

Similarly, you can subtract a region from a current selection by holding down **option** while selecting the area you want to remove.

RULE 3: You can remove from any selection by holding down option while making a new selection, using ANY selection tool.

In general, you won't want a hard-edged border between a selected area and an unselected area. This is because you want your modifications to blend in smoothly with the original image.

In Photoshop, **feathering** is the term for taking an existing selection and blurring or softening the edges between what is selected and what is not selected. Mathematically, feathering creates selection values that range between 0 and 1.

The units of feathering are in **pixels**. If you feather a selection by one pixel, it means that one pixel worth of the selection – on each side of the marching ant border – will get a selection value between 0 and 1.

RULE 4: Any existing selection can be feathered. You do this by using the Select->Feather menu option.

The marching ants generally delineate the border between fully selected and not selected. However, it's clear that feathering a selection introduces values between 0 and 1. Where does the marching ant border lie when there's a feathered selection?

RULE 5: The marching ant border attempts to show you where the selection values are equal to 0.5.

Other common tools for making selections are:

The elliptical marquee – good for selecting elliptical regions (click and hold on the rectangular marquee icon)

The lasso – draw out a region freehand (second icon down on the left).

The polygonal lasso – draw out a closed region with a polygonal shaped boundary (click and hold on the lasso icon)

The magic wand – select a contiguous region of pixels using a value threshold to determine which ones should be selected. Good for selecting strangely-shaped regions with similar colors (second icon down on the right – the **tolerance** value is visible in the area just below the pulldown menus at the top of the screen.)

The selection menu – when you create a difficult selection, use the Select->Save Selection menu option to save it along with your image (Photoshop file format only). Then, you can use Select->Load Selection just like any other selection tool to re-select the region you saved. It works with the Shift and option key modifiers, too!