

Adobe Photoshop Selections

This information sheet is designed as a supplement to the GC2 Photo Club video on the same subject. It is provided to help reinforce learning and as a reference document for you to keep.

There are 4 main types of selections, split into 3 tool groups.

Geometric selections, the Marquee tools (keyboard shortcut M) as shown in

Figure 1.

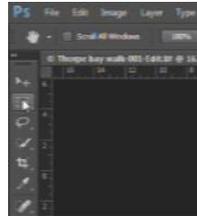


Figure 3

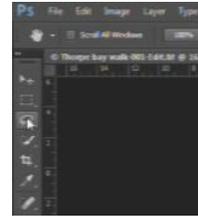


Figure 1

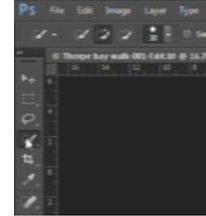


Figure 2

Freehand selections, the Lasso tools (keyboard shortcut L) as shown in Figure 2.

The quick selection tool, which makes selections based on edge contrast and the Magic Wand tool, which makes selections based on colour. These last two are grouped together in the tools panel and have the (keyboard shortcut W) as shown in Figure 3.

The Geometric Selection tools are:-

The Rectangular Marquee selection tool (default) makes a selection in the shape of a rectangle. You make your selection by activating the tool (click on it in the tools panel or use the keyboard shortcut M) and clicking and dragging out your shape to the required size, as in Figure 4.

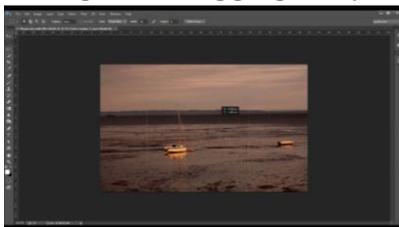


Figure 5

To reposition the selection just click inside the selection boundary and drag it into position, as in Figure 5.

If you want your selection to be an exact square instead of rectangular, hold down the shift key as you click and drag.

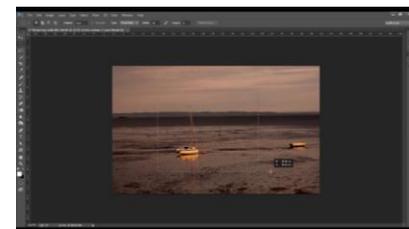


Figure 4

The Elliptical Marquee Selection tool.

This tool works in exactly the same way as the Rectangular Marquee tool but drags out an elliptical shaped selection. You can drag out an exact circle by holding down the shift key as you drag, just as you would the square with the Rectangular Marquee tool.

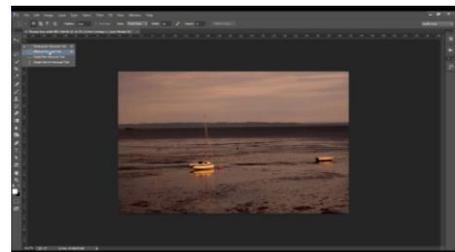


Figure 6

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The single row and single column Marquee tools select a row or column that is one pixel wide or one pixel high, as shown in Figure 7. These tools aren't used frequently but could be helpful to select a single line such as a scratch.



Figure 7

Freehand Selection tools:-

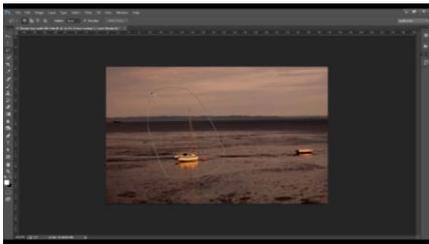


Figure 8

The Lasso tool (default) makes freehand selections by clicking and dragging a custom shape as if drawing with a pen (don't confuse this with the pen tool which is very different). The selection becomes active when you join the start and finishing points together, thus Lassoing an area, as in Figure 8.

The Polygonal Lasso tool works by clicking to set points in straight lines around the area you wish to select, as in Figure 9. It is useful as you don't need a steady hand to draw complex shapes that contain straight lines.

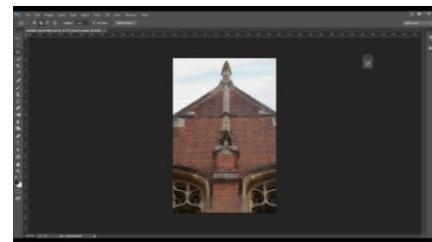


Figure 9

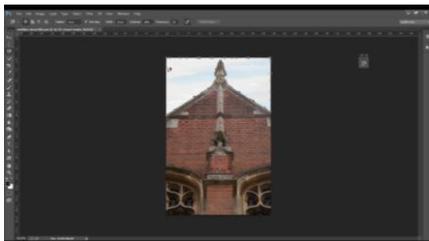


Figure 10

The Magnetic Lasso tool, in Figure 10, is useful for finding complex shapes and selecting them as you click and drag around your subject (placing anchor points) based on the contrast of the subject (for example a sky against a building). The selection finds the edges as if being attracted to them by a magnet.

This tool is tricky to use and takes a bit of practice.

Click on the starting point to make the selection active and then select another tool to avoid starting another selection. You can double click at any time to join up your selection.

The Quick selection tool, Figure 11, makes an instant selection based on sharp definition of edges. It is useful for quickly selecting an area such as a sky, which you can refine later.

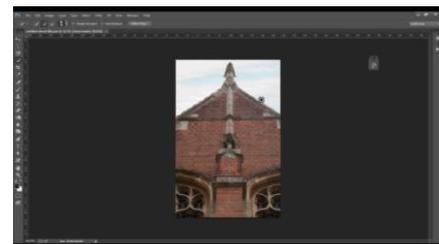


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Figure 12

The Magic Wand tool selects areas based on the difference between two areas of colour, it is useful for selecting an area that has a strong uniform colour, such as a tomato or, as in Figure 12, the red coat. You can set the tolerance at the top of your screen to increase or decrease the range of similarity in colour that is selected, to give you a more accurate selection.

I have described the Selection tools and their uses, I will now show you some of the things that you can do with a selection once it is active.

Make a selection, in Figure 13 I have made a basic rectangular selection to show clearly the alterations we make.

Any adjustments that you make now will apply only to the portion of the image that is selected.



Figure 14

For example we could make an adjustment to the exposure, turn the selection black and white (as in Figure 14), add a solid colour fill layer or even choose Edit > Fill > Content Aware to repair the selected area. Use your imagination and play with different adjustments to learn what can be achieved.



Figure 13

Here are some more tips that will help with your selections workflow.

Hold down the ALT/Option key to drag out your selection from the centre point.

When using the Rectangular Marquee tool, if you want to make a selection to a fixed Ratio, such as 10x8, click on Normal [Style] at top of screen and change it to fixed ratio, then add your chosen settings in the width and height boxes.

To ADD to any selection hold down the SHIFT key as you make your selection, as shown in Figure 15. You can also click on the Add to selection Icon at the top.

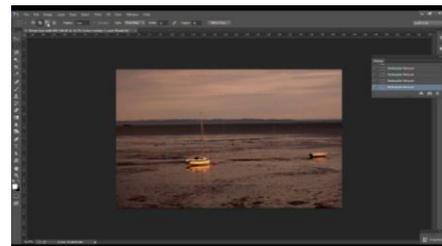


Figure 15

To SUBTRACT from any selection hold down the ALT/Option key as you make your selection. You can also click on the subtract from a selection Icon at the top.

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To INTERSECT with a Selection hold down the Shift + ALT/Option key as you drag or click on the Intersect with selection Icon at the top of the screen. This cuts out and retains the portion of the selections that overlap.

One of the most useful parts of these edits is that you can change tools to Add, Subtract or Intersect selections as you work.



Figure 16

To Delete a Selection just click anywhere outside the selection with a selection tool active, as in Figure 16, however be aware the tool will be active and will try to start another selection so be careful of the Magic Wand, Quick Selection and particularly the Magnetic Lasso tools. Just select something like the hand tool to avoid problems or choose Select > Deselect or the keyboard shortcut CTRL\Option + D

To Move a selection boundary, click inside your boundary and drag into place or use the arrow keys on your keyboard.

To cut out and move a selection, use the Move tool (V) or select the Move tool and use the arrow keys (Figure 17)



Figure 17

To Invert a selection choose: Select > Inverse (Shift + CTRL/Com + I).

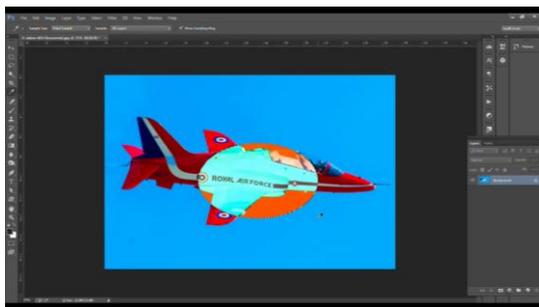


Figure 18

To invert the colours in a selection use the keyboard shortcut CTRL/Com and I, as shown in Figure 18.

To Reselect the last deselected selection choose: Select > Reselect or use the keyboard shortcut CTRL/ Command + shift +D

If you want to move a selection that you are making with one of the geometric marquee tools but haven't finished dragging it out, hold down the space bar and drag it to a new location, then release the space bar and continue making your selection. DO NOT release the mouse button until you have finished.

If you are making a selection with the Lasso tool and you want to change to the Polygonal Lasso tool to continue your selection :- press and hold down the ALT/Option key and release the mouse button.

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To return to the Lasso tool :- click and hold down mouse button and release the ALT/Option key.

To cut out a selection and move it to a new location. Hold down the CTRL/Option key and drag it into position. Once you have started to move the selection you can release the CTRL/Option key.

If you wish to move and duplicate a selection at the same time:- Activate the move tool, then press and hold down the ALT/Option key as you drag into position. It creates a duplicate and allows you to move it as required. If you hold down the Shift key it allows you to move the duplicate in straight line or at a 45 degree angle.

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Bye for now.

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