EXTRACTING CLOUDS WITHOUT SKY – (full version of Photoshop only)

1. First you need a high resolution image of big fluffy clouds. The larger the image, the better the result.
    For best results, it needs to be at least the same file size as the image you plan to put the clouds into.

    OPTION: *Convert your image to black and white first. Use curves or levels to increase contrast.*

Thanks for letting me use your image, SC!

2. With the image open in Photoshop, press the following keys all at once: Control/Alt/Shift/~
    On a Mac, that's Command/Option/Shift/~

    (That last squiggly thing is a "tilde". The Tilde key is located just above the Tab key).
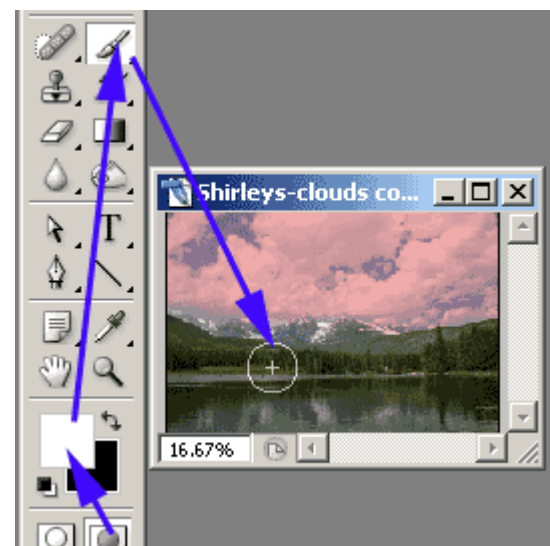
3. You just selected all the brightest areas of the image. It usually selects more than you want, though.
    To get rid of the unwanted areas, press Q on the keyboard to enter Quick Mask Mode.
    All the selected areas will be red.

    Choose a soft brush and use White to paint away the red areas you don't want. Press Q again to return.
    If you still see "marching ants" on areas you don't want to move, press Q again and paint them away.
    (if this is confusing, see my Quick Mask Selection tutorial)

Snow and reflections on the water were also selected

Enter Quick Mask. Paint unwanted areas with White
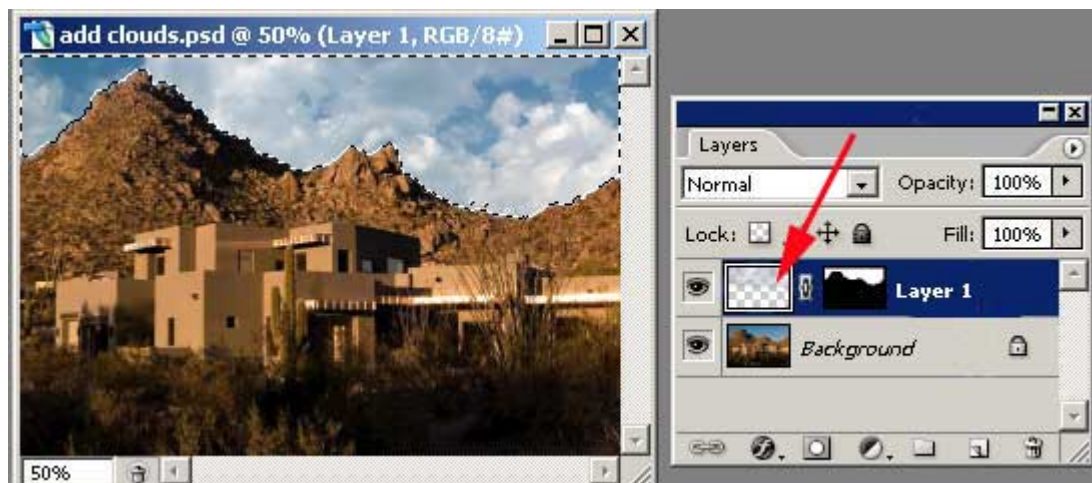
4. When you see red on ONLY the areas you want selected, press Q again to go back to normal.
    Your selection should now only include the clouds.

5. Open up the image that needs clouds. Select the sky. *(Two clicks of Magic Wand worked in my image).*

6. Now <u>click back on the Clouds image to make it active</u>. With the selection showing, Click EDIT>COPY. Next….Click back on the image you want to put the clouds into and click EDIT><u>PASTE INTO</u>.

    The clouds will appear in the selection area. Note that you now have a new layer with a MASK attached.

7. NOW THE FUN! You can move these clouds around! It's a little tricky so follow the steps carefully! First you need to get rid of the selection. SELECT>DESELECT. Next, click on the cloud icon on Layer 1. It should then have a little black line around it. Next….click on the little LINK between the cloud icon and the Mask. This will UNLINK the mask from the clouds.

8. Get the MOVE TOOL. Click on the clouds in the image and drag them anywhere you want! If needed, use the Transform Tool to size or distort them until they closely match your image. Make tonal corrections if needed.