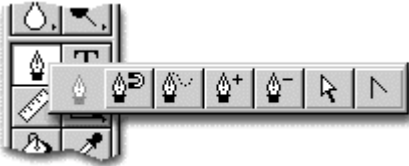


Author: Mark Monciardini
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Photoshop Tips
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The Pen Tool


The tutorial that many have been waiting for is the marvelous Pen Tool. It's a little tricky at first but after you learn how it works it becomes more easier and useful. I hope these tips will improve your ability working with this tool.




To start, Click and hold the mouse button down on the Pen Tool on the Tool bar. You will now see another bar pop out with more Tools, these all belong to the Pen neighborhood. I'll go over what each one does. *Animations were done with Adobe ImageReady 2.0.*

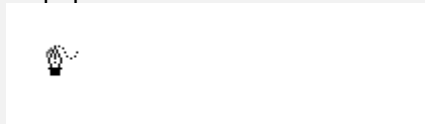
It comes with Photoshop 5.5


 The Pen Tool is used to make paths. A path is any line or shape you draw using the pen, magnetic pen, or free form pen tool. Unlike the bitmap shapes drawn by the pencil or other painting tools, paths are vector objects that contain no pixels. Once you have saved a path, you can store it in the Paths palette, convert it to a selection border, fill it with color or stroke the path outline with any color.

 The Magnetic Pen tool lets you draw a path that snaps to the edges of defined areas in your image.




 The Freeform pen tool lets you draw paths as if you were drawing with a pencil on paper.




 The Add-anchor-point tool lets you create an anchor point along any path.




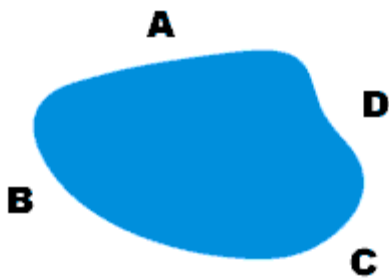
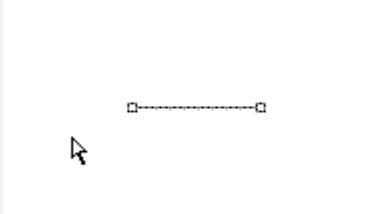
 The Delete-anchor-point tool lets you delete an anchor path along any path.



 The Direct-selection tool allows you to modify the shape of the path. Use this to select a point along the path. You may move the whole path by selecting it and clicking on a part of it and dragging. **Tip:** When using the Pen tool, you can switch to the Direct-selection tool anytime by pressing the Ctrl. key. (Mac: Command)

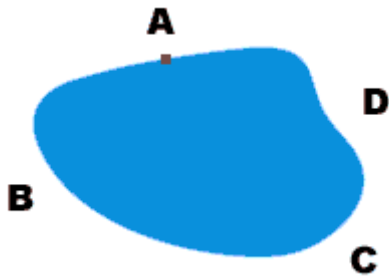



 The Convert-direction-point tool lets you convert a smooth curve to a sharp curve or to a straight segment, and vice versa.



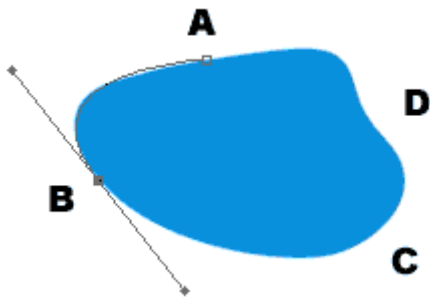
Pen Tool Tutorial

1 I've put together an exercise for you to try. Firstly save this image and load it up in Photoshop. To save it, Right Click and choose "Save As" to download (Mac: Press and hold mouse button on the image, Select Save from the popup menu).

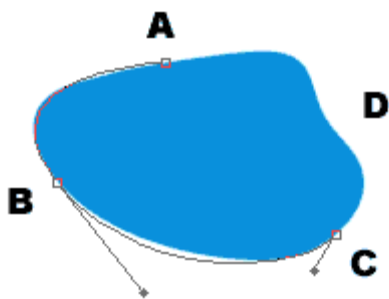


2 Select the pen tool 

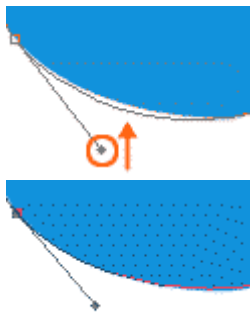
Click on Point A.



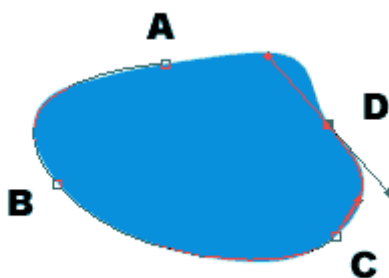
3 Now Click on Point B. When you do, make sure you click and drag, this will make a curve. Drag until the curved path lines up with the image's curve. Doesn't have to be perfect.



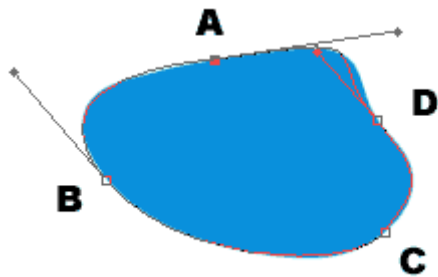
4 Now click on Point C. Remember to drag when you click to create a curve. Shape the path to the image's curve as close as you can.



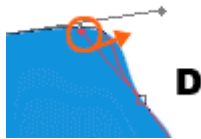
5 I ended up with a little space. There are times when it's not always perfect. To fix it, Hold down the Ctrl. key (Mac: Command) this will make it switch to the Direct Selection tool, click on the anchor point I have circled and move it up a bit so the path meets the edge of the image. This will help you understand how the Direct-selection tool works.



6 Click on Point D. Drag to fit the curve.



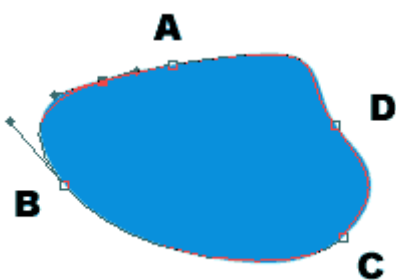
7 Now click directly on Point A to connect the path. Remember to drag and match the curve close as you can.



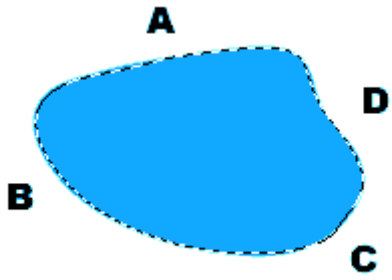
8 Again lets make another adjustment with the Direct-selection tool. Hold down the Ctrl. key (Mac: Command) and click on the anchor point I have circled, now move it to the right so it matches the path with the images edge.



9 Try adding an anchor to the path using the Add-anchor-point tool. I have an example on the left of a spot that needed improving. Once you have added a point, Press the Ctrl. key (Mac: Command) and move the new anchor to the images edge.



10 After you're done, you can export the paths to Illustrator or store the path in the Path Pallet. For more options, select the pen tool and right click in the center of the image, you'll now see more options such as Delete Path, Save Path, Fill, Stroke Path or even make it a selection like I have below.



Tip: A quick way to make the path a selection is by pressing the Enter key on the keyboard.