

## The Selection Tools

Master the Quick Selection and Magic Wand tools to make detailed extractions from your images

The “Quick Selection” and the “Magic Wand” tools select pixels based on color and tonal similarity, so they share the same toolbox compartment. However, like any double act they have their own individual strengths. To start making a selection with the “Magic Wand” tool, you simply click an area to sample it. The tool will then select similar pixels based on the colors and tones that you first clicked.

By brushing the more intelligent “Quick Selection” tool over your subject, it will create a more complex selection marquee that attempts to include the subject's relevant details. In both cases, you can then use the “Add to Selection” and “Subtract from Selection” icons in the options bar to refine your marquee even more.

The “Quick Selection” tool is best suited to selecting a single subject - for example, a person standing against a busy backdrop. Once you've made your selection, you can use the “Refine Edge” option to tweak its edge, turn it into a layer mask, or create an accurate cut-out.

The “Magic Wand” tool is great for ferreting out every bit of background sky, including those pixels hiding between the branches of a tree. You can modify its tolerance so it selects a wider or narrower range of pixels with each click. This adjustable sensitivity is very useful. An evenly colored and toned sky can be selected using a low tolerance value. A more complex sky that features different colors and tones will need a higher tolerance setting to select all of it.

### Unleash the Power of the Magic Wand Tool

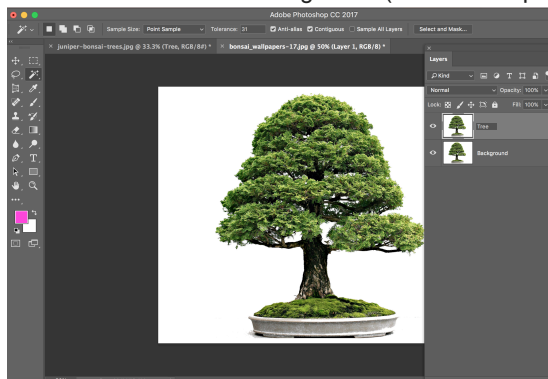
Select every bit of unwanted background with ease

Some shots like our Bonsai tree here have color backgrounds that you may want to select and replace. When set up correctly, the “Magic Wand” tool can tackle these sorts of selection challenges in just a few clicks. As well as the new selection option that gives you a basic marquee, there's also “Add to Selection” and “Subtract from Selection.” When zoomed in to your image, these incredibly useful tools will fine-tune your marquee, particularly around edges and in detailed areas.

Although small and seemingly insignificant, the “Sample All Layers” box shouldn't be overlooked. This facility ensures that your selection includes similar pixels on multiple layers, and not just the one currently targeted in the layers panel. If there are any patches of unwanted background sky hiding among the leaves and branches, then you'll need to clear the “Contiguous” box. This lets the “Magic Wand” tool off its leash, so it can track down the sampled colors in every part of the image. The final way to make the tool even more precise is with the “Refine Edge” button. This opens a new window with multiple options for feathering, smoothing and even shifting the marquee.

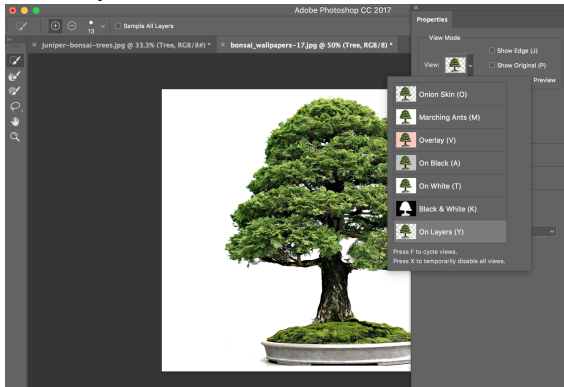
#### 1. Choose Your Tool

Open the “Bonsai Trees.jpg” image. Duplicate the “background” layer and turn off the bottom layer. Change the name of “Layer 1” to “Tree.” Grab the “Magic Wand” from the tools panel. In this image the background is evenly lit, so you'd leave the Tolerance on 31. Clear Contiguous. (Note: You can press the “W” key to toggle between it and the Quick Selection tool.)



## 2. Click the Sample

Click any patch of background. The marching ants should appear around all of that color, even if it's in the branches. From the menu bar "Select > Inverse" to select the tree. From the option bar click on "Select and Mask." Set the View drop down menu to On Layers.



## 3. Delete the Selection

The leaves are looking a little sharp and 'cut-out'. To soften things, set Feather to 0.5 pixels. To remove any background sky pixels clinging to the edge of the tree, drag Shift Edge to 16%. Set Output to New Layer and click OK.

