

Placing a thin Black border around the finished image in a non-destructive way.

Image Presentation: Adding a thin presentation border to your image.

To finish off your image it is often useful to apply a thin line around the outside of the image. You can do this in several ways including using a colour taken directly from within the image to use as your line colour. This will create a sympathetic approach and can often look very good. However, a black line is more commonly used and can add that extra quality touch to complete your work. However, I like to do this using a new layer. This allows additional control and the ability to adjust the line opacity to tone down the colour if necessary but more importantly allows the procedure to be carried out in a non-destructive way. No pixels or colour is actually applied to the image.

1. With the image open on screen and all necessary work completed we can add a border to the image. You can carry out this task on a new image or on any image that you have previously worked on.
2. I favour creating a border in a non-destructive way, and therefore believe it best to do this on a separate layer for a couple of good reasons. You do not damage the image pixels in any way and can easily change the line colour or line opacity at any time. You can also dump the layer and start again if need be.
3. For the benefit of this procedure it is assumed we have only one layer (although the technique can easily be applied to an image that has several layers).
4. Click the *Background* layer to highlight it, and from the **Select** menu choose **All** or use the keyboard shortcut, **Ctrl+A**.
5. With the layer highlighted click the 'Create a new layer' icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. If the Layers palette is not visible press the **F7** key.
6. The *Create a new layer* icon is located at the bottom of the layer palette and the second icon from the right (it looks like a sheet of paper with a corner turned up).
7. A new blank transparent layer will be created above the previously highlighted layer and named Layer 1.
8. Layer 1 be highlighted and as you previously selected **All** from the **Select** menu you will see 'Marching ants' around the outside edge of the image. Marching ants is a term used to describe the outline of a selection.
9. Select Black as your foreground colour, if not press the '**D**' key to set the default foreground/background colours to Black/White.
10. From the **Edit** menu select **Stroke**.
11. At the Stroke dialogue box enter the line width you want in pixels. You need to experiment to get a feel for what line size is needed. I find that generally 1 to 2 pixels is okay but if you want a thicker line then add 5 or 10 or any value you want.
12. On the same Stroke dialogue box click the **Inside** radio button and that the Opacity is set at 100% (full colour) and that Mode is set too normal. Click OK.
13. The line will have been placed around the outside of your image but on it's own layer.
14. Click the eye icon next to Layer 1. The line will disappear. Click the eye again to restore the line.
15. A nice touch is the ability to adjust the Layer Opacity setting. Doing so will allow the line colour to be faded from full opacity to any level you want. This is particularly nice if using a coloured line.
16. If preparing images for use on a website where a darker coloured background is used, a White borderline at full opacity can look far too bright. Lowering the layer Opacity in this case to about 70% to 80% is less harsh and can be very affective.
17. Generally for images that are to be printed onto white photo paper, using a black line or possibly a colour taken from within the image is best.