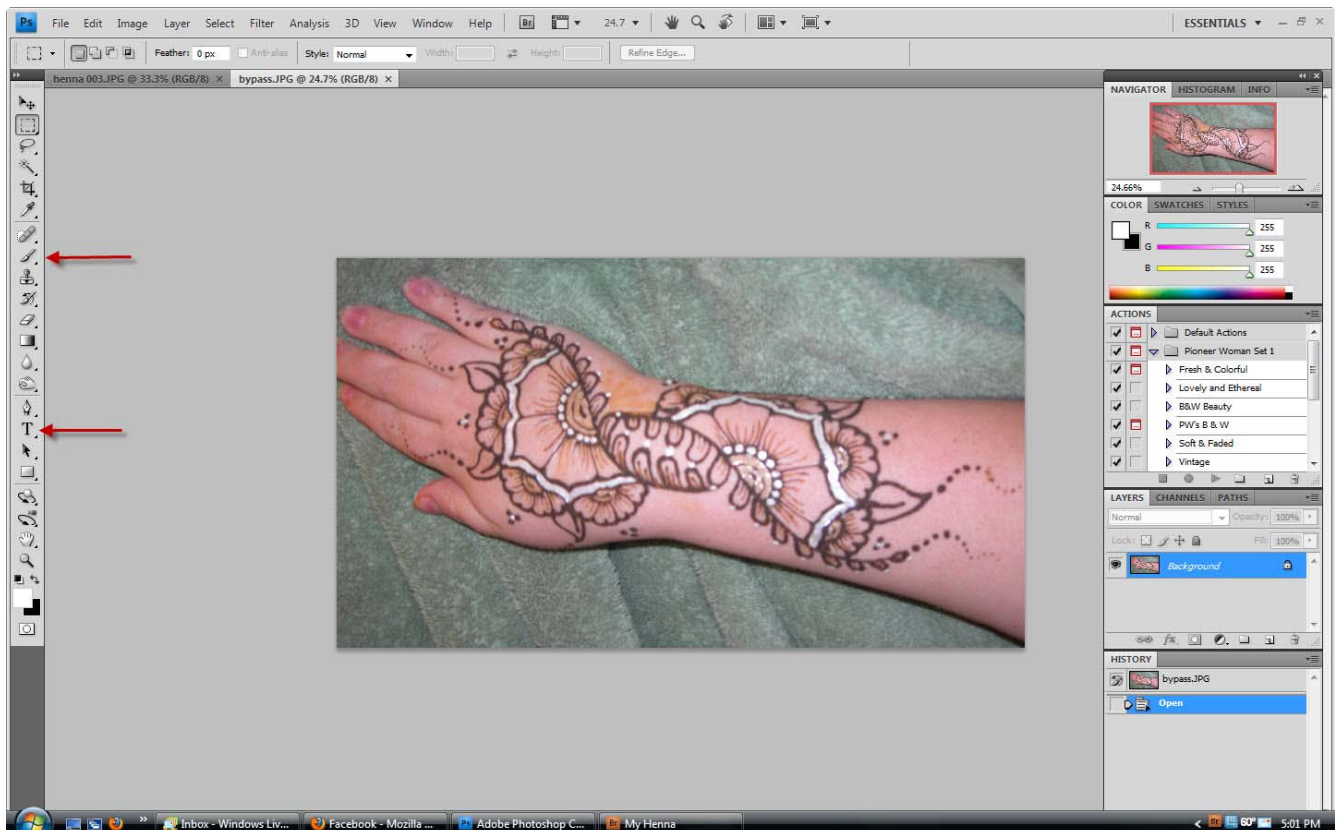


How to watermark your henna shots like a champ!

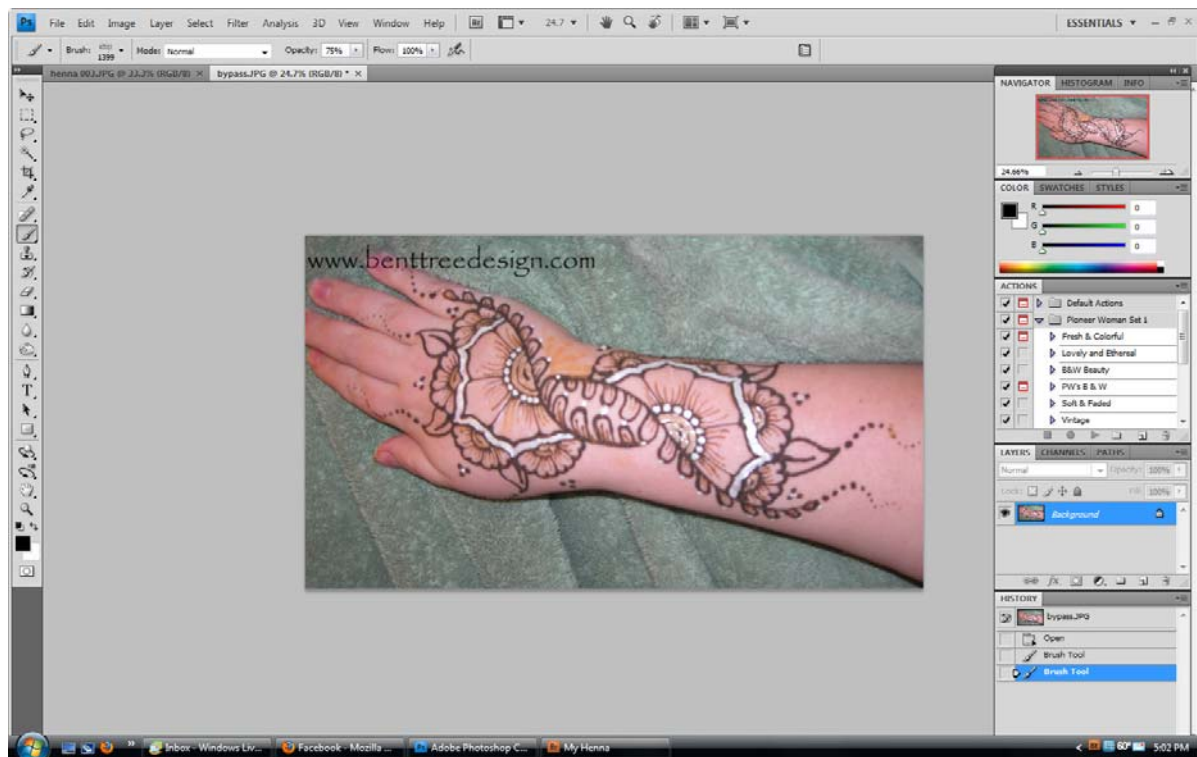
Okay, so, we're all sick unto death of having our work stolen online. Well, most of us are. The ones who aren't have stumbled across the best thing digital imaging has ever offered, the joys of watermarking. There is no silver bullet for image theft, but a well-watermarked image can save you a whole lot of time, energy, and takedown notices, if you take the time to learn the method and do it right. I was once asked to remove a watermark from an image of mine. I refused, but I did it for fun – and it took me over 3 hours. Not many henna-pic thieves are going to spend that much time removing a watermark – at that point, their time is better spent doing their own henna, and they know it. Those who decide to steal your watermarked shots are easy targets, if you don't want to just let them keep giving you free advertising, as some do!

I am not an expert on doing tutorials, and I hope I've created one that's simple and easy to follow in Adobe Photoshop CS4. Don't worry too much about the individual menu commands, although I have outlined them pretty blatantly for fellow PS users. Get the gist of it and your image editing software will have a way for you to do the same thing. If you remain confused or lost, please email me at info@benttreedesign.com or ask on the Henna Page forums! There is no reason to be stumped by software and be stolen from, somebody can help!

Below is a basic PS workspace and image. If yours is arranged a little differently, don't sweat it, just look around until you find the appropriate menu and go from there. I've tagged the brush and text tools. I use a custom brush for my watermarks since it's one-click, but you CAN use the text tool if you like or if custom brushes are not available. I've included a custom brush tutorial at the end. This document has been prepared as a .pdf so you should be able to zoom in and pick out menu items easily.

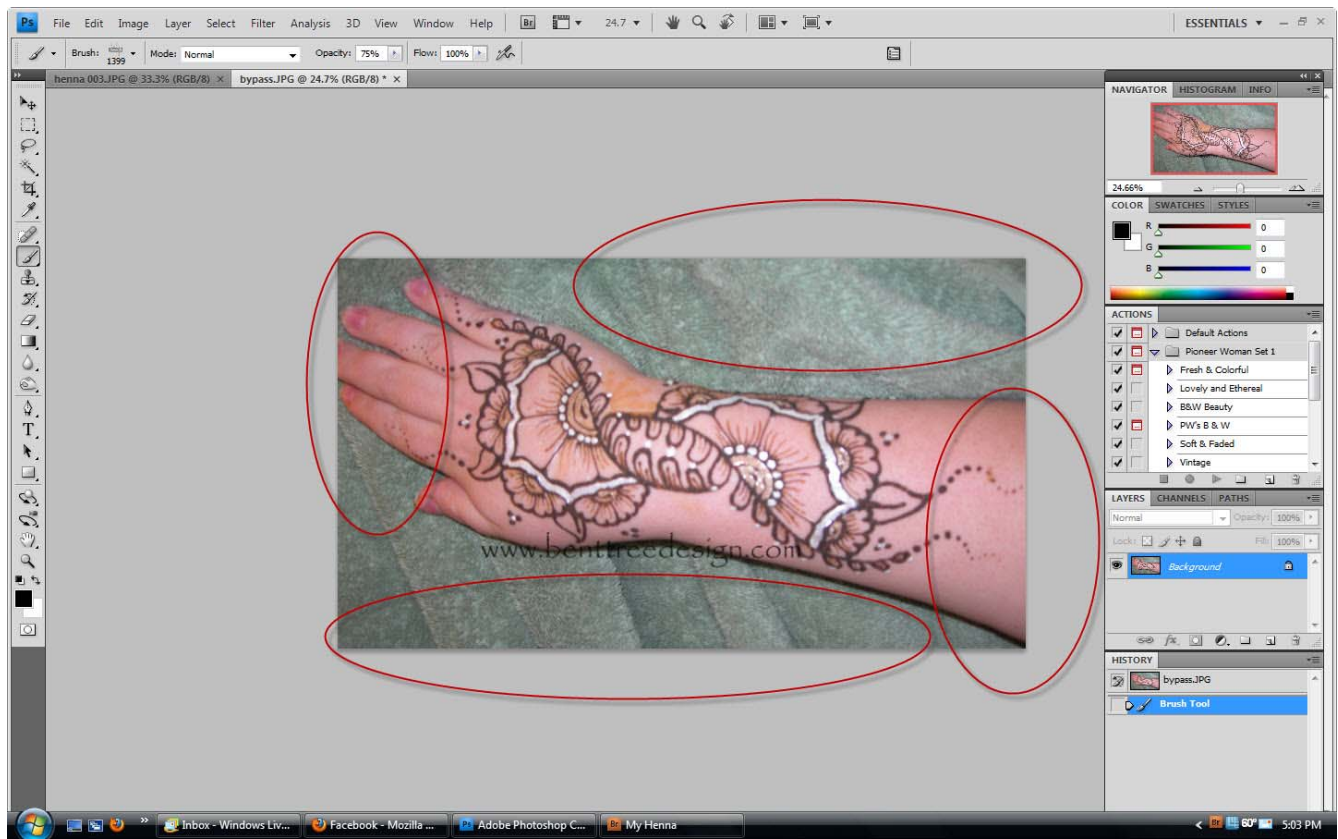


So, we have opened our image. Next, slap on a watermark.

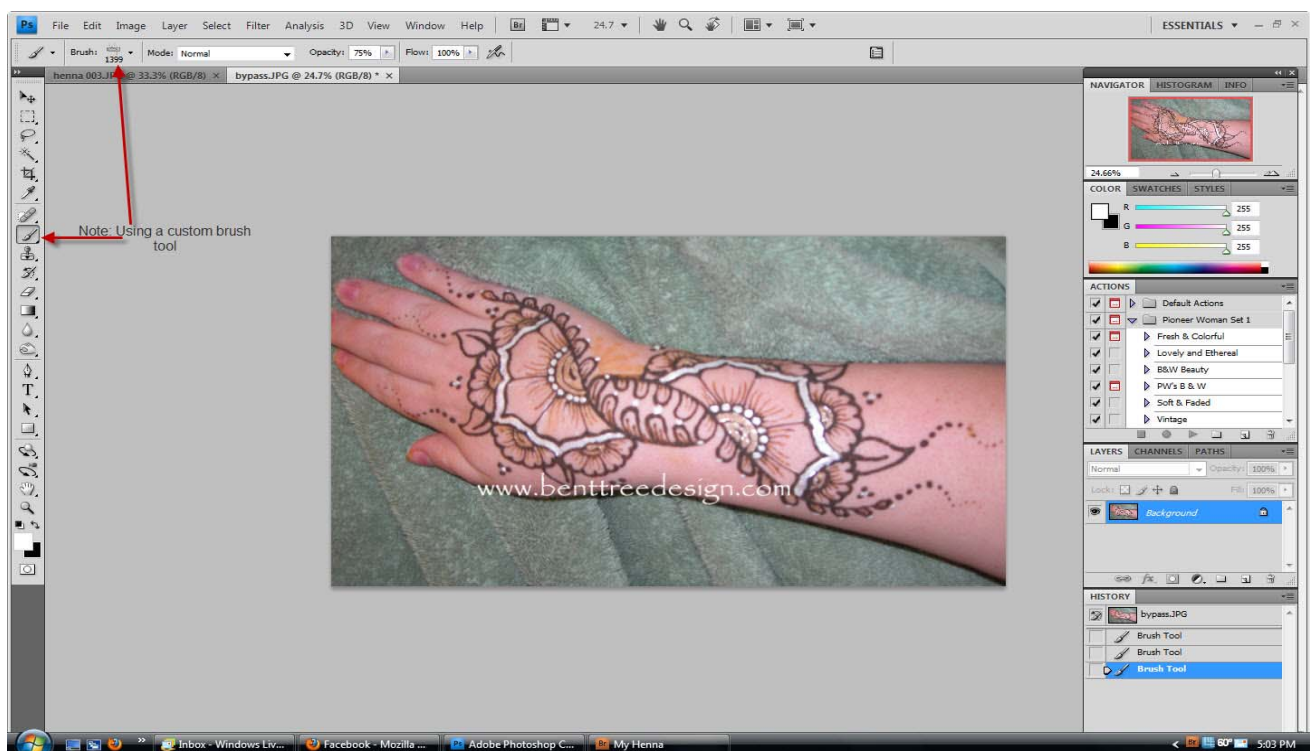


It's very tempting and easy to put your watermarks in corners, as then they don't interfere with your pretty henna work. GET OVER THAT IDEA! Thieves will happily sacrifice backgrounds, wrists,

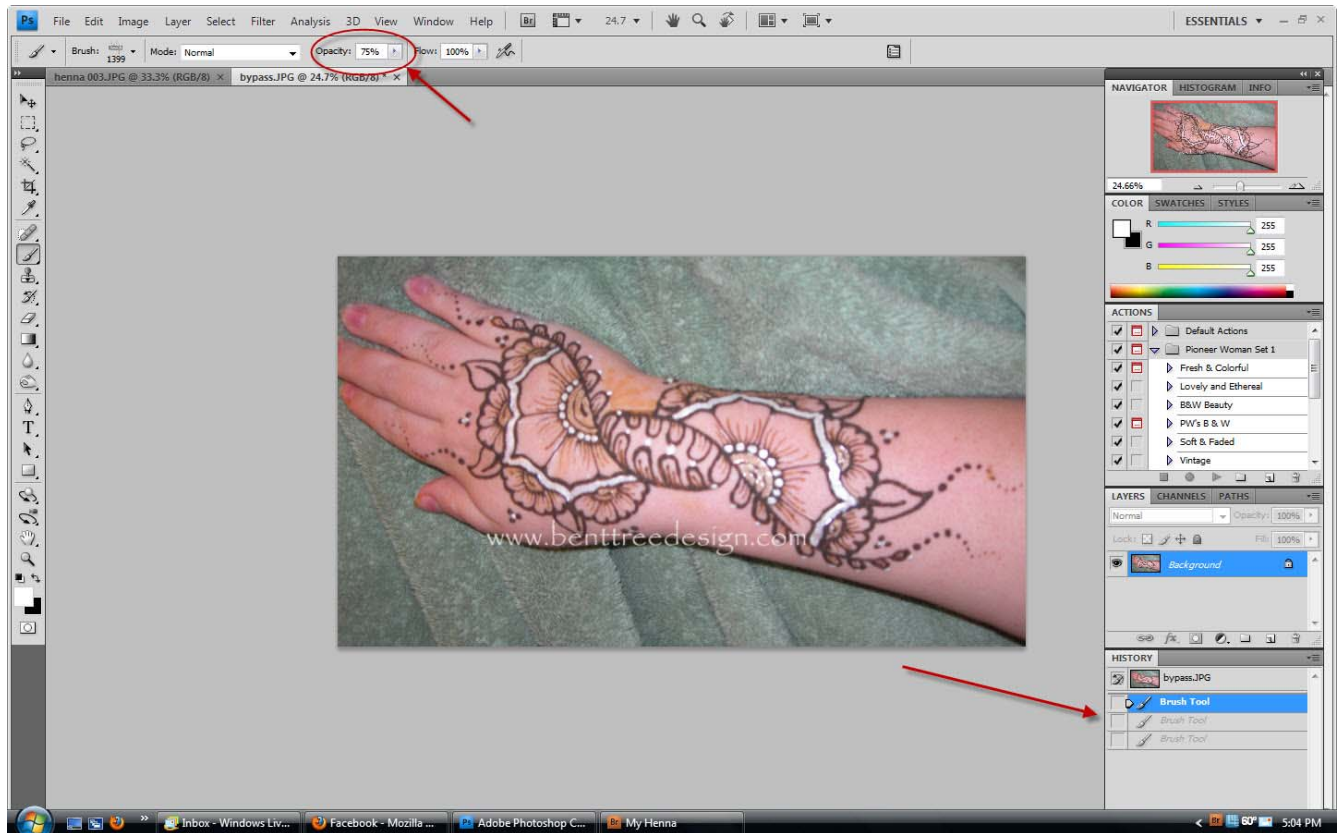
fingers and pretty much everything circled in red below: So your job is to watermark elsewhere!



You'll see I've put my watermark across the line of the wrist and over both light and dark areas. This makes cloning the text out a royal pain in the hiny, let me assure you. The only downside is, I can't see it. Let's switch to white.



That seems rather blatant, so I'm going to tone down the opacity. The attentive student will note that my opacity did not change, I just triple clicked. This time, I'll apply my white watermark just once, at 75% opacity. I like to tone down my opacity a bit from 100% since it is a little less obnoxious. Your selection of colors and opacity are entirely up to you and your aesthetic, but you want to remember to try to make it hard to remove – go over light and dark areas, and patterned spots that would take time to clone out.

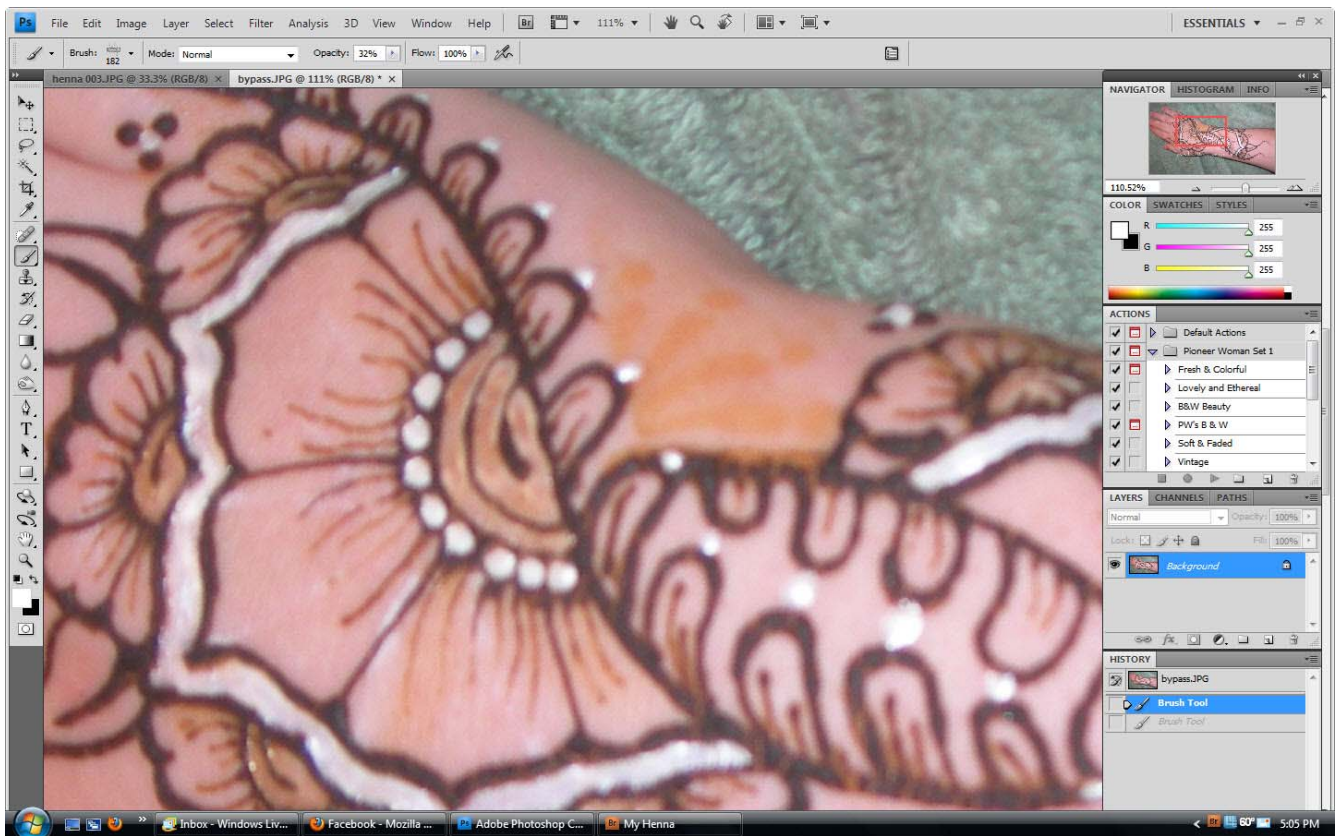


There. It's visible, but it's not the very first thing your eye jumps to.

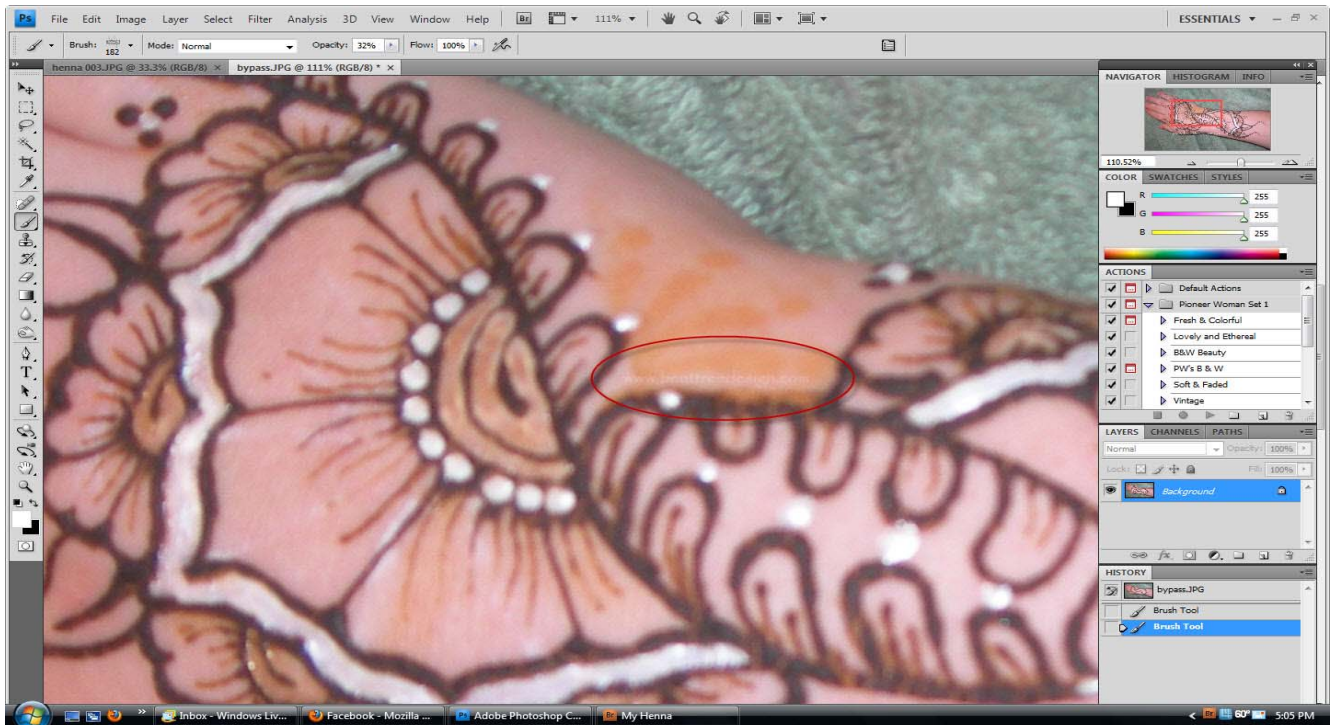
But wait, there's more!

I've covered foiling thieves looking to remove or crop out the watermark, but what about them just covering it over?

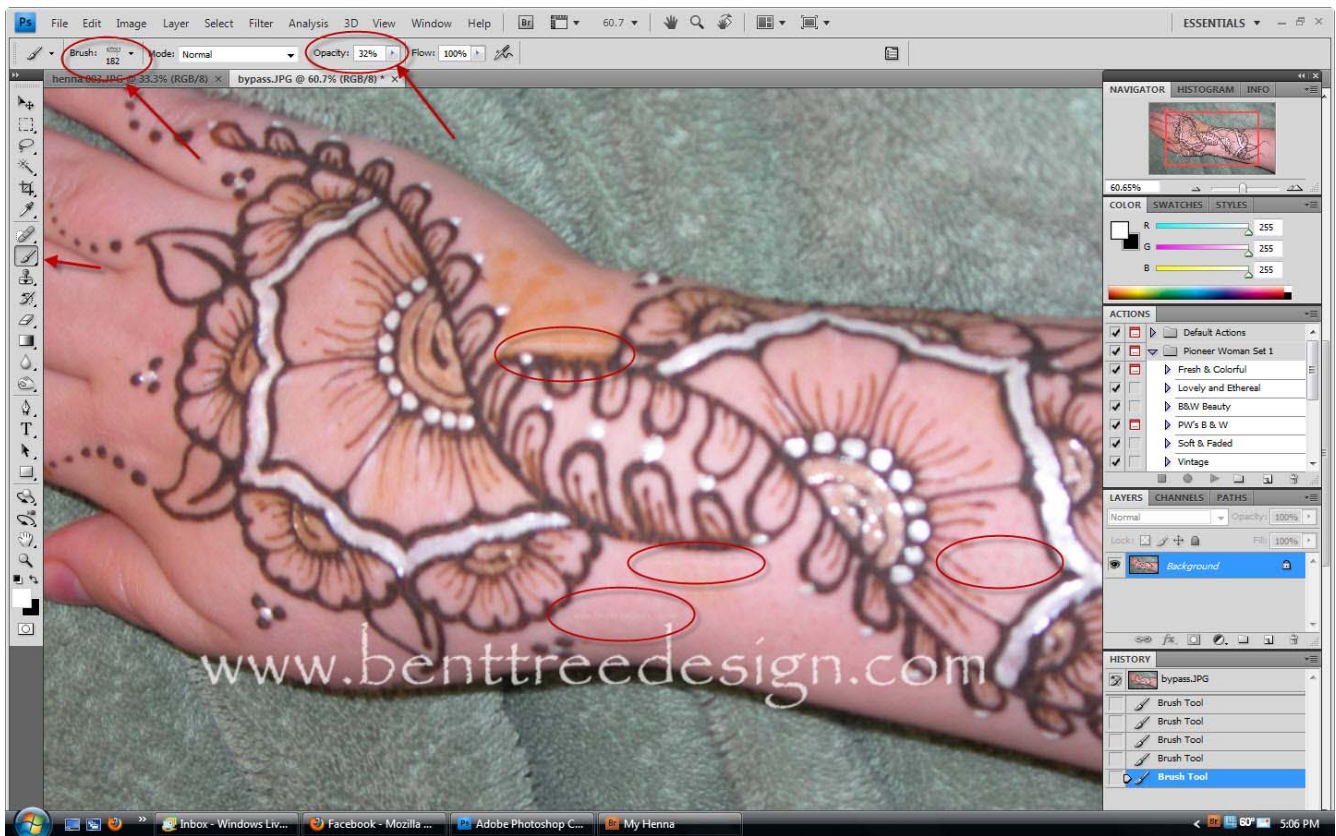
Unfortunately, there is no way to prevent some thief from just slapping a rectangular text box over your pain-in-the-butt-to-remove fancy new watermark. With any luck, your semi-transparent text is in a place that would look awkward with a rectangular blob over it. But you can't rely on thieves caring that the pattern still looks good, and that's where minimarking comes in! Zoom in to some light region of your pattern like below:



This is good territory. Our goal here is to make a mark that only WE, the owners, will see. Then, when it's stolen further down the line and they start arguing about who actually owns it, we'll have a teensy little stamp that they missed!

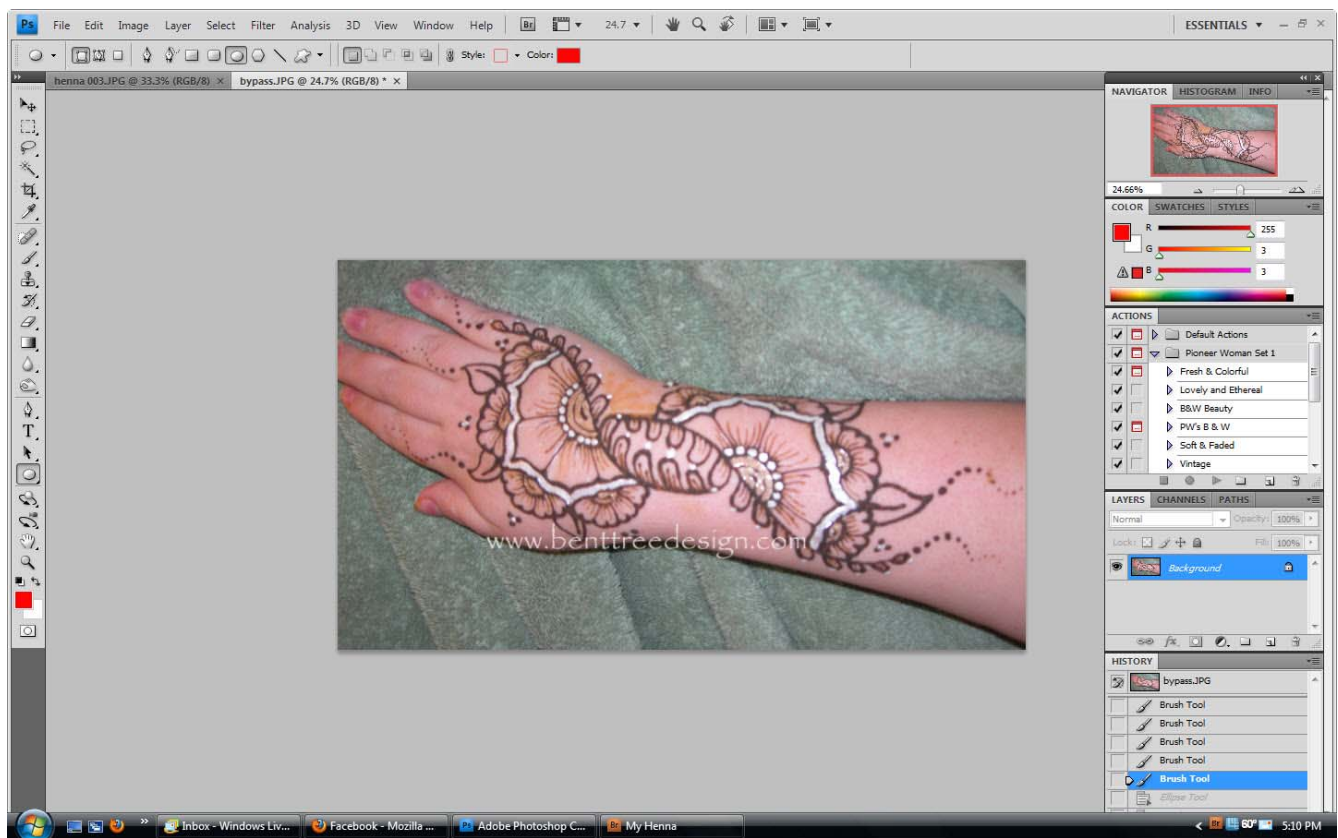


Use your same custom brush or text, just shrink it waaaaaaay down and drop the opacity to some it's-almost-there percentage. Pick a consistent spot in your picture to always stick your stamp on. I have a few spots I prefer, and what's more, I don't normally stop with one!



Yeah, if they weren't circled, would you really see those? If you were looking to steal my picture, do you think you'd catch all of those? (Note the lowered brush size and very low opacity.) NB: I may have gone a bit overboard on hiding them in this context, they're practically impossible to make out of the pixelation from compressing this to a .pdf. I assure you, they're there. You may want to make yours a bare touch more visible, or leave them as super-sneaky speedbumps, it's up to you. The original high-resolution image does show them delightfully well, even at this size and opacity, which means my lawyer could point to them and say “nyah-nyah,” which is the whole point.

Of course, having nifty stamps won't do you a lick of good if you don't **SAVE THE ORIGINAL**. Don't trust flickr with your professional life and portfolio, invest in some storage medium and keep your pix organized and dated. Nobody **WANTS** to have to deal with a snotty thief claiming they shot the pic, but at least this way you'll have some weapons! Zoom back out and look at your final product: It's not a great shot, and the photography and henna are decidedly so-so, but it would really take some work to steal this final product and be able to get away with it. This is not going to be 100% effective, nothing is, but it should make life for the thieves quite a bit harder!



Hopefully, using these simple tricks, you should be able to cut down on your pix theft issues and be able to enjoy better creative control over where your work winds up! Again, if you have questions or got lost, please, email me or access the wonderful forums online at

www.HennaPage.com

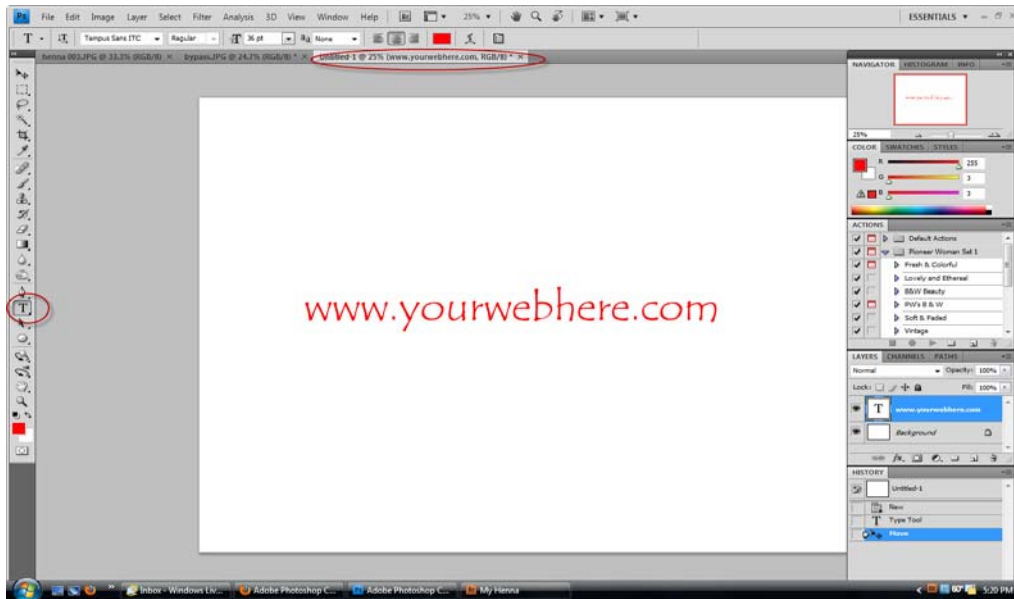
Best of Luck!!!
LadyTetsu

Bent Tree Design
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info@benttreedesign.com

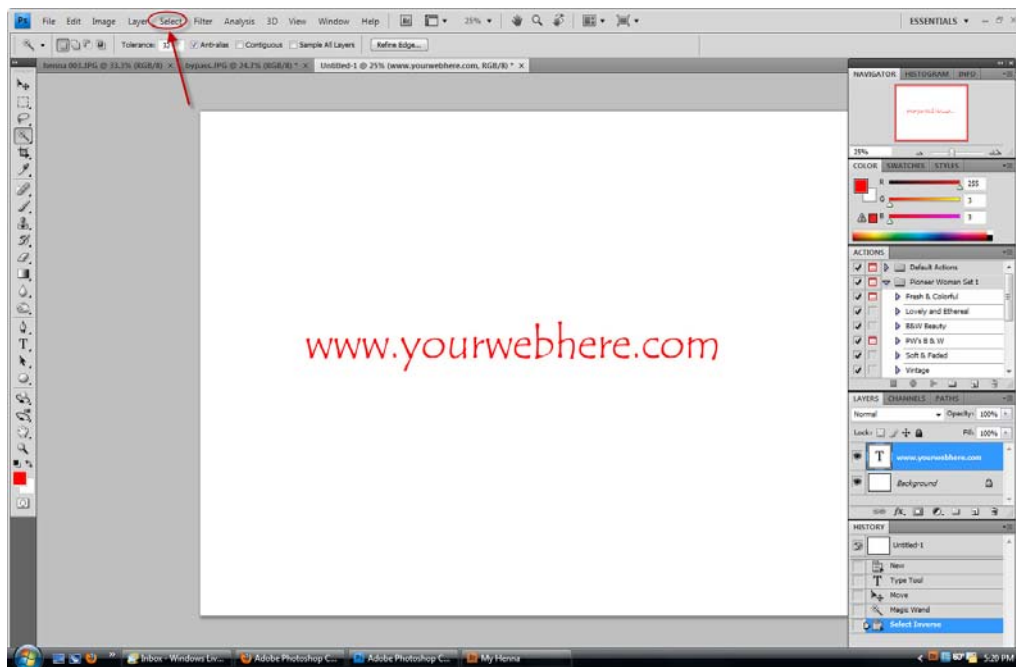
Appendix A and Only - making custom brushes in Adobe Photoshop CS4.

I'm lazy. And I'm dumb. I can't remember how to do the same thing two times in a row, so I need to keep my life simplified. If I'm sticking 48 watermarked stamps on my shots, I do NOT want to have to sit there and type out my web address 48 separate times. So, I made custom brushes! Here's how in CS4 – other software suites will have a way to do the same!

Open a new file, pick your font, and type in your text:



This may sound stupid, but really- make sure you like your font and your spelling. You can change size and color each time you use it, but you're going to tell PS to create a “brush” whose “tip” is the exact shape of the text you type in here. Get it right!



Your next step doesn't show up so easily on screencaps – you need to select the area of the text **ONLY**, not including the background or even the little holes in the letters. In CS4, you can do this by

Selecting the “Magic Wand” tool (looks like a magic wand in the menu)

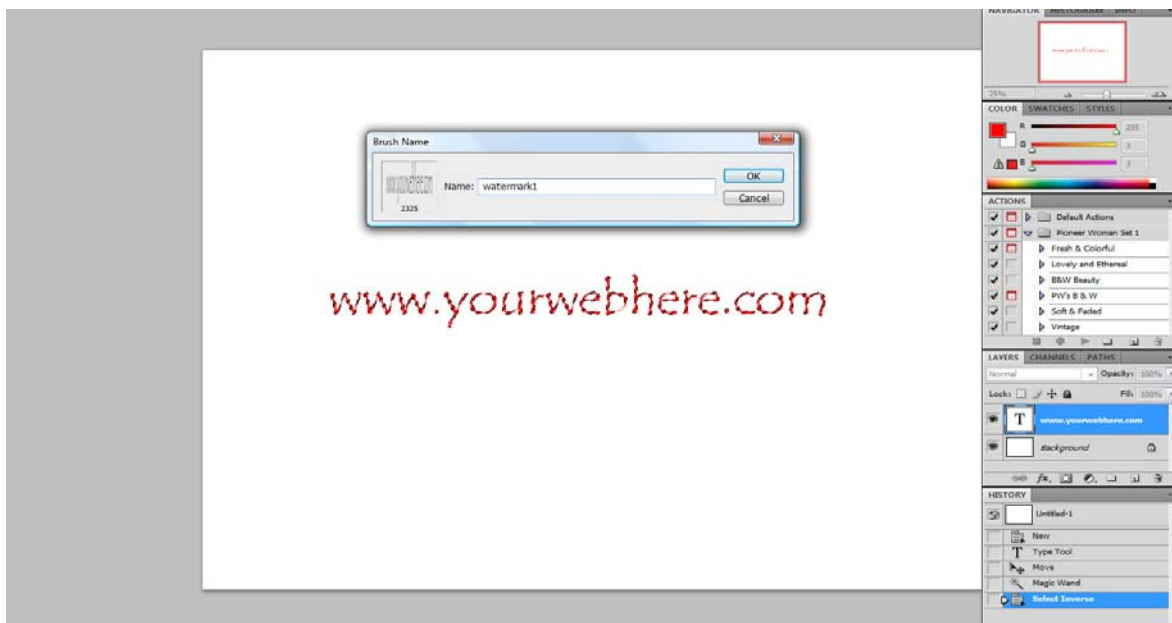
Deselecting “Contiguous” up in the top menu bar (you want to grab the holes and disconnected areas)

And then clicking somewhere on the background.

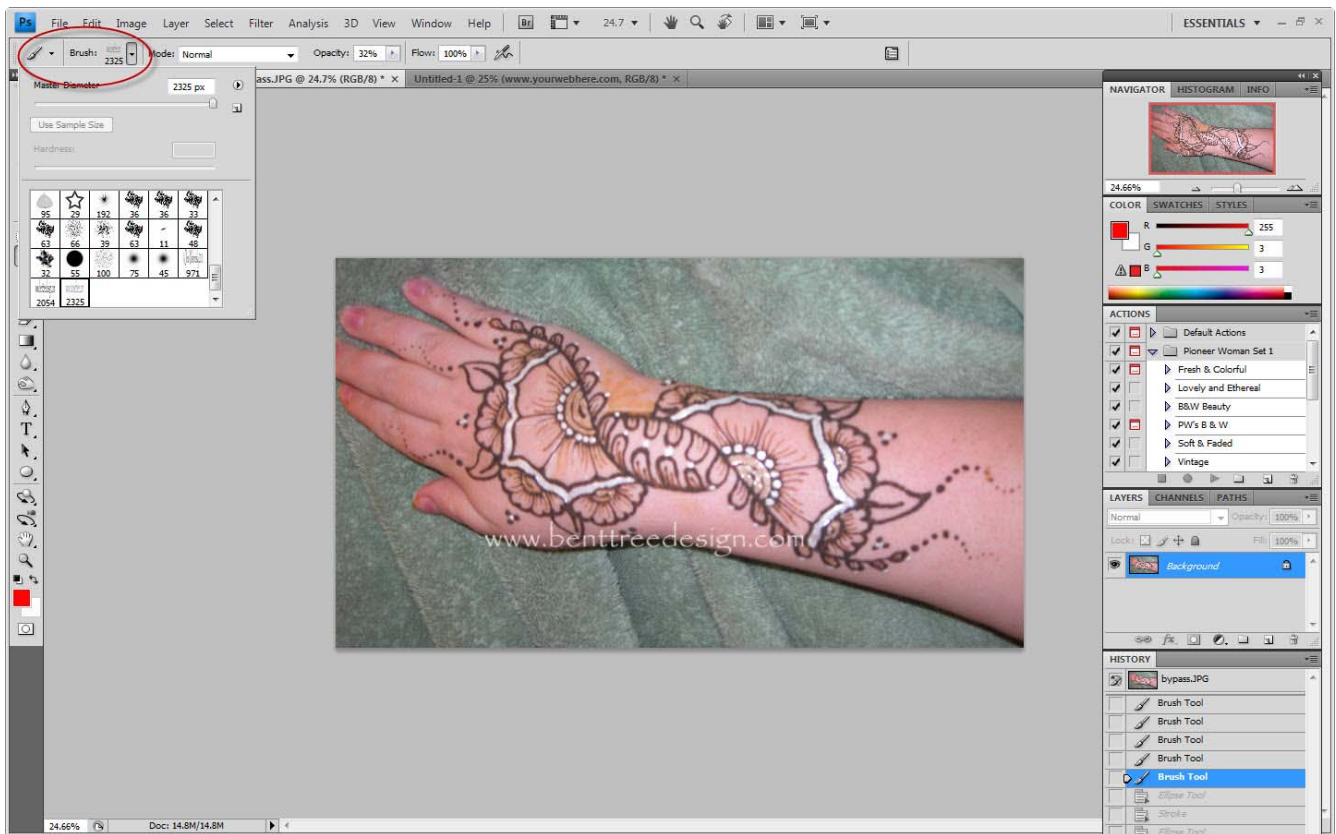
A marquee (the little dotted moving black lines) will appear around your text if you did it right, but you're not done yet. You've just selected all the white stuff in the background, **NOT** the text. Go to Select, circled above in the menu, and pick Inverse. **NOW** you should have grabbed the text!!! Next step, go straight to the Edit menu, and Click on Define Brush Presets



Name your new brush.



Go into another file, and select your brush tool from the menu as you usually do. Up top, you have a selection of sizes and shapes, scroll to the bottom of the menu and you should see some feathery squished-up text as your last option. Click on that, and bring up its menu.



You've now got a brush shaped like your text phrase. Click once somewhere with that brush and note the extreme lack of typing involved! The custom brush also has its resizing, opacity and flow tools for you to fiddle with, just like any other. Enjoy!!!