



Creating Torn / Deckle Edges in Photoshop



By Rick Wetzel

Recently, I received an email asking how I would create a torn edge or deckle edge on a photograph. The answer is quite simple and does not require any expensive plugins. If you own Photoshop, it's already part of the program. The following technique can be used with numerous built-in Photoshop filters. Try it, it's worth the experiment.

First, start out with an image of your choice. I chose one from my recent trip to Germany. I replaced the sky with a [Watercolor Background](#), but that's not necessary for this tip.

Step 1

Enlarge your canvas size by ten percent in both directions. You'll need the extra room around your image to create whatever technique you choose.

Step 2

With the selection tool, marquee just inside of your image.

Or - with the magic wand, select the white background, which selects your image. Choose **Select>Modify>Contract** and choose 5 to 10 pixels - or about an eighth of an inch.



Step 3

Choose Select>Inverse. Now, only the outside edge is selected.



Step 4

Choose Filter>Distort>Ocean Ripple

When the Ocean Ripple dialog appears select a low number. This number is relative to the DPI of your image. In this example, which is 72 DPI, I chose -

Ripple Size 2 and Ripple Magnitude 2.

The final Illustration.

You could stop after Step 4 but I chose to give my new image a subtle drop shadow. I duplicated layer, deleted the white background and selected Layer>Effects>Drop Shadow.

Step 4 can be replaced by several other filters. Some of my favorites are Gaussian Blur, Rough Pastels, and Spatter.

