

Haunted House Basics

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Note:

There are many ways to use Photoshop to Haunt a house. This guide is designed to be simple and produce adequate results. If you want to use other techniques to create the scene other than those shown here that is your choice. You must produce a 8x10 Haunted House image that includes a main building, with a light in a window and a complete landscape with trees, walls, fences and other features. If you have any questions regarding what is acceptable ask the instructor to be sure your image will be acceptable.

Step One:

You will need a photograph of a building to haunt. When you photograph the building I suggest that you look for a building that offers a clear view of the building. That is one without trees, or bushes blocking the view. You may use either a straight on front view or a three quarter view showing some of the side of the building. It is your choice.

Wooden structures work best while buildings with lots of glass and steel work worst. Brick will do and stucco will do but are more difficult. A two story building or a tall building is preferred to a one floor structure---but the choice is yours. I suggest your photograph several building so you will have some choice when you get back to the computer. Be sure your building has at least one window for you to light.

You should check to be sure that the camera setting for quality is set to FINE and not normal.

You may look on line for additional instruction or you may use the basic ones listed below. Your grade will be determined by the haunted look of the building. The more you pay attention to detail the better the final project will be.

You will also need a photo of ground to set your building on. You could photograph a lawn, a hill or almost anything for this purpose. Your building will look best on a hill or rise in the ground but you can distort the ground in Photoshop to create a hill. While you are out looking for a building I suggest that you find a piece of clear ground to work with.

You should also look for “old walls” to use as well. Old wooden fences, brick walls , like the ones found at entrances to communities, and stone walls are ideal. I suggest that you photograph them from difference angles. Generally low angles work best but you can shoot them straight on. Get several views and angles so you will have a choice when you start to work on your project. Additionally you should look for gates to create an entrance. A broken gate, falling off its hinges will add a great deal of “spookyness” to a scene. You can always “break” the gate in Photoshop.

If you need a moon for your scene, I have a stock photo of a moon that anyone may use. I also have some trees that you may use rather than try to extract your own, but these choices are up to you. I also have a witch you may use if you want to extract her from the background

Next you will need a photo of a cloudy and dark sky. I suggest that once again you take several photos and decide later which one you prefer. Stormy clouds work well but you will need some clear sections in the sky in order to place a moon, flying bats, or witches as you decide later.

Step 2

You will need to extract the building from the photo you took. Use the extract tools found in Photoshop to complete this task.

While you are extracting, you can extract the walls, fences and gates you might need for the project. Be sure to save the extracts as new documents and save them in PSD format as they will be easier to work with.

Step 3

Open a file and size it to 16 inches high and 20 inches wide. When you are finished you will reduce this to 8x10 to help sharpen the final image but you will find it better to work in this large size while constructing the image.

Most images of haunted houses use a strong sense of perspective to make the house look tall and overbearing. Creating this effect is easy to do in Photoshop.

1. On the top menu go to Edit>Transform>Perspective

2. Slide the top corners towards the center so that the house appears narrower at the top. You also may want to spread the lower corners to make the building wider and you may want to use transform>scale to make the building appear a bit taller and more menacing.

3. Crop the image accordingly.