

# **A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO ADOBE PHOTOSHOP**

**KAYLA HUMPHREY  
ENGLISH 495**



## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Figures</b>	3
<b>Introduction</b>	4
<b>Section 1: Overview</b>	4
1.1 Understanding the Interface	4
1.2 Understanding Layers	5
1.3 Understanding Masks	6
<b>Section 2: Beginning Your Project</b>	6
2.1 Importing Photos	6
2.2 Cropping Photos	7
2.3 Adjusting Image Colors	8
2.3 Removing Objects from Photos	8
2.4 Using a Layer Masks	10
2.5 Using Clipping Masks	12
2.6 Applying Filters	14
2.7 Exporting Photos	15

## Table of Figures

Figure 1: The interface layout screen.....	4
Figure 2: The layers panel.....	5
Figure 3: The layers visibility panel.....	5
Figure 4: A layer mask example.....	6
Figure 5: The file drop-down menu.....	7
Figure 6: The crop tool icon.....	7
Figure 8: The cropping results.....	8
Figure 9: The duplicate layer location.....	8
Figure 10: The lasso tool icon.....	8
Figure 11: The “Content Aware Fill” option.....	9
Figure 12: Adjustments menu.....	9
Figure 13: An adjustment windows.....	10
Figure 14: The “select and mask” location.....	10
Figure 15: The selection/brush tool options.....	10
Figure 16: The “select and mask” process.....	11
Figure 17: An image with a layer mask.....	11
Figure 18: “Free Transform” tool location.....	12
Figure 19: Using the “Free Transform” tool.....	12
Figure 20: The Layers visibility panel part 2.....	13
Figure 21: Creating a text layer.....	13
Figure 22: The type tool icon.....	13
Figure 23: The shape tool icon.....	13
Figure 24: Rearranging layers.....	14
Figure 25: The clipping mask effect.....	14
Figure 26: Adjustment layer icon.....	14
Figure 27: The layer menu.....	14
Figure 28: Rearranging layers part 2.....	15
Figure 29: “Convert to smart object” menu option.....	15
Figure 30: The filter gallery.....	16
Figure 31: Exporting your photo.....	16

# Introduction

Welcome to Adobe Photoshop, an excellent image and graphic editing software that will take your creativity to a new level. This introductory guide is for all beginners who wish to learn how to use Adobe Photoshop but need help knowing where to start. The guide will cover the layout and the concept of layers and masks that all beginners should know before exploring different editing methods you can practice as you become familiar with the program.

## Section 1: Overview

This section of the guide will introduce you to the layout of the Photoshop interface and the concepts of layers and masks in the program.

### 1.1 Understanding the Interface

The following section provides a general layout of the user interface in Adobe Photoshop. Refer to figure 1 for the standard Photoshop interface layout.

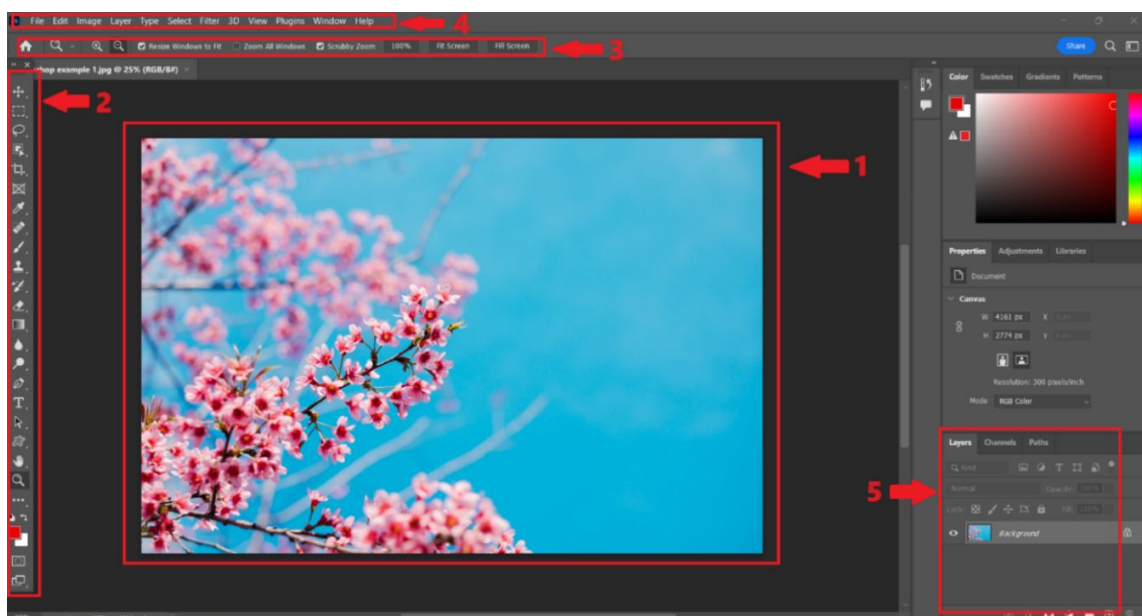


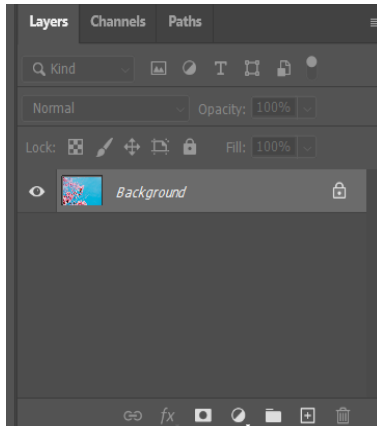
Figure 1: The interface layout screen.

1. Project Window
2. Tool Bar
3. Control Bar
4. Menu Bar
5. Layers Panel

Note: While the tool bar's different panels can be moved according to user preference, we recommend using the standard layout as you learn more about Adobe Photoshop.

## 1.2 Understanding Layers

As part of your introduction to Photoshop, it is important to understand what layers are before beginning your project.



Since photo editing can result in changes that cannot be reversed without starting over, Adobe Photoshop allows you to use layers to stack different graphics on top of the photo without permanently changing the original image.

The layers panel is in the bottom right corner of the project screen. Refer to figure 2 to see what the layers panel looks like.

Figure 2: The layers panel.

Each individual layer can be edited without the effect of other layers that have been created. The best way to do this is to create a duplicate layer of the photo before beginning any other edits. This method allows you to move the layer around in the layers panel to achieve specific effects. You can also delete and create new duplicate layers if the edits are not what you wanted. The second section of this guide will practice creating duplicate layers as you learn the different photo editing methods.

You can also hide layers if you need to remove the edit from the image layer. Refer to figure 3 for the location of the visibility panel.

Keep layers in mind as you begin your Photoshop experience. They will be mentioned again throughout the guide.

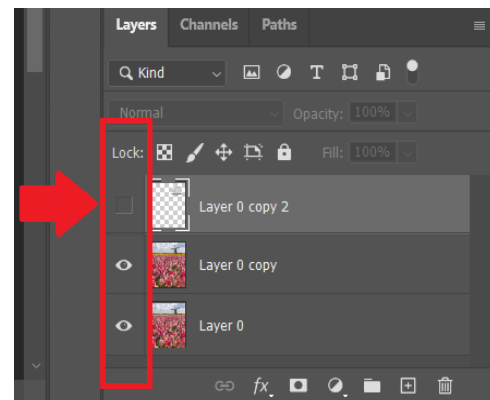
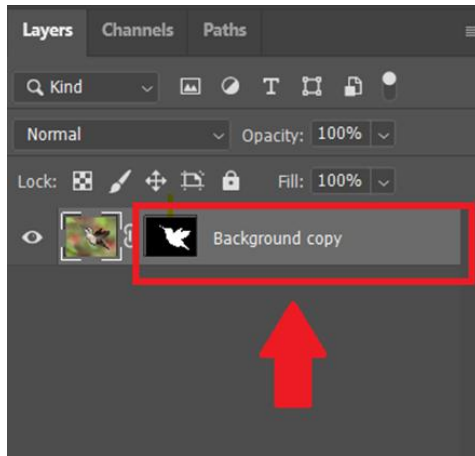


Figure 3: The layers visibility panel.

## 1.3 Understanding Masks

It is also important to understand what masks are before beginning your project in Photoshop.



Masks are edits to a specific part of the overall image layer. They can be used to hide parts of the image layer without permanently removing the pixels in the image. In other words, if layers protect the base image from destructive edits, the mask similarly protects the layers. Refer to figure 4 to see an example of a layer mask.

Figure 4: A layer mask example.

As part of the introduction to Photoshop, this guide will show you how to create the following types of masks:

**Layer Masks**- used to control the transparency of a layer and often used when combining two images. Refer to section 2.4 of the guide to learn how to use layer masks.

**Clipping Masks**- used to provide the top layer transparency to the layer underneath. It is often used when layering an image into a specific shape. Refer to section 2.6 on how to create clipping masks.

## Section 2: Beginning Your Project

This section of the guide will show you how to begin your project, several editing techniques you can perform, and how to export your project when finished.

### 2.1 Importing Photos

To begin your Photoshop experience, you will need the photo you wish to edit. The following instructions will show you how to import your photo into Adobe Photoshop.

1. Click on "File" in the menu bar.
2. Select "Open" from the drop-down menu. Refer to figure 5 for the location.

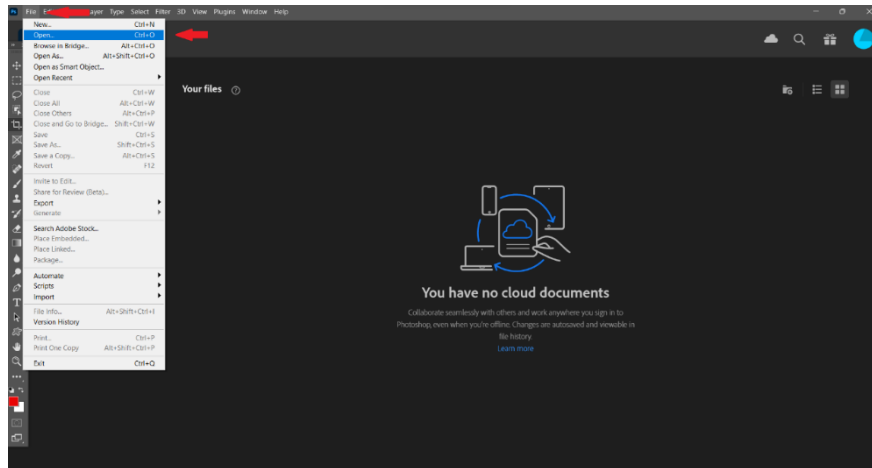


Figure 5: The file drop-down menu.

3. Select the photo you wish to edit from the pop-up window.

Note: You can also drag and drop your image into Photoshop window.

## 2.2 Cropping Photos

If you want to improve the framing of your photo or cut something out of it completely, then cropping is an excellent tool to learn. The following instructions will show you how to crop images in Photoshop. Before you proceed, be aware of any crops done while affecting the photo layer directly as opposed to other edits.

1. Select the Crop Tool from the toolbar. Refer to figure 6 for the icon appearance.



Figure 6: The crop tool icon.

*A window with border brackets will appear within the photo.*

2. Using the border brackets, frame the crop window over the part of the image you wish to keep. Refer to figure 7 to see the crop window appearance.



Figure 7: The crop tool window.



3. Press “enter” on your keyboard to complete the crop. Refer to figure 8 to see the final result of cropping a photo.

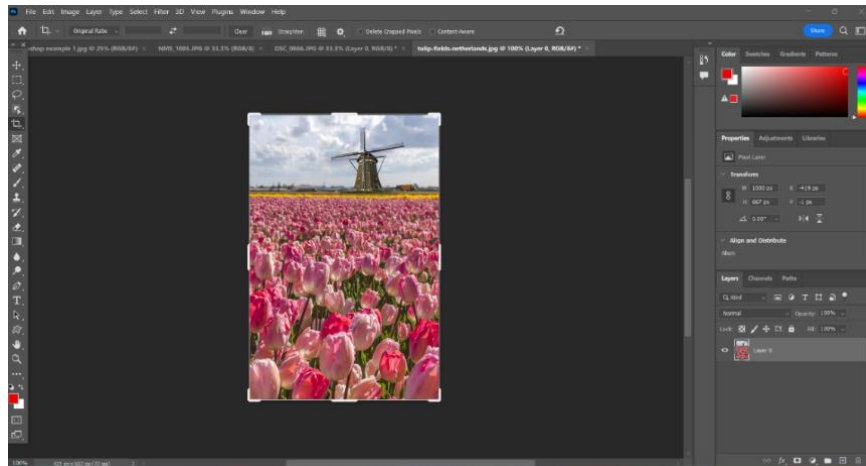


Figure 8: The cropping results.

## 2.3 Removing Objects from Photos

Is there something in your photo you do not want to be there? The following instructions will show you how to remove undesirable objects from your photo easily.

1. In the layers panel, right-click on your image layer to open the layer menu.
2. Select “duplicate layer” in the menu to preserve the base image. A new window will pop up, allowing you to name the new layer. Refer to Figure 11 for the location of this option.



Figure 9: The duplicate layer location.

3. Select the lasso tool from the toolbar to draw around the objects you wish to remove. Refer to figure 10 for the icon appearance.



Figure 10: The lasso tool icon.

Note: You can also select the Object Selection Tool from the tool bar to have the program automatically select the object you wish to remove.



- Click “Edit” in the menu bar.  
*A drop-down menu will appear.*
- Select “Content Aware Fill” and a preview window will appear to show what the picture will look like once the object is removed. Refer to Figure 11 to see what the option looks like.

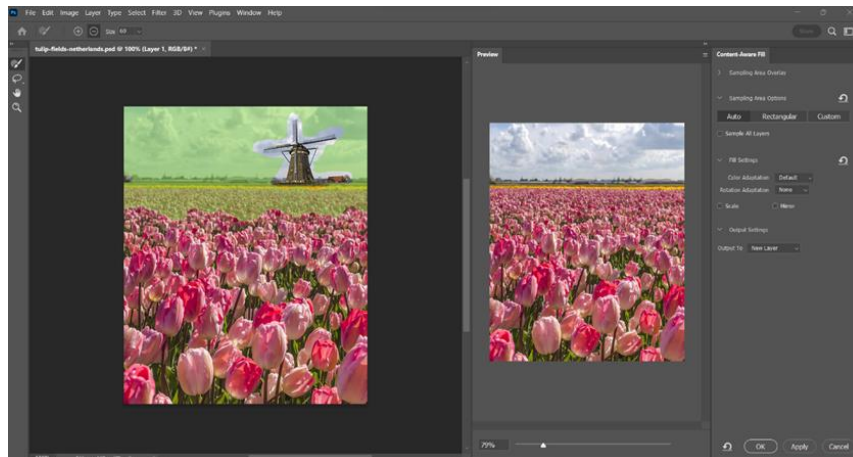


Figure 11: The “Content Aware Fill” option.

- If you are satisfied with your edit, select “OK”.

## 2.4 Adjusting Image Colors

Is your photo darker than you wanted? Do some of the colors in the photo seem slightly weak? These problems can be fixed by using the adjustments feature in Photoshop. This section of the guide will show you how to find the adjustments feature in photoshop and how to make a color adjustment.

- Create a Duplicate layer.
- Click on “Image” in the menu bar.
- Select “Adjustments” from the drop menu, and the second drop-down menu with the color adjustments options will open. Refer to figure 12 for the location.

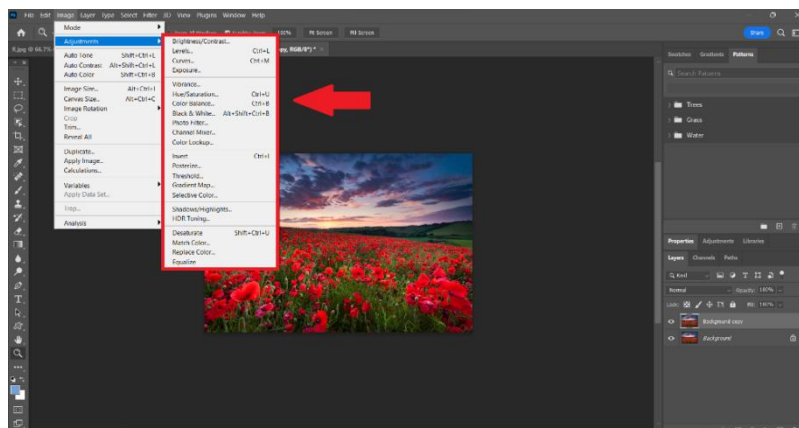


Figure 12: Adjustments menu

4. Select the adjustment you wish to make, and a second window will open to allow you to toggle the settings. Refer to figure 13 to see an example of an adjustment window.

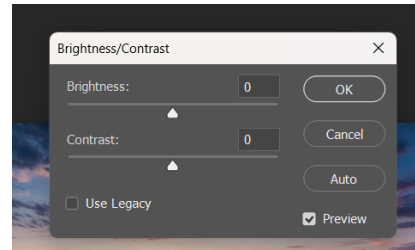


Figure 13: An adjustment windows.

Note: Each adjustment window will look different from each other.

5. Click the OK button in the window when finished.

## 2.5 Using a Layer Masks

Layer masks are often used to add pictures to other pictures or change an entire background. The following instructions will show you how to use this feature in Photoshop.

1. Click on “Select” in the menu bar.
2. Select “Select and Mask” from the drop-down menu. A grid screen will cover the photo and a new selection tool bar will appear. Refer to figure 14 for the location of this option.

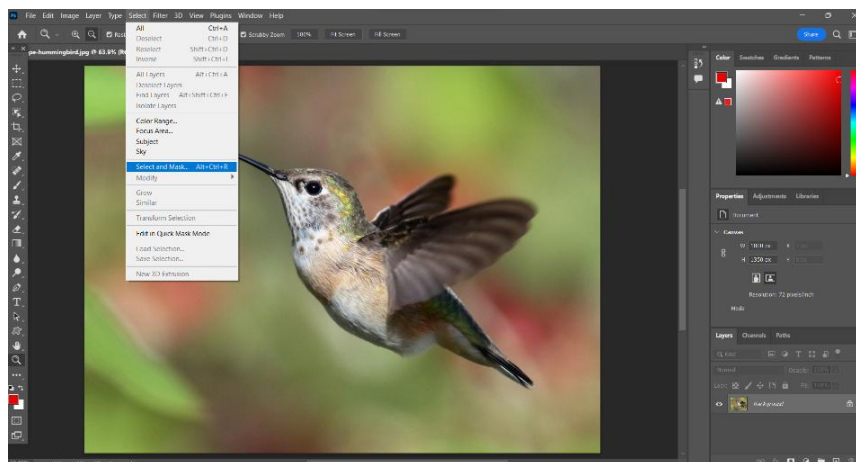


Figure 14: The “select and mask” location.

3. Select one of the selection/brush tools from the toolbar. Refer to Figure 15 for the tool options.

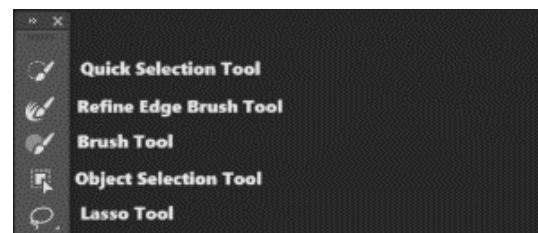


Figure 15: The selection/brush tool options.

4. Use the selection or brush tool on the object in the photo you wish to keep. The parts that you select will lose the mask filter that you placed in an earlier step. Refer to Figure 16 to see how a selected object looks against the layer.

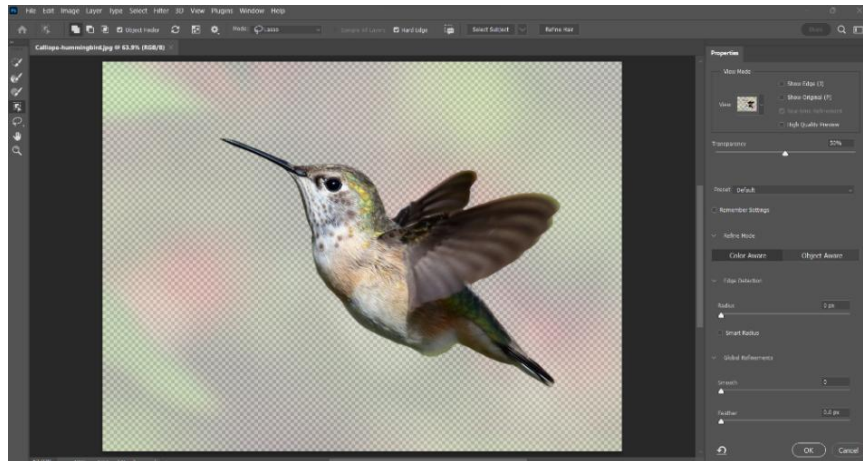


Figure 16: The “select and mask” process.

5. Click “OK” at the bottom right corner of the screen. A layer mask will be created and the rest of the photo that was not selected will disappear. Refer to figure 17 to see the result of a layer mask.

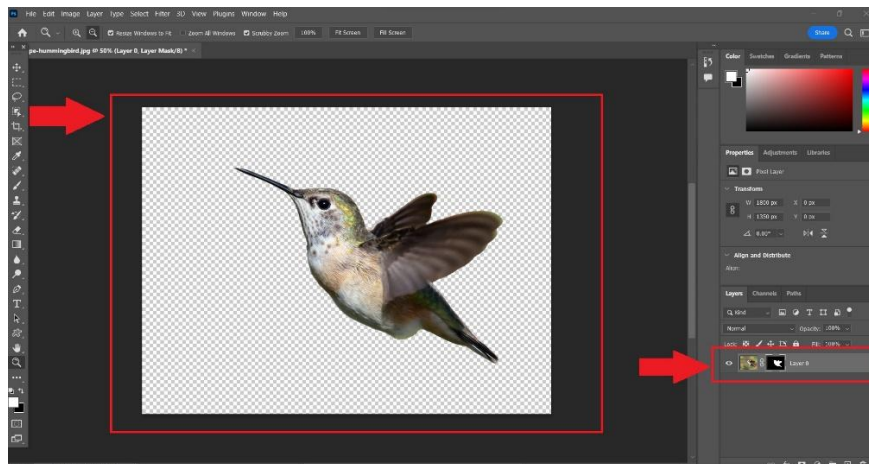


Figure 17: An image with a layer mask.

6. To open new background picture, click on “File” in the top left corner of the menu bar.
7. Select “Place Embedded” from the drop-down menu.  
*A new window will pop up and allow you to choose a file from your computer.*
8. Choose the new background from the window and select “Place”.  
*The image will appear as a new layer in the project.*

Note: Make sure to click and drag the new layer below the image with the layer mask or it will not be visible in the new background.

9. If the project layer needs a placement or size adjustment, select “Edit” in the menu bar.

Note: Make sure the layer you wish to adjust is highlighted by clicking on it.

10. Select “Free Transform”. A frame will appear around the selected layer, allowing you to move or resize it. Refer to figure 18 for the location of the tool.

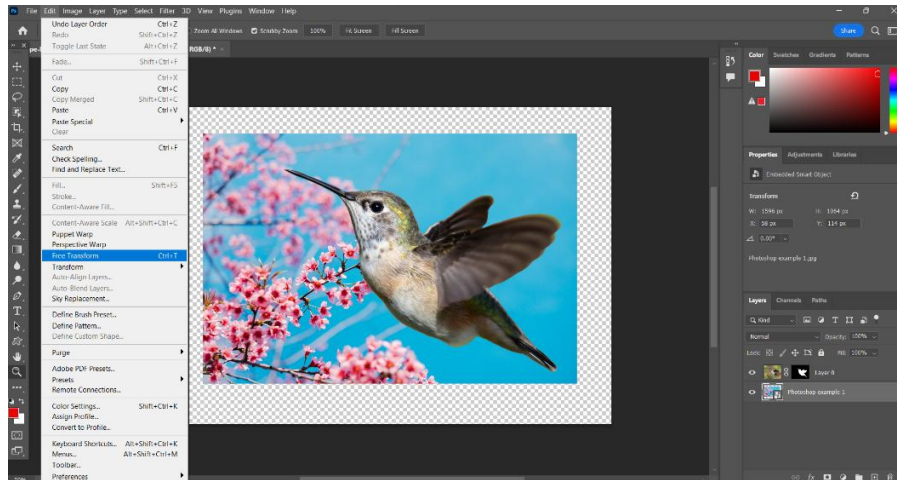


Figure 18: “Free Transform” tool location.

11. Once the adjustments are done, select the check mark symbol in the control bar to finish. Refer to figure 19 to see the result of the “Free Transform” tool.

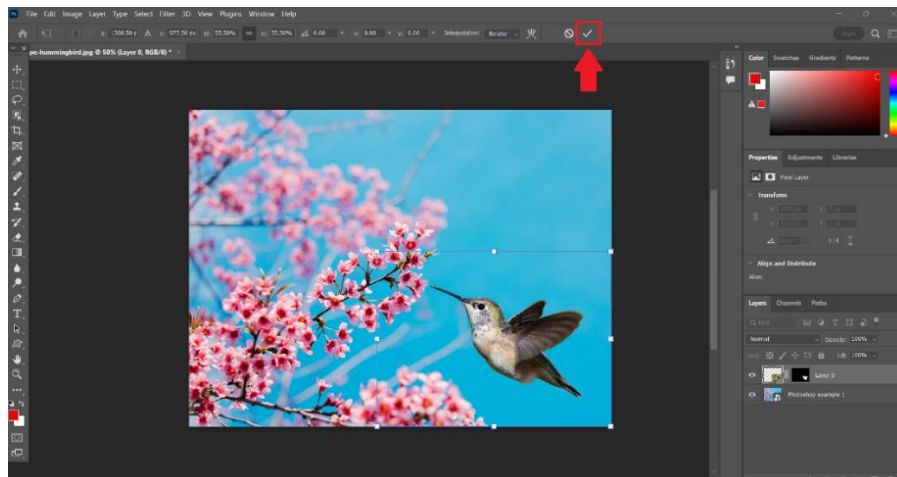


Figure 19: Using the “Free Transform” tool.

## 2.6 Using Clipping Masks

Clipping Masks is a popular effect that allows you to place an image into a shape. In this guide, the following instructions will show you how to create a clipping effect with the desired image and shape on a solid color background.

1. Open the image you want to place in the shape.
2. Right click on the layer to open the layer menu.
3. Select “Duplicate Layer” to create a new image layer. Refer to section 2.3 on how to create a duplicate layer.

4. Turn off the background layer's visibility by clicking the eye icon next to it. Refer to Figure 20 to see where the visibility option is located.

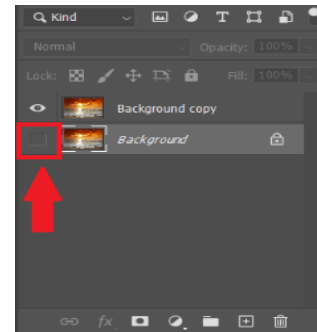


Figure 20: The Layers visibility panel part 2

5. Create the shape or the text that you want the image to be clipped into. Your choice will create a new layer above the duplicate layer. Refer to Figure 21 to see an example of a text layer.



Figure 21: Creating a text layer.

To create text, select the type of tool in the toolbar. Refer to figure 22 for the icon appearance.



Figure 22: The type tool icon.

To create a shape, right-click on the shape tool icon in the tool to choose the shape you wish to use. Refer to figure 23 for the icon appearance.



Figure 23: The shape tool icon

6. If needed, adjust the size of the new layer with the “Free Transform” tool in the Edit drop-down menu.



7. Move the new shape/text layer underneath the image layer. Refer to figure 24 to see where to move the layer.

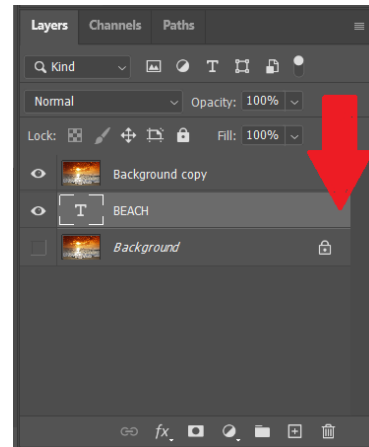


Figure 24:  
Rearranging  
layers.

8. Right-click on the image layer to open the layer menu.
9. Select “Create Clipping mask”. The clipping effect will appear, and a background will need to be added. Refer to figure 25 to see the clipping effect.

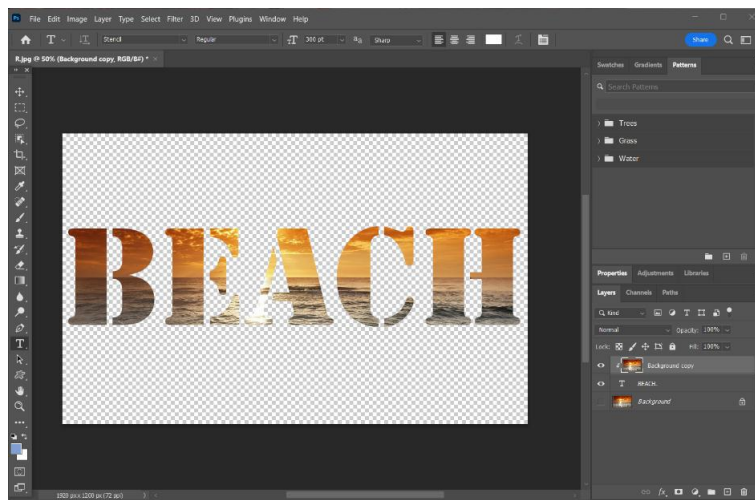


Figure 25: The clipping mask effect.

10. To create a solid color background, click on the “Adjustment Layer” icon at the bottom of the layers panel. Refer to figure 26 for the icon appearance.



Figure 26: Adjustment layer icon.

11. Select “Solid Color” from the menu. The color selection window will pop up to allow you to choose the color you want for the solid background. Refer to figure 27 to see the location of this option in the layer menu.

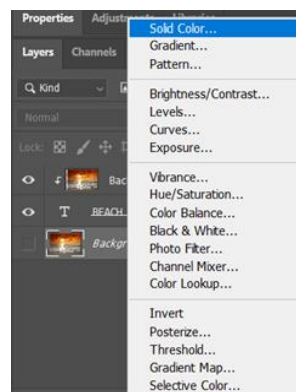


Figure 27:  
The layer  
menu.

12. Select ok to create the new color layer.
13. Move the color layer below the image and the shape/text layer. The solid background will appear behind your shape/text. Refer to Figure 28 on what the layer order should look like.

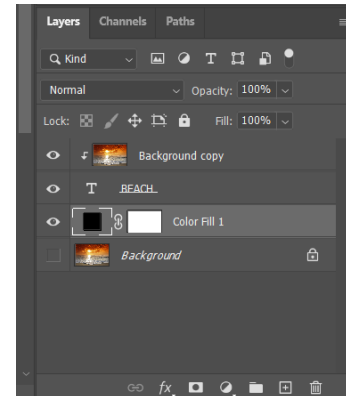


Figure 28: Rearranging layers part 2.

## 2.7 Applying Filters

Filters are one of several digital effects you can use to change the overall look of your photo. The following instructions will show you how to find the filter options, preview them, and add them to a photo in Photoshop.

1. Open the image you wish to apply the filter to in the project window.
2. Create a duplicate layer to preserve the original layer. Refer to section 2.3 on how to create a duplicate layer.
3. Turn off background layer's visibility by clicking the eye icon next to it.
4. Right-click on the duplicate layer to open the layer menu.
5. Select "Covert to smart object" from the menu bar. Refer to figure 29 for the location of this menu option.

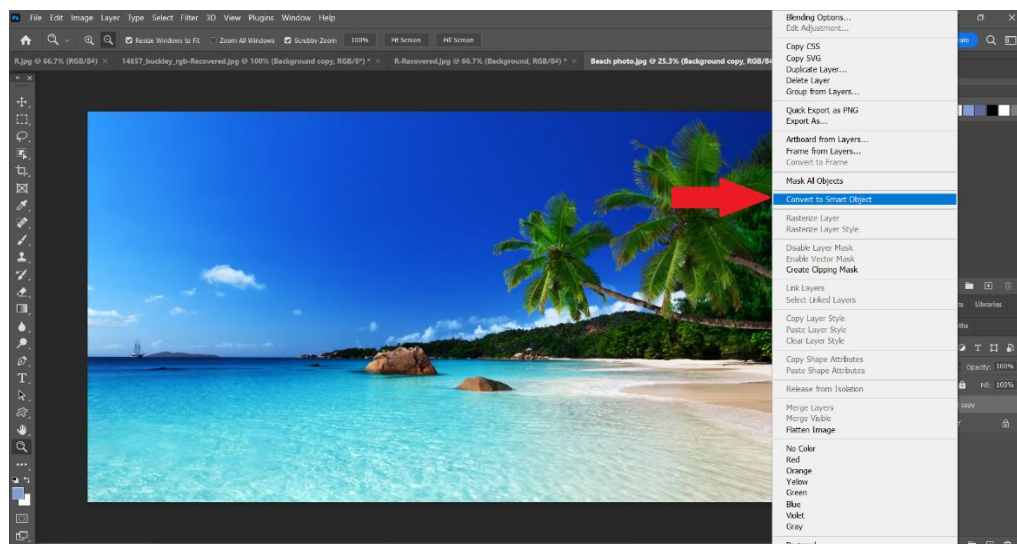


Figure 29: "Convert to smart object" menu option.

Note: This option will allow you to see the filters applied to the layer in the layers panel. It will also allow you to remove any unwanted filters without deleting the layer altogether.

6. Click on "Filter" in the menu bar.



Note: You can pick the filters directly from the drop-down menu or preview them in the filters gallery before applying it.

7. To preview the filters you wish to use, select “Filter gallery” from the drop-down menu for the filter gallery window to pop up. Refer to figure 30 to see the layout of the filter gallery.



Figure 30: The filter gallery

8. After making your selection, press the “OK” button on the top right corner of the window to add the filter to the photo layer.

## 2.8 Exporting Photos

Once finished with your project, it's time to export and save your project as a new photo. The following section will show you how to save your project as a photo.

1. Click on “File” in the menu bar.
2. Select “Save a Copy” from the drop-down menu. A window will pop up that will allow you to pick the location on your computer where you want the file to be saved. Refer to figure 31 for the location of this menu option.

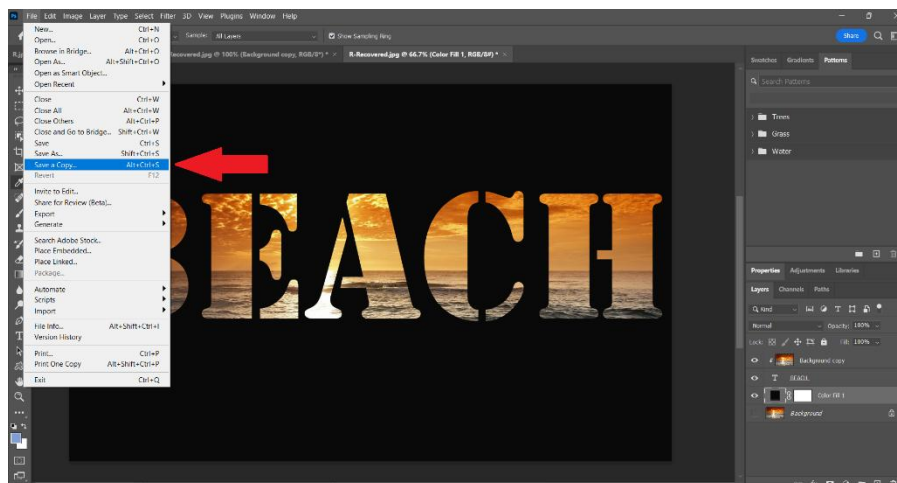


Figure 31: Exporting your photo.

3. Click the “Save” button in the pop-up window and the export is complete.

# Index

---

## A

Adjustments · 9

---

## C

**Clipping Masks** · See section 2.6  
Covert to smart object · 15  
Cropping · 7

---

## E

Exporting · 16

---

## F

Filters · 15  
Free Transform · 11

---

## I

Importing · 6

---

## L

**Layer Masks** · See section 2.4  
Layers · 5

---

## M

Masks · 6

---

## T

the lasso tool · 8  
The shape tool · 13  
The type tool · 13