



David C. Dalton

Web application & database development, interface design, programming and SEO

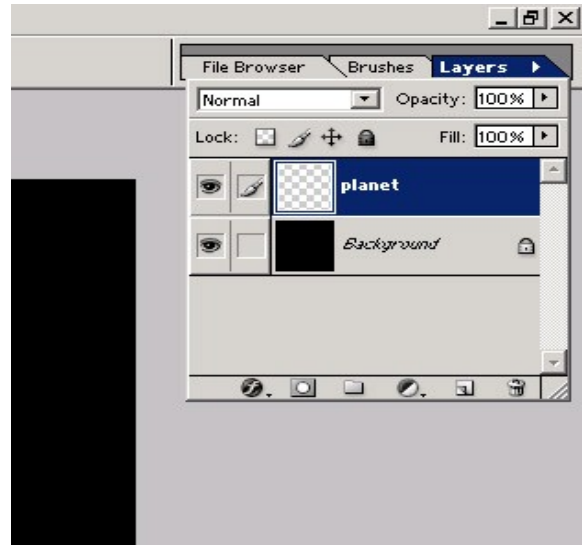
I was inspired to create this tutorial while I was teaching Photoshop. I had just finished the Photoshop 7 Bible by Deke McClelland and had just read the part where he mentions repeating filters over and over to see what happens. Well what happened was this really fun little tutorial! Thanks Deke!

The Earth in Seven Minutes - Photoshop 7.0

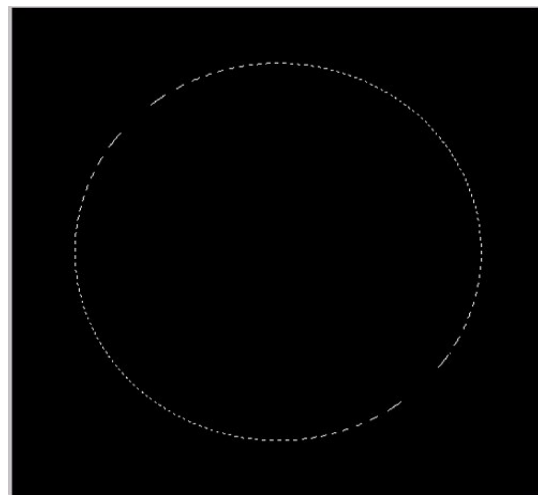
This fun little Photoshop will make you feel like a supreme being as you create planets in minutes! Recommended for Photoshop 7 it should work fine in CS or Photoshop 6.

Create a new image 800 x 800, color pure black

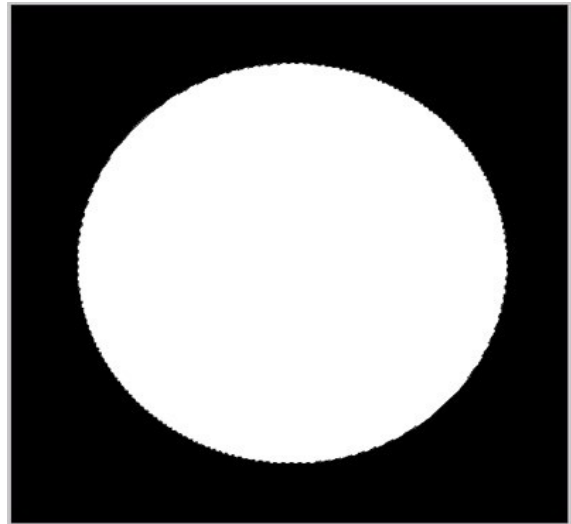
Create a new layer above it, name it planet



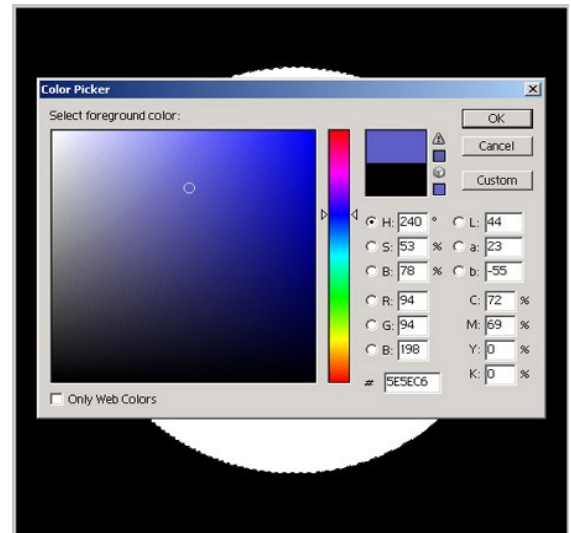
Select the elliptical marquee tool, hold down shift and drag out a perfect circle, leaving about 50-60 pixels open on all sides of the circle



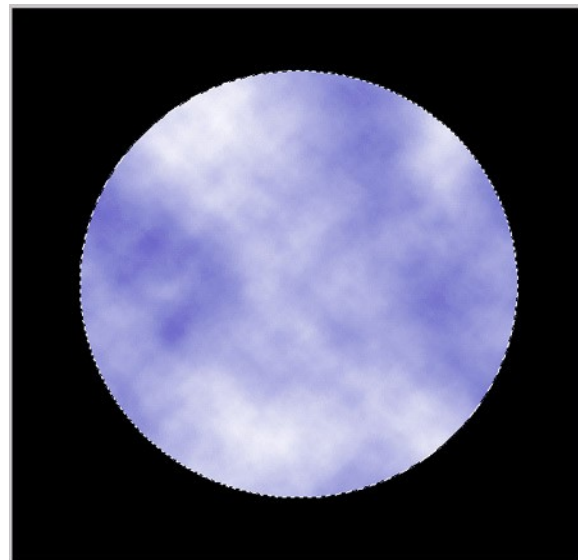
Fill the circle with white - do NOT deselect



Change your foreground color to 94,94,198. Background color pure white. NOTE: the color used for the foreground is very important to the formation of your land masses. If the color is too blue they will be pink instead of brownish.



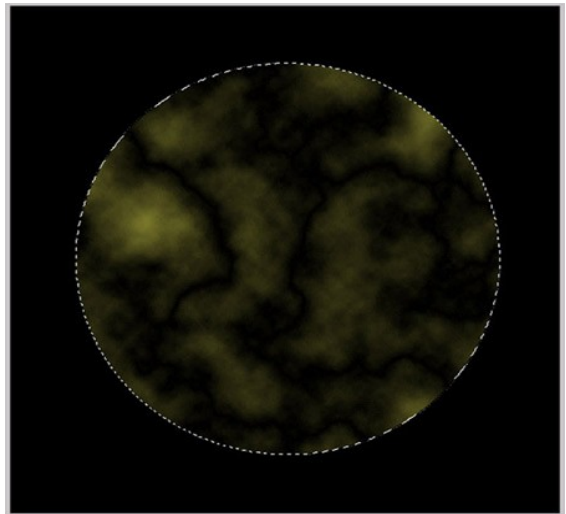
While holding down the shift key choose filter -> render -> clouds



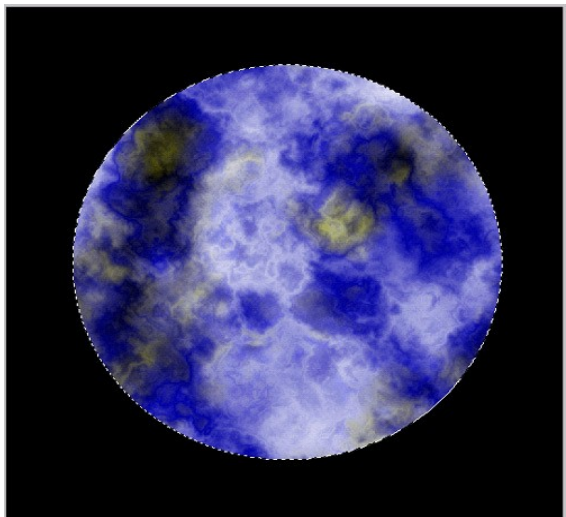
While holding down the shift key choose filter -> render -> difference clouds

Hit cntrl (cmd) F to re-apply the last filter - the blue / white pattern returns

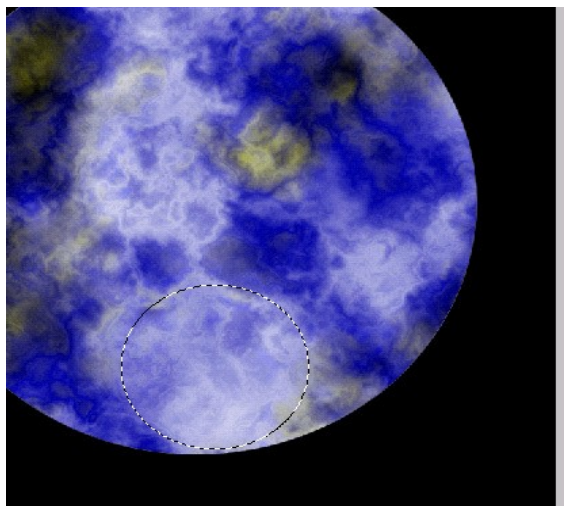
Repeat the cntrl F as many times as required until you have a nice "cloud" pattern, along with some nice land masses (it can take up to 15-20 times to get a nice one)



Once you have a nice looking pattern deselect your "planet".



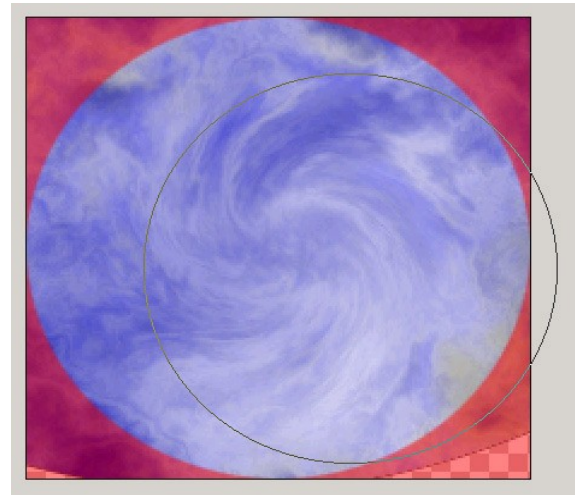
Find a nice clumpy cloud pattern & draw a round selection around it, almost to its edges. (HINT: if you can find a nice "clump" near the edge grab it, but make sure you are NOT selecting outside of the planet. This gives a really nice effect later)



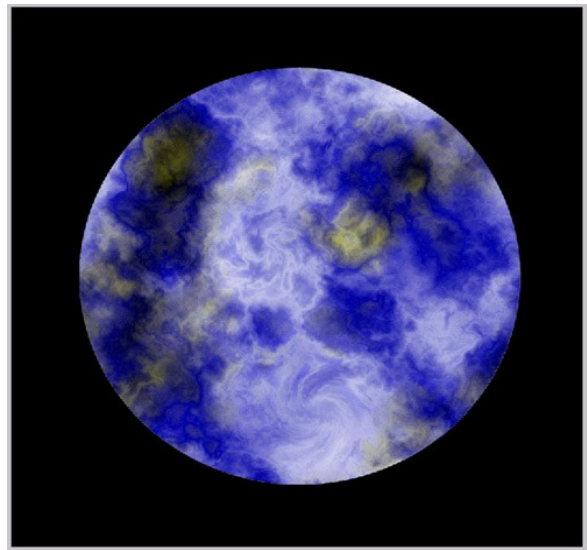
With the selection intact choose filter -> liquify
Using a brush size that is slightly smaller than the selection area and a brush pressure of NO more than 50% (40% is ideal) choose the twirl CCW feature and gently twirl the cloud formation (DON'T get too crazy here or it wont look real)

Repeat the previous step and this step if you'd like on a separate "cloud formation"

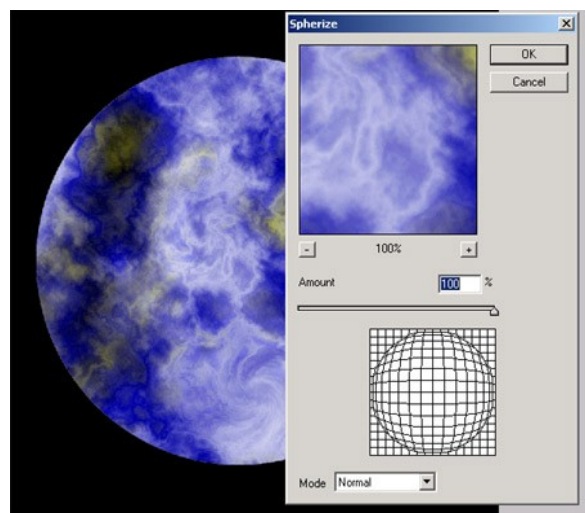
You may also "twirl" a few clouds without a selection to add some roundness to the formations. Purely optional though.



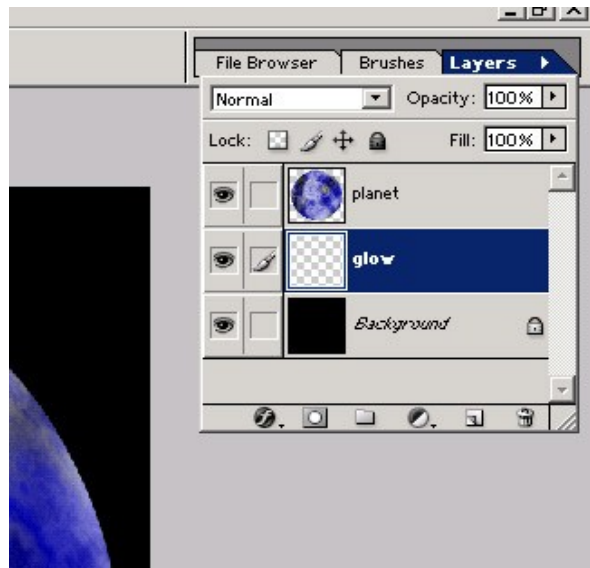
Once you have all the clouds you would like hit cntrl (cmd) D to make sure everything is deselected.



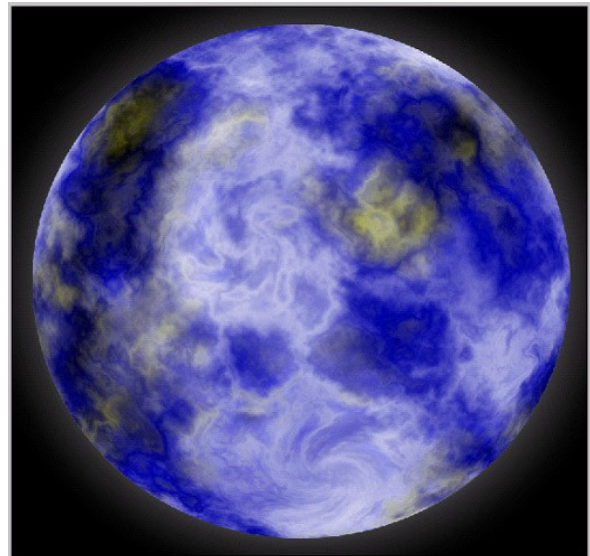
Making sure you have your planet layer selected choose filter -> distort -> spherize with an amount of 100% and normal mode



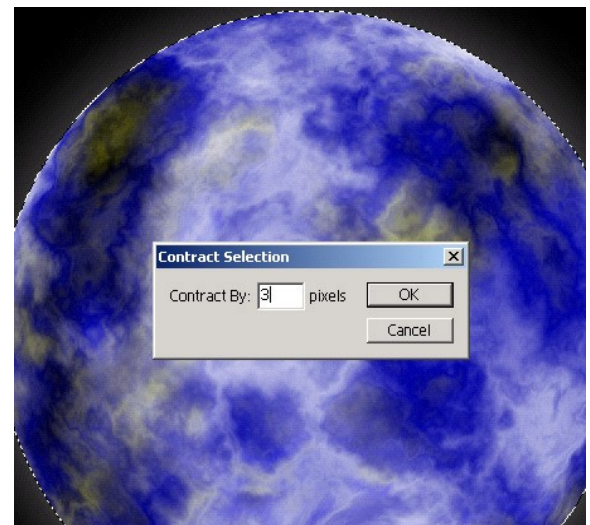
Starting to look like something! OK we need to add that slight haze earth always has. Create a new layer behind your planet layer and name it glow.



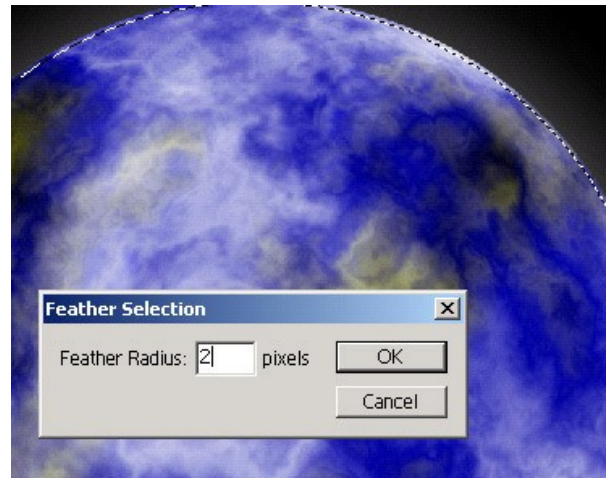
Set your foreground color to white, choose the gradient tool, click the radial gradient option, click the gradient drop down & choose foreground to transparent. Drag a gradient out from the middle of your glow layer to about 3/4 of the way. We only want a slight glow to protrude past the planet edges so try it one or twice to get it right, hiding the planet layer as needed.



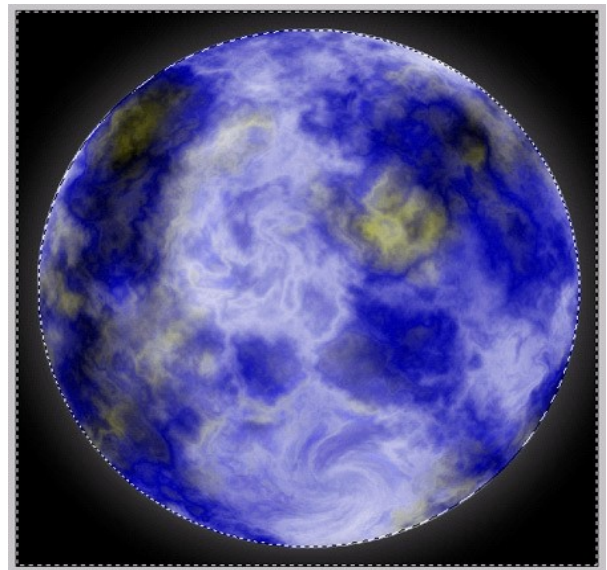
OK lets attack these edges and make this thing look REAL. Cntrl click your planet layer to select the planet. Choose select -> modify -> contract and input 3 pixels



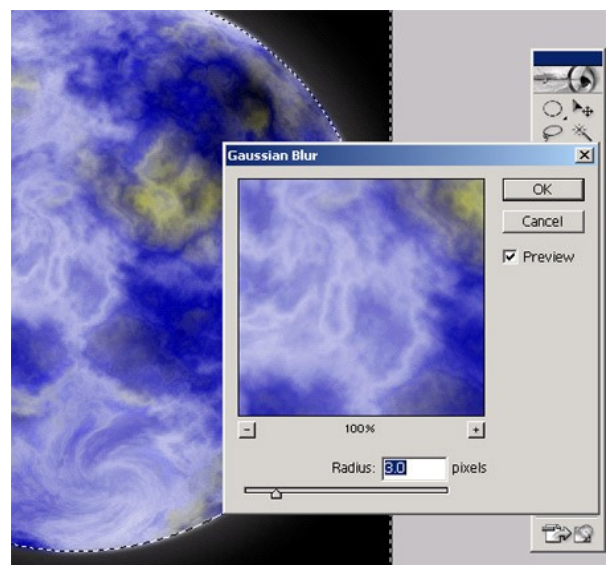
Choose select -> modify -> feather and enter 2 pixels.



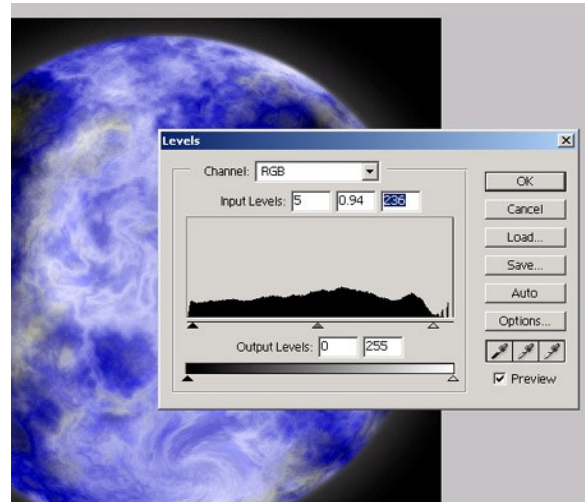
No do a select-> inverse (shift-cntrl (cmd)-I).



Make sure your planet layer is the active layer and choose filter -> blur -> Gaussian blur and enter an amount of 3. Click OK.

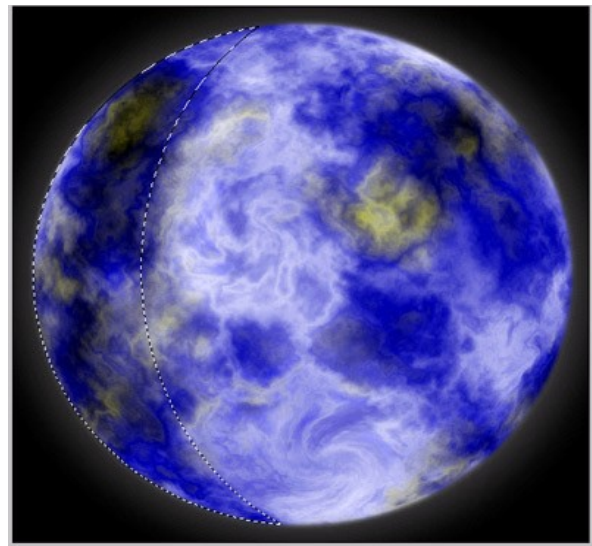


Looking COOL! Now the final adjustment will sharpen up the colors a tad. First merge your glow and planet layer (cntrl (cmd) E) then choose image -> adjustments -> levels. Make sure you are on the RGB level and drag the bottom slider (shadows) up ever so slightly. Drag the center slider (mid tones) up a hair also & the top slider (highlights) down just to "perk up" the clouds and make them look fluffy.

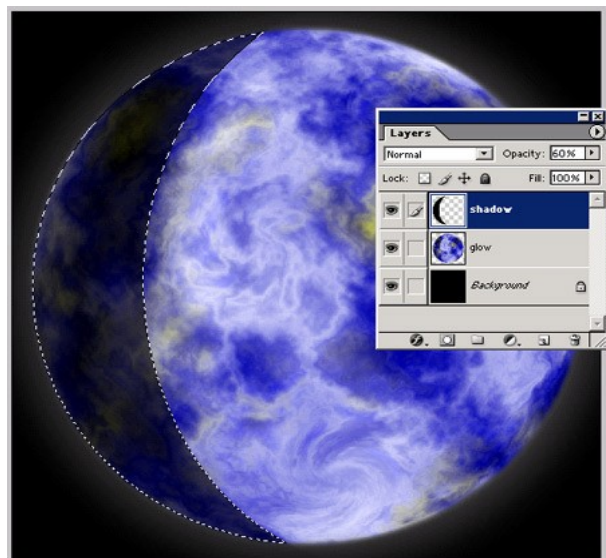


If you look at pictures of real planets they have an area that the sun cant get to so you have a crescent. To do this to your "earth" just control click your planet's layer and then choose the selection tool (round of course)

Hold down the alt key (so your new selection will subtract from the first) and then remove the part you DON'T want shaded. you may have to cntrl alt z a few times (or edit undo) until you get it right.



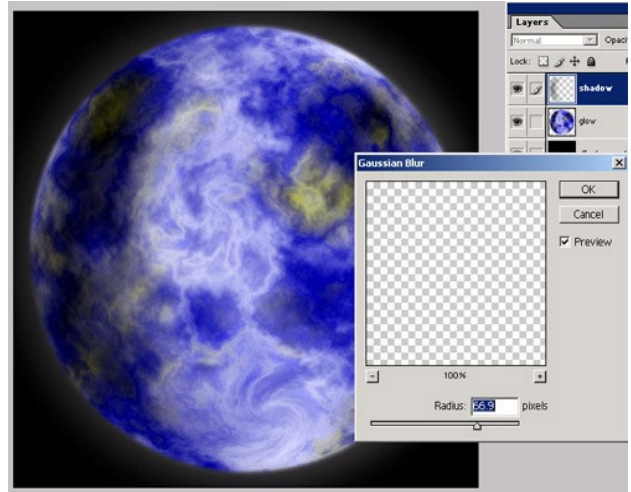
Once you have the selection to where you want it create a new layer above your planet. Fill it with pure black and bring the opacity down to about 60%.



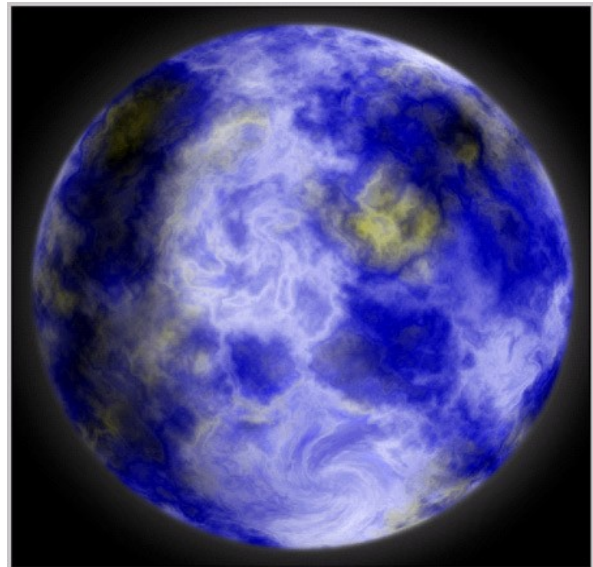
Deselect the shaded area

On that "shadow" layer do a filter > blur > Gaussian blur and input anywhere from 20 - 60 in the amount (it depends on how much opacity you have and the size of your planet.)

If you not happy with the first blur feel free to add another at about 1/2 of the original.. now your planet has that realistic shadow we all see in the real pictures.



There you go, our final product, very cool looking indeed!



I made one up and swiped an image off the web of a real star pattern, grabbed another planet and a moon dropped them in and brought down the other planets opacity to get this planet example. The one thing you will quickly learn doing this is that no two planets are alike. It all depends on how many times you repeat the clouds / difference clouds filters.

Enjoy,

Dave!

