

Photoshop Tips and Tricks

- 1. Fade:** After any color adjustment, filter, or painting tool, try using the Fade command (under the Edit menu). It partially reverses the previous action. I often find I have gotten carried away with some color adjustment, and that a 50 to 75% effect is more pleasing.
- 2. Multiple windows:** You can open one or more additional windows of the same image by choosing “New View” under the View menu. Arrange them so you can see them both on the screen, and zoom them to make one a view of the whole image and another to be a close-up of some critical part. Both windows will preview any action you take, making it easier to judge the effect. Note that in Photoshop 7 the equivalent command is Windows|Documents|New Window.
- 3. Select the inverse:** To select an object or a portion of an image, it is often easier to select everything else and then Invert the selection (under the Select menu). (Ctrl-Shift-I).
- 4. Hide selection edges:** When making a tonal adjustment to a selection, the “marching ants” can be distracting when previewing the change. Turn them off using the “Show” command under the View menu. (Toggle with Ctrl-H).
- 5. Print Options:** Use the Print Options command under the File menu to position the image as you desire on the printed sheet.
- 6. Hue/Saturation:** Use the Hue/Saturation command (under Adjust under the Image menu or Ctrl-U) to selectively change only one color. For example, if the greens are too bluish, choose to edit the Greens, and adjust the hue to bend them more toward yellow rather than cyan. Other colors are unaffected.
- 7. Smooth selections:** Use the Smooth command (under Modify under Select) to round the edges of a selection, choosing a radius of a few pixels. This also eliminates tiny fragments of selection, and closes tiny holes in the selection, when these fragments and holes are smaller than the chosen radius.
- 8. Feather selections:** Before applying a tonal change to a selection, feather the edges (under the Select menu) to avoid creating sharp artifacts at the boundaries.
- 9. Spot corrections:** You can use painting tools like dodge/burn to make spot corrections to an image. However, I find I get better control by first selecting the area of interest (perhaps by painting with a soft brush in Quick Mask), and then applying an adjustment (brightness/contrast, hue/saturation, etc.) or a filter (blur, sharpen, etc.) to the selection.
- 10. Selective focus:** For some images, I like to select the main subject and then separate it from the background by making the subject brighter, more contrasty, more saturated, and/or sharper, while making the background darker, less contrasty, less saturated, and/or blurred. When done with some subtlety, this does not appear unnatural, but enhances a selective focus effect.

11. Color Range: Use the Color Range command (under the Select menu) to select all similarly colored areas in an image or a part of an image. If something is selected beforehand, Color Range selects a subset within it. You can sample a color to be selected, sample other (similar) colors to be added to the selection, and sample colors to be excluded. You can adjust the “fuzziness”, to select only closely matching colors, or allow a wider range of color variation within the selection.

12. Variations: Use Variations (under Adjust under the Image menu) to do a rough and ready color and tone correction. Adjust lightness and color for mid tones, shadows, and highlights, then adjust saturation. To start, drag the fine/coarse slider up to the coarse end so that the corrections are all obviously too extreme, i.e. the red variation is obviously too red, the yellow too yellow, etc. Now move the slider back toward fine until some of the variations don’t look too bad. If five colors look awful and one is OK, then that is the direction you want to go. Move the slider one more notch toward fine and make that variation. Go on to the other choices.

13. Repeated use of the Magic Wand: To select a complex object (or its background), build up the selection by repeatedly using the magic wand tool to add small increments to the selection. (Choose “add to selection” in the options bar or hold down the shift key.) If you select some of the wrong thing, choose Undo under the Edit menu (Ctrl-Z) and try again with a smaller Tolerance.

14. Filling in a hollow selection: If you have selected portions of an Object that include its boundaries, but there are still unselected areas in the middle, here is an easy way to complete the selection: Choose Quick Mask, then in the Channels palette make the RGB channel invisible so that you are just looking at a black and white image of the selection, with the selected area black. With the magic wand tool, click in the white area outside the Object. This should select all of the background. Choose Inverse under the Select menu, Fill (under Edit) with black, and exit Quick Mask. You now have the Object selected. (If you have selected portions of the background that includes the boundaries around the Object, you can do a similar thing to complete the selection.)

15. Turn off your Epson printer: ALWAYS turn your printer off after you use it. Each time you turn the printer off it cleans itself and that is supposed keep banding from happening. Sometimes I (Pat Egaas) left my printer on all day if I was working off and on when I had time, so I could be to blame. I finally had to take my printer to the Epson dealer and they could not fix it. Now I not only have banding, I also have one ugly black line. My Epson printer is toast! Also never turn the printer off via the power strip. Turn the printer off via the printer power button! (Pat Egaas)

16. Viewing options: Shift-Tab toggles the palettes off and on. Tab toggles tool bars off and on. Cntrl-0 enlarges the picture to better fill the screen. F key is a three way toggle to view the picture. Enter gives the Tool Options bar when tool bars have been toggled off; however, to restore all the palettes, you need to go to the Windows menu. F8 toggles the Info pallet and F7 toggles the Layers pallet. (Ken Hales)

17. Changing the selected picture: Assuming two pictures are open, then Cntrl-Tab toggles between pictures. (Alt-Tab toggles between applications). (Ken Hales)

18. Custom Proof Setup: I downloaded a file for my 1280 printer from Epson's website. This file contained the Print Image Matching features and special proof setups for many of the specific Epson papers on my printer. For example I can create a Proof Setup and a Print Space Profile in the Print with Preview menu for the EPSON Stylus Photo 1280 Premium Glossy Photo Paper. (Ken Hales)

19. Clone Stamp tool used to remove scratches and or power lines: Select the clone tool mode to normal and opacity to 100%. Select a brush size that is large enough to cover the scratch. Move the mouse 1-2 brush widths to the left or right of the scratch, to an area that has a similar tonal range and (Alt + click) to set the clone source. Set the mouse brush at the top of the scratch and Shift - click. Let go of the mouse button and move the brush down a few inches and Shift - click again. The Clone Stamp tool clones in a perfectly straight line. (Bob Oze)

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