

REMOVE UNWANTED ELEMENTS – like relatives 😊



Above left is a beautiful photo of my Danish cousin Michael, his wife Tanya and his mother-in-law. Removing Michael's mother-in-law from this photo was relatively easy since she's standing a little to the side. Here's how:

1. First, I used the marquee tool to make a selection of everything to the right side of his mother-in-law getting as close to her arm as I could.



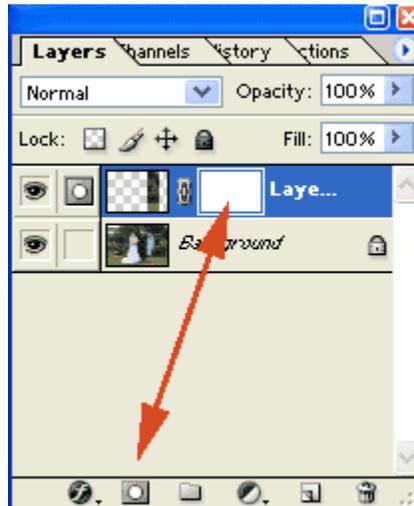
2. I then put this selection on its own layer by going to "Layer" "New" "layer via copy". (Ctrl/Cmd + J)

3. With this layer active (click on it to make it active), I selected the move tool (V) and moved the selection to the left until it totally covered his mother-in-law. This also ended up covering part of Michael's arm.



Note: To make your selection move perfectly straight, you can use the arrow keys on your keyboard. This is especially helpful when you need to move slightly. Hold the Shift Key and it will move 10 pixels at a time.

4. With the selection layer still active, I clicked on the "layer mask" icon on the bottom of the layer's palette. It's the one that looks kind of like a square donut. OR you can go to "Layer" "Add Layer Mask" and "reveal all". This puts a white mask to the right in the selection layer.



MASKS: In a nutshell, masks work like an On/Off Switch. A White Mask lets everything on a layer show. A Black Mask will hide what's on a layer. In this case the contents layer is a section of the photograph.

5. I then enlarged the photo to 200% or more. When you work that closely, you can use smaller brushes which ultimately produce a much better result. I then click on the mask just to make sure it's active. I then move the image into position so I can see the area to be worked on. You can use the move tool, the scroll bars of the image to move it or use the Navigator but here's my favorite tip:

TIP: Hold down the spacebar. It will turn your cursor into a hand no matter which tool you are using. Now can now click and drag your image to find the area to be worked on.

6. I picked a fairly small brush with a soft edge. With "Black" (100% opacity) I started at the top of the photo where the selection began and painted over the edge from the top of the edge to the bottom. As I'm painting, those areas disappear and reveal what's on the layer below. If I happened to reveal something I wanted hidden, I just switched my paint color to "White" (press the X key) and paint over that area again. I switched between black and white until the two layers were blended. Remember, Black is hiding areas of the selection layer so if I make a mistake, I just paint with White to reveal it again.

7. I then flattened the image (go to "Layer" and "flatten image"). I used the rubber stamp tool to "clone" Michael's sleeve over his mother-in-law's hand. I also used the rubber stamp to fine tune the merged areas.

8. Finally....I cropped the photo to balance it.

Once you become comfortable working with Masks, you'll find endless uses for them. For instance, every Adjustment Layer comes with a Mask (did you notice that?). So....if you want to turn of all or part of the Adjustment in some areas, just paint in that area with Black at varying opacities!