

COVERS
PHOTOSHOP

3.0

014

Photoshop Techniques

How to

REMOVE OBJECTS FROM A PHOTO.

Removing unwanted objects from a photo requires an eye for detail and a strong understanding of Adobe Photoshop's selection and cloning tools. No single solution will work for every type of photograph. The following three techniques provide a starting point for most photos. As you become more familiar with Photoshop's tools, you may develop additional techniques for different types of situations.

In most cases, the easiest way to remove an unwanted object is to try using existing parts of the photo to cover it up. For detail work, Photoshop's cloning tool allows more flexible controls. In some cases, it is necessary to completely recreate missing parts of an image using Photoshop's drawing tools.

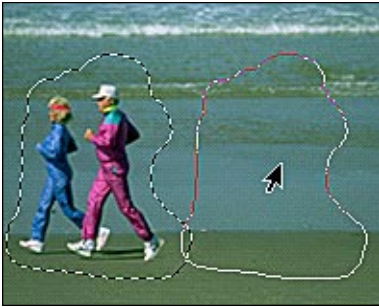
This issue's techniques are broken into three main sections.

- Copying feathered selections.
- Pasting into selections.
- Using Photoshop's painting tools.

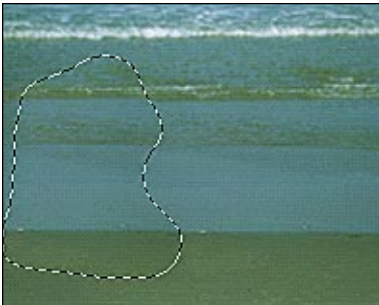




Option 1, Step 1



Option 1, Step 2



Option 1, Step 3,4

Option 1: Copying feathered selections

In some photographs the quickest way to remove unwanted objects is by covering them with parts of the current background. This approach works best in photos that already have large areas of unspoiled background to work with.

1. Outline the unwanted object with the Lasso tool.

When you outline your object, leave some distance between your outline and the object. If your outline is too tight, the original object may not be completely covered when the selection is feathered.

2. Hold down Command and Option and drag the outline.

PC Users: Hold down CNTRL and ALT keys.

These two keys let you move the selection outline without moving any part of your photograph. Move the outline to a part of the photo's background that is similar to the area you wish to cover. Look for sections with similar textures and colors.

3. Choose Feather from the Select menu.

Feathering creates a soft edge to your selection. Feathering the selection is critical to create a smooth blending between the copied background and the original image. This example uses a feather of 6 pixels.

Hint: Keep in mind that your selection will feather both inward and outward from the original outline. For larger amounts of feathering, you will need to leave a wider border around the original object.

4. Hold down Option and drag the selection back.

PC Users: Hold down ALT key.

With this key held down, you make a copy of the selection you are moving. If you do not hold down Option, you will leave a white area where your selection outline was dragged from.

Hint: You can use your cursor keys to refine the final positioning of your copied selection.

Example in use:

The tops of the two people were fairly easy to remove. By duplicating feathered sections of the background you can see how we covered the tops of the bodies.

Notice that we kept well away from the edges of the canoe in this step. The remaining two techniques in this issue provided the control to work in closely with the canoe.





Option 2, Step 1



Option 2, Step 2a



Option 2, Step 2b

Option 2: Pasting into selections

Look at our example of the canoe. To remove the hand splash from the side, we could copy a section of the waterline from the boat's bow. We want the waterline itself to fade smoothly into our existing photo, but the top edge of the canoe needs to remain defined.

Step 1

Copy a feathered section of the photo to memory.

A: Select a part of your photo to use as a cover.

In this case we've selected a rectangular area from the bow of the canoe where the waterline is untouched.

B: Choose Feather from the Select menu.

As in the previous technique, feathering the selection creates a soft edge to help blend the sections of your photo together.

C: Choose Copy from the Edit menu.

The feathered section is copied to memory for the next step.

Step 2

Paste the feathered shape into a selection outline.

A: Create a selection outline to paste into.

In this example, we've carefully outlined the side of the canoe using the Lasso tool. Notice that we left enough space at the bottom for the water to feather in naturally.

B: Choose Paste Into from the Edit menu.

The copied section from Step 1 is pasted inside the outline. We moved the pasted section to match up with the original waterline. Notice that while the upper rim of the canoe is kept well defined, the water in the lower section blends in naturally, obscuring the original hand and splash.

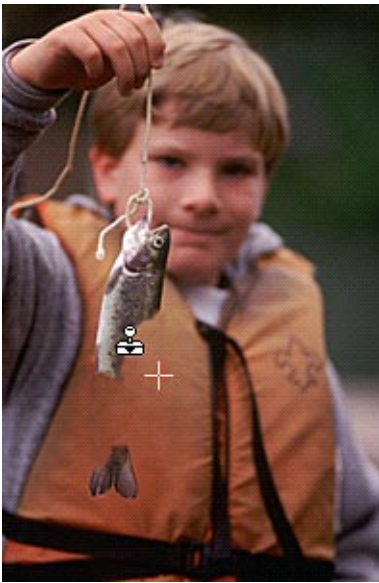
Example in use:

Removing the woman's hand and water splash turned out to be fairly simple. We used a feathered selection of the bow of the boat and repeated it several times.

By pasting the selection into a outline of the canoe's side, we could keep the top edge sharp and clear, while letting copied shape feather naturally into the existing water.

We also used this same technique to trim the water more tightly to the top of the canoe.





Using the rubber stamp

By slowly working inward from different sides, you can remove small unwanted details or objects from most photos.

Option 3: Using Photoshop's painting tools

Photoshop has a number of tools you can use to paint over unwanted parts of the photo. Be creative with Photoshop's tools. The basic use of the rubber stamp tool (circled to right) is covered here.



1. **Select the Rubber Stamp tool.**
2. **Hold down Option and click to 'load' the tool.**

PC Users: Hold down the ALT key.

When you hold this key down, the tip of your stamp tool will turn white. Clicking on your image "loads" the stamp with that part of the image. Click on an area near the edge of the object you want to remove.

3. **Paint over the edge of the object.**

When you paint, Photoshop covers over your object with a clone of the area you clicked on in the previous step. A small + icon shows what part of the photo you are using to paint over your object.

4. **Repeat steps using other parts of the image.**

By slowly painting inward from different sides, you can remove objects from the original photograph.

Hint: To remove seams in your cloning, try setting your brush opacity to 50% and repainting the flawed areas with other parts of the image.



Example in use:

To finish removing the two people, we had to draw in the final parts of the canoe that were missing. The inside of the canoe was painted with the light brown color that originally showed up between the two people.

The cloning tool was used to clean-up small details, and remove the parts of the arms covering the metal edge of the canoe.

Note: Artistic skill is useful when you are trying to create missing elements.