

Adobe Photoshop CS4

Part 3: Layouts and Masking

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

Version 1.0

Fall 2009

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Introduction

Adobe Photoshop CS4, an industry standard, pushes the boundaries of digital imaging and editing. While widely used by professional photographers as well as web and graphic designers, Photoshop can also provide a creative outlet for amateurs, enthusiasts, and artists alike.

Photoshop is not just used for photographic image editing. It can also be used to create graphic layouts, montages, contact sheets, and websites. The following lessons show various and creative ways to present imagery.

Downloading the Data Files

This handout includes sample data files that can be used for hands-on practice. The data files are stored in a self-extracting archive. The archive must be downloaded and executed in order to extract the data files.

- The data files used with this handout are available for download at <http://www.calstatela.edu/its/training/datafiles/photoshopcs4p3.exe>.
- Instructions on how to download and extract the data files are available at <http://www.calstatela.edu/its/docs/download.php>.

Presenting Images in Various Ways

Photoshop allows users to share their images with a large audience using common presentation methods such as contact sheets, web photo galleries, and photographic layouts.


Creating Contact Sheets

Professional photographers use contact sheets to show their clients several images from a photo shoot at one time. Contact sheets can also be used to create a CD or portfolio cover as a way of indexing images. Users can create a PDF version of a contact sheet directly from Bridge CS4, Photoshop's file browser.

To start Bridge CS4 from the Start menu:

1. Click the **Start** button, point to **All Programs**, point to **Adobe Design Premium CS4**, and select **Adobe Bridge CS4**.

To start Bridge CS4 from within Photoshop CS4:

1. Click the **Launch Bridge** button  on the **Application** bar (see Figure 1). Or, click the **File** menu and select **Browse in Bridge** (see Figure 2).

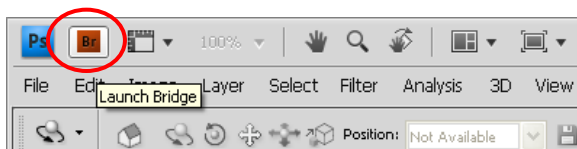


Figure 1 – Launch Bridge Button

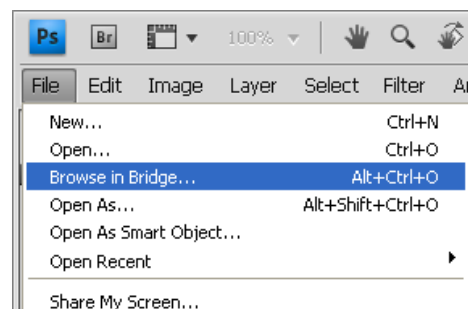


Figure 2 – File Menu When Selecting Browse in Bridge

To create a contact sheet using Bridge CS4:

1. In the **Folders** panel, navigate to the data files folder and select the **100CANON** folder (see Figure 3).

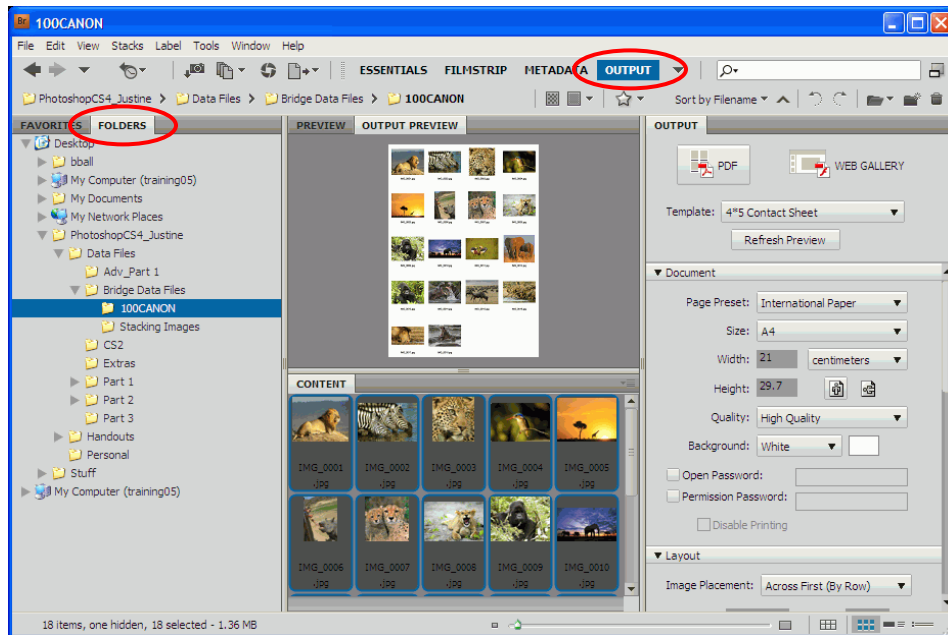


Figure 3 – Bridge CS4 Window

2. Click the **Edit** menu and select **Select All**.
3. Click the **Window** menu, point to **Workspace**, and select **Output**. Or, click the **Output** workspace button on the **Application** bar (see Figure 3). The **Output** panel displays on the right side of the window (see Figure 4).
4. In the **Output** panel, click the **PDF** button (see Figure 4).



Figure 4 – Output Panel When PDF is Selected

5. From the **Template** list, select **4*5 Contact Sheet** (see Figure 4).

NOTE: The **Document** section of the **Output** panel allows you to set the paper size, quality, and background color of the contact sheet. The **Layout** section is used for setting the number of rows and columns and the page margins.

6. Click the **Refresh Preview** button to see a preview of the contact sheet in the **Output Preview** panel (see Figure 4).
7. To generate and save the contact sheet as a PDF file, scroll down to the **Watermark** section of the **Output** panel, select the **View PDF After Save** check box, and then click the **Save** button.
8. In the **Save** dialog box, enter a file name and specify a location to save the file (e.g., Desktop or My Pictures folder), and then click the **Save** button.

NOTE: To print the contact sheet, you can use either Adobe Acrobat or Photoshop.

Creating a Web Photo Gallery

Bridge CS4 makes it easy for users to create a web photo gallery, a website that features a home page with thumbnail images and gallery pages with full-size images.

To create a web photo gallery:

1. In the **Output** panel, click the **Web Gallery** button (see Figure 5).

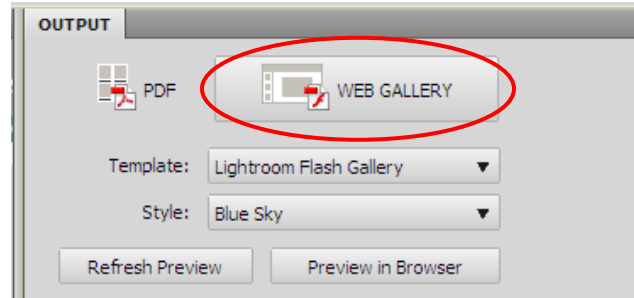


Figure 5 – Output Panel When Web Gallery is Selected

2. From the **Template** list, select **Lightroom Flash Gallery** (see Figure 5).
3. From the **Style** list, select **Blue Sky** (see Figure 5).
4. Click the **Refresh Preview** button to see a preview of the gallery in the **Output Preview** panel. Or, click the **Preview in Browser** button to preview it in a web browser as an actual website.

NOTE: To customize the text that appears on web photo gallery pages, use the **Site Info** section of the **Output** panel. To change the color scheme of a gallery, use the **Color Palette** section. To change the layout and appearance of a gallery, use the **Appearance** section.

NOTE: The options available in the **Output** panel depend on the web photo gallery template that is selected. For example, the option to change the thumbnail size is available when using the **Left Filmstrip** template, but not when using the **HTML Gallery** template.

5. To save the gallery, scroll down to the **Create Gallery** section of the **Output** panel, select the **Save to Disk** option, and then click the **Browse** button (see Figure 6).
6. In the **Choose a Folder** dialog box, select **Desktop**, and then click the **OK** button.
7. In the **Gallery Name** box, type **African Safari** (see Figure 6).
8. Click the **Save** button.

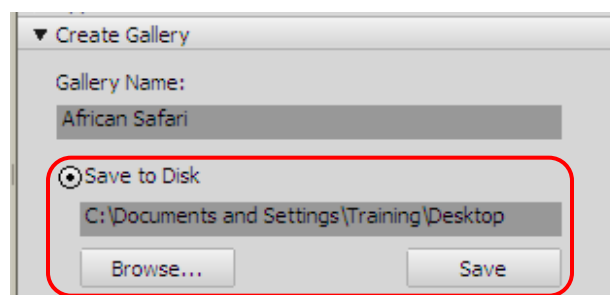


Figure 6 – Create Gallery Section of the Output Panel

NOTE: In order to view the photo gallery online, you must first upload it to a web server.

Making Posters

Creating a photographic layout is an art form in itself. The following examples are just a few ways in which individuals can creatively present their images.

Creating a One Image Poster Layout

With the onset of digital photography, people are producing massive amounts of images. Sometimes, a person captures an image that stands out from the rest. The following lesson covers how to create a new Photoshop file, move an image from one file to another, resize an object within a layer, and add a layer style and text.

To create a new Photoshop file:

1. Open **Photoshop CS4**.
2. Click the **File** menu and select **New**. The **New** dialog box opens (see Figure 7).
3. Click the **Preset** arrow and select **Custom** from the list.

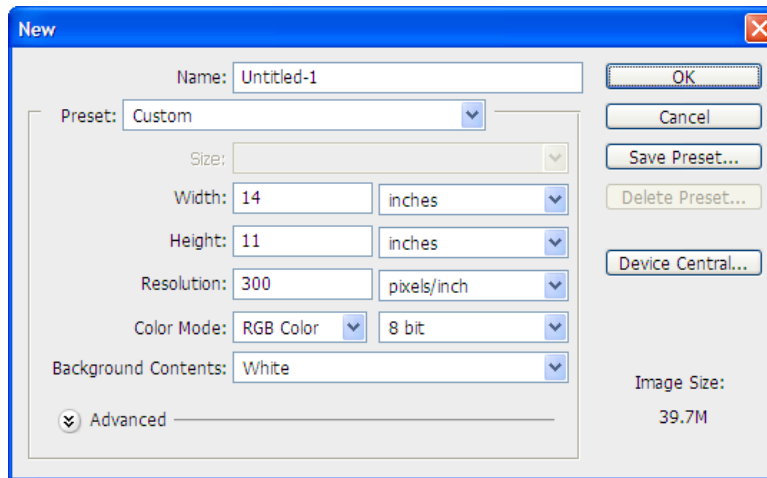


Figure 7 – New Dialog Box

4. Type **14** in the **Width** box and **11** in the **Height** box. Make sure the units are set to **inches** (see Figure 7).
5. Type **300** in the **Resolution** box. Make sure the unit is set to **pixels/inch** (see Figure 7).
6. Leave the **Color Mode** set to **RGB Color** and **8 bit**.
7. Leave the **Background Contents** set to **White**.
8. When finished, click the **OK** button.

To transfer an image from one file to another:

1. Open the **using_one_image.psd** file.
2. Drag the file's image tab away from the other tab to float the image in a window (see Figure 8).

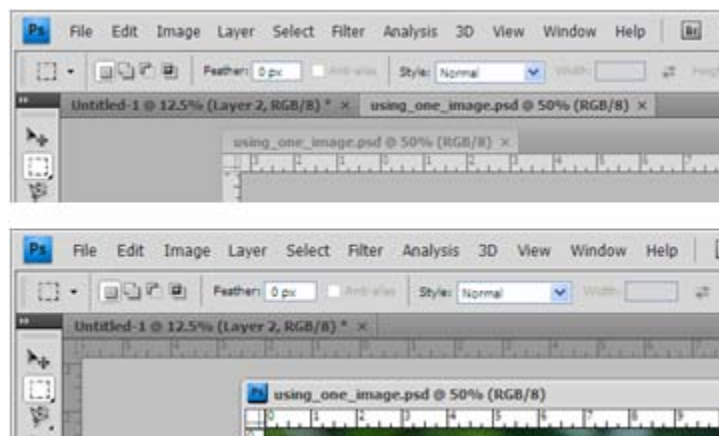



Figure 8 – Floating an Image Window

3. Select the **Move** tool  in the **Tools** panel.
4. Drag the image from the **using_one_image.psd** window onto the canvas of the **Untitled-1** file. Or, drag the layer with the image from the **Layers** panel of the **using_one_image.psd** file onto the canvas of the **Untitled-1** file.

NOTE: The **Untitled-1** file should now have two layers in the **Layers** panel (see Figure 9).

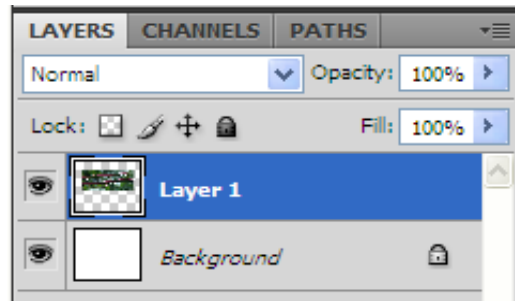


Figure 9 – Layers Panel

5. Close the **using_one_image.psd** file.

NOTE: Another way to insert an image from one file into another is to click the **File** menu and select **Place**, and then select the desired image file from the **Place** dialog box.

To resize an object in a layer:

1. Select the **Layer 1** layer in the **Layers** panel of the **Untitled-1** file (see Figure 9).
2. Click the **Edit** menu and select **Free Transform**.
3. Hold down the **Shift** key and drag a corner of the image out to the desired size (see Figure 10).

NOTE: Holding down the **Shift** key while resizing keeps the original proportions of the image intact.



Figure 10 – Free Transform

4. Press the **Enter** key. Or, click the **Commit** button  on the **Options** bar.
5. In the **Layers** panel, hold down the **Shift** key and click to select both layers.
6. Click the **Align horizontal centers** button  on the **Options** bar (see Figure 11).

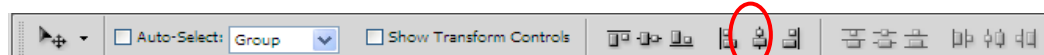


Figure 11 – Move Tool Options Bar

To add a layer style:

1. In the **Layers** panel, select the **Background** layer.
2. Click the **Layer** menu, point to **New**, and select **Layer**. The **New Layer** dialog box opens (see Figure 12).

NOTE: To name the new layer, type the desired name in the **Name** box.

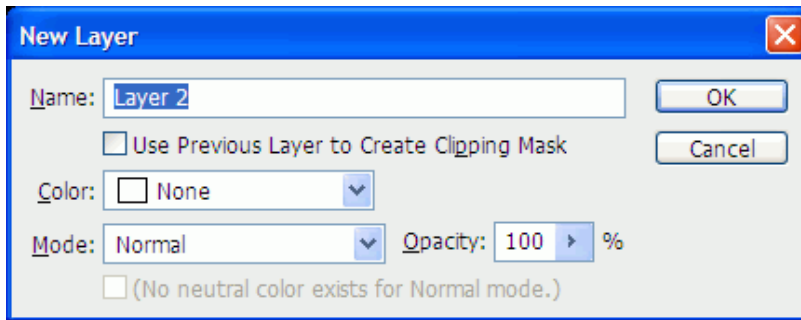


Figure 12 – New Layer Dialog Box

3. Click the **OK** button.

NOTE: The **Layers** panel should now have three layers in the following order (see Figure 13).

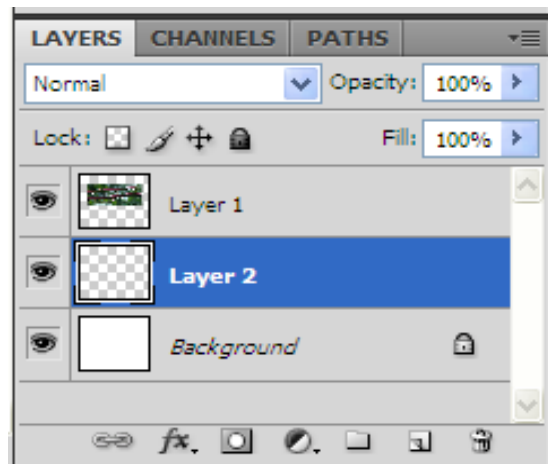


Figure 13 – Layer Order


4. Make sure the **Layer 2** layer is selected in the **Layers** panel.
5. Select the **Rectangular Marquee** tool  in the **Tools** panel.
6. Drag a rectangular selection about half an inch larger than the image (see Figure 14).



Figure 14 – Rectangular Marquee Selection

7. Click the **Edit** menu and select **Fill**. The **Fill** dialog box opens (see Figure 15).
8. Under **Contents**, click the **Use** arrow and select **White** from the list.
9. Click the **OK** button.
10. Click the **Select** menu and select **Deselect**.
11. With the **Layer 2** layer selected, click the **Layer** menu, point to **Layer Style**, and select **Inner Glow** (see Figure 16). The **Layer Style** dialog box opens (Figure 17).

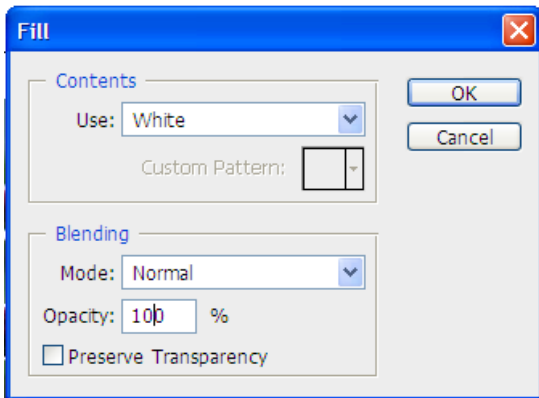


Figure 15 – Fill Dialog Box

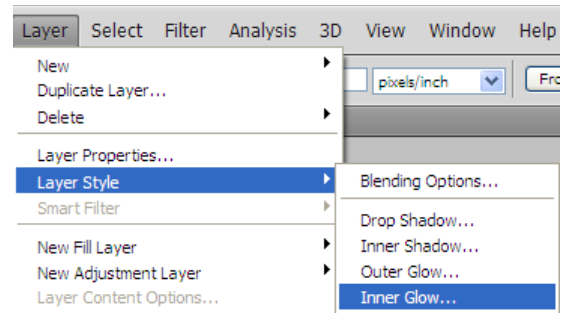


Figure 16 – Layer Menu When Selecting Inner Glow Layer Style

12. In the **STRUCTURE** section, click the color swatch and change the color of the glow to black in the **Color Picker** dialog box (see Figure 17).
13. Click the **Blend Mode** arrow and select **Normal** from the list.
14. Drag the **Opacity** slider to **20%**.
15. Drag the **Size** slider to **10** pixels.

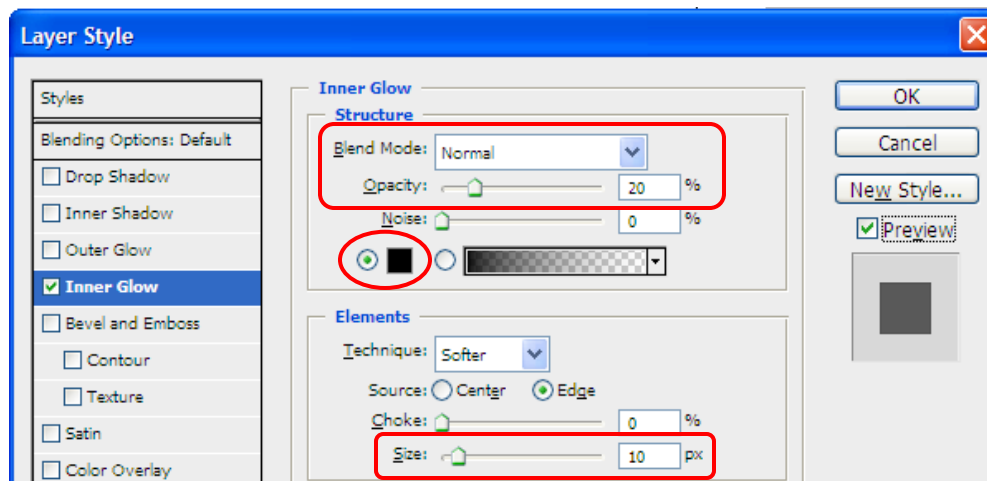


Figure 17 – Layer Style Dialog Box

16. Click the **OK** button.

To add text to a layout:

1. Select the **Text tool** **T** in the **Tools** panel.
2. On the **Options** bar, select **Trajan Pro** as the font type and **36 pt** as the font size (see Figure 18).

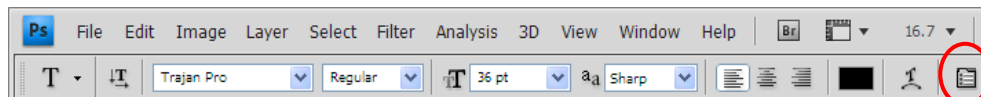



Figure 18 – Text Tool Options Bar

3. On the **Options** bar, click the **Character and Paragraph panels** button  (see Figure 18) to open the **Character** panel (see Figure 19).
4. Type **120** in the **Tracking** box (see Figure 19).

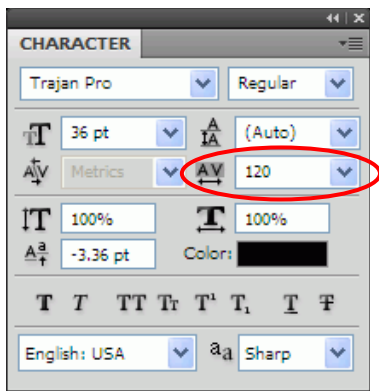
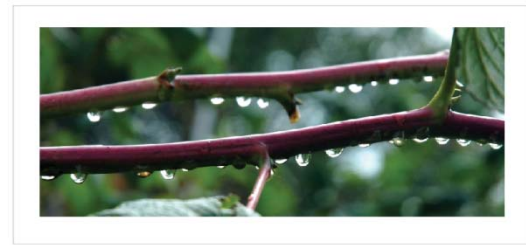


Figure 19 – Character Panel



.BOTA|

Figure 20 – Adding Text

5. On the canvas, click in an area below the image to begin typing the desired text (see Figure 20).

NOTE: A new type layer is added in the **Layers** panel (see Figure 21).

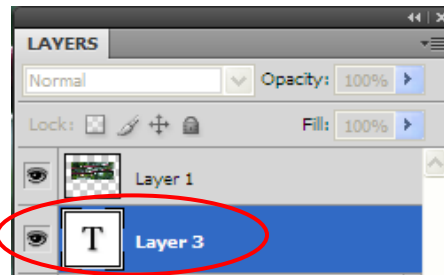




Figure 21 – Type Layer in the Layers Panel

NOTE: To change the font size, type, or tracking, highlight the text, and then change the options on the **Options** bar (Figure 18) or in the **Character** panel (see Figure 19).

To align the text to the image and background:

1. In the **Layers** panel, select all the layers by clicking the **Background** layer, holding down the **Shift** key, and then clicking the **Layer 1** layer or the top layer in the panel.
2. Select the **Move** tool  in the **Tools** panel.
3. Click the **Align horizontal centers** button  on the **Options** bar (see Figure 22).

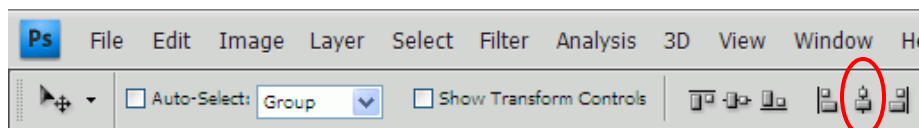


Figure 22 – Move Tool Options Bar

NOTE: To move individual layers, select the desired layer and use the **Move** tool to move the objects or text within the canvas.


Creating a Poster Layout Using the Shape Tool and Clipping Mask Feature

Another way to create a poster layout is to use the Shape tool and Clipping Mask feature to create a design on top of an image. Clipping masks allow you to define a mask in one or more layers with the shape of another layer. In the following lesson, the Rectangle tool is used to mask out the image and the text to create the following poster layout (see Figure 23).



Figure 23 – Poster After Adding Clipping Mask

To use the Shape tool:

1. Open the **clipping_mask.psd** file.
2. In the **Layers** panel, duplicate the **Background** layer.
3. In the **Tools** panel, select the **Rectangle** tool  (see Figure 24).

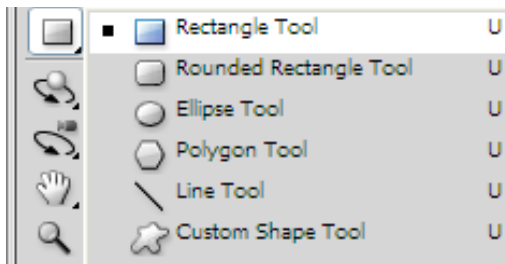


Figure 24 – Rectangle Tool

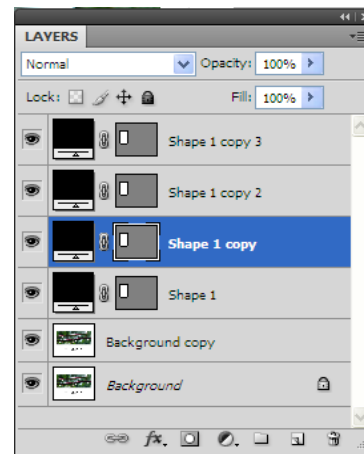


Figure 25 – Layers Panel

4. On the canvas, drag a rectangular shape on top of the image.
5. In the **Layers** panel, duplicate the **Shape 1** layer four times.

NOTE: The **Layers** panel should now have six layers (see Figure 25).

6. Select the **Shape 1 copy** layer (see Figure 25).
7. Select the **Move** tool in the **Tools** panel.
8. Hold down the **Shift** key and drag the rectangular shape on the canvas to the right (see Figure 26).



Figure 26 – Moving Shapes

9. Select the **Shape 1 copy 2** layer.

- Repeat step 8 until all four rectangular shapes are distributed evenly over the image (see Figure 27).

NOTE: To move a shape, make sure the layer that the shape is located on is selected in the **Layers** panel first.



Figure 27 – Distributing Shapes on the Canvas

- Select the **Rectangle** tool again and draw a rectangle over the text (see Figure 27).
- Select all the shape layers by holding down the **Shift** key and clicking each layer in the **Layers** panel (see Figure 28).
- Right-click any of the selected shape layers and select **Merge Layers** from the shortcut menu (see Figure 28).

NOTE: The **Layers** panel should now have three layers.

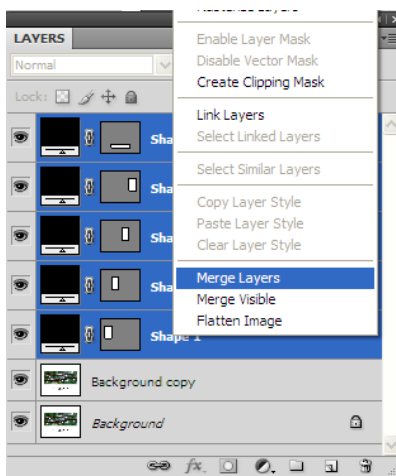


Figure 28 – Merge Layers

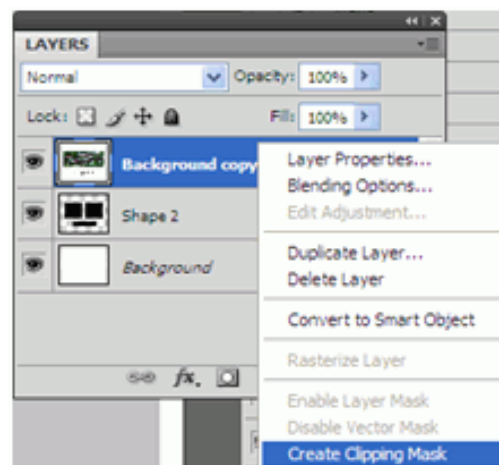


Figure 29 – Create Clipping Mask










To create a clipping mask:

- With the **Background** layer selected, click the **Edit** menu and select **Fill**. The **Fill** dialog box opens.
- Make sure **White** is selected from the **Use** list, and then click the **OK** button.
- Drag the **Background copy** layer above the rasterized shape layer (see Figure 29).
- Right-click the **Background copy** layer and select **Create Clipping Mask** (see Figure 29).

Working with Selection Tools

When an object is selected, it is the only editable area. Selections can be made according to shape, size, or color. There are four types of selections: geometric, freehand, edge-based, and color-based (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Selection Tools

Selection Type	Icon	Description
Geometric		Rectangular Marquee tool selects a rectangular area of an image.
		Elliptical Marquee tool selects an elliptical area.
		Single Row Marquee tool selects a 1-pixel-high row.
		Single Column Marquee tool selects a 1-pixel-wide column.
Freehand		Lasso tool can be used to drag around an area using freehand.
		Polygonal Lasso tool sets anchor points in straight line segments around an area.
		Magnetic Lasso tool creates a selection by following the contrast line that exists between the area to be selected and its surroundings.
Edge-Based		Quick Selection tool paints a selection by automatically finding and following defined edges in an image.
Color-Based		Magic Wand tool selects parts of an image based on the similarity in color of adjacent pixels.


Using a Geometric Selection Tool

Geometric selection tools are best utilized when selecting objects with distinct geometric outlines such as the rims of a tire, a globe, a window, or a door. In the following exercise, the Rectangular Marquee tool is used to select a rectangular stamp.

To use the Rectangular Marquee tool:

1. Open the **using_selection_tools.psd** file.
2. In the **Layers** panel, select the **stamp** layer.

NOTE: Zoom in if necessary using the **Zoom** tool or the **Navigator** panel.

3. In the **Tools** panel, select the **Rectangular Marquee** tool .
4. Drag a rectangular selection around the stamp image. If the selection needs to be adjusted, keep the mouse button pressed and do one of the following:
 - Hold down the **Spacebar** and drag the pointer to reposition the selection.
 - Release the **Spacebar** and drag the pointer to resize the selection.
5. Release the mouse button.
6. Right-click the selection and select **Layer via Copy** or **Layer via Cut** (see Figure 30).

NOTE: A new layer is added in the **Layers** panel.

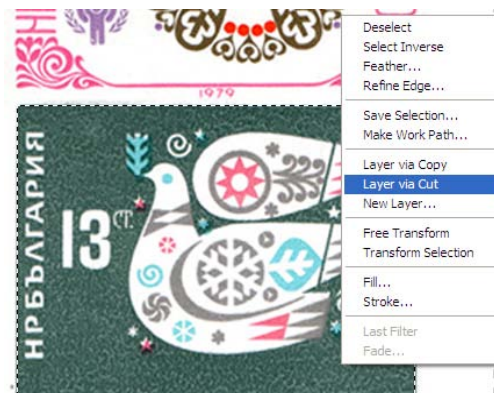



Figure 30 – Layer via Cut

7. In the **Tools** panel, select the **Move** tool.
8. Drag the stamp image to move it anywhere on the canvas.

Using a Freehand Selection Tool

Most objects within an image, especially photographic ones, are not geometric. The following exercise utilizes the Magnetic Lasso tool to select a gold piggy bank. A greater contrast between the object to be selected and its background produces a better selection. Furthermore, straight edges, as opposed to jagged or frayed edges, produce a more accurate selection with the Magnetic Lasso tool. The Polygonal Lasso tool is perfect for selecting road signs, while the Lasso tool allows users to freely draw to make their selection.

To use the Magnetic Lasso tool:

1. In the **Layers** panel, select the **piggy bank** layer.
2. Right-click the **Lasso** tool and select the **Magnetic Lasso** tool  (see Figure 31).

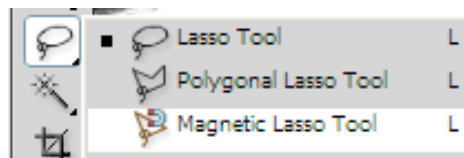


Figure 31 – Magnetic Lasso Tool

3. Click anywhere on the outline of the image to create the first anchor point.
4. Using the mouse, trace the outline of the image all the way around and click the first anchor point to close the selection (see Figure 32).

NOTE: When you hover over the very first anchor point, a small circle appears adjacent to the **Magnetic Lasso** tool pointer (see Figure 32).

NOTE: To delete an anchor point and retrace the lasso, press the **Delete** key.



Figure 32 – Using the Magnetic Lasso Tool

5. Right-click the selection and select **Layer via Copy** or **Layer via Cut**.

Using the Edge-Based Selection Tool

The Quick Selection tool makes a selection by automatically finding and following defined edges of an object within an image, as opposed to the Magic Wand tool which selects based on similarity of color. Both are useful for selecting odd shaped areas such as a lettuce head. However, due to the wide gradient color range of most objects, the Magic Wand tool cannot perfectly select an object without missing pixels or over selecting.

To use the Quick Selection tool:

1. Select the **lettuce** layer.
2. In the **Tools** panel, select the **Quick Selection** tool  (see Figure 33).

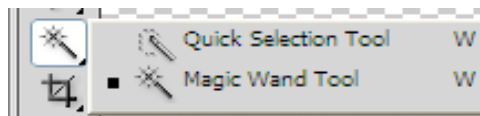


Figure 33 – Quick Selection and Magic Wand Tools

3. Click once on the lettuce to start selecting, and then continue clicking to select the entire lettuce head (see Figure 33).


NOTE: To change the **Quick Selection** tool brush size, click the **Brush** arrow  on the **Options** bar, and then drag the **Diameter** slider.



Figure 34 – Quick Selection

4. To refine the edges, click the **Subtract from selection** button  on the **Options** bar (see Figure 35).

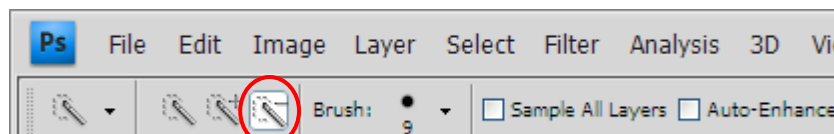


Figure 35 – Quick Selection Tool Options Bar

5. Click the white areas of the background to remove them from the selection.
6. Right-click the remaining selection and select **Layer via Copy** or **Layer via Cut**.

Using the Color-Based Selection Tool

The Magic Wand tool is highly useful for selecting a uni-colored object, graphic, or text, or an area of an object that is the same color. However, because most photographic images are gradient based, the Magic Wand tool may not work as accurately as the Quick Selection tool. Furthermore, individuals may want to try selecting the background, if uni-colored (e.g., blue screen), and inverse their selection.

To use the Magic Wand tool:

1. Select the **yellow bottle** layer.
2. In the **Tools** panel, select the **Magic Wand** tool (see Figure 33).
3. Click anywhere on the image of the yellow bottle to make a selection using color.
4. Right-click the selection and select **Layer via Copy** or **Layer via Cut**.

Masking Simple Objects

For images with well defined edges, masking is simple. In addition to using selection tools, users can use the Quick Mask Mode to mask an image.

To edit in Quick Mask Mode:

1. Open the **masking_simple.psd** file.
2. In the **Tools** panel, click the **Edit in Quick Mask Mode** button  (see Figure 36).



Figure 36 – Standard Mode vs. Quick Mask Mode

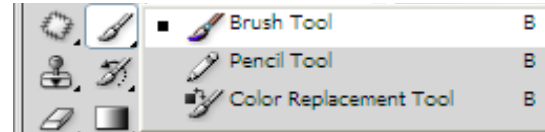





Figure 37 – Brush Tool

3. Select the **Brush** tool  (see Figure 37).
4. Click the **Default Foreground and Background Colors** icon  to set the **Foreground** color to black and **Background** color to white (see Figure 36).
5. Readjust the brush size as needed and paint the butterfly.

NOTE:

- Be careful to stay within the outline of the image.
 - Make sure the **Mode** is set to **Normal**.
 - Even though the **Foreground** color is set to black, the brush will paint red because it is in **Quick Mask Mode**.
6. To erase a mistake, click the **Switch Foreground and Background Colors** icon  and paint over the red area with white to remove it (see Figure 38).

NOTE: Toggle the **Foreground** color back and forth between black and white to get a more accurate mask.

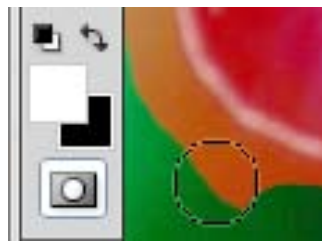


Figure 38 – Painting with White in Quick Mask Mode

7. Click the **Edit in Standard Mode** button  (see Figure 36).
8. In the **Layers** panel, click the **Add layer mask** button  located at the bottom of the panel (see Figure 39).

NOTE: A layer mask can only be added to unlocked layers.

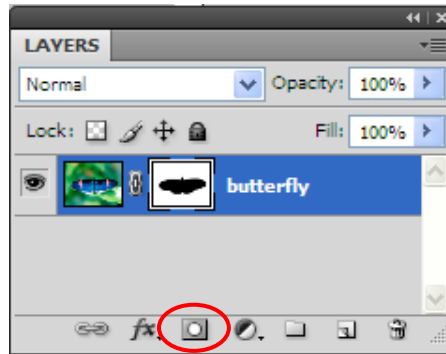


Figure 39 – Add Layer Mask

9. In the **Masks** panel, click the **Invert** button (see Figure 40).

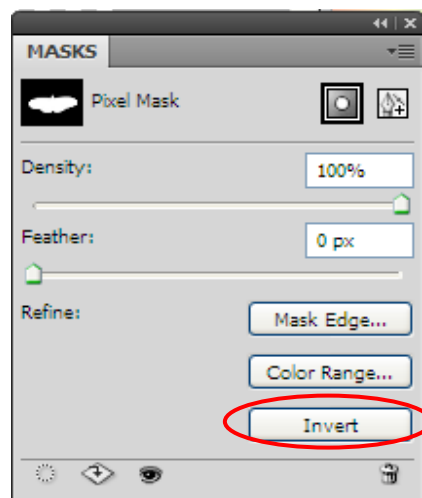


Figure 40 – Masks Panel

To save a masked object with a transparent background:

1. Click the **File** menu and select **Save As**. The **Save As** dialog box opens.
2. Click the **Format** arrow and select **PNG (*.PNG)** from the list.
3. Click the **Save** button.

NOTE: PNG stands for Portable Network Graphics. It can save partially transparent pixels using alpha transparency (i.e., any one of 256 levels of opacity).

Masking Complex Objects

When the edges of an image are not well defined, Photoshop users can utilize the Channels panel to increase the contrast between the image and its background in order to mask it out. The following steps can be used to mask complex objects such as bushes, hair, and feathers.

Masking a Tree Using One Channel

Different images have different number of channels depending on the type of color set up that they are using. For example, an RGB picture is composed of three color channels: Red, Green, and Blue. Each channel shows the amount of that color in the image on a grayscale. This can be seen in the thumbnail preview in the Channels panel or on the image itself when the channel is selected. The first step in masking is to select the color from the channel that has the most contrast from the outline of the object of choice.

To mask a tree using one channel:

1. Open the **masking_complex.psd** file.
2. In the **Channels** panel, select the **Blue** channel.
3. Right-click the **Blue** channel and select **Duplicate Channel** (see Figure 41).

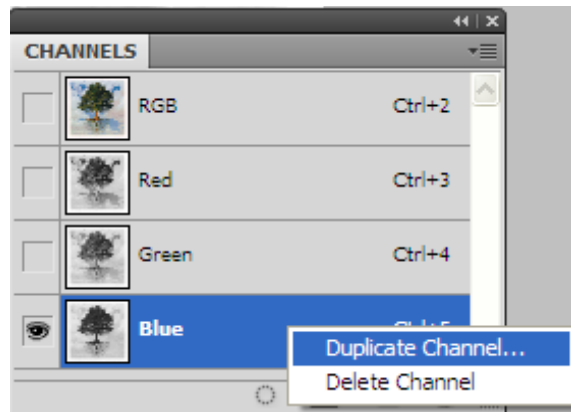


Figure 41 – Duplicate Channel

4. In the **Duplicate Channel** dialog box, click the **OK** button.
5. Turn on the layer visibility only on the **Blue copy** channel (see Figure 42).
6. Select the **Blue copy** channel (see Figure 42).

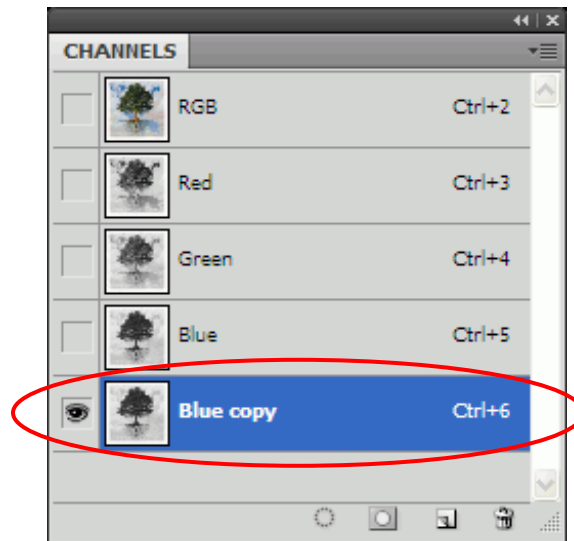





Figure 42 – Blue Copy Channel

7. Click the **Image** menu, point to **Adjustments**, and select **Levels**. The **Levels** dialog box opens (see Figure 43).
8. Drag the **Shadow** slider  to the right until the image of the tree is completely black.
9. Drag the **Highlight** slider  to the left until the background is completely white.

NOTE: Use the **Midtone** slider  to tweak the edges.

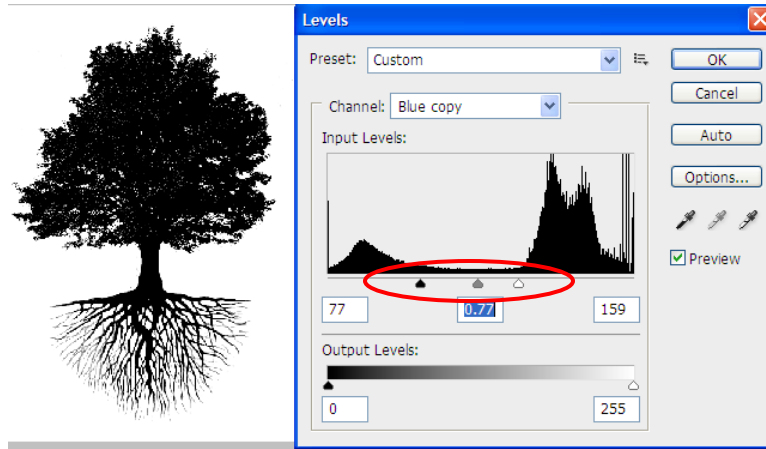



Figure 43 – Levels Adjustment on Alpha Channel

10. Click the **OK** button.
11. With the **Blue copy** channel selected, click the **Image** menu, point to **Adjustments**, and select **Invert**.

NOTE: This will turn the tree white and the background black. This way, the tree is masked as opposed to the background.

12. Click the **Select** menu and select **Load Selection**. The **Load Selection** dialog box opens.
13. Click the **OK** button.
14. In the **Layers** panel, duplicate the **Background** layer.
15. With the **Background copy** layer selected, click the **Add layer mask** button  located at the bottom of the **Layers** panel (see Figure 44).
16. Turn off the layer visibility on the **Background** layer to see the masked tree (see Figure 44).

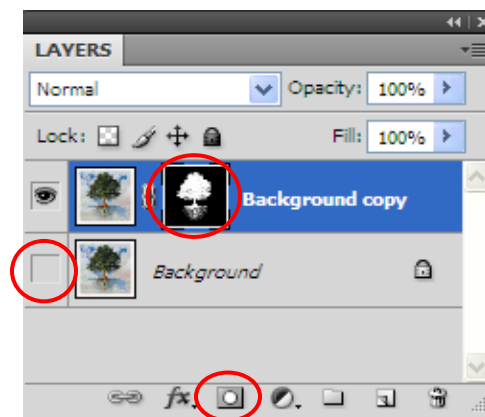



Figure 44 – Layer Mask

Refining the Mask

To adjust the edges of the image in order to get a better mask, users can utilize the Masks panel which is new to Photoshop CS4.

To refine the mask:

1. In the **Layers** panel, select the layer mask of the tree (see Figure 44).
2. Click to select the **Masks** panel located adjacent to the **Adjustments** panel.
3. In the **Masks** panel, click the **Mask Edge** button (see Figure 40). The **Refine Mask** dialog box opens (see Figure 45).

- Click the **On Black** icon  to preview the selection over a black background (see Figure 45).

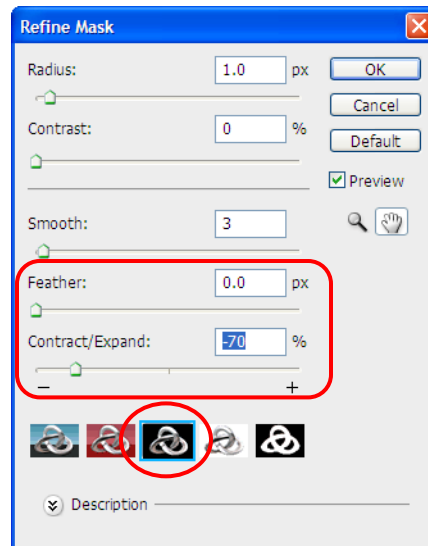


Figure 45 – Refine Mask Dialog Box

- Drag the **Feather** slider to the left to decrease the size to **0.0 pixels** (see Figure 45).
- Drag the **Contract/Expand** slider to the left to contract the mask to about **-70%** (see Figure 45).
- Click the **OK** button.

Masking a Tree Using Multiple Channels

The first step is to balance the channels. In the Channels panel, choose the channel that has the most contrast when comparing the tree to the rest of the image. Since the sky is fairly distinct from the tree and has a fair amount of blue tonal area, the *Blue* channel would be the best choice to start with. Likewise, the bark of the tree is a bit redder than the backdrop so the *Red* channel will also be used. A single channel can be used to make the adjustment, though using several channels can assist in making the adjustments easier overall. A copy of each channel will be used and the originals will remain intact.

To mask a tree using multiple channels:

- Open the **tree.jpg** file.
- In the **Channels** panel, select the **Blue** channel.
- Right-click the **Blue** channel and select **Duplicate Channel** (see Figure 46).

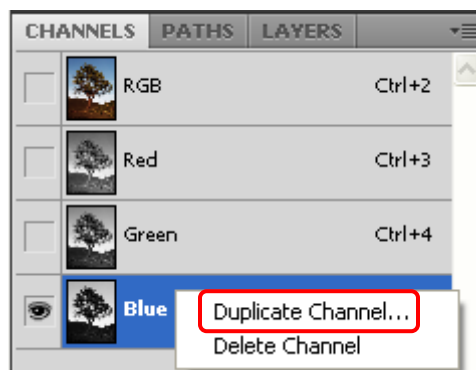


Figure 46 – Duplicate Blue Channel

- In the **Duplicate Channel** dialog box, type **Tree Alpha** in the **As** box to change the name of the channel (see Figure 47).



Figure 47 – Duplicate Channel Dialog Box

- Click the **OK** button.
 - In the **Channels** panel, right-click the **Red** channel and select **Duplicate Channel**. The **Duplicate Channel** dialog box opens.
 - Click the **OK** button.
- NOTE: The **Red copy** channel will be used as a selection to assist in modifying the **Tree Alpha** channel.
- With only the **Red copy** channel selected and only its visibility turned on, click the **Image** menu, point to **Adjustments**, and select **Levels**. The **Levels** dialog box opens (see Figure 48).
 - Set the **Input Levels** to **50**, **0.85**, and **222** (see Figure 48).

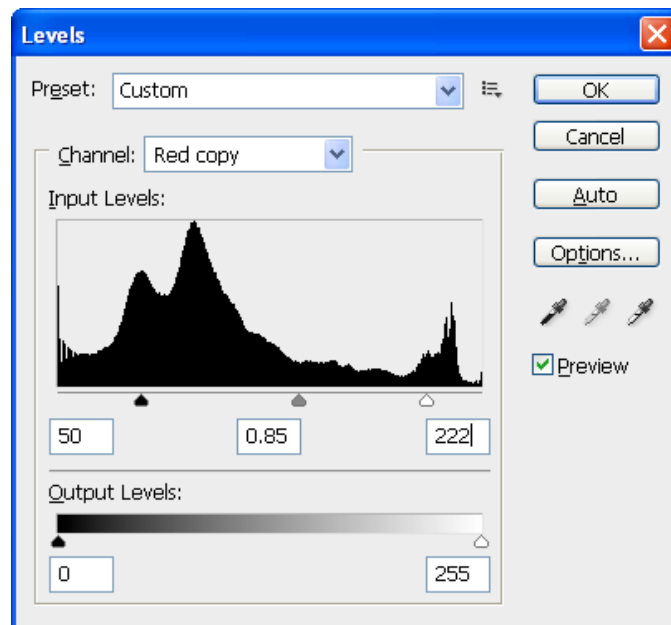



Figure 48 – Adjusting the Red Copy Channel Using Levels Adjustment

- Click the **OK** button.

NOTE: The purpose of this adjustment is to make the tree bark distinct from the background. Notice how clearly defined the border is between the tree bark and background after the levels adjustment.

To load a channel as a selection:

1. With the **Red copy** channel selected and only its visibility turned on, click the **Select** menu and select **Load Selection**. Or, click the **Load channel as selection** button  located at the bottom of the **Channels** panel (see Figure 49).

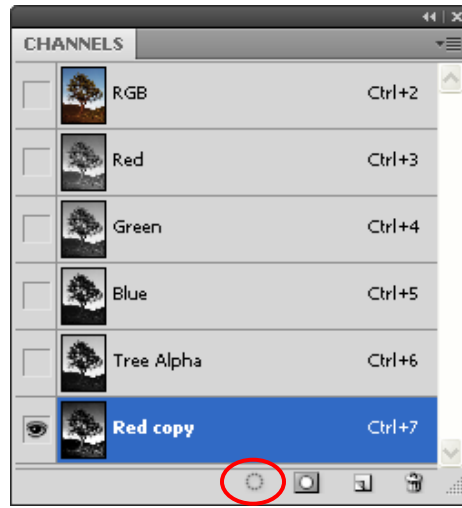


Figure 49 – Load Channel as Selection

2. Select the **Tree Alpha** channel.
3. Press **Ctrl+H** to hide the selection.

NOTE: The selection remains, however, there are no visual markings. This will make working on the image easier.

4. To darken the white speckles in the bark area, click the **Image** menu, point to **Adjustments**, and select **Levels**. The **Levels** dialog box opens (see Figure 50).
5. Set the **Input Levels** to **120**, **1.2**, and **255** (see Figure 50).

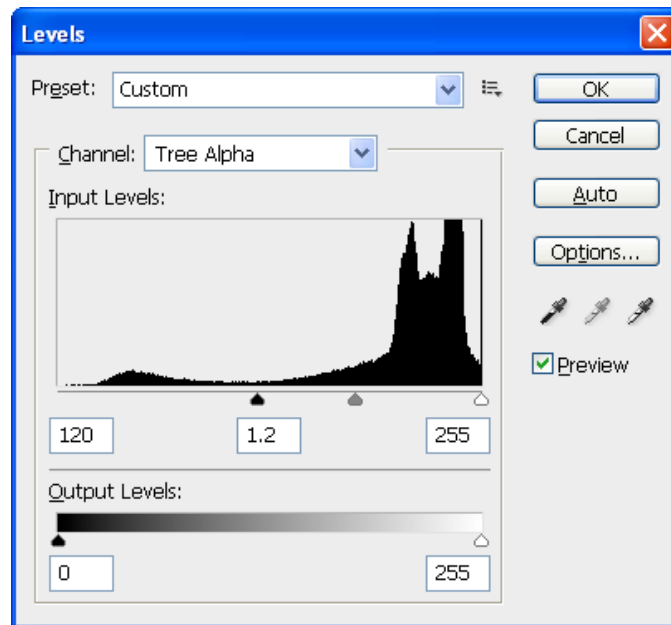


Figure 50 – Adjusting a Portion of the Tree Alpha Channel Using Levels

6. When finished, click the **OK** button.

To adjust the Tree Alpha channel:

1. Click the **Select** menu and select **Deselect** to remove any active selections.
2. Click the **Image** menu, point to **Adjustments**, and select **Levels**. The **Levels** dialog box opens (see Figure 51).
3. Set the **Input Levels** to **31**, **1.00**, and **145** (see Figure 51).

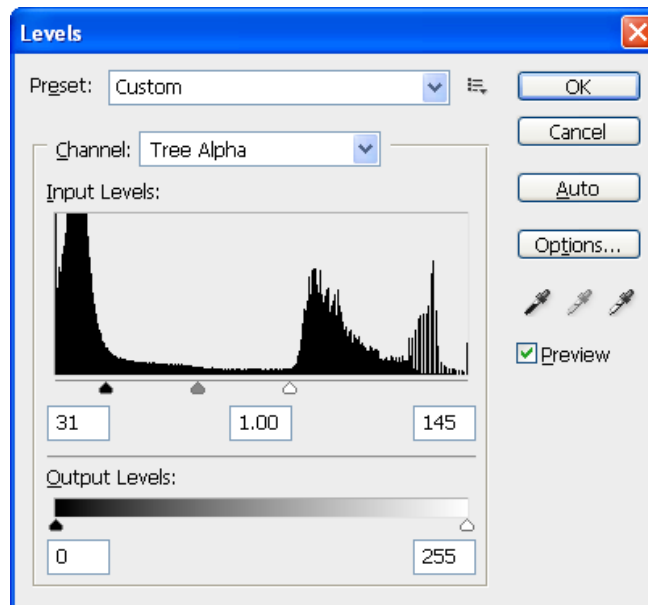


Figure 51 – Adjusting the Entire Tree Alpha Channel Using Levels

NOTE: When adjusting the levels, make sure not to adjust too far as the sky will appear through the tree or parts of the tree will disappear into the background.


4. When finished, click the **OK** button.
5. Click the **Image** menu, point to **Adjustments**, and select **Invert** to invert the channel so that the tree is white and the sky is black (see Figure 52).

NOTE: The white area is always the part that is masked.



Figure 52 – Original and Inverted Image

To apply the layer mask:

1. Click the **Select** menu and select **Load Selection** to load the **Tree Alpha** channel as a selection. Or, click the **Load channel as selection** button .
2. In the **Layers** panel, double-click the locked **Background** layer to unlock it. The layer automatically renames itself as **Layer 0** (see Figure 53).

3. In the **Layers** panel, click the **Add layer mask** button  to mask the tree (see Figure 53).

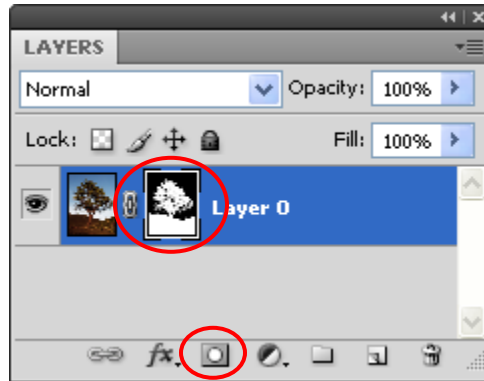


Figure 53 – Layer Mask

To mask out the hill:


1. In the **Tools** panel, right-click the **Lasso** tool and select the **Polygonal Lasso** tool  (see Figure 54).



Figure 54 – Polygonal Lasso Tool

2. Select the hillside area around the tree. Make sure to select around the edges of the image (see Figure 55).



Figure 55 – Selecting the Hill

3. Click the **Edit** menu and select **Fill**. The **Fill** dialog box opens.
4. Under **Contents**, click the **Use** arrow and select **Black** (see Figure 56).

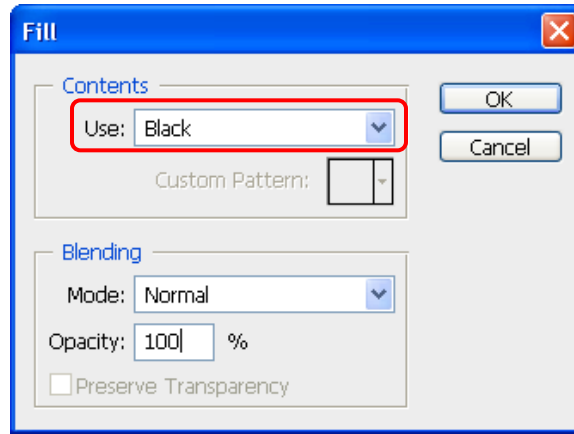



Figure 56 – Fill Dialog Box

5. When finished, click the **OK** button.
6. Click the **Select** menu and select **Deselect** to deselect the selection.

To refine the edges of the masked tree:

1. In the **Masks** panel, click the **Mask Edge** button. The **Refine Mask** dialog box opens (see Figure 57).
2. Click the **On Black** icon  to preview the selection over a black background.

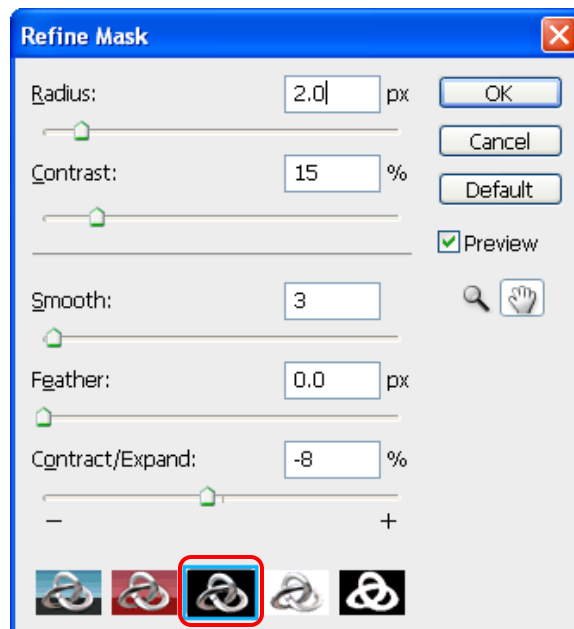


Figure 57 – Refining the Mask of the Tree

3. Drag the **Feather** slider to the left to decrease the size to **0.0 pixels**.
4. Drag the **Contract/Expand** slider to the left to contract the mask to about **-8%**.
5. Increase the **Radius** size to **2.0 pixels** and the **Contrast** to **15%** (see Figure 57).
6. Click the **OK** button.