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Handout

Photoshop for Web Design
Lesson 2 - Step 8
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Introduction to creating a background

We are going to discuss some of the techniques that can take your background to another level.

Start off with a blue rectangle and convert it to a smart object.

Adding lighting effects to background

Go to Filter > Render > Lighting Effects. My favourite preset is the point effect. You have a lot of options here and it's best that you play with them to achieve the effect you're looking for. Note that you can change the color or something else, so you don't have to go back a few steps in order to reset. Commit the changes when you are done.

If you want further adjustments, go to the Layers panel and double click on Lighting Effects under Smart Filters. This will reopen the panel, and you'll get to make even more adjustments.

Adding noise to background

Go to Filter > Noise. This will add a small texture effect to the background, but be warned that anything above 2% or 2.5% is too much. I usually go for 1% to 1.5% uniform, and monochromatic.

Adding patterns and blending modes

Another technique is to add a Pattern Overlay from the fx panel. If you don't have patterns at this point, don't worry - I'll show you how you can get some resources later on. The opacity of the pattern heavily depends on the colors and the effects already applied. So be sure to adjust based on what you see and not on certain percentages.

The final twist is in the blending mode of your patterns. Just browse through the other blending modes while adjusting the opacity (use the scroll on my mouse to go through them quickly).