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How to Take Up the Challenge of Photoshop Hair Masking by Atiqur Sumon

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Selecting and extracting the hair can test the skills of any levelheaded photo editor. Even if he has the best Photoshop software, he will first need to figure which method will be appropriate without spoiling the actual motion and emotion of the image. Thankfully most professional photographers have a tuning with some editor or the other to make such photos look a million dollars. Actually for the photo editor there is no such thing as mastering any one technique for hair masking. There are different kinds of hair and different solutions need to be adopted. It could be a super modelâ€™s hair flying or a pet animalâ€™s ruffled fur coat, which needs photogenic adjustments. The technique differs but each â€˜hairy problemâ€™ can be solved. Photoshop hair masking comes in CS3 and CS5 versions. Both help to redefine the contours of the hair.

It isnâ€™t really easy to explain without an example. So here is one, which will help to take up the challenge of Photoshop Hair Masking with least effort.

Suppose there is a picture of a model with cropped hair upwards that needs a hair transplant. First understand which areas of the hair need masking. This makes the job easier. If the photographer has clicked the picture on a white background, editing will be smooth. The next challenge lies in making this hair transplant look authentic and not like a wig placed on the model. Initially the editor will makes sure that the mask that he uses for the first edit will remain till the final composition. The next step is to duplicate and create a monolayer. Then with the blend and overlay mode stack the layers. This will need the layer menu often, use the menu bar to control. The next step involves clicking â€˜merge downâ€™. Then use black color and with the help of the brush darken the spot. Tracing around it means the hair is not selected for edit. To make sure the selection is not ugly, use the blend mode of the brush in normal position. Once this mask is ready it can be applied as a layer.

To switch back to the white color, use overlay. Avoid the edges while painting. There are strands of hair, which may be covered. Next adjustment layer needs to be put into action. This mask will be the cover up for the one (mask) already created in the earlier steps. To relocate the mask, click â€˜allâ€™ fror the menu. Then merge it by checking the edit menu. A new background has been created. Grouping needs to be done. To improve the quality of the mask, the editor will place the blend mode to multiply. Fine hair emerges in the process. To be doubly sure that the hair does not look like a transplant the lasso tool can be applied. A filter can be used to blur the mask. So the actual picture looks refined after editing. To realign the adjustment mask use the gamma slider. The final sharpness can be controlled with the slider. If the setting looks fine, then simply click on OK. Itâ€™s done!

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