

# Blurred Backgrounds

## Blurred Backgrounds

by Jenifer Juris

Learn how to quickly create a dreamy background that you can use to highlight your favorite quotes, phrases, scriptures, and songs.

One of the things about being online with social media is that you see gobs of quotes and phrases all over the place. For me, many of them are somewhat empty but every once in awhile, I'll come across one that jumps out at me and I feel the need to save it somewhere so I can reference it again. And these words I've saved, are ones I am compelled to share with those around me and I found a way to do so that makes them easy to read while still being beautiful at the same time.

So, in case you enjoy the words I've used below, I've included a [free download](#) of these word art files for you to use on your own blurry backgrounds.

### Step One: Open a Photo

- Open a photo (File > Open) that has colors you enjoy.
- In the Menu Bar, choose File > Duplicate. (Photoshop: Choose Image > Duplicate.)
- In the dialog box, click OK.
- Close the original photo (File > Close).

### Step Two: Crop The Photo

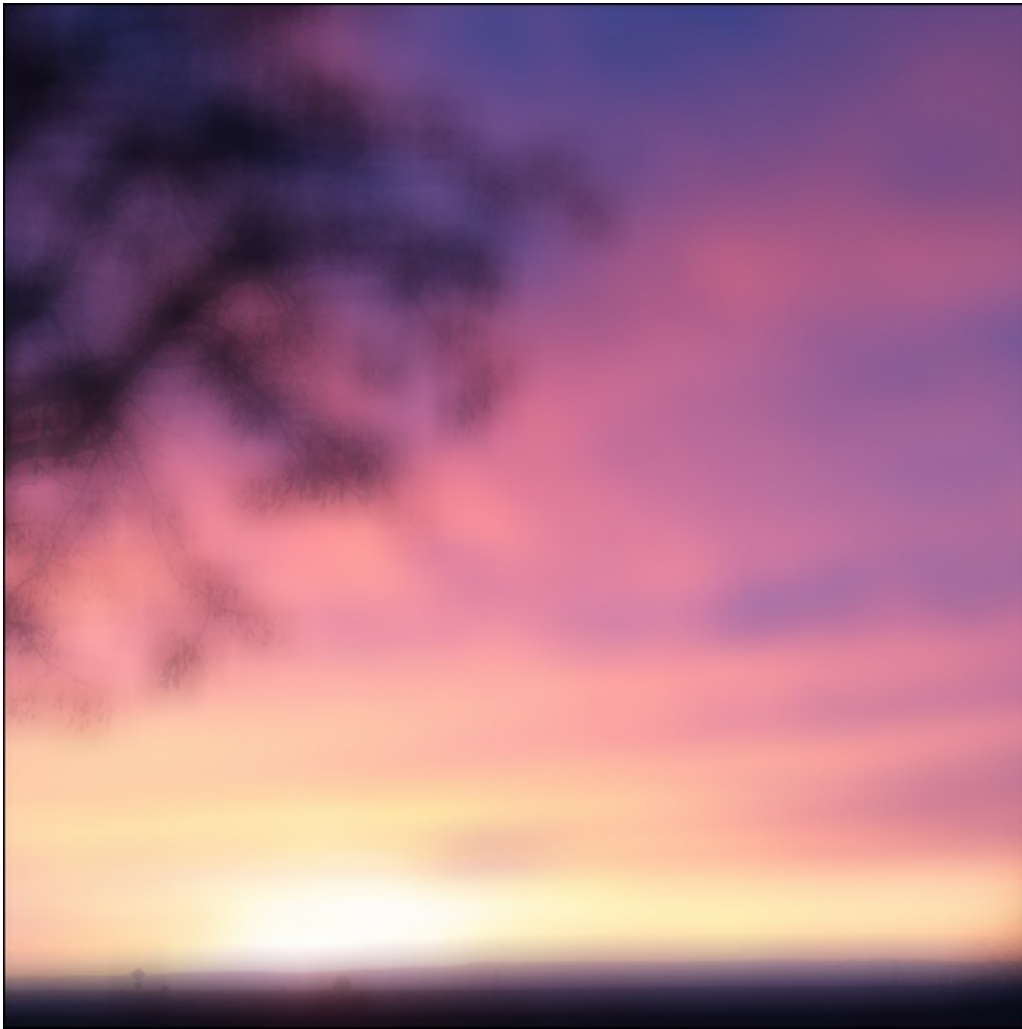
- Get the Rectangular Marquee tool.
- In the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon. Set the Feather to 0 and the Aspect to Normal. (Photoshop: Set the Style to Normal.)
- On the document, click and drag out a selection around the portion of the photo you wish to use. To constrain proportions, hold down the Shift key while dragging. To reposition while dragging, press and hold the Space bar.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Image > Crop.



### **Step Three: Blur the Photo**

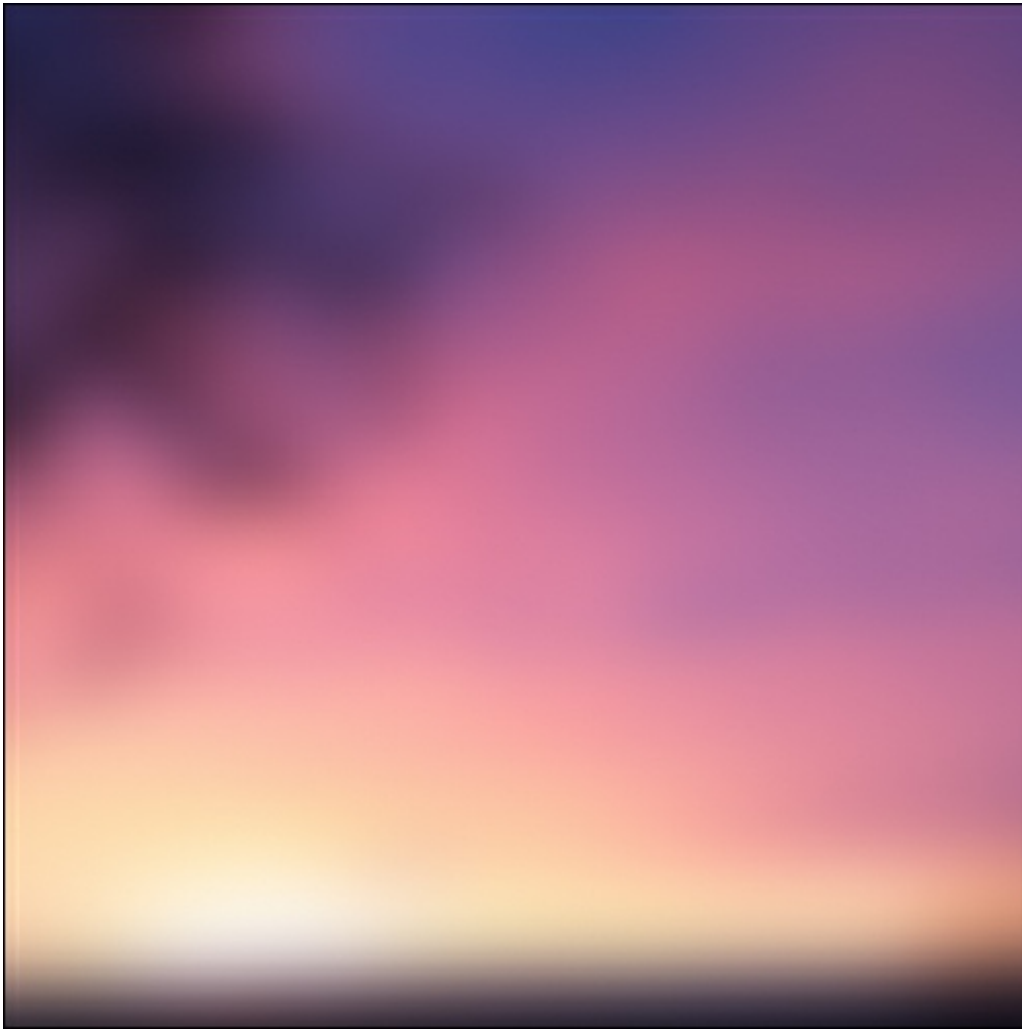
Adobe Photoshop (CS6 and earlier) and Photoshop Elements:

- In the Menu Bar, choose Filter > Blur > Surface Blur.
- In the dialog box, set the Radius to 100 and the Threshold to 255.
- Click OK.



The above image is what my photo looks like after running the Surface Blur filter once. If you want to achieve a more dreamy background, you can run the same filter multiple times. (Doing that, will give your photo a look that more closely resembles the Field Blur option found in Photoshop CC discussed below.) Depending on your photo and the look you are going for, you may decide to use more or less of the Surface Blur. Play with the numbers and see which effect you like best.

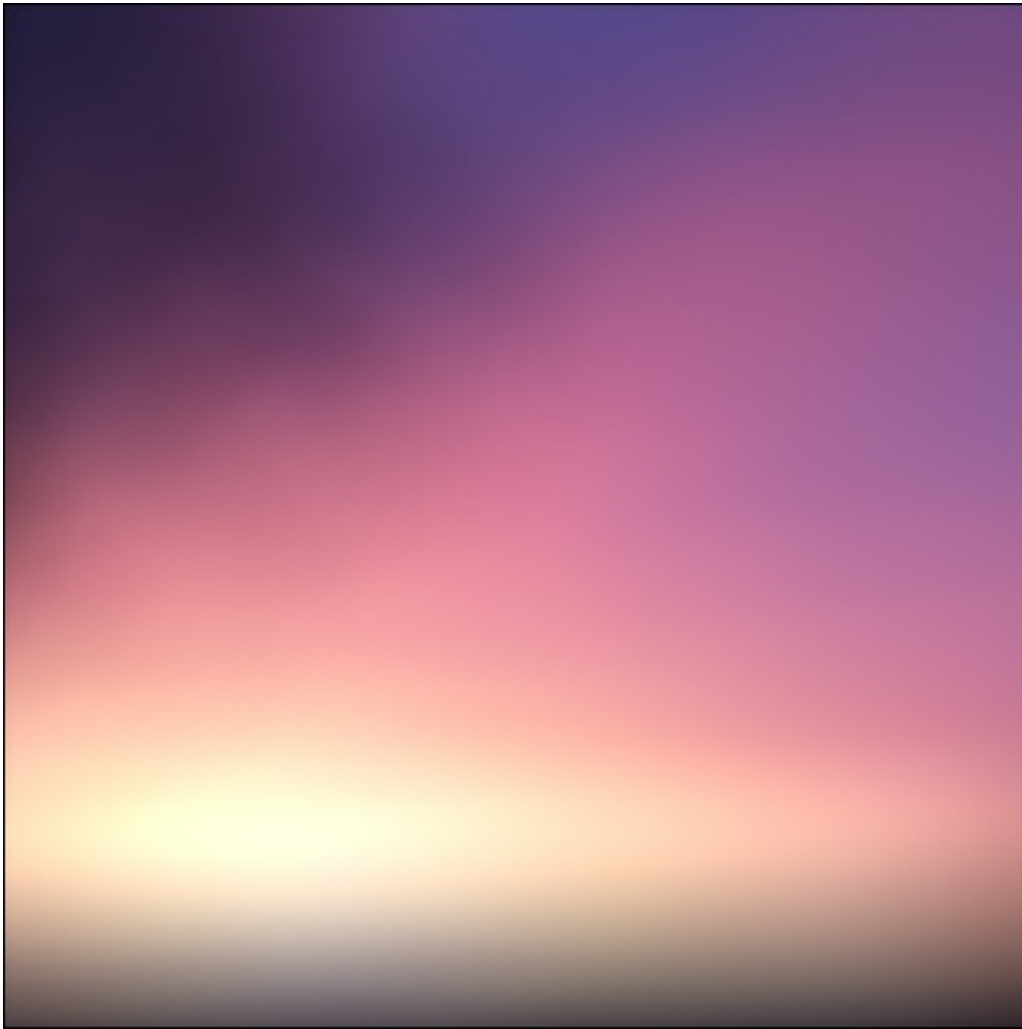
Here is what my photo looks like after running the Surface Blur filter five times:



Note: After running this filter many times, I found that after the fifth time, it didn't really change much. While your photo might vary slightly, I'm guessing this will be similar for you, as well.

**Adobe Photoshop CC Only:**

- In the Menu Bar, choose Filter > Blur Gallery > Field Blur.
- In the Blur Tools, set the Field Blur number to 500 or a lower number if you prefer.
- In the Blur Effects, set the Light Bokeh to the strength of your choice.
- Feel free to play with the other Bokeh effects to get a blurred background that you enjoy.
- In the Options Bar, Click OK. (Note: Running this filter will take a LONG time. Like go to the restroom and then get yourself a cup of coffee long time. I wouldn't recommend using it if you have too many programs open and running while you're doing this step.)

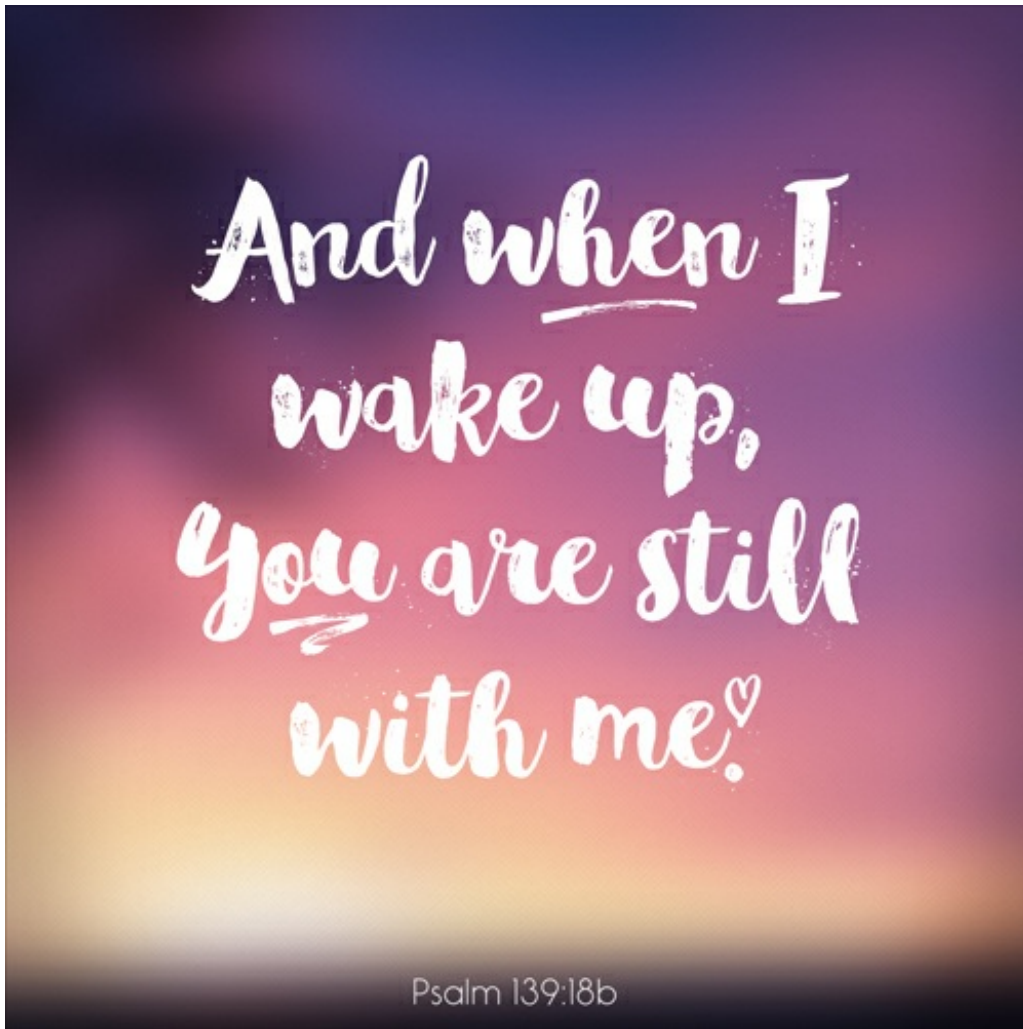


### **Take It A Step Further:**

Now that your background is ready, it's time to be creative!

- Add text to showcase your favorite words.
- If you like, use a Vignette around the border.
- Consider using a font ornament or two to add style to your type.
- Blend the photo into a light background paper for added texture.
- Add a stroke outline for a border.

Here's my final image using the Surface Blur Filter:



Here's the final image using the Photoshop CC Blur Gallery Field Blur:

And when I  
wake up,  
you are still  
with me.

Psalm 139:18b

Some more examples:



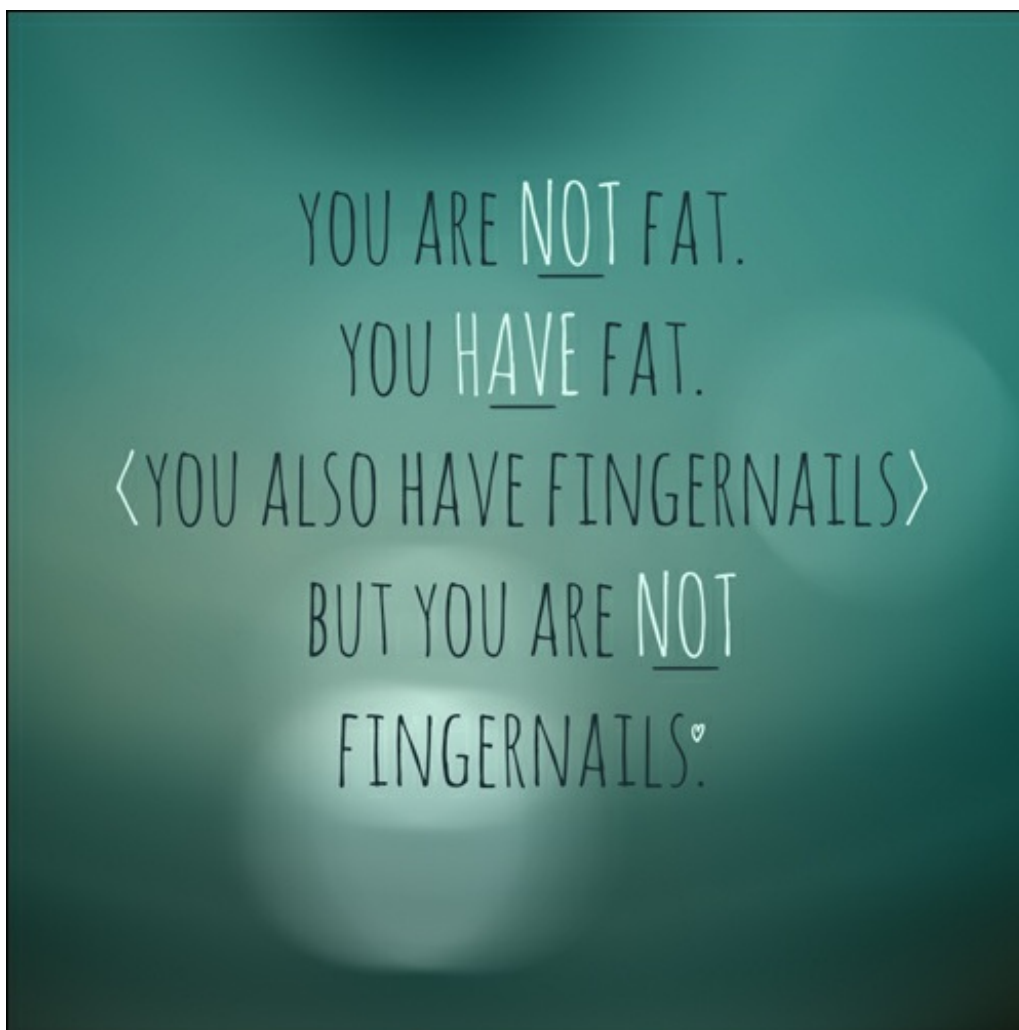


For the above image, I used the same Surface Blur filter but I brought down the Radius to 53 and I only ran it once. It was just enough blur to make my words legible.





For the above image, I again used the Surface Blur filter once with the Radius lowered to 53. Because of the quote referring to sunsets, I wanted to make sure you could tell my photo was of the sky just after sunset so I didn't go too crazy with the blurring here.



For this last image, I used the Blur Gallery Field Blur filter in Photoshop CC. It might be hard to believe but this photo started as a close up shot of my teal dutch oven. The flash reflecting off of the lid is what gave me the light bokeh you see.

The beauty about using the blur filters is that your photos don't have to be perfect. So dig into your photo stash and have fun creating some beautiful images and don't be afraid to share them. The world can always use more beauty and positive words in it. Just make sure to give credit when necessary. And in case you enjoy these words as much as I do (and didn't see it at the top), I've included them as a [free download](#) to go with this tutorial.

#### Credits:

Layouts and Photos: Jenifer Juris

Tutorial: Blurred Backgrounds by Jenifer Juris

Extras: Cardstock Blank Canvas by Susie Roberts

Fonts: Glamour Brush, The Treasured Years Ornaments, Amatic SC, Monopoly, Mulberry Script Pro, Modern No. 20

Software: Photoshop Elements 14, Adobe Photoshop CC

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