

Want your graphics to have a great textured look? Want your shadows with different colors? Add dimension and character to your type or graphics using textured gradations. You'll build a different layer for each color you want to spatter onto your image. Then you'll add a layer mask and texturize it. You'll end up with a multi-layered file that is very versatile. You can experiment with different colors, layer modes, and textures as you lay one colored texture on top of another.

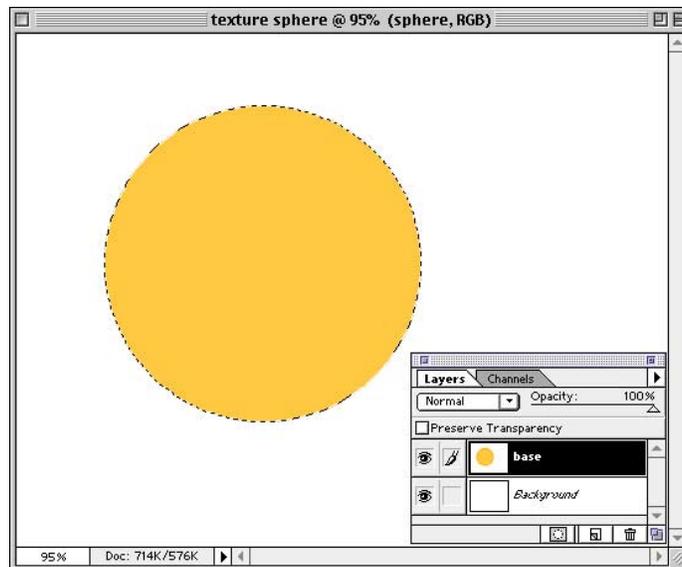


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Creative Director at
Adobe Systems, gets
textural with Adobe®
Photoshop® 4.0.

ADVANCED

TEXTURED GRADATIONS

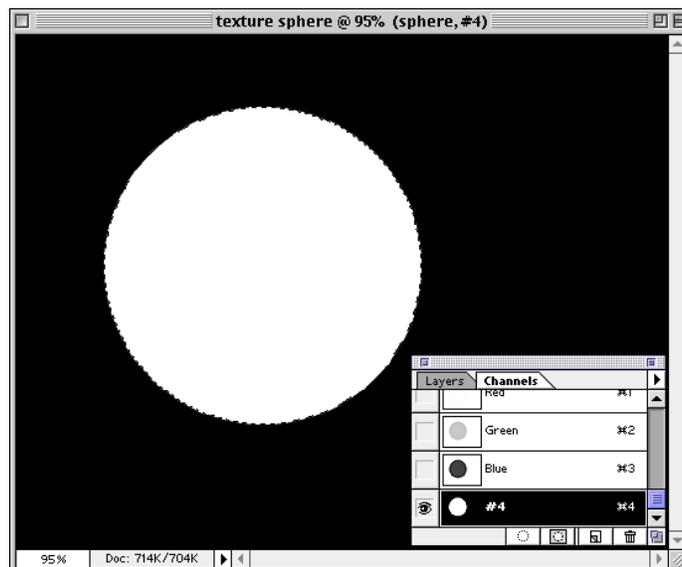
1. We will begin to build the textured, gradated graphic by first creating its basic shape and filling it with a color. Make a new layer named *base* and use the selection tools or type tools to create the graphic. You can also paste shapes from other files or import the graphic from Adobe® Illustrator®. Select the shape (if it is not already selected) by Command/Ctrl-clicking on the layer name.



Shortcuts

Throughout this document, "Command/Ctrl" means Command on the Macintosh and Ctrl on Windows. "Option/Alt" means Option on the Macintosh and Alt on Windows.

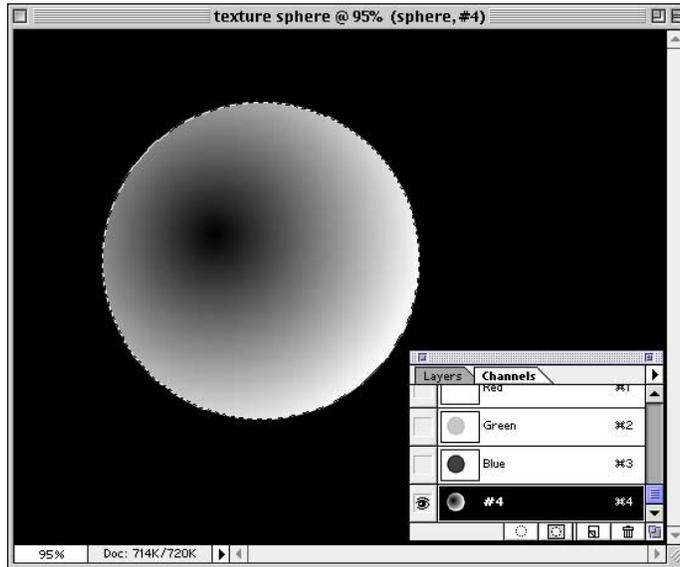
2. Switch to the Channels palette and click on the save selection icon. Do not deselect yet! Click on the new channel name in the palette to view it.



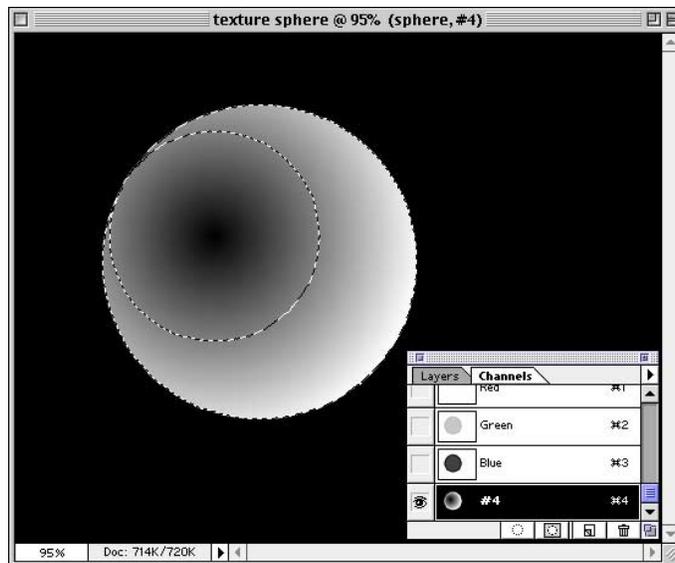
Why use alpha channels?

Alpha channels are a quick and convenient way to select objects or images. If you know you'll need to select something more than once during a Photoshop session, it may be worthwhile to save that selection as an alpha channel. When you need to activate the selection, simply hold down the Command/Ctrl key and click on the channel name.

3. Add a gradient to the selected area. Remember that when you are working in channels, you are working with a negative version of your image. Also, channels contain only grayscale information. The gradient you choose should be grayscale. The areas that are dark will block out more color in the final image, and the areas that are lightest will let the most color through. Save the file at this point.



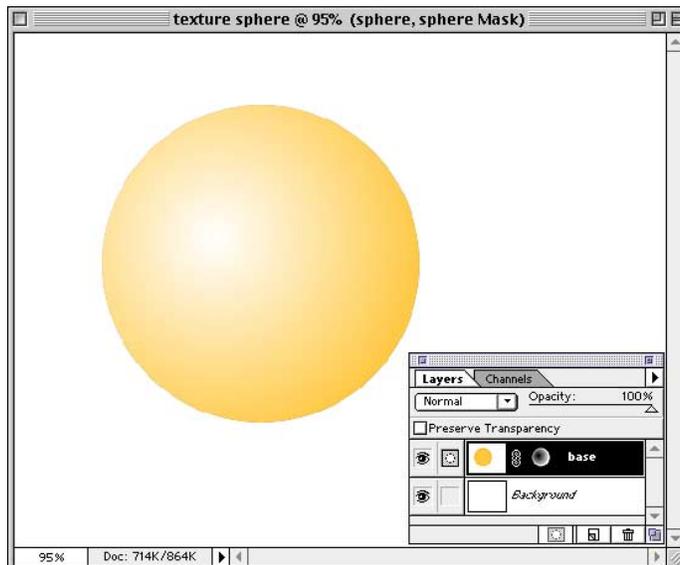
4. Load the new channel as a selection by Command/Ctrl-clicking on the channel name.



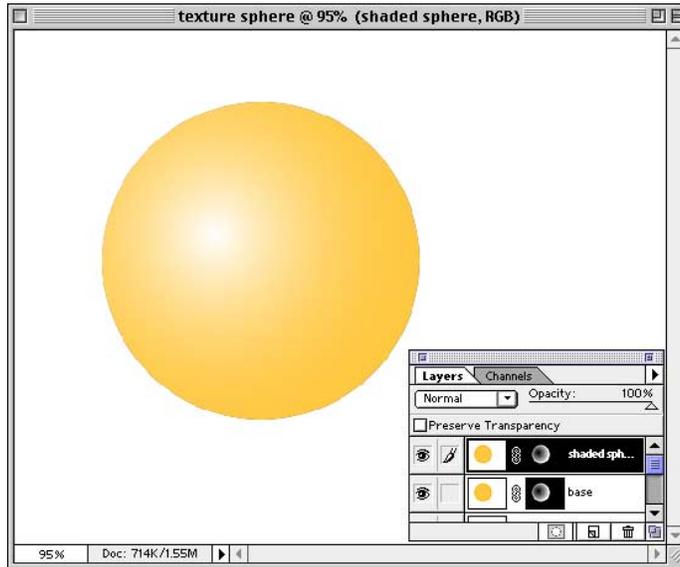
Selecting gradations

When you load a selection that contains a gradient, you might wonder why it looks as if some parts aren't selected. Photoshop only displays a selection border around pixels that are up to 50% transparent. Feathered, soft edges that are more than 50% transparent will not have a selection border, but they will still be selected.

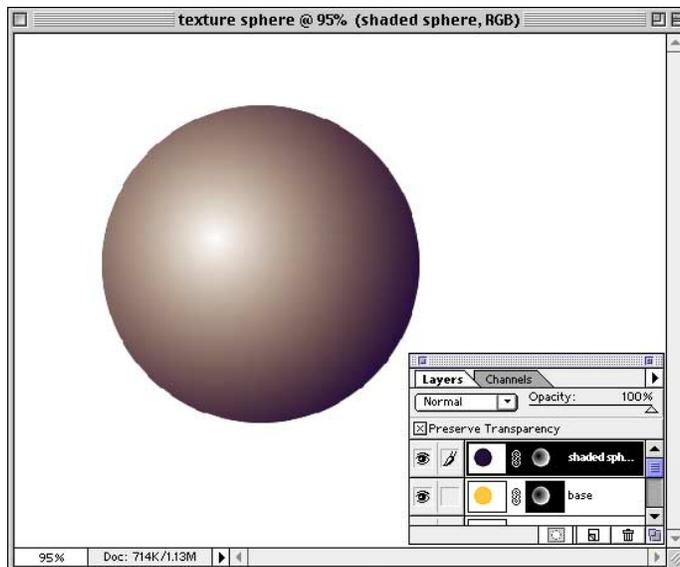
5. Now we will apply the gradation to the graphic. Switch to the Layers palette and click on the *base* layer to activate it. With the gradation selection still active, click on the layer mask icon to save the selection as a layer mask for the graphic layer.



6. To get a richer looking texture, you will want to create more than one colored texture layer. A quick way to create a new layer is simply to duplicate the existing one. Option/Alt-drag the *base* layer onto the new layer icon in the Layers palette. Give the layer a new name. Because the layer masks have some transparency, the duplicate layer saturates the image with more color.

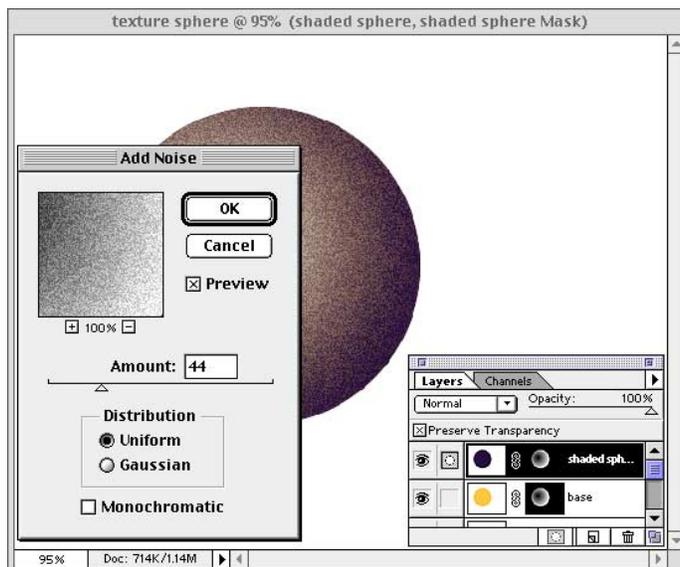


7. Lets fill this second layer with the color of the shadow we want in the final artwork. Pick a new foreground color. To fill only the area of your graphic, select the Preserve Transparency option, and then fill the layer with the new color (Option/Alt+Delete/Backspace). Don't worry if the colors don't look right yet, because they will change once we add the texture.

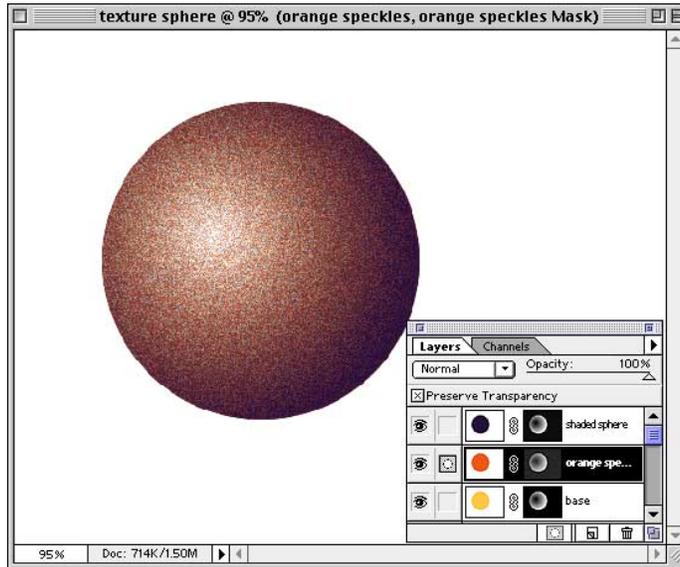


Layer masks
The great advantage of using layer masks in a technique like this is that you aren't committed to a certain color for your graphic. You can change the colors at any time during the design process simply by using the Preserve Transparency option and filling the layer with a new color.

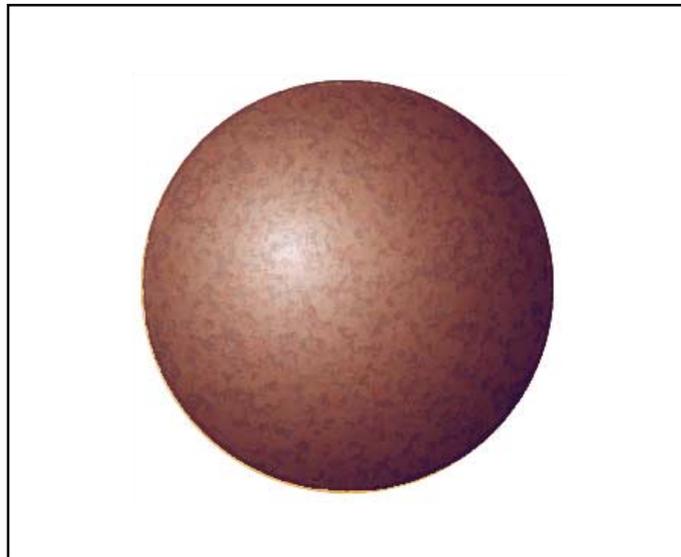
8. Now we will add texture to the shaded layer. Click on the layer mask for the shaded layer. Choose Filter > Noise > Add Noise. Select Uniform Distribution, and experiment with the slider to see what values work best for your image. When you're satisfied with the result, click OK. There are many other textures besides noise that you can use in this step. See page 4 for a few examples of other textures.



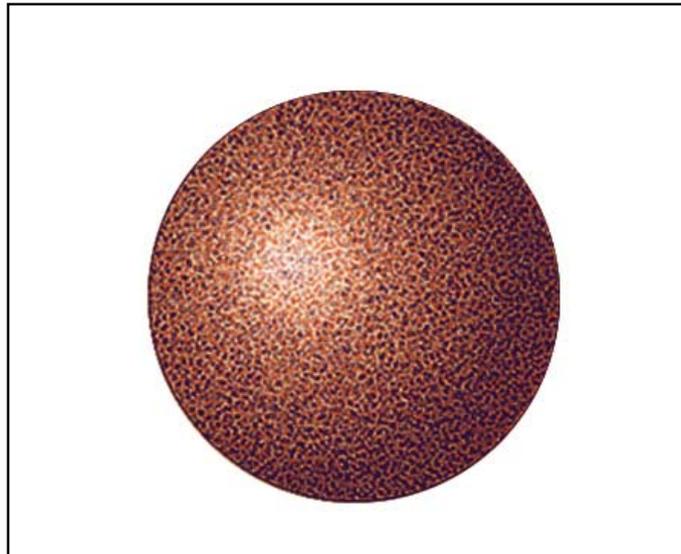
9. To add more colored texture to your image, repeat steps 6-8 for as many different layers as you want. In this example I added one more layer of orange. Its important to reapply the texture filter to each new layer. Most of the filters randomly apply texture and if you just copy the same texture from another color layer, it will cover up the other color's texture.



Variation 1: This is the same file used above. The only difference is that in step 8, I chose Filter > Artistic > Sponge instead of the Noise filter.



Variation 2: For this texture, use Filter > Sketch > Reticulation instead of Noise in step 8.



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