



Getting Started in Photoshop

A Companion to The Beginners Guide to Photoshop

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[The Beginners Guide to Photoshop](https://www.phlearn.com)
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Working with Pixels in Photoshop



Pixels

Digital images are made up of tiny dots of color called **pixels**.

How many pixels are there? If you took a picture with a **30 megapixel** camera, that photo would be made up of **30 million pixels**! What does this have to do with Photoshop?

Photoshop is a collection of tools that can **edit pixels**. It can change their **color**, **brightness**, and **visibility**. It can **move** them around and even **make copies**. Photoshop is designed to edit pixels on both a large and small scale—all so we can improve our photos.

Easy Navigation in Photoshop

Sometimes you'll be zoomed out working on your image as a whole. Sometimes you'll be taking care of the details down at the pixel level. These handy shortcuts will help you move around with ease.



Standard Zoom

The most common way to zoom in or out. But there's a faster way!

(PC)
ctrl + OUT - or IN +

(MAC)
cmd + OUT - or IN +



Scrubby Zoom

The fastest and most accurate way to zoom in Photoshop.

(PC)
ctrl + space +  click & drag

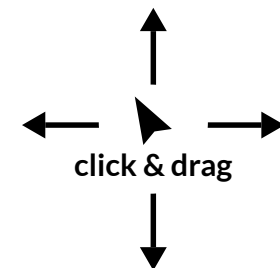
(MAC)
cmd + space +  click & drag



Hand Tool

When you're up close, use the Hand Tool to slide around.

(PC & MAC)
space



Using Layer Masks in Photoshop

If you need to remove part of a layer, like the background behind a subject, don't delete those pixels! Layer Masks allow you to hide parts of a Layer without permanently deleting any information.



Original

Cutting a person out of a background is a common challenge in Photoshop. Let's say we wanted to place our subject onto a new background. How could we remove the sky, bridge, and trees?



Layer Mask

Layer Masks are the key to 'non-destructive' editing. You can hide pixels from any Layer without permanently deleting them. Here, the black areas around our subject have been hidden, while the white areas remain visible.



Cut Out

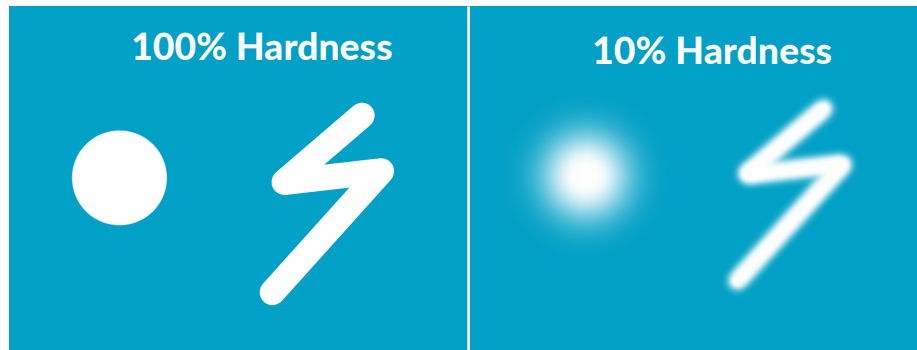
With our subject cut out, we're free to place her onto any new background. Plus we can delete or disable the Layer Mask to get the original background back!

Quick Tip

When editing a Layer Mask, **white** areas will be **visible** and the **black** areas will be **invisible**.

Master the Brush Tool in Photoshop

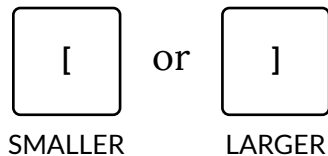
The Brush Tool might be the most versatile tool in Photoshop. It can be used for everything from painting in new details and blending effects, to fixing exposure and editing Layer Masks



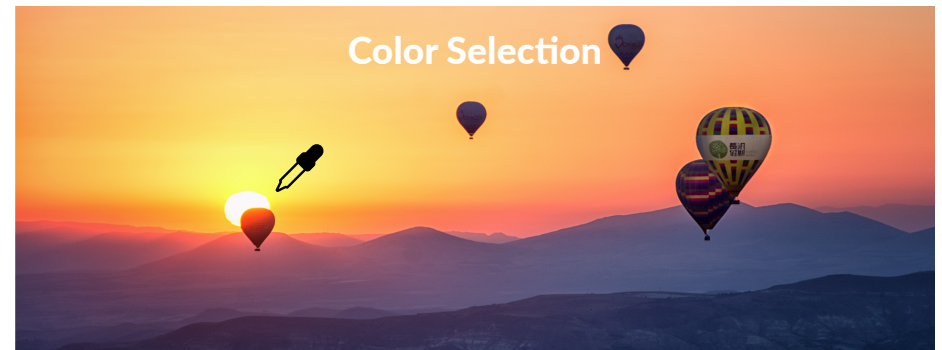
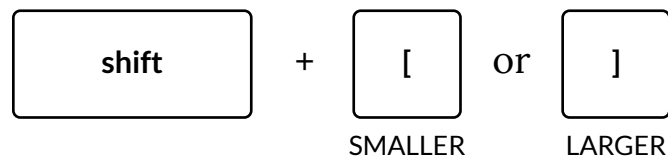
Size & Hardness

You can quickly change the **size** and **hardness** of a Brush for **greater precision** and for **easier blending**.

(PC & MAC) Brush Size



(PC & MAC) Brush Hardness



Sample Color

See a color you like? Use the Brush Tool to Sample any color from an image and use it to paint.

PC



MAC



The Best Way to Save in Photoshop

It's a good idea to always save at least two different versions of your images. We recommend saving as a PSD to protect your hard work and as a JPEG to share it with the world.



share your work

JPEG

Ready to display your work on the web or social media? Export your photo as a **JPEG** using the **File, Export, Save for Web (Legacy)** option. Make sure “Convert to sRGB” is checked, which will ensure the colors are displayed accurately on a web page.

- Smaller File Sizes
- Web/Social Media Compatible
- Adjust Image Size and Quality



save your work

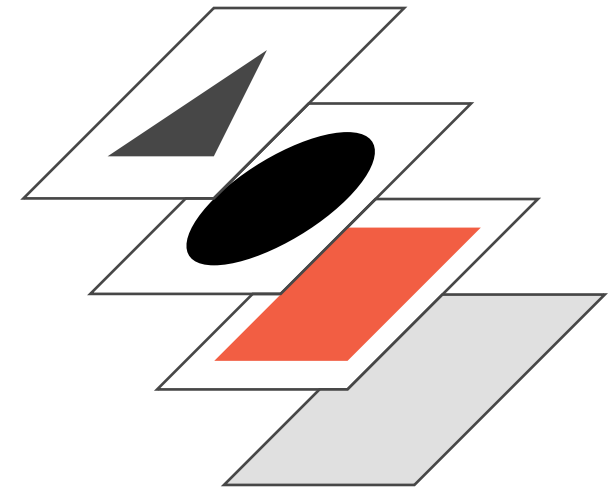
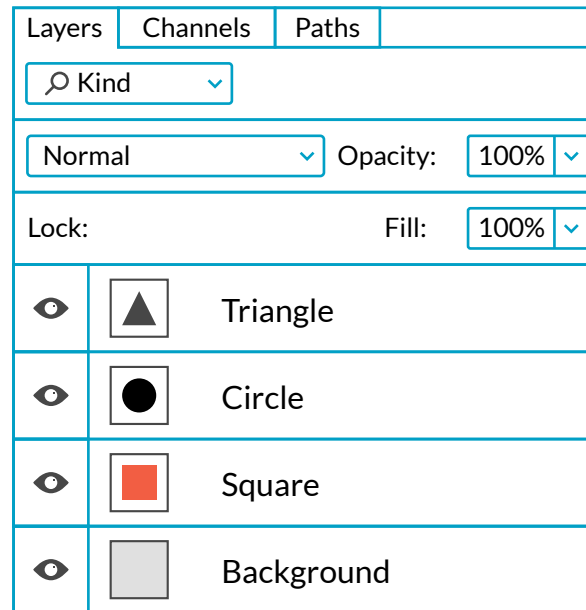
PSD

PSD stands for **Photoshop Document**. Where a JPEG is great for displaying a final image, a PSD is great for **saving all of your work** and **every step** you took to create that image. PSDs will open in Photoshop along with **every Layer you created**.

- Saves Layer Information
- Change or Remove Edits
- Only Opens in Photoshop

Understanding Layers in Photoshop

Layers are the backbone of Photoshop. They allow you to stack images, shapes, text, colors, and effects on top of one another so you can work with each independently.



The Canvas

While it may look like a flattened image, this example is made up of four separate elements—a triangle, a circle, a square, and the background—each on their own Layer.

The Layers Panel

The Layers Panel shows you how Layers are arranged in a document. If a Layer is at the top of the Layers Panel, it will appear on top of other Layers on the canvas.

Layer Stack

Because Layers can be worked with independently, it's easy to make changes without ever permanently changing your original image. You can rearrange, hide, add, or delete Layers at any time!

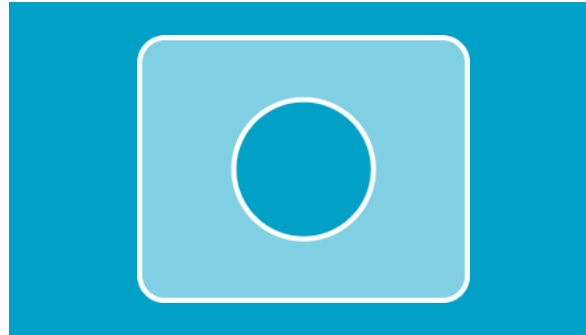
Work Non-Destructively in Photoshop

It's important to save your work and protect all of your original photos. Follow these tips so you can easily go back and make changes to an edit or even start from scratch.



Use New Layers

Always work on a new Layer. Whether you're adding text or you're removing a blemish with the Spot Healing Brush Tool. This way you never change any of the pixels on your original photo and you can always go back to change or remove adjustments.



Use Layer Masks

Layer Masks are your best friend. When you want to hide part of a Layer, don't use the Eraser Tool and delete valuable information. Simply use a Layer Mask to make those parts invisible. You can change or remove Masks at any time!



Save a PSD

Save your work! A PSD will save all of the Layers and adjustments you've made. Later on, if you decide you want to go back and change or remove an edit, you don't have to start from scratch.

Ready to Master Photoshop?

There's never been a better time to learn Photoshop. Whether you've never opened the program before or you're looking for a quick refresher, [The Beginner's Guide to Photoshop](#) is the BEST way to jump in-and we're there with you every step of the way.



Basic Retouching

Learn to improve your photos and help people look their best with retouching in Photoshop. Remove minor blemishes, clean up stray hairs, add shape and definition, and make sure your subjects are the center of attention.



Basic Compositing

Learn to combine multiple photos to solve common issues. Were you the one person in a group photo that wasn't smiling? We show you how to composite two images together to make sure everyone has a picture perfect expression, every time.



Color & Style

After you learn the basics, it's time to develop your style. Learn how to add style and color to your photos and even create popular special effects like a double exposure. Once you finish [The Beginner's Guide to Photoshop](#), you'll be ready to tackle any one of the other 150+ PRO tutorials in our library.