

How to add lightsaber effects for free

 Fri, Jul 8 2011 0:23:20 PDT by Patrick Lambert filed under features

This quick tutorial will show you how to do one of the most popular effect everyone who starts working with digital art wants to do: lightsabers! I'll also do it completely in Paint.NET, which is free, so you don't need to buy Photoshop if you don't have it.



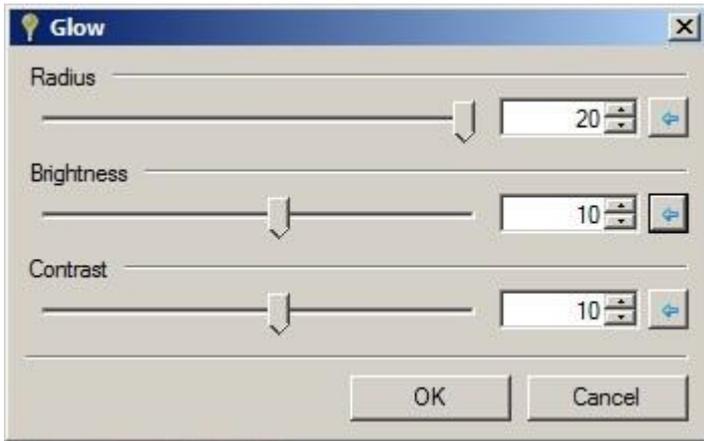
The first thing to do is load the image you want to modify. The higher resolution, the better. Then, create a new layer in the layers window on the bottom right of the screen by clicking on the + button. The next thing you want to do is draw a rectangle over the area where you want your lightsaber to be. Use the color of the lightsaber you want to create, in this case, red.



Now, click on the layer you just created, and go to its properties by clicking on the right most icon at the bottom of the layers window. You should see the properties window appear, which allows you to change the *Opacity* and *Blend Mode*. Change the mode to **Glow**.



Now it's time to apply the effects to your rectangle. In the *Effects* menu, select the *Glow* effect under the *Photo* section. What I do is use a radius of 20, with default brightness and contrast for the first effect.



Then, do this effect again, but drop the radius to 10, raise the brightness and drop the contrast. Do this a third time with radius at 5, then a fourth, at which point you want the radius at the minimum, max brightness and minimum contrast. You should end up with a very nice glow effect, although everything will seem white.



Now you need to adjust the colors. Go to the *Adjustments* menu, and select *Hue / Saturation*. There, change the *Saturation* and *Lightness* to get the desired effect. Based on your background, that may not be enough. What you can also do is duplicate that layer in the layers window, and change the blend mode to **Overlay**, and then reducing the *Opacity*.



Finally, you can easily add some specular light so that it looks like red light is coming from the weapon. Make a new layer, then use the selection tool to fill in some color along the body parts.



From the *Effects* menu, this time go to the *Blurs* option and apply a generous amount of *Gaussian Blur*. After that, all you have to do is play with the *Opacity* of the layer to make it look real.



Images credit: [Tasastock](#)