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dekeBytes: A Taste of Vanishing Point 2.0 in Photoshop CS3

by [Deke McClelland](#)

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The Vanishing Point filter was one of the way-cool additions to Photoshop CS2. And it's gotten even better in CS3. Now you can connect non-perpendicular surfaces and wrap an image around multiple surfaces at a time.

To demonstrate, I'll wrap Bruce Heavin's artwork for my Photoshop Channels & Masks video around a photograph of a naked DVD case, captured by Chris Mattia. For those of you who'd like to follow along, I've included both components here for download.

To download the files, right-click the file names and choose Save As (on the Mac, that's Ctrl-click and choose Save Image As).

The files are:

- [Chans & Masks.tif](#)
- and [DVD case.psd](#).

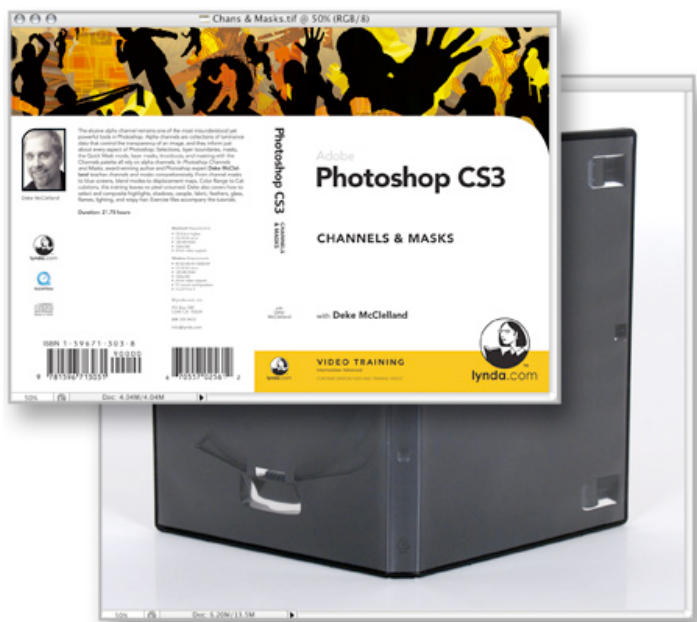


Fig. 1: The two images involved in this exercise are Chans & Masks.tif and DVD case.psd.

Anytime you need to import an image into Vanishing Point, the first step is to copy it to the clipboard. So press Ctrl+A, Ctrl+C (on the Mac, that's ⌘-A followed by ⌘-C) to select the artwork file and load it onto the clipboard. Then switch to the image of the DVD case. Press Ctrl+Shift+N (or ⌘-Shift-N) to display the New Layer dialog box. Name the layer “Artwork” and click OK. Choose Filter→Vanishing Point to bring up the Vanishing Point plug-in. Click at each of the four corners of the transparent plastic on the back side of the DVD case to make a four-point plane. Then drag the corner handles to align them as precisely as possible, as illustrated in Figure 2. As always, make sure that the grid is blue, not yellow or red (Vanishing Point's warning colors).

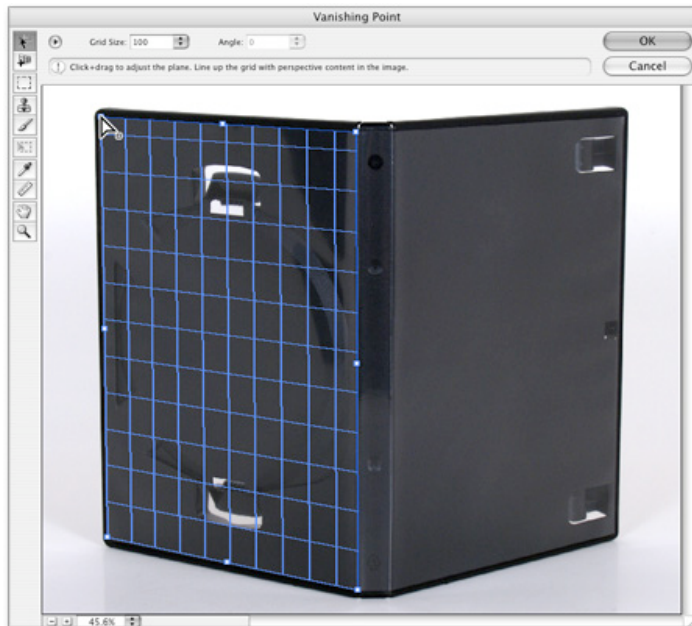


Fig. 2: Drag the corner handles to align them with the corners.

Press and hold the Ctrl (or ⌘) key and drag from the right-hand side handle of the plane to draw forth a perpendicular plane. Then press and hold the Alt (or Option) key and drag the right handle of the new plane. The grid swings like a door on a hinge, allowing you to move the plane to any angle. Once you have the angle you want, release and then drag (with no key pressed) to retract the edge so it aligns with the DVD case's slim spine, as shown in Figure 3.

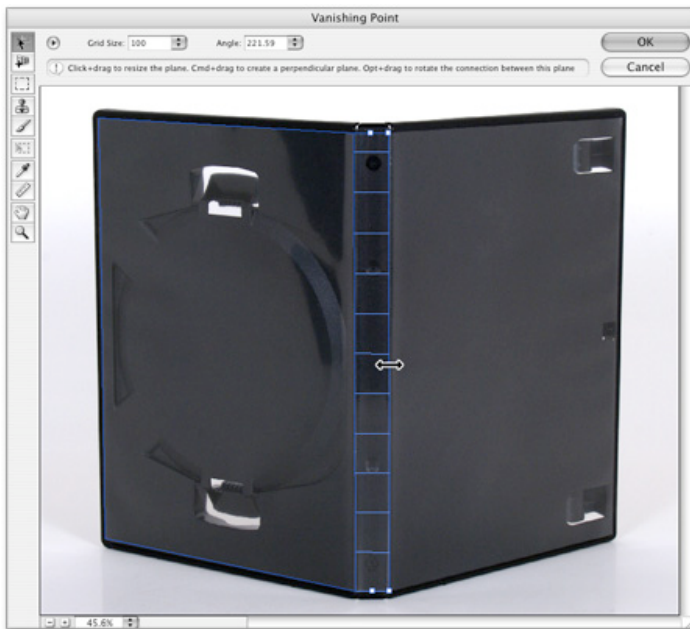


Fig. 3: After adjusting to the desired angle, retract the edge to align it with the DVD case's spine.

Next, use the Ctrl (or ⌘) key to drag out another right-hand plane. Because the plane extrudes 90 degrees away from you, it appears foreshortened, meaning that it's deeper than it looks. So keep your drag very short. Then Alt-drag (or Option-drag) the right handle to swing the plane forward so it aligns with the front of the DVD box. You can also adjust the Angle value at the top of the window. A value between 125 and 130 degrees works best. When you get the angle right, drag the far edge of the overly long plane (see Figure 4) to the right edge of the box.

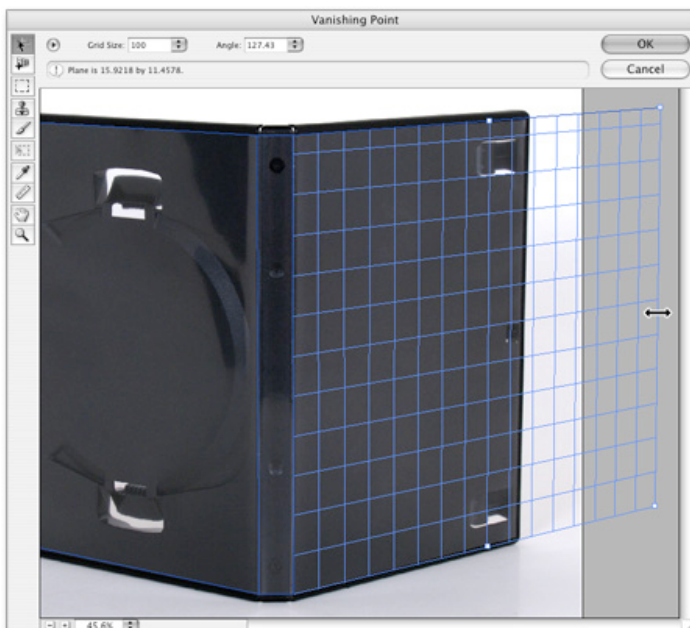


Fig. 4: Set the appropriate angle, then drag the overly long plane to the right edge of the box.

Now it's time to import the artwork. Press Ctrl+V (or ⌘-V) to paste the label image from the

Clipboard. Drag it down into its new home and watch as it wraps into place. As usual, the art is too big. Click the arrow and turn off Clip Operations to Surface Edges (so you can see the corner handles) and turn on Allow Multi-surface Operations (so the artwork can wrap all the way around the box). Press the T key to switch to the transform tool. Then drag a corner handle to reduce the size of the artwork. Make sure the artwork falls entirely inside the transparent plastic overlay, the way it would in real life (see Figure 5). Drag the pasted artwork until the spine art aligns with the spine plane. Nudge the artwork as needed with the arrow keys. Then click OK to accept the modification and exit the Vanishing Point plug-in.

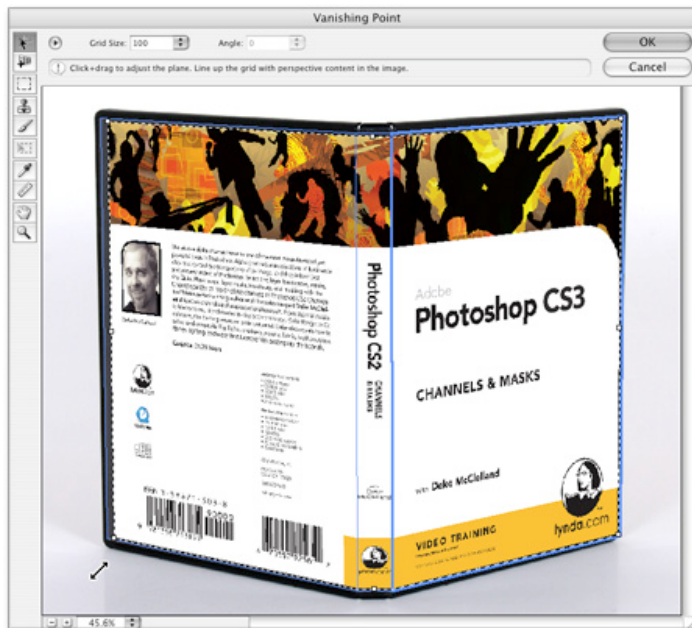


Fig. 5: Check the edges of your artwork carefully to see that they fall within the natural boundaries of the DVD case's plastic cover.

Vanishing Point is a 3D surface wrapping tool; it doesn't light the image or render shading. So the label art in no way matches the luminance of the DVD case. To add a faux-shading effect, go to the Layers palette and turn on the Depth layer, which is a special bit of painting that I created in advance. Click the Depth layer to make it active and press Ctrl+Alt+G (or ⌘-Option-G) to clip the shading effect to the artwork below. The finished effect appears in Figure 6.

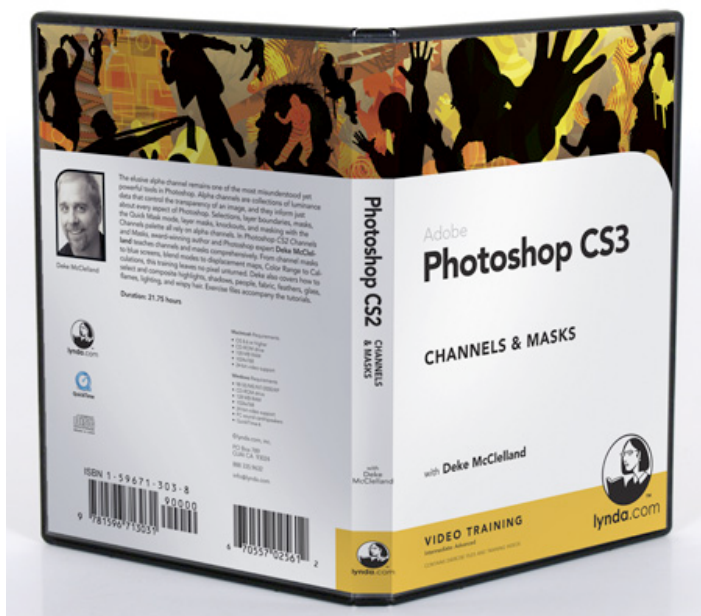


Fig. 6: Add shading and the previously naked DVD case is realistically dressed.

This is an excerpt from Deke's soon-to-be-released [Adobe Photoshop CS3 One-on-One](#). You can also check out more of Deke's videos at online training center [lynda.com](#).



[Deke McClelland](#) is a popular lecturer on Adobe Photoshop and the larger realm of computer graphics and design. He has hosted the interactive "Video Workshop" CD that shipped with Photoshop Versions 7, CS, and CS2, as well as hundreds of hours of tutorial-style video training for industry leaders lynda.com and Total Training. In addition to his video work, Deke has written 84 books translated into 24 languages, with more than 4 million copies in print. One of the most award-winning writers in the technology market, Deke received the Benjamin Franklin Award for Best Computer Book in 1989. Since then, he has garnered more than 20 honors, including seven independent citations from the Computer Press Association. In 2002, he was inducted into the Photoshop Hall of Fame.

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