

Creating a Title Banner

Most Website have some way of letting you know where you are. One good and common way of doing this is to create a title banner of some sort to put at the top of your pages. In this tutorial a banner like the one below will be created.



For this design there are three parts the image, the fade, and the text. So first a suitable image must be found. Using one that you have taken is always fun. Visit pics4learning.com, www.freefoto.com, www.freestockphotos.com, www.imagesoftheworld.org for a good selection of images that are OK to use on your site. Be sure and read the terms of usage.

Creating the Fading Image by Using a Mask

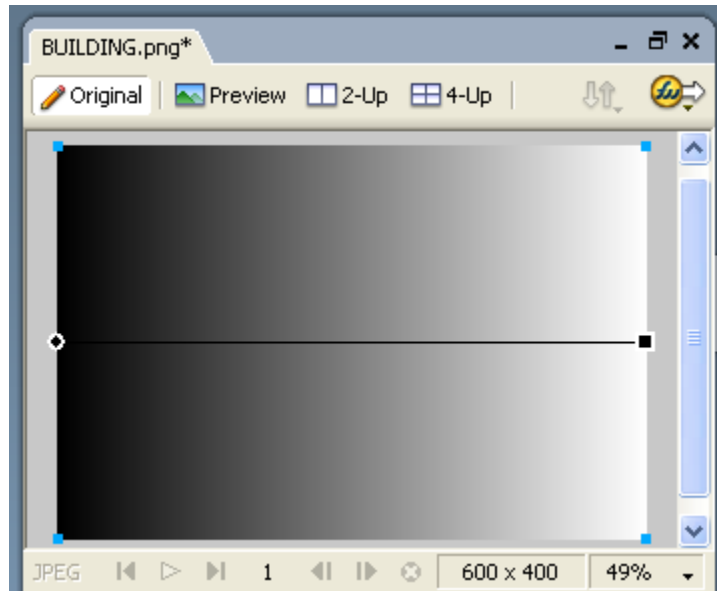
Masking is basically seeing one object through another. Sort of like a window. Effects can then be added to the mask or "window" which then changes how the underlying image appears. In this example we will create a fade on the left side of this photo. The window or mask will be a rectangle the same size as the photo with a gradient from black to white. When the rectangle is masked the white becomes transparent and the white become opaque. The gray area is where the fade will occur.



1. **Open the sample file** or any image you would like to mask. Note the length and width.
2. Uses the **Rectangle Vector tool** to drag out a rectangle don't worry about its size, color or position yet.
3. **Select the rectangle** and use the **Properties bar** to change its width and height to match the photo. Set the x, y coordinates to (0, 0). The Rectangle should now be exactly the same size and in the same position as photo.

4. Now add a gradient fill by first selecting the rectangle and use the fill drop down menu in the **Properties bar** to change from solid to linear.

5. Fireworks will pick up two colors and create a gradient. Don't worry if the colors aren't black and white, we will change them next.



6. In the **Properties bar** selecting the Fill color button will get you a new panel instead of the usual color palette. The two little hatted

squares represent the two colors being used in the gradient. To change one of the colors just click right on the square and the normal color palette will pop up. For a gradient mask you need to use black and white.

7. These little squares can also be moved around to change the look of the gradient.

8. When you look back at the rectangle it now will have an extra handle with a circle on one end and a square on the other. The circle is where the gradient starts. You can drag it around. The square controls the width and direction of the gradient it also can be dragged around. Remember White is fully transparent meaning we will see through it like a clear window. Black is opaque and when masked will become completely not see through. The gray area will be where the fading will occur.

9. **Select** both the rectangle and photo by using the **Black pointer** to drag a rectangle around the two objects.

10. You can tell they are both selected by looking at the layer panel and seeing both objects highlighted blue.

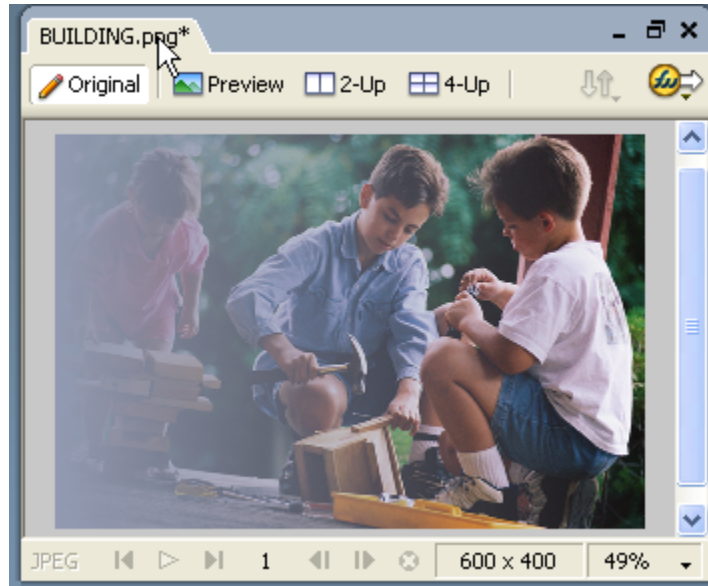
11. With both objects selected go to **Modify >> Mask >> Group as Mask**

12. The image is now masked. The checkered pattern on the left is the canvas color showing through. It is set to transparent.

13. The canvas color should match the color of the background on the webpage it will end up on. To change the canvas color go to **Modify >> Canvas >> Canvas Color**.

14. **Select Custom** and then use the Color Palette to select a color.

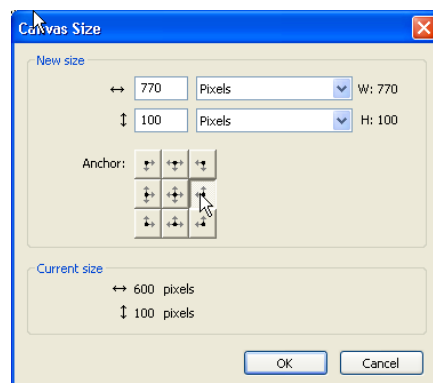
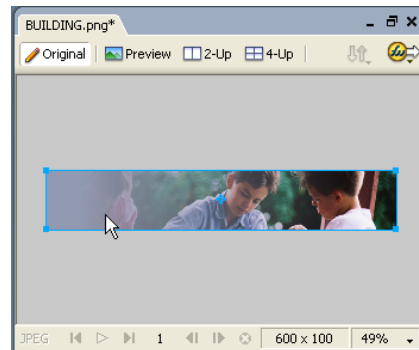
15. **Preview** it in a browser by pressing **F12** to see how it will actually appear. Don't forget to save.



Cropping

Now that the fade is created the image needs to be cropped to the right size. In this example the image is 600 x 400. The final banner will be 770 x 100 so this image needs to be cropped to 600 x 100 and then have the canvas width expanded to 770.

1. Pick up the **crop tool** and drag out a rectangle. .
2. Use the **Properties Bar** to resize it to 600 by 100.
3. Once it is the right size reposition it by clicking and dragging within the box.
4. **Double click** inside the box to actually crop.
5. Enlarge the Canvas to 770 by **Modify >> Canvas >> Size**.
6. Set the width to 770 and select an Anchor point the points left. This will make the canvas 770 x 100 with some extra space on the left for the text.



Adding Text and Exporting

All that is left is to add the text. In this example there are two lines of text formatted differently. The easiest way to accomplish this is to use two text boxes.

1. Pick up the **Text tool**, **click once** on the image and type the text. Once the text is in, switch back to the black pointer and then use the **Properties bar** to format and position the text.
2. Repeat the process for the second text box.



3. **Save** as a .png so there is a master file to go back to if ever needed.
4. **File >> Export** to convert to a .jpg or .gif. This is the one that will be inserted onto the page in Dreamweaver.