

## Pacific New Media

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## Selections and Masking in Adobe Photoshop

### 1. Magic Wand Tool and Quick Selection Tool

#### Layer Basics

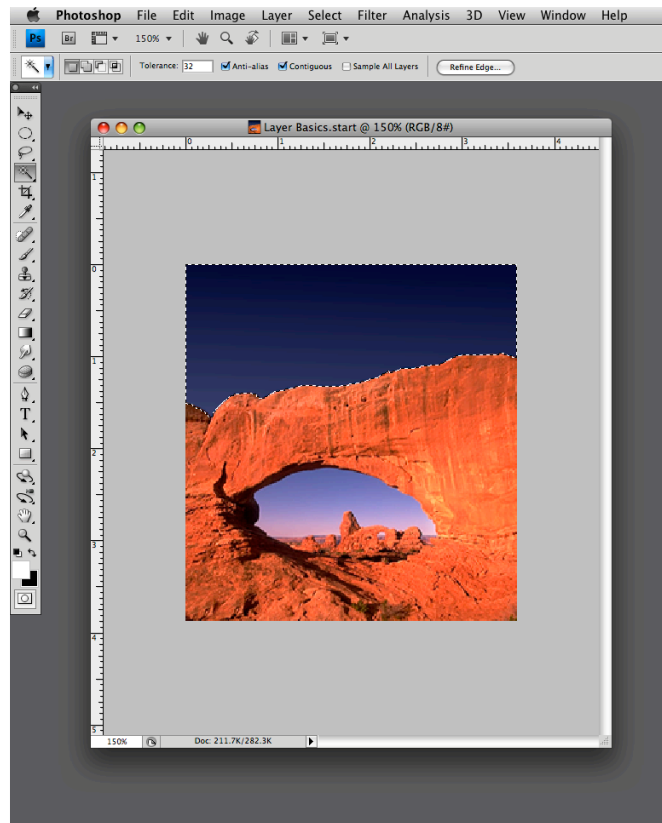
Layers allow you to work on one element of an image without disturbing the others. Think of layers as sheets of acetate stacked one on top of the other. Where there is no image on a layer, you can see through to the layers below. You can change the composition of an image by changing the order and attributes of layers. In addition, special features such as adjustment layers, fill layers, and layer styles let you create sophisticated effects. The layers palette is accessed through Window>show layers.

The challenge in this project is to select the earth, place it as a separate layer into the photo from Arches National Park, and adjust its location so that it is behind the red rocks. Then resize the earth layer and adjust its shading.



Step #1: Duplicate the background layer by highlighting it and dragging it the new page icon at the bottom of layers palette (left of the trash can). This practice allows you to maintain the integrity of the original image by not editing or manipulating the background layer.

Step #2: Make a selection of the blue sky with the Magic Wand tool, (fourth tool down) adjusting the tolerance in the tool sub-menu until the entire blue sky is cleanly selected. Or shift-click with the magic wand tool to add to your selection. If you select too much, option-click to subtract pixels from your selection. If you need to deselect your selection and start over, use Select>deselect or keyboard Command-D. You can also use the Quick Selection tool, in the same tool set, to “paint” your selection on the image.

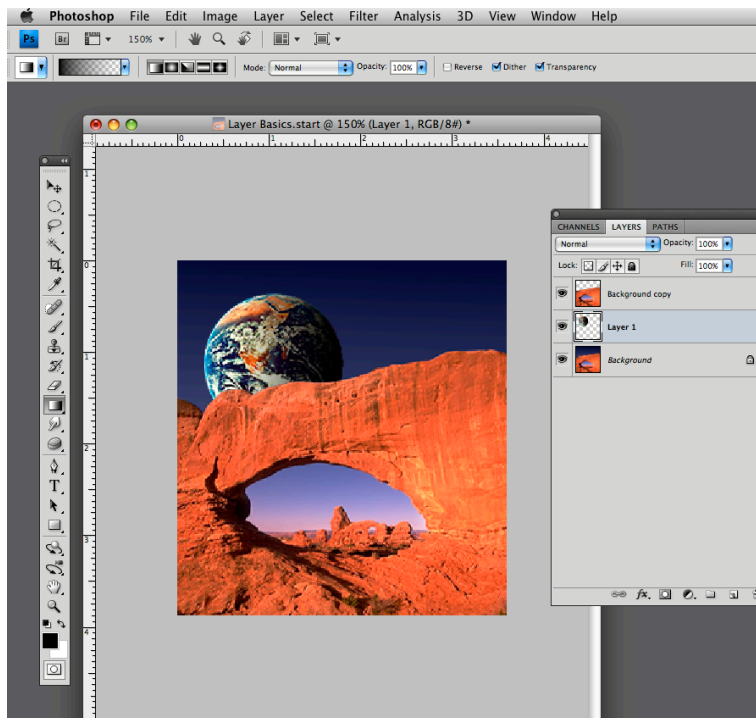


Step #3: After selecting the sky, highlight the background copy layer and remove the sky (Edit>cut) (or keyboard command-X) from the layer. Turn the layer visibility off by clicking on the eyeball icon in the box on the far left side of the layer.

Step #4: Next we will open the earth photo and make a selection of the earth, isolating it from the black background. Use the magic wand tool and select the black background, then Select>inverse your selection to make a perfect selection of the globe. Save your selection by Select>Save Selection. Now, using the move tool, drag the selection on to the start image. Notice it automatically comes in as a separate layer. Adjust the layer hierarchy by highlighting and dragging the earth layer so that it is located under the background copy layer. Voila! The earth is now behind the rocks!

Step #5: Using Edit>transform>scale, while holding down the shift key to constrain the proportions of the earth, adjust the handles of the bounding box until the globe is sized to where you want it. Double-click inside the bounding box to “apply the transformation” and remove the box.

Step #6: To apply shading to the earth, use the linear gradient tool set to “background color to transparent”. Make certain your background color is set to the default black by clicking on the small B&W icon on the lower left of your color swatches on the toolbar.



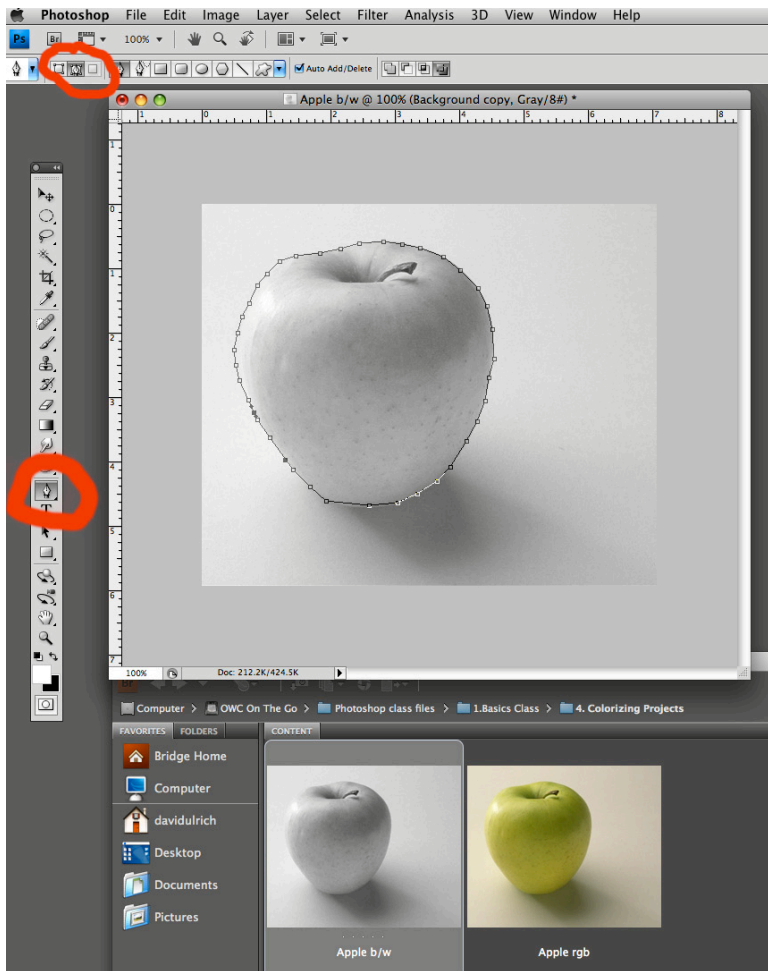
Highlight the earth layer and re-load your selection (Select>load selection). Using the linear gradient tool, drag the gradient from the right side to the left side of globe and your shading will appear.

Whenever you save a selection, that selection is saved in the Channels palette and can be reselected at any time by going to Select>Load Selection.

## 2. The Pen Tool

For complicated selections that are not one color or tonal range, or where the color range is too indistinct to select with the Quick Selection Tool or the Magic Wand tool, the pen tool allows you to “draw” anchor points around an object to make a selection. In this exercise, we are going to select the apple using the Pen tool and hand color the apple and the background. See example below. To use the pen tool:

1. Select the Pen tool on the toolbox. Select the Path tool on the Pen tool submenu (see red circle in illustration). Using the pen tool and your mouse, click and drag on the edges of the apple to create a series of “anchor points” that surround the apple. Do not worry if you are exact (you can change them later) and continue until you return to the beginning point. In other words, “close” your path. If you need additional anchor points after closing your path, use the “Add anchor point” tool located in the Pen tool menu. If you have too many anchor points (unlikely), you can use the “Delete anchor point” tool located in the Pen tool submenu.

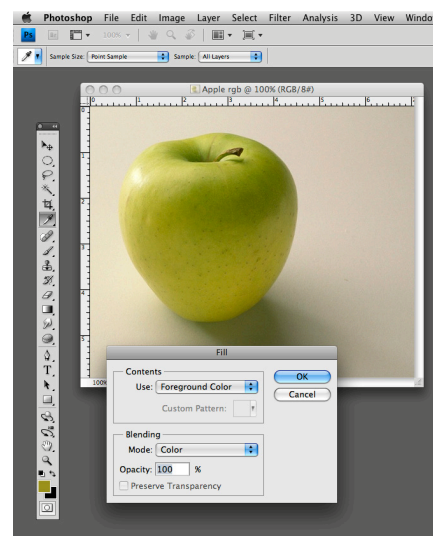


2. Select the Direct Selection tool, the *white* arrow tool directly below the T (type) tool on your toolbox. Using the Direct selection tool, you can “push” or “pull” your anchor points into a precise position on the edge of the apple, making a relatively precise path around the apple.

3. Go to the Paths Palette (Window>Show Paths). In the Path Palette, go to the submenu located at the small downward triangle in the upper right corner of the Paths Palette box. In the submenu, go to “Make

Selection” and turn your path into a selection. And voila, your path is now a selection with “marching ants” around the apple. Save your selection, Selection>Save Selection.

4. Change your file mode from greyscale to RGB color — Image>Mode>RGB color. Select a color for the apple and use either the brush tool of the Edit>Fill tool, set to Use Foreground color. Change the blending mode of the Brush or the Edit tool to “Color” mode. This allows you to change the color while maintaining the luminosity and texture of the original photograph. Then invert your selection, Selection>Invert and paint or fill the background with a color of your choice.



### 3. The Quick Mask Tool

The Quick Mask tool is another, highly flexible method of making selections. With the Quick Mask tool, you create a red, “rubylith” mask and use the brush tool to paint your selection — to mask or unmask the object. The value of Quick Mask is that you use the Brush tool, highly flexible and variable in terms of size, shape and softness/hardness.

To use any mask in Photoshop:

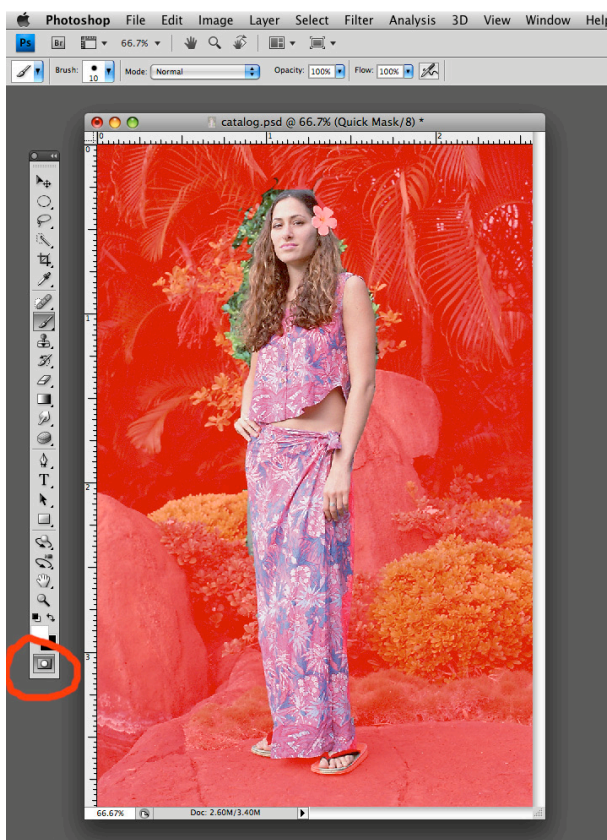
Black Conceals

White Reveals

Painting with black conceals/removes your selection, and painting with white reveals your selection.

To use the Quick Mask Tool:

1. The Quick Mask will ONLY work on a partial selection made with another selection tool. With the Quick Selection tool, select as much of the model as possible, isolating her from the background.



Then, click on the Quick Mask tool, bottom tool on the toolbar. Your non-selected areas will turn rubylith red and your selected areas will remain clear. This red mask is called a Quick Mask. To remove more of the mask, revealing more of your selection, use the brush tool and paint with White. To add to the mask, hiding more of your selection, paint with Black. Use brushes of variable size and hardness/softness until you get a perfect selection.

To review your selection, you can toggle the Quick Mask tool On and Off, which will toggle back and forth between your mask and your selection.



2. Save your selection. Also select the foreground pavement and rocks, as we are going to blur the background to bring more attention to the model and reduce the distractions. After refining and saving your selection, inverse the selection to select the Background.

3. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and experiment with the radius setting until you get the affect that you want.

## All Selection Tools

Holding down the Shift key, adds to a selection.

Holding down the option/alt key subtracts from a selection.

The lasso tool is often used in conjunction with other selection tools to “lasso” more or less into or out of a selection.

Selections can be modified: expanded, contracted, feathered using Select>Modify from the main menu.

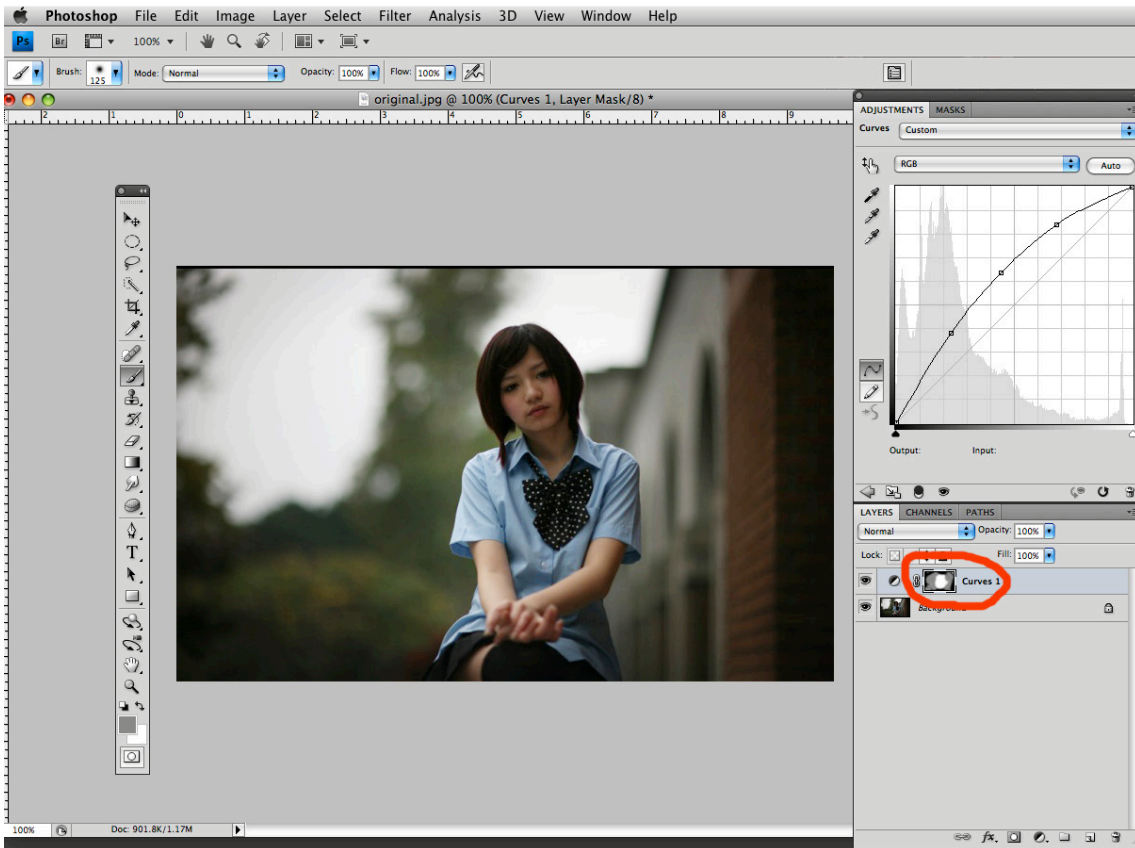


## To Make a Layer Mask

All adjustment layers have layer masks -- the white box to the right of the adjustment icon. Remember, white reveals, black conceals.

To activate a layer mask. Click on the mask, the white box. You'll see a highlight border surrounding it; that means it is active. Create an adjustment layer for levels or curves and make the ENTIRE image as light as you want the girl's face. Do not be concerned if the background become too light.

Using the brush tool, paint black where you want to fully hide the effects of the adjustment layer. Paint grey where you want to partially hide the effects of the adjustment layer. In other words, by painting with black you are returning those parts of the image to the original BEFORE you used Curves or Levels. By painting with grey, you are allowing SOME of the adjustment layer effect to show through. Any method of applying black and white to the adjustment layer can be used -- paintbrush, linear gradient tool, fill tool, etc.



Another use of layer masks is to “blend” multiple images.

To use a layer mask:

Take the background layer of one image and drag it on top of a second image. The layer stack will now reveal two content layers, one on top of another.

Now, on the upper layer, go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal all. A white layer mask will appear to the right of your top layer.

Black conceals and white reveals. The layer mask is white allowing the entire upper image to show. By placing black and white in the layer mask, you will control how the two images blend.

Click on the layer mask and highlight it, making it active.

Now, draw a black to white gradient on the layer mask. And voila, the two images are blended in accordance with the mask.

