# Neath & District Photographic Society

*Making Selections*

*To use this Tutorial Please download the Image* [Selections](#)

## Q. Why do we need to make selections?

The answer is – 'for varied reasons', i.e Copying & Cloning, image enhancement, montage work etc. the list is endless.

Using the image 'Selections', I will attempt to show you some basic ways to make selections.  Each method has its own merits, the only thing in common is that all selections should be 'feathered' to a certain extent.

## Q. What is 'Feathering'?

When you make a selection the edges are very sharp, these tend to stand out and make a the image look false. This is especially so if you have copied or 'dropped' a selection into another image.  To get around this we 'Feather' the selection.  This has the effect of softening the edge and making the selection look more natural.  After all, there are no sharp edges in nature.

Let's look at the Selection Tools we are going to use.

 - The magic wand tool is used to make selections by Colour or Tonal Range

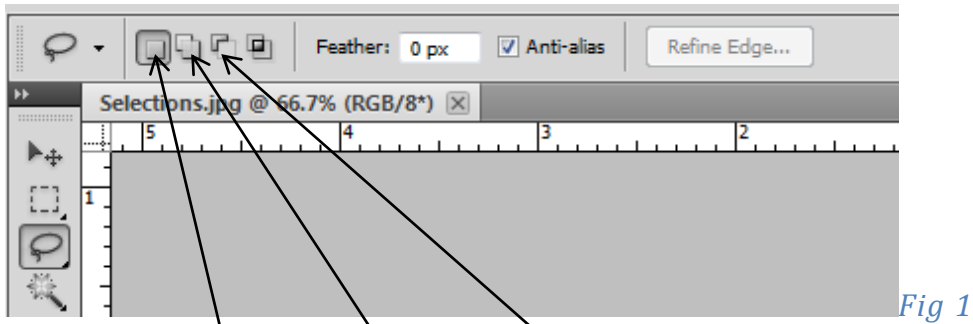 The Lasso Tool – a freehand selection tool best used at high magnification.

 The Polygonal Lasso Tool – found in the same location as the Lasso Tool, use the menu on the Lasso Tool or hold down the Shift Key and press L.  This tool is for objects with regular sides, it only draws straight lines.

 The Magnetic Lasso Tool. Again found under the Lasso Tool.  This is useful for selecting where there are high areas of contrast.

As with any other Tool, when you make the Lasso Tool or the Magic Wand  active you get a Preference Bar.

Below are the Preference Bars for the Lasso Tool (fig 1) and the Magic Wand (fig 2)
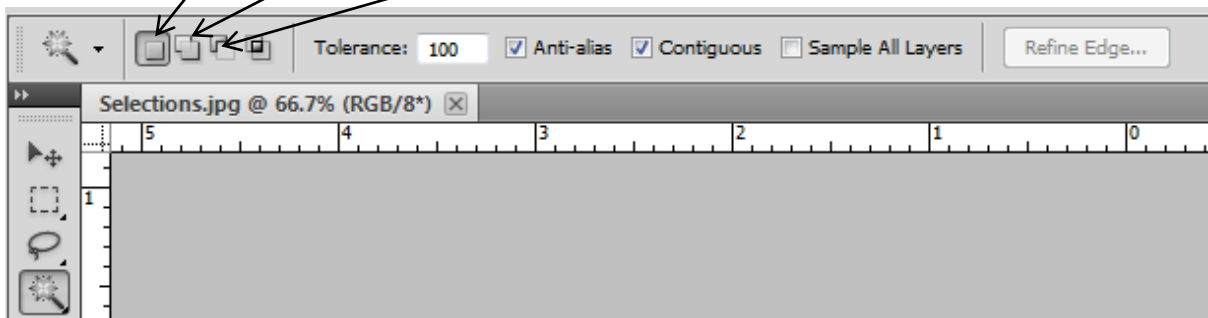
*Fig 1*



*Fig 2*

## Options for the Lasso Tool and the Magic Wand

**New Selection** – Makes a new selection, careful ! if you take the Tool off the Image and start again then any selections you have made on that image will be deleted.

**Add To Selection** – Enables you to make multiple selections or increase the size of the existing selection by adding to it.

**Subtract From Selection** – Removes the selected area from the original selection

**Feather (Lasso Tool Only)** – Enables you to set the feathering whilst you are making the selection.

**Tolerance (Magic Wand Only)** – Increasing the Tolerance will increase the Tonal Range of the Tool.

## Using The Magic Wand

This method is great for making selections of a similar tonal range.  By using the Tolerance scale we can vary the amount of selection.  Using the Image 'Selections' set a Tolerance of 10, make sure the Contiguous Box is unticked,  and touch the Orange Ellipse 'A'.

'Marching Ants' should now appear around the ellipse, this is now selected.

Press Ctrl D or go to Select>Deselect and the 'marching ants' will disappear.  This is now de-selected.

Now repeat the exercise but set the Tolerance to 100, this time the second orange ellipse, the bright red rectangle and the two yellow objects are all selected.

Sometimes we wish to restrict the amount of selection without tightening the Tonal Range. To do this, tick the box marked Contiguous and repeat the exercise. This time only the objects that are touching your initial point (the Orange Ellipse A) are selected.

Remember you can Add To The Selection, so try adding another colour.

## The Lasso Tool

This is primarily a 'Free Hand' selection Tool, best used at high magnification. The selection, once started, must be completed or the Lasso Tool will find the quickest way to close the selection.

The selection can be added to or subtracted from by using the options available in the Preferences Menu.

Tip – If you are making a selection and need to move the page down or relax your grip, then press the Space Bar, this puts the 'Hand Tool' on the screen and as long as the Space Bar is pressed the selection will not close. You can then move the page around or move the selection tool.

## Polygonal Lasso Tool

This is found by clicking the small triangle at the bottom right hand corner of the Lasso Tool.

Alternatively hold the Shift key down and press 'L' to scroll through the three options.

This tool is great for objects with regular sides, try it on the rectangles, then try it on the ellipses.

## Magnetic Lasso Tool

Again found under the Lasso Tool. This tool is useful for areas of high contrast.

Click on the edge of object 'D', as you move around the object click at regular intervals to set the anchor points. When you are a straight line away from your starting point try double clicking the mouse button, the selection should now close.

Note – when you are using any of the Lasso tools, when you reach the start position the Lasso Icon will show a small circle in the bottom right.

There are other tools available for making selections, the Pen Tool and the Marquee Tool. The Marquee Tool is used for regular shapes and quick selections. The Pen Tool will be covered at a later date.