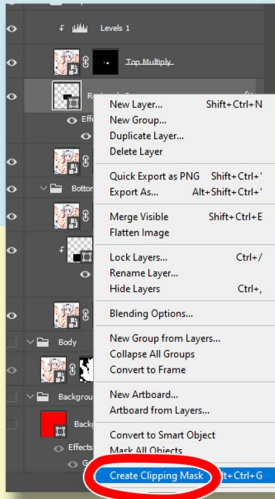
Recoloring Clothing - Part 3

Time to get those Gradient Rectangles into the shape of the of the clothes

On the Layer:
Right Click > Create Clipping Mask

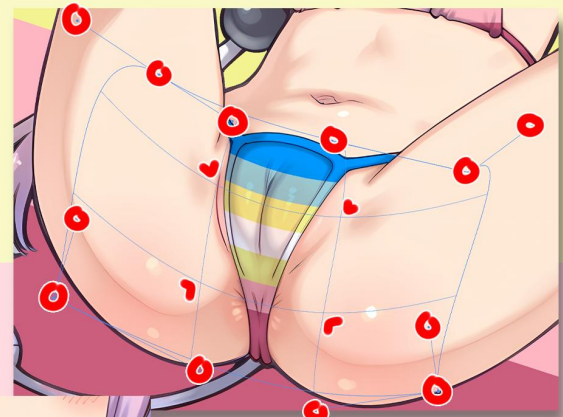
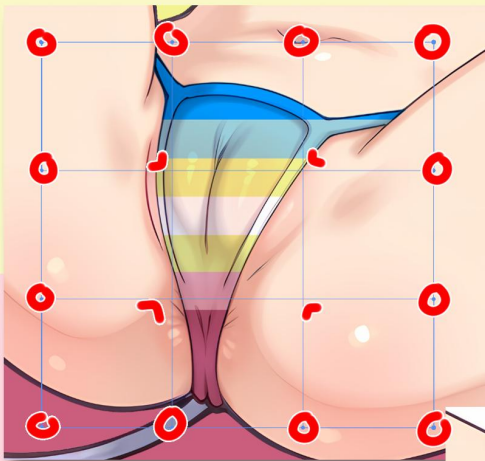
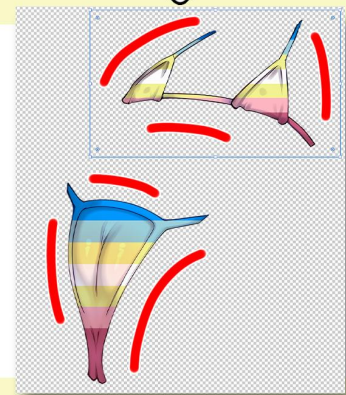
So we can warp the Gradients into the same of the clothes and body time to Convert those Rectangles into Smart Objects

Right Click > Convert to Smart Object



To Warp the Rectangle Smart Objects:

Edit > Transform > Warp

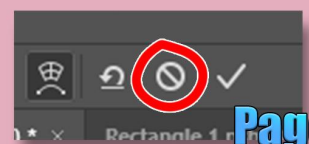


Once the grid appears you can start moving around the squares, corners and ears of the Warp Transform

You need to get all lines to look like they're flowing with the shapes and contours of the body

It's a little trial and error but you'll soon get it looking right

You can always revert the Warp

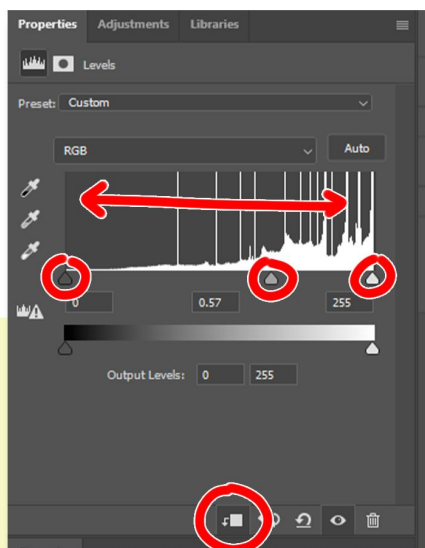
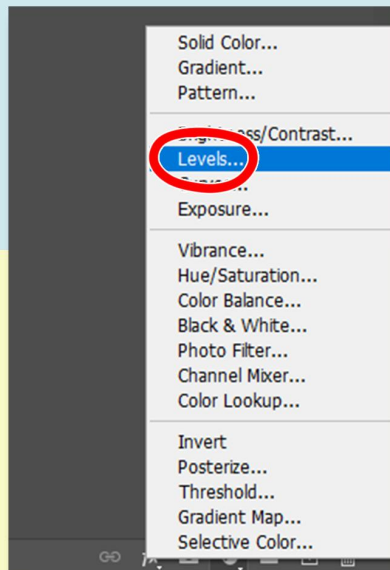


Recoloring Clothing - Part 4

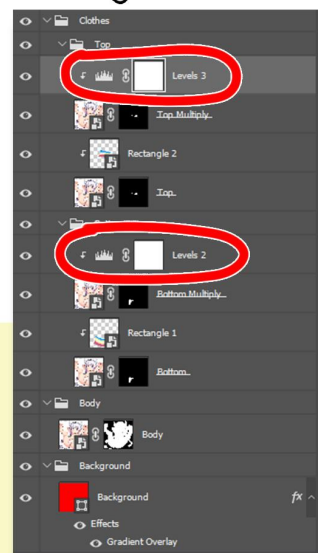


She's looking great but the details ontop of the clothing should be a bit more defined

We're going to add an Adjustment Layer with a Levels Adjustment to the uppermost Mask (The one with the Multiple Blend)



Making sure we Check the Clipping Mask for this Adjustment Layer so it only effects the Layer we want



Adjusting the middle value you can bring the contrast of the Layer higher, deeping the Shadows and Details



BEFORE



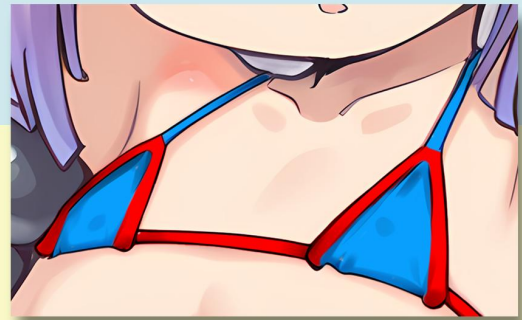
AFTER

Recoloring Clothing - Extras (Just Paint Your Colors)

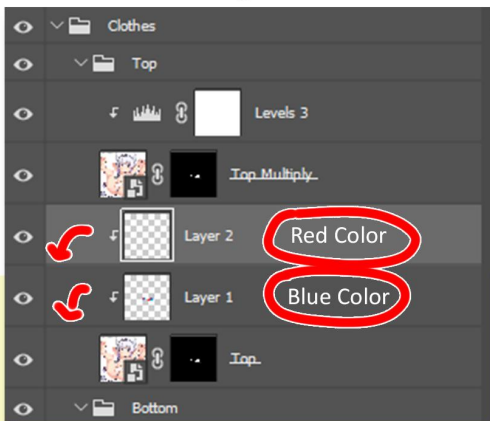
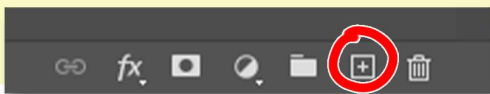
Instead of just using our MAP gradient you can just paint the colors you need over the clothes you want colored. This can be useful when the gradient shapes doesn't completely cover parts of clothes (e.g. Bra straps) or allow you to add custom decoration.



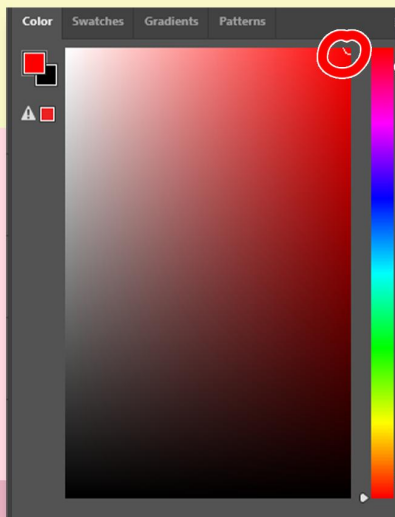
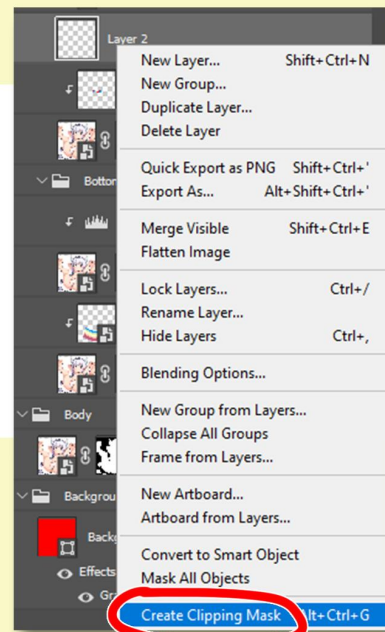
NO OVERLAY



TWO LAYERS PAINTED WITH TWO COLORS



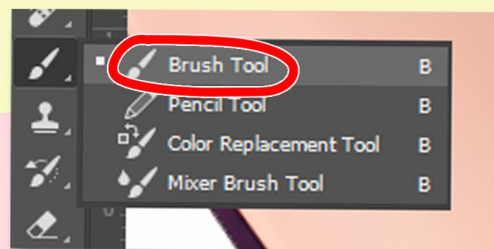
Add a new layer in between our masks and apply a Clipping Mask to any layer you want to Paint in



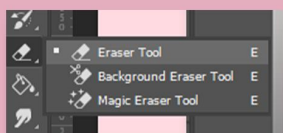
- Select the Brush Tool
- Select a Color
- Pick a Brush type (Diameter & Hardness)

Hold down Alt and move mouse left/right - Diameter
up/right - Hardness

Get to painting

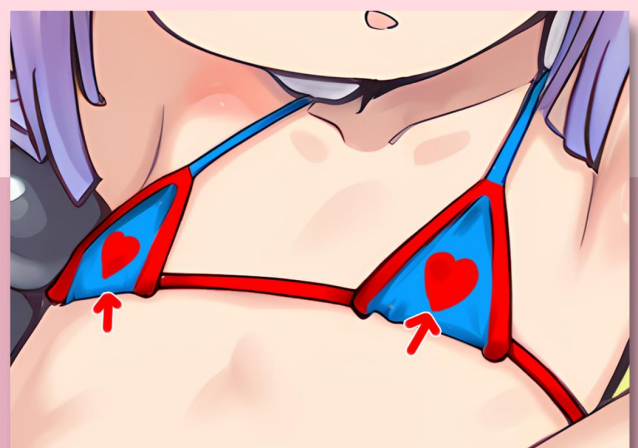


Use the Eraser tool to fix your mistakes
Same controls as Brush tool



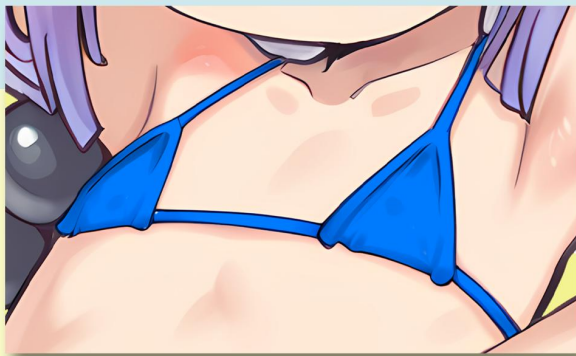
You can use as many layers as needed to get the design or look you're after.

Always best to use a different layer per color

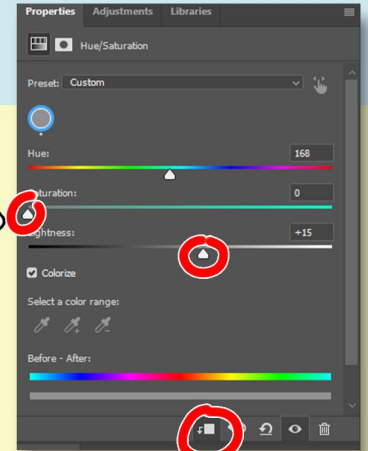
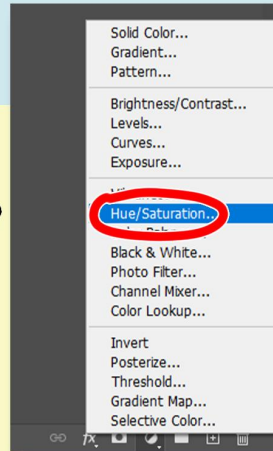


Recoloring Clothing - Extras (Different Colored Clothing)

For now we've only dealt with basic white colored clothing but sometimes you want to recolor an item of clothing that's a different color which if we repeated the original steps would give us the wrong color reproduction when adding gradients/painted colors

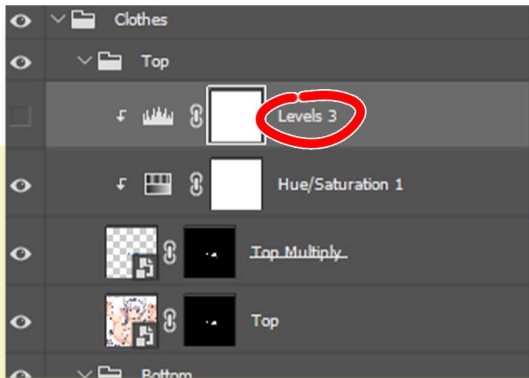


This should work with any color and possibly work with any gradient colored clothes

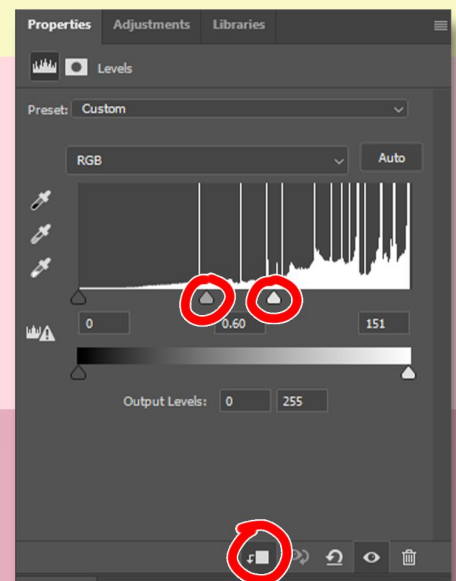
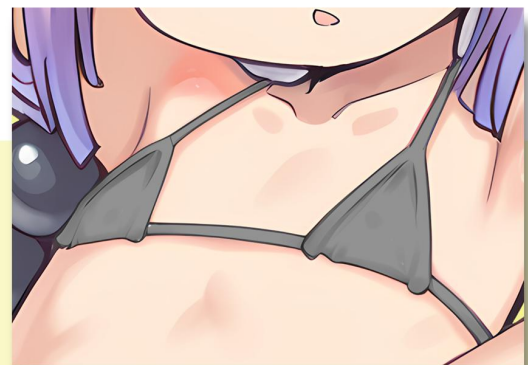


Apply a Hue/Saturation Adjustment layer to this colored layer (Only needs to be done on the Multiply blend layer)

Bring the Saturation all the way down to 0% and bring the Lightness up to a mid gray tone



To get the base back to white with black outlines/details we'll apply a Levels Adjustment Layer to bring up the contrast



Crush the upper value and bring the middle close to it to bring it back to a more natural white base



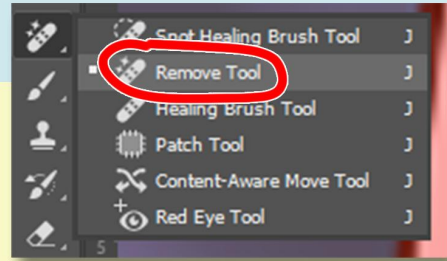
You can now follow the original steps to add the colors/gradients you'd like

Recoloring Clothing - Extras (Removing Patterns)

Sometimes an item of clothing especially cute panties or t-shirts might have a pattern on it that you need to remove as it'll blend though any recoloring. This is why we always use Smart Objects so we can go back in and re-edit the original material to fit our needs

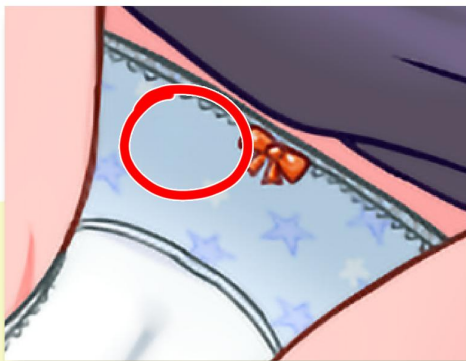


Open your reference image that you're working on by clicking on the thumbnail of the Smart Object



Now it's in an editable state (Original Rasterized) you can open up the Remove tool

You can also find other Healing/Patching tools to in this context menu that might come in useful for repairing artwork (especially AI works with glitchy clothing elements)



This might take a few attempts (Ctrl + Z) to undo any errors or simply repaint over it until it appears how you'd like



Draw over the patch you want to remove and it'll try to blend it in with the surrounding area

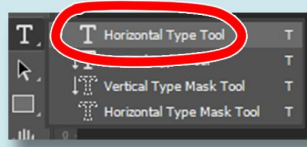


Repeat this process on all patterns, spots, blemishes till it's a clean as you can get it

If you wanted to keep a styled piece like the bow in this example. Just duplicate the layer and mask it out so it won't be edited and can be placed above all other layers

Text & Layer Styles - Part 1

Now that you've got some proper MAP Flag representation in your piece. It's time give it some more flourishes and add some text on the screen for you and the viewer to enjoy



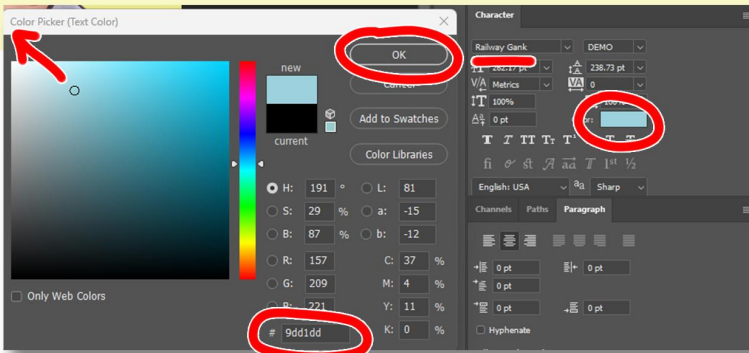
Using the Text tool you can start typing anywhere
(The font used is Railway Gank)



The color used will be whichever is default in your color selection box (Same as with brushes/shapes)

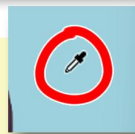


If you want to change the color of just one letter/work just hight over it with your cursor

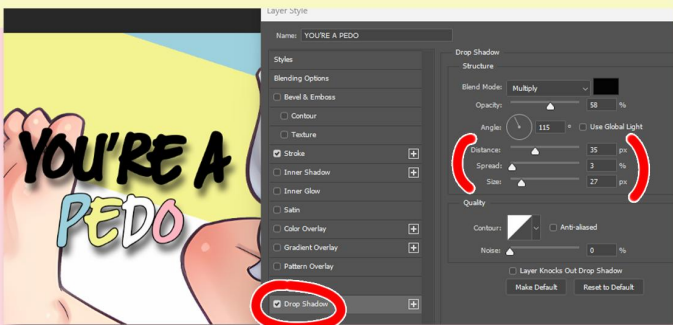


In the Character window you can change the font, size and other formatting options but for now we'll just change the color

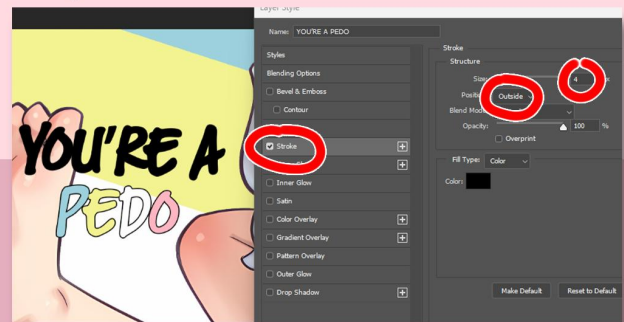
(Double Click on Color Box)



Moving your cursor outside the color selection and onto the canvas you it'll change into the Eyedropper tool allowing you to pick a color off your background or anything else



It's starting to look good but we're not able to properly see all the colored text, so for now we're going to add a Stroke & Drop Shadow this Text layer's Layer Styles



So the black text doesn't stand out so much we can go back and swap that out as well

Text & Layer Styles - Part 2

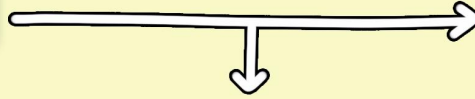
We could leave it there but for now we'll be adding a couple more Layer Styles to make it stand out over everything else



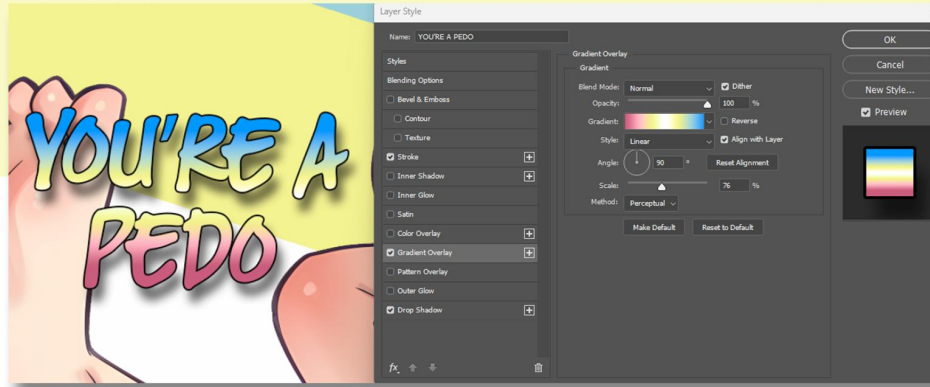
THIS

To get this new style we'll be keeping the Stroke & Drop Shadow

Then going back into the text's Layer Style to start adding a few more effects



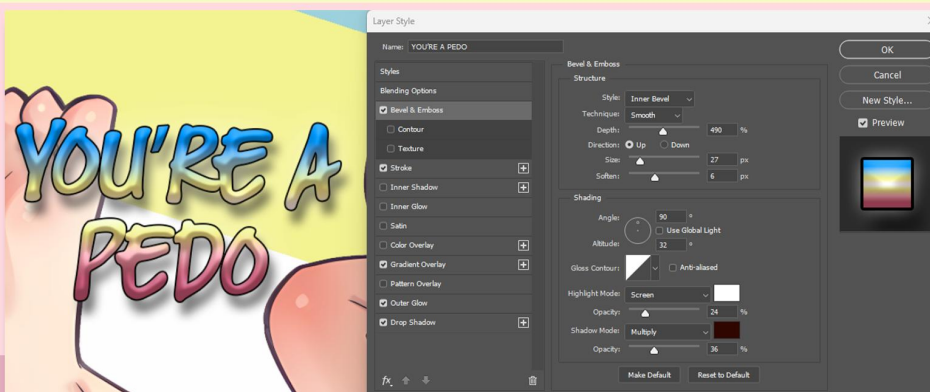
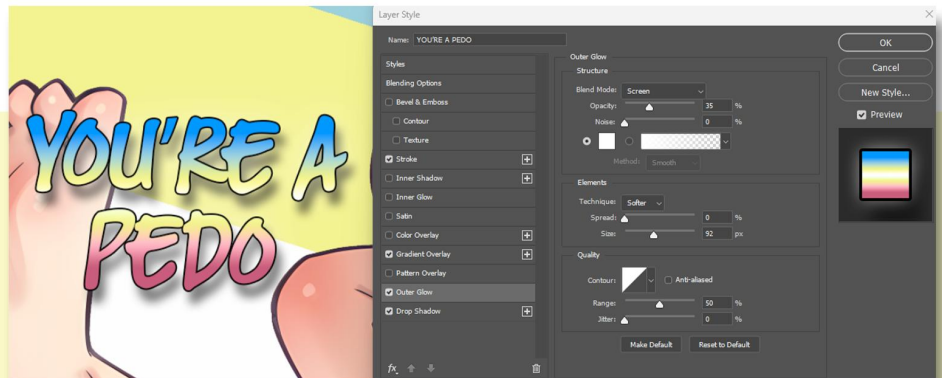
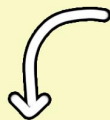
TO THIS



Time to add back our custom MAP gradient with a Gradient Overlay and adjust the size as need to really fill both parts of the entire sentence



Now an Outer Shadow might not be really necessary but it can help lighten up some parts of artwork behind it



To give some 3D dimensionality to the text the Bevel & Emboss style will make it look less flat overall

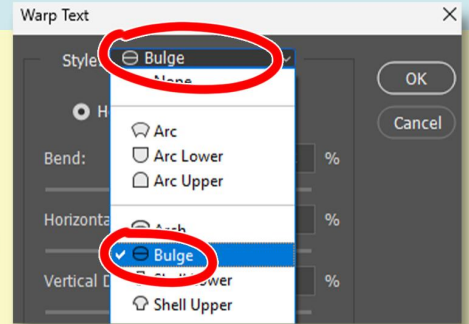
There are so many powerful things you can do with this style so try copying these settings as is and then start adjusting each value.

The main values to adjust are Size, Soften & Depth along with the colors and opacity of the Highlights/Shadows

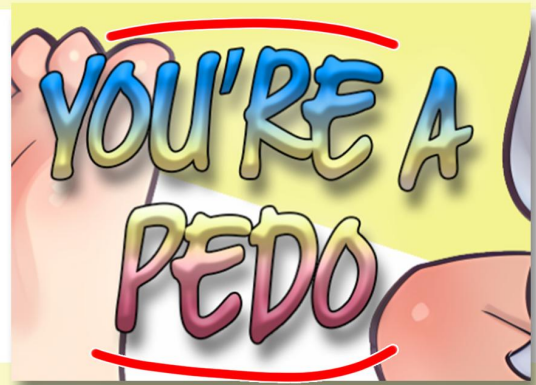
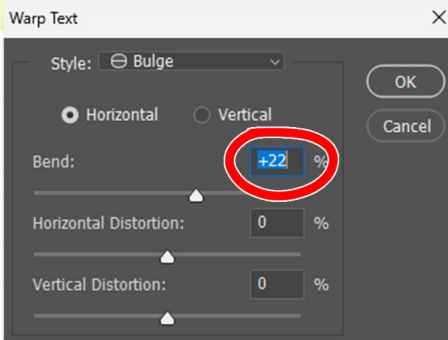
Text & Layer Styles - Part 3



To add some warps to the text to get it like the example open up the Warp Text window



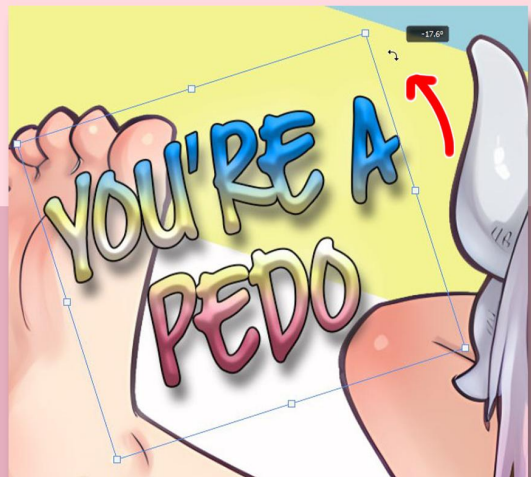
Here you can choose from a whole lot of Styles but for this one we're just going to use Bulge at Bend of +22%



Next is a simple rotation with Ctrl + T to bring up Transform controls

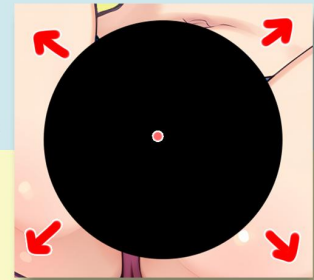
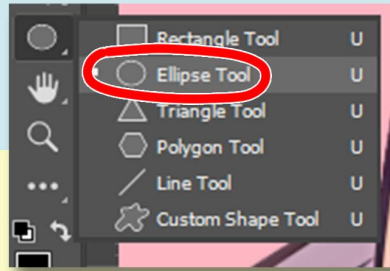
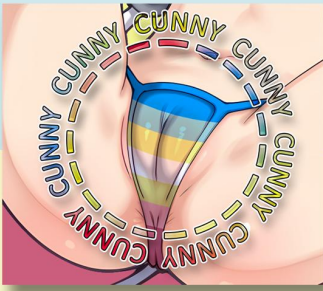
If you put your cursor near the corner or point of the bounding box it will allow you to rotate the image

Add some more text to your caption to complete the vibe or messaging you're going for



Text & Layer Styles - Extras - Part 1

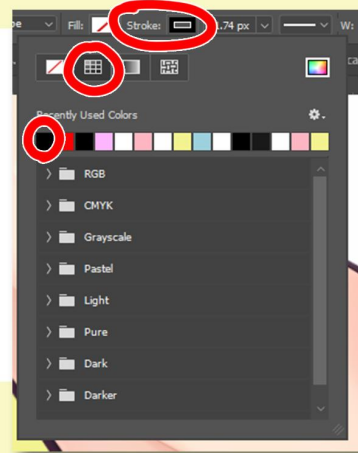
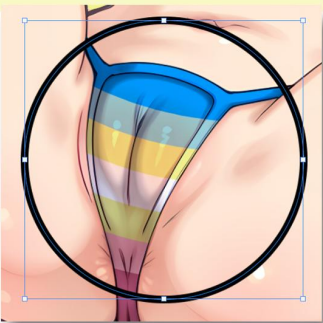
Maybe you also want to emphasize a particular focus in your scene, either with some arrows pointing at something or even a stylized circle



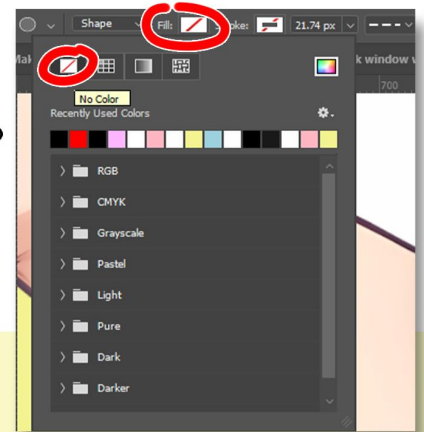
Let's create a simple circle with the Ellipse tool

Draw it over the area you'd like holding down Shift + Alt to center it

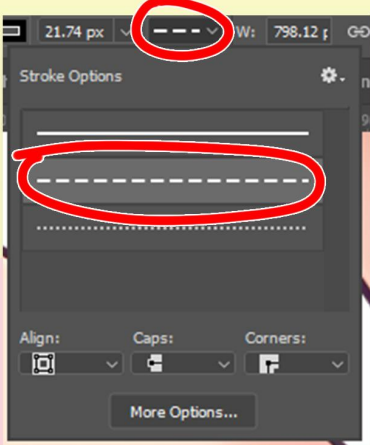
And create a stroke instead (Pick any color & line thickness as needed)



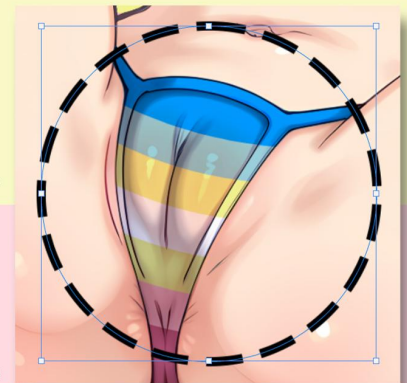
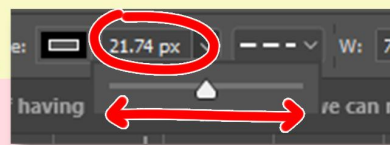
Instead of having it filled in with a color we can remove the fill



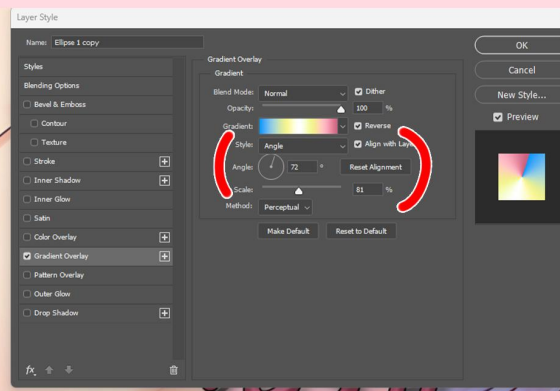
Time to give it a dashed line look by selecting Stroke Options



Using the line thickness tool this will even add more or less dashes to fit around your circle



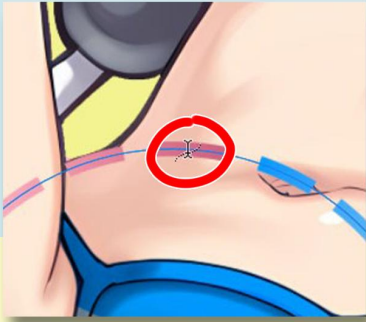
You can now add a gradient to the circle in Layer Styles



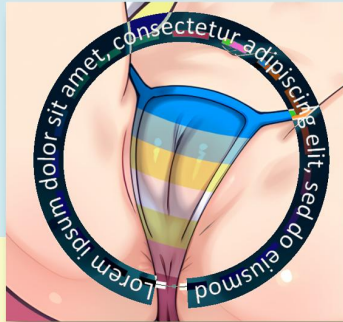
But instead of a Linear Style we'll switch it to Angle and then adjust the angle so they're not abrupt stop to the gradient

(You want the gradient cut off to appear in between the dashes)

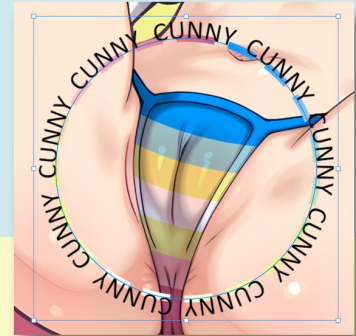
Text & Layer Styles (Extras) - Part 2



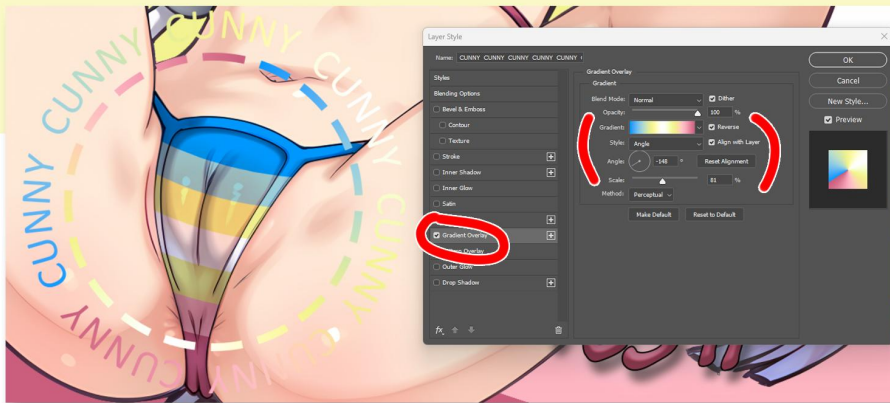
Using the Text tool we can hover and click on edge of the circle to start writing around it



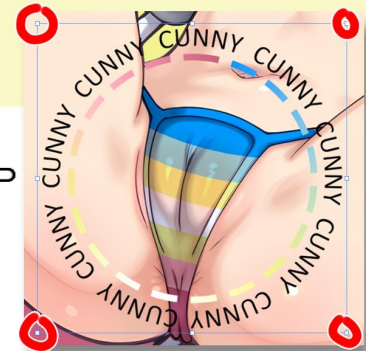
Select all the auto-filled in text by holding Ctrl + A



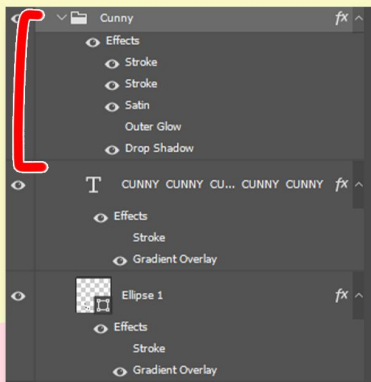
Replace the text as needed making sure to add spaces in between the words



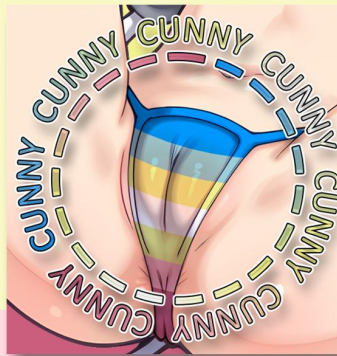
You can apply the same gradient to this layer but flip the angle so it mirrors with circle's gradient



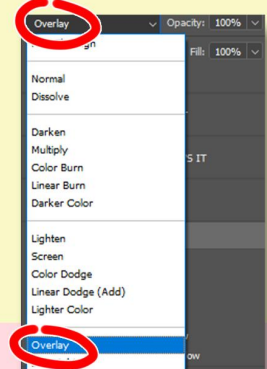
Press Ctrl + T so you can scale it around the circle and Shift + Alt to scale in on the center



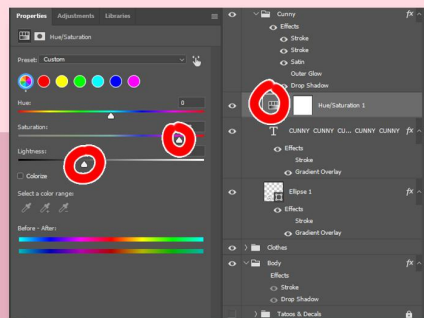
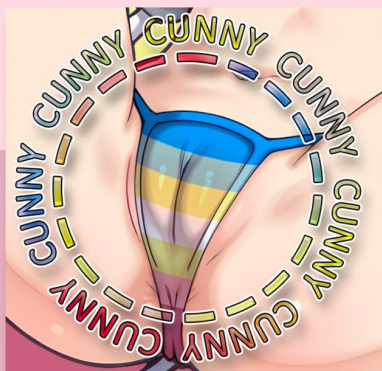
Place both Text & Shape layers in a folder so you apply more Layer Styles over all the them



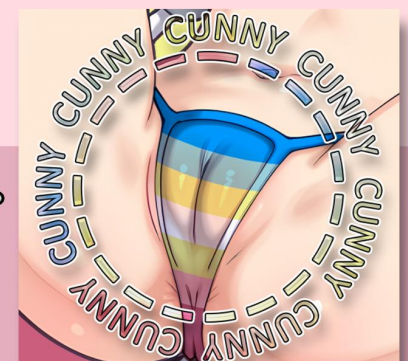
You can double up the Stroke effect with one being smallest in Black and a slightly bigger one in White, along with a drop shadow



Set the Group Blend mode to Overlay so you can see through it slightly



As the overall group of Text & dashed Circle now appear too washed out adding a Hue & Saturation Adjustment Layer both of them within the Group you can boost up the Saturation and bring down the Lightness



Tattoos & Decals - Part 1

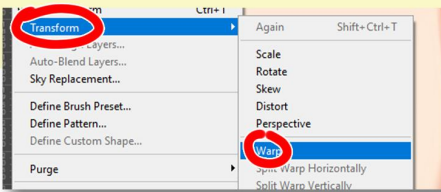
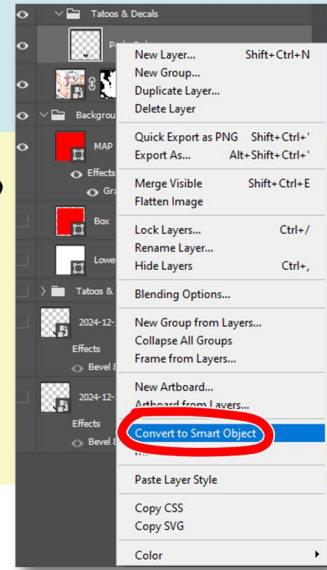
Time to add some tattoos to you your caption. We want to make sure we can blend them seamlessly onto your characters just let they were meant to be there



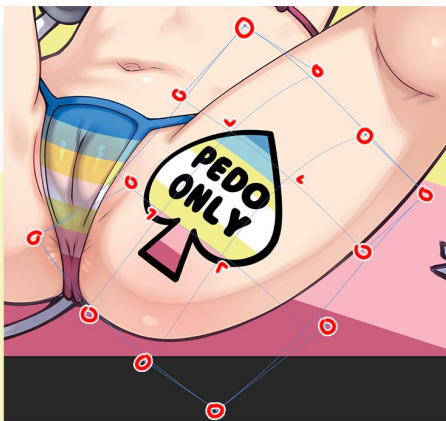
END RESULT



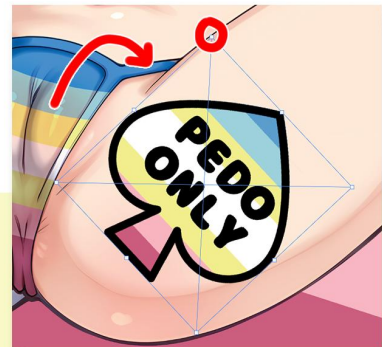
Take your tattoo or decal and place it in a rough position on your character. Then Convert to Smart Object if it wasn't imported as so



Once you have it as a Smart Object you can now do a basic rotation ready to begin a Warp Transform



Warp it around the curves to get it as close as you can. You can always adjust the Warp later



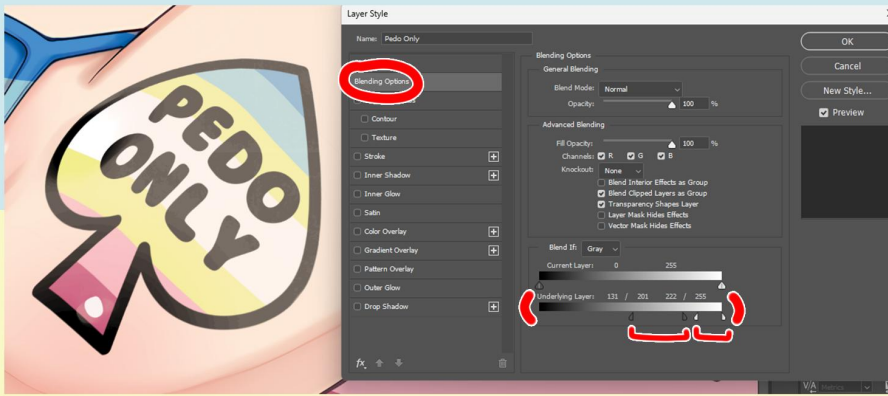
To give you Warp some more twists and manipulations hold Cntrl over a section of the Warp grid to add and extra point of adjustment



Twist your Warp to your liking for now ready for the next steps of blending it into the skin



Tattoos & Decals - Part 2



Under the Layer's Blending Options we can Blend the Underlying Layer through our tattoo

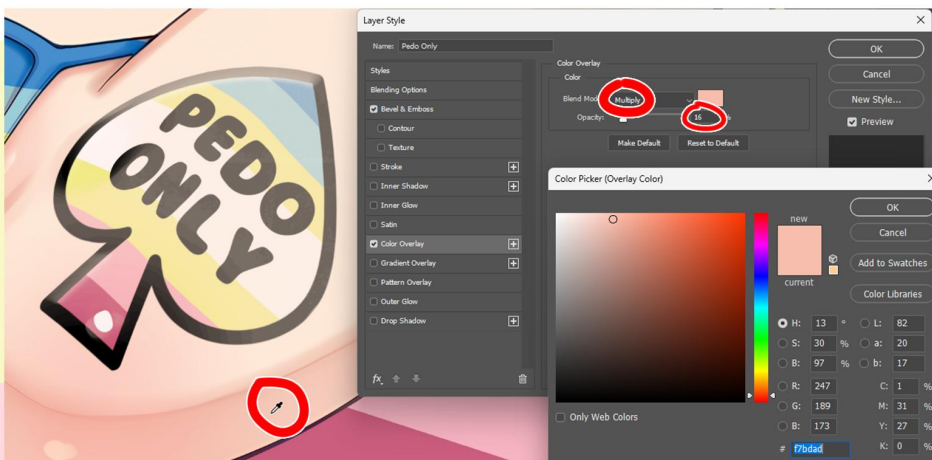
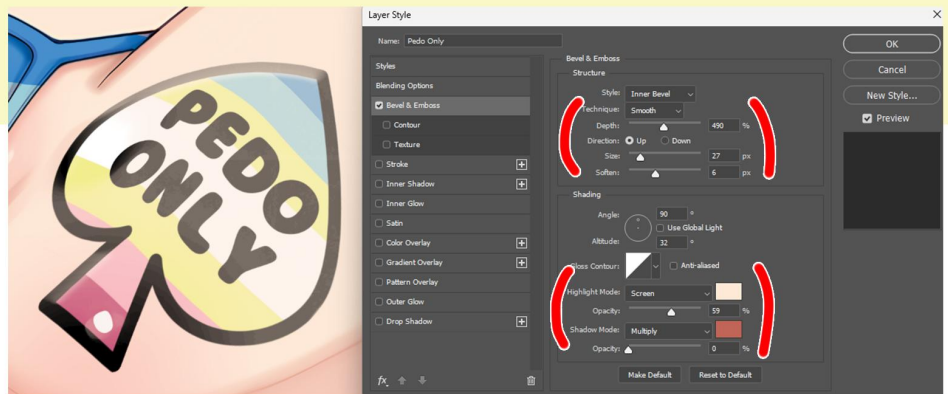
Start with widening the Whites and then Black levels

Hold Alt and Click the value to split the adjustment



Give the tattoo some extra highlights/shadowing by adding an Bevel & Emboss effect

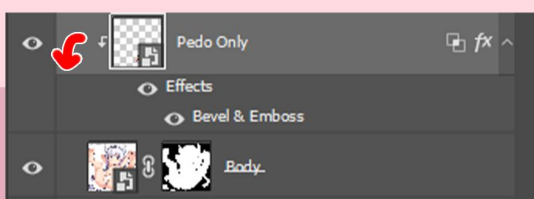
Change the Angle and Size to try and replicate the original character lighting



Sometimes with darker tinted tattoos they might not match the black levels of characters or the scene.

Using a Color Overlay and a Multiply Blend, Eyedropper tool the shadow skin tones to get that slight color tint

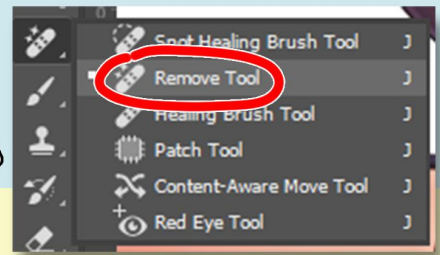
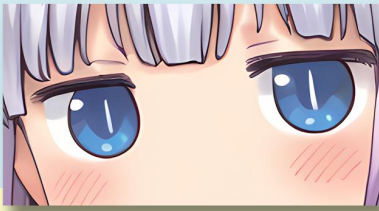
If you want to place a tattoo on the edge of a character you can convert that layer into a Clipping Mask so it can only appear on that character's Layer



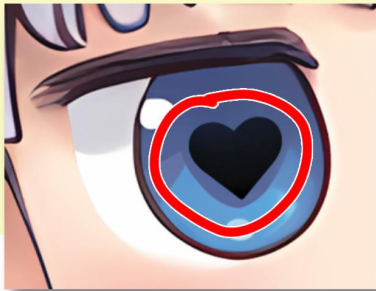
A similar effect can be created by drawing a mask around the character's body part but then applying that mask to your tattoo. This can show or hide parts of it

Tattoos & Decals - Part 3

Maybe you want to change up the eyes and add some hearts/spirals/etc to them



Go into the Smart Object of the original image and duplicate it



Bring in your Heart asset

Scale, Rotate, Warp it as needed

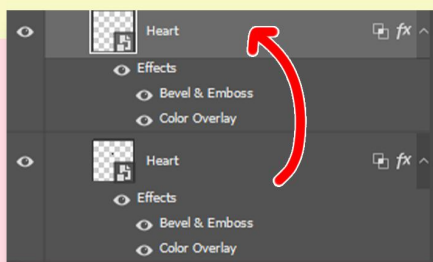
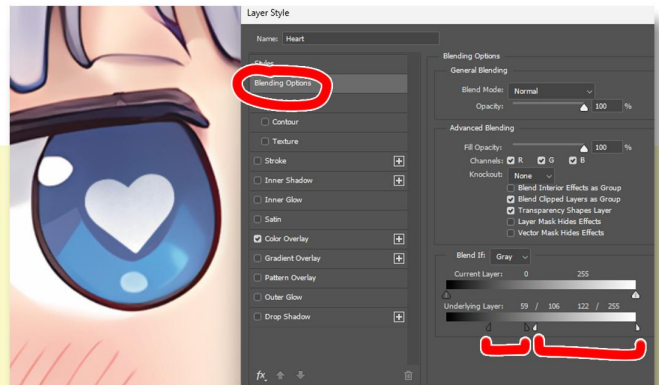
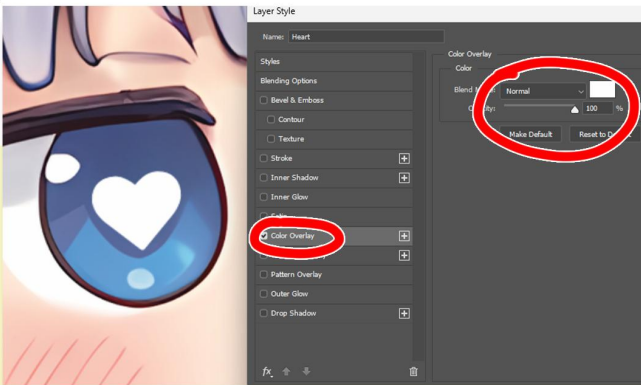
Use the Remove tool to auto replace the highlight in both eyes



As this is black asset we'll want to add a Color Overlay to have it match the highlights of the eye

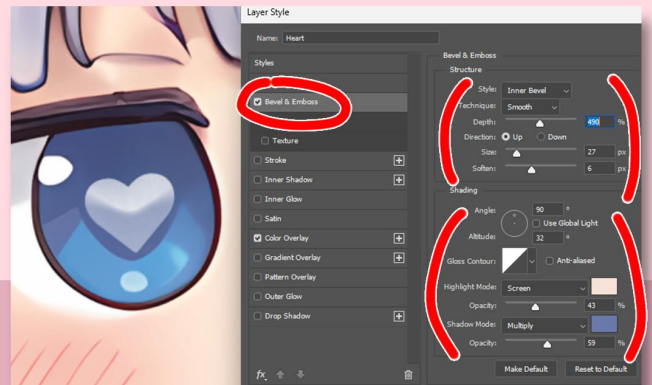


Under Blending Options edit the Underlying Layer value to fade it slightly in



Copy the eye to the other eye socket and you should be finished

Next either use the Bevel & Emboss too or a Satin effect and adjust it to appear more 3D



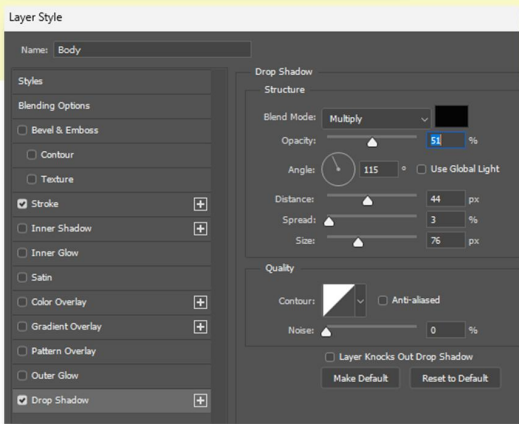
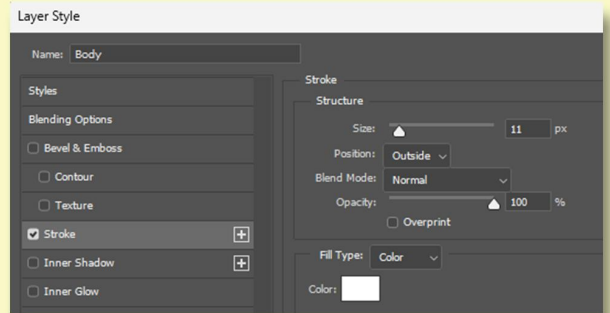
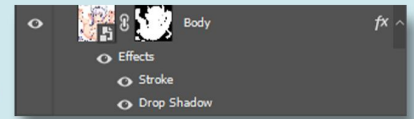
You maybe need to adjust the Scale/Rotation/Warp to fit more realistically

Editing Background - Part 1

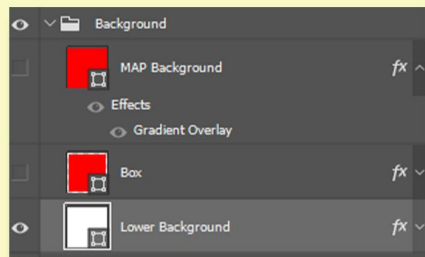
Sometime you want to go for something a little different and stylized for your character background so we'll complete this caption a few options



For this caption we've added an extra white Stroke & Shadow to make it stand out along with adding another gradient as a border



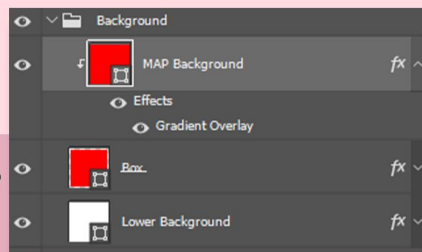
Adding a basic Outside white Stroke and then adding a Drop Dropshadow our character now stands out from the background



Create another Rectangle or duplicate the MAP background to change up the gradient



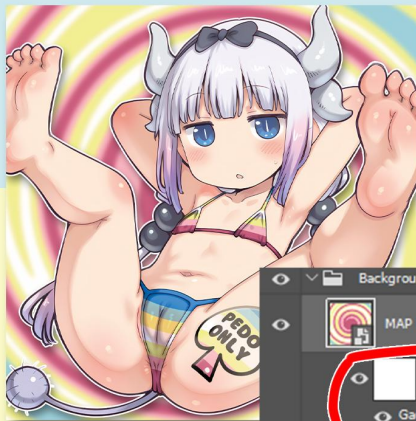
Create one final Rectangle and make it the size of the inner Background you want to use



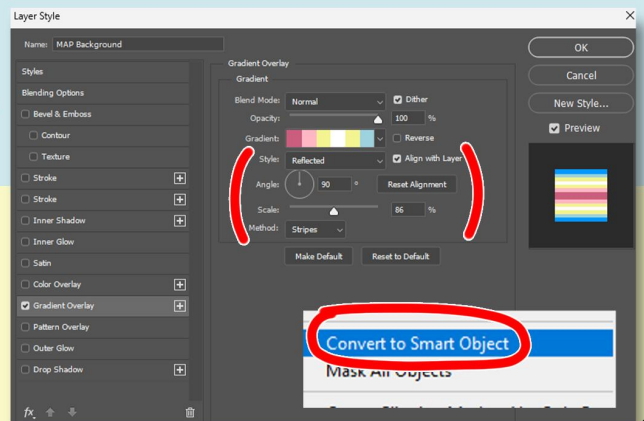
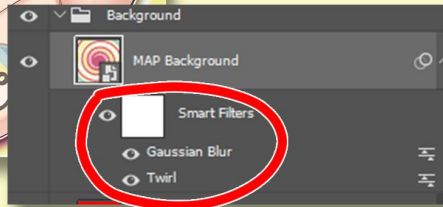
Set the MAP Background to a Clipping Mask of the Box and you can also add a Drop Shadow to the Box

Editing Background - Part 2

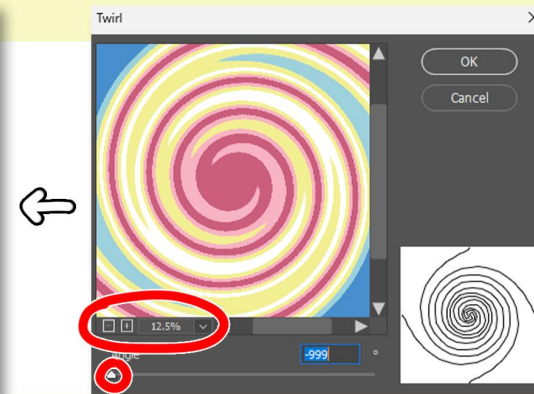
Changing up the background style is fairly simple with some Smart Filters



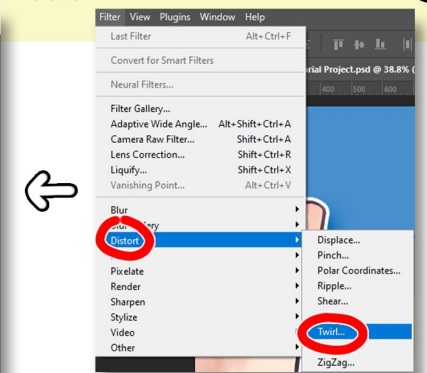
For the background we've changed the Style to Reflective, reset the angle & reduced the scale of the gradient



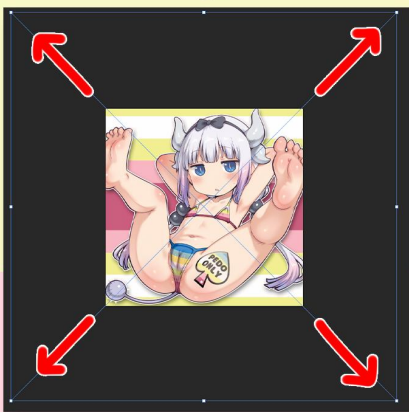
Convert the background to a Smart Object so we can apply some Smart Filters



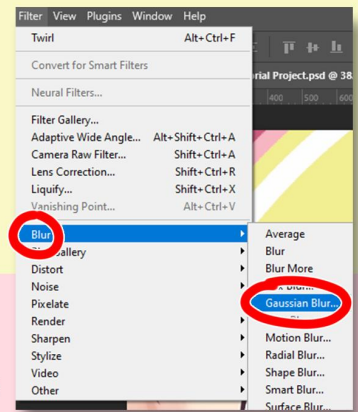
Set the Angle to as high as you'd like



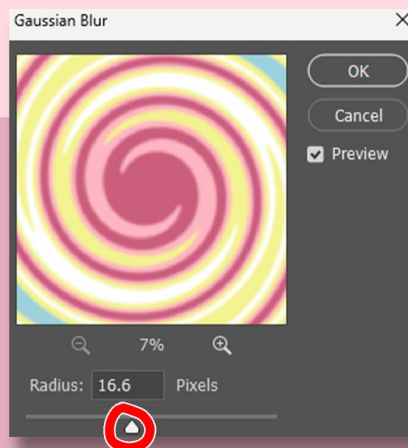
Go into Filters > Distort > Twirl



As it's a Smart Object we can expand the size of the Transform to get the spiral in the middle



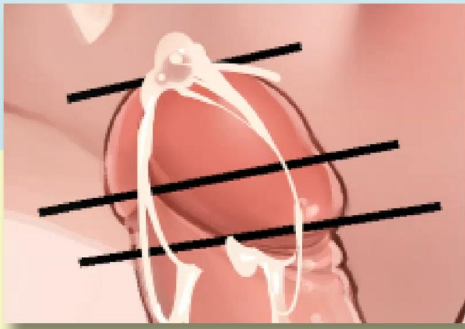
Go into Filters > Blur > Gaussian Blur



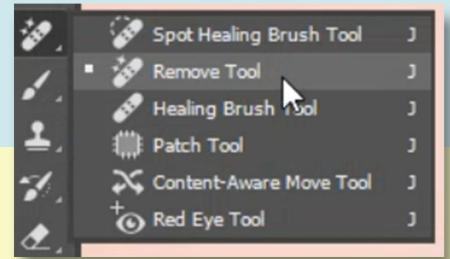
Set the Radius to whichever strength you'd prefer whilst looking at the preview or how it's effecting the canvas

Advanced Editing (Decensoring)

Artwork or references taken from Japanese Artists might have some basic line censoring to them. These are actually the easiest to remove and paint back in



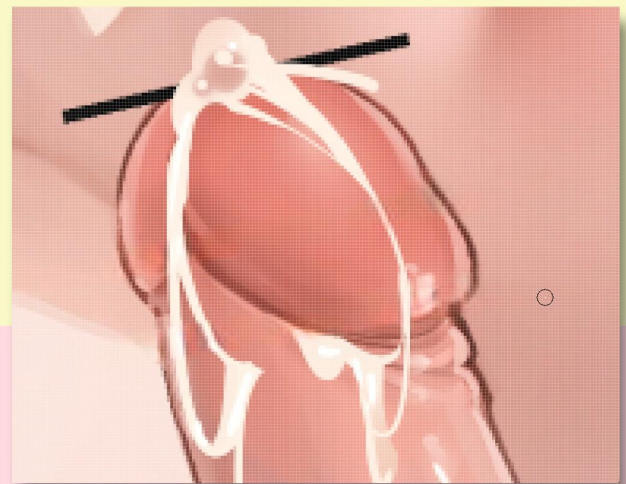
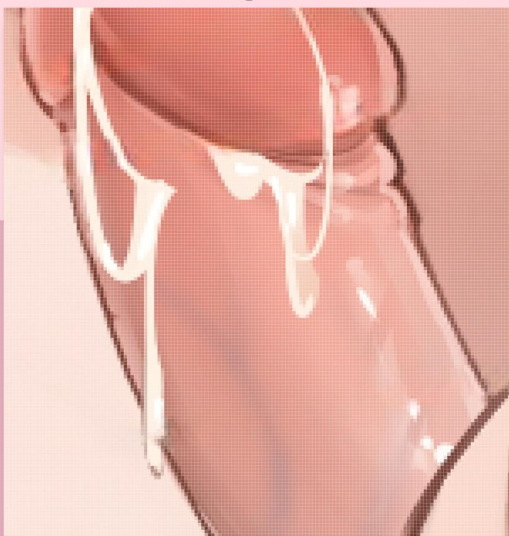
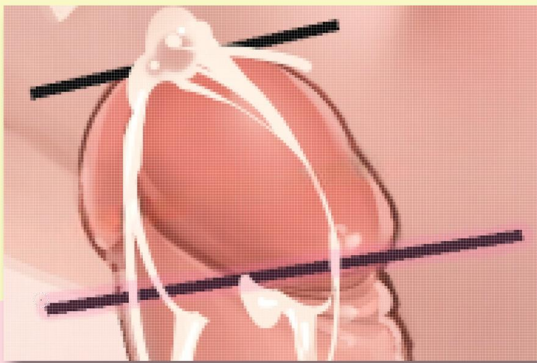
These censor lines come in all sorts of colors and styles but with the Remove tool they're simple to uncensor



Make the size of your Remove tool Brush to be slightly bigger than the line you want to paint out



Once brushed out you should see the line disappear with all colors & shapes joined back up underneath



Repeat the process on all censor lines

You can go over already worked on uncensoring to fix any errors

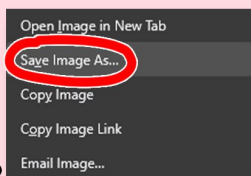
You should now be left with a clean uncensor especially once fully zoomed out to the entire piece

Resources: (Websites to find material)

Getting high-quality images to start editing with is easier than ever!
Here's a list of some popular sites to download from

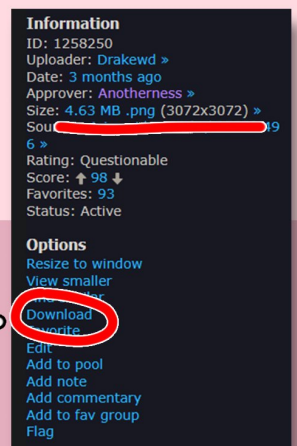
Website	Type	Tags
exhentai.org	Gallery	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
imhentai.xxx	Gallery	Loli, Shota
hitomi.la	Gallery	Loli, Shota, Todcon
simplyhentai.org	Gallery	Loli, Shota
booru.allthefallen.moe	Booru	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
chan.sankakucomplex.com	Booru	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
gelbooru.com	Bouru	Loli, Shota, AI
7chan.org/cake/	Chan	Loli, AI
7chan.org/sh/ & /ss/	Chan	Shota, AI
chan.moe/loli/	Chan	Loli, AI
meta.kiwi.st/d/	Chan	Loli, Shota, Todcon, MAP, AI
pixiv.net	Official Artist Pages	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
baraag.net	Official Artist Pages	Loli, Shota, Todcon
kemono.cr	Premium Artist Leaks	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
neko.house.su	Premium Aritst Leaks	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
allthefallen.moe/forum	Forum	Loli, Shota, Todcon, AI
roriwalrus.com	Forum	Loli, Shota, AI
shotaworld.com	Forum	Loli, Shota
pomf.tv	Artist/Gaming Live Streams	Loli, Shota, Todcon

Make sure you're always downloading the highest quality version of an image to make your edits out of!!!

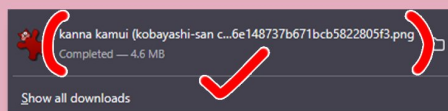
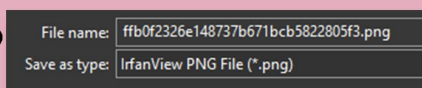
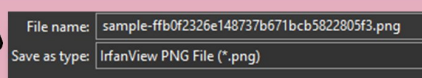


If you normally just right click an image to download when the download dialogue pops up make sure it doesn't say **sample**

Instead check to see if there's a download button that tells you the original file size & dimenions

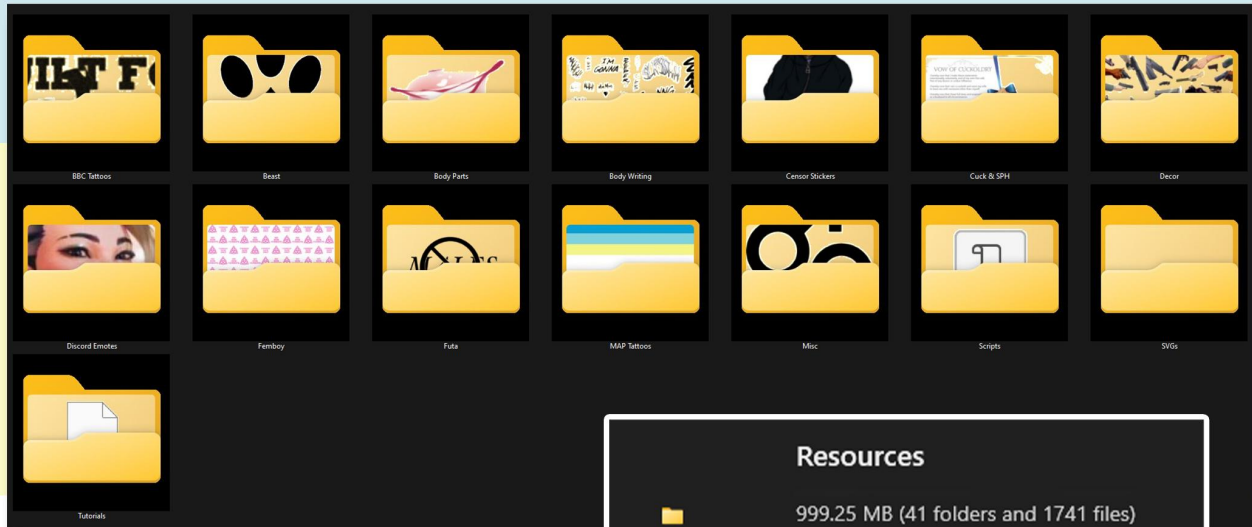


Images above 1000 x 1000 px are recommended



Resources: (Pre-made Assets)

Along with this guide there should be a few links to asset packs for various textures/gradients/tattoo/decals/bodyparts/scripts/etc



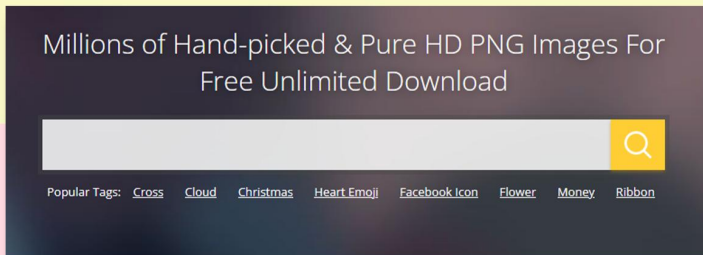
If you found this guide from the original post links should be in a reply to it

If this guide got reposted elsewhere please ask the uploader to give you the links to all assets mentioned

Apart from the pre-made assets packs there are plenty of other websites to get more elements to add to your work

PNGITEM

There are many sites that can give you high quality PNG images with transparency

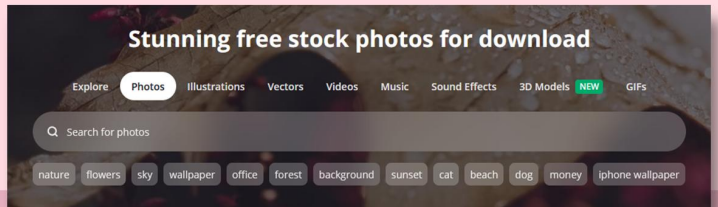


These are just a couple

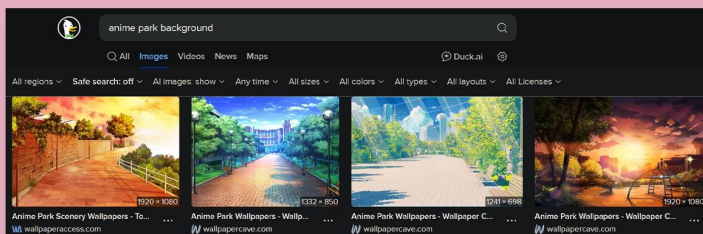
pixabay



DuckDuckGo.



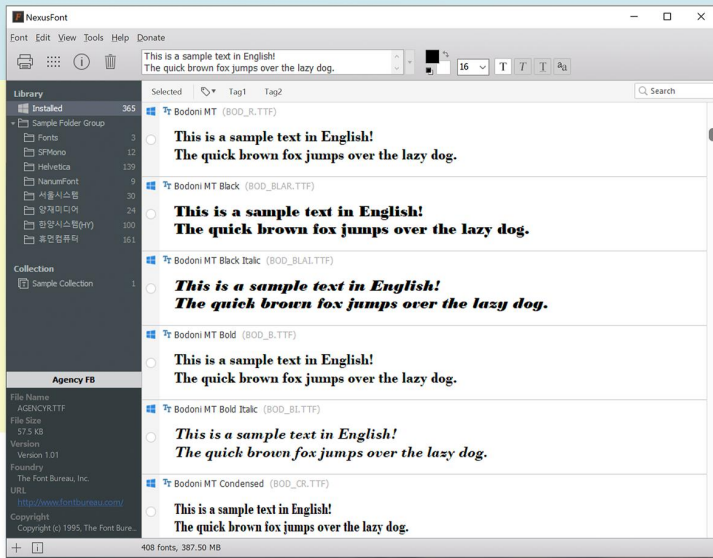
If all else fails just search for what you're looking for off a search engine. Just make sure you size the search size to be the highest available



Resources: (Additional Software)

There are a few extra FREE programs you can use to help you with editings and keeping things organized

nexusfont



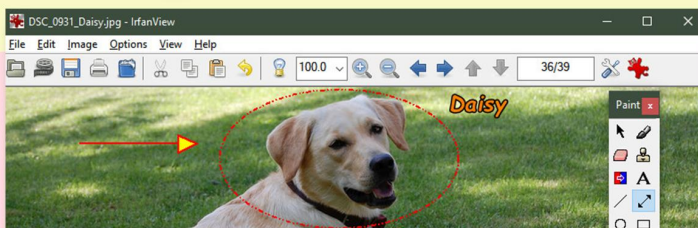
This is a few Font manager which loads up all Fonts that are installs and allow you to preview what text might looks like in a bunch of sizes, colors & font styles

Get from: xiles.app



A great place to get various Fonts in different styles to meet your creative needs

Get from: dafont.com



One of the most popular viewers you can use with a bunch of useful features that should help you keep your assets organized (You can crop and copy aparts of assets from IrfanView to paste into Photoshop)

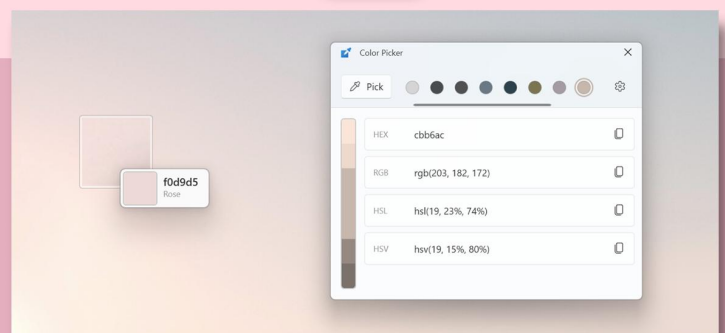
Get from: irfanview.com (Download & Install plugins as well)



Color Picker is a system-wide color picking utility activated with Win+Shift+C

It allows you to pick colors from anywhere on the screen, and the picker automatically copies the color to your clipboard in a specified format

Get from: github.com/microsoft/PowerToys



Credits:

Reference image for
this caption tutorial

@STEVEP1ZZ4



Created by:



QA Testers:

To be added in V1.1

Inspiration for this guide

♥ Awesome Caption Makers ♥



EndlessDrift



@pornrotgoonette

