

Tips and Tricks

Here are some quick tips, in no specific order, to help you when working with Photoshop:

- Holding down the shift key will allow you to add to a selection area. You can do this when using any of the selection tools.
- Holding down the Option will allow you to subtract from a selection area. This means that you can fine tune your selections by zooming in close and the de-selecting the area that you don't want any more.
- When you scan an image, scan it in color, even if the end result is going to be a grayscale image. By scanning in color, you will gain more detail in the shadows and highlights, especially if you scan from a negative or transparency. After scanning, convert the image back to grayscale.
- Don't work with a fragmented hard drive. Photoshop uses the hard drive (defined as the Scratch Disk under File - Preferences) as temporary storage when working with images. The more fragmented this free space is, the slower Photoshop will run. Do not use removable storage (Zip disk, floppy disk, etc.) as the Scratch Disk.
- You can't ever have too much RAM - buy more RAM. Virtual memory does not replace physical RAM, especially with a program like Photoshop.
- Almost all scanned images will benefit by applying the Unsharp Mask filter to the image. This filter is found under Filter - Sharpen - Unsharp Mask. Don't overdo it.
- If you are going to copy and paste a selected area, diffuse the edge of the selection (thus hiding it better when you paste it) by going to Select - Feather and selecting a radius of several pixels (you may need to experiment with this.) Feather the edge **BEFORE** you copy the selection.
- Many scans end up with dust spots or scratches on the image. The best way to clean up these errors is by using the rubber stamp tool to "stipple" the dot away. Select an area close to the spot and then fill in the spot by clicking repeatedly to hide it. Don't click and drag because it will be too apparent.
- Holding down the space bar will give you a hand tool that can be used to move the image around in the window, especially when the image has been enlarged.