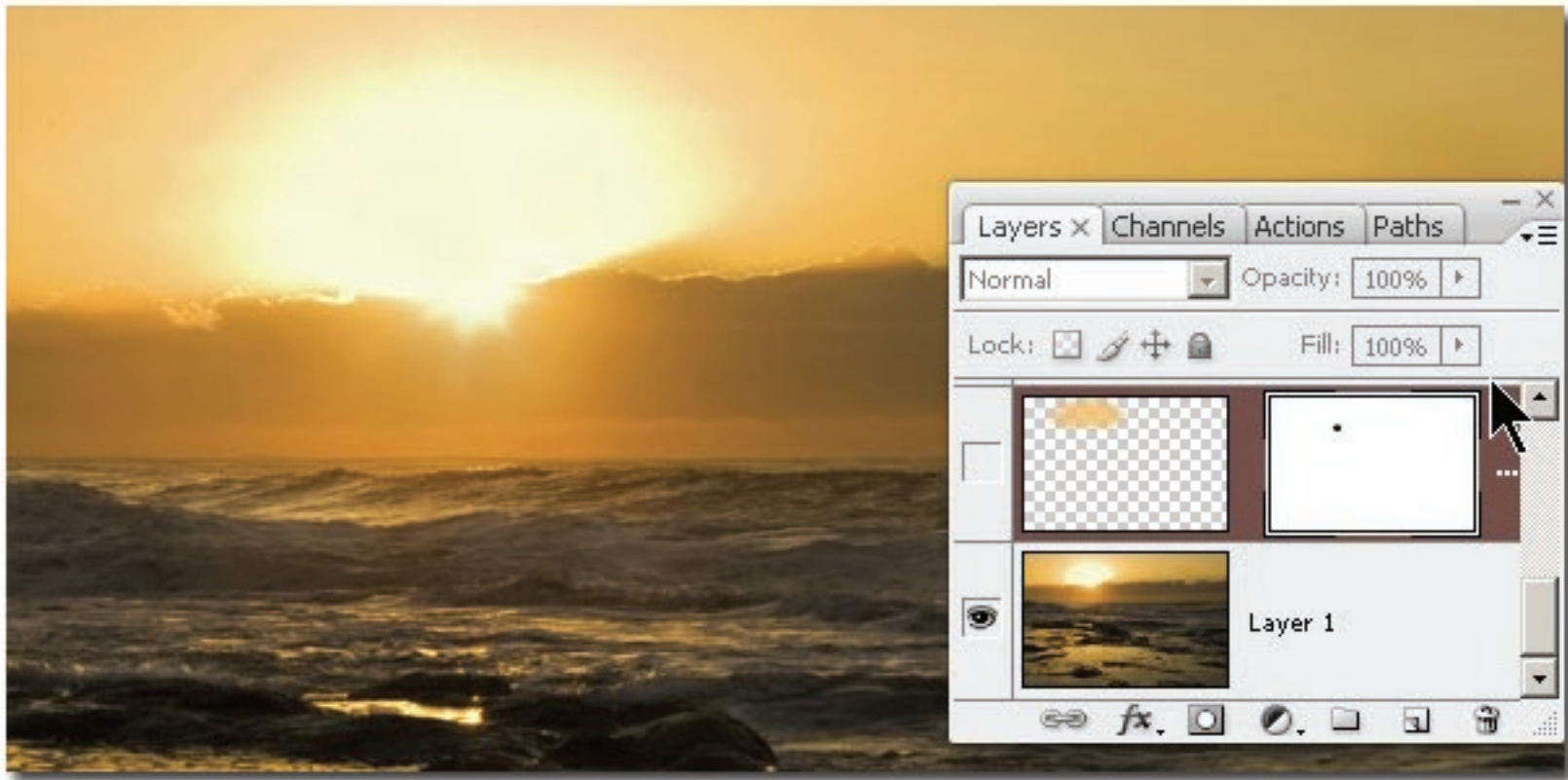
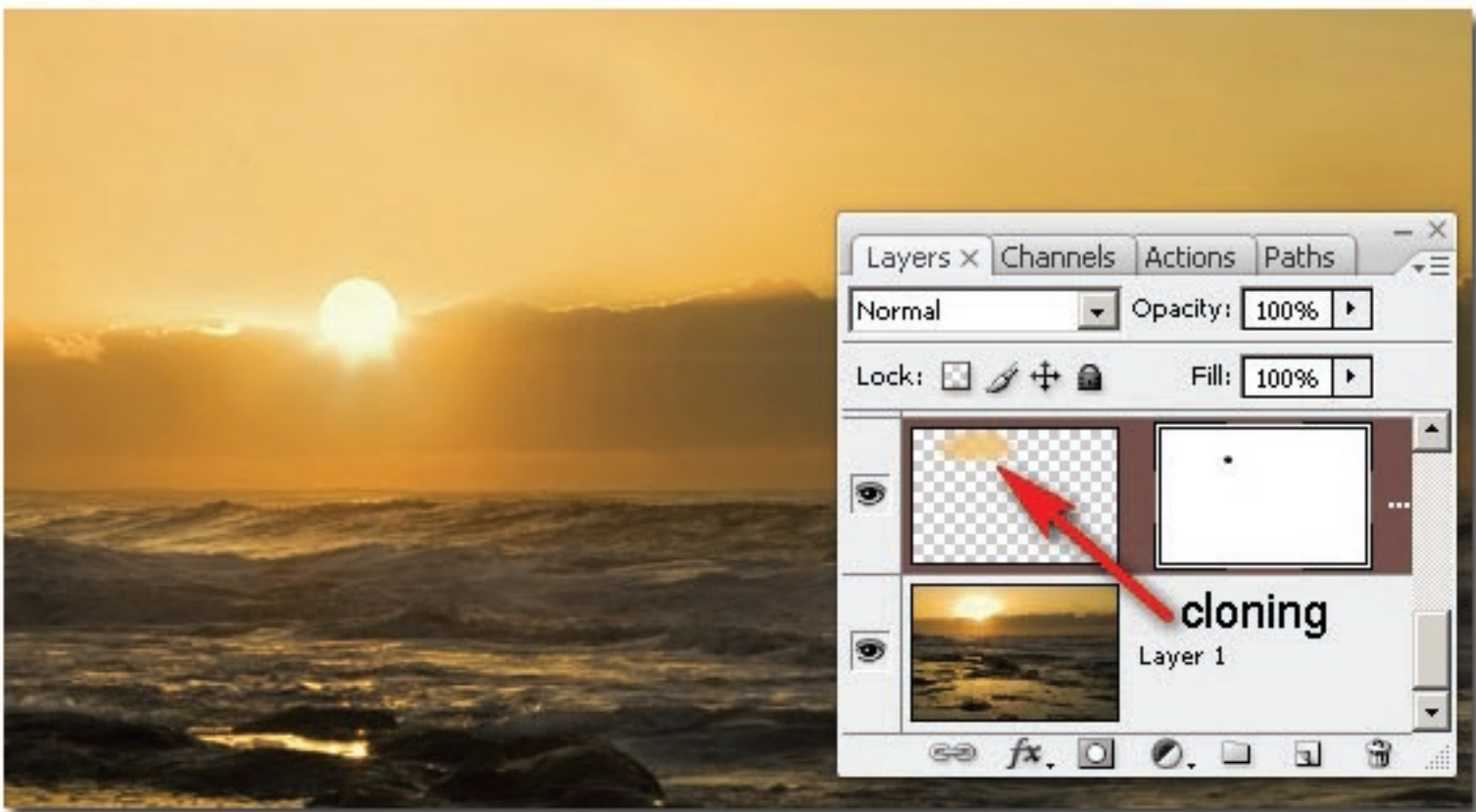


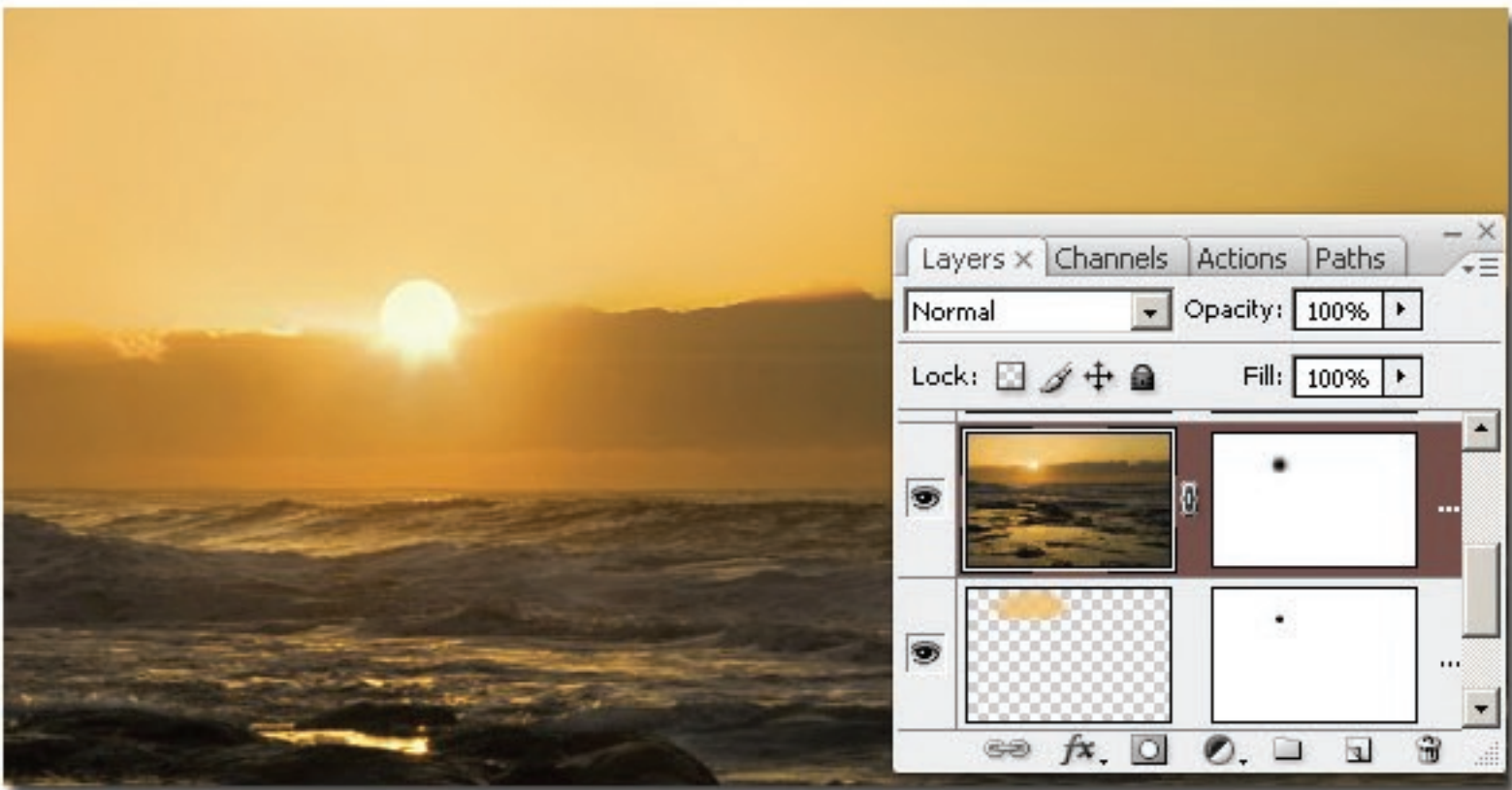
Tutorial: Reducing sun flare



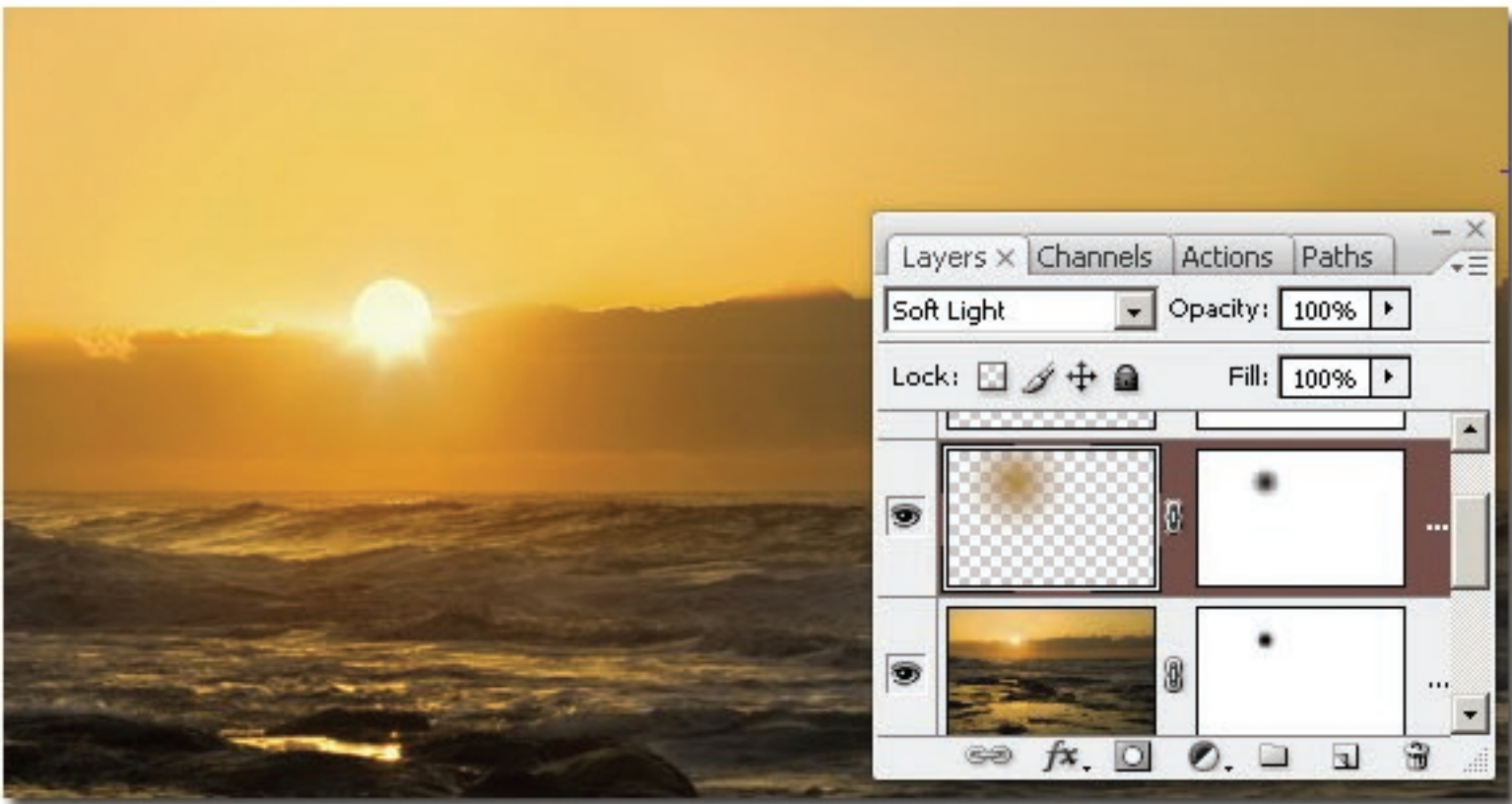
1. Open a blank layer, place a mask on it, and put a black circular spot where you want the sun to appear. A hard round brush will do for this.



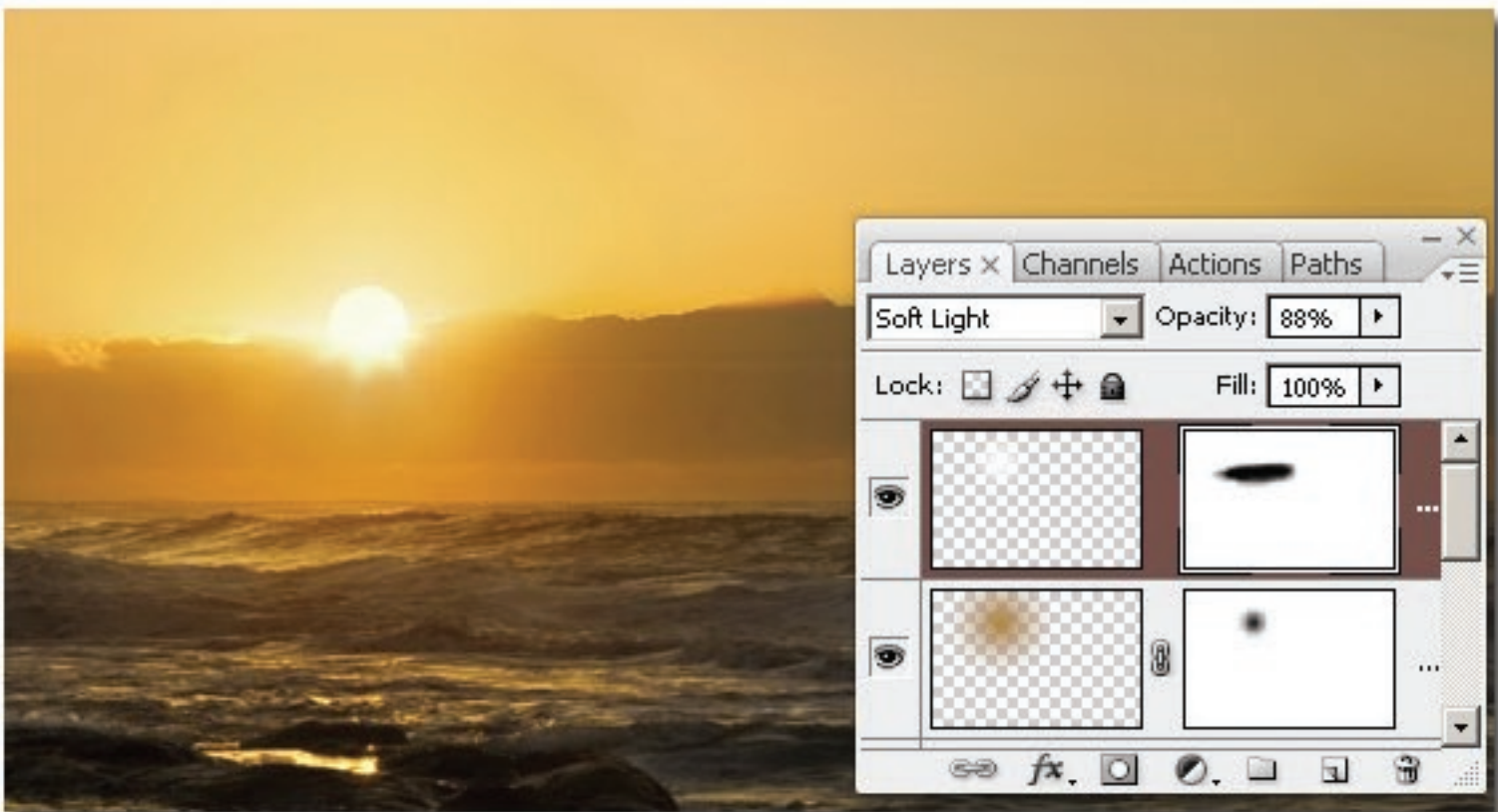
2. Click outside the mask icon so you're working on the layer, and clone from the surrounding sky into the flare area. This is the part that takes some practice to get good results. Use a soft brush and try 10-20% opacity. Try for a smooth transition from the darker sky into the flare area. The mask protects the "sun" you created earlier. If you want the edge of the sun to be blurry, click on the layer mask and blur the black spot you created earlier. Use Gaussian blur.



3. The cloning will probably be a bit uneven. To smooth it out, merge all layers upward (Alt-Ctrl-Shift-E). Roughly select the sky and apply surface blur (in CS2 and subsequent versions of Photoshop). I used a setting of 15/15. If you aren't familiar with radius and threshold, Google for surface blur. It's easy to find tutorials that explain it.



4. This is a refinement, possibly not necessary. To enhance the glow around the sun, open a blank layer and change blend mode to soft light. Sample a darker hue from the sky and apply a radial gradient starting from the center of the sun. You can see on the layer mask about how large I made it. Put a mask on this layer and hit the sun with a black brush so the gradient doesn't apply there.



5. I thought the flare above the sun needed to be brighter to match the flare below. To create this, open another blank layer, change blend mode to soft light, and apply a white circular gradient, as in the previous step. Place a mask on the layer and paint with black to remove this gradient effect beneath the sun (below the edge of the mountain). Adjust layer opacity as needed.