

These instructions were written for Photoshop CS6, but should work the same or similarly in recent versions of Photoshop.



1. To download the files you'll use in this exercise go to:
<http://www.nobledesktop.com/goodies>
2. Under **Photoshop Digital Darkroom**, click the **Class Files** button to download the compressed files.
3. Once the file is downloaded and uncompressed you should have a folder named **DigitalDarkroomFiles** containing two images: **bbq.psd** and **bbq-finished.jpg**
4. In Photoshop, go to **File > Open**.
5. Navigate to the **DigitalDarkroomFiles** folder and open **bbq-finished.jpg**. This is a flattened version of how the finished image will look.

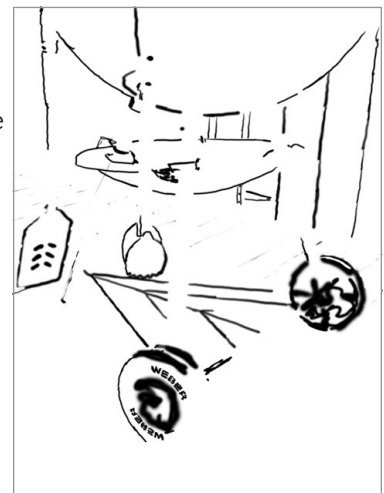
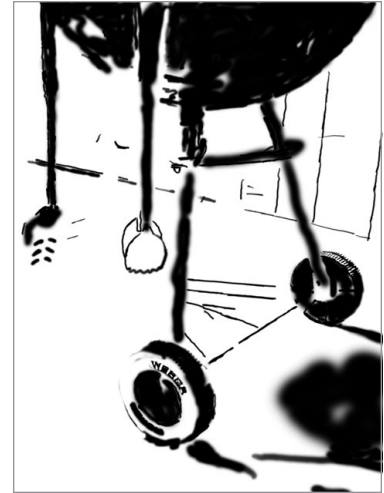
The goal is to transform an ordinary still life into something more memorable with a sense of magical light, subtle organic/painterly textures and three-dimensionality through tonal and color changes, as well as selective focus.

6. **Close** it once you've had a good look.
7. Go to **File > Open** and from the **DigitalDarkroomFiles** folder, open **bbq.psd**.

ADDING A HALO EFFECT AROUND THE EDGES OF SHADOW AREAS

1. To select the top half of the image's histogram press **Cmd-Option-2** (MAC) or **Ctrl-Alt-2** (WINDOWS).
2. Invert the selection to select only tones below 50% on the grayscale (**Cmd-Shift-I** (MAC) or **Ctrl-Shift-I** (WINDOWS)). That's the letter i, not a 1.
3. Duplicate only the selected pixels to a new image layer by pressing **Cmd-J** (MAC) or **Ctrl-J** (WINDOWS) (or choosing **Layer > New > Layer Via Copy**).
4. Name the new layer **blurred shadows**.
5. With the new layer selected, go to **Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur**.
6. Set the **Radius** to **2** (or use your own taste) to make a soft halo around the shadows and click **OK**.
7. To intensify the effect, change the blending mode of the layer to **Overlay** (at the top left of the **Layers** panel).
8. Some of the shadows have become too dark. Choose **Layer > Layer Mask > Reveal All** to add a layer mask to the blurred shadows layer.

9. To bring back some of the lost shadow details, use the **Brush** () tool (press **B** to select the tool). Paint **black** to hide the blurred shadow areas where you want to preserve sharpness (e.g., around the “WEBER” letters on the foreground wheel and other areas of fine detail). Use the example to the right as a guideline.
10. Now you’ll do almost the same thing for the highlights. **Hide** the **blurred shadows** layer.
11. Press **Cmd–Option–2** (MAC) or **Ctrl–Alt–2** (WINDOWS) to select the top half of the image’s histogram.
12. Select the **Background** layer.
13. Duplicate the selected pixels to a new image layer by pressing **Cmd–J** (MAC) or **Ctrl–J** (WINDOWS).
14. Name the new layer **blurred highlights**.
15. Move the **blurred highlights layer** so it’s the top layer.
16. With the new layer selected, choose **Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur**.
17. Set the **Radius** to **2** (or use your own taste) to make a soft halo around the highlights and click **OK**.
18. To slightly lessen the overall effect, reduce the **Opacity** of the layer to **80%**.
19. Choose **Layer > Layer Mask > Reveal All** to add a layer mask to the blurred highlights layer.
20. **Show** the **blurred shadows** layer.
21. Select the **blurred highlights** layer mask.
22. Use the **Brush** () tool with **black** paint to hide the blurring in areas where you want to preserve sharpness. Using the example to the right as a guideline, we suggest keeping the background elements blurred (wooden deck, wall, door) to effectively make the sharp foreground elements stand out.



RE-INTERPRET THE OVERALL COLORS IN THE IMAGE

1. Select the topmost layer.
2. Choose **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Color Balance**.
3. Name it **overall color** and click **OK**.

4. In the **Properties** panel, set the following:
 - **Shadows** to **+4, 0, +22**
 - **Midtones** to **+29, -4, -11**
 - **Highlights** to **+13, 0, -41**
 - Make sure **Preserve Luminosity** is checked.
5. The layer mask thumbnail of the color balance layer you just added should currently be selected. To add some texture to this adjustment layer's mask, choose **Filter > Noise > Add Noise** and set the following:



Amount: **50%**
Distribution: **Gaussian**


6. Click **OK**.
7. Now let's make the texture more subtle and organic either by painting on the layer mask with various organically shaped brushes, varying the opacity of your brush, or applying a painterly filter to the mask for an easier (but less interesting) look. Go to **Filter > Filter Gallery** and choose **Brush Strokes > Angled Strokes** and set:

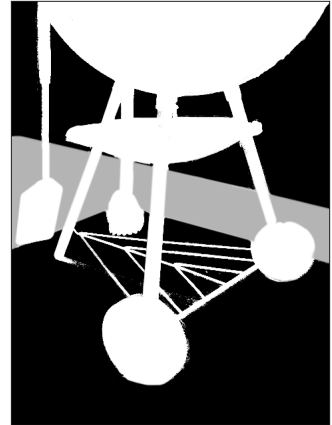
Direction Balance: **75**
Stroke Length: **33**
Sharpness: **1**

8. Click **OK**.


GIVE THE GREENISH WALL & SLATE A MORE INTERESTING COLOR

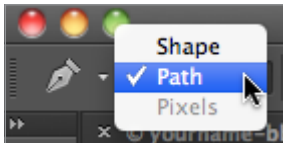
1. Select the **Background** layer (otherwise the selection we are about to make could accidentally alter the mask of another layer).
2. Go to **Select > Color Range** and:
 - Click the eyedropper on the green door in the upper left corner.
 - Set Fuzziness to **48**.
 - Also do a **Shift-click** with the eyedropper to add the slate floor and the wall slats to the right of the grill.
3. Click **OK**.
4. **Double-click** the **Quick Mask Mode** () button at the bottom of the Toolbar to bring up the Quick Mask Options.
5. Set **Color Indicates** to **Selected Areas** and click **OK**.
6. You should now be in **Quick Mask Mode** (). If not, click the button to switch into **Quick Mask Mode**.


7. Use the **Brush** () tool to paint **white** over any shadow areas of the grill (to remove it from the selection). Paint **black** over any wall or slate areas (to add it to the selection). Paint **50% grey** on the wood flooring so it will be partially selected. Use the example to the right as a guideline for the selection. In the example, the **black** indicates **selected** areas, the **white** indicates **deselected** areas, **gray** is **partially** selected.
8. Press **Q** to exit Quick Mask Mode.
9. Select the topmost layer.
10. Choose **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Color Balance**.
11. Name the adjustment **green slate, door, wall** and click **OK**.
12. In the **Properties** panel, set the following:
 - **Shadows** to **+5, +3, 0**
 - **Midtones** to **+2, +23, 0**
 - **Highlights** to **-4, +23, 0**
 - Make sure **Preserve Luminosity** is checked.
13. To slightly lessen the overall effect, reduce the **Opacity** of the layer to **70%**.

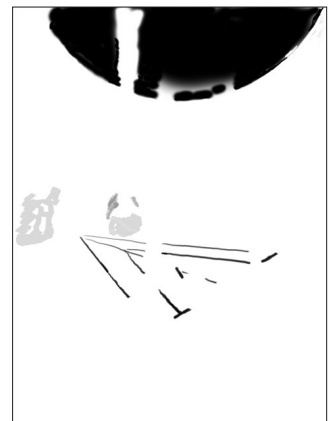


PUNCH UP THE REDS LATENT IN BOWL, TOOLS AND RUST ON LOWER GRILL BARS

1. Press **P** to select the **Pen** () tool.
2. In the **Options** bar at the top, choose the **Paths** option as shown below. Instead of making a Shape Layer, this will create a path that we'll later turn into a selection.



3. Draw a path to encompass the bowl.
4. In the **Paths** panel, double-click the **Work Path** and rename it **red bowl** for later use.
5. With the **red bowl** path highlighted, at the top right of the **Paths** panel go into the **panel menu** () and choose **Make Selection**.
6. Set the following:
 - Feather Radius: **2**
 - Check on **Anti-Aliased** (to soften the edge of the selection slightly)
7. Click **OK**.
8. Press **Q** to enter **Quick Mask Mode**.

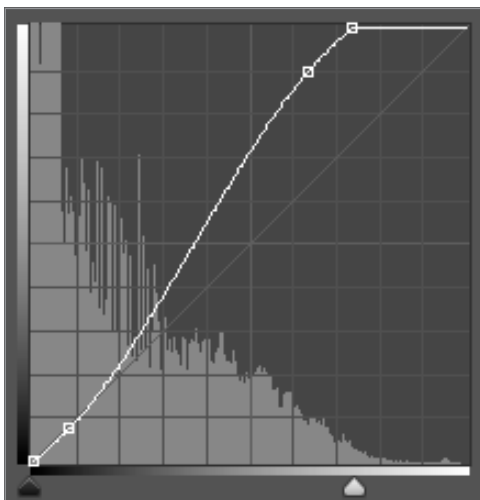


9. With a medium size brush set at low opacity, paint **black** (gray) over rusty parts of the tools. Refer to the example on the right as a guideline.
10. With a small brush set at 50% opacity, **click** and then **Shift-click** on the struts to add them to the selection. Refer to the example on the right as a guideline of what we want in the final selection.
11. Press **Q** to leave **Quick Mask Mode**.
12. Choose **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Color Balance**.
13. Name the adjustment **reddish bowl, tools & struts** and click **OK**.
14. In the **Properties** panel, set the following:
 - **Shadows** to **+21, -3, -7**
 - **Midtones** to **+35, -10, -17**
 - **Highlights** to **+10, -13, -20**.
 - Make sure **Preserve Luminosity** is checked.

BRIGHTENING SOME ELEMENTS

We want to add more emphasis to parts of the grill by brightening the red bowl, struts, foreground wheel's whitewall, and shadow sides of the hanging tools.

1. Press **Q** to enter **Quick Mask Mode**.
2. Using the example on the right as a guideline, paint **black** (to select) over the bowl, tools and wheels.
3. Press **Q** to leave **Quick Mask Mode**.
4. Choose **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Curves**.
5. Name the adjustment **brighten bowl, etc.** and click **OK**.
6. In the **Properties** panel, brighten the highlights with a curve as shown below.





BALANCING THE COLOR SATURATION


1. Some colors have become over saturated. To adjust them, choose **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Hue/Saturation**.
2. Name the layer **balance color saturation** and click **OK**.
3. In the **Properties** panel, make sure **Colorize** is **not** checked and:
 - Set **Saturation** to **-40**
 - From the menu that says **Master** choose **Reds**.
 - Make **Saturation -5** and **Lightness +3**.
 - Change the menu to **Yellows** and make **Saturation +23** and **Lightness -15**.
 - Change the menu to **Blues** and make **Saturation +20**.
4. Too much of the tool's color saturation was lost. Paint **black** on the layer mask to give them back a more vibrant color. Refer to the example on the right as a guideline.



ADDING VIGNETTING TO FOCUS ON SUBJECT

1. Choose the **Elliptical Marquee** () tool.
2. Drag from the upper left to the lower right corner of the image.
3. Choose **Select > Refine Edge**.
4. Click on the **View** menu and double-click **On Black** so we get a better preview of how the effect will look.
5. Set the **Feather** to **70**.
6. Click **OK**.
7. Invert the selection (**Cmd-Shift-I** (MAC) or **Ctrl-Shift-I** (WINDOWS)).
8. **Cmd-Option-click** (MAC) or **Ctrl-Alt-click** (WINDOWS) on the layer mask on the **reddish bowl, tools & struts** layer to subtract those areas from the selection.
9. Choose **Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Curves**.
10. Name it **vignette** and click **OK**.
11. In the **Properties** panel, drag the **White Point** straight down to **Output 138/Input 255**.
12. With the layer mask still selected, use the **Brush** () tool to mask out the vignetting on other foreground elements whose tones you want to preserve, like the hanging tools and wheels.
13. Your image should be looking good! **Save** and **close** the file.

MASKING TIPS

- When creating a mask select the parts of a layer you want to see. Then, when you click the **Add layer mask** () button in the **Layers** panel, you'll see what was selected and everything will be masked out (or hidden).
- **Shift-click** a mask thumbnail to disable it without throwing it away.
- **Option-click** (MAC) or **Alt-click** (WINDOWS) a mask thumbnail to view only the mask, not the image.
- **Option-Shift-click** (MAC) or **Alt-Shift-click** (WINDOWS) a mask thumbnail to view it as a shaded color overlay, much like a Quick Mask.
- Remove a mask by dragging the mask thumbnail to the trash. Photoshop will ask if you want to **Apply mask to layer before removing**. If you click **Apply**, Photoshop will delete the areas of the layer that had been hidden by the mask. In most cases, you'll simply want to choose **Discard**, to throw away the mask without affecting the image layer.