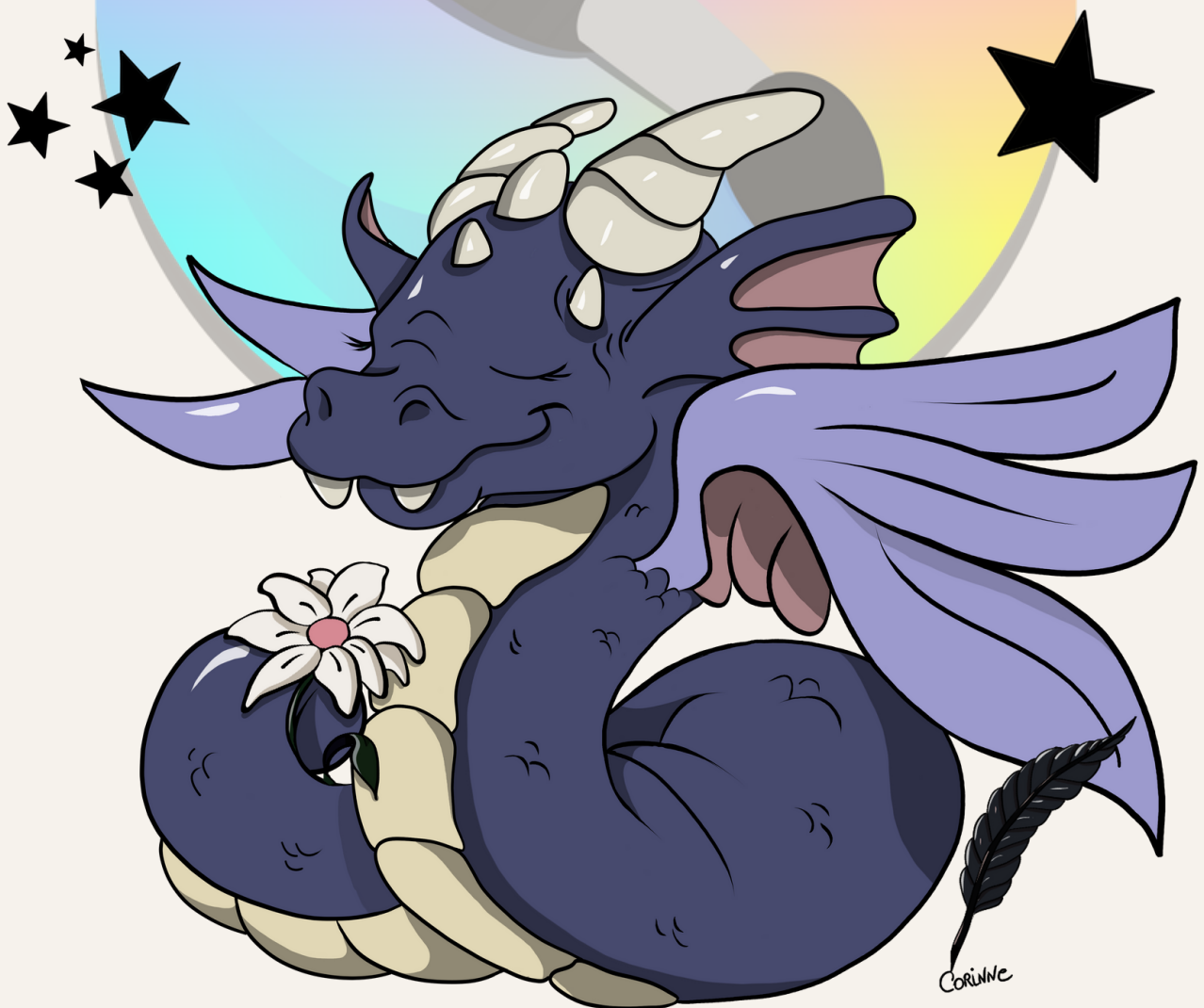


KRITA *for* BEGINNERS



Blade & Quill

A GUIDE TO KRITA'S BLENDING MODES

INTRODUCTION

Hello!



In this PDF, I'll do my best to explain in simple terms what Krita's blending modes are.

I will also mention when you **shouldn't** use them and why.

Please make sure to print this PDF or keep it handy.

Thank you all for following this channel, and most importantly, thank you for your trust and support!

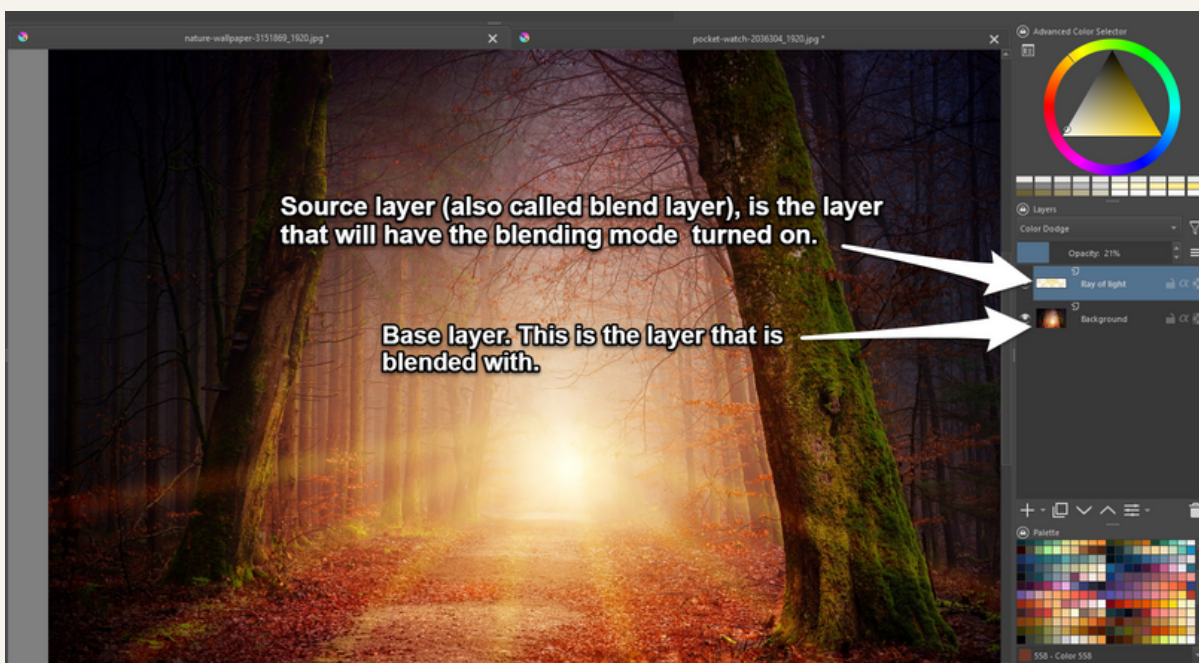
I am so happy you decided to learn Krita with me.

A stylized signature of the name "Corinne" in a cursive font, with a black quill pen positioned above the letters.

BLENDING MODES

Quick notes

Before starting, know that when you blend two layers together, the top layer is called the **source layer** (also called by other people, the **blend layer**), while the bottom layer is called the **base layer**. See below:



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

Addition
Burn
Color
Color Dodge
Darken
Divide
Erase
Lighten
Luminosity
Multiply
Normal
Overlay
Saturation
Screen
Soft Light (SVG)

These are the 15 blending modes that have been ticked as favorites in Krita. This guide will focus on these only!!!



Most likely you will not use them all. It's Okay.

Personally, I only use 5 or 6 of them. So experiment and see what they can help you create.

MUST KNOW

Important!

You may have read or heard people organize the blending modes into groups. So, let's categorize these 15 blending modes!

- **DARKEN GROUP**
Multiply, Burn & Darken.
- **LIGHTEN GROUP**
Screen, Color Dodge, Addition* & Lighten.
- **CONTRAST GROUP**
Overlay & Soft Light.
- **CANCELATION GROUP**
Divide.
- **COMPONENT GROUP**
Saturation, Color & Luminosity.

As for the **NORMAL & ERASE** blending modes, please understand that they are not really blending modes.

I'll explain later.

**NOTE: ADDITION = LINEAR DODGE in photoshop.*

MUST KNOW

Important

- Blending modes work with mathematical formulas. I won't mention them in this guide, as this is a guide to understanding the **basics** of blending modes. However, if you want to know what they are, please check Krita's manual.
- When talking about blending modes, think of them as "special effects." They will allow you to change the appearance of your photograph, painting, or illustration.

Did you know?

Layer blending modes are non-destructive. In other words, they are not changing the underlying data or the original colors of the layers. If you are not satisfied with the blend effects you created, just remove them by going back to the NORMAL blending mode.

One more thing.

Blending modes will act differently at times. It's normal. Some blending modes, such as Overlay and Soft Light, can both lighten and darken the image **depending on the colors in the layers**. I thought it was worth mentioning!

DARKEN

What is the Multiply blending mode?

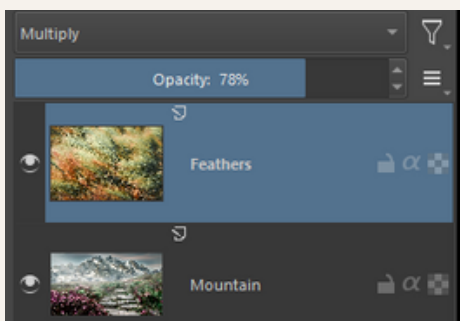
When you activate the MULTIPLY blending mode, the lightest color of the source layer becomes transparent, and the darkest color of the base layer becomes the darkest color of the final image. The other colors in between are multiplied to produce a darker result. So, in brief, darker colors become even darker and blending with white produces no change!



Source



Base



Result



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

DARKEN

What is the Burn blending mode?

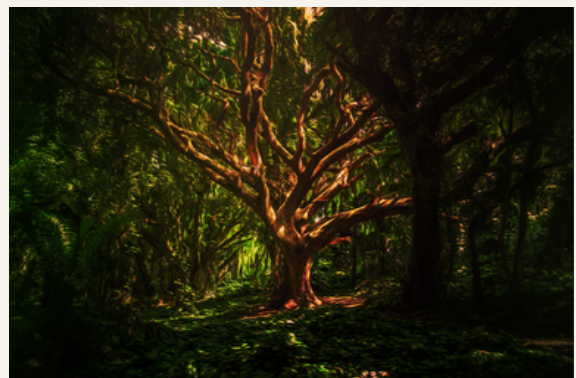
The BURN blending mode acts just like the multiply mode, but with a few modifications. The resulting image shows more contrast. Here again, blending with white produces no change.

How to use it?

You could use this blending mode to add drama to an image or make a painting spooky... To darken an image, first, make a duplicate of the original. Then set the duplicated image's blending mode to Darken, and decrease its opacity to 50%, as shown below. Experiment and see what works best for your project.



Result



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

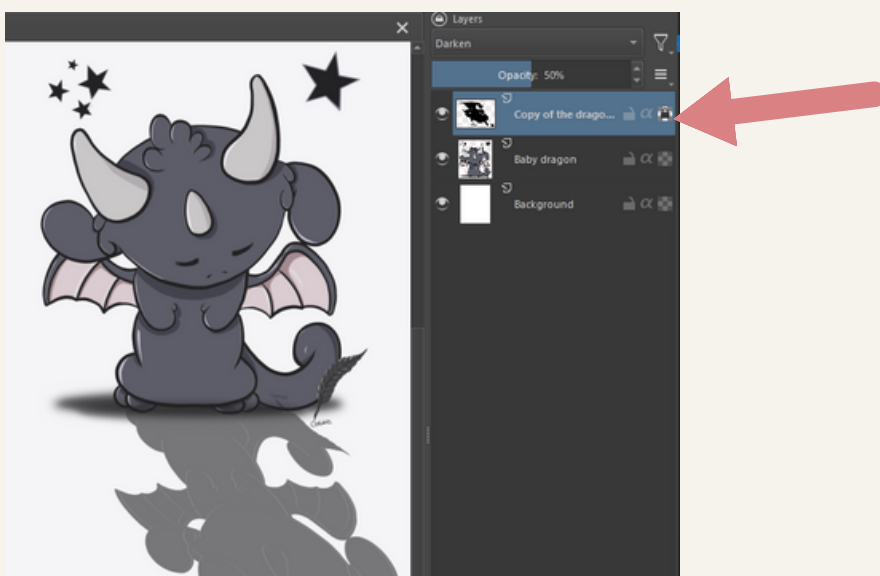
DARKEN

What is the Darken blending mode?

This blending mode compares the colors of layers that are blended and picks the darkest color between them. Only the darkest pixels of the two layers are kept. Pixels lighter than the blend color are replaced, and pixels darker than the blend color do not change.

How to use it?

Use this blending mode to create a shadow effect. To do so, first, duplicate the layer of the cartoon character you want to cast a shadow for. Activate the alpha lock, as shown by the arrow below, and fill the shape with a dark color. Change the blending mode of the source layer to DARKEN. Then decrease the opacity to 50% or less, and position the shadow you created using the transform tool (shear, resize, or rotate).



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LIGHTEN

What is the Screen blending mode?

The SCREEN blending mode is used to lighten an image. So, basically, if you think about it, this mode is the opposite of the MULTIPLY blending mode, which darkens an image. It multiplies the inverse of the source and base colors layer. The result makes the image brighter, and it looks bleached. Be careful, not all colors can be blended with this blending mode.

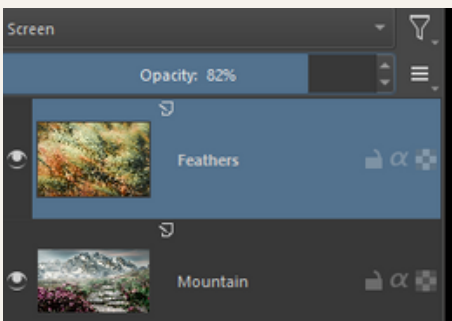


Source



Base

Result



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

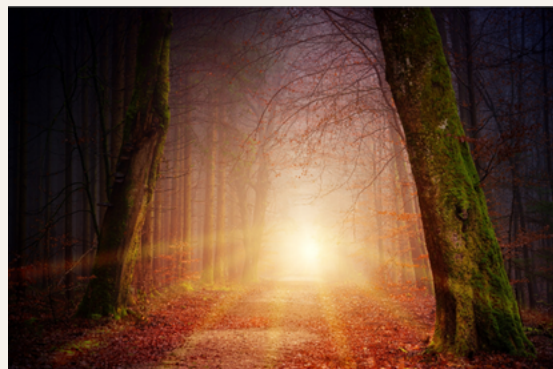
LIGHTEN

What is the Color Dodge blending mode?

When you use the COLOR DODGE blending mode, colors, and tones in the blend layer become lighter. Any contrast is decreased. You will also notice that any highlights that were present in the source image are highly increased. The white pixels are predominant. Blending with black produces no change.

How to use it?

Use this blending mode to add a vivid glow or shine to your painting or photograph, simulating the effect of a bright light source like the sun, as shown below. To do so, create a new layer above your original image and paint rays of light. Next, change the blending mode of your painted rays of light, from NORMAL to COLOR DODGE, and lower the layer opacity to maybe 20%. Done!



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

LIGHTEN

What is the addition blending mode?

When the ADDITION mode is applied, the brightness of the base layer is increased by adding the brightness values of the pixels from the source layer. This can create a very bright effect. As you can see from the color swatches, blending with black produces no change.

How to use it?

This blending mode would be useful to help you create glow effects.

Normal



Addition



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LIGHTEN

What is the Lighten blending mode?

The LIGHTEN blending mode looks at the color values of each pixel in the two layers and only keeps the brighter of the two colors for the final image. If you look at the color swatches beneath the photograph, you will see that pixels darker than the blend color are replaced. Blending with white produces no change.

How to use it?

This blending mode is useful when you want to lighten an image or composite elements from two images, ensuring that only the brighter pixels are shown.

Normal



Lighten



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

CONTRAST

What is the Overlay blending mode?

This one is very interesting as it combines the MULTIPLY and SCREEN blending modes. This creates an effect that boosts both the shadows and the highlights of an image. It adds significant contrast to the resulting image.

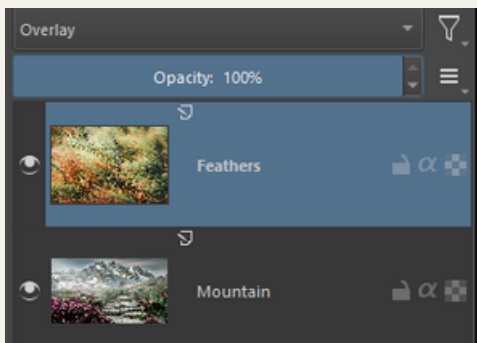


Source



Base

Result



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

CONTRAST

What is the Soft light blending mode?

This blending mode acts like the overlay mode but uses a different mathematical formula. This mode adds more contrast to the resulting image. That creates milder results, like a soft and delicate effect.

How to use it?

Use to add a subtle, dreamy effect to an image, and for adjusting the overall brightness and contrast of an image.

Normal



Soft Light



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CANCELATION

What is the Divide blending mode?

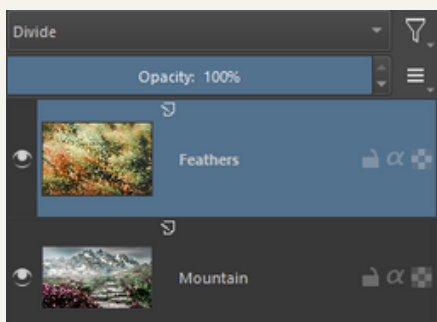
The DIVIDE blending mode divides the color of the base layer from the color of the source layer. This is achieved by dividing the pixel values of the source layer from the corresponding pixel values of the base layer. Meaning that black pixels would become white and light pixels would become darker.



Source



Base



Result



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

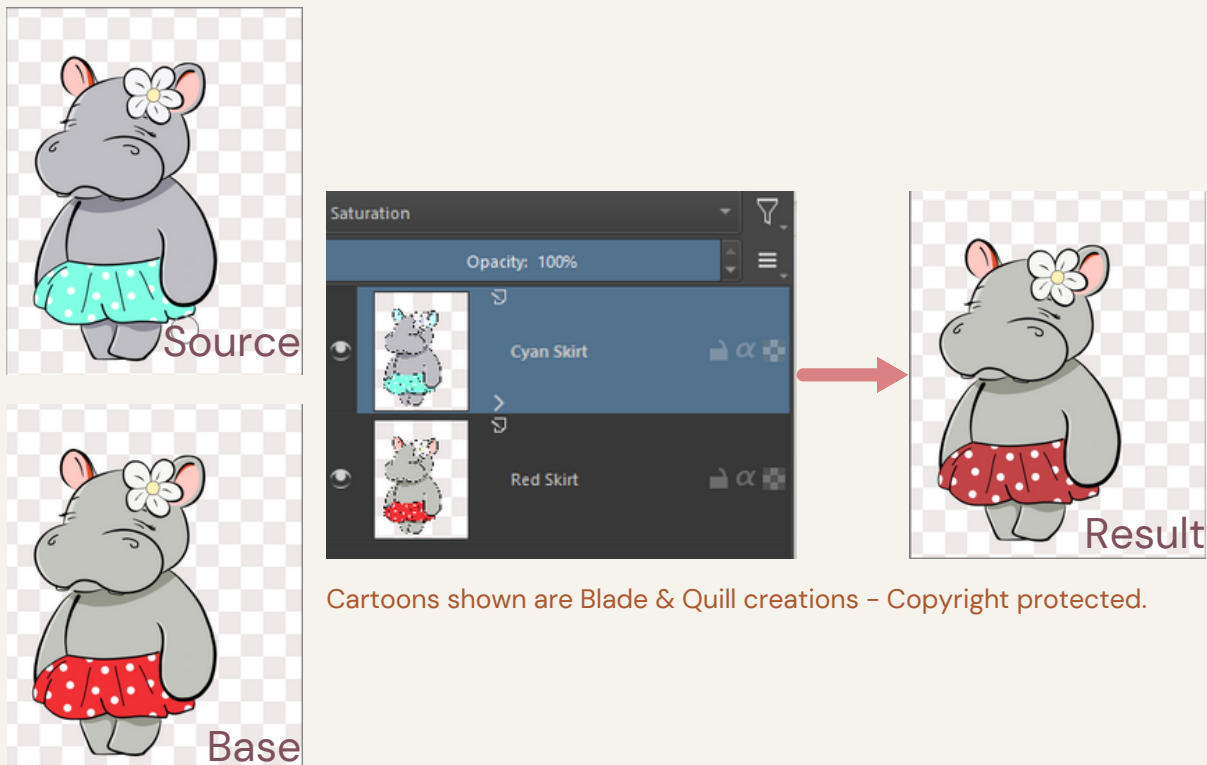
COMPONENT

What is the Saturation blending mode?

Whatever saturation you have on the blend mode, you will keep and see. Any areas on your art with no saturation (gray, white, or black) will not change.

How to use it?

Use this blending mode to adjust the color intensity of an image. For example, see what happens to the skirt of my lady hippo. The skirt on the source layer is a cyan color and it is a red color on the base layer. When I apply the saturation blending mode, it changes the saturation of the base layer while keeping the brightness and contrast.



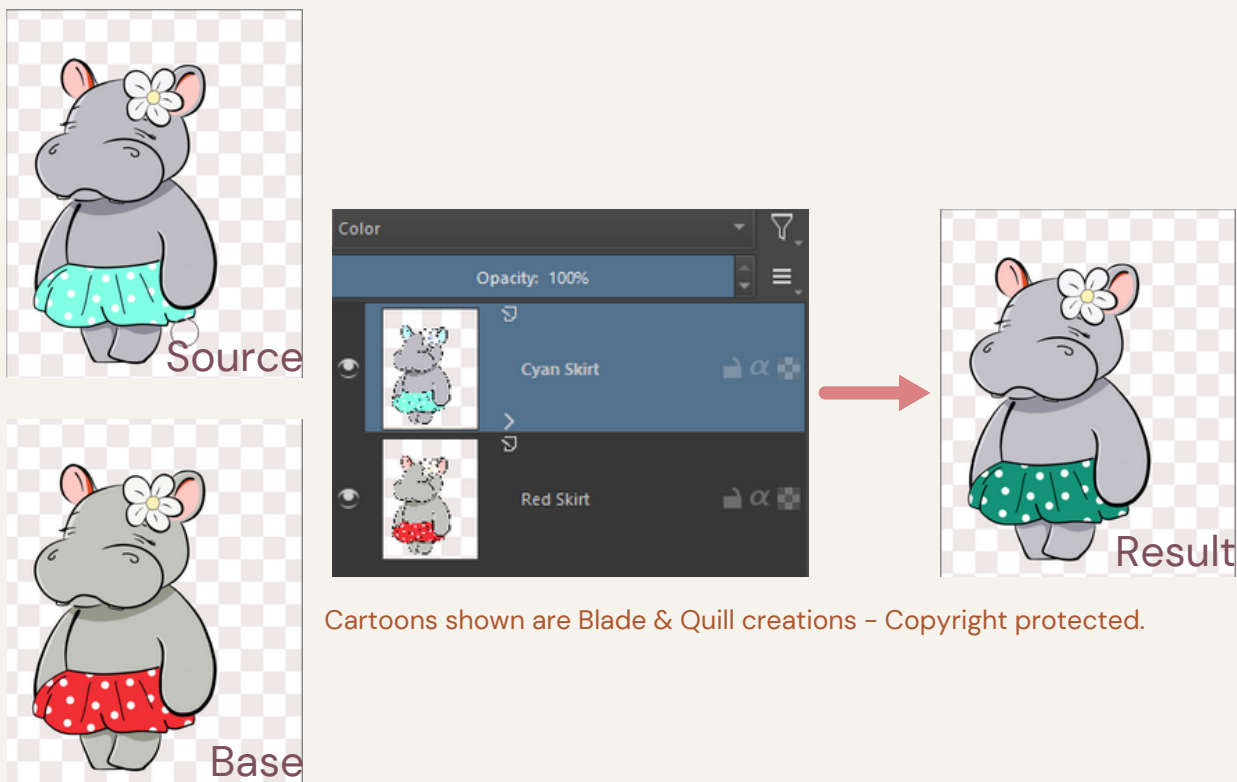
Cartoons shown are Blade & Quill creations – Copyright protected.

COMPONENT

What is the color blending mode?

The COLOR blending mode replaces the hue and saturation of the base layer with those of the source layer while keeping the brightness and contrast the same. It would be perfect for coloring monochrome images.

I use this blending mode on my cartoons. As you can see below, the skirt on the source layer is a cyan color and it is a red color on the base layer. When I apply the color blending mode, it replaces the red color with green while keeping the brightness and contrasts the same. Be careful, sometimes, depending on the colors blended, only the color will show well and details may be lost.



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COMPONENT

What is the Luminosity blending mode?

The LUMINOSITY blending mode takes the hue and saturation of the base color and blends it with the luminance of the blend color. This creates an effect that is basically the inverse of what the COLOR mode would do.

How to use it?

It can be used to adjust the color of an image without changing its brightness values. The example below is not great, I will admit, but it gives you an idea.

Normal



Luminosity



Images used in this guide come from Pixabay.com

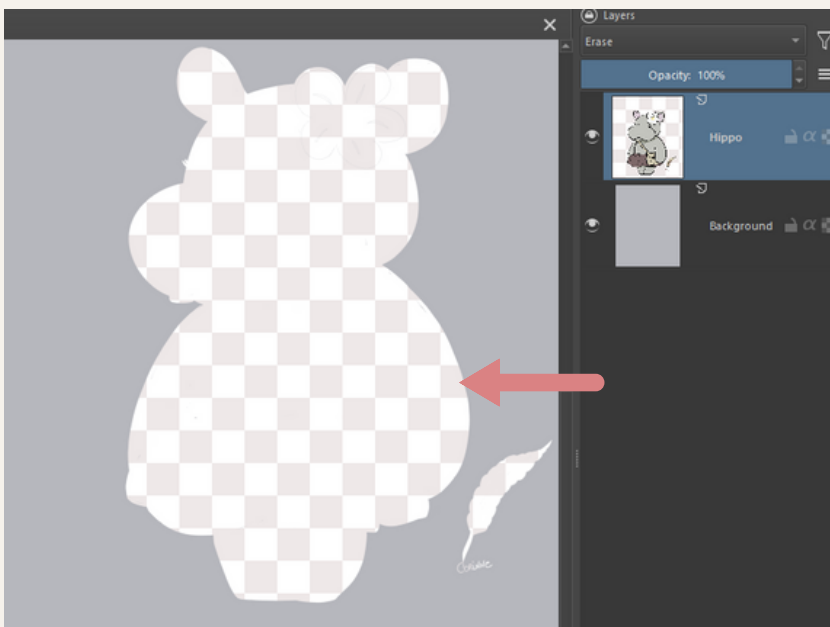
ERASE

What is the Erase blending mode?

This one is a bit special because the ERASE blend mode isn't really a blend mode in the traditional sense. Instead, it is a way to use a layer to erase parts of another layer. When you set a layer to Erase mode, it makes the pixels in that layer transparent wherever they overlap with the pixels in the layer below. Essentially, it acts as an eraser, removing parts of the layer that it is applied to. Krita's manual says: Erase mode erases any non-transparent area of the upper layer from the lower layer, making those parts in the bottom layer transparent.

How to use it?

This could be useful for creating cutouts, as shown below.



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NORMAL

What is the Normal blending mode?

The NORMAL blending mode is the **default** layer mode.

Nothing happens here. Meaning that no mathematical formulas are applied to it. There is no interaction between the source layer's colors and the base layer's colors.



MUST KNOW

Important!

When to use (or not use) blending modes?

- Do not use them when working with semi-transparent layers. blending modes work by blending colors, and therefore, they will not work properly if your layers are not completely opaque.
- Use them with caution when working on photographs. blending modes can produce weird results when working with photographic images, especially if the images have a high level of detail or texture. If you overuse them, you may end up with your photographs looking unnaturally fake!
- Do not use them when working on images with low resolution. Blending modes can amplify noise and other artifacts in these types of images. So, just be aware of that!

All in all, remember to use blending modes **sparingly** and remember that they have their **limitations**. They are not miracle workers! I recommend experimenting with all the blending modes to see which ones you like best.

Finally, only use them when you really believe that they will enhance your artwork. If they won't... Then, **don't** use them. Not every paintings or photograph need special effects!

THANK YOU!

Bye!

I really hope that this little guide is going to help you understand better the blending mode. There is plenty of information on the internet and on YouTube.

Thank you, again, for following my little channel. It is truly an honor to help you all.

Best of luck and create some great art!



Corinne

