

Erasing Backgrounds:

Background Eraser, Pen Tool and the Paths palette.

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Erasing Backgrounds:

- ◆ The key to increasing your workflow productivity is finding out how tools interact with one another, Photoshop's tools don't exist in a vacuum - a relationship exists between them.
- ◆ Using Photoshop in a production environment (as well as teaching production techniques), I'm always trying to establish a working relationship with one tool to other tools. Finding and establishing this relationship will make you a significantly more valuable Photoshop technician as you're able to work in an efficient, streamlined manner.



Erasing Backgrounds:

- ◆ If you think of this in math terms: Permutation (i.e. the combination) > Individual Tool in a vacuum.
- ◆ This technique presupposes a working knowledge of the Background Eraser as well as the Paths palette.
- ◆ While the Background Eraser is a very cool tool, it needs some assistance - that's where the Freeform Pen Tool and Paths palette comes into play.

Erasing Backgrounds:

◆ **First:** Select the Freeform Pen Tool from the toolbox, drawing a freeform path around the object you want to remove the background from as illustrated in the **first picture**.



Optional: You fine-tune your path by selecting the Direct Selection tool from the toolbox and moving the paths and anchor points.

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- ◆ **Second:** Select from the Paths palette menu (accessible from the sideways Delta/Triangle) "Stroke Path" as illustrated in the **second picture**.



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- ◆ **Third:** Selecting "Stroke Path" brings up the Stroke Path dialog box where you'll select "Background Eraser" (see picture 3). The Stroke Path option allows one to choose a tool that will stroke the path, in this case we're stroking the path with the Background Eraser as it saves us time drawing and fixing mistakes caused by the Background Eraser alone.



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- ◆ **Fourth:** Now that your path has been stroked by the Background Eraser as illustrated in **picture 4**, you can use your preferred method of removing the extraneous background information (e.g. using the lasso tool to select and delete). I'll usually just create a selection from the path by going to the Path palette menu's "Make Selection" - which makes a selection from the path - then I'll select Inverse from the Select menu, and then hit delete.



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- ◆ I hope this will illuminate for you the significance in finding a working relationship between tools.

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