Creating Old Paper/Parchment in Gimp

By Rob A>

Start with new image of about 800x600 or whatever size you need, RGB, white background.

Go to Layers tab, and insert 4 new transparent layers, and name them like this:

Select all (ctrl-A), then reduce the selection by 40 (Selection->Shrink->40). Now distress the selection (Script-Fu-Selection-Distress). You might have to play a bit to get it to look OK for your image size: You can also get the selection less rectangular if you start with a selection made with the lasso tool:

Select the paper Layer and fill this selection with a tan colour. I used 208, 193, 162. Now a texture...Select the texture layer and apply Filter->Render->Clouds->Plasma. Here I used 2.5 for the turbulence:
De-saturate the layer (Layers->Colors->Desaturate). Now apply a Filter->Map->Bump Map using the texture layer as the bump map source. I use Linear and 5 and checked compensate for darkening, but play to get the look you want:

Change the texture layer mode to overlay.
Select the blots layer, set the default color (black foreground) and then stroke the selection (edit -> stroke) 40px was used here, then Gaussian blur of 100px. (Filter->Blur->Gaussian Blur). Don’t worry about the ugly black border; it will disappear later.

Pick a grunge brush (search deviant art http://www.deviantart.com/ for grunge brush gimp if you don’t have one), and black, then mess it up a bit with the paint brushes. Play with the opacity of the brushed, use various brushes to make splotches, shadow marks, etc.
Then change the blots layer mode to overlay. If it is too light duplicate the blot layer keeping the copy in overlay too. (I did it here):
You can also add creases by drawing a line, applying a Gaussian blur, then drawing a thin sharp line down the middle of the blur. to it in the blots layer, or on a layer of their own, just setting to overlay as well:

![Image of a creased paper texture]

**TIP:** To draw straight lines in GIMP, click once with any tool then holding the shift key. Click again somewhere else and it will draw a straight line from the first click using whatever tool is selected. It also works for the eraser, smudge, dodge/burn tools too! Keep holding shift and clicking to draw connected straight lines.

Now go to the still empty fuzz layer, and do another apply Filter->Render->Clouds->Plasma (randomize) then desaturate.

Now select the Paintbrush tool, black ink, circle-fuzzy-19 and stroke the selection with the paintbrush at about 60% opacity. This is to give the edge a more defined darkness.

(And GIMP crashed here without me having saved...) so repeating my steps to this point gets me to:
Finishing touches are to add a drop shadow using script-fu:
To use paper like this, just take a map or whatever, put it below the fuzz layer, and set the blend mode to multiply or burn or overlay depending on the map. Play with all the options..... Adjust the various layer opacities until it looks good.

You can also use a Script-fu->Décor->coffee stain to get a spill effect. It is good to blur the source map under a spill like this to look like ink running. Also erase a few holes on the creases, and randomly erase the drawing with a low opacity eraser.

Here is a final example. (I distressed the edge a second time to make it more torn looking):