

## Masks & channels

Masks allow you to protect parts of an image. When you create a mask with a selection, the part not selected is masked or protected from editing.

Masks also allow you to reuse time-consuming selections. You can also use masks to create more complicated effects (for example, doing a filter and gradient at the same time.)

You can either use a quick mask, or save a mask permanently as an alpha channel in the channels palette.

Open up the giraffes images.

Save as PSD.

Select the magic wand tool.

```
tolerance 30
click on sky
go to select ..>inverse
```

Click on the quick mask button (under the foreground/background color) in tool bar.

Edit the quick mask

Select the brush tool...pick the right size to refine the mask.

You can add to the mask using black. You can subtract using white.

Save the file.

### **Saving a mask or selection as an alpha channel.**

Click back on the standard mode. This should turn the mask back into a selection.

In the Channels Palette, click on the second button at the bottom that says "save selection as channel".

Double-Click on Alpha 1 and rename to Giraffes.

You now have a mask you can reuse, either as a mask in the channel palette, or by turning it back into a selection by clicking on the first button at the bottom that says "load channel as selection".

### **Editing masks**

You can edit a mask in the channel palette.

As with the quick mask, you can add to the mask with black and subtract with white. In the channel palette you can also do different opacity by using shades of gray.

### **Applying a filter and a gradient to a masked selection**

In layers palette, select the background

In channels palette, load the giraffes as a selection.

Choose select -- inverse.

Click on the layers tab to make sure you have the background selected, and then choose...>

Filter ..> Artistic ..> Watercolor (or whatever filter you'd prefer)

Deselect

Save.

In the channels palette, select the giraffes, then click on the right arrow, and choose "duplicate channel".

Double-click on it and call it "gradient".

Select the gradient tool.

In the options bar, choose the black to white gradient.

Drag the gradient from top to bottom in the gradient channel.

In the channels palette, click the RGB to show the image.

Load the gradient as a selection. (The "dancing ants" should cover about half the image.)

Make sure the foreground and background colors are black and white respectively.

Press "delete" key to fill the selection with white.  
(Background)

Save.

### **Extracting fiddly bits**

Open the flowers pic.

Save as PSD.

[note if we wanted to use this in the giraffes, we would have to make sure the resolution matches (72 dpi)]

Choose Filter --> Extract

To extract an object, use the edge highlighter tool to outline the edge of what you'd want to extract. Check Brush size.

Outline one flower.  
(It's okay if you get some of the background too, because the tool will use the contrast to grab what you want.)

Fill in the flower.

Click Preview to see what you'll get. If you don't like what you've got, go down to the Preview pull-down and change it to Original. Then you can edit your extraction.

When you're happy with the extraction, click okay.

To use this in our giraffes pic, click on the move tool and then drag the flower into the giraffes file.

SAVE

Click on the edit menu and choose "free transform"

Resize the flower and rotate it so that it can be held in one of the giraffes' mouth.

Click on the background layer.

Select a part of the giraffe's mouth that's holding the flower (use freehand lasso).

Paste over top the flower layer.

Erase the sky from the small mouth layer to complete the illusion.

[if time allows: use mountains background.]