

BASIC LAYERS TUTORIAL

Learning to use layers is a little bit like learning to set the table, in fact that is exactly what you're going to do in this tutorial. At the end of this text are three images (see below) contained in a folder attached to this tutorial:

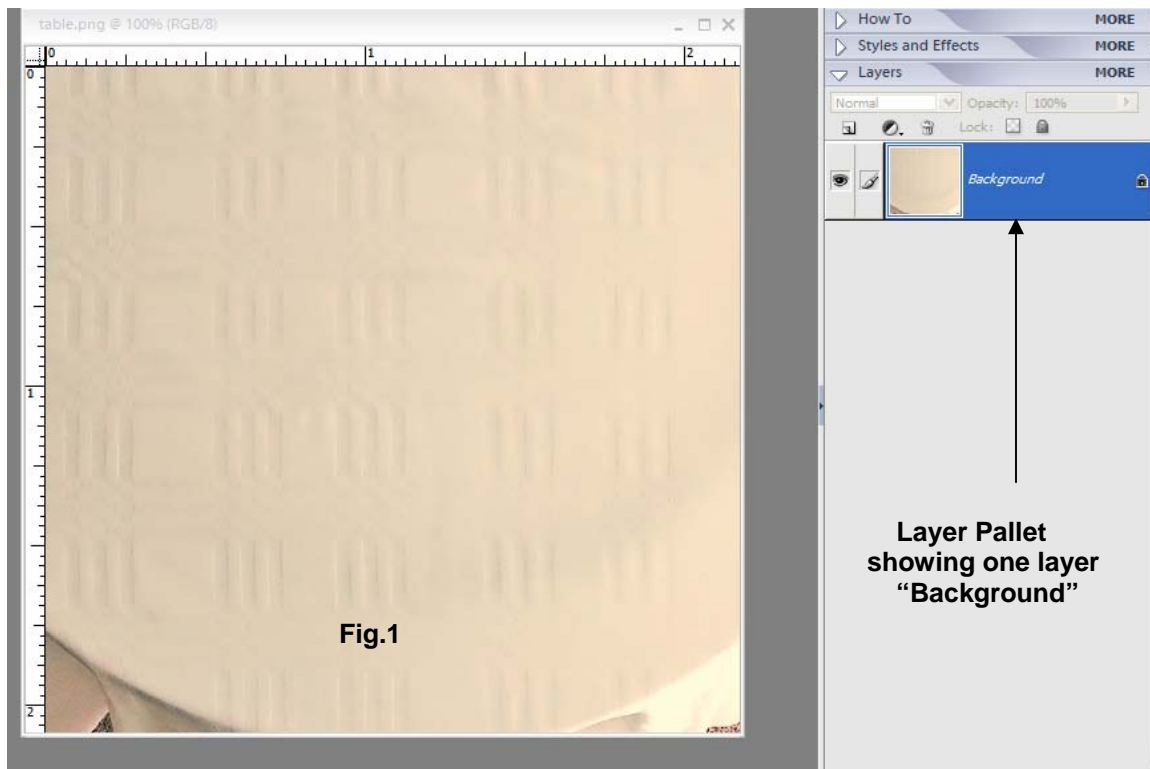
- Table.png
- Plate.png
- Silver.png

This tutorial is divided into two sections, in the first part we will work with basic layers and in the second adjustment layers.

PART ONE - BASIC LAYERS

There are many reasons to use layers from adding fancy filters to a specific area, add text or to save a work in progress and edit it at a later date.

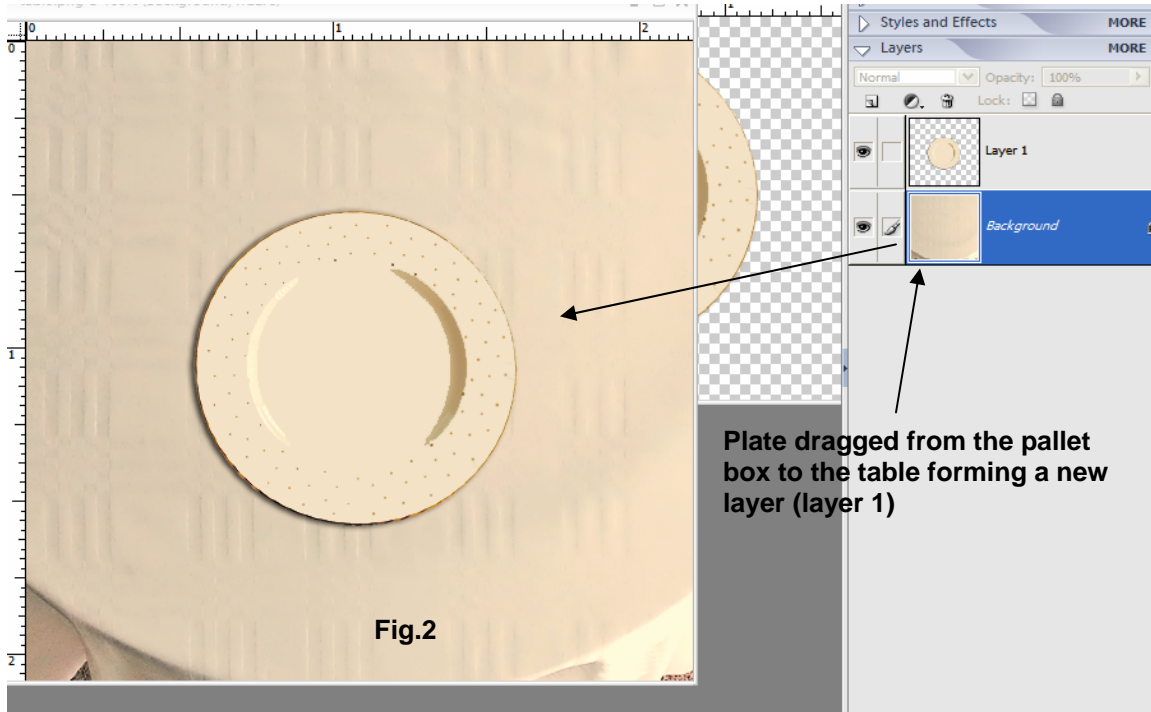
Let's start by opening table.png in Photoshop Elements:



Note the layers pallet is open and the table appears as "background". (See fig.1)

Now open plate.png ensuring that you have checked under on the menu bar **windows>images>cascade** so that both images will appear in the work area.

Resize them to ensure the table is visible. With the plate picture active, (you will see it in the layers pallet), drag the picture of the plate from the pallet box onto the picture of the table and release. If it is not reasonably symmetrical you can click on the move tool in the tool box and rearrange its position until it is similar to the picture below.



Now open the picture silver.png (it will appear in the work area with the other two images) and make it active. Drag this to the table image from the layer pallet as you did with the plate.

OOPS! The silver ware came all bunched together and landed on the plate! See fig.3.

To fix that make sure the silverware layer (layer 2) is selected in the pallet box as shown by the blue box. Using the lasso tool select the fork (you don't need to be especially accurate as this is a layer and the utensils are surrounded by transparency).

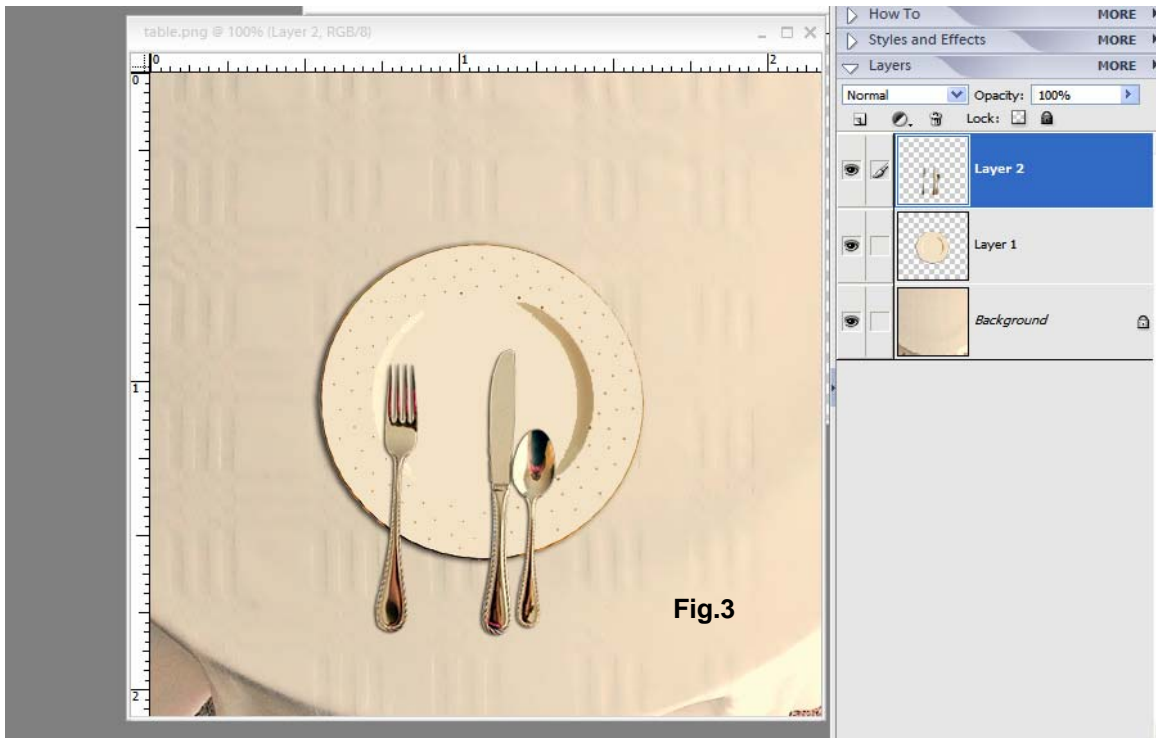


Fig.3

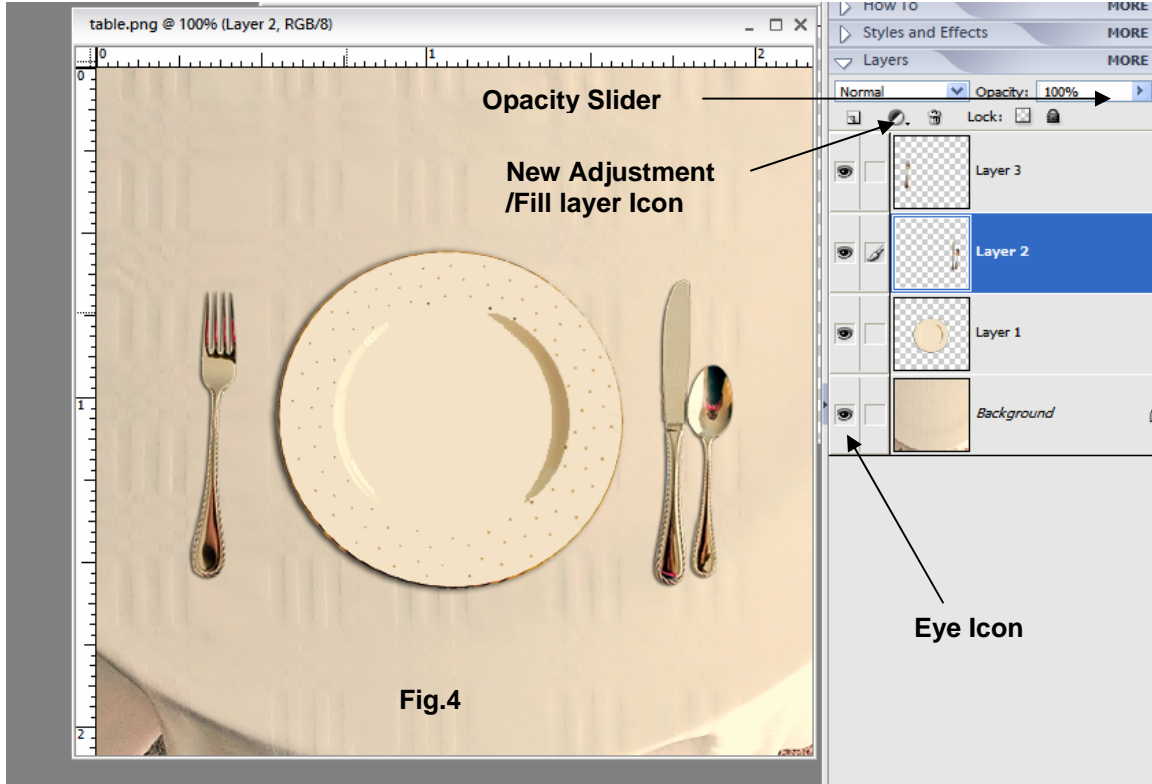
We will now take the fork and make it into its own layer. After selecting the fork with the lasso tool, whilst layer 2 is active, go to the menu bar and select **Layer>New>Layer via cut**.

If you were successful the fork is now a new layer in the pallet box and you should have the following layers showing in the layer pallet:

- Background, the table
- Layer 1, the plate
- Layer 2, the knife and spoon
- Layer 3, the fork

By selecting the knife/spoon layer and the fork layer individually and using the move tool you can position the utensils either side of the plate in the correct positions. See Fig. 4. You can after this, if you like, merge the silver ware back into one layer to make it easier to work with later on. To do this make sure the fork is the active layer and the knife and spoon are the layer underneath in the pallet box and go to the menu bar and select **Layer>merge down** to combine them into one layer. In these illustrations this was not done.

We now have a correctly set table but a rather bland looking one, about as exciting as a blank wall.



PART TWO - ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Let's first change the table cloth color.

In your image (similar to Fig.4) hide the other layers by clicking the eye icon (see Fig.4) which close them from view.

Now using the magic wand select the table cloth (adjusting the tolerance in the tool bar if necessary to obtain it all) and click **Adjustment/Fill layer Icon** in the pallet (see fig.4) and select "solid color".

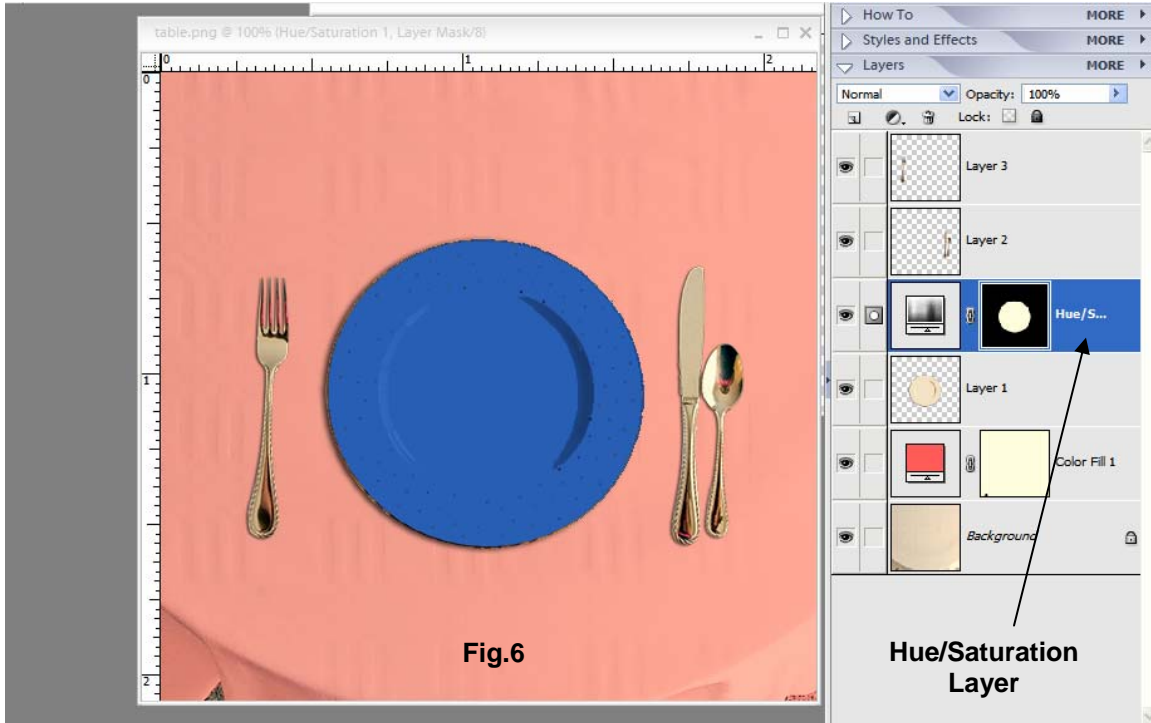
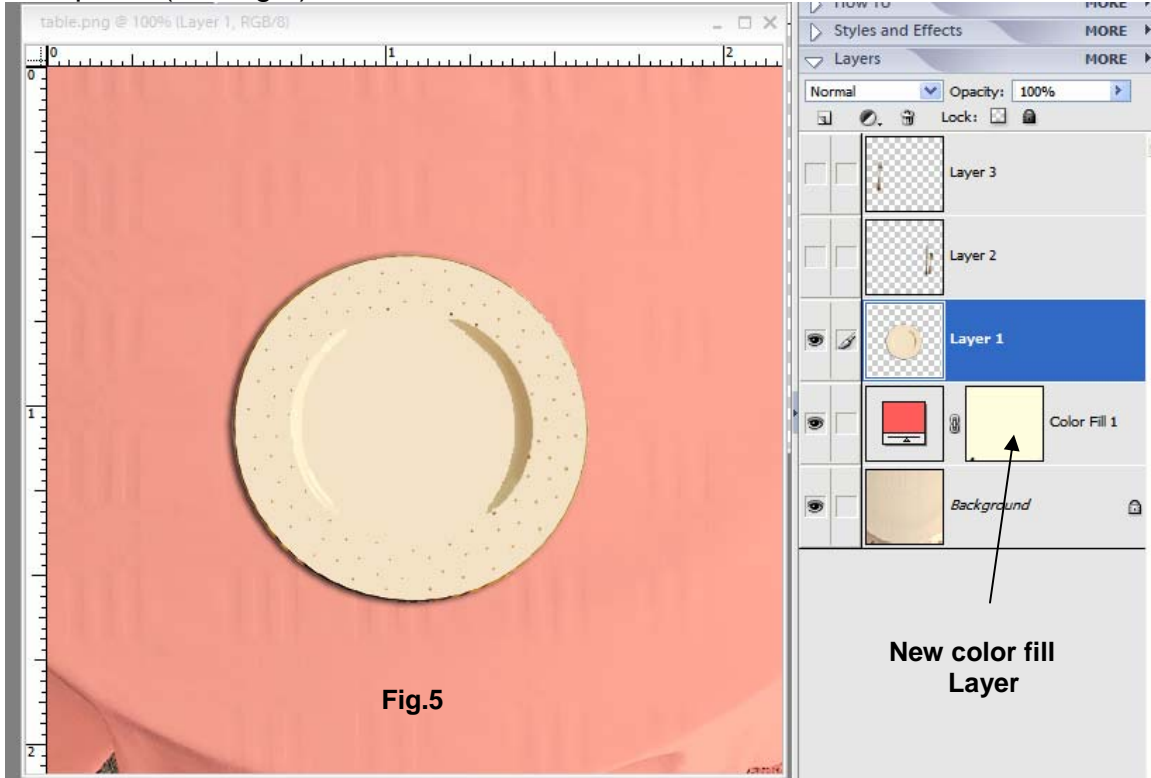
The color picker appears so select the color you like and click O.K. A new fill layer appears in the layer pallet right above the background layer.

If the details of the table cloth are hidden use the "Opacity Slider" (see fig.4) in the pallet box until you can see the details and you are happy with the result.

Now turn on the plate and silverware layers by clicking on the eye icon and select the plate with the magic wand (see Fig.5).

Again go to the Adjustment/Fill Layer icon but this time select Hue/Saturation.

Make sure the check the “colorize box” and play with the sliders until you have a blue plate. (See fig.6).



Note that now you have six layers! Your task is complete.