

## Blending Options 1: fire power



**1** This rocket and its jet flame are on two separate layers. The flame is actually a photograph of a firework, rotated to the same angle as the rocket. Fireworks make really great explosions. But how do we get rid of that black background?



**3** When we change the sky for a much brighter one, however, the flame loses all its power. Sure, we can still see it, but the Screen effect has now become insipid. Change the mode back to Normal and we'll find another solution.



**5** So far, so good. But when we zoom in on that flame, we can see that it's a hard cut-off. Everything darker than 25 is hidden, everything brighter is visible: and this produces an ugly, ragged stepping effect.



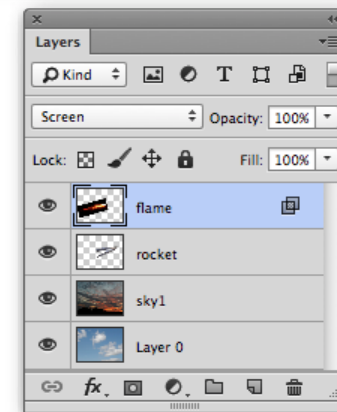
**2** Changing the mode of the firework layer from Normal to Screen, using the pop-up menu at the top of the Layers panel, is one solution. And, when seen against this dark sky background, it's reasonably effective.



**4** Double-click the layer to open the Layer Styles dialog, and look at the Blending Options. At the bottom are the Blend If controls. Under This Layer, drag the left (black) triangle to the right. Now, everything darker than a value of 25 is hidden.

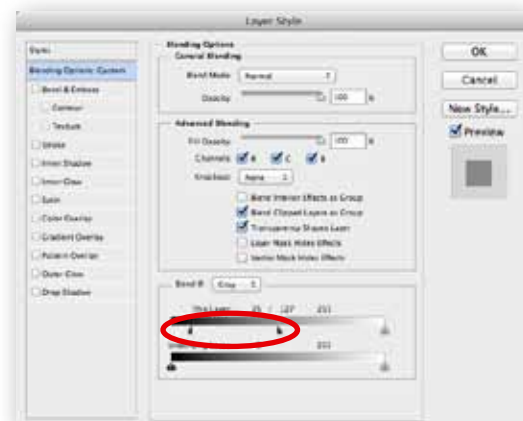
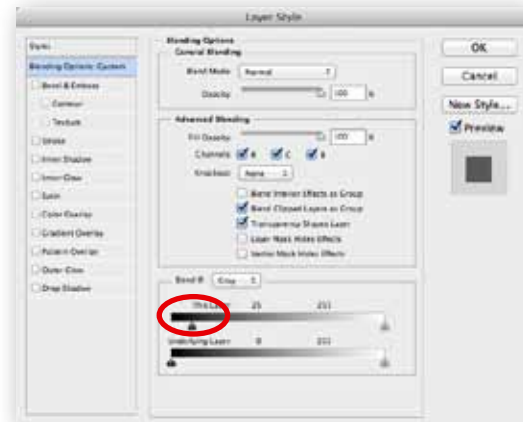


**6** Hold **alt** and drag the right half of the black triangle, and it will split in two. Now, everything darker than 25 is hidden, and everything brighter than 127 is visible; the visibility fades smoothly between the two.



**HOT TIP**

Don't just use my values: they vary for each job. Trust your eyes!



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