

It is easy to create your own track mattes in Adobe Photoshop or any other imaging programme that supports alpha channels. Many interesting and creative effects can be achieved in this way.

- 1) Create a new document 720 pixels wide by 572 pixels high at 72dpi (this is for PAL video, for NTSC the dimensions should be 720 x 480)
- 2) Click on the *Channels* tab in the *Layers* palette.
- 3) At the bottom of the *Channels* palette click on the *Create New Channel* icon. A new channel will appear named "*Alpha 1*"
- 4) Select any tool capable of adding paint or fill to the image, making sure that white is selected as the foreground colour.
- 5) Create a rectangular marquee, oval, shape or paint any other object you require onto the black alpha channel in your image.
- 6) If you have created a rectangular marquee, fill with white from the *Paint Bucket Tool* or a graduated white to black fill with the *Gradient Tool*.
- 7) Save your track matte firstly as a *.psd* file for future alterations and also as a *32bit Targa* file for importing into your editing programme. When saving as a Targa file make sure the *Alpha Channels* box is ticked in the *Save Options* box.

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