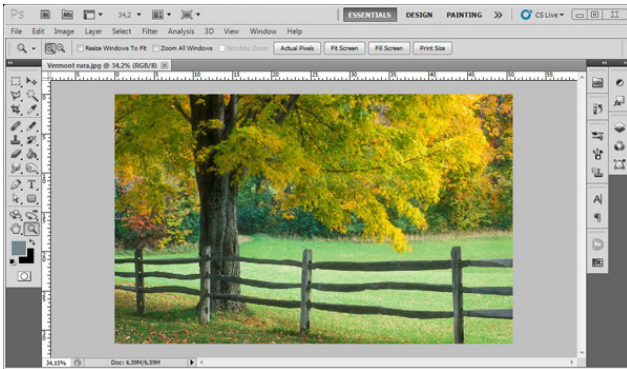


Use the Mixer Brush in Photoshop CS5 to Turn a Photo Into a Realistic Painting

Before Photoshop CS5, transforming a photo into a realistic-looking painting was quite tricky. Now that CS5 has been released we now have some new tools to help achieve this effect a bit more realistically. In today's tutorial we will demonstrate how to use new Mixer Brush tool to transform a photo into a masterpiece in minutes.

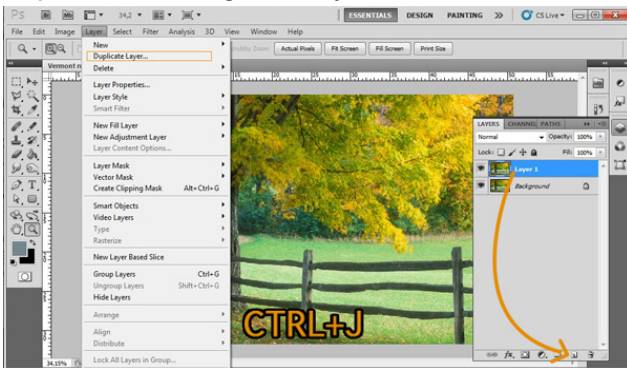
Step 1

Let's get started by first opening a photo.



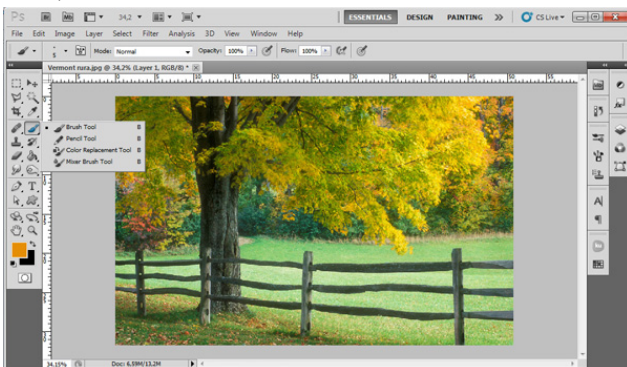
Step 2

Duplicate the background layer Command + J. Label it "Original."



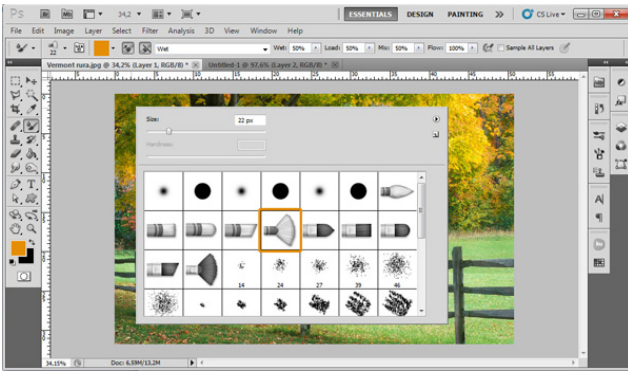
Step 3

Now, click and hold the Brush icon in the toolbar then select the Mixer Brush Tool.



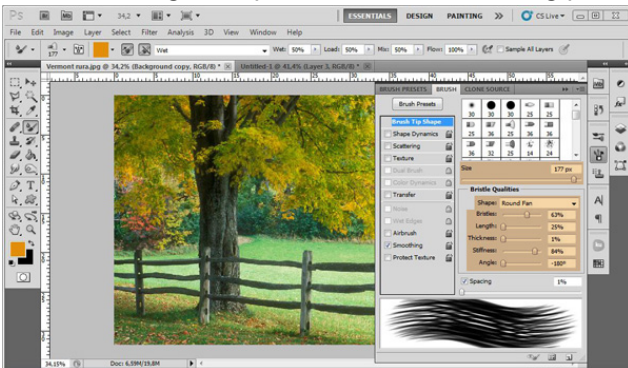
Step 4

Go to Window > Brushes. Choose the brush (Round Fan Brush) as shown below.



Step 5

After the dialog has opened, enter the following parameters.



Size 177px

(Choose a fairly large sized brush, I've chosen 177 px but you can choose a larger or smaller one if you like.)

Bristle Qualities

Bristles: 67%

Length: 25%

Thickness: 1%

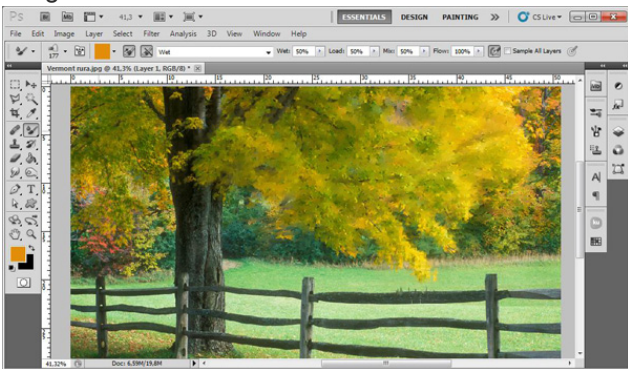
Stiffness: 84%

Angle: -180

Note: If you are using a tablet, check the "Airbrush" Option as I've done here.

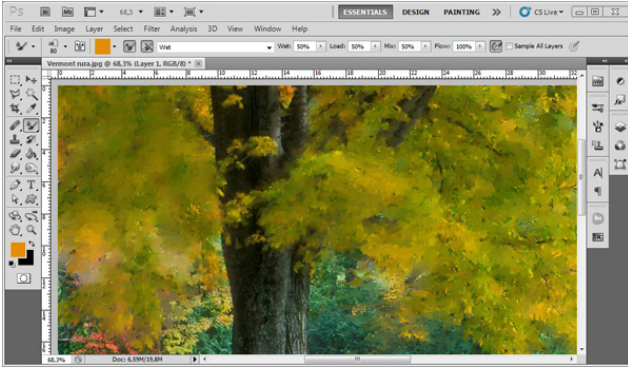
Step 6

Create a new transparent layer. Label it "Right Side of Tree." Let's focus on the tree for now. Start moving your brush in circular movements on the right side of the tree. Once you've finished, you should have something that looks like the image below.



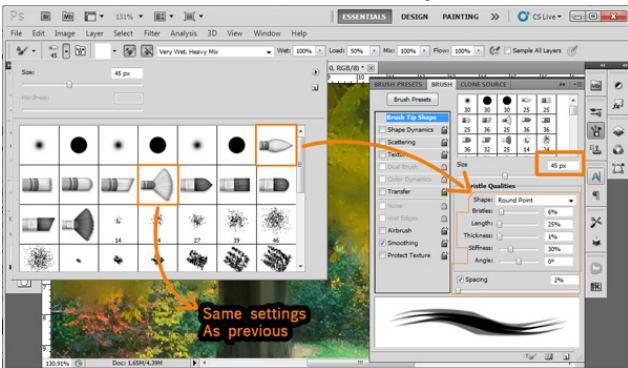
Step 7

Create a new transparent layer. Label it “Left Side of Tree.” Use the same technique on the left side of the tree. Feel free to adjust the size of the brush as needed to paint in some details.



Step 8

Create a new transparent layer. Label it “Trunk.” Now let’s start working on the trunk of the tree. This time, we will use another technique, which is to start from a point and drag the brush along the trunk. Be careful to pick a brush that is the same size as the trunk and then vary it to work with the details. For this step, I used two brushes as shown below.

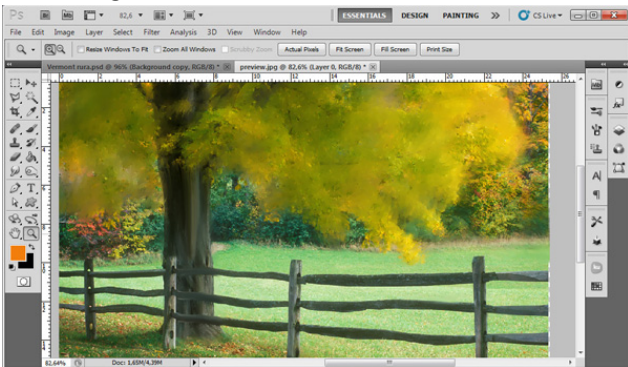


Size 72px

- Bristle Qualities
- Shape: Round Point
- Bristles: 6%
- Length: 25%
- Thickness: 1%
- Stiffness: 30%
- Angle: 0
- Spacing: 2%

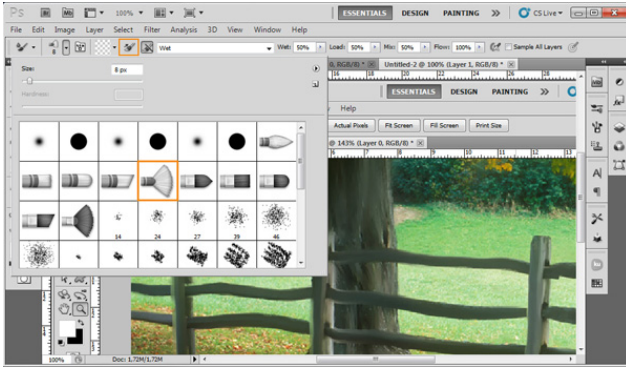
Step 9

Your image should now look similar to below.



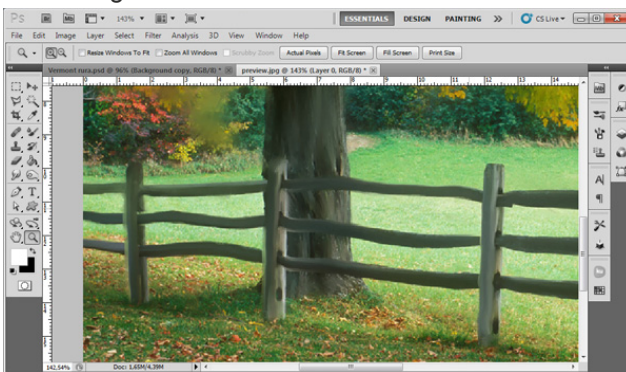
Step 10

Create a new transparent layer. Label it "Fence." Now let's work on the fence. For this I used the same brush (Round Fan Brush) as in Step 4 using the same technique.



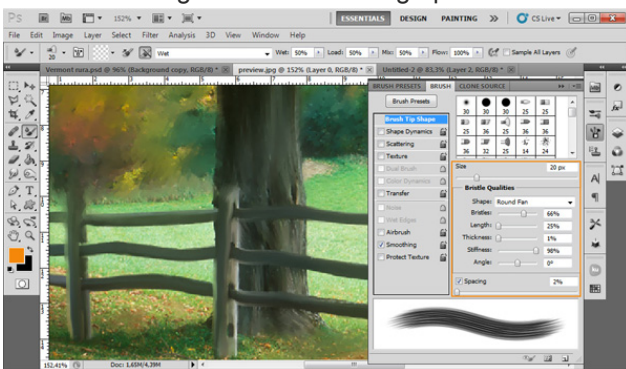
Step 11

Your image should now look similar to below.



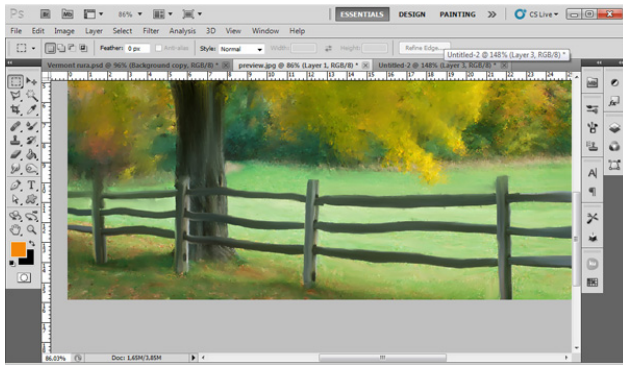
Step 12

Create a new transparent layer. Label it "Grass." We can now start on the grass. To do this, we need to change the stiffness of the brush (Round Fan Brush) to 98% to get a more diffused effect. There are two techniques you can use. The first is performing some more circular movements on the grass varying the brush size to give it more detail. The second is to start from the bottom right side of the image and slightly drag (less than a 1/4") the brush up working your way across the image and then moving up.



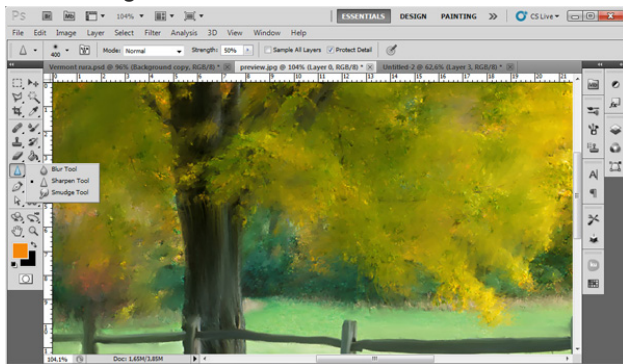
Step 13

Your image should now look similar to below.



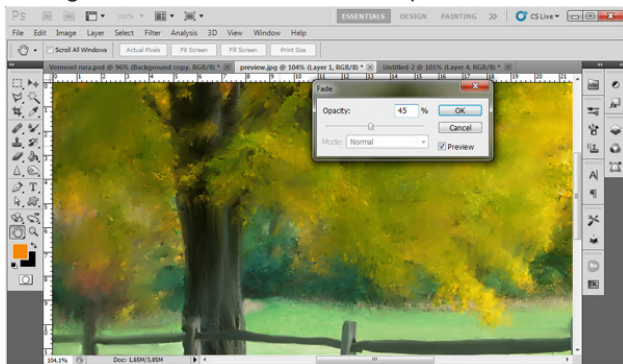
Step 14

Once you are happy with the look of the image, merge the Left Side of Tree, Right Side of tree, Trunk, Fence, and Grass Layers. (Shift and Click on all those layers so they are highlighted Then from the Menu bar go to Image > Layer > Merge Layer) Re-name this layer “Brush Strokes.” Now select the Sharpen tool and select a round brush size of 400 px. Apply it to the image as shown.



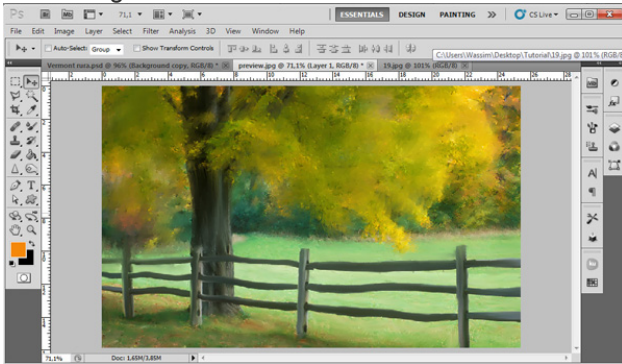
Step 15

Now go to edit, then fade the Sharpen effect, to 45% as shown. (Note: You must still be on the Sharpen tool.)



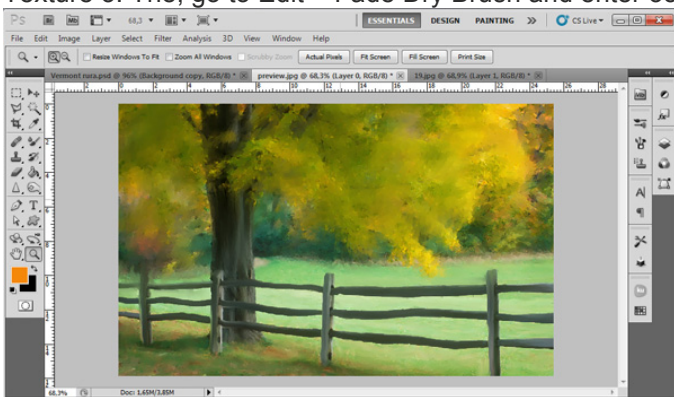
Step 16

Your image should now look similar to below.



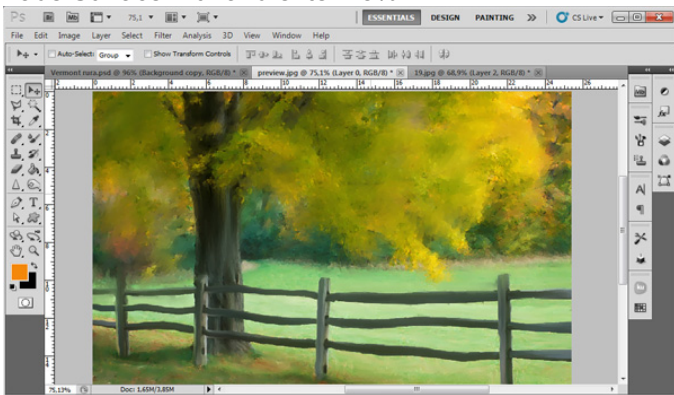
Step 17

Now let's apply an Artistic filter, go to filter > Artistic > Dry Brush, and enter the settings Brush Size 0, Brush Detail 10, Texture 3. The, go to Edit > Fade Dry Brush and enter 35%.



Step 18

Apply a surface blur, go to filter > Blur > Surface Blur, and enter the settings Radius 3 and Threshold 4. Then go to Edit > Fade Surface Blur and enter 15%.



Final Image

Take a look at the final image.

