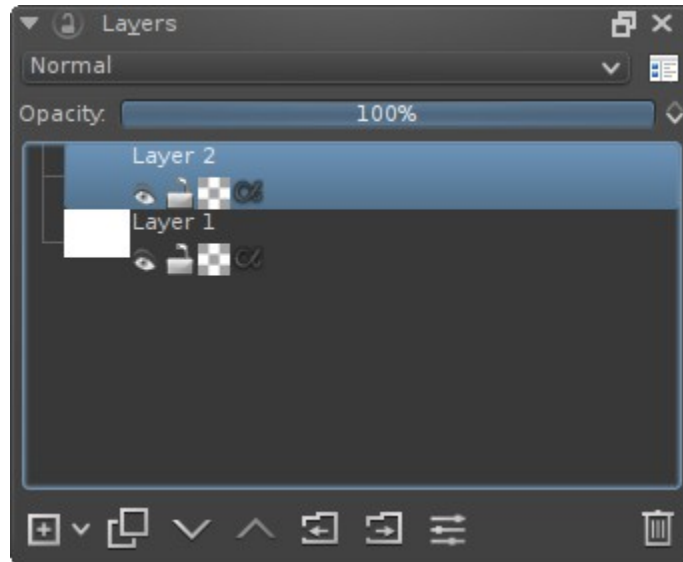


Krita 2.9

02 – The Layer Stack



The layer stack is a very important part to understand, as you can add several kinds of layers with different options to compose your work. There are globally two kinds of items: Layers and Masks. Layers add their content on top of the result from layers below. Masks affect only the result of the layer they are attached to. You can attach any kind of mask to any kind of layer.

On the bottom of the layer docker there's a row of buttons:

- + icon: add a paint layer.
- Little down arrow: choose a layer or mask to add from the list.
- Double-square icon: duplicate selected layer or mask.
- Down arrow: move selected layer down in the stack.
- Up arrow: move selected layer up in the stack.
- Arrow to outside of folder: move selected layers out of the group.
- Arrow to inside of folder: move selected layers inside closest group.
- Properties: access layer properties.

Let's take a quick look at each kind of layer and mask you can add:

- Paint Layer: This is the most common type of layer, used to paint with brushes on pixels.
- Group Layer: You can group several layers together to isolate their compositing and use the result as a single layer in the stack.
- Clone Layer: Duplicate any layer keeping it linked to the origin layer content.

-Vector Layer: This is where you can draw editable vector shapes and text.

-Filter Layer: Apply a filter on the result from layers below. Painting grayscale values on it affect the visibility of the result (black: transparent).

-Fill Layer: Create a layer filled with a single flat color or pattern. Painting grayscale values on it affect the visibility of the result (black: transparent).

-File Layer: Add an external file as a layer. You can't paint on it.

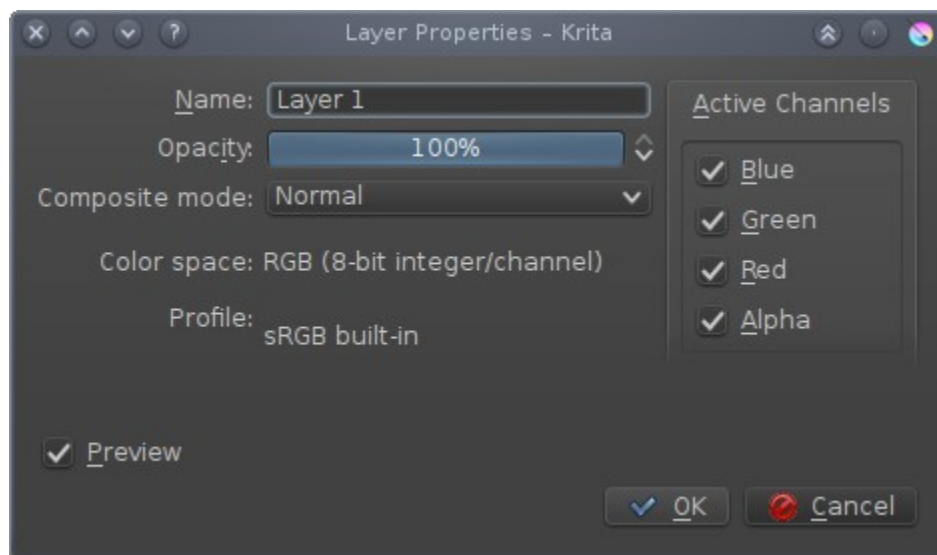
-Transparency Mask: Paint the transparency applied to the content of attached layer, using grayscale values (black: transparent).

-Filter Mask: Apply a filter to the content of attached layer. Painting grayscale values on it affect the visibility of the filter effect (black: not filtered).

-Transform Mask: Only use the transform tool on it to apply non destructive transformation.

-Local Selection: You can store a selection and get it active when attached layer is selected. Also you can paint grayscale values to edit the selection (black: not selected)

There's one more kind of mask that is hidden: in the Select menu, you can activate “Show Global Selection Mask”. Then if you create a selection on any layer without a local selection mask, it will show the global selection mask at the top of the stack. This way you can manage selection state from the layer stack, and also paint grayscale values on it to edit the selection.



Now let's look closer at the layer properties you can find on all kind of layer except on Fill and Filter layers :

-Name: Change the name of the layer.

-Opacity: Change the opacity rate of the layer.

-Composite mode: Choose the blending mode for the layer.

-Color space and profile used by the layer are shown here, but to change those you need to use the menu Layer – Convert layer color space.

-Active channels: these are compositing options. If you disable any of the channel, content from this channel in this layer will not be used when blending the layer in the stack. To disable color channels can be useful for advanced editing techniques, like when using Separate Image feature. To disable Alpha channel can be useful to clip the content of a layer to what's below it in the same layer group (* example at the end of this chapter)

Most of these layer settings are directly available in the layer docker. Double-click on a layer name to edit it. The composite mode drop down list and the opacity slider affect the last selected layer. There are also useful shortcuts on each layer line:

-The eye icon is used to hide/show the layer or mask.

-The locker icon is used to lock a layer or mask to prevent editing it.

-The checkboard icon is used to lock alpha of a layer, preventing to edit its transparency.

-The alpha icon is used to disable the alpha channel on a layer. It has the nickname “inherit alpha”, but it's only a shortcut to disable alpha channel as seen in “Active channels” from layer properties.

-For Local and Global selection, the eye icon show/hide the selection area on the canvas, and the ants circle is used to disable the selection.

For Filter layer and mask, the layer properties let you edit the filter settings.

Same for Fill layer properties where you can change selected color or pattern.

For a description of each composite mode available (which are also available for brush blending mode), see the Composite modes chapter.

* Below an example of layer stack, with a gradient clipped to layers inside a group.



Layers

Normal

Opacity: 100%

- Compositing_group
 - color_on_top-clipped_with_alpha_disabled
 - circle
 - rectangle
 - Background_filled_with_white

Layer icons: +, -, copy, paste, up, down, left, right, align, trash