

Guide to creating Fantasy Maps



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Introduction

Fantasy Map Creator 2 is a set of backgrounds, graphic objects and effects for creating detailed color maps for games, books and presentations in a fantasy or medieval style. Anyone can create a map without having a graphic tablet or art education, it is enough just to remember some rules and learn how to use a graphic editor at a basic level. If you have any questions about using the graphic editor, nowadays it is very easy to find all the information you need in the internet. If you have any ideas for new graphic objects, please contact me at ponetisup@gmail.com, I will add new pictures to the package according to the demand.

I will also immediately answer the main questions:

Can I return the package?

No, you cannot return this asset after import.

I want to create a map for my friends or for a large studio (3-10 people).

In this case you need to purchase a "Multi Entity" license.

Where can I get the fonts?

Fonts are not included in the package, you need to download them, if necessary, purchase a license.

Can I change the pictures and objects to fit my game?

Yes. This guide also contains information on how to do it.

Where can I find pictures of higher quality?

Creating a map puts a lot of load on the computer due to the large volume of files, so I did not make all the files in 4k extension. Every available file is already included to the package.

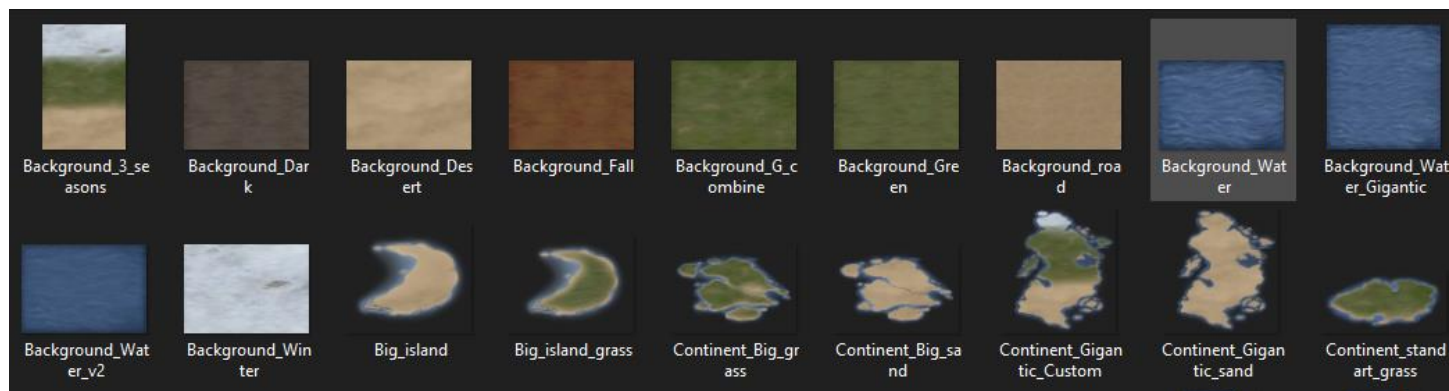
Do I need to indicate the author (PONETI) of the drawings?

As you wish.

Preparation of files and workspace

If you bought an asset on Artstation, you should already have all the files on your hard drive. If you bought an asset in Unity, you need to create a project and import all files there. Find the project folder on your hard drive and start using the files in the graphics editor.

After you have found the asset folder, select a suitable landscape from the list in the "1_Backgrounds" folder, and drop it into Photoshop (or another graphic editor, I will use Photoshop as an example) as a new file.



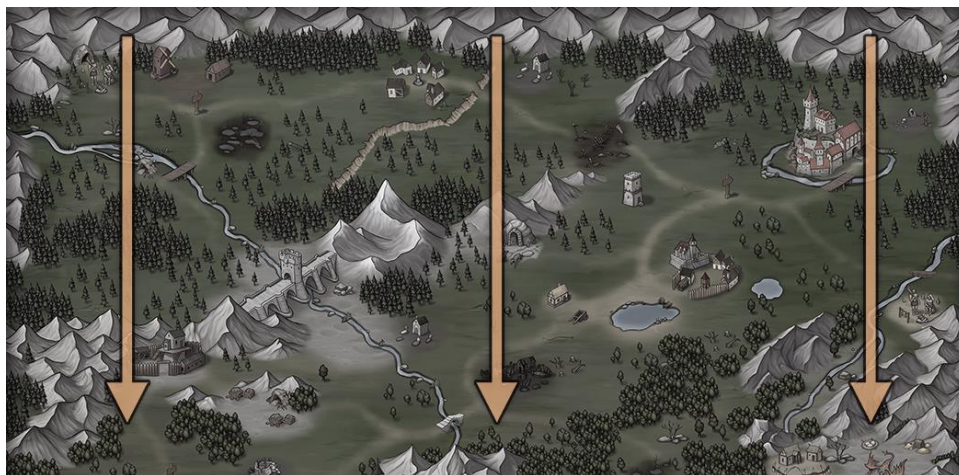
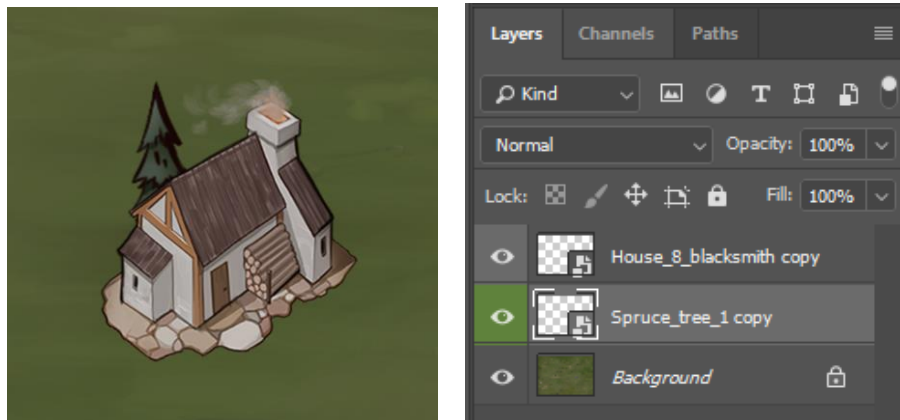
Immediately save this document in PSD format and work in it (for example, My_First_Map). Don't forget to save the file [Ctrl+S]. Usually the backgrounds are in 8k quality, you can lower them to 4k or 2k in Image > Image Size tab, so as not to overload your computer.

Working with layers and basic layout rules

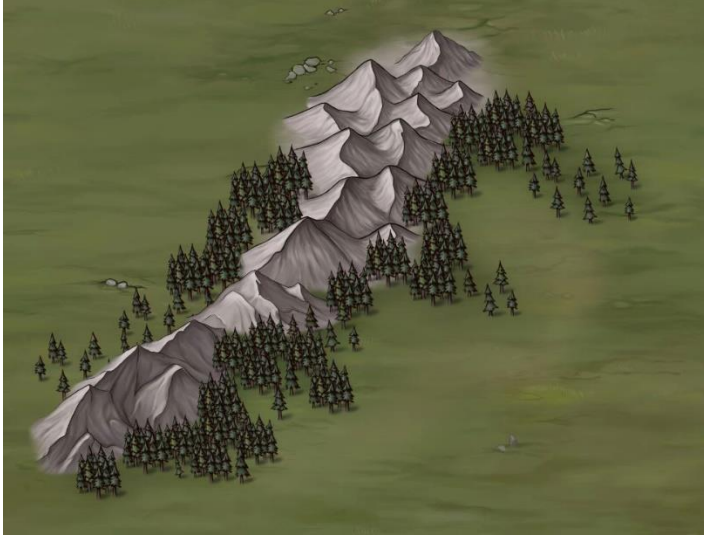
The biggest trouble will be following the rule of layers and their transfer, Because the following situation will often arise:



Therefore, it is recommended to start the composition from top to bottom and before inserting the object with the help of [V], select the layer on which you will overlay the object.



Firstly, divide the map into zones and plan the location of mountains and rivers. Usually, mountains appear at the places of collision of lithospheric plates, so they more or less a line. Also keep in mind that rivers flow into lakes or the sea, so rivers can start from mountainous terrain and flow into the bigger water reservoirs.



The line of the mountain massif



River

Do not hesitate to use the principle of "accent and pause", that is, do not accumulate a bunch of objects in one place, use buildings and lakes as accent points, and meadows and forests as a "pause". Example:



Chaos - no accent and pause correlation

Harmony - the correct combination of objects






If you plan to make a large map of an entire continent, try to create different climatic conditions - arctic climate at the top, warm at the bottom, moderate in the middle, do not make sharp transitions between them.



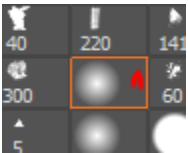
An example of a large continent with climate change.

Hot keys and their usage

Use hotkeys, it will greatly speed up the process. Here is a table of hotkeys that you may need (for Photoshop).

	[V]	<i>Move</i>
	[E]	<i>Eraser</i>
	[Ctrl+T]	<i>Edit</i>
	[M]	<i>Choose</i>
	[Ctrl+D]	<i>Cancel</i>
	[Ctrl+S]	<i>Save Project</i>
	[T]	<i>Text</i>
	[Ctrl+Alt+Z]	<i>Step Back</i>
	[Alt + click and move object]	<i>Copy</i>
	[Alt + Mouse scroll, Z]	<i>Zoom</i>

It should be noted that most often you will move objects and make copies of them. To erase objects [E], use this soft transition brush:

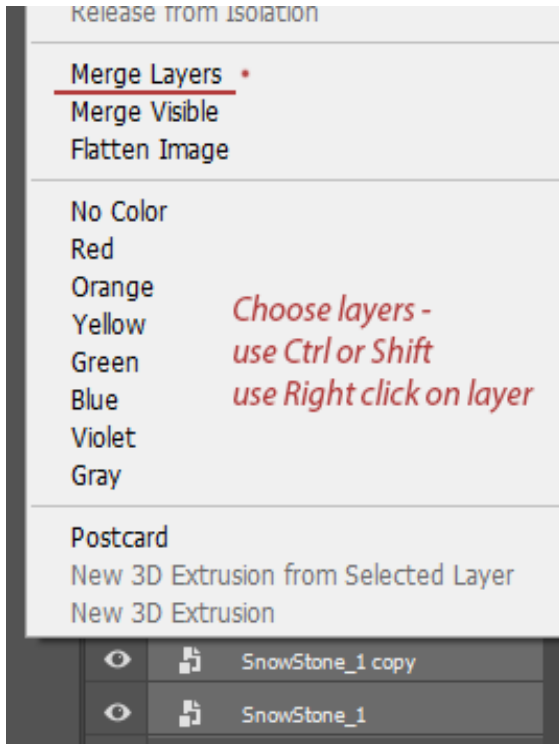


[Ctrl+T] allows you to move selected objects and change their size, perspective, etc.

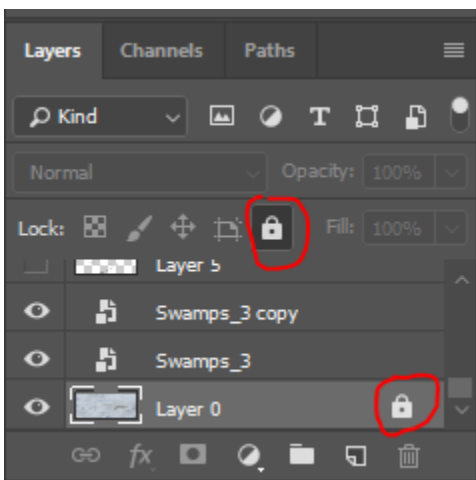
Techniques for editing and creating your own drawings

Here I will note some examples and tips for editing the map.

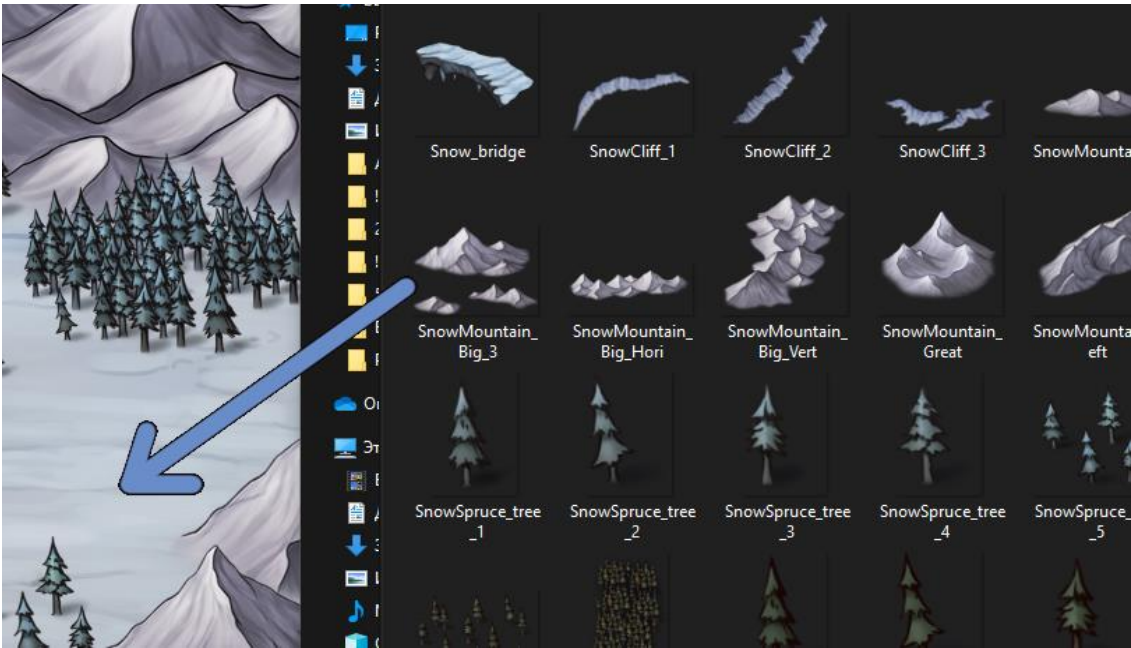
- 1) If your file is very heavy, you need to reduce the size by 2 or 4 times. [Ctrl+Alt+I] or merge the layers into one layer (if you don't plan to edit them any more) but **don't merge layers with the background**, it should always be a separate pinned layer.



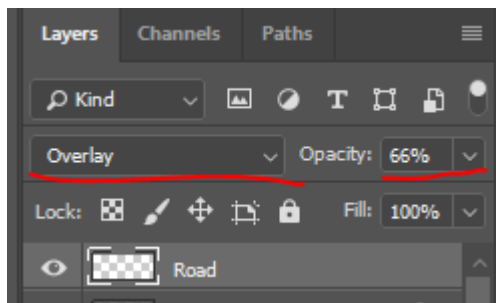
- 2) Select a layer and press "lock" to avoid moving or random selection, can also be useful for the background.



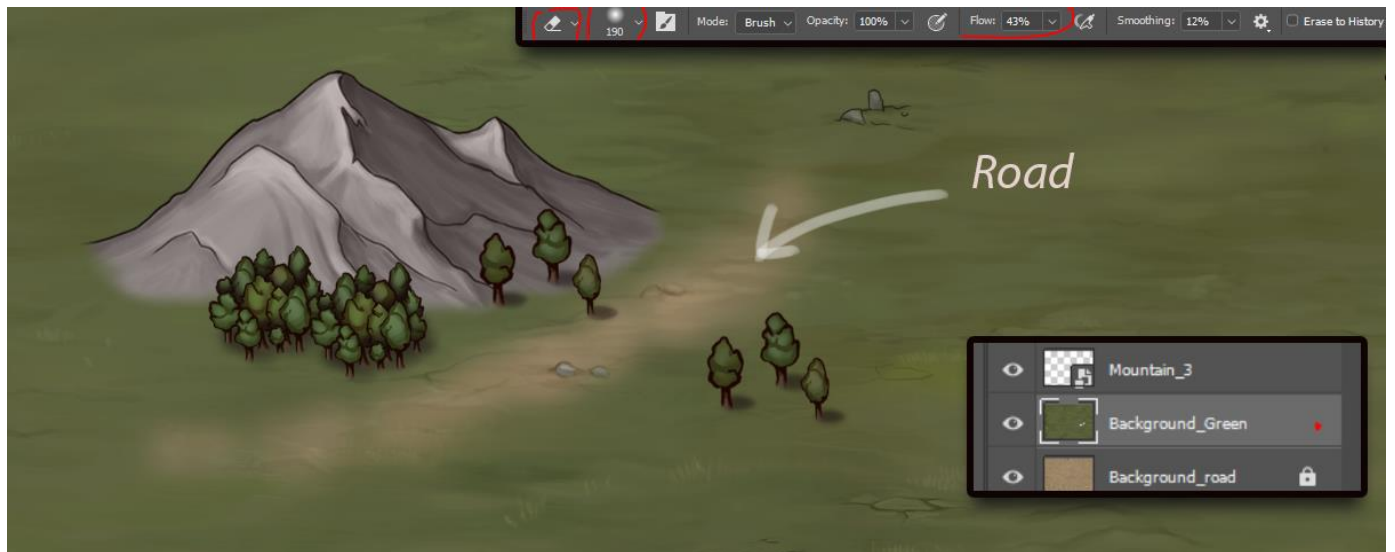
- 3) If you can't find the desired layer in the “Layers” tab, press [V] and left-click on the object on the map (if you haven't merged the layers yet). After that, the object with the required layer will be selected in the “Layers” tab (does not work for the "locked" layers).
- 4) To quickly move objects in a Photoshop file, simply drag the file from the folder and drop it to the map.



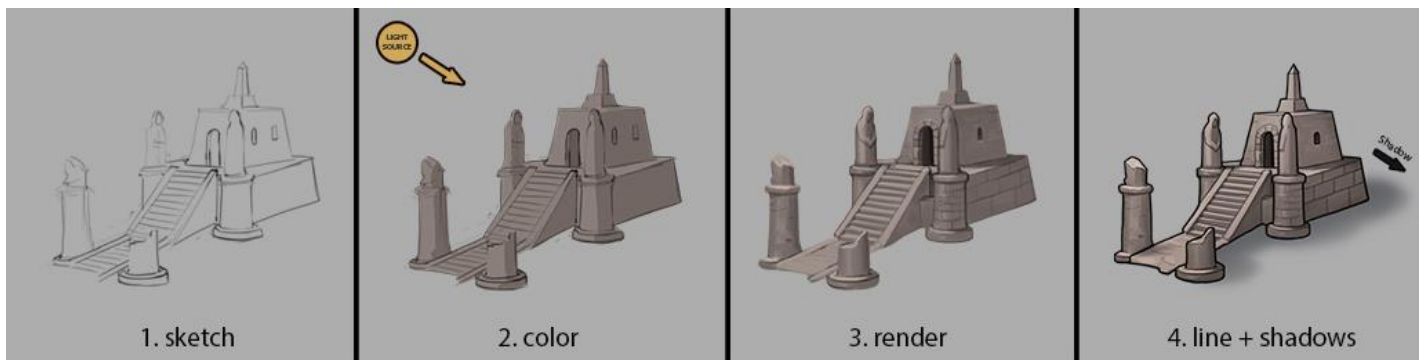
- 5) There are two ways to create roads: The first is to create a new layer and draw a road with a standard white brush, then turn on the "Overlay" mode on the layer and adjust the transparency.



The second is to put a file called “Background_road” under the background and start erasing the background [E] so that the road texture appears under it.



6) If you have drawing skills or can hire an artist, you can use this scheme and add your objects to your map and match your style.



7) Do not create groups or mark layers, you will only waste time. It is better to create a map according to the principle from top to bottom, use [V] and select a layer, then overlay objects on it. In the “Layers” tab, drag the layers to avoid objects overlapping each other incorrectly.

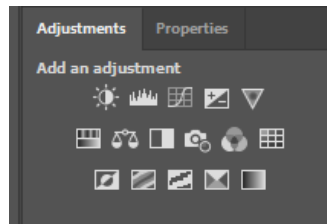
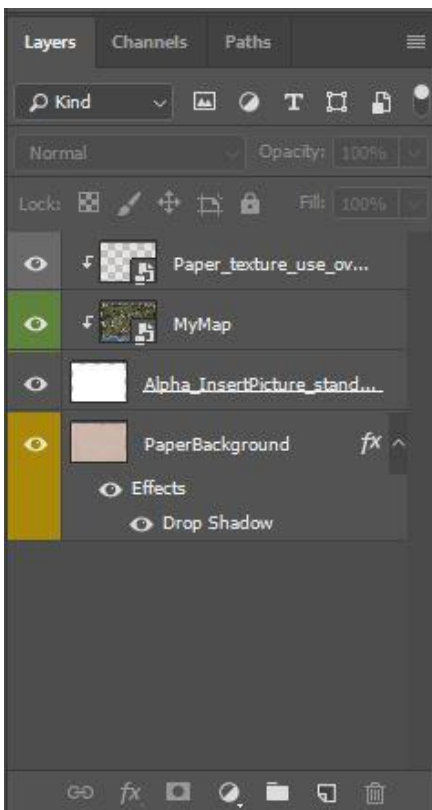
8) Use gothic or medieval fonts for maps so as not to lose authenticity. I recommend using the fonts “Georgia”, “Bookman Old Style” or “Seagram”.

Post-processing.

A very important step for those who want the map to look completed. It may take several minutes.

- 1) Save the map in PNG format in a separate folder (create the folder “Ready_Maps”)
- 2) Open the required **PaperBackground** size from the “6_PostProcessing” folder in Photoshop.
- 3) Drag the **Alpha_InsertPicture** file on top of the **PaperBackground**.
- 4) Transfer your map in PNG format to Alpha_InsertPicture, create a Clipping Mask by dragging the file with Alt held onto Alpha_InsertPicture.
- 5) Add an overlay of the map - Paper_texture_use_overlay and make the mode of this layer “Overlay” and adjust the transparency suitable for you.

It should look more or less like this:



You can try various filters, resize the file Ctrl+Alt+I, then save the file in PNG format and enjoy!