

postwork tutorial

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amazing  
hair

**for your renders**

Step by step tutorial, techniques, tips, examples.  
Drawing hair is not as complicated as it seems.  
Now you can learn how to draw realistic  
hair for your characters in just a few steps.

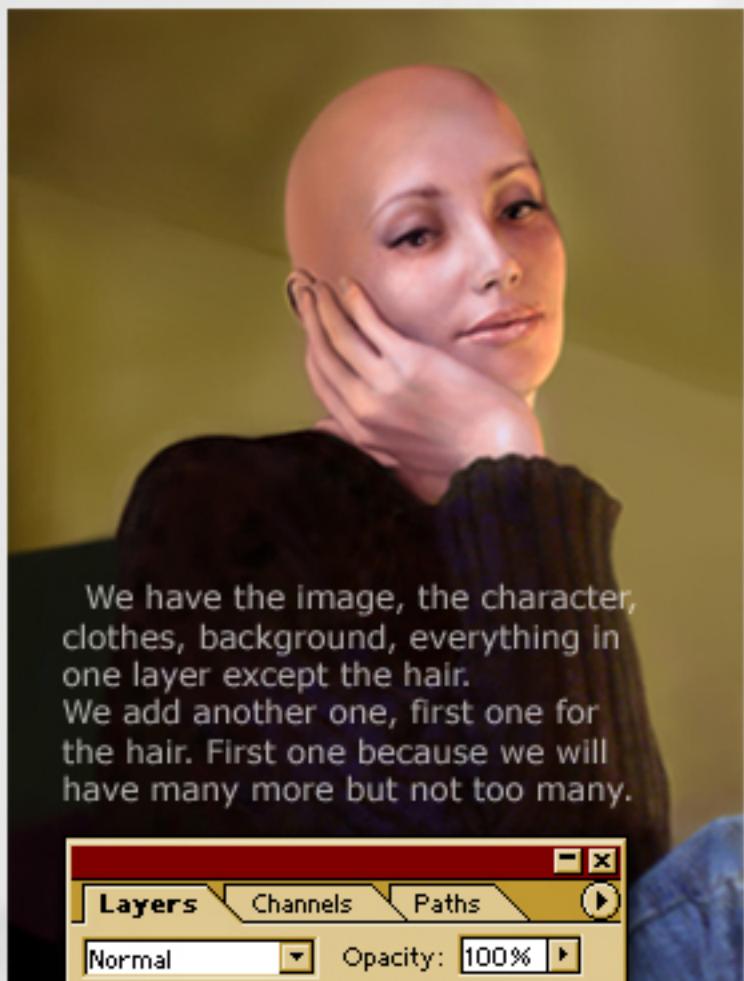
Since there are people asking me how I paint the hair in my images I decided to try and make an easy to follow tutorial. In this image the hair is painted entirely in photoshop.

Our character will have long blonde hair and we already know we have two light sources so the hair will cast a shadow over the face and we have to draw it. Below you can see the render before and after the postwork.

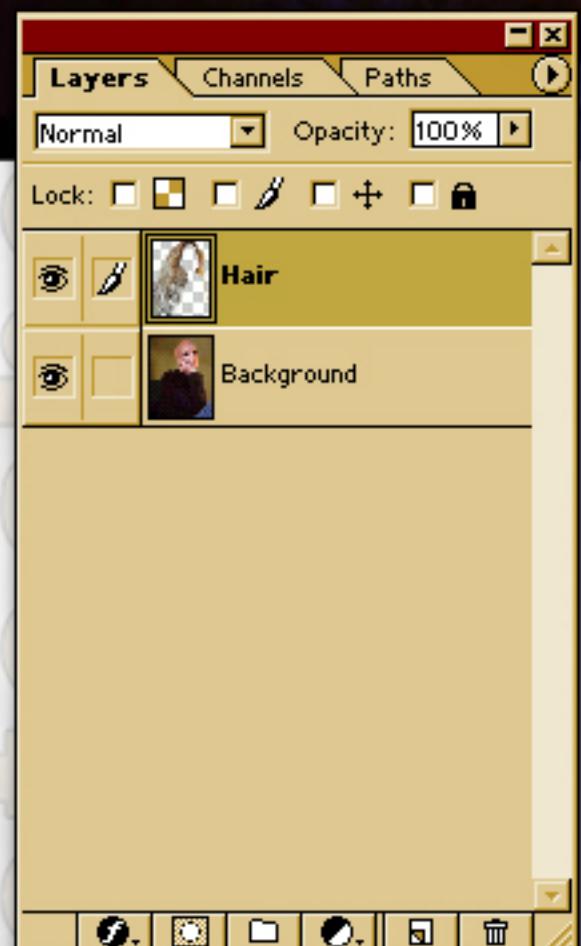
We will paint the shadows with  the airbrush tool ( #100, pressure 16)



This is just the main shadow, we will add more subtle shadows near the hair once we begin to draw it.



We have the image, the character, clothes, background, everything in one layer except the hair.  
We add another one, first one for the hair. First one because we will have many more but not too many.



### Tips:

\* You should work with very large images (approximately 4 000x 4 000 pixels). This helps when you will draw the details. The realistic look of the hair comes from thin strokes that we will draw later so you have to be able to zoom in as much as you can in order to use a 2px brush.

The hair is done entirely in photoshop using these three tools:



the airbrush

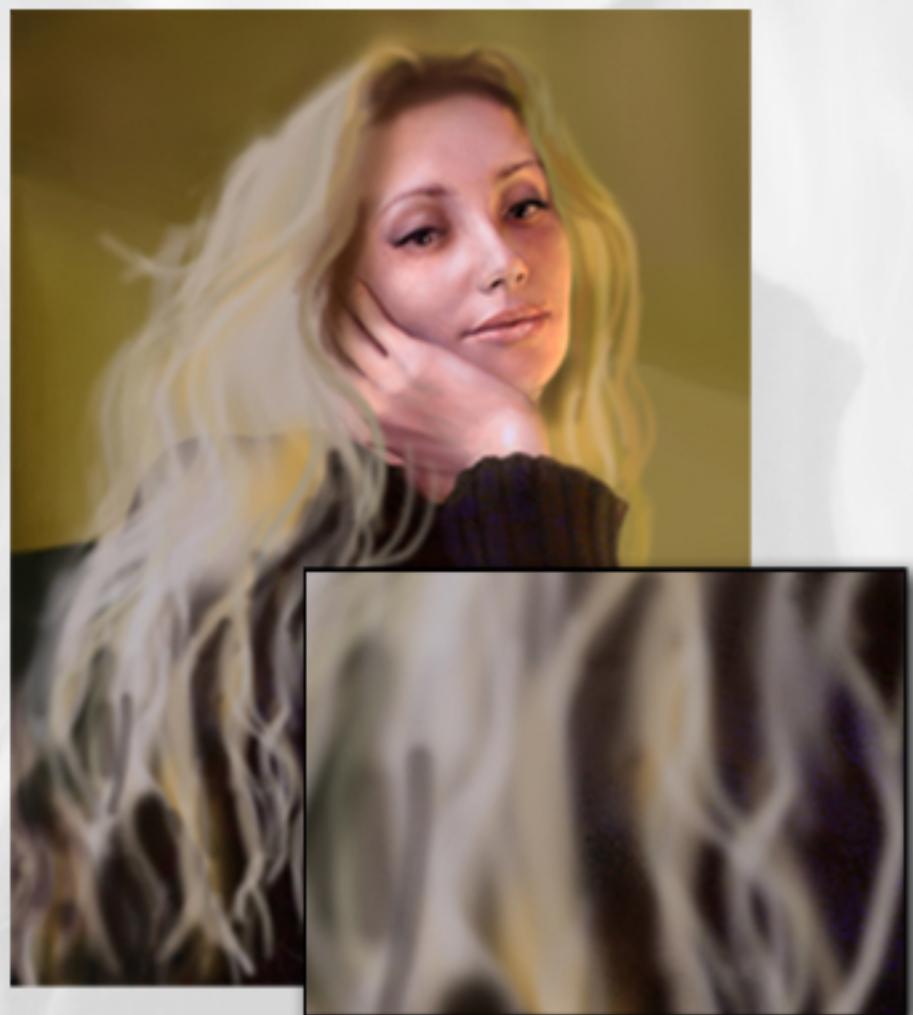


the eraser

(different sizes and pressures of course )

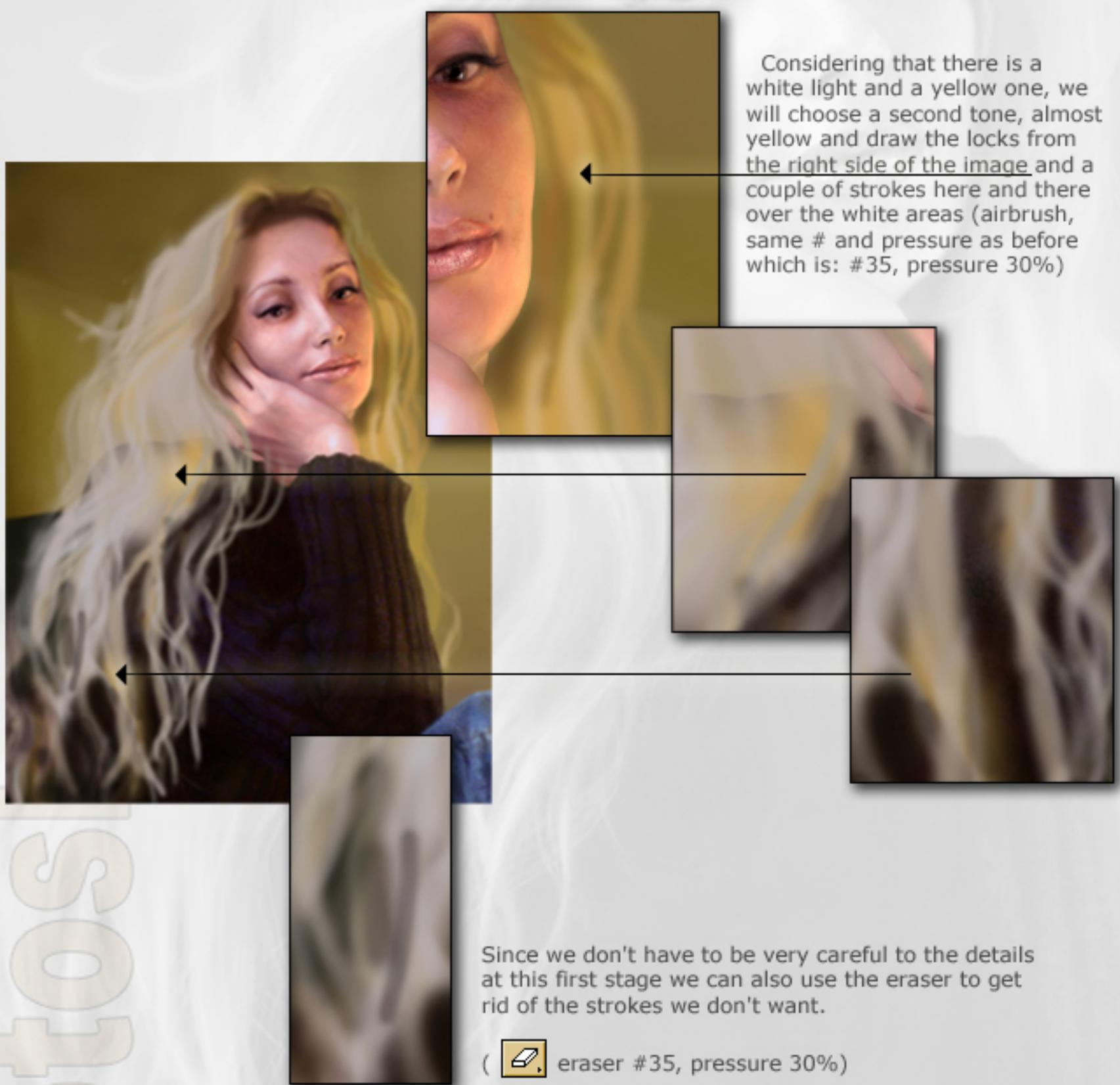


the eyedropper tool



Now we need to decide what color we want the hair to be. The girl in the image is blonde and more than that the hair is almost entirely lighted, there are two light sources: one from the upper left corner and one from the right side. We want to consider all this when we start to paint the hair. So, with a light tone of brown we draw the main shape of the hair (airbrush #35, pressure 30%)

We choose a darker tone for the shadows (same tool)



Considering that there is a white light and a yellow one, we will choose a second tone, almost yellow and draw the locks from the right side of the image and a couple of strokes here and there over the white areas (airbrush, same # and pressure as before which is: #35, pressure 30%)

Since we don't have to be very careful to the details at this first stage we can also use the eraser to get rid of the strokes we don't want.

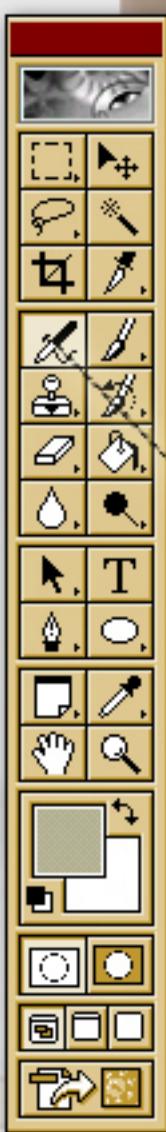
(  eraser #35, pressure 30%)

### Tips:

\* Save your image.

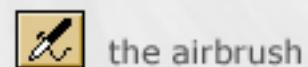
\* Zoom out till your image looks approximately like a 300x 300 pixels image. This way you can see the whole picture and decide if the composition looks right without being disturbed by the details.

\* For better results use a tablet and a graphic pen not the mouse.



Presuming you followed my advice and choosed to use a tablet, for better and faster results you should use the pen with one hand and the keyboard with the other one, in the same time.

This is possible because we paint with just two tools:

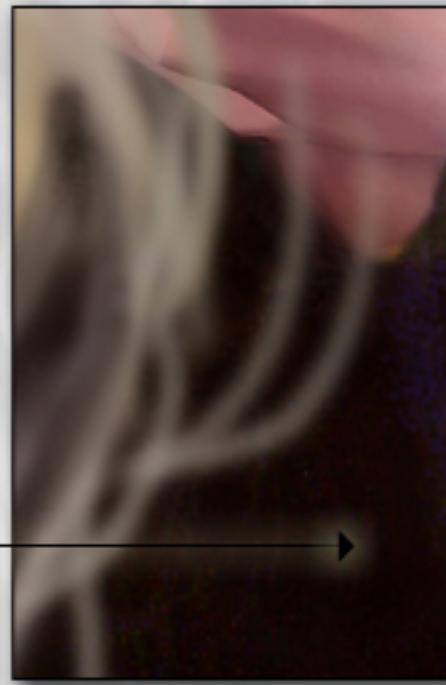


the airbrush



the eraser

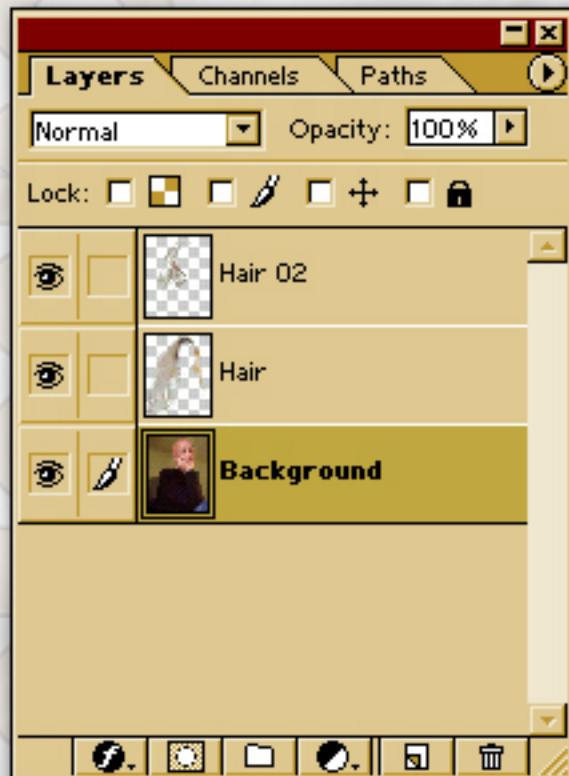
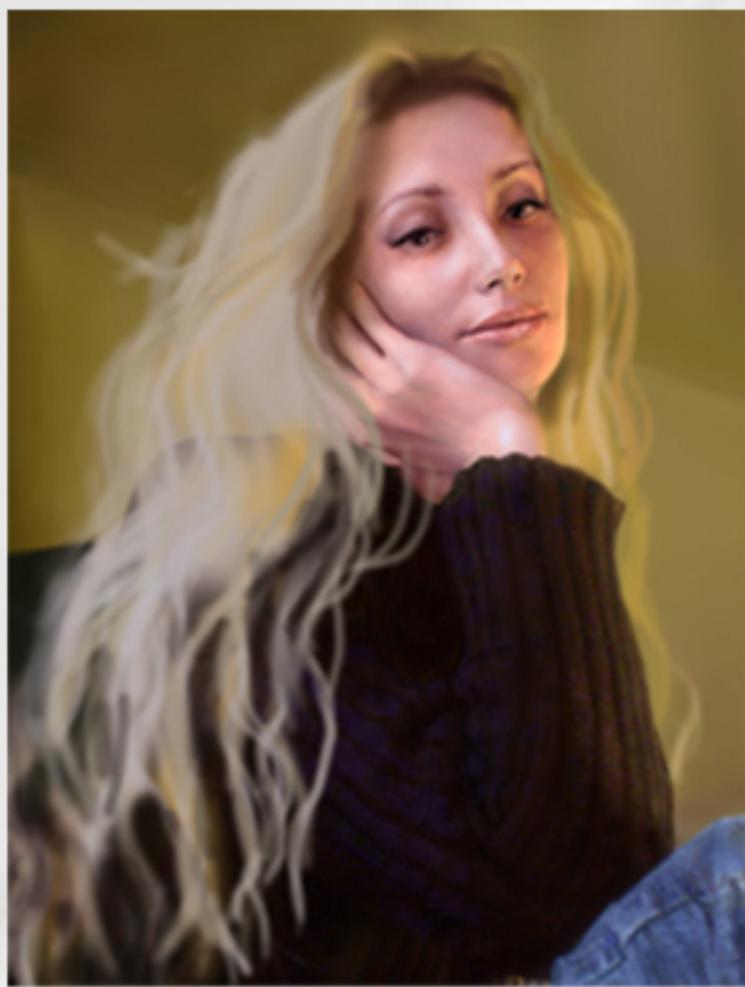
One finger is fixed on the airbrush key on the keyboard and the other on the eraser key. This way you can switch between these very fast because it might happen to dislike at some point some of the strokes.



Also, even if we had choosen a certain pressure for the tools and we already have the main shape for the hair not all the strokes will be as we want them to be in the first place.

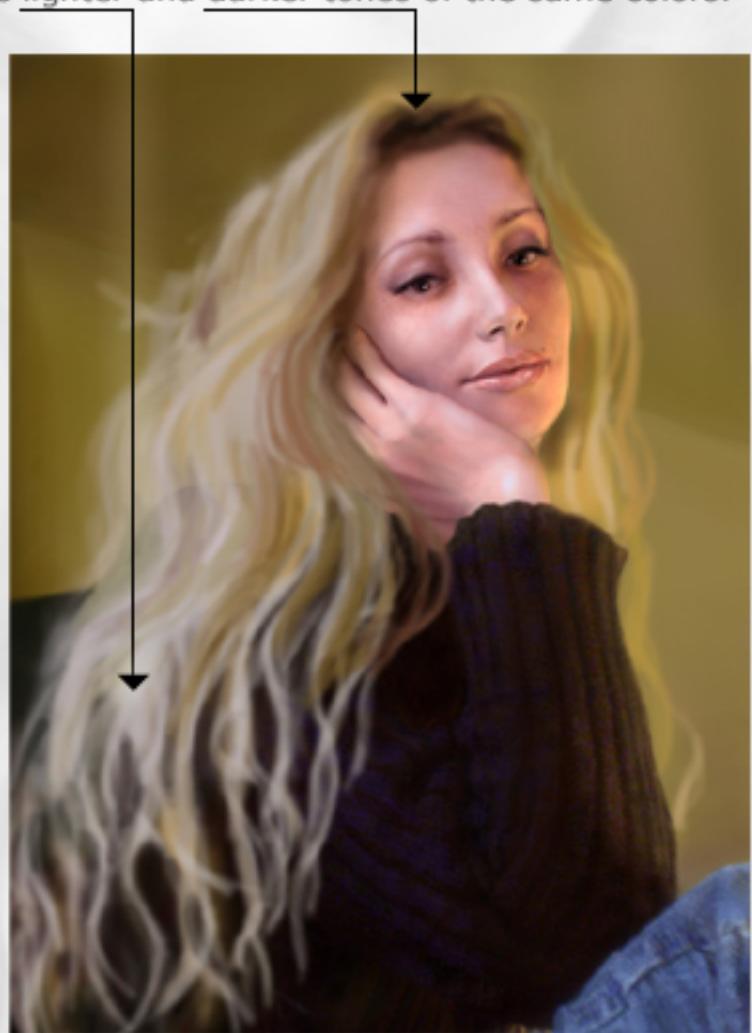
If that happens just use the undo command and do that stroke again until you manage to do it right.

This is basically the same effect as the one above but we can use it when we dislike not just parts of the lock we just painted but the entire lock.



Now we know the basic techniques and we have the main shape of the hair but the hair looks very flat so it needs details.

The color palette remains the same basically but, since we need to add more life to the hair we will also use lighter and darker tones of the same colors.



We will use a smaller brush (#20, pressure 30%) on a new layer that we can call "hair 2", which means that we have now three layers: background, hair and hair 2.

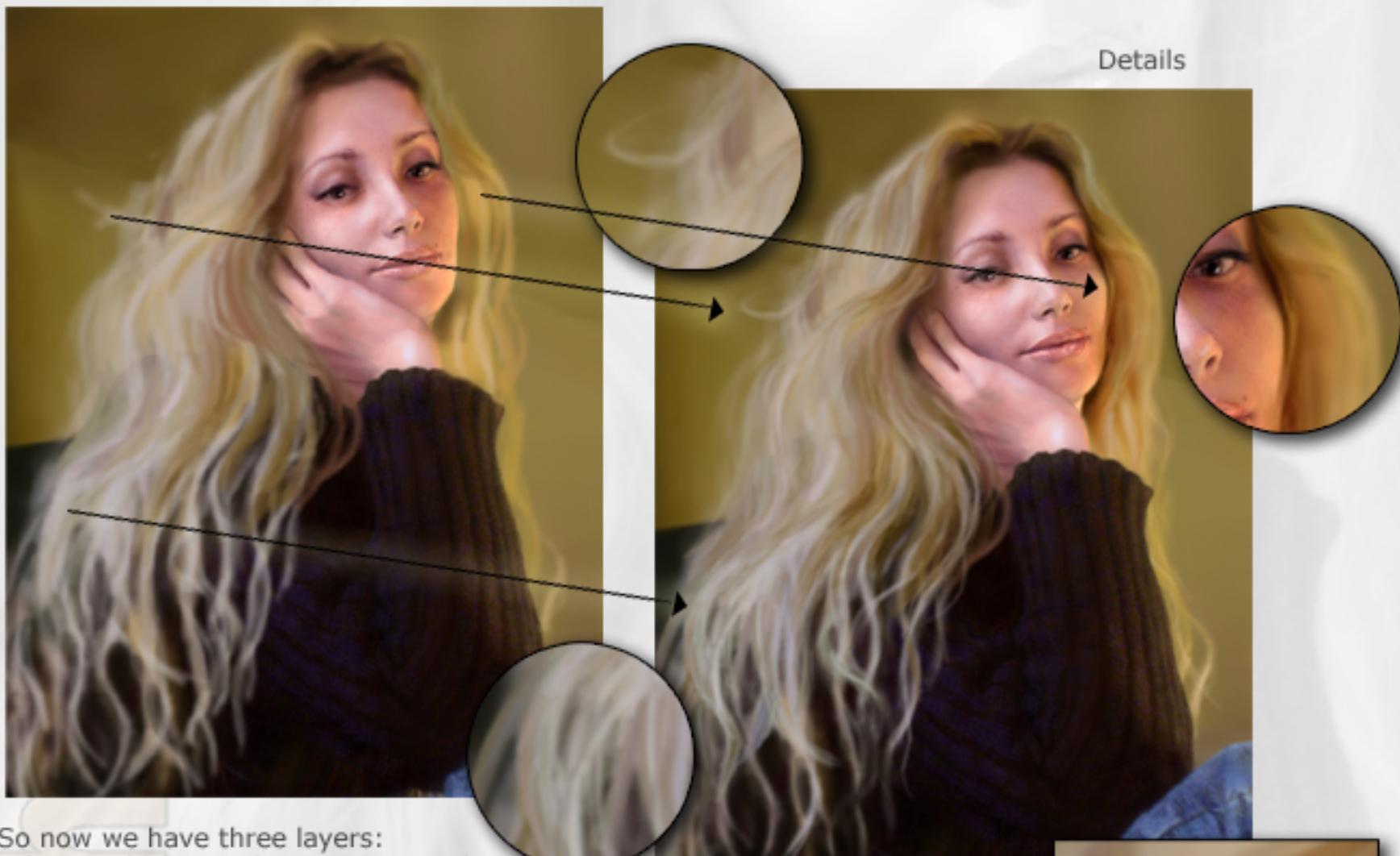
This time we zoom in and work areas of the hair until cover the entire image. This way we can concentrate on the details. Keep in mind the light sources in order to maintain a realistic look.

### Tips:

- \* Regardless of its texture the hair has to flow in a natural way so remember the gravity laws. Exceptions: our character is outside and the wind blows or we want to create a fantastic image and in this case the hair can have unusual ways to flow.

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The hair looks already way better now :) but still needs more details. Remember, this is a complex texture and it requiers patience and attention to draw it right. A realistic hair can improve your image very much :)



So now we have three layers:

Background, Hair and Hair 02. To make it easier we will flatten the two hair layers and we have again just two layers: Background and Hair. We could draw more details on the hair layer but we don't want that because so far we are happy with our image and we need to able to erase the new strokes in case we don't like them. Therefore we add a new layer and we begin to draw even more details.

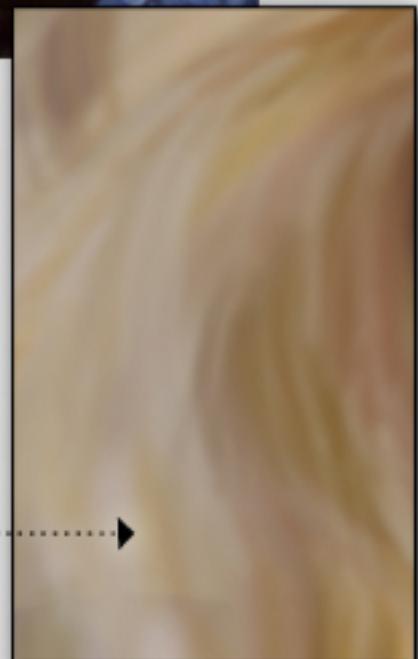
Use a smaller brush (#9, pressure 25).

Keep working on areas of the image and from time to time zoom out to verify the entire image and its composition.

Even if we have the main light and dark areas, inside them we need smaller light and dark strokes. Inside those areas the contrasts are not that strong. Lets say we choose this area..... we paint with darker shades the smaller locks but those shades are very close to the light ones. If we would use the darkest tones we would break the composition.

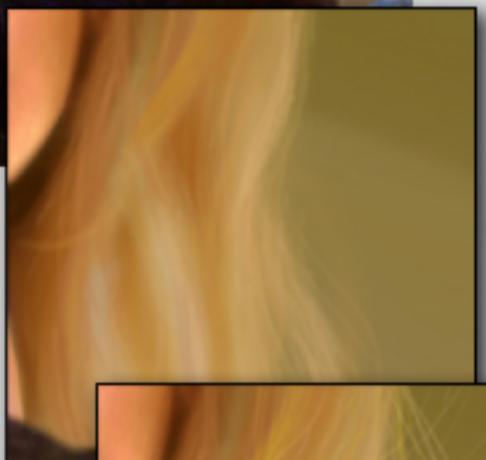
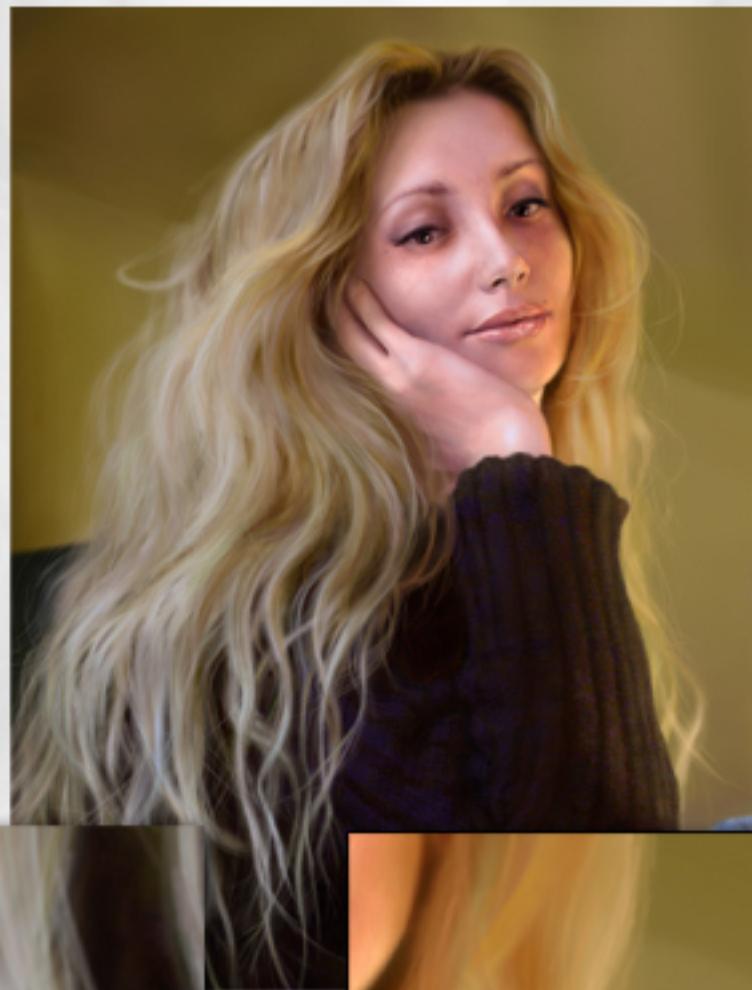
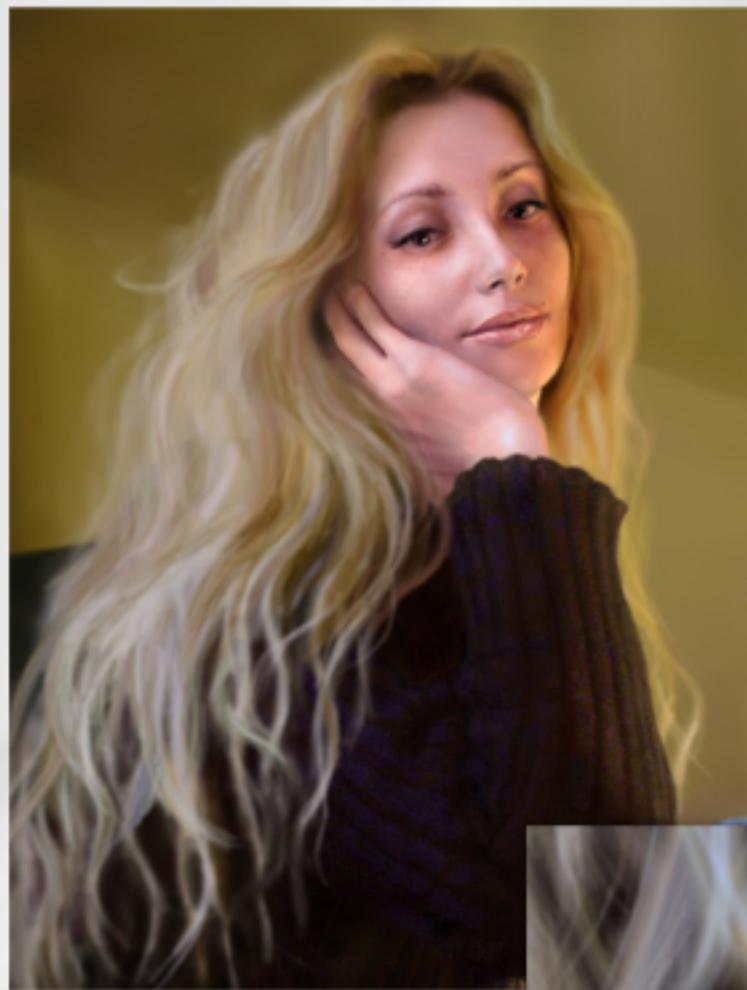
Tips:

\* You should always use a new layer when you draw something new just in case you don't like the results and you want to be able to get back to the previous state of your image. When you are happy with the results you can merge that layer down or even flatten the image.



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The hair looks good now, we have the main shape of it and we have some details too and the last thing we have to do to make the hair life like are the smallest details. We will use the airbrush (#2 and #1, pressure 50%)



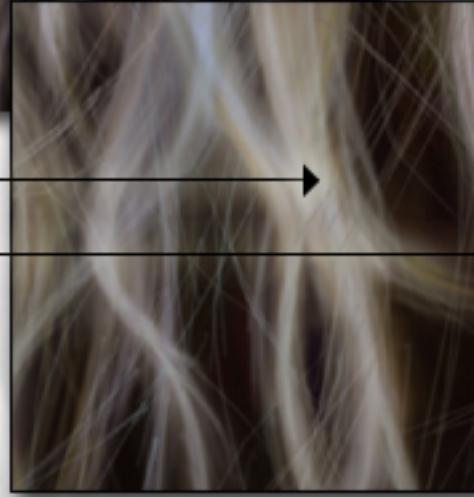
Choose an area, zoom in for a better control of the strokes.

Use the eyedropper tool to pick the right color.



Examples:

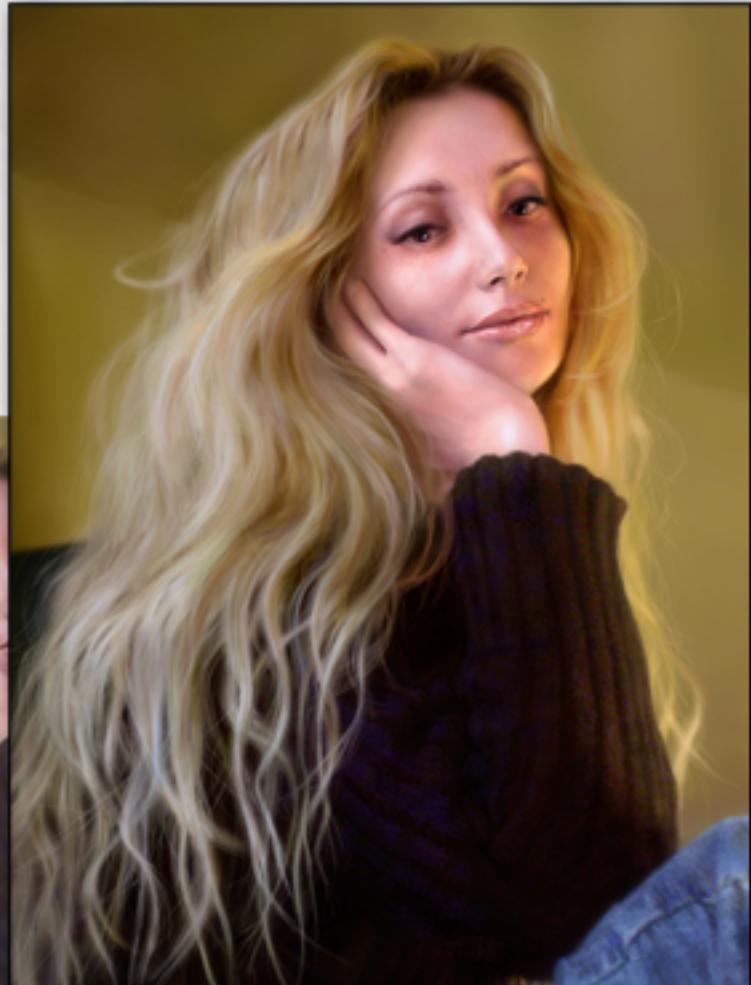
Pick this white shade for this area



Pick this yellow shade for this area



This is the last step that you have to do. If you look at the entire image you might not see these little details but they give the image that "realistic look" so you have to be patient and draw them carefully. Once you finish drawing them the hair is done and you can zoom out and check the entire image. If you are happy with it, flatten the two layers (Background, Hair) and save the image :)



### Basics:

Use large images.

Zoom in and out all the time so you can focus on the details and check the whole composition in the same time.

Use three tools: the airbrush, the eraser and the eyedropper tool.

Keep in mind the light sources and their colors.

Save your work every time you are happy with the results and work on a new layer when you add new elements to the image.



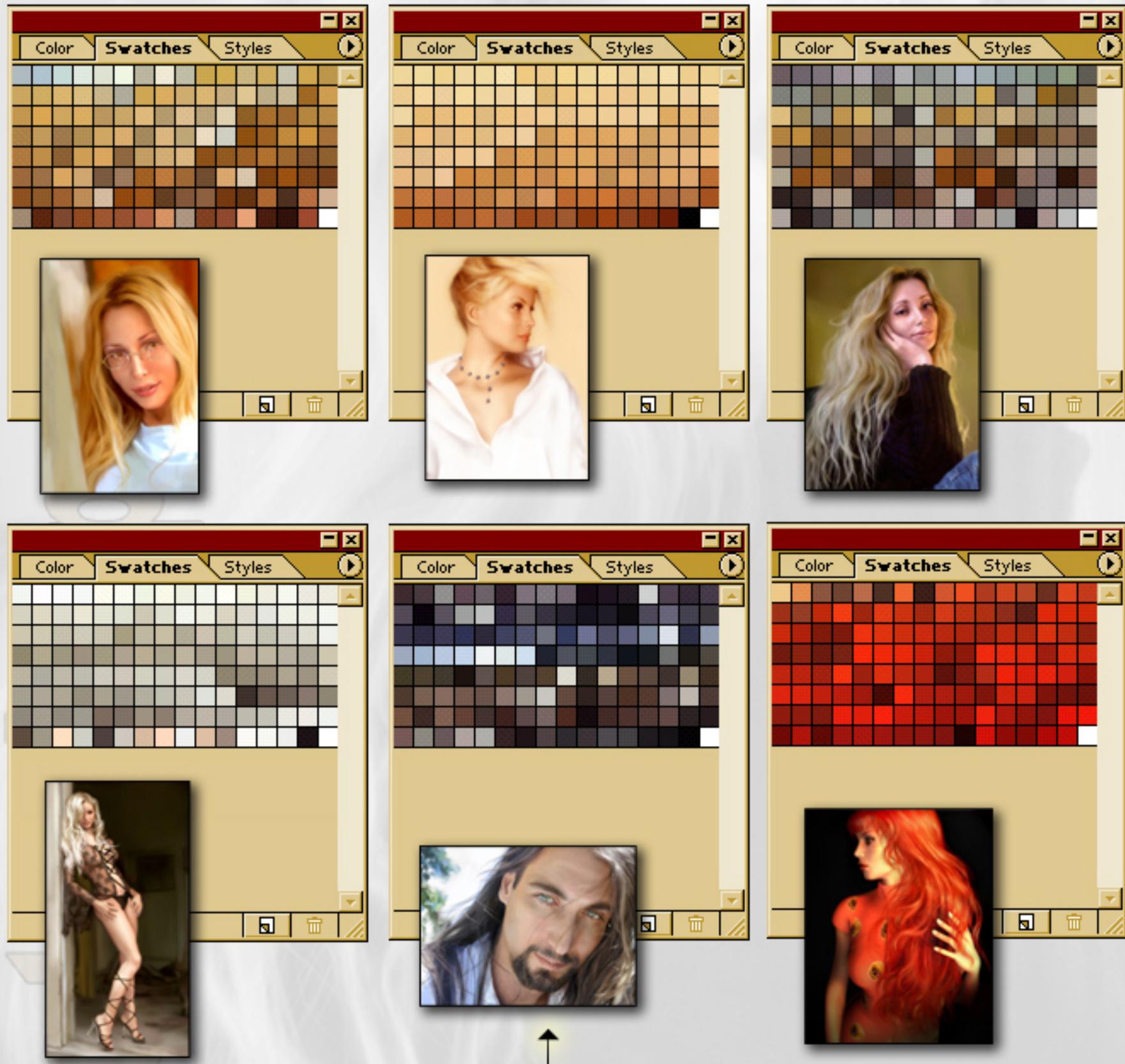
These are the few steps you should follow in order to draw amazing hair for your renders. It's not complicated and anyone can do it.

Use your imagination and the advices I gave you and you will draw in no time the kind of hair you want.

Have fun! :)

## postwork tutorial

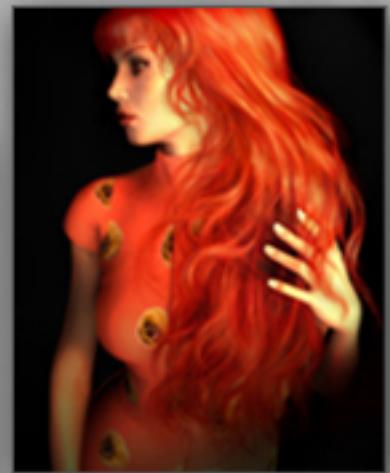
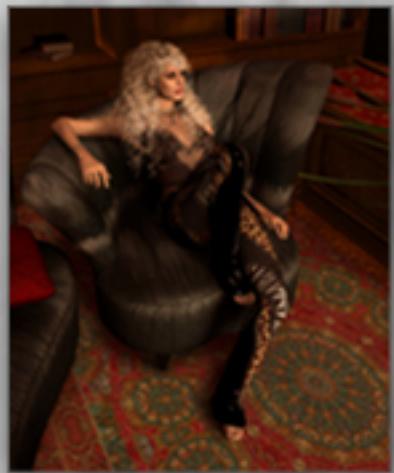
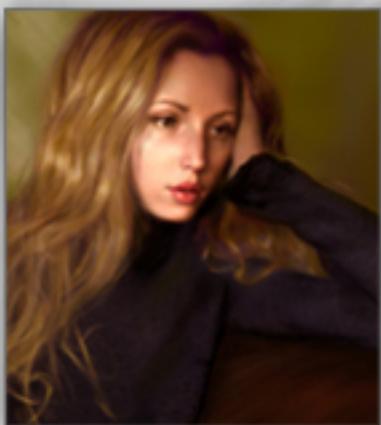
These are some of my images and the color palettes I used to paint the hair:



Keep in mind that the hair colors are in harmony with the rest of the colors used in the images. Therefore, if we take as example this image we notice that the character has dark brown hair. Looking at the color palette you can see that we don't have just brown shades. There are also blue and green shades because the hair borrows tones and nuances from the environment.

The swatches can be used as photoshop palettes (color table- ACT format) or as jpg's. Both formats are included in this package.

# Gallery



## **Recomended websites:**

<http://redragon.deviantart.com/store/>

<http://www.daz3d.com/>

<http://www.contentparadise.com/>

<http://www.runtimedna.com/>

<http://www.cgtalk.com/>

<http://www.e-frontier.com/>