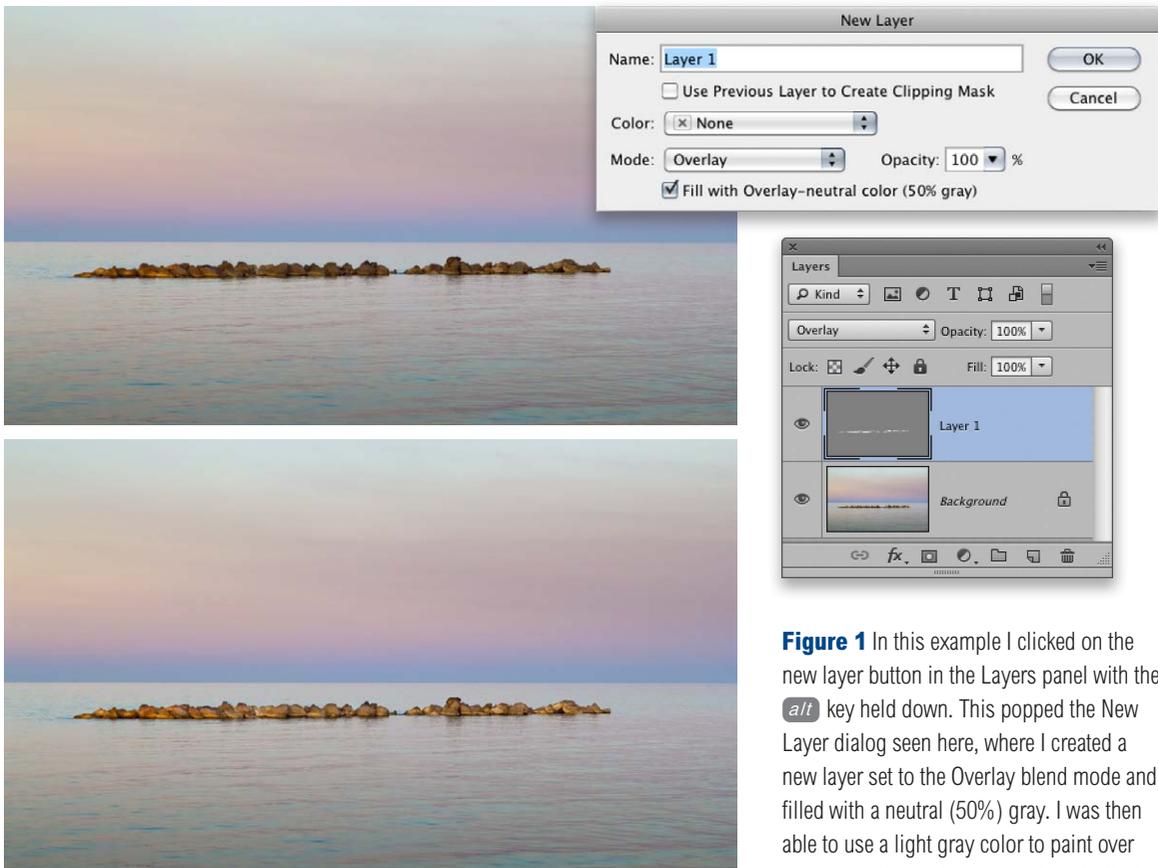# Overlay mode dodging and burning

Dodging and burning in Overlay mode

You can also use a neutral Overlay mode layer to carry out dodging and burning. To do this, add an empty new layer above an image layer and set the blend mode to Overlay (or follow the instructions in Figure 1). If you paint using neutral gray, this will have no impact on the image layer or layers below. If you paint with anything lighter than a mid gray you apply a lightening adjustment, and if you paint with anything darker than a mid gray you apply a darkening adjustment. So, by switching back and forth between painting with white or black, using a low opacity brush, you can apply dodge and burn adjustments to an image using just a single image layer. You also retain the ability to continue painting with black or white to keep on editing the dodge and burn effects.

Figure 1 In this example I clicked on the new layer button in the Layers panel with the `alt` key held down. This popped the New Layer dialog seen here, where I created a new layer set to the Overlay blend mode and filled with a neutral (50%) gray. I was then able to use a light gray color to paint over the rocks in the water in order to selectively lighten them.