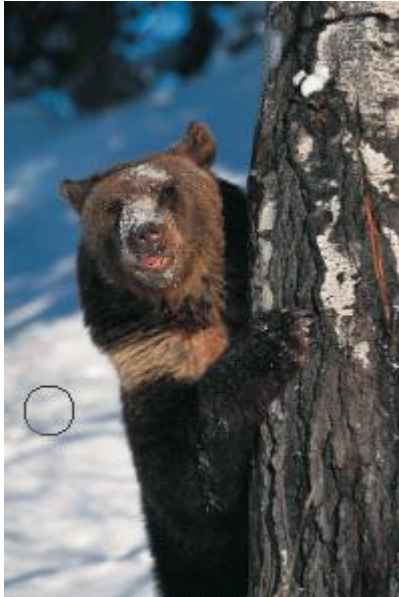


Quick Mask: Placing Images Into Images

-Brian Hogan

This bear, a stock image included with Photoshop 6.0, is hanging around on this tree, not bothering anyone. It might be nice to have that graphic available to us for use on a web site for some reason.

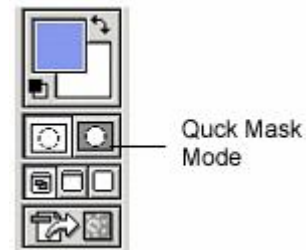


But let's say that we want just the bear, and not the sky, snow. We want just the bear and the tree for our website.

We could use the **Magic Wand** tool or the **Lasso** tool to draw our selection area. That can be cumbersome, and can lead to mixed results.

There is a much better way to select an area, and it is known as the **Quick Mask** technique. Quick masks allow you to select a precise area, which can then be copied, removed, saved, or imported into another graphic.

The **Quick Mask** button is located on the tool palette underneath the **Background Color** button. Once this mode is selected, you can use the **Paintbrush** tool to select an area. In the **Quick Mask** mode, any area you color using the **Paintbrush** will not be a selection area when you return to the **Standard mode**.



In this example, I am going to color in the background, instead of the bear. This will select the bear in the picture, which I can then simply remove once I go back to the Standard mode.

It can be a little confusing until you realize that selecting something in Quick Mask mode means you are NOT selecting it in the Standard mode!!!

If you make a mistake when coloring, you can use the Eraser tool, which will deselect an area.

Tips:

- Use a large brush for the large areas
- Use the marquee tool for larger areas, then switch to Quick Mask mode and color in the rest
- Use a small brush and zoom in to select small spaces

- Use a stylus graphics tablet for more precision

After I've colored in the entire selection, my picture should look like the figure to the right. Everything that want to remove has been colored in with the paintbrush, and I can now switch back to Standard mode.



Notice that when you switch to Standard Mode, the area will no longer be colored in, but will instead have the little selection "ants" running around the area. This selection can be treated just like any other.

For example, we can hit the **Delete** key and completely remove the bear from the picture. Or we can go to the **Select** menu and choose **Inverse**, which will then select the background. If we select the inverse and then press **Delete**, we can remove the background.

What we end up with is a nice clean-looking picture of a bear hanging from a tree. We can now use **Dodge** and **Burn** to correct the lighting, or we can use the **Smudge** and **Blur** tools to smooth out the rough edges left over from the Quick Mask.

