

CHAPTER 2



Pixlr Editor Tools

This chapter looks at the broad set of tools at your disposal in Pixlr Editor. Here's what you'll learn:

- *The Tool's Purpose and Function:* Each tool's purpose and how it functions is described—an oversized icon representing the tool is shown in each figure to help the reader recognize it by sight on the toolbar.
- *Tool Shortcuts:* Tool keyboard shortcuts use a single alphabetic character and are indicated after the tool's name in parentheses. Once you memorize them, these keyboard shortcuts can dramatically reduce the time spent during an editing session. Tool shortcuts are included in the descriptions where applicable (not all tools have keyboard shortcuts).
- *Tool Options:* Many tools have options available in addition to their default settings. These options are described when applicable (not all tools have them).

■ **Note** If you're a complete beginner and would like to try out each tool, there are practice images provided (with instructions on PDF) located in the *Tools Tryout Guide and Practice Images* folder, which can be obtained from the Source Code/Downloads tab from this Apress page: <http://www.apress.com/9781484226971>.

The Tools and How They Work

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce you to the tools and describe how they work.

You'll be using many of these tools as you work through the tutorials in the second part of this book, Part II, "Working with Images."

We will now take a look at each tool—its name, shortcut, description of its purpose, and additional options.

Crop Tool (Shortcut: C)

The Crop tool is used for trimming by removing excess image data for image composure (Figure 2-1).

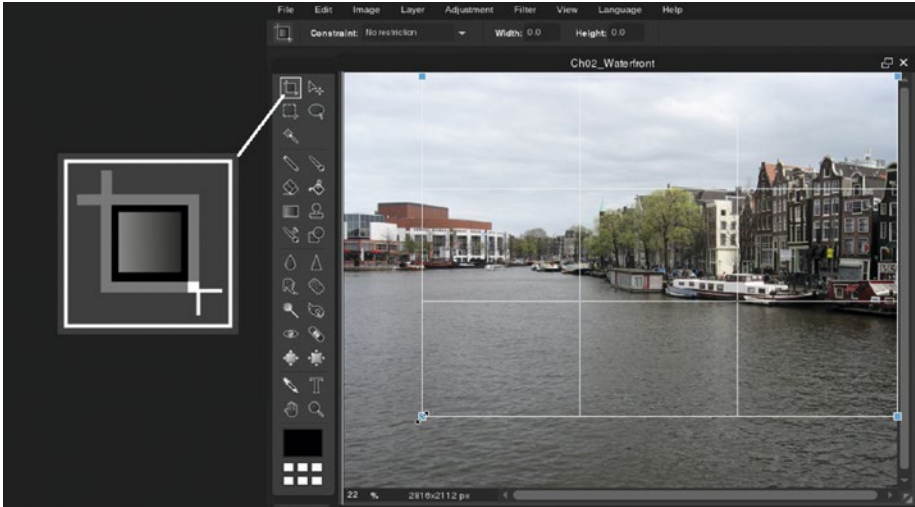


Figure 2-1. The Crop tool trims away excess image data

You use this tool by clicking and dragging around the area to be trimmed and then clicking the Crop tool icon. You'll be presented with a Confirm dialog box, prompting you to apply the changes (Figure 2-2).

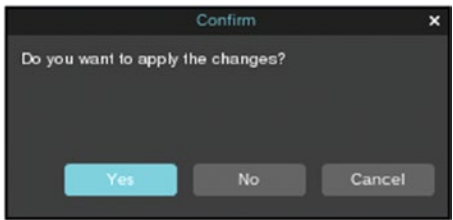


Figure 2-2. The Crop tool Confirm dialog box

Alternatively, you can double-click in the image or press Enter to make the change without the prompting the Confirm dialog box.

Additional Options

The Crop tool has three Constraint settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *No Restriction*—The width and height of the crop can be adjusted independently.
- *Aspect Ratio*—Allows the tool to be set as either a perfect square or rectangle whose width remains proportional to the height as the tool is dragged.
- *Output Size*—The overall width and height remain the same after the image is cropped.

Move Tool (Shortcut: V)

The Move tool is used to reposition graphical elements. By clicking on the element and holding the mouse button down, you can move the element anywhere in the image (Figure 2-3).

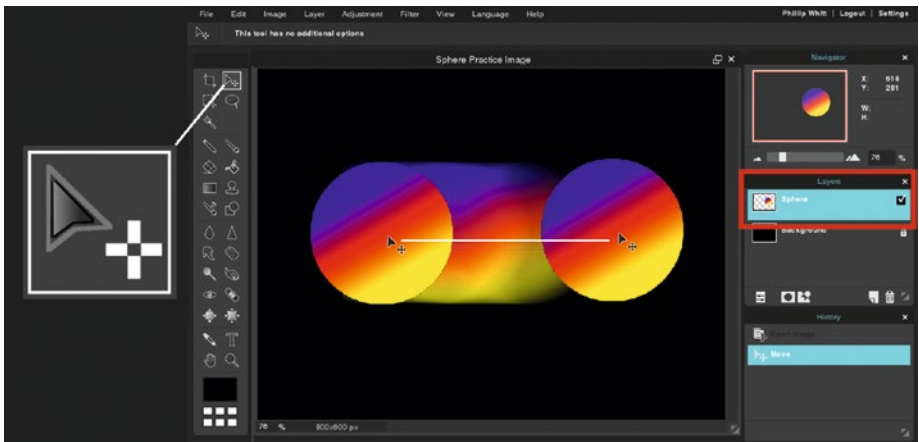


Figure 2-3. The Move tool is used to reposition graphical elements

Additional Options

None

Marquee Tool (M)

The Marquee tool is used to make four types of selections—rectangular, square, elliptical, and circular. In Figure 2-4, the Marquee tool is being used to make a rectangular selection around the graphic of a domino. The boundary is defined by dashed lines that appear to move around the selected area like “marching ants” (a term commonly used in the graphic design world).

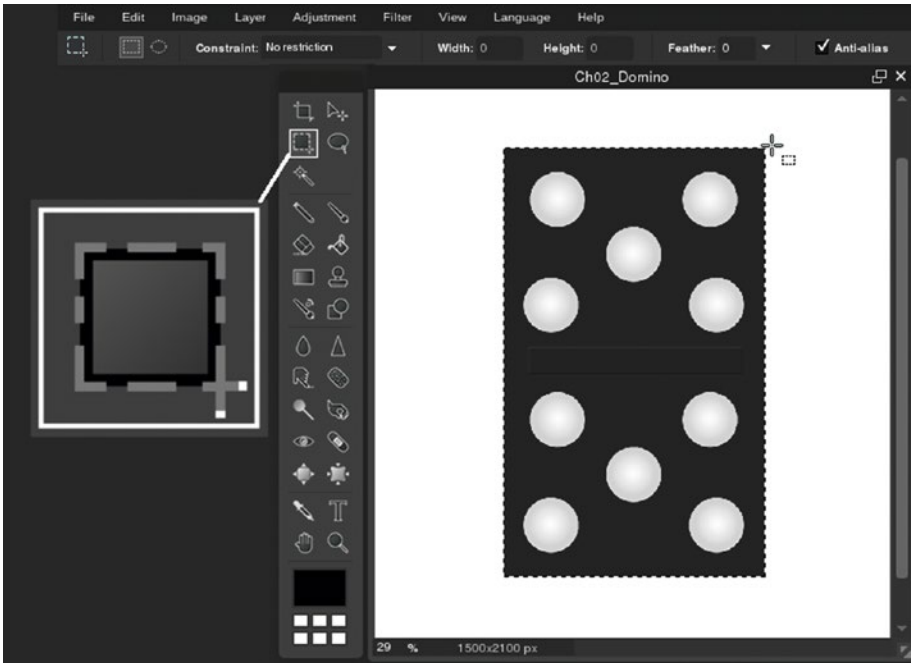


Figure 2-4. Selecting the domino graphic using the Marquee tool

To add to a selection, hold the Shift key down. To subtract from a selection, hold the Control key down.

Additional Options

The Marquee tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Rectangle/Circle or Elliptical/Circle*—Indicated by icons.
- *Constraint*:
 - *No Restriction*—The width and height of the selection can be adjusted independently (either by clicking and dragging, or using the Width/Height numeric input boxes).
 - *Aspect Ratio*—Allows the tool to be set as either a perfect square (which it does by default) or rectangle whose width remains proportional to the height as the tool is dragged. The settings can be changed using the Width/Height numeric input boxes.
 - *Output Size*—Crops the image but maintains the current width and height.
- *Feather*—This option softens the edge of the selection (Figure 2-5). The higher the numeric value entered in the numeric input box, the softer the edge.

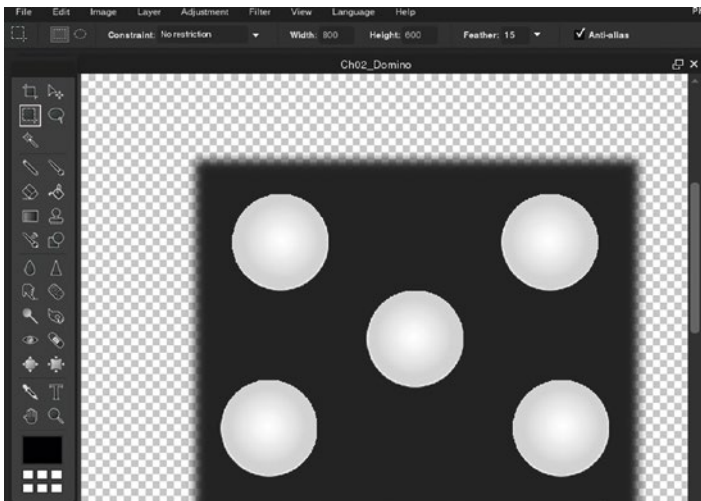


Figure 2-5. Using the Feather tool option softens the edge

- *Anti-Alias*—This option helps create smoother lines and curves in selections by reducing the appearance of jagged edges.

Lasso Tool (L)

The Lasso tool is used for making selections around objects with irregular shapes or polygonal shapes, as shown in Figure 2-6.

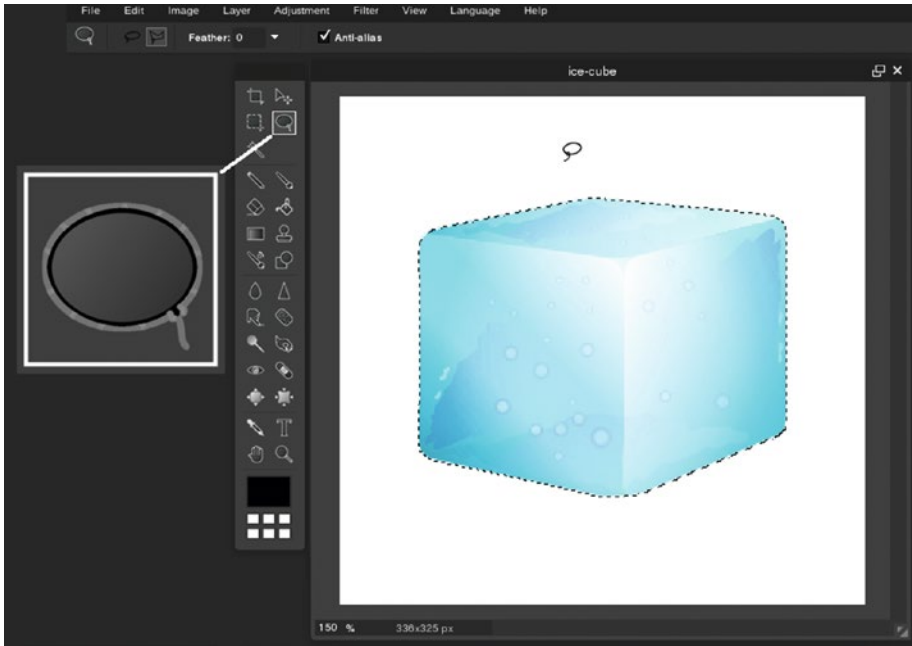


Figure 2-6. Using the Lasso tool to make a selection

To add to a selection, hold the Shift key down. To subtract from a selection, hold the Control key down.

Additional Options

The Lasso tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Free Hand or Polygonal Selection*—Indicated by icons.
- *Feather*—Creates a soft edge around the selection.
- *Anti-Alias*—Creates smoother lines by reducing jagged edges.

Wand Tool (W)

The Wand tool is used for making selections based on color and tone. For example, the red areas of the beach ball are quickly selected by clicking them with the Wand tool (Figure 2-7).

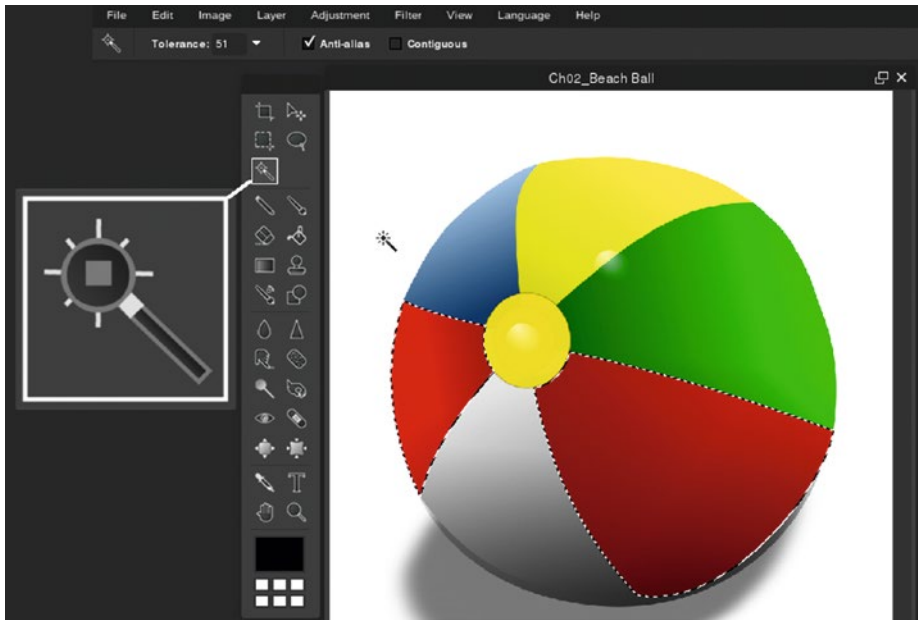


Figure 2-7. The Wand tool selects areas by color and tone

To add to a selection, hold the Shift key down. To subtract from a selection, hold the Control key down.

Additional Options

The Wand tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Tolerance*—Adjusts the range of color and tone the Wand tool selects. The higher the number, the wider the range the tool selects.
- *Anti-Alias*—Creates smoother lines by reducing jagged edges.
- *Contiguous*—Selects continuous areas of color and tone.

Pencil Tool (No Shortcut)

The Pencil tool is used for drawing as you would with an actual pencil, and it mimics a pencil's characteristics quite well (Figure 2-8).



Figure 2-8. The Pencil tool can be used for digital sketching and drawing

Additional Options

The Pencil tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Type*—Allows you to draw the following types of lines (Figure 2-9):
 - Plain—A basic, hard pencil line.
 - Sketchy—Resembles lines rapidly sketched out.
 - Trail—Draws lines that trail off slightly at the ends.
 - Shaded—Draws angled and curved lines with a smudged effect.
 - Sticky—Draws lines drawn with a sticky or waxy medium effect.
 - Ink—Resembles lines drawn with an artist's marker.

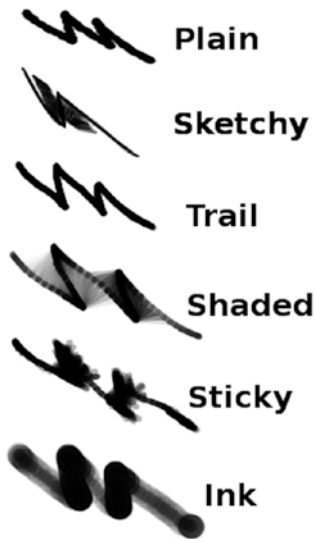


Figure 2-9. *The Pencil tool can create various types of lines*

- *Size*—The line diameter measured in pixels.
- *Opacity*—Controls how opaque or transparent a line is.
- *Amount*—Controls how much of an effect is applied.

Brush Tool (B)

The Brush tool is used for applying color in the fashion an artist's paintbrush does. It can be used for creating digital paintings and illustrations (Figure 2-10).

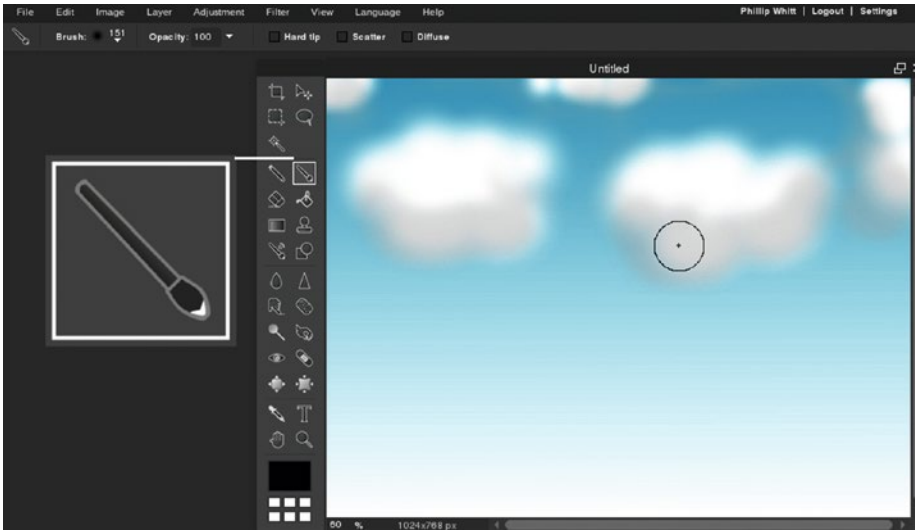


Figure 2-10. The Brush tool can be used to create digital paintings

Additional Options

The Brush tool has numerous settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Brush*—Offers a plethora of preset choices, including nibs of assorted shapes and sizes, hard or soft tips, and other settings (Figure 2-11).

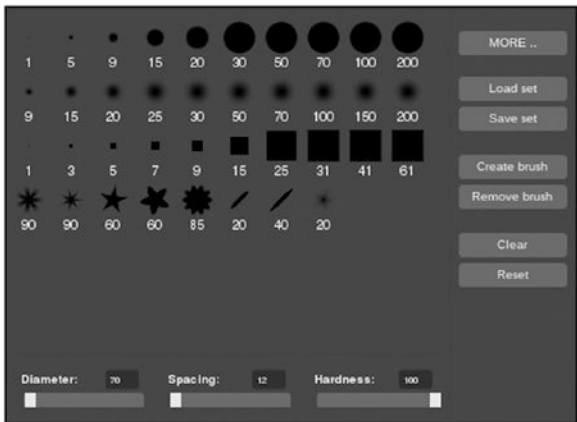


Figure 2-11. The Brush tool settings come in a wide assortment shapes and sizes

Under the More subset, there are specialty brushes such as Artistic, Nature, Makeup, Shapes, and Misc (Figure 2-12).

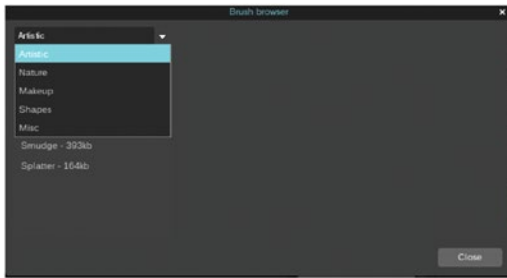


Figure 2-12. Additional brush options under the More subset

- *Opacity*—Controls how opaque or transparent the applied color is.
- *Hard Tip*—Gives the brush currently being used a hard-tipped nib.
- *Scatter*—Creates multiple copies of the brush tip with each stroke.
- *Diffuse*—Creates a misty, splattered effect similar to using spray paint.

Eraser Tool (E)

The Eraser tool removes image data (Figure 2-13). On non-layered images, it removes data, revealing the underlying background color.



Figure 2-13. The Eraser tool removes image data

On layered images, using the Eraser tool reveals the image data on the underlying layer(s), as shown in Figure 2-14.

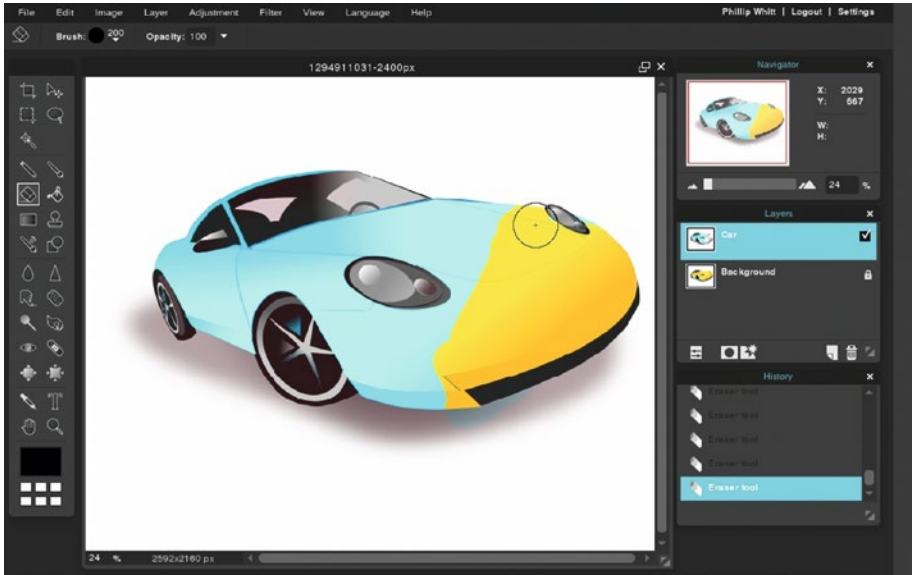


Figure 2-14. Using the Eraser tool on a layered image

Additional Options

The Eraser tool has the following settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Brush*—Opens the Brush Preset dialog box.
- *Opacity*—Controls how opaque or transparent the erased data is.

Paint Bucket Tool (G)

The Paint Bucket tool is used for quickly applying color to large areas of an image (Figure 2-15).

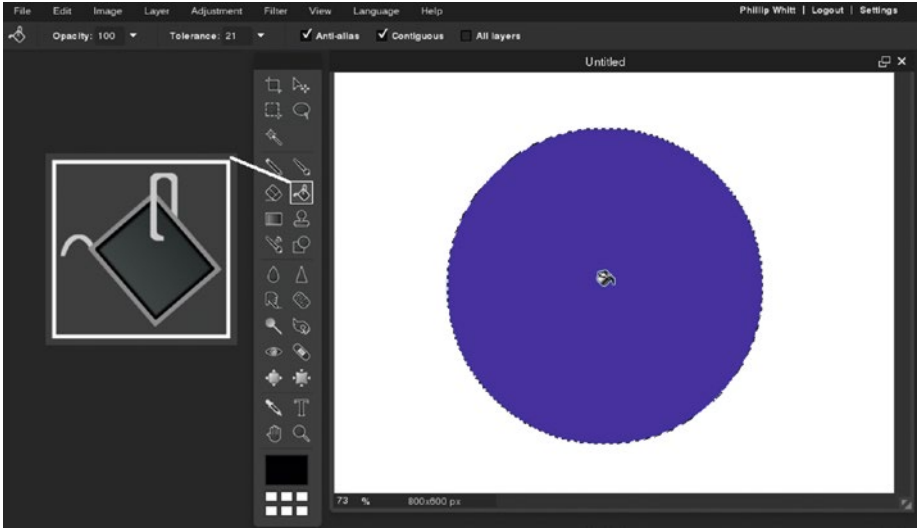


Figure 2-15. The circular selection filled in using the Bucket Fill tool

Additional Options

The Paint Bucket tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Opacity*—Controls how opaque or transparent the filled area is.
- *Tolerance*—Controls how little or how much color fills an area. Lower tolerance settings restrict the function to pixels that are closest in color or tone. Higher tolerance settings extend to pixels less similar in color or tone (Figure 2-16).

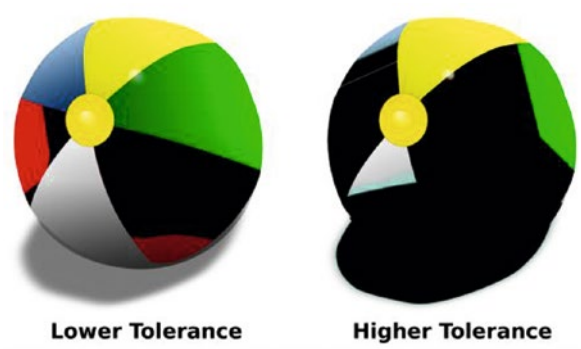


Figure 2-16. Comparison of lower and higher tolerance settings

- *Anti-Alias*—Creates smoother lines by reducing jagged edges.
- *Contiguous*—Selects continuous areas of color and tone.
- *All Layers*—Allows you to apply the fill to an area on a layer separate from that containing the colors being sampled.

Gradient Tool (No Shortcut)

The Gradient tool is used for creating a transition of one color to another. As shown in Figure 2-17, the circular selection is filled with the default setting gradient that starts as white and ends in black.

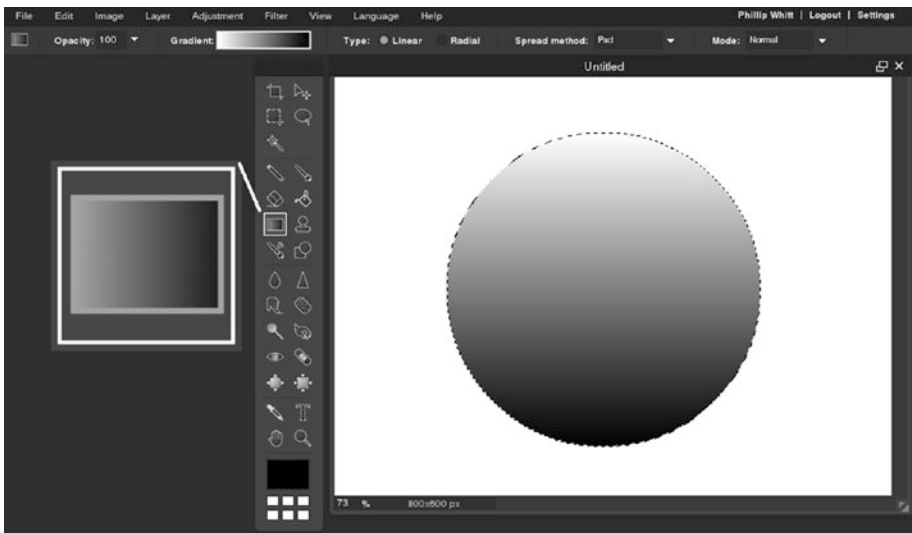


Figure 2-17. Example of a gradient

Additional Options

The Gradient tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Opacity*—Controls how opaque or transparent the filled area is.
- *Gradient*—Offers 43 preset gradients of varying styles and colors.
- *Linear/Radial* (Figure 2-18)—Lets you choose between creating a gradient that extends from one point to another in a straight line (linear), or a gradient that starts at one point and extends outward in every direction (radial).

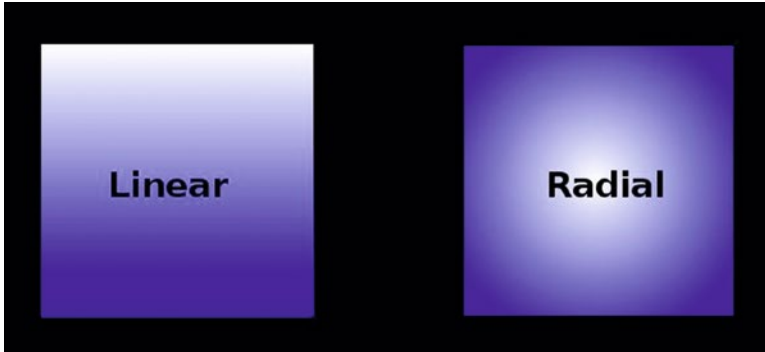


Figure 2-18. Comparison of a linear and radial gradient

- *Spread Method*—Controls the way the gradient flows.
 - Pad (default)
 - Reflect (creates a mirrored effect)
 - Repeat (creates a pattern by repeating the gradient)
- *Mode*—Offers a choice blend modes, which create a variety of color effects.

Clone Stamp Tool (S)

The Clone Stamp tool is used for sampling pixels from one area and pasting them to another. In Figure 2-19, the star on the far left is sampled and then copies of it are pasted.

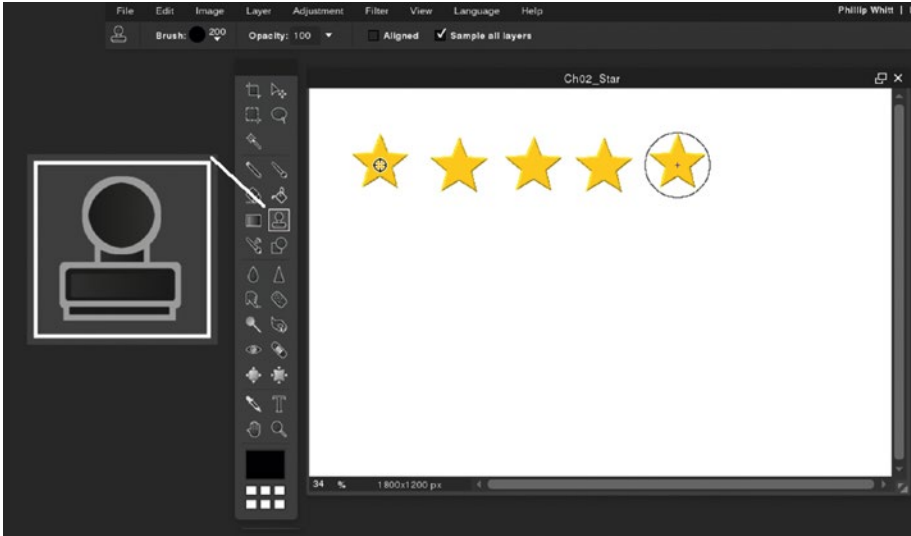


Figure 2-19. Using the Clone Stamp tool to make copies of the star

■ **Note** The Clone Stamp tool is a staple for use in retouching and restoring images, because of its ability to sample good areas of the image and to paste them over flawed areas.

Additional Options

The Clone Stamp tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- *Brush*—Opens the Brush Preset dialog box.
- *Opacity*—Controls how opaque or transparent the filled area is.
- *Aligned*—When this option is checked, the sample point remains in close proximity to the Clone Stamp tool as you work along the image.
- *Sample All Layers*—Allows you to sample image data from an image and paste it on to a different layer.

Color Replace Tool (No Shortcut)

The Color Replace tool is used to quickly change an area of the image from one color to another (Figure 2-20). This tool only works on RGB images with color, not grayscale images.

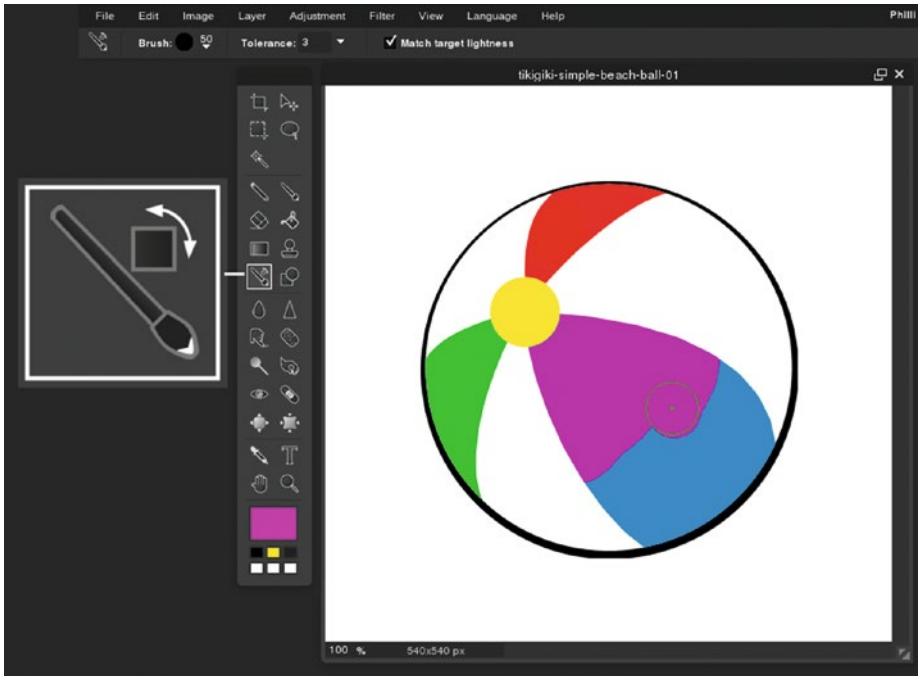


Figure 2-20. Using the Color Replace tool

Additional Options

The Color Replace tool has several settings, which can be found in the Additional Options dialog box (located under the menu bar):

- **Brush**—Opens the Brush Preset dialog box.
- **Tolerance**—Adjusts the range of color and tone the tool replaces. The higher the number, the wider the range of color the tool replaces.