Select and Mask Workspace Tutorial

Heather Gillich

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What it is:

Select and Mask workspace is basically all of Photoshop's selection tools utilized in a single workspace to achieve a more accurate selection of any subject. It is really useful when needing to select a subject that embodies finer details such as hair, fur, etc.,.

Getting started:

- Open an image
- Choose select > select and mask OR make a selection using one of the individual selection tools and choose select and mask from the toolbar to bring up the workspace

Summary of Tools:

1. Quick Selection Tool – makes quick selections based on color and texture similarity when clicking or clicking and dragging over an area of an image. This tool makes a selection using Photoshop's own intuitiveness and has nothing to do with how precise you are in selecting the area.
2. Refine Edge Brush Tool - used to more accurately adjust the borders of an area of finer detail, such as hair, to the current selection. Brush sizes (and any other selection tool in the workspace) can be changed with the bracket keys.
3. Lasso Tool – allows for freehand selection of an area. This tool is only as precise as you make it and does not rely on Photoshop intuition to make a selection.
4. Polygonal Lasso Tool – used to draw straight-edged segments of a selection.
5. Hand Tool – this is just a navigation tool to navigate around your photo around the canvas.
6. Zoom Tool – used to magnify and navigate around the photo.

The tools on the right are used to refine the selection now made.

1. View mode – displays a variety of options you can choose to view your selection in to better see what you have actually selected.
2. Show Edge – shows the area you have refined.
3. Show Original – shows the original selection before any refinement has been made.
4. High Quality Preview – gives a more precise preview of the changes made in the workspace.
5. Transparency/Opacity – sets the transparency/opacity of the selected view mode.
6. Radius – sets the size of the selection border where edge refinement occurs. It is recommended to use a small radius setting for sharp edges and a large setting for softer edges.

7. Smart radius – sets the variable width refinement around the edge of your selection. This is useful in something like a portrait photo when you would need to select the hair and shoulders.
8. Smooth – reduces irregularities in the selection area for a smoother outline.
9. Contrast – transitions along the selection border to become more or less abrupt.
10. Shift Edge – moves soft-edged borders inward with negative values or outward with positive values. This is useful to remove unwanted background colors from selection edges.
11. Decontaminate Colors – replaces color fringes with the color of fully selected pixels in the image. By default, the strength of color replacement is proportional to the softness of selection edges and can be changed with adjustment of the slider. This tool requires output to a new layer because it is changing pixel color. It is recommended to retain the original layer so you are able to revert to it if necessary.
12. Output To – allows you to determine whether the refined selection becomes a selection, a mask on the current layer, or a new layer/document altogether.

Selecting and Masking in Practice:

1. Open the image in Photoshop
2. Unlock the layer
3. Choose the quick selection tool to bring up the "Select and Mask" workspace
4. Choose "Select and Mask" at the top of the tool bar
5. Choose "Onion Skin" as the view mode and set opacity to something around 20%
6. Choose the "Quick Selection" tool to select the bulk of the subject
7. Choose the "Refine Edge" tool and surface around the edges of the subject to more accurately select fine details
8. Choose the "Decontaminate Colors" box under "Output Settings"
9. Choose "Output to" as "New Layer with Layer Mask"
10. Choose "OK"

Tutorial Link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5vT0lyKSTg#action=share