

How to use Photoshop CS5 - Part 21: Create water ripple effect in photos

In the next part of the tutorial series on Photoshop, we will learn and practice the basic steps to create a photo with the water surface moving and wavy. In fact, Photoshop already has a number of filters available to create the same effect ...

In fact, Photoshop already has a number of filters available to create the above effect, but users will not be able to guess from the filter's name (not **Ripple** or **Ocean Ripple**) if not refer to the article below.

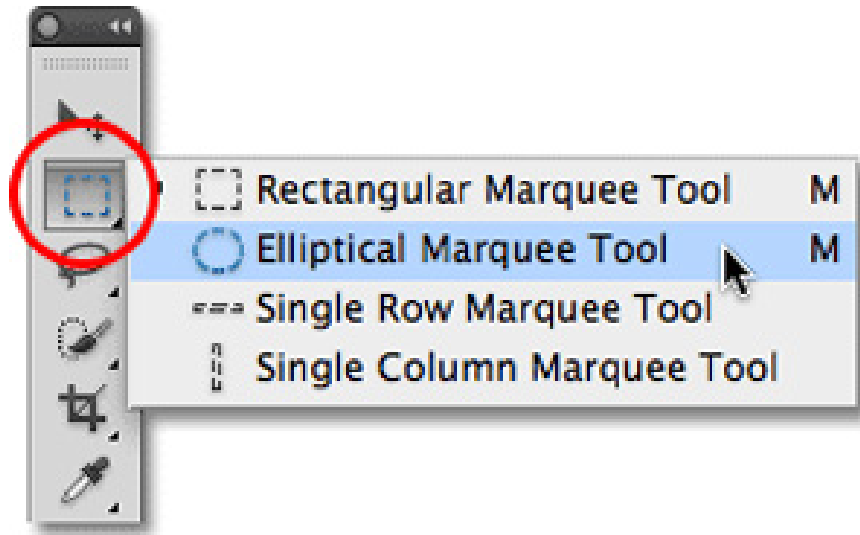


Sample images are used in this test

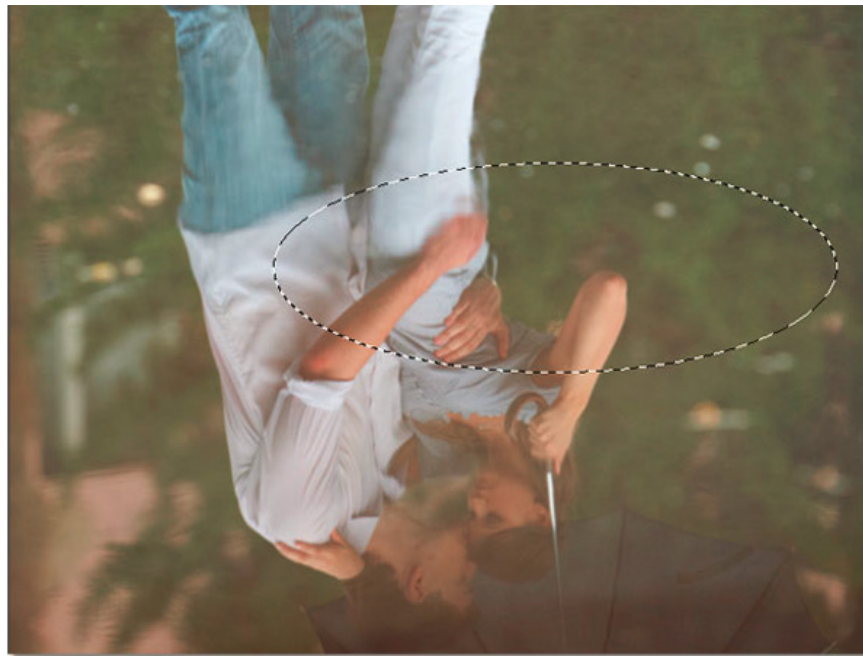
And this is the result after we finish:



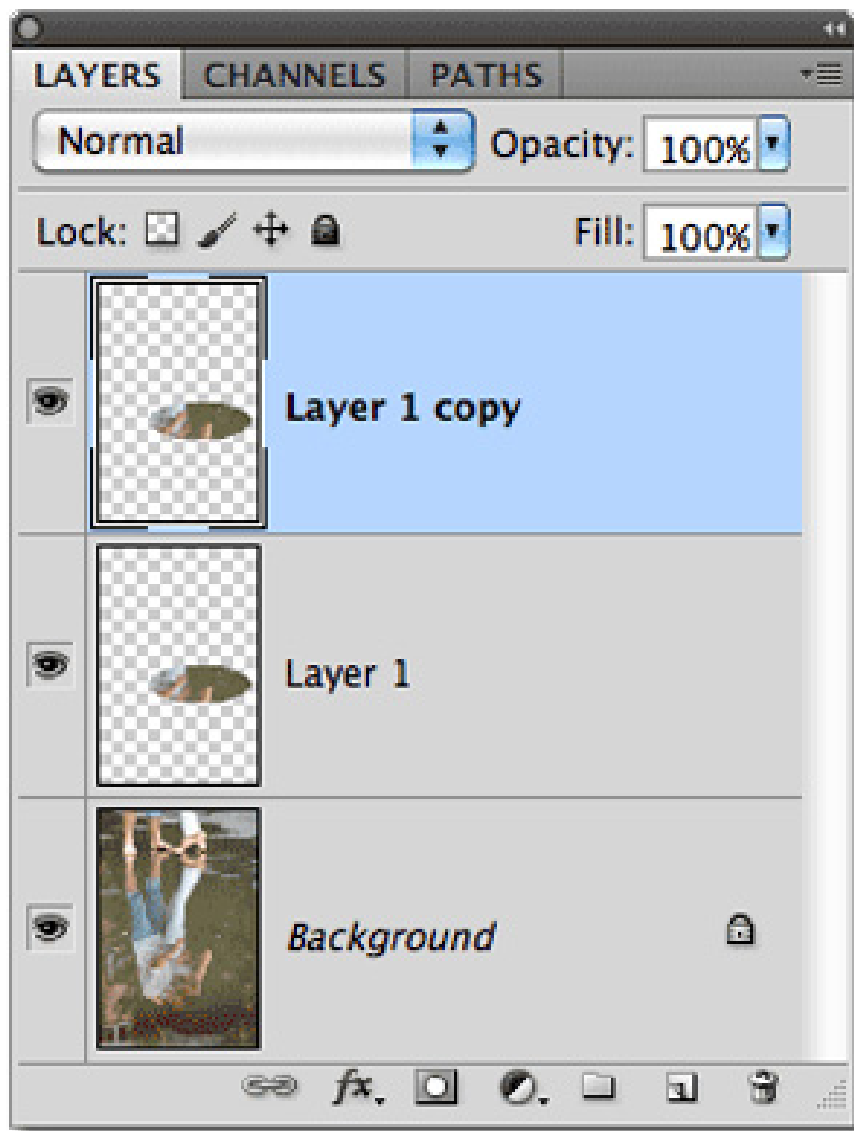
First, we will draw any area on the image, where water ripples will appear. Select the **Elliptical Marquee Tool** in the menu bar or press the M key twice:



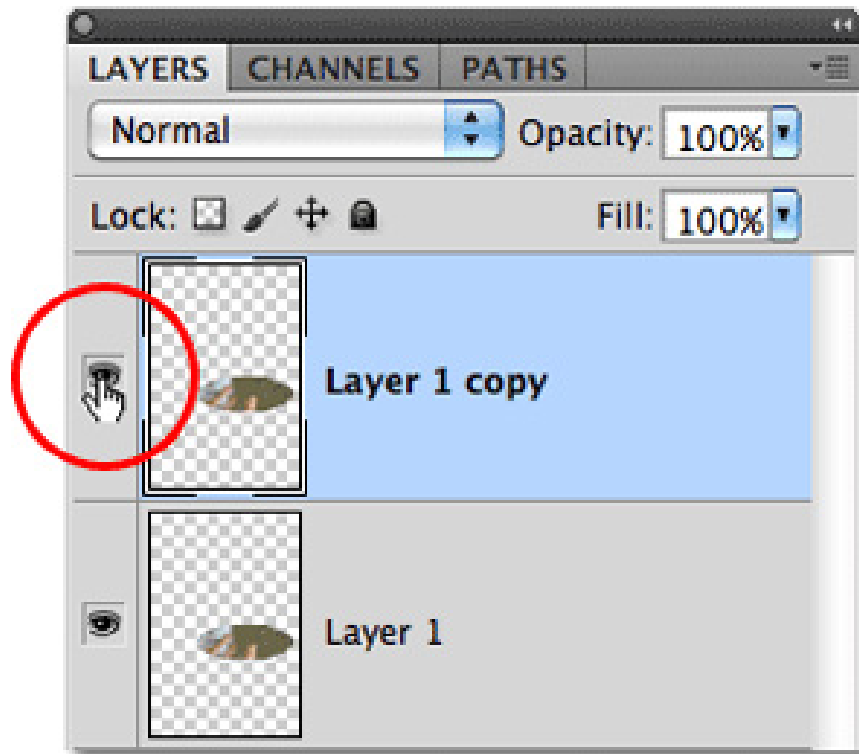
Then move this selection into the appropriate position of the image, depending on the object and the components that appear, we will have different choices. Example here:



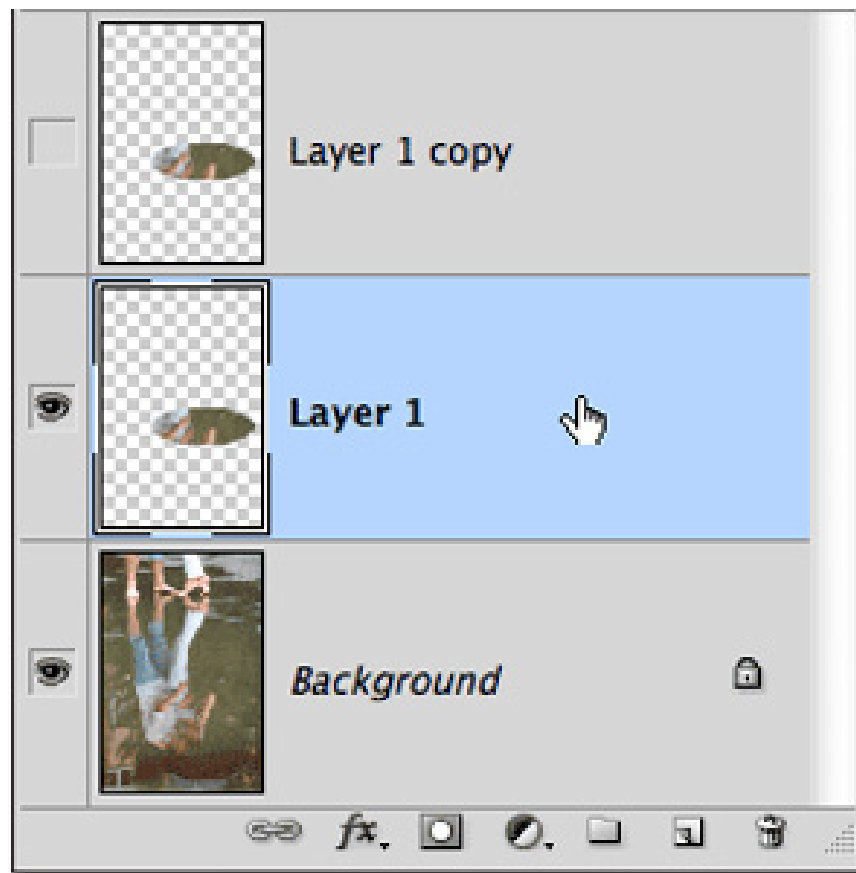
Keep this selection intact, press **Ctrl + J (Windows)** or **Command + J (Mac)** 2 times to create 2 different copies:



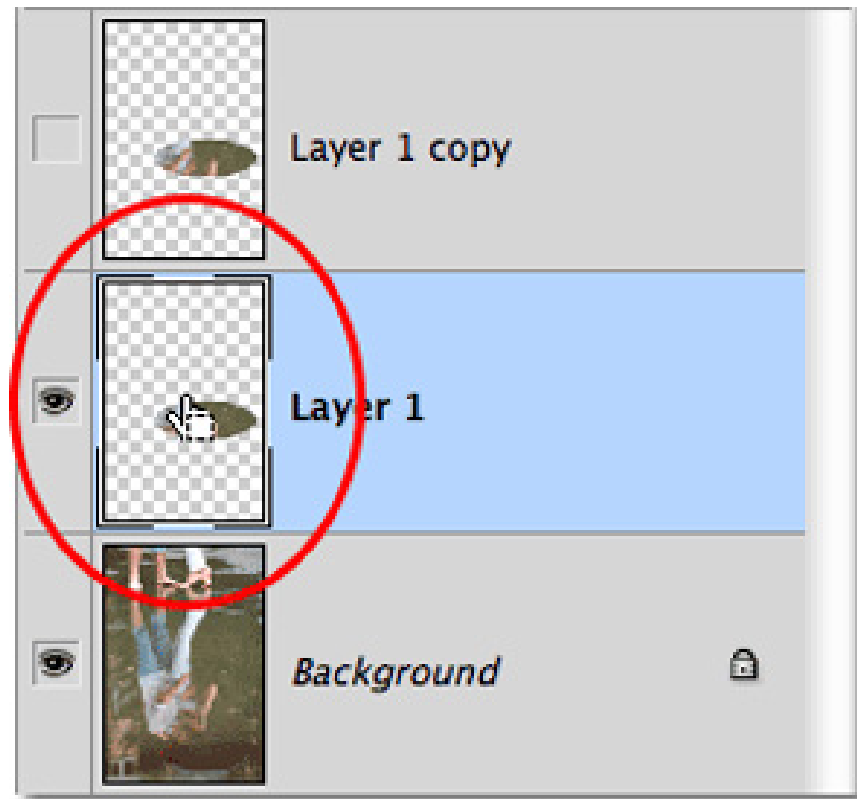
To continue, we need to hide the top layer (here is **Layer 1 copy**) by clicking the eye icon on the left:



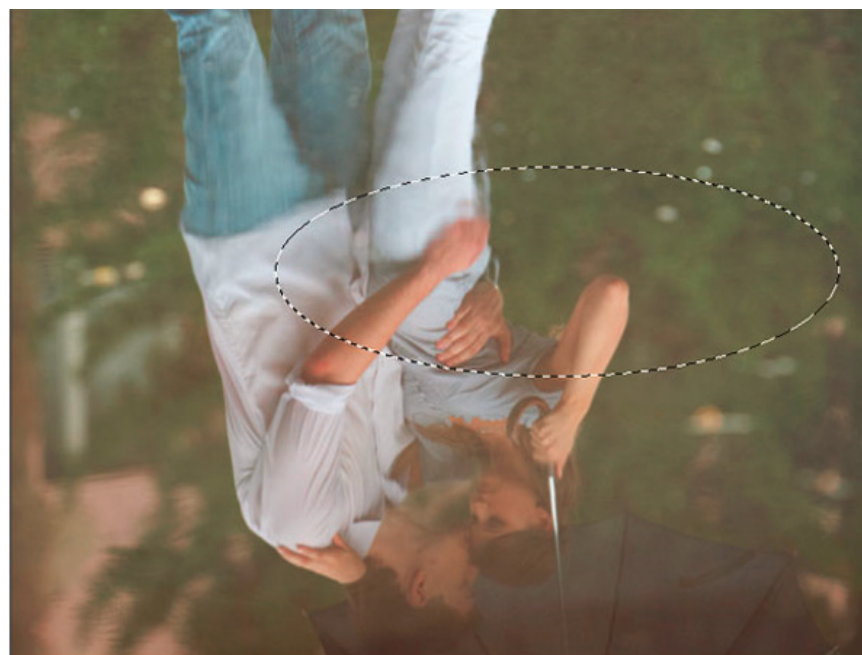
And work with the class right below:



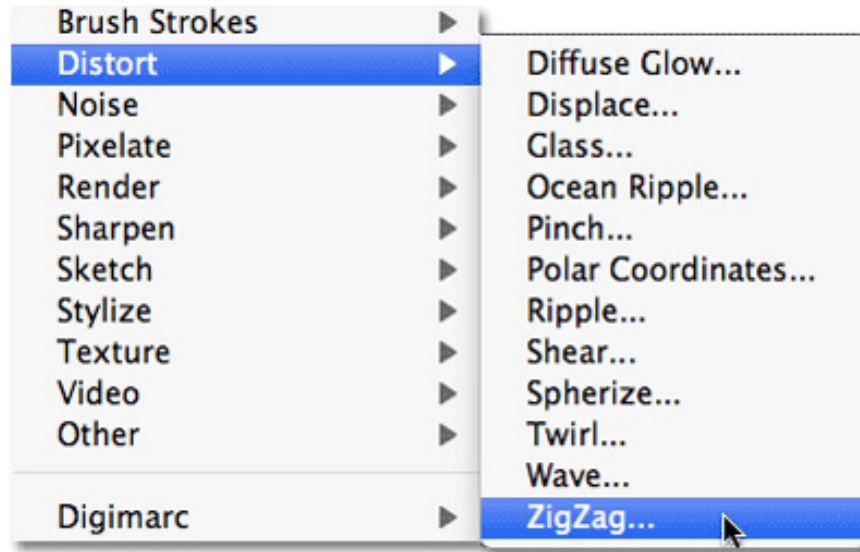
Continue, hold down **Ctrl (Windows)** or **Command (Mac)** and select the layer to be manipulated (here is **Layer 1**):



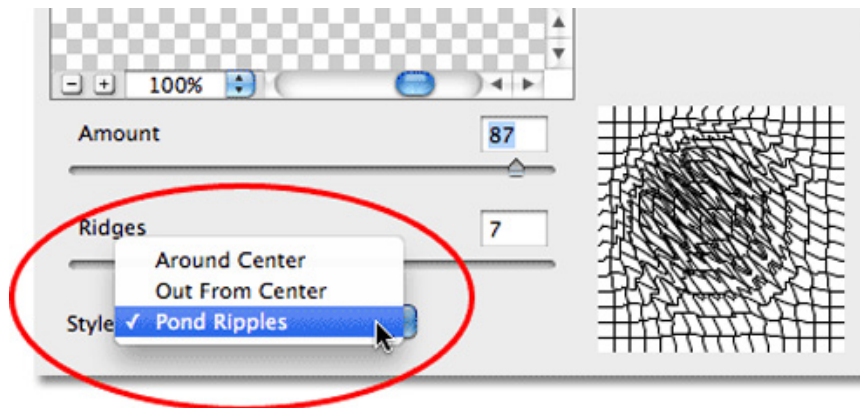
This process will create another selection area around the main part of Layer 1, which means that the outer selection you just drawn in the previous step will return. The reason why we have to do this before applying the filter effect is because if we do the opposite, Photoshop will apply the entire effect to all the original layers and images:



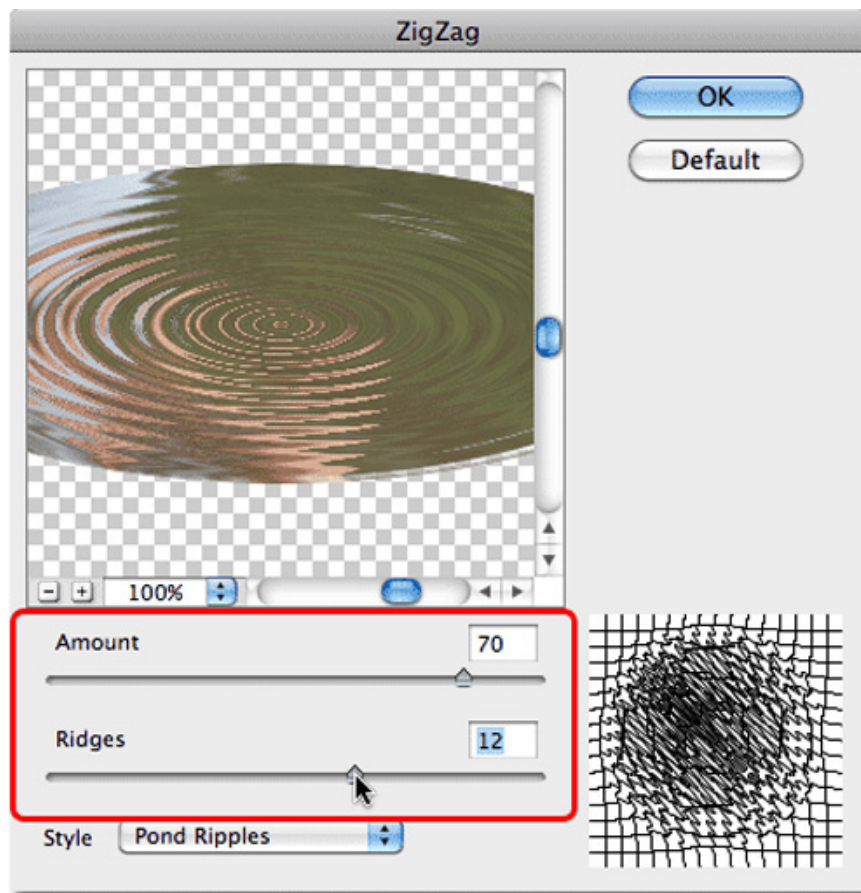
And this is the main part of this process, which is to apply the effect reasonably. To achieve the desired effect, we need to use a filter called ZigZag (not **Ripple** or **Ocean Ripple**). You select **Filter> Distort> ZigZag** in the displayed list:



This filter works by turning details in a selection into water ripples. At the bottom of the control panel is the **Style** section - the corresponding ways to customize the effect of Photoshop. There are 3 main options: **Around Center**, **Out From Center** and **Pond Ripples** (default), which corresponds to 3 different effects, and depends on the area of ??the selection that the user will give the option. apply their own best:



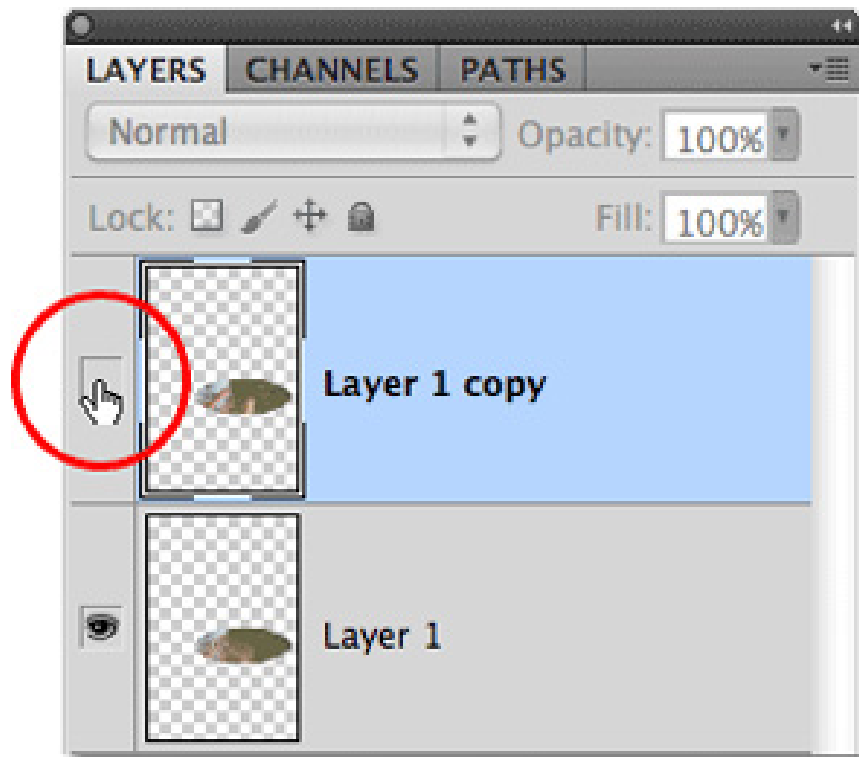
The **Amount** control part that changes the 'intensity' of the water ripple will appear, while the **Ridges** parameter directly affects the amount of water ripple. Pay attention and rely on your own sense of intuition to decide which option is most appropriate (the effect will not be applied until you press the **OK** button). In this test, we applied ZigZag twice with the **Ridges 12** parameter , **Amount 70** and **Style** as **Pond Ripples**:



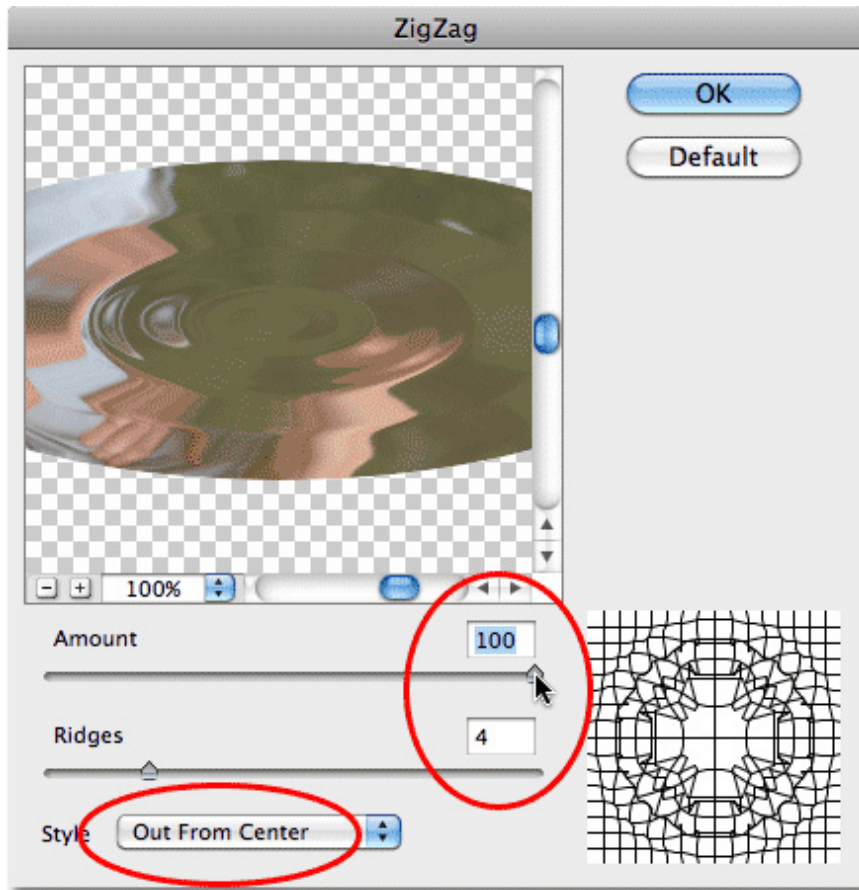
Click **OK** , and we will get the following result:



Then we will show the top layer again (here is **Layer 1 copy**) to proceed to the next step:



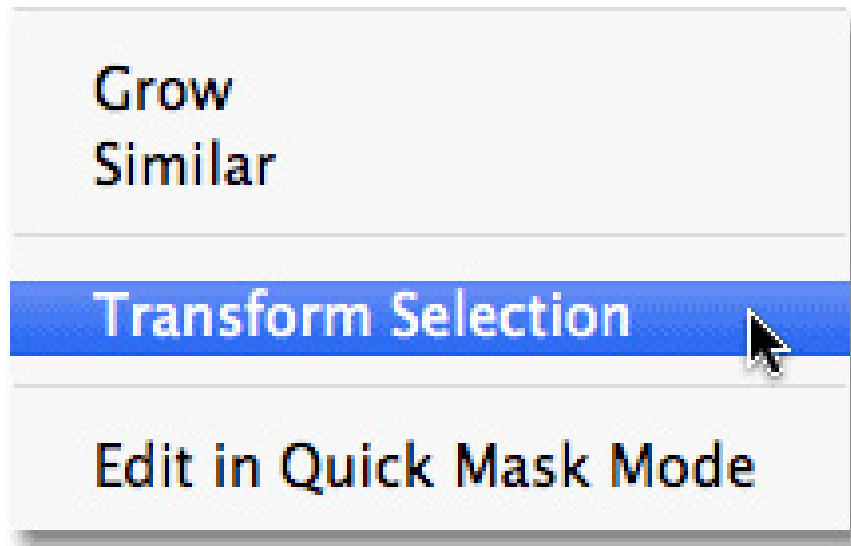
Here, we will apply the **ZigZag** filter again. Press the shortcut **Ctrl + Alt + F (Windows)** or **Command + Option + F (Mac)** to use the most recently used filter set. Specifically this time the effect area will be the center of the 'puddle' just created in the previous step, so switch the **Style** to **Out From Center**, **Ridges** to **4** and **Amount** to **100** :



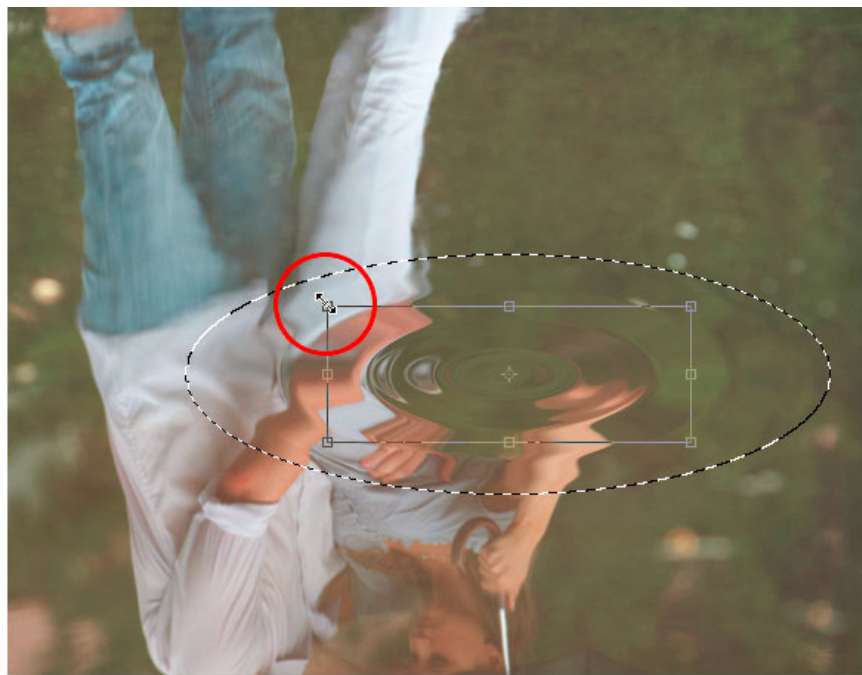
Click **OK** to apply the change and close the **ZigZag** window. We will get the same result as the image below:



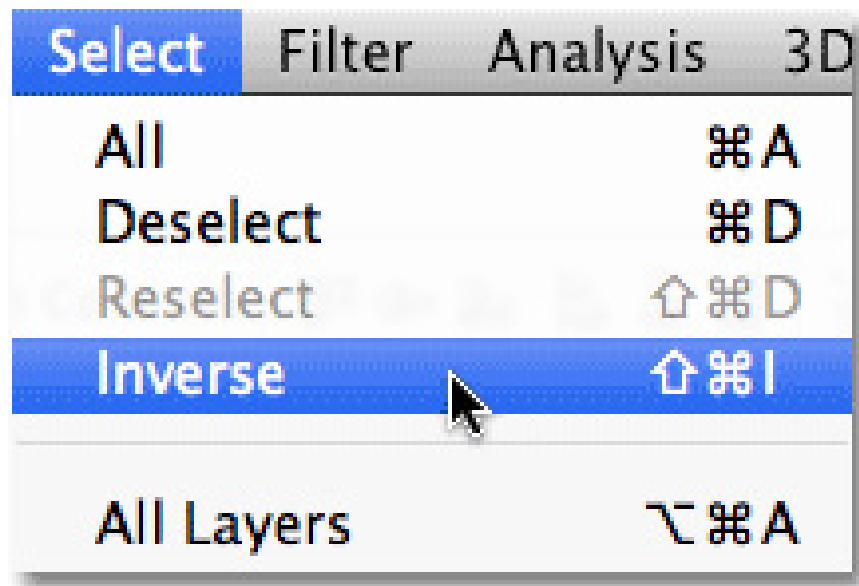
Then, select the **Select> Transform Selection** menu :



This Transform Selection feature is similar to **Photoshop** 's **Free Transform** except the process affects the outer selection. Hold **Shift + Alt (Windows)** or **Shift + Option (Mac)** and select the upper left corner of the selection area (in the form of a rectangle), then drag it to the center of the image until the area remains around 50-60% of the original size. Press **Enter (Windows)** or **Return (Mac)** to apply the change:



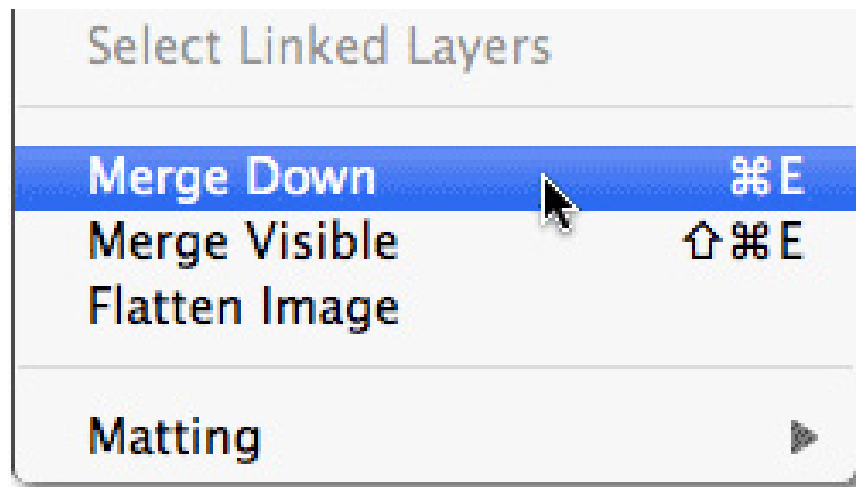
Continue, select **Select> Inverse** menu or use **Shift + Ctrl + I (Windows)** or **Shift + Command + I (Mac)** :



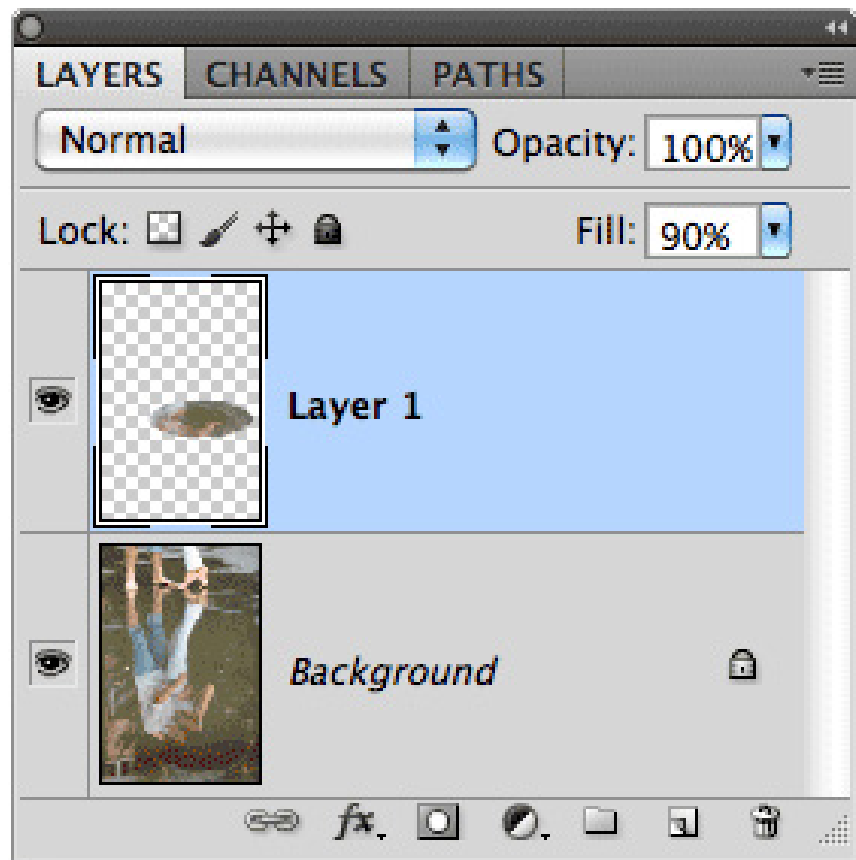
This process will reverse the selection, when we reach this step, we press **Backspace (Windows)** or **Delete (Mac)** to erase all the components around the center of that pool. Press **Ctrl + D (Windows)** or **Command + D (Mac)** to remove the selection:



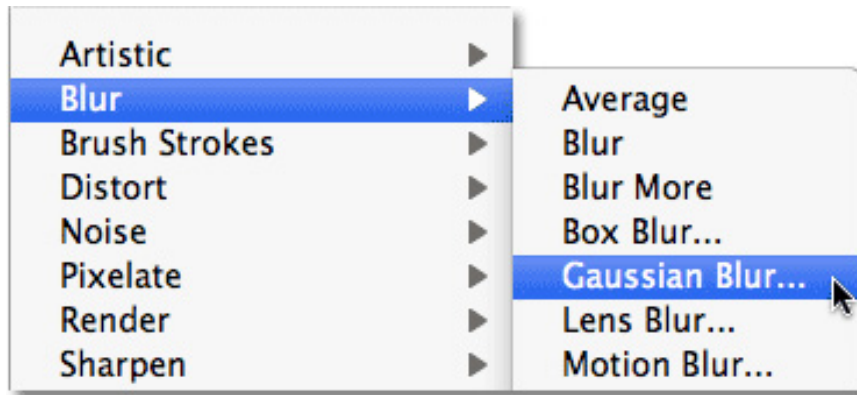
Next, select menu **Layer > Merge Down** or press shortcut **Ctrl + E (Windows)** or **Command + E (Mac)**:



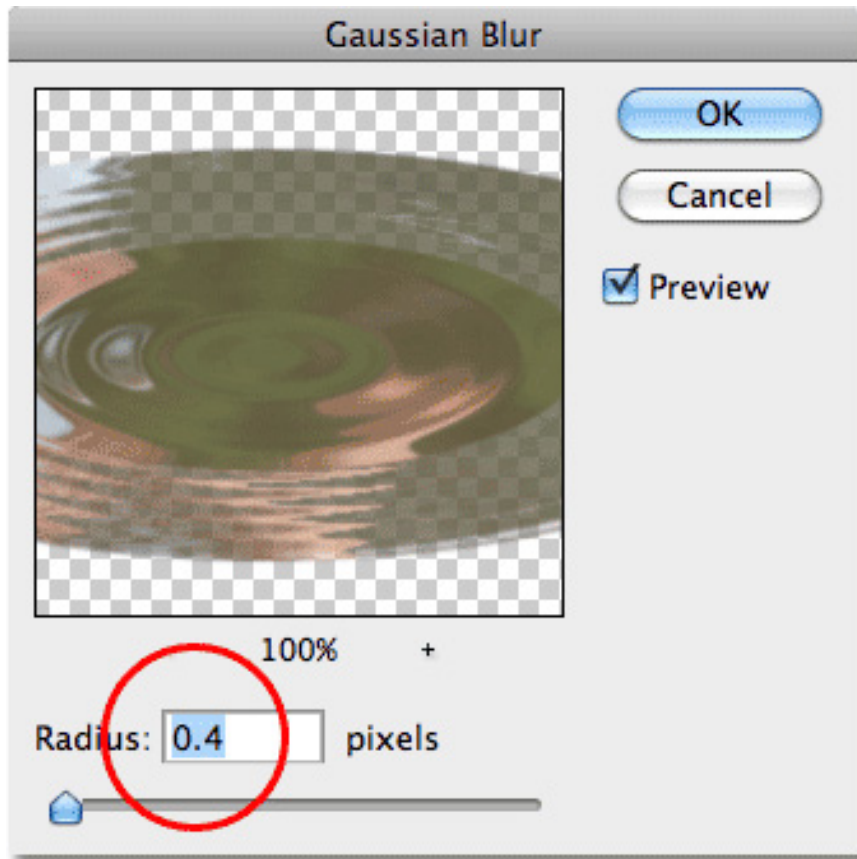
And then, we will have a new layer just created:



However, applying the effect of the upper **ZigZag** filter creates wavy details with many sawtooth images, so the image will not look natural. Make these "soft" parts with **Gaussian Blur** (**Filter**> **Blur**> **Gaussian Blur**):



Photoshop's **Gaussian Blur** panel displays, adjusting the **Radius** value to **0.4**:



Click OK, and the image will look like the following:



Depending on each photo and specific details, you can be flexible in creating more water ripples and applying ZigZag effect so that it is really effective. And below is our result after performing the above process:



Besides, you can refer to video tutorials in other forms here:

Good luck!

You finished reading the article "**How to use Photoshop CS5 - Part 21: Create water ripple effect in photos**" edited by the [TipsMake](#) team. We hope this article has provided you with many useful tech tips and tricks. You can search for similar articles on tips and guides. Thank you for reading and for following us regularly.