

These layers menus combined with the tools selections on the left side of the Photoshop window will give you more power to manipulate your images than you ever expected. The tools you will mostly need to familiarize yourself with are the pen tool and it's alternates, and the white pointer tool just beneath it.

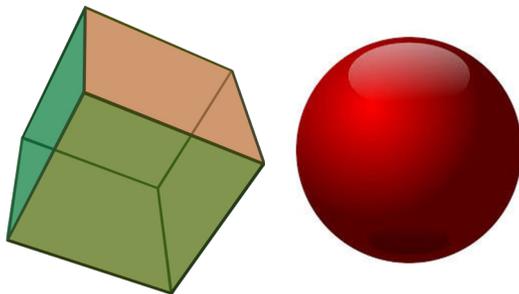


There ARE alternatives to this system. There are other alternatives in Photoshop and there are a number of applications and filters out there to help, Topaz's excellent "Remask" being but one of them.



### Tips:

1. Always name layers. (you will thank me later)
2. It's all right to lose the very outside row of pixels when cutting out an item. No one will know you did it but you.
3. **FEATHER** your paths, a softer cut eliminates the "jaggies".
4. Check your layer order. Many problems are eliminated by moving a layer up or down in their order.
5. Don't work in 72 ppi resolution. I always use 300 ppi. This will greatly improve your work.
6. Double check your resolution. Match your background and your imported object resolution for more believable composites.
7. **LIGHT!!** It's important. Not only the direction & hue, but intensity as well.
8. Avoid halos. They are for angels not photo composites.
9. Remember, everything interacts with everything else.
10. Also remember, the devil is in the details.



The cube and globe above were used in today's program and are good subjects to begin with. Feel free to download and practice with them. They can be found at:  
[www.coastalphotoclub.com/present](http://www.coastalphotoclub.com/present)



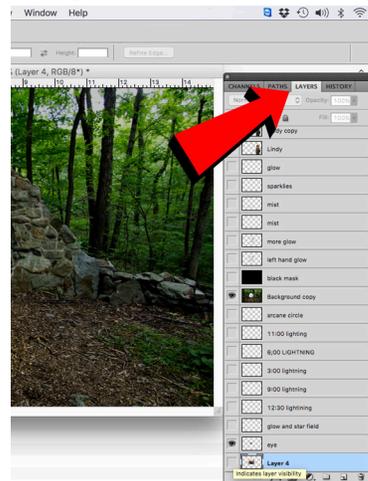
Layers are arguably the most powerful tool in Photoshop. Many people are afraid of using the layers tool set but this is mostly due to unfamiliarity with the system. I hope this presentation will set that fear to rest. All right, here is your introduction to layers.

**Layers.** (uh huh) What are they good for?

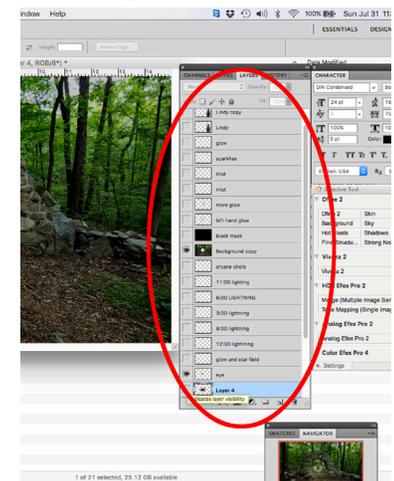
- Creating composites
- Removal of unwanted objects
- Color correction or modification
- Spot exposure correction

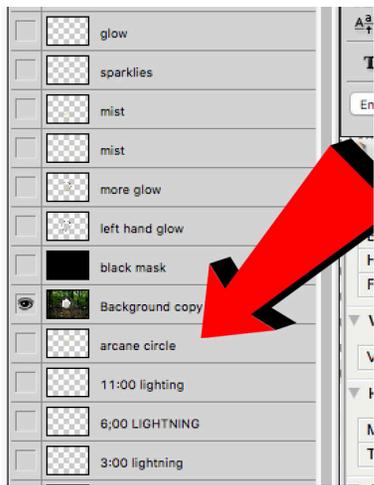
*So let's get started:*

You can access the layers menu using this tab. This is the default but this tab is useful for returning to the layers menu after using another function. *Only one layer at a time can be worked on* which is the whole point of layers. The active layer's name is always highlighted in blue.

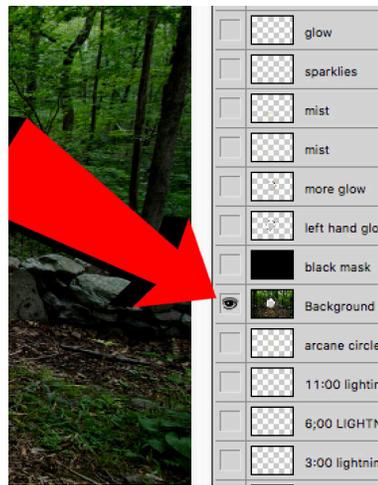


The layers are displayed here in CORRECT order. There may be more layers off the menu at top or bottom in complex projects. Layers can also be re-ordered here simply by dragging up or down. Pay special attention to what layer is on top of what *other* layers.





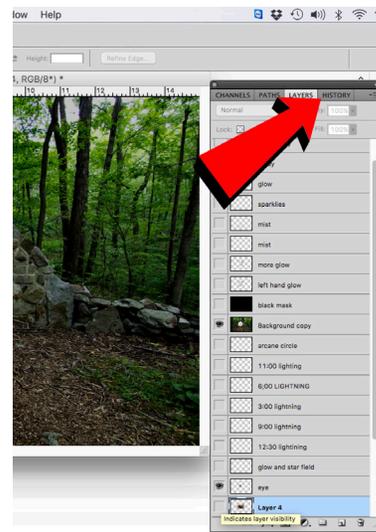
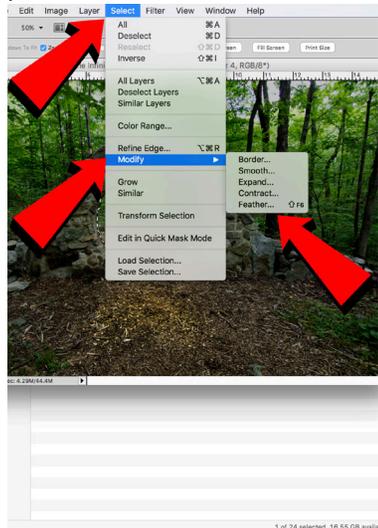
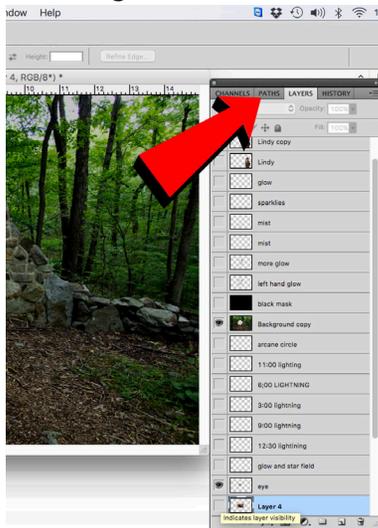
I strongly urge you to name your layers, otherwise you will waste time trying to figure out if you should be working on layer 3 or 17



This eye icon (eyecon?) indicates that this layer is visible. All the other layers are not visible as indicated by the empty boxes

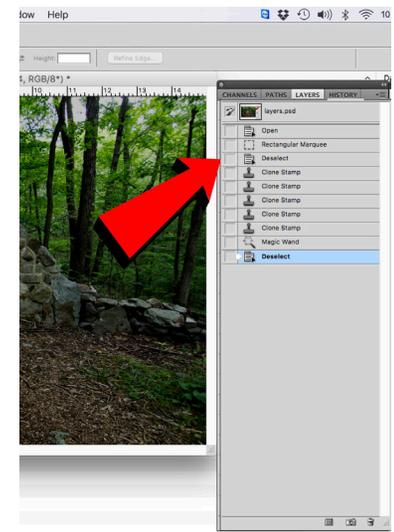
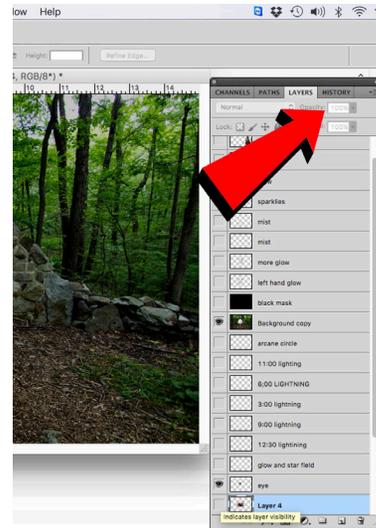
Paths are a way to cut out a part of an image. As the name says you can draw a "path" around something to isolate it from the rest of the image.

Once you have made your path to cut out an object, this menu leads you to tools, such as expand and contract, for modifying the path for better results.



If you make a mistake or change your mind you can use the "History" tab to undo some 15 or 20 past actions.

You can also adjust the translucency of any active layer from 1 to 100%. Nice for creating "ghosts" or distance faded items.



This History menu shows the last 8 actions done here and you can jump back to anywhere on the list. After that you can then jump forward if need ed.

This drop down menu allows you to create new layers, delete, merge selected layers on flatten the image combining all layers into one.

