

# Photoshop Tips and Tricks

## Working with masks

- To quickly fill the mask with black or white, make sure that black and white are set as the foreground and background color. It doesn't matter which one is which.
  - To fill the mask with the foreground color press ALT + Delete (or Backspace)
  - To fill the mask with the background color press CTRL + Delete (or Backspace)

## Quickly switch foreground/background colors

If you do any masking, you'll be using black or white as your foreground color to paint on the mask. It is often useful to switch back and forth between black and white when painting a mask.

- If your foreground/background colors are not already black and white, press D
- To switch foreground and background, press X. Each time you press the X key it will toggle the colors

## Quick, temporary tool change

While using one tool, hold the shortcut key for another tool to quickly switch to it, do your work, let go of the key and the original tool is back.

## Max Zoom and Zoom to Fit

Use CTRL + 1 for zoom to 100% and use CTRL + 0 to zoom the image to fit the space in Photoshop. Also useful when using Transform and the bounding box is off the screen. After selecting Transform, then press CTRL + 0 to see the entire bounding box

## Changing Opacity

Changing the opacity of any tool can be quickly done with the number keys. Pressing the number 1 will make it 10%, 2 = 20%, etc. 0 = 100% for values in between multiples of 10, just type the numbers quickly. 15 = 15%, etc.

## Isolating layers for more efficient workflow

If you have a lot of layers and are tired of scrolling through them looking for a particular layer, try this. CTRL-click to select the layers you are currently working on the most. With the Move tool active, right-click in the document (not the Layers panel) and select Isolate Layers. All the non-selected layers will be hidden in the Layers panel. When finished, right-click in the document and choose Isolate Layers again.

## Precise cursor

If you want to see a precise, or you see a precise cursor and wonder how it got there, press the Caps Lock key. A precise cursor is like a cross hairs. For example, the brush tool's circle that shows you its size, disappears when the precise cursor is turned on.

## Custom shortcut keys

You can create your own shortcut keys for the commands/features you frequently use.

- From the menu, select Edit > Keyboard Shortcuts or press ALT + CTRL + Shift + K
- In the "Keyboard Shortcuts" tab, select "Shortcuts for": "Application Menus"
- Under "Application Menu Command", find the menu item for which you want to create a shortcut
- Click on the menu item and the cursor will appear in a box to the right

## Photoshop Tips and Tricks

- Press the key combination you want to use for the shortcut. If the combination is already used, it will tell you what it is used for. You can then either choose to accept it or try a different combination
- When you're done, click OK and then your command is now available with your shortcut key combination

### Learn shortcut keys

Common shortcuts in addition to those above (to check your shortcuts go to Edit > Keyboard shortcuts in the menu or press ALT + CTRL + Shift + K)

- Switching between tools (to switch between tools with the same letter, hold the Shift key along with the letter)
  - B – Brush
  - M – Marquee
  - C – Crop
  - W – Selection tool
  - S – Stamp (clone)
  - Z – Zoom
  - V - Move
- [ - decrease brush size
- ] – increase brush size
- CTRL + D – Delete all current selections
- CTRL + T – Transform
- CTRL + Z – Undo
- CTRL + C – Copy
- CTRL + V – Paste
- CTRL + J – Copy current layer
- CTRL + S – save the file

### Hide all but current layer

Alt + click on the Eye icon of a layer to hide all the other layers. Do it again to make all layers visible again.

### Zoom on composite layers

If you are compositing several subjects and they are each on their own layer, you may want to zoom into to the objects separately to work on them. To quickly do that, hold the ALT key and click on any one of the subject layers.

### Viewing the same image, both zoomed in and zoomed out

- With the image file open, in the menu, select Window > Arrange > New Window “filename.psd”. This will be at the bottom of the Arrange menu.
- Then select Window > Arrange > 2-up Vertical (or 2-up Horizontal)
- With the Zoom tool selected, uncheck “Zoom all windows” in the options bar at the top
- On one side, you can then zoom in and on the other side you can zoom out

## Photoshop Tips and Tricks

**Auto invert mask while copying** – Hold ALT+Shift when dragging a mask from one layer to another

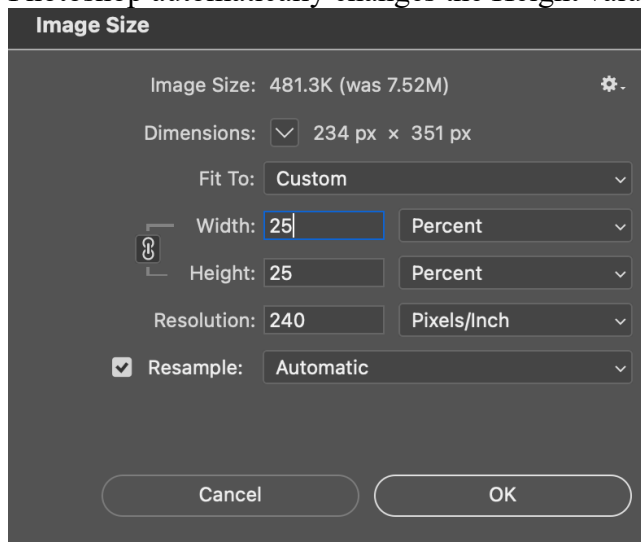
### Adding a Creative Vignette in Photoshop

Often, a good final touch on a photograph is a slight (or sometimes extreme) vignette. There are many applications or plug ins that do this for you, but one simple technique uses paint brush strokes and layer blending modes. The first step is to add a black solid color adjustment layer. Next set the blend mode on the black solid color layer to Soft Light. Fill the layer mask on the Solid Color layer with black. Now using your brush, with white as the foreground color, set to a low opacity (20-40%) and soft edges, brush in the areas you want to be darkened for the vignette. Adjust your brush opacity to control how smoothly your vignette blends into the base layer.

### Easy way to resize for the web

Open your image in Photoshop then view your image at 100% (select View from menu, 100%). Use CTRL Key and the minus key together to reduce the viewing size to the size you wish the image to be displayed on the web. Make note of the percentage number it has been reduced too in the top of the image next to the file name (or lower left of the Photoshop window). For example it might say “image.psd @25% (RGB/8). So the image view has been reduced from 100% to 25%.

Now go to Image > Image Size in the menu. Be sure the Resample box is checked. You can resize the image based on reduced percentage. Simply change the measurement type for the Width and Height from Pixels to Percent, then enter the percentage value noted above for Width. Photoshop automatically changes the Height value. Click OK.



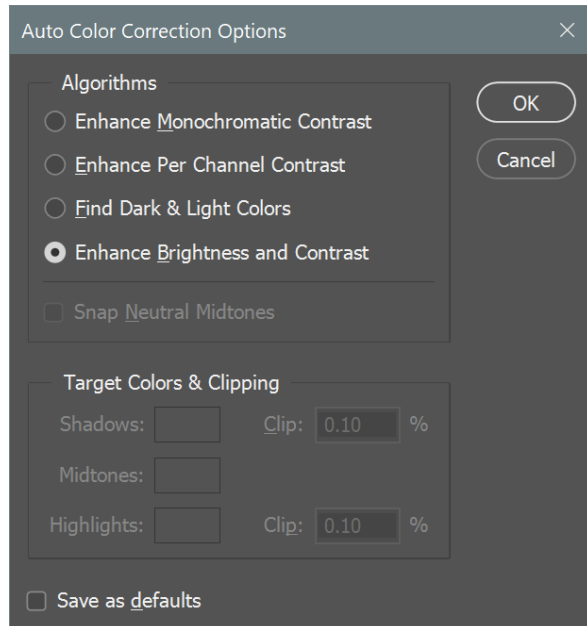
Now select File > Save a Copy to save image as a Jpg.

### Quick color correction

- In Photoshop, select a Curves layer
- In the Curves dialog/properties window, click on Auto. If it still doesn't look good, hold the Alt key and click Auto again

## Photoshop Tips and Tricks

- This will bring up another properties window, like this



- Click on other algorithms at the top. “Find Dark & Light Colors” often works the best
- Make sure the “Snap Neutral Midtones” box is **unchecked**
- If you like the result and want to repeat it for other photos, check the “Save as defaults” box on the bottom and then the OK button. Then the next time you click on Auto in the Curves properties window it will repeat this look

### Closing several photos at once in Photoshop

If you have several photos open and want to close them all, hold the Alt key while closing one photo (by clicking the ‘x’ to close). This will close all the photos. If you have made any changes to any photo since you last saved it, you will be prompted to save it before it closes.

## **Photoshop Tips and Tricks**

### **Bonus Lightroom tips**

#### **Center the Radial Filter tool**

In ACR or the Lightroom Develop module Select the Radial Filter tool. Hold down the CTRL key and double-click photo. It will create a centered oval filter that you can then adjust.

#### **Speeding up full screen preview**

When you select a thumbnail and then hit the space bar to see a preview that fills the screen, if there is a bit of a delay, you may be able to reduce that delay. Go to Edit > Catalog Settings and select the middle tab, called File Handling. In the Standard Preview Size, select Auto. This will automatically render the photo in the size that matches the resolution of your screen. Preview qualities of either Low or Medium will also speed it up.