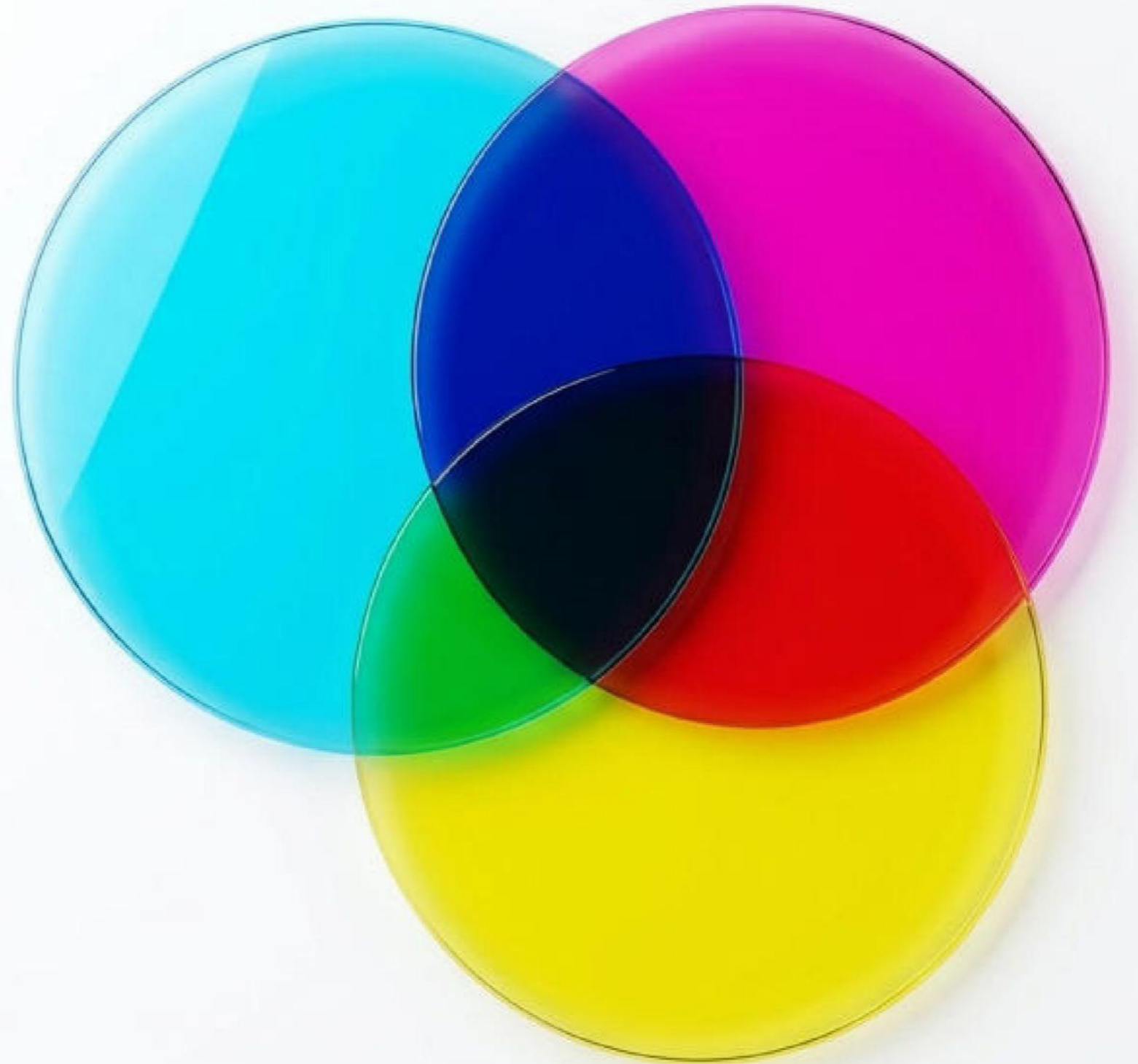


BLOG output Deck (Basic)

<https://photoeditihelp.com/blog/>

**Demystifying Photoshop Blend
Modes: From Guesswork to
Creative Control.**



How Blending Actually Works

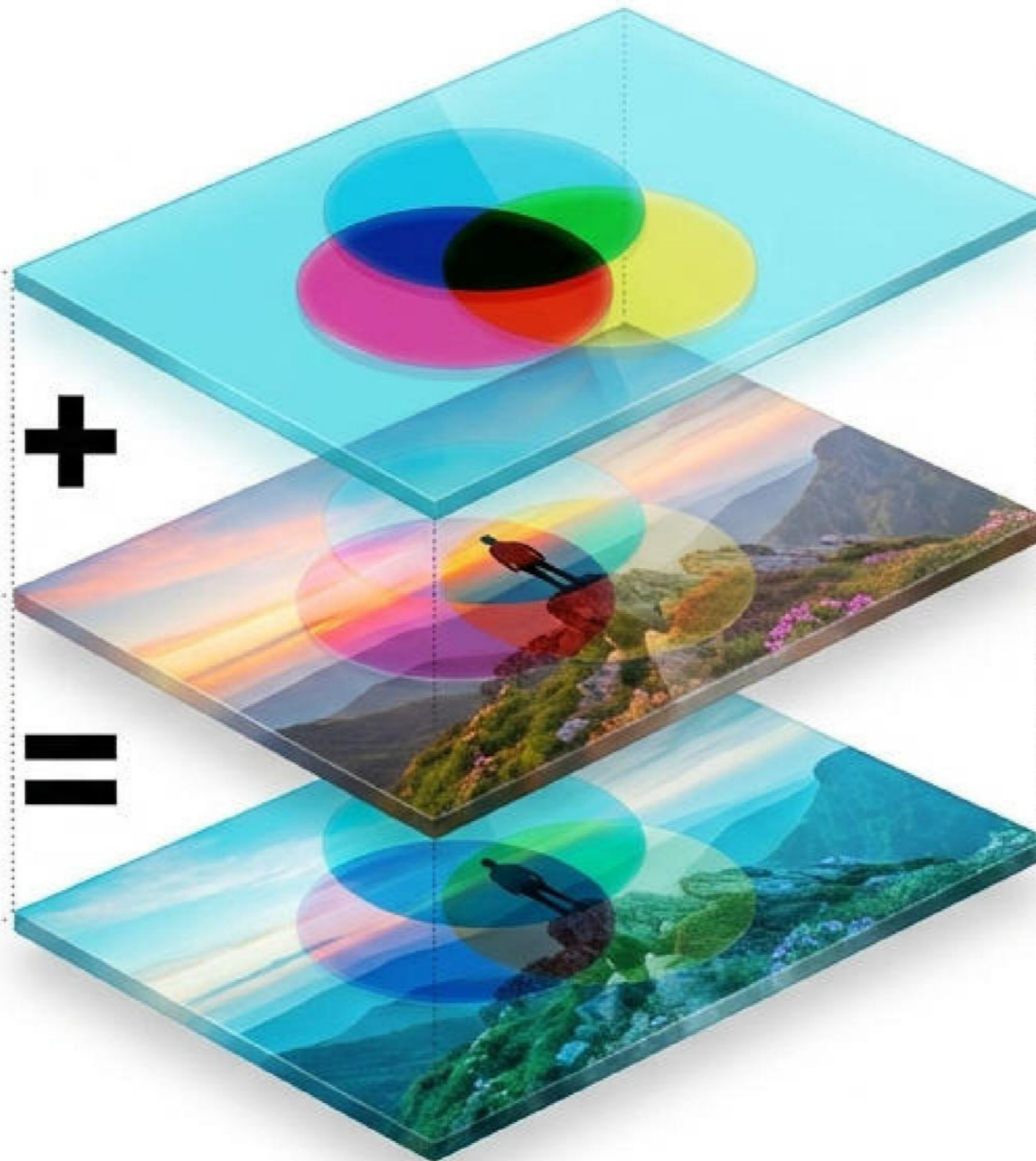
[Blend Layer] - The active layer where the mode is applied.

+

[Base Layer] - The underlying starting image.

=

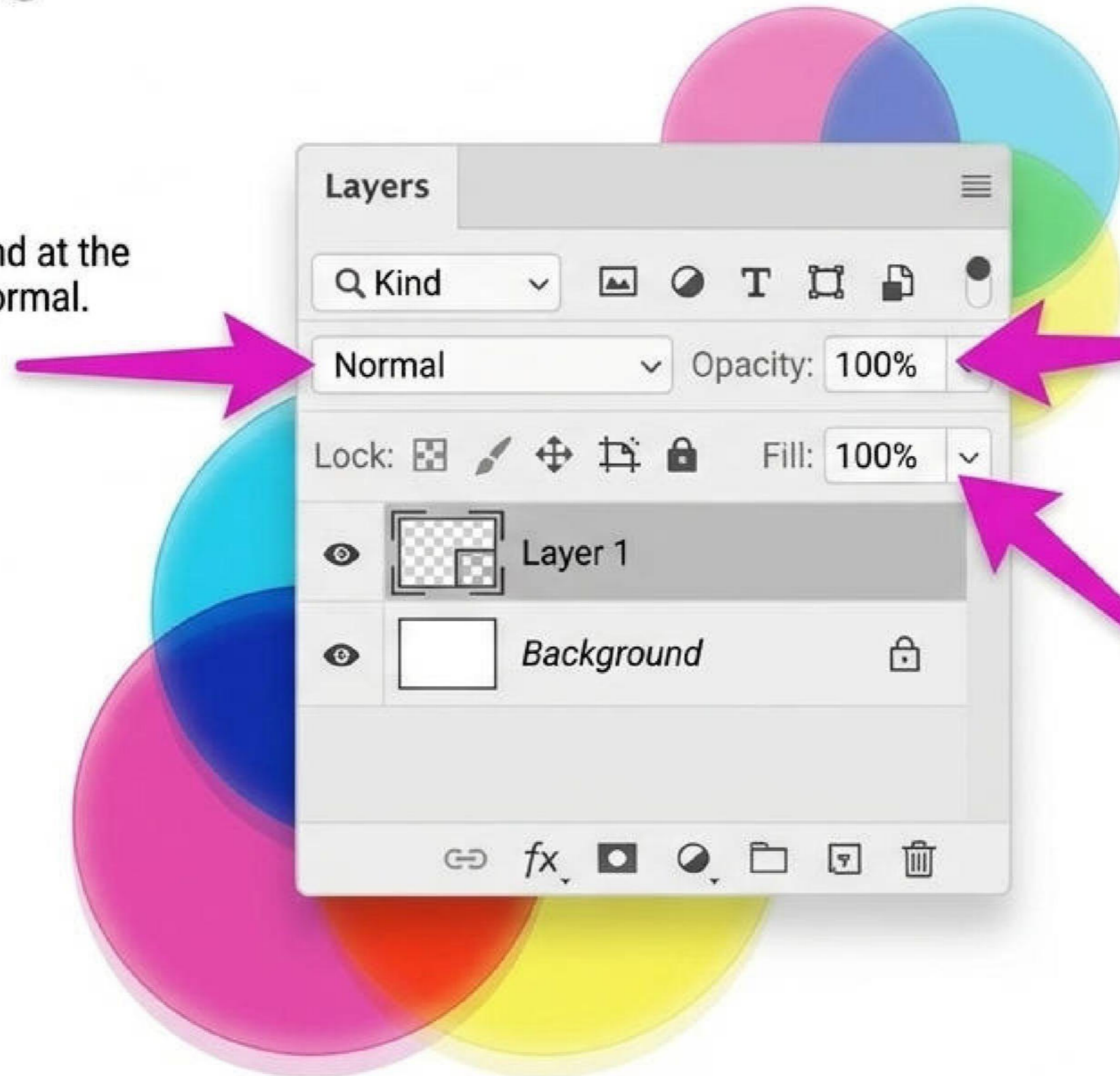
[Result] - Non-destructive visual output.



Blending modes do not alter original pixels; they are mathematical instructions for layer interaction.

Your Blending Toolkit

The Dropdown – Found at the top-left, defaults to Normal.

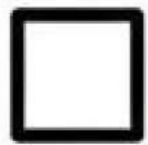


Opacity Slider – Controls overall layer transparency.

Fill Slider – Controls pixel transparency (crucial for advanced modes).

Pro Tip: Hold **Shift + +** or **-** to rapidly cycle through modes while a tool is active.

The Blend Mode Taxonomy



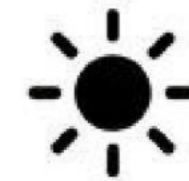
Normal

No pixel math. Relies entirely on opacity.



Darken

Keeps darks, hides lights. Result is always darker.



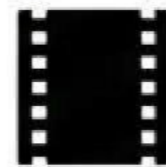
Lighten

Keeps lights, hides darks. Result is always lighter.



Contrast

Darkens darks, lightens lights. Boosts contrast.



Inversion

Creates mathematical negatives and differences.

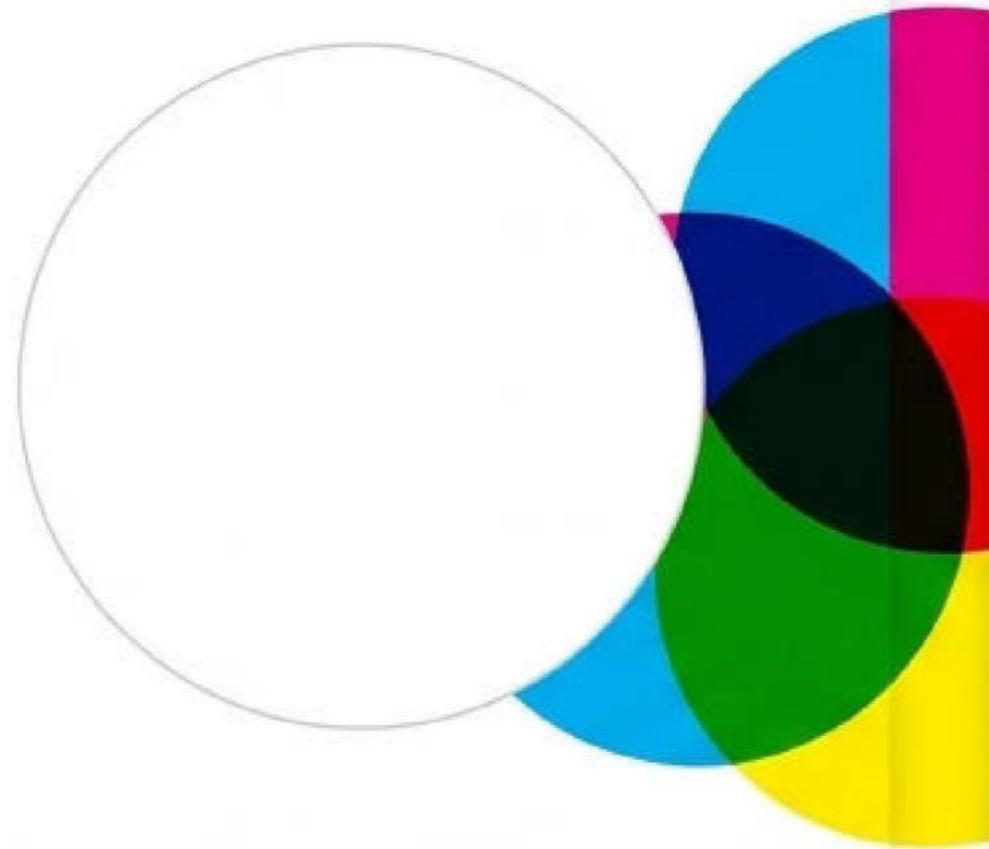


Component

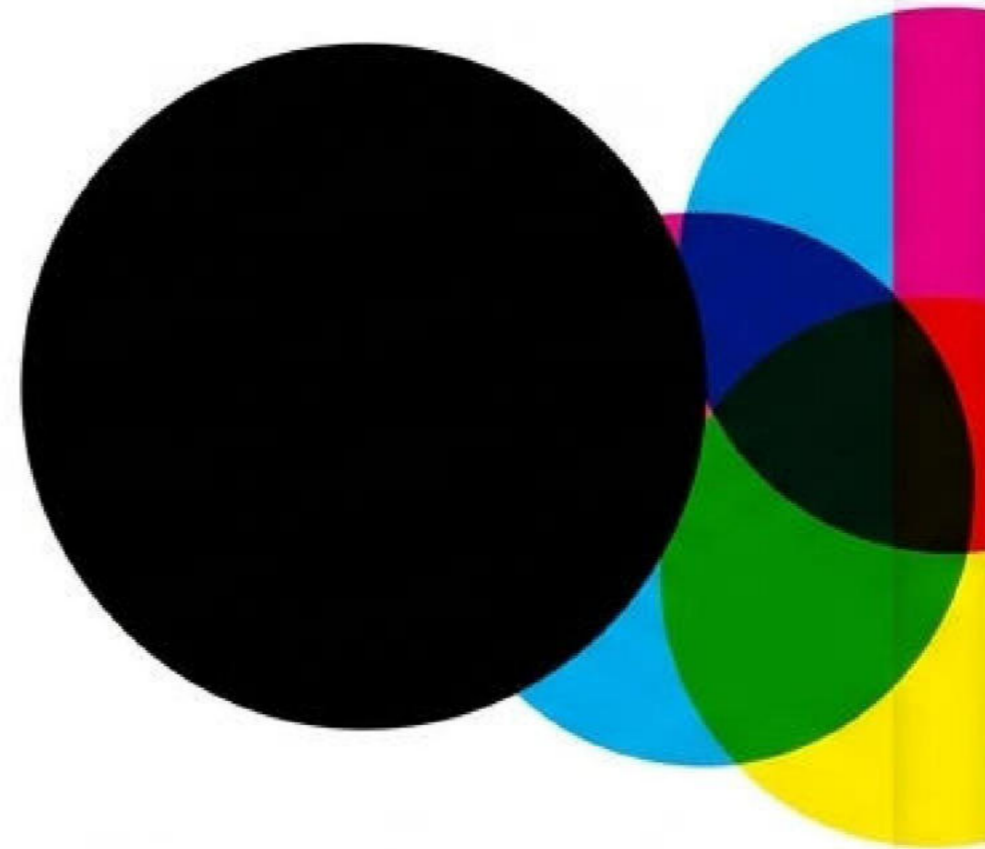
Blends specific HSL values (Hue, Saturation, Luminosity).

The Secret of Neutral Colors

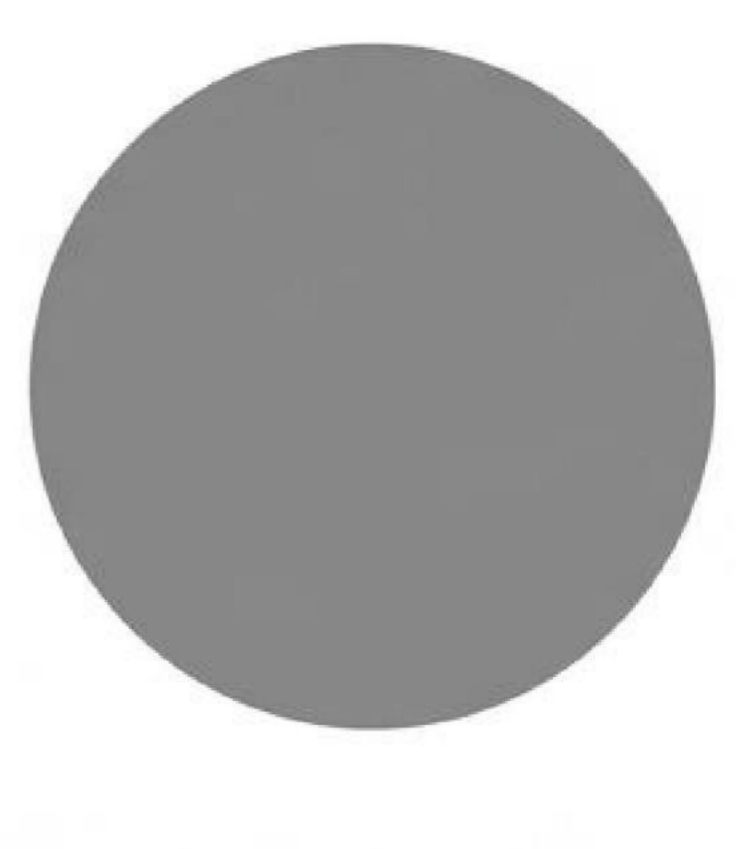
Master blend modes instantly by knowing which colors disappear.



Pure White (255)
becomes completely
invisible in the
Darken group.



Pure Black (0)
becomes completely
invisible in the
Lighten group.



50% Gray (128)
becomes completely
invisible in the
Contrast group.

Multiply (The Essential Darkener)

The Math:

Multiplies base and blend colors.

The Analogy:

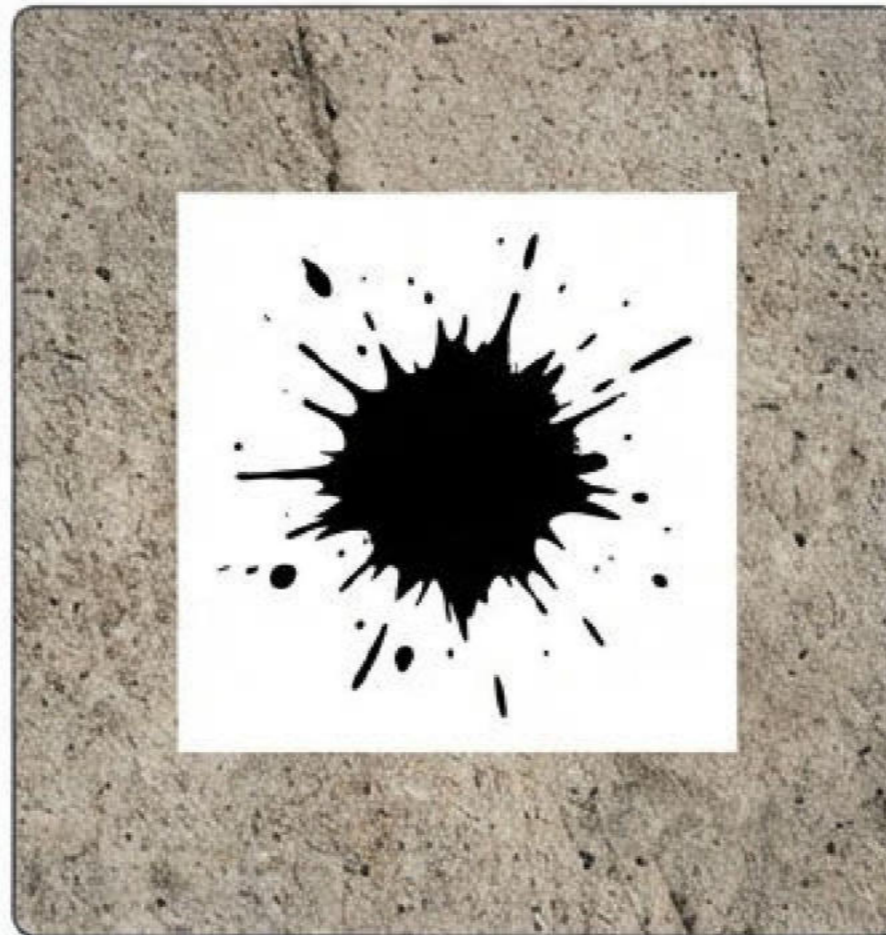
Like stacking two printed transparencies on an overhead projector.

Best Used For:

Knocking out white backgrounds, dropping in shadows, fixing overexposed photos.

Before & After

Before



After



Screen (The Essential Lightener)

The Math: Multiplies the inverse of the colors.

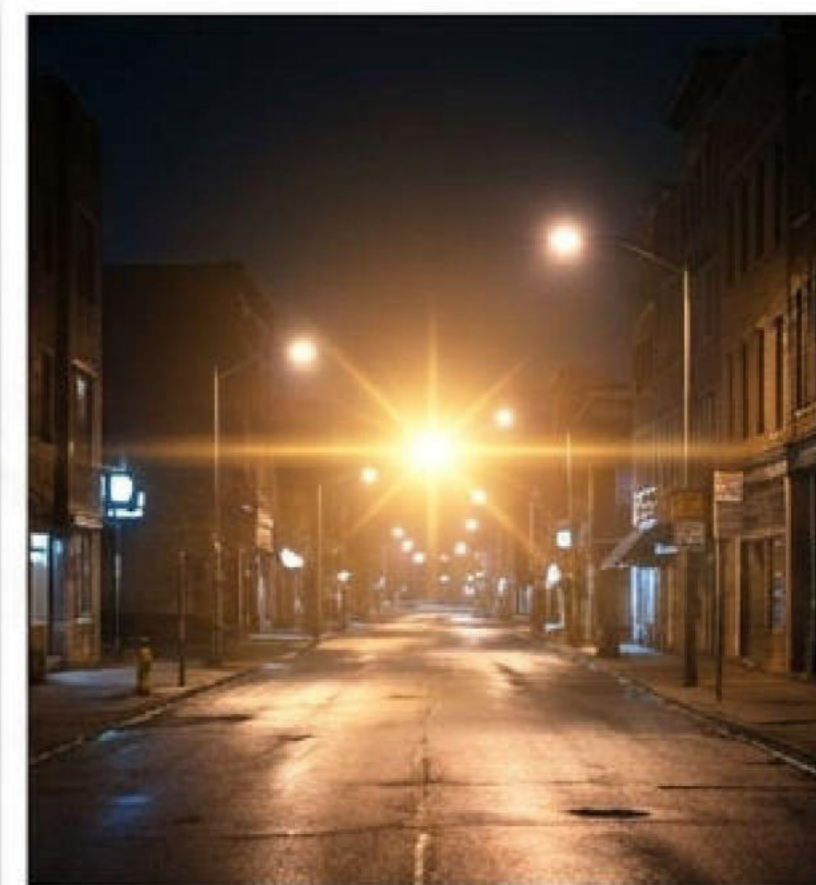
The Analogy: Like projecting two slide projectors onto the exact same physical screen.

Best Used For: Knocking out black backgrounds, adding light leaks, lens flares, or fixing underexposed photos.

Before



After



Overlay & Soft Light (The Punch-Makers)



The Math: A combination of Multiply and Screen based on the Base layer's brightness. 50% Gray vanishes.



Base Photo



Overlay - High impact, intense contrast. Favors harsh light.



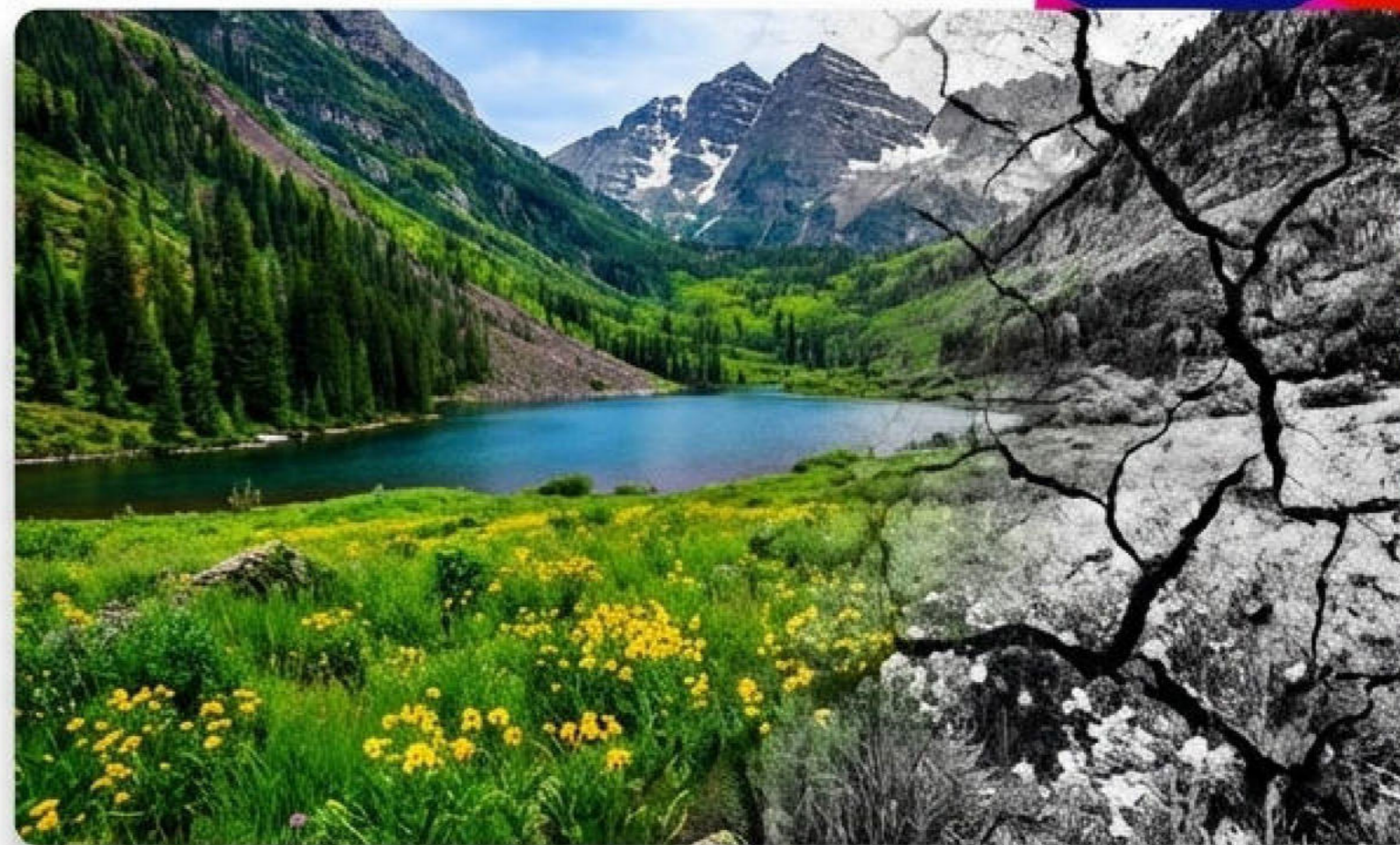
Soft Light - A gentler, more forgiving version. Favors diffused light.

Best Used For: Adding texture, non-destructive dodging and burning, color grading.

Color & Luminosity (The Targeted Tweaks)



Color Mode - Keeps the base brightness, applies the blend's Hue and Saturation. Perfect for hand-tinting B&W photos or matching tones.



Luminosity Mode - Keeps the base color, applies the blend's brightness. Perfect for applying sharpening or contrast adjustments without causing color shifts.

Advanced Secret #1: The Special 8

1 The Trick

For most modes, Opacity and Fill do the exact same thing. But for 8 specific modes, Fill changes the math algorithm for a superior blend.

2 The Special 8

Color Burn, Linear Burn, Color Dodge, Linear Dodge (Add), Vivid Light, Linear Light, Hard Mix, Difference

3 Rule of Thumb

For these 8 modes, leave Opacity at 100% and lower the Fill.

Hard Mix (Opacity 50%)



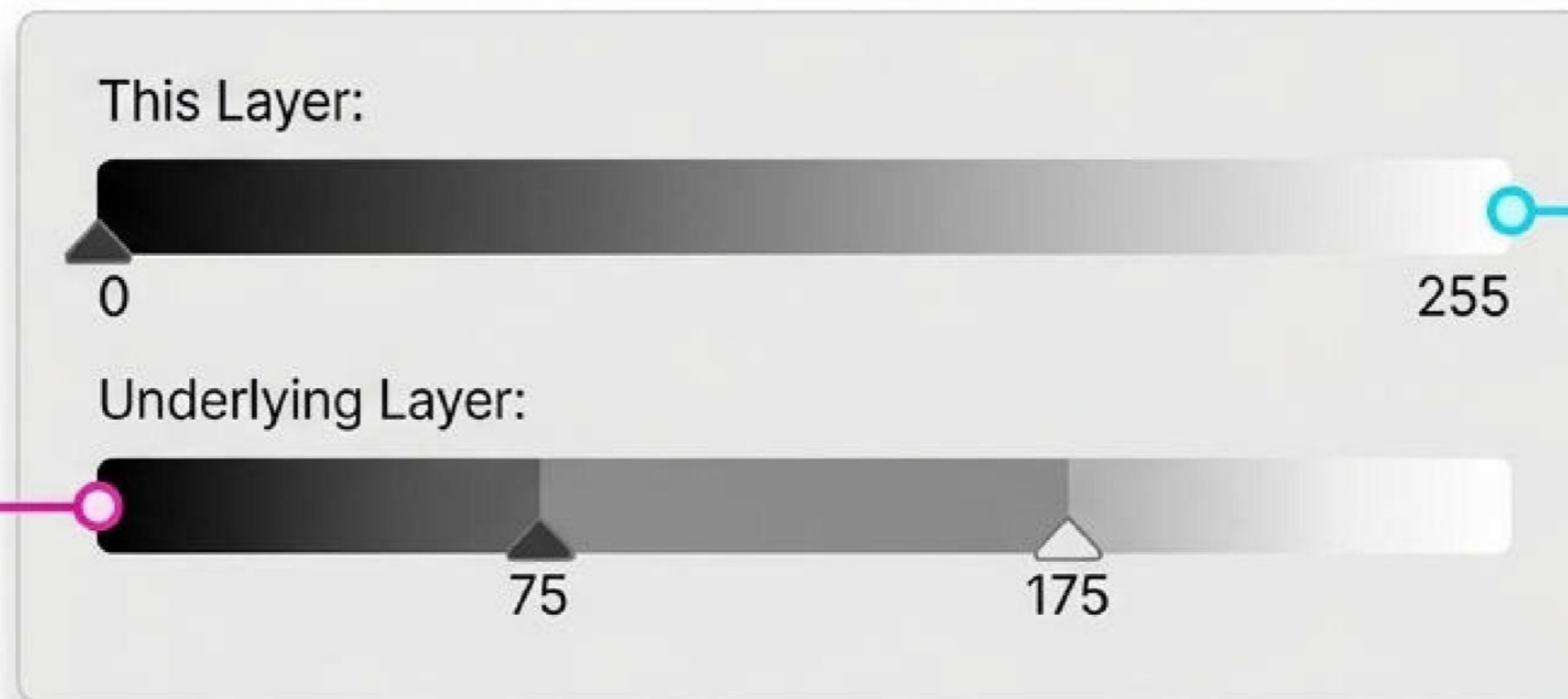
Hard Mix (Fill 50%)



Advanced Secret #2: Blend If

Concept: Blend based on luminance (brightness) rather than overall opacity.

Underlying Layer:
Forces pixels from the layer below to punch through the active layer.



This Layer:
Hides pixels on the active layer based on their brightness.

Pro Tip: Alt/Option + Click the slider triangles to split them, creating a smooth, feathered transition instead of harsh jagged edges.

The Blend Mode Diagnostic Matrix

Goal	Best Mode	Neutral Color / Pro-Tip
Drop a White Background?	Multiply	White vanishes.
Drop a Black Background?	Screen	Black vanishes.
Add Texture & Contrast?	Overlay / Soft Light	50% Gray vanishes.
Change Color Only?	Color	Luminosity remains.
Extreme Glows?	Linear Dodge (Add)	Pro-Tip: Lower FILL, not Opacity.



Keep Blending. Keep Creating.

Blending modes are parametric and non-destructive.
You cannot break your image—so play, adjust, and discover.