


YouTube Resources

See the videos below to review essential skills for selecting and masking.

 [Video: Layers and Layer Mask](#) (cheezy but effective tutorial on the basics)

[Videos: Adobe](#) ("Making Selections," see Videos #2 and #3 for Quick select and Select & Mask)

 [Video: Select and Mask](#)

Preparations for This Tutorial

We are going to give a lion a new background, placing him on the Savanna.

1) Download These Images

and open them in Photoshop:

www.julietdavis.com/COM302/tutorial_layermask/lion.jpg (free desktop wallpaper)

www.julietdavis.com/COM302/tutorial_layermask/savanna.jpg (free desktop wallpaper)



Lion Image



Savanna Image



Your Combined Image (result)

2) Combine Images in One Photoshop Document

- Copy and paste the image of the lion into the savanna file so that it appears in its own layer on top.

There are several ways to do this. For example, copy and paste:

- 1) Open lion image and select all (Command-A or Ctrl-A).
- 2) Copy (Edit > Copy OR Command-C or Ctrl-C).
- 3) Open Savanna image and paste (Edit > Paste OR Command-V or Ctrl-V).

You will see the lion paste on its own layer on top of the Savanna image.

- To scale the lion to a size within the document, go to Edit > Free Transform and shift-drag to constrain the image as you scale it down any further.
- Save your document as lionlayermask.psd and update your saves often as you work. You can also take snapshots in the history panel in case you need to go back to a key point in your work.

3) Try Out a Simple Layer Mask

It can be tempting at this point to start erasing the background around the lion. DON'T DO IT! ☺ Instead, just one more click, you can mask that background so that you don't damage it permanently in case you need to make changes later. Here's how to do that:

- Select the layer with the lion and click the "Add a Mask" button at the bottom of the Layers Panel. After you have done this, you will see two icons appear on the layer: on the left is the image; on the right is the mask. Click on the mask icon.
- Choose the paint brush tool on BLACK and start painting the background around the lion. Notice the brush becomes like the eraser tool making the background disappear so that the layer below shows through. However, it is not permanently destroying/erasing your image.
- Now choose the WHITE color for the brush and start painting in the same places. You will see the lion's background come back.

How to Use “Select and Mask” (for advanced selections)

The above steps for a simple layer mask will work well if you have a simple image. However, if you have wispy areas that need to be selected, you will need to use “Select and Mask” instead. Here’s how:

1) Select the Lion

- First, step back in your History panel so that your mask no longer appears on the lion.
- Click the “Quick Select” tool (behind the magic wand tool) and change the brush size by clicking the bracket keys on your keyboard (left bracket for smaller; right bracket for larger).
- Drag the quick select tool over the lion to see the “marching ants” make an approximate selection.
- Hold down the SHIFT key to add to the selection as you click or the ALT key to subtract from the selection as you click and drag the brush.
- Use any other selection tools you want (e.g., lasso tool), holding down shift or alt to add or subtract from your selection.
- Notice there will be areas where the lion’s fine hair mixes with the background. Keep those mixed areas out of your selection so that only the lion is selected, without any background areas (we’ll pick up the wispy ends on the background later).
- If you want to start over again at any point, deselect by clicking Command-D (Mac) or Ctrl-D (PC).

STEP 2: Use “Select and Mask”

- After you have selected your object (and you see the marching ants activated around your selection), click “Select and Mask” in top menu (or go to Select > Select and Mask). Notice that in older versions of Photoshop, this is called “Refine Edge” instead. Either way, a dialogue box opens.
- Click on View > Onion Skin.
- Move the “Transparency” arrow left and right. Notice it allows you to see the selection you have made by making the rest of the image transparent. Set the transparency to 50-75% or so, so you can see the edges where you made your selection AND the areas you have not yet selected but need to include (i.e., wispy hairs on the lion).
- Select the “Refine Edge” brush (it’s on the left tool menu, second tool down from the top).
- Paint over the wispy areas of lion’s hair that got left out of your selection before. DO NOT let your brush go into the area you already have selected—if you do that, the edges of your selection will start to disappear; instead, stay OUTSIDE that main selection and stay in the wispy areas to watch them appear.
- Click the “Show Edge” option (right menu) to see any areas you have missed out—so you can paint them in. Then, deselect “Show Edge.”
- Use any of the other sliders you need to smooth or feather edges, or to “shift edge” as needed.
- Under “Output Settings” on the right menu, check “Decontaminate Color” (so Photoshop can approximate the colors that need to be pulled in to make the image look natural). Temporarily, you will see artifacts added to the image.
- Under “View,” switch from Onion Skin to “On Layers” so that the artifacts go away and leave a natural look.
- Output: select “New Layer with Layer Mask” (the default) and click “Okay.” You will now be taken back to your normal Photoshop document. In the layer panel, you will see the new layer with a new layer mask on it.
- To edit the mask further by hand, click on the mask icon and choose the brush tool. Use BLACK to hide more of the lion or WHITE to reveal more of the lion.

STEP 3: Flip Image Horizontally and Remove Center Tree

- Flip the image horizontally by selecting the layer and then going to Edit > Transform > Flip Horizontal.
- Move the whole image where you want it by selecting the layer and using the move tool.
- To delete the middle tree from the background, 1) select the background layer, 2) select the tree roughly with the lasso or other tool, and 3) go to Edit > Fill and select “content aware” and Okay.

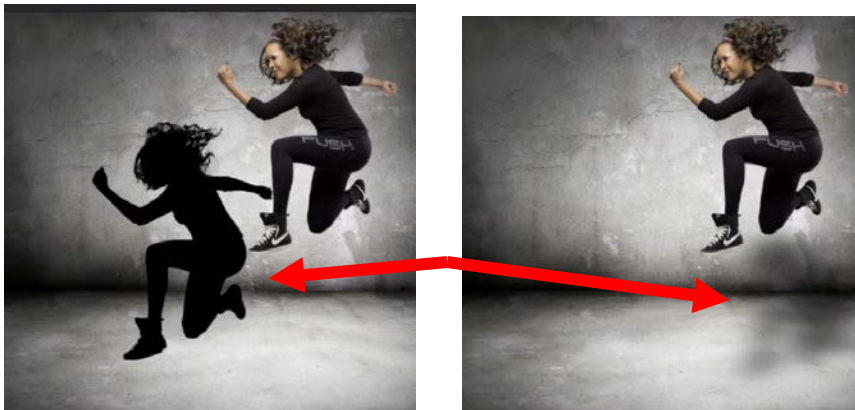
How to Create a Gradient on the Background if Needed



- Select the lion again. To do this, go to the layer with your mask, click on the mask icon and go to Select > Reselect. This selects the image you masked.
 - Now you're going to "inverse" your selection so that the area around the lion is selected instead of the lion itself (go to Select > Inverse).
 - Create a new layer on top of the old background and select that layer.
 - Select the gradient tool (under the paint bucket), and select BLACK in the color picker.
 - On the top menu, see the gradient selections; click the fly-down menu; select black to transparent.
 - Start drawing gradient lines from the outside of the image toward the lion, all around the head.
- Your lion will have a gradient background that feathers in toward the head but shows the background.
- You can easily add more images by masking them, copying, and pasting them into this document.

How to Add Shadows if Needed

This lion does not need a shadow, but some images do, and a drop shadow is not always adequate. Here's how to create a real shadow when you need one. Overview: Basically, you would copy and paste the image, then distort it to look like a shadow, and move it into position. Here's how:



CREDIT: [Video by Terri White](#)

- On the layer with the mask, select the mask icon and go to Select > Reselect (to select the lion).
- Copy and paste that selection (it will automatically paste onto its own new layer). Name it "Shadow."
- Use the move tool to move the shadow image to a position where a shadow would fall (e.g., underneath). Remember, if light is streaming onto an object, the shadow will appear on the other side, in the area where light is obstructed.
- Go to Image > Adjustment > Input levels (drag all the way to the right to turn the silhouette black) OR Image > Adjust > Exposure (drag all the way to the left). Click okay.
- Blur the silhouette by going to Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur (try setting it 80-90, very blurry)
- Lower the opacity (to about 78%).
- Move around the shadow to correspond to your light source.
- Edit > Free Transform, resize to squash it down horizontally and squash it up horizontally (like real shadows are).
- Bring opacity down even more as needed.