How to Do It

1. To get started, follow the tutorial on how to use the Tilt Shift blur filter. The link to the tutorial is on the class web site. Find a panoramic type photo of a large city scape or landscape to practice such as the one you see below. Make the Background a smart object so you can always go back and edit the Tilt Shift Filter later if you need to.

2. If the tilt shift doesn’t work for your photo (as it didn’t on the upper half of the photo above due to the tall Empire State Building), you may need to select a specific area and blur it. Go Filter-Blur-Gaussian Blur to apply a blur to a selected area. I did this on the upper half of the photo and avoided selecting the Empire State Building.

3. Find objects to place in your scene that play with proportion/scale. Open them as separate documents in Photoshop. They will be easier to select if they have a simple/solid background.

4. If the background is a solid color, select the background using the magic wand tool. If it doesn’t select the entire background, try going under the Select menu Select-Similar

5. Click on Select and Mask at the top of the screen and refine the edges of the object.

6. Hit OK.

7. Create a new blank layer, unlock the background layer, and drag the blank layer below it.

8. Hit Delete.
9. Now your object has a transparent background, ready to drag onto your new background photo you edited is steps 1-2.
10. Using the move tool, drag and drop the object on the new background.
11. Adjust the size while holding the shift key to avoid distortion.
12. Add a cast shadow under the object using the burn tool on the background photo (duplicate background to be safe) or a black paint brush on a new layer behind the object. (hardness at 0%) with low opacity and/or overlay effect. Make sure the cast shadow matches the light source in the background photo. (see the cast shadow under the objects in the example)
13. If the lighting on the new layers doesn’t match the background photo, go to Filter-Render-Lighting Effects to adjust the lighting.
14. If you want to modify the orientation of the object, go under Edit-Transform-Flip Horizontal. (the soldier on the right was flipped horizontally in the example)
15. If you want to modify the perspective/tilt of the object, go under Edit-Transform-Perspective. (both soldiers have perspective angles used to make them look like they are angling toward the Empire State Building)
16. If you need to make an object look like it is behind something in the background photo (see sock monkey’s torso behind top of Empire State Building), click Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the layers window to create a mask on the layer you wish to remove.
17. While the mask is selected, use a black paint brush to remove areas of the object so the background shows through.
18. To give all photo layers a similar color tone, add a Photo Filter Adjustment Layer such as a warming filter on top of all the other layers.

Requirements

- Do a practice miniature world using photos found online.
- Create your own unique miniature world after that, using all of your own original photos.
- You can do a reverse miniature world inserting larger object in a smaller setting using the same steps, such as the examples below: