CONQUERING PHOTO SOFTWARE

It's not as difficult as it appears once you take the plunge!

READY TO TAKE THE PLUNGE!

- Don't be afraid of just exploring the menus and tools. You won't damage the programme! If it doesn't respond there is always the Task Manager (Ctrl Alt Delete) to close it down and start again (or the usual - turn the computer off and on again!).

- Just play and have a go at altering the different settings to see what the effects are on an image. Don't overwrite your original.

- If you don't like what you have done, it can be undone (within reason) or if it is a complete disaster just close the file without saving. You may have wasted a few hours but will have learnt a lot in that time!

- The Internet is a great place to find out how to do something you are not sure about – easier and cheaper than a book.

- Don't worry about doing something the right or wrong way as there is usually several methods to achieve the same result!

- Relax ~ it is supposed to be a hobby!!

TO DOWNLOAD YOUR IMAGE

- Images can be manually downloaded from your camera to your computer by Move or Copy – paste.
- An easier method is to use image viewer software like Adobe Bridge (free if you have an Adobe A/C), FastStone (free), or something similar.
- When downloading images, this type of programme can be set up to automatically create and name a new folder, then download images. Easiest if you make a main 'Download' folder.
- It can also be used to file (as you want), create collections, add key words for quick sorting, always showing files as thumbnails. Clicking on a thumbnail will open the image in a photo editing programme (this may need setting up).
- Affinity files – Bridge will only show a generic logo, FastStone will not show file at all. Windows File Explorer can show the files if you add a plug-in.
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6LCXWpyaIo - this link will show you a work-around for Bridge so you can also view the Affinity files.

OPENING IMAGES

JPEG v. RAW

- By saving the image as JPEG (even at best quality) in your camera, it is already throwing away information. With areas of high contrast JPEG can create a halo effect. Most DSLR's can be set to automatically save a JPEG & RAW image but this will slow down the reaction time as it has twice the work to do. The best solution, if available, is to shoot in RAW only and if you need a JPEG image convert from a non JPEG file.

- Using RAW format allows you to use the maximum amount of information generated by the sensor. Check which setting gives the most detail. This won't initially look as good as a JPEG on screen and will always require manipulation of some kind.

- If your camera cannot shoot in RAW, and you want to manipulate the image, open it with your photo software then re-save the JPEG image as TIFF or PSD. Photoshop is Save As, Affinity Photo has to Export, otherwise it will be saved in Affinity's own unique format.

- Never overwrite your original file. Always back-up everything, even when working on a file. Use iterations as backups to return to.

OPENING IMAGES

This is the JPEG file, generated from the RAW file, in Lightroom. This is the starting point.

Degradation starts after the file has been saved 6 times as a JPEG.

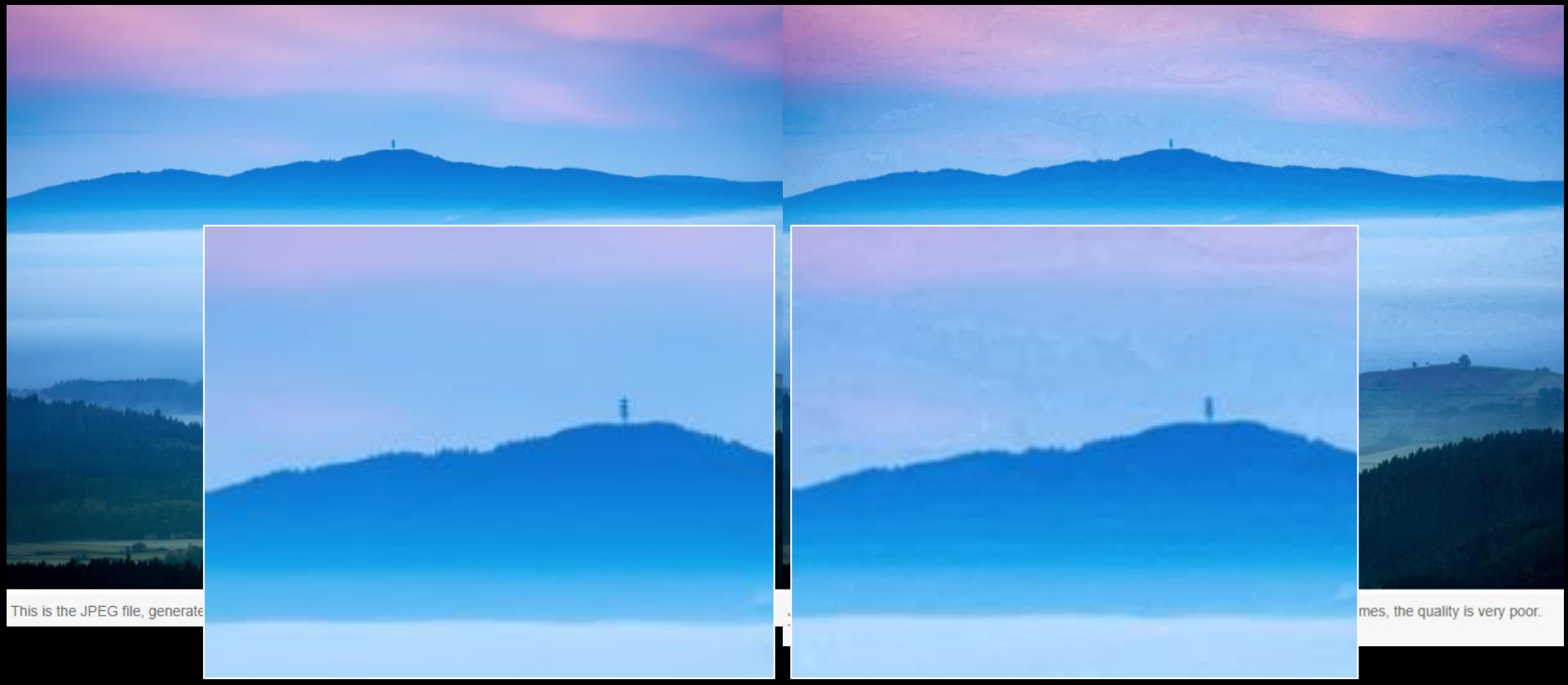
OPENING IMAGES

This is the JPEG file, generated from the RAW file, in Lightroom. This is the starting point.

Just to see what will happen when the image is saved over and over again. After twenty times, the quality is very poor. This image can never be used, not even on social media like Facebook.

Degradation starts after the file has been saved 6 times as a JPEG.

OPENING IMAGES



Degradation starts after the file has been saved 6 times as a JPEG.

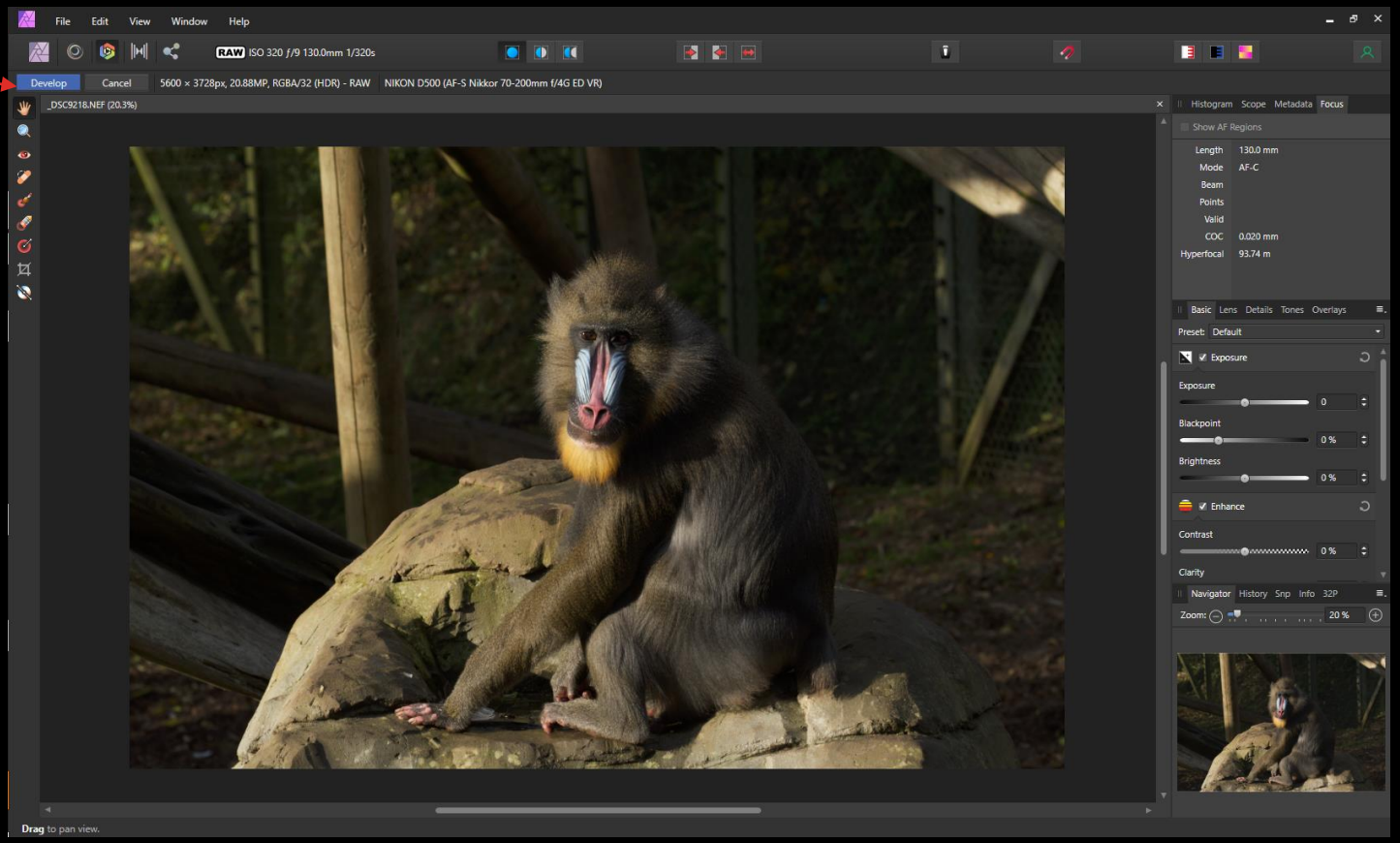
https://fstoppers.com/education/about-jpeg-images-and-their-quality-degradation-435235es

OPENING IMAGES

Opening RAW files after they have been downloaded to your computer.

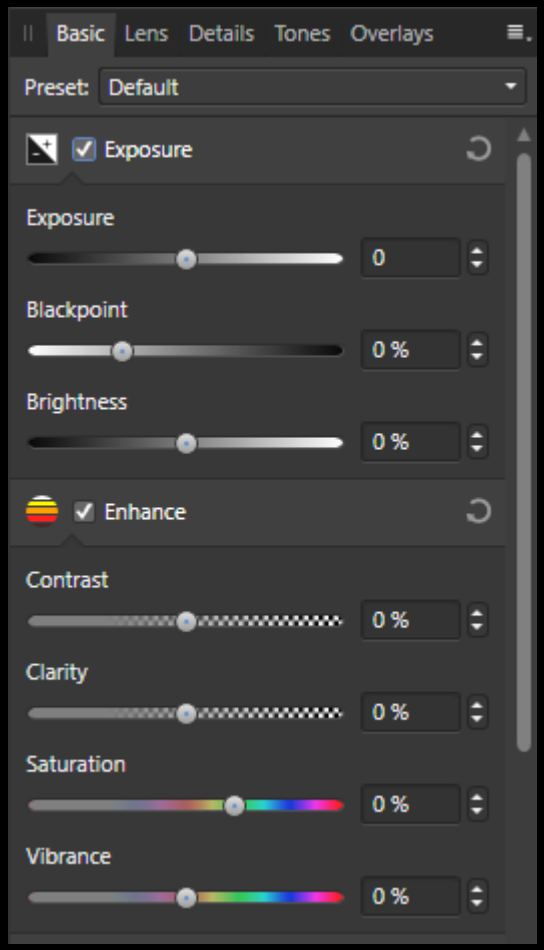
Affinity Photo – Develop Persona Window (RAW file import)

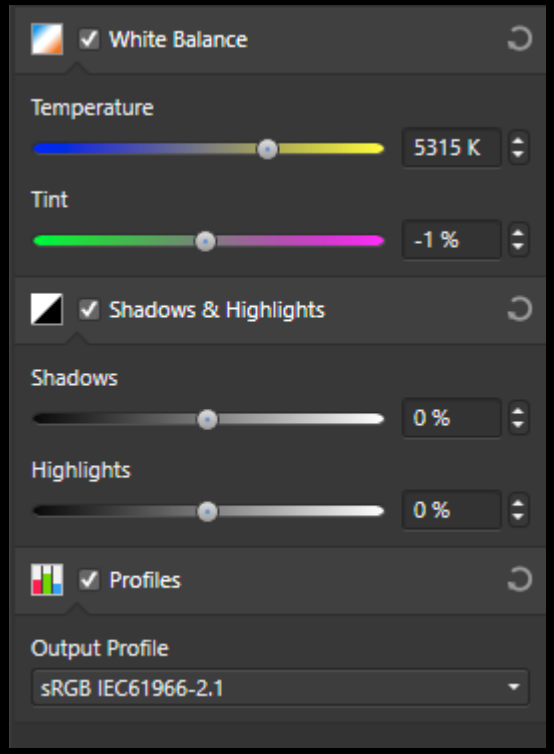
When adjustments are completed press Develop to fully open the image.

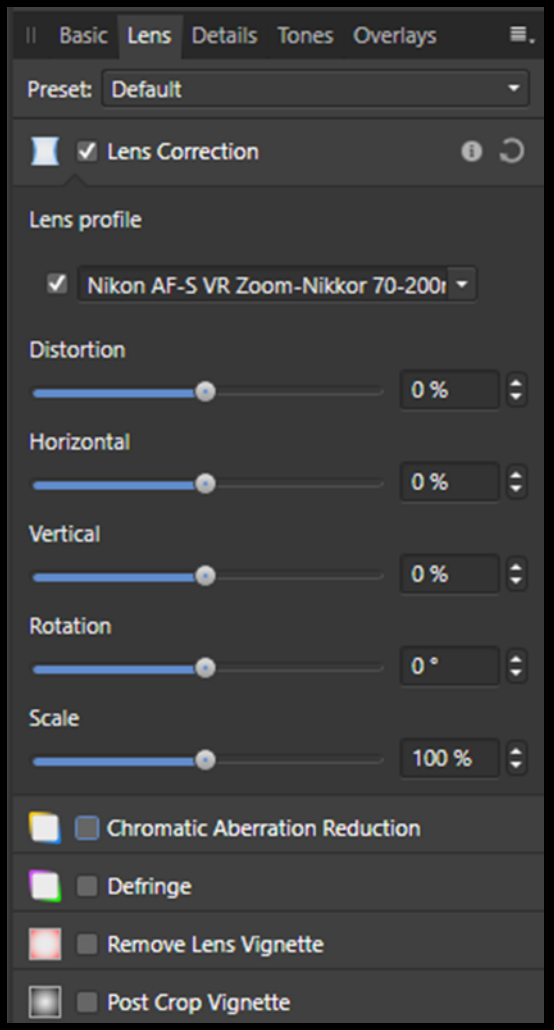


OPENING IMAGES

Affinity Photo – Develop Persona (RAW file) adjustments

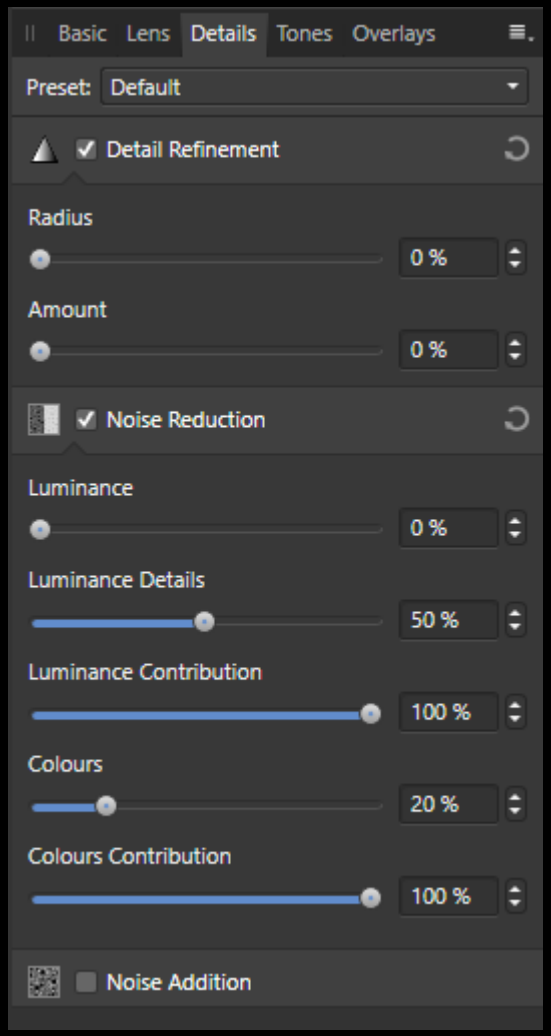


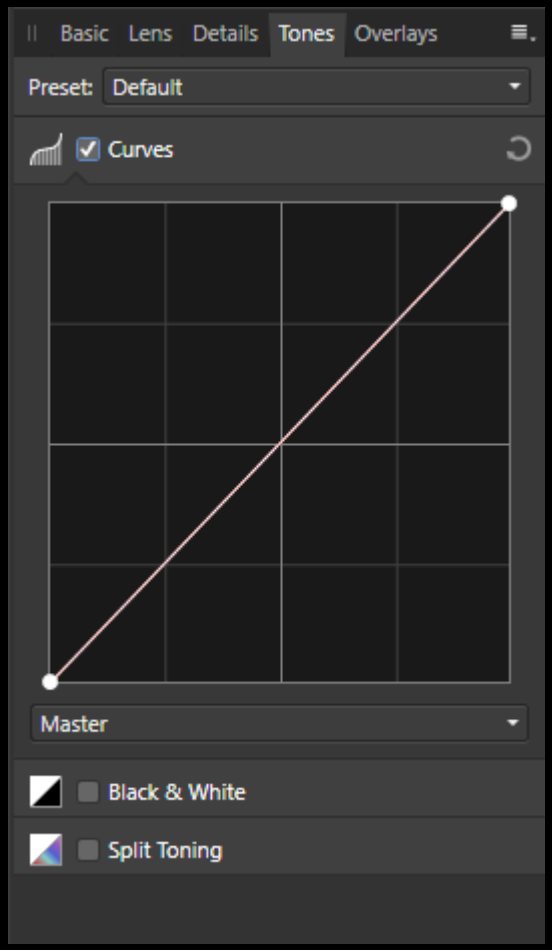


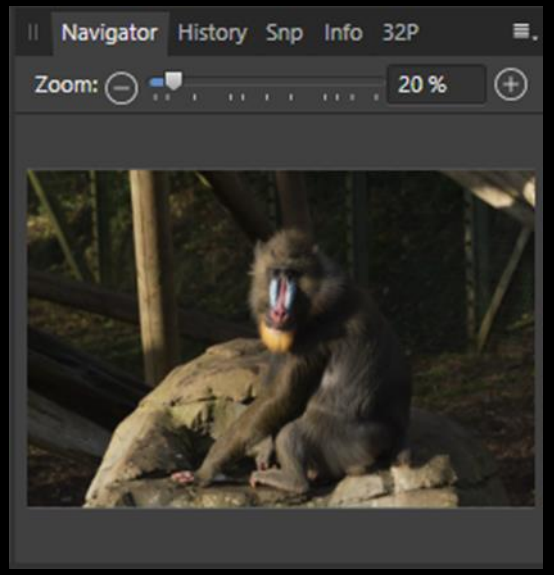


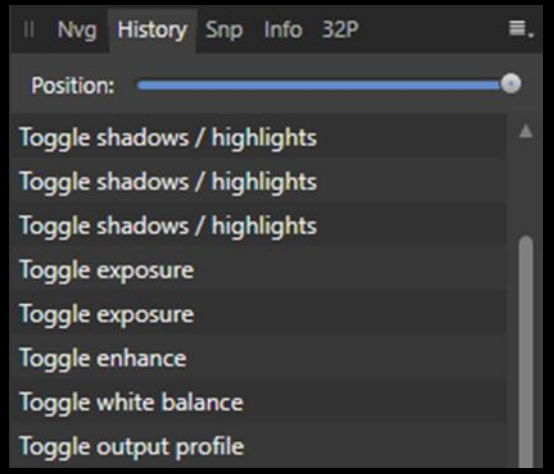
OPENING IMAGES

Affinity Photo – Develop Persona (RAW file) adjustments



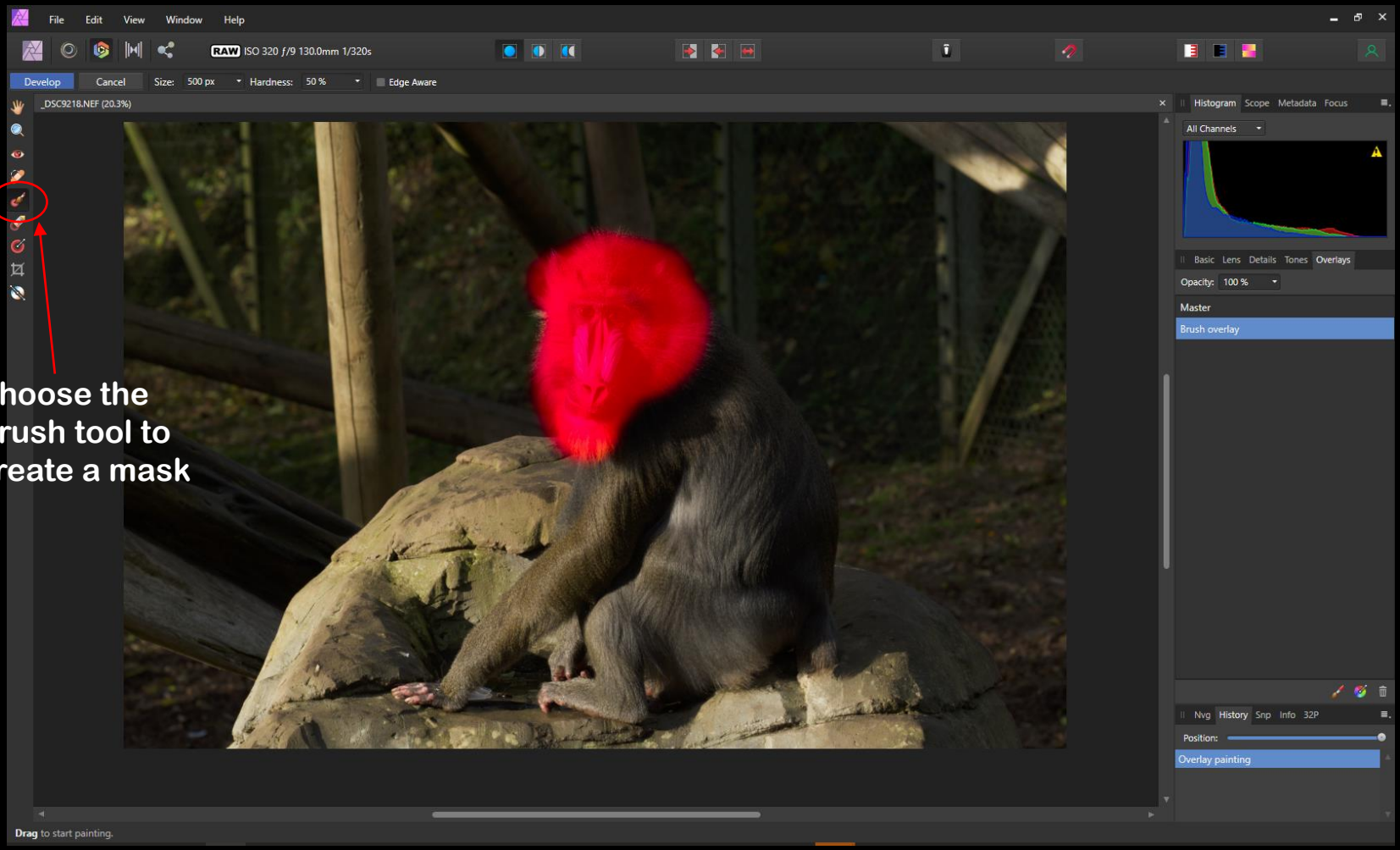






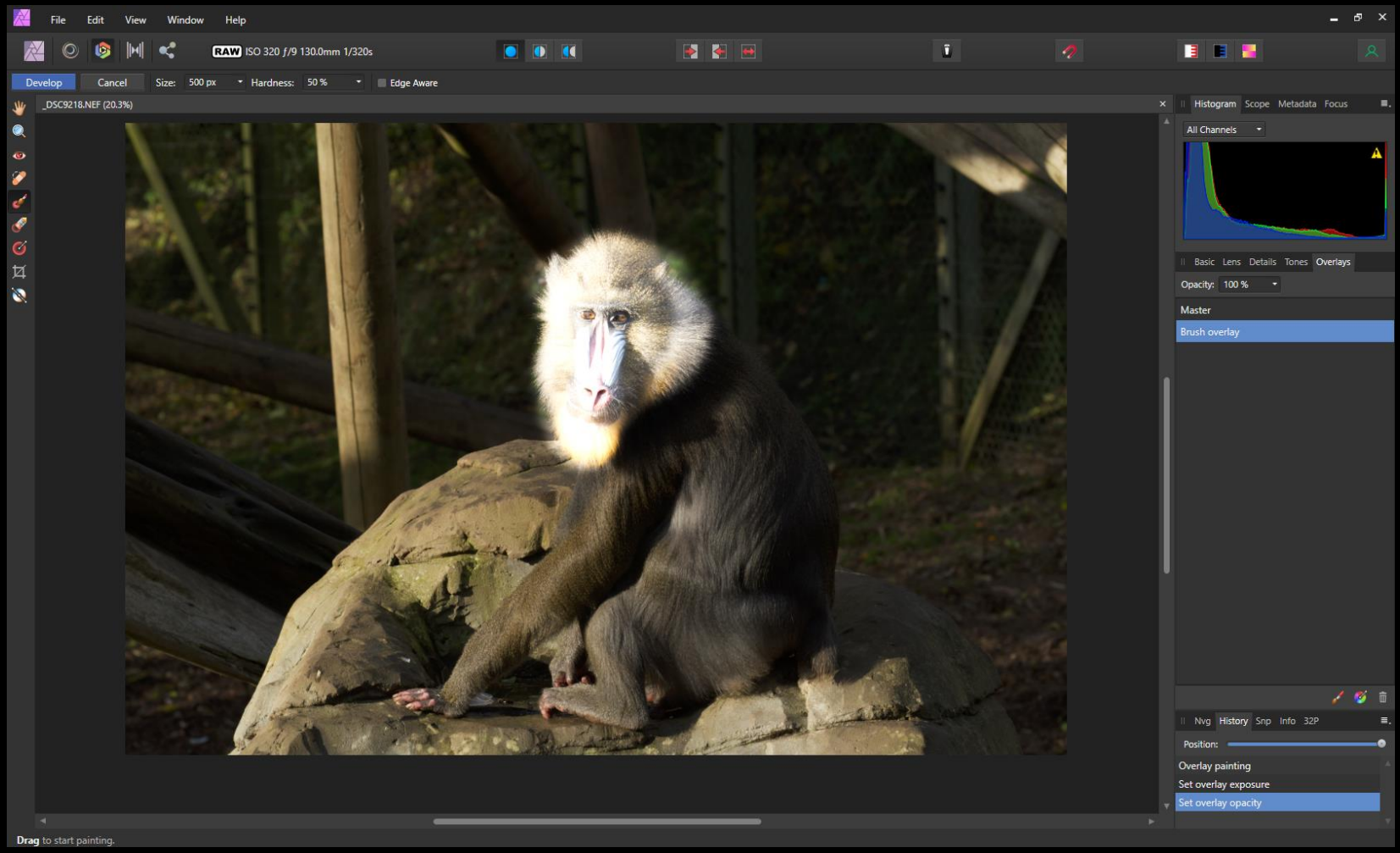
OPENING IMAGES

Affinity Photo – Develop Persona (RAW file) selective adjustments



OPENING IMAGES

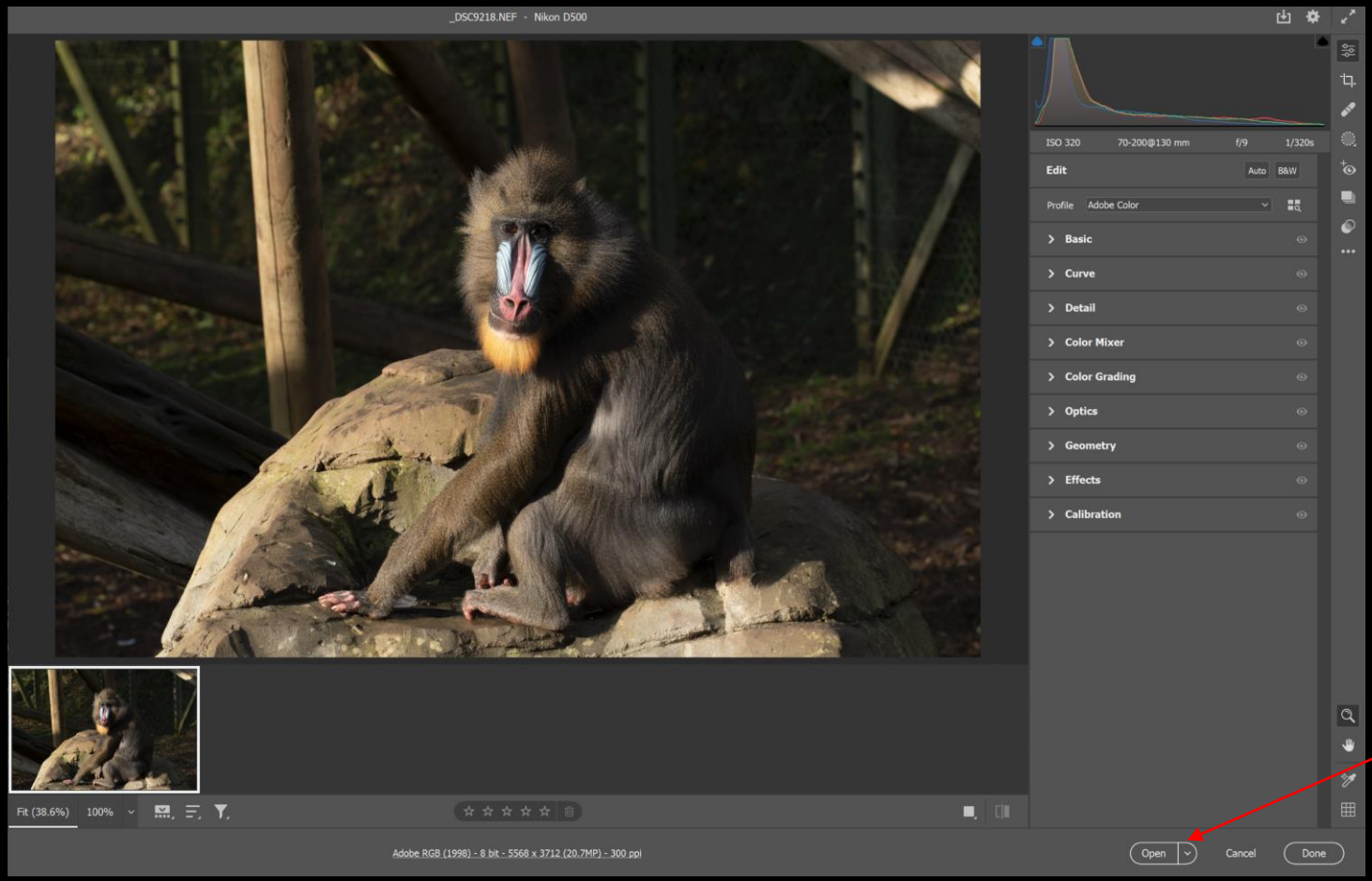
Affinity Photo – Develop Persona (RAW file) selevtice adjustments



OPENING IMAGES

Opening RAW files after they have been downloaded to your computer.

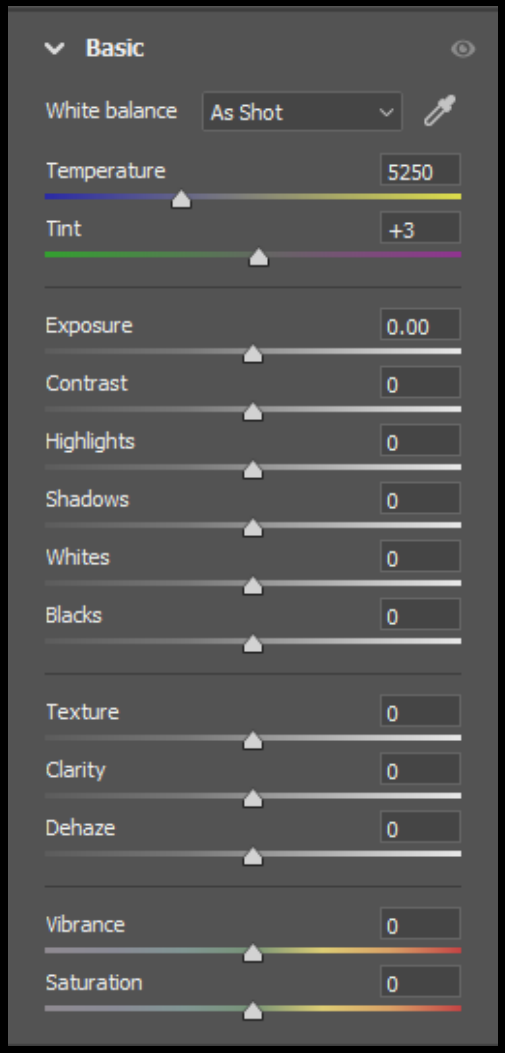
Photoshop – RAW file window

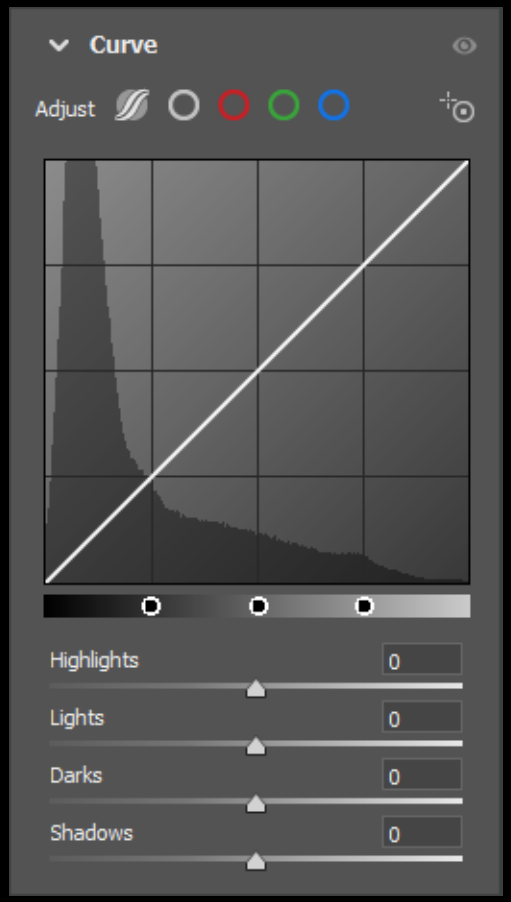


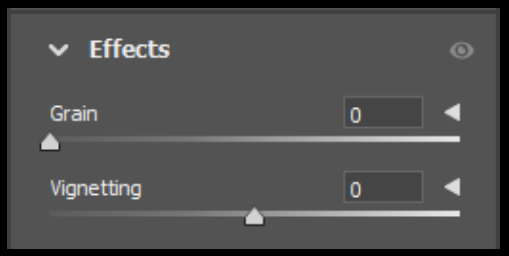
When adjustments are completed press Open to fully open the image.

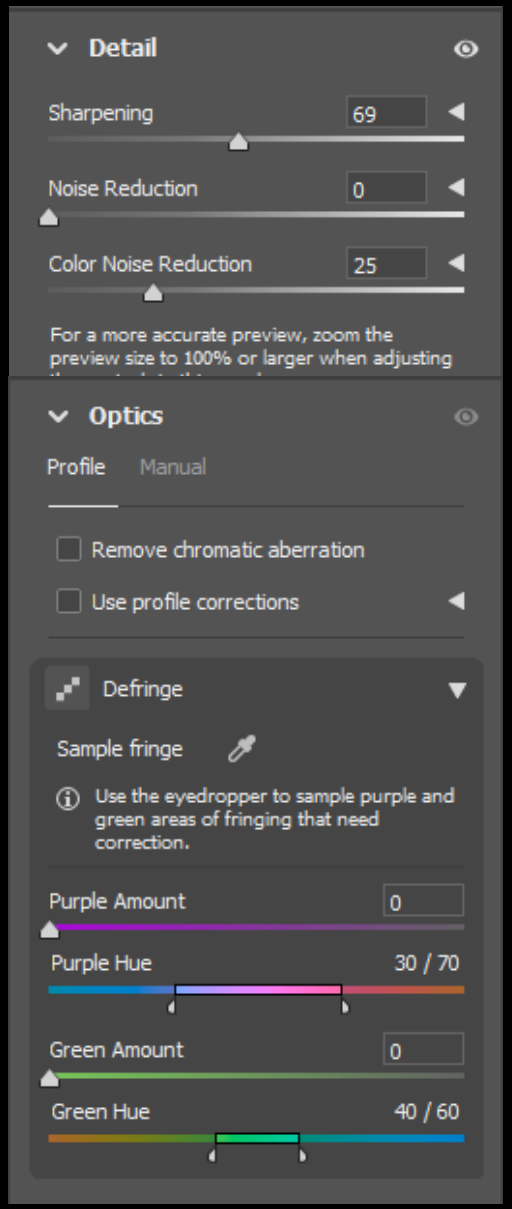
OPENING IMAGES

Photoshop – RAW file adjs



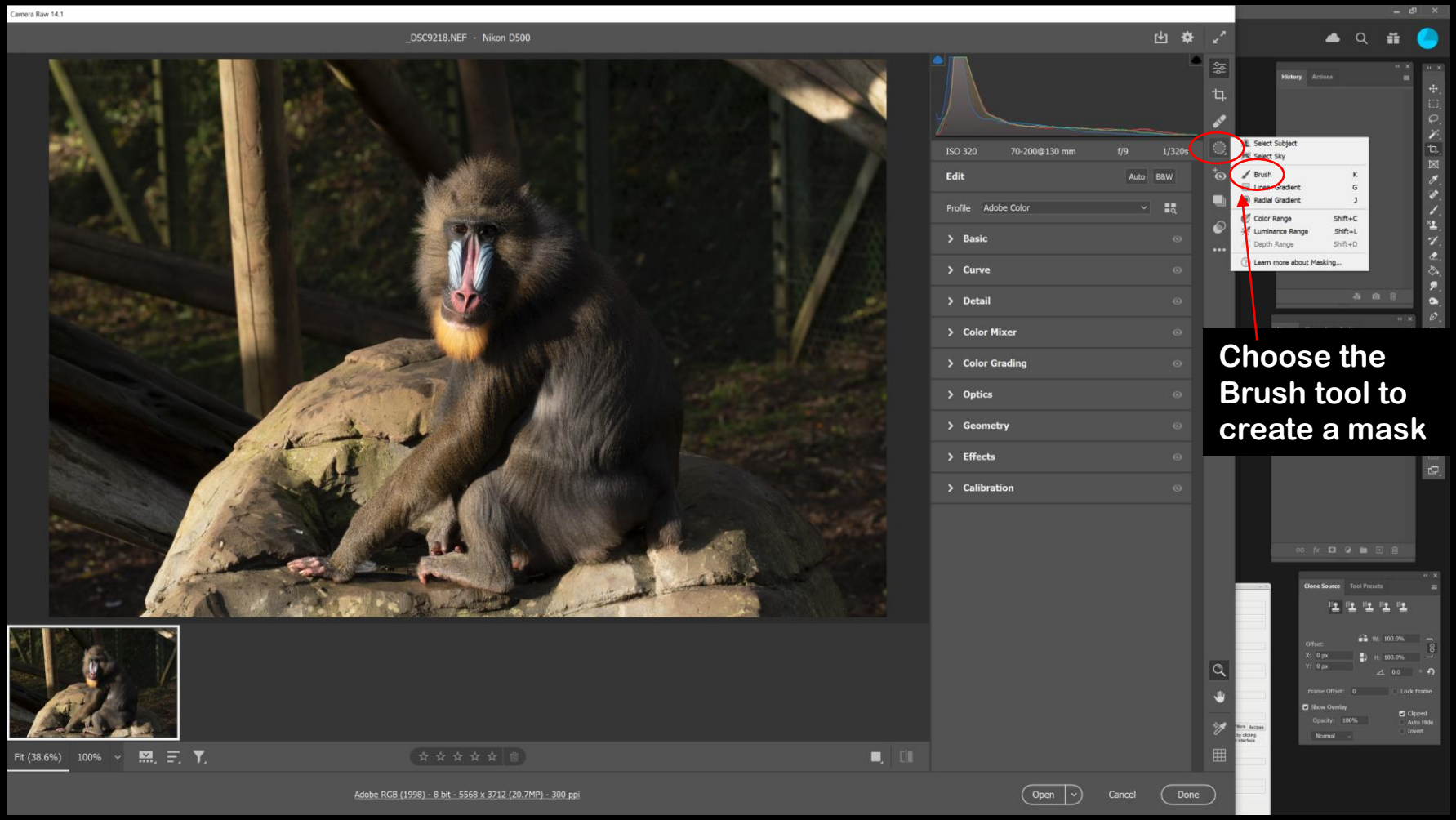






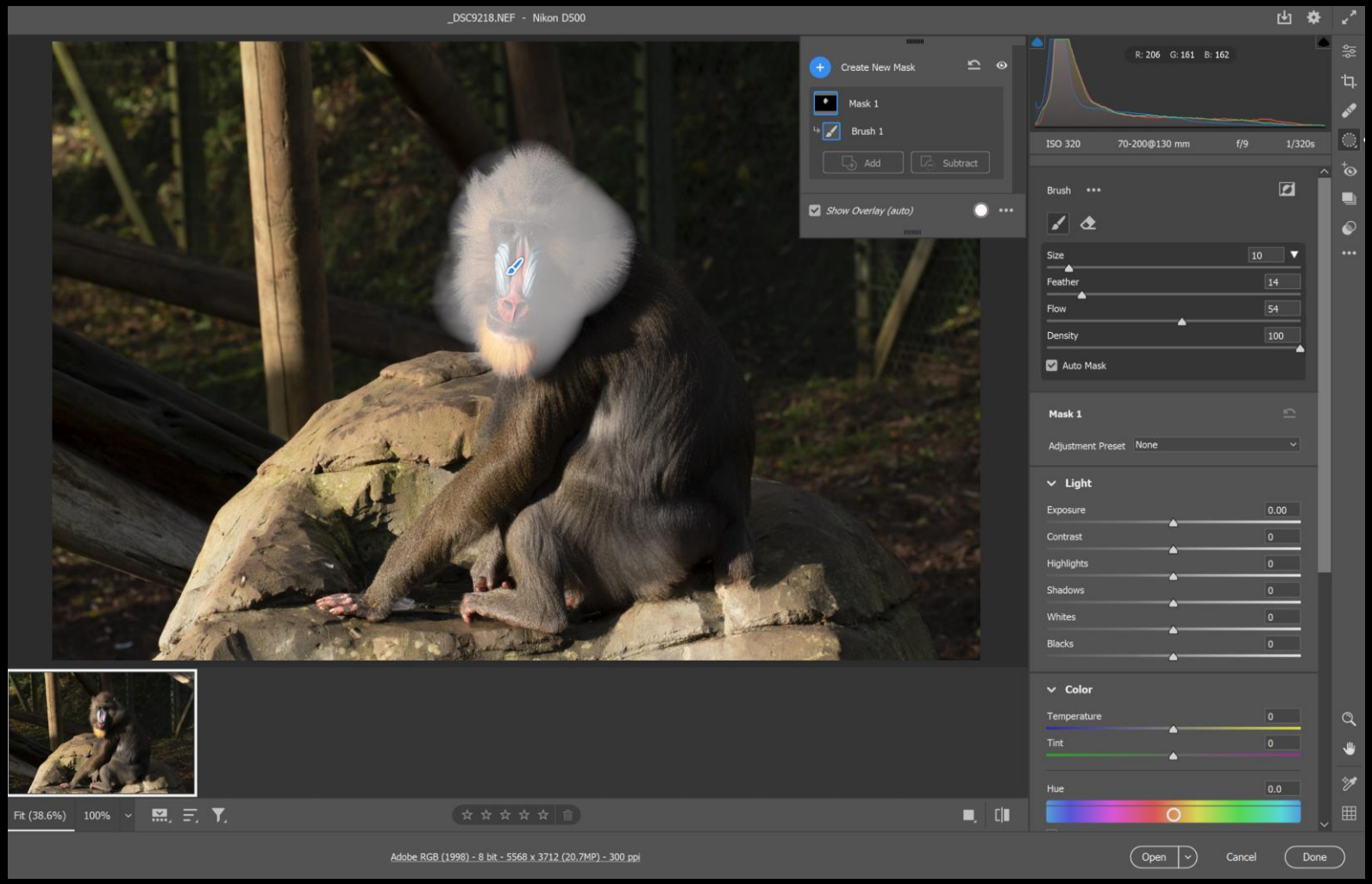
OPENING IMAGES

Photoshop – RAW file selective adjustments



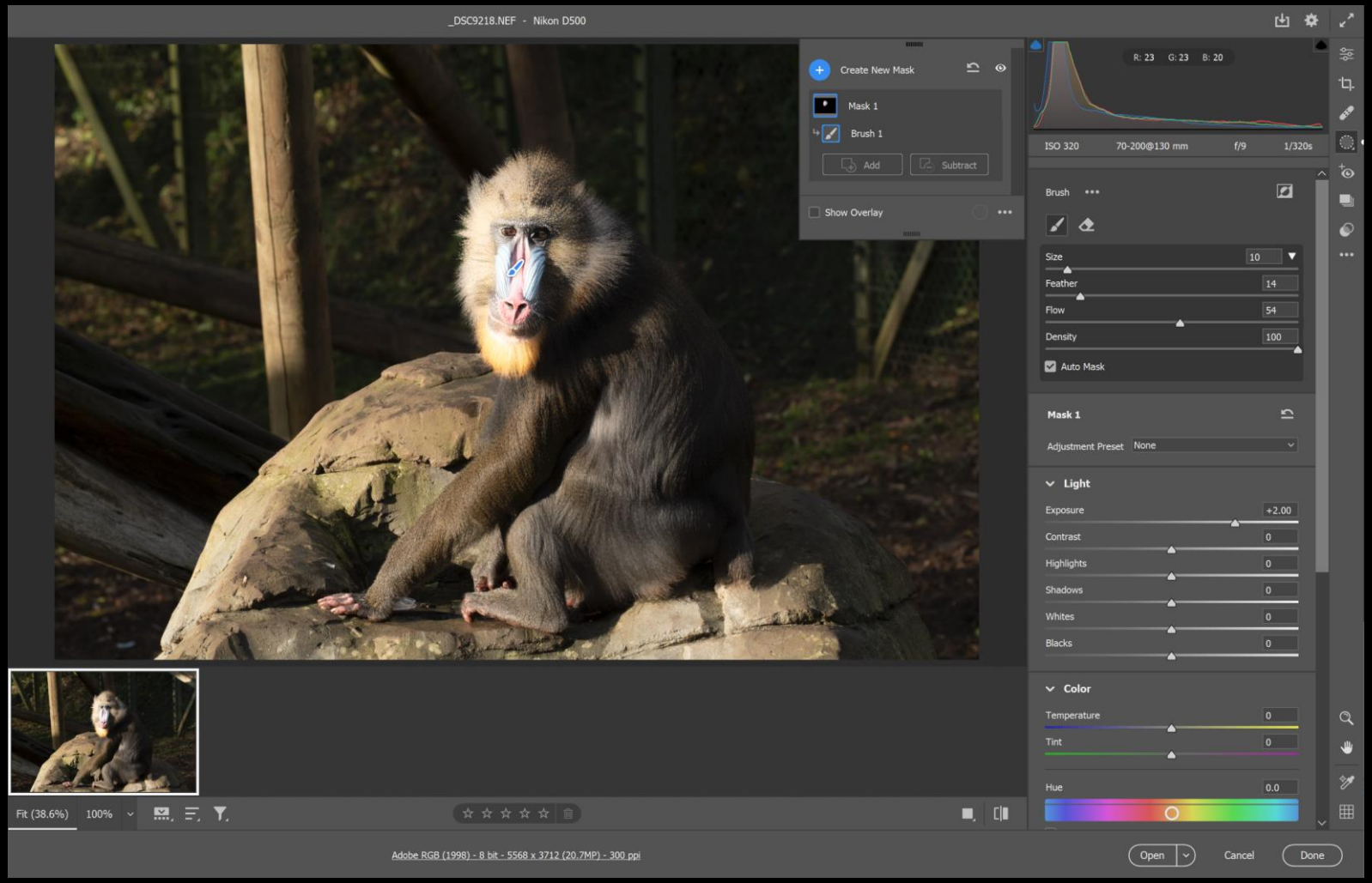
OPENING IMAGES

Photoshop – RAW file selective adjustments



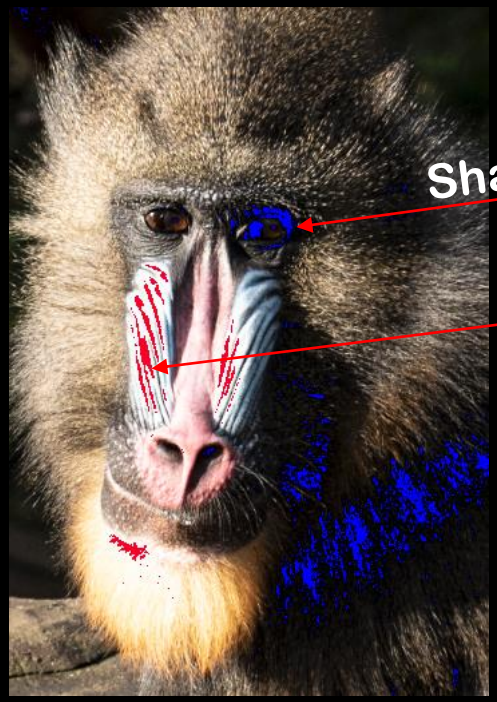
OPENING IMAGES

Photoshop – RAW file selective adjustments



OPENING IMAGES - HINTS

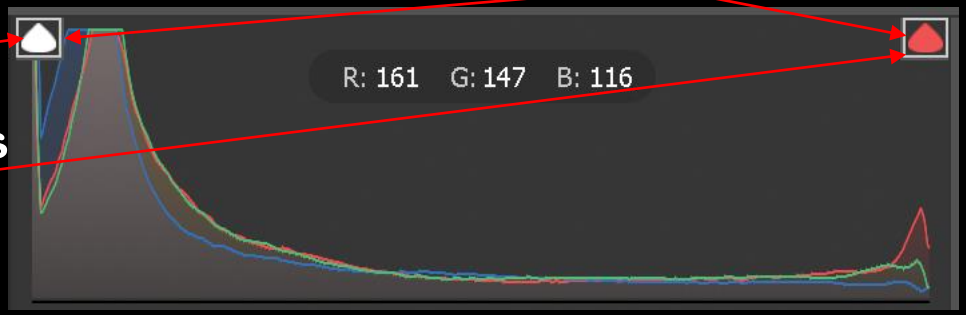
- Pay particular attention to the Histogram to extract as much information as possible from the image file.



Click on the clipping warning buttons

Shadows

Highlights

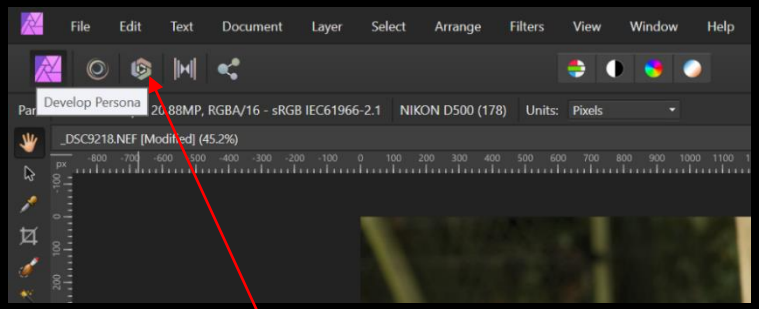


- Adjust sliders to correct for out of gamit colours (this will also help produce a better colour rendition when printing).

OPENING IMAGES - HINTS

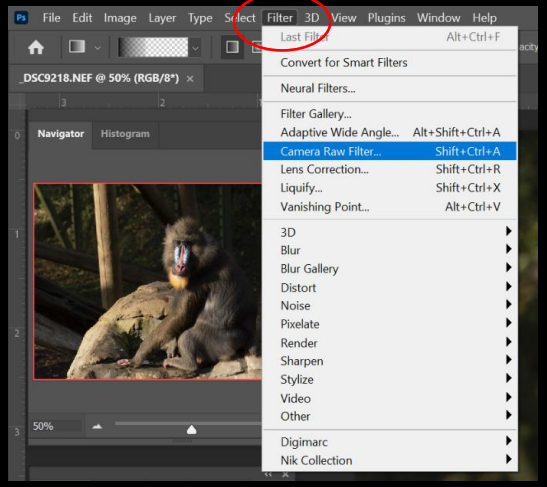
- Non RAW images can be edited via the RAW or Develop Persona window.

Affinity Photo



Open file, click the Develop Persona icon.

Photoshop



Choose Filter > Camera Raw Filter from the drop down menu.

- When in the RAW/Develop window the filters can then be used for editing non RAW files including JPEG's, but also further editing of previously manipulated images.

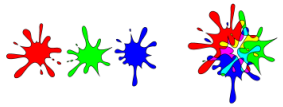
- If it all goes pear shaped in Photoshop, provided there is a Cancel option on the window in use, press 'ALT' key and the Cancel button turns to Reset. Click on Reset and all settings return to their default values.

SHARPENING

Sharpening – Colour Space (Affinity Photo & Photoshop)

RGB model

The RGB model is an additive colour model. The primary colours of light, Red, Green and Blue, are combined in various degrees to make other colours in the spectrum.

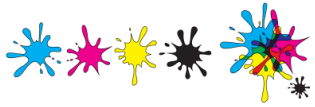


This starts from black e.g. screen and then adds RGB to end up with white

A representation of the RGB colour model. This model is universal within digital cameras and electronic displays.

CMYK model

The CMYK model is a subtractive model. Cyan, Magenta and Yellow are combined to make each colour. A fourth ink, Black, is also used for extra control and can be used either on its own for a true black, or combined with the other inks for a rich black.



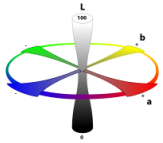
This starts from white (paper) and then adds CMY to end up with black.

A representation of the CMYK colour model. When the three colours combine they make black. Black is also added as a separate colour for extra tonal control.

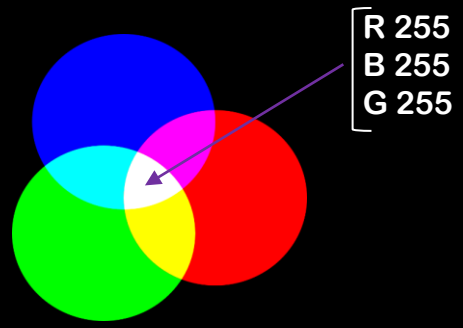
The way that the colour model is implemented is defined by the colour space that is chosen; this is possible by selecting a colour profile.

Lab

Lab colour represents the theoretical range of human vision using three channels: Lightness (L), and two colour channels of opposing values of 'red - green' (a) and 'yellow - blue' (b). It can be very useful when used creatively, especially as Lightness can be adjusted without any change to hue or saturation.



A representation of the Lab colour opposition model. Lightness (L) is controlled separately to the two colour channels (a, b).

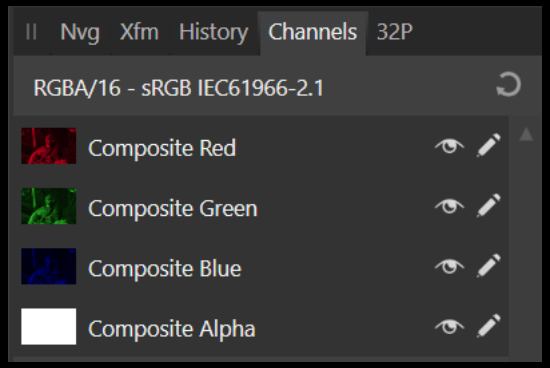


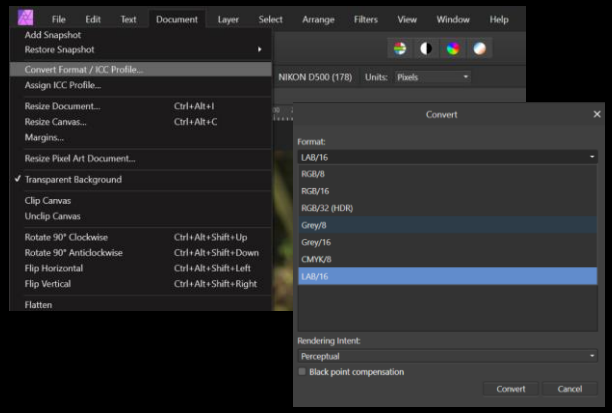
When sharpening RGB and CMYK colour channels you are also affecting the black and white spaces.

SHARPENING

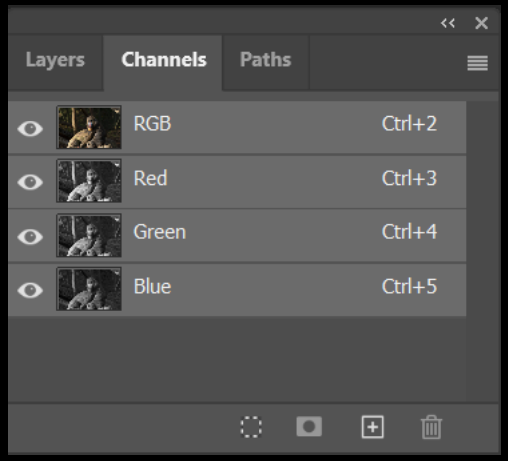
Sharpening – Changing Colour Space

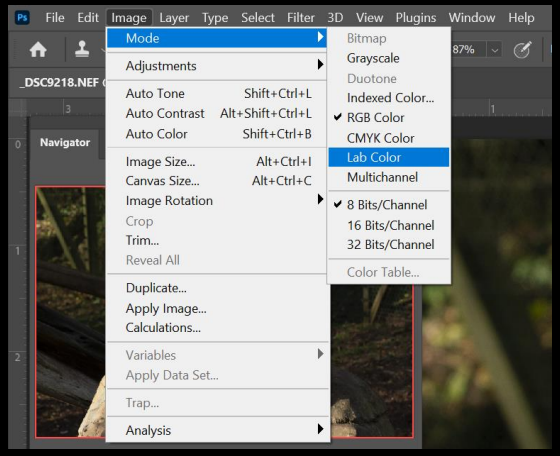
Affinity Photo

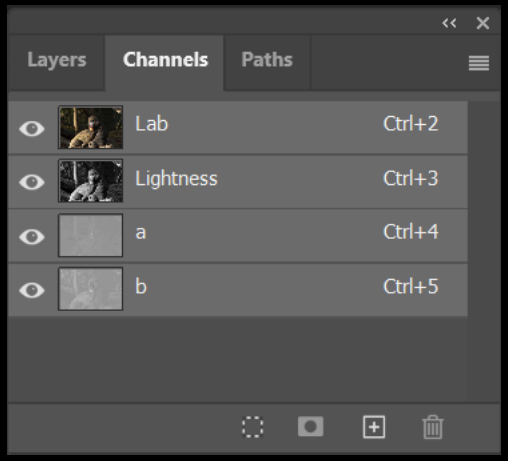




Photoshop

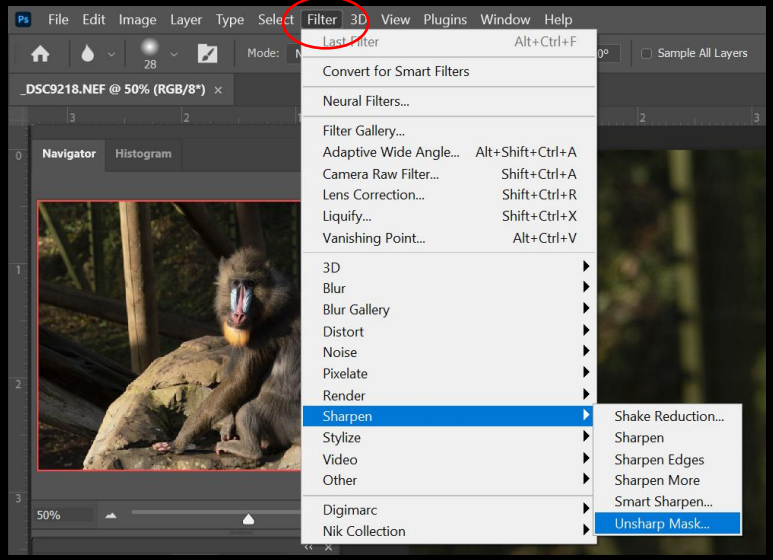


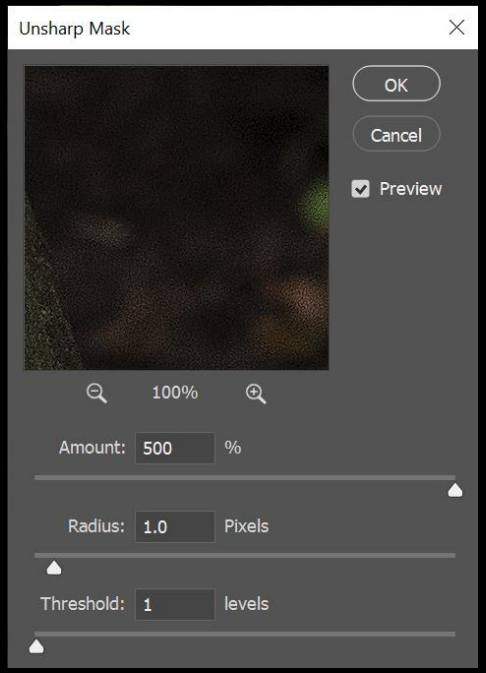




Sharpening – Colour Space (Photoshop)

Original

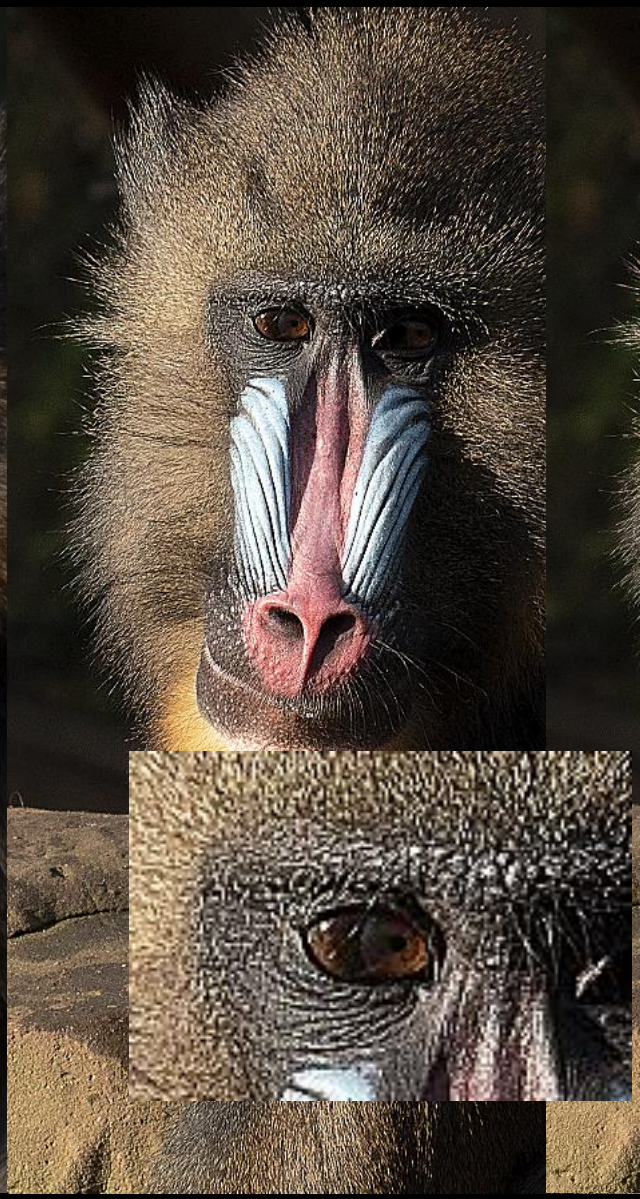




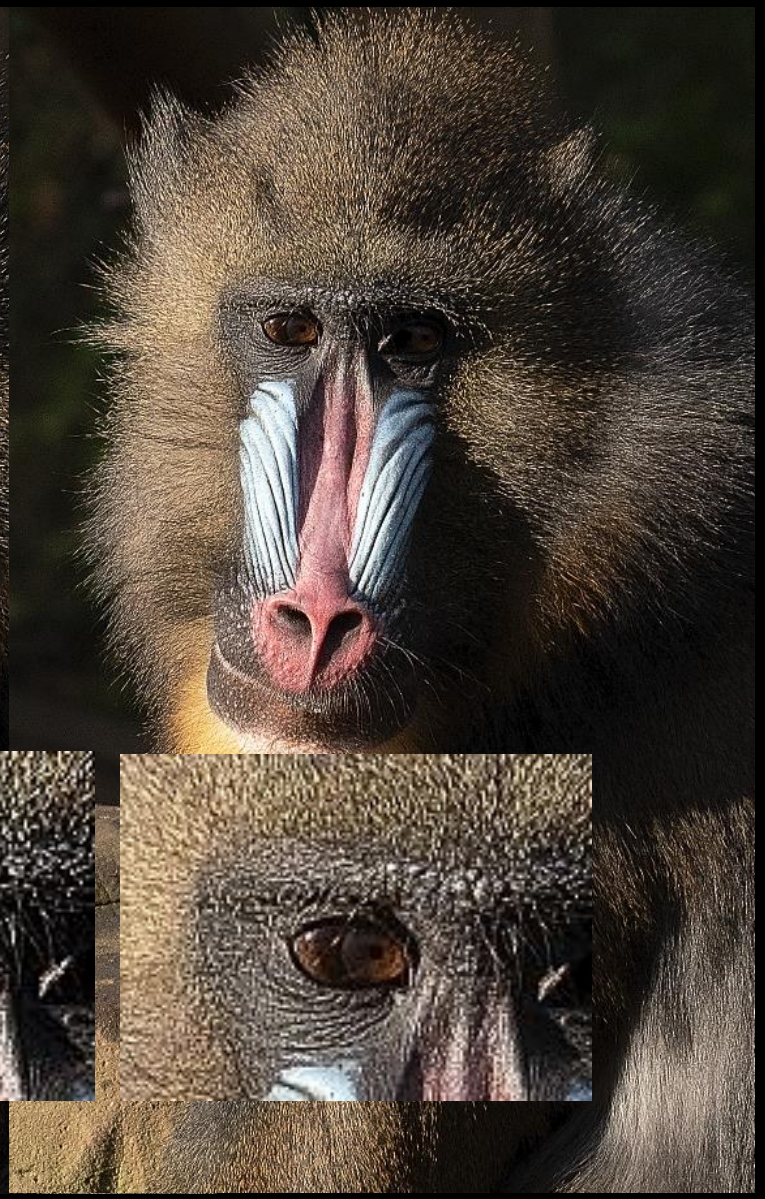
Select all channels or if individual channels are selected different strengths of sharpening can be applied to each one.

Sharpening – Colour Space (Photoshop)

Original

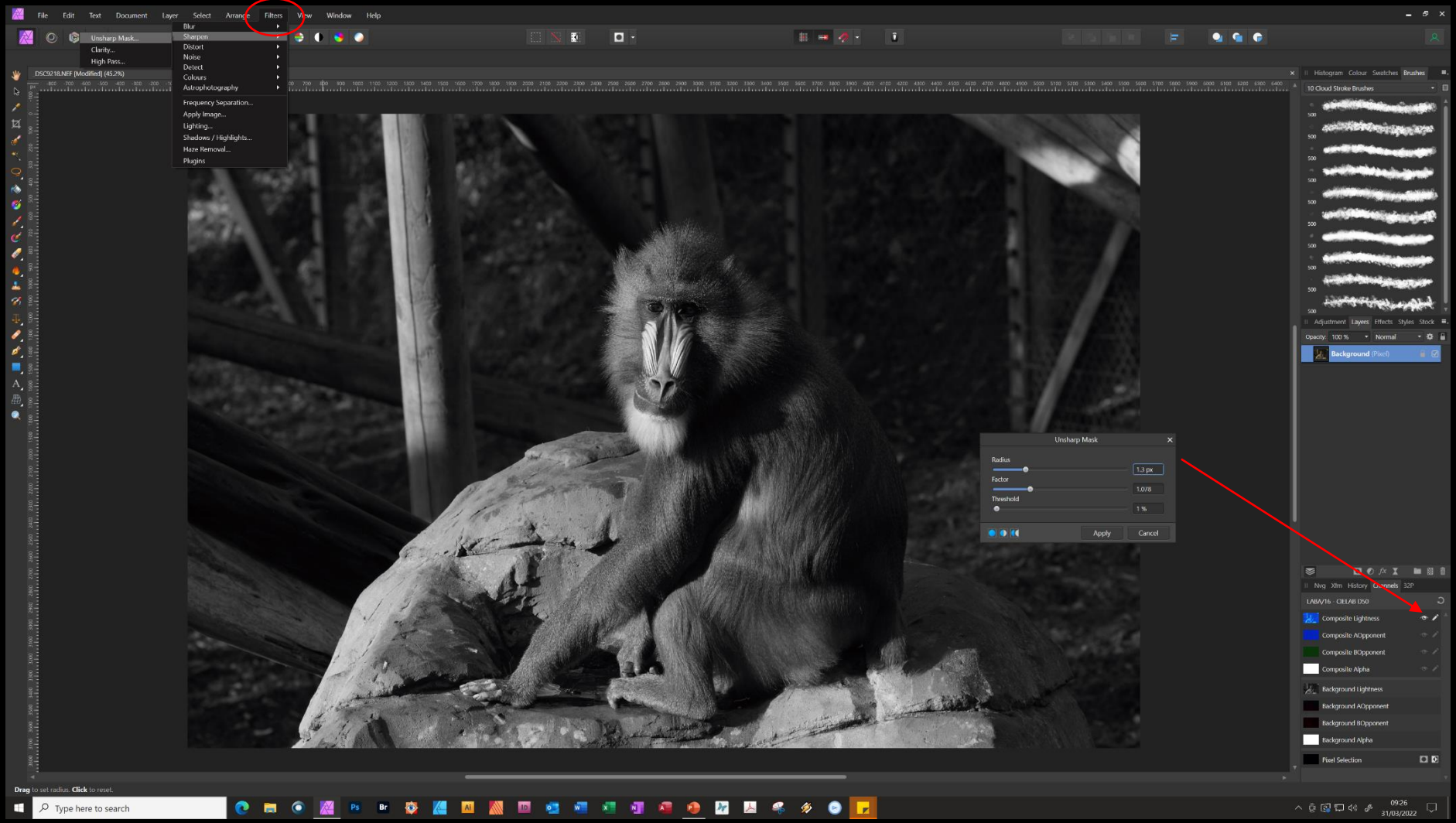


RGB



LAB – only Lightness Channel

Sharpening – Colour Space (Affinity Photo)

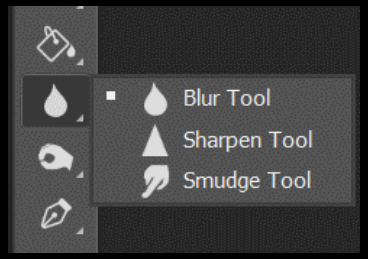


Sharpening to be applied to only the LAB Lightness channel.

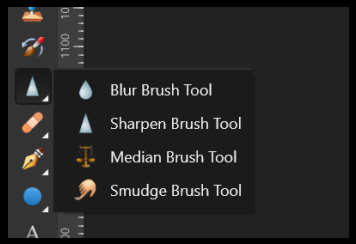
SHARPENING - HINTS

- Don’t forget to also use the Sharpening tool as this allows localised detailed alterations.

Photoshop



Affinity Photo



- Specific layers and colour channels can be targeted.
- Flatten image if you want to use it on the overall image.
- Reducing noise slightly softens the image. With heavy sharpening noise will return.
- Apply sharpening as the first process after opening (if not already applied during the opening process) as any marks are emphasised.
- Don’t over sharpen – less is more, especially with JPEG images otherwise it emphasises any halo present in the original. Check areas of high contrast, e.g. sky meets darkish buildings.

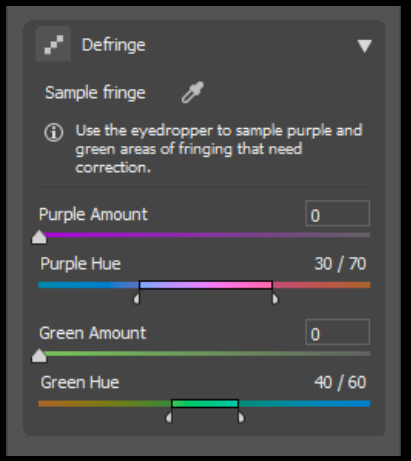
SHARPENING - HINTS

JPEG Straight from the camera

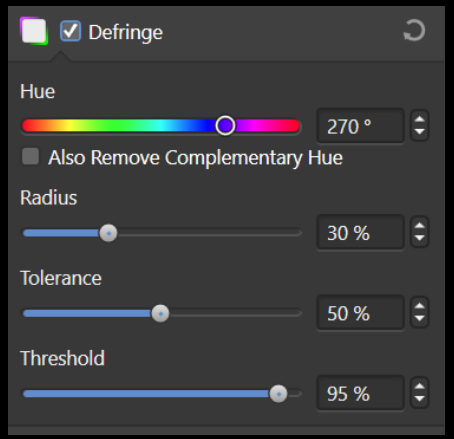
Some sharpening applied

SHARPENING - HINTS

Photoshop



Affinity Photo



This is shown at a higher magnification than it would normally be viewed. ‘Defringe’ does not always completely remove the problem so a bit of cloning in strategic places can also help. It’s all to do with fooling the brain (and the Judges!).

SHARPENING - HINTS

Give the High Pass filter a try

Original

After filter applied

https://www.photoshopessentials.com/photo-editing/sharpen-high-pass/

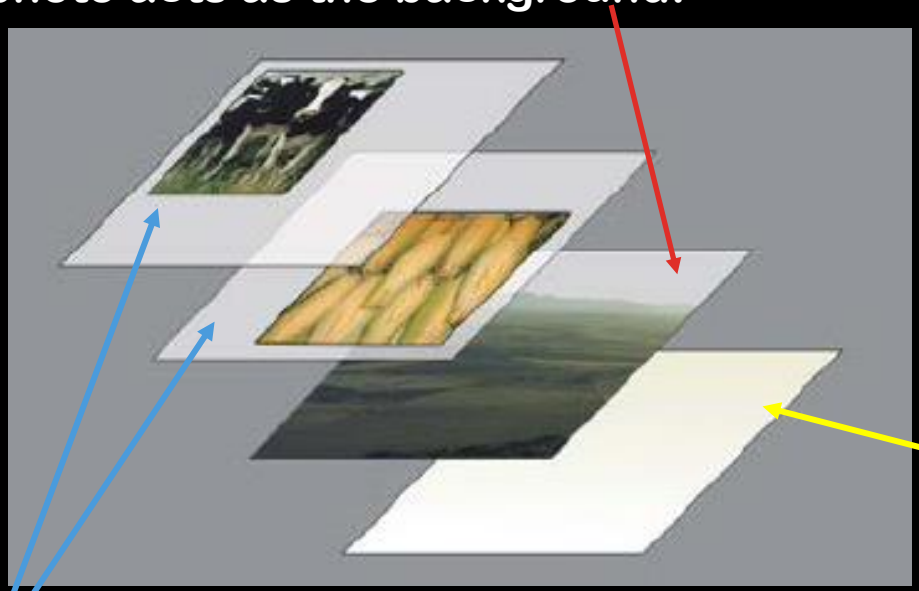
Photoshop – Filter > Other > High Pass

Affinity Photo – Filters > Sharpen > High Pass

LAYERS

What are layers ?

The original photo acts as the background.



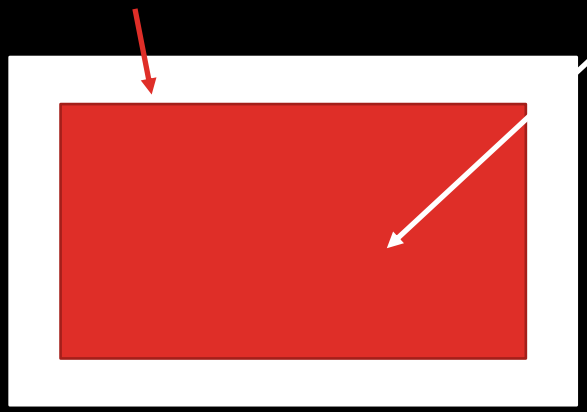
- Transparent layers are then built up above the background.
- These can be used for various actions and adjustments.
- Layers increase the size of your file, save copies during work but once finalised save a copy before flattening – you may want to revisit.

LAYERS

Canvas – This your workspace where you can add an image, etc. When you open an image with File > Open it automatically makes the canvas the same size as the image opened. A Canvas can hold more than one image e.g. Triptych.

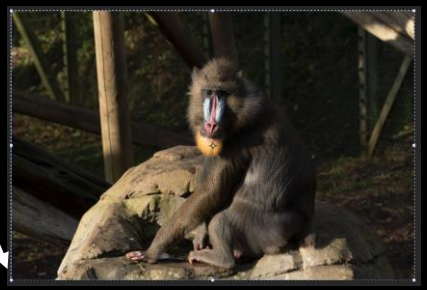
Image (Background) – The image size is the size of each individual image on the Canvas.

If you want to add more area around an image change the canvas size.



If you want to shrink, expand, or change the resolution of an image, adjust the image size.
(*Resizing an image automatically adjusts the canvas size to fit)*

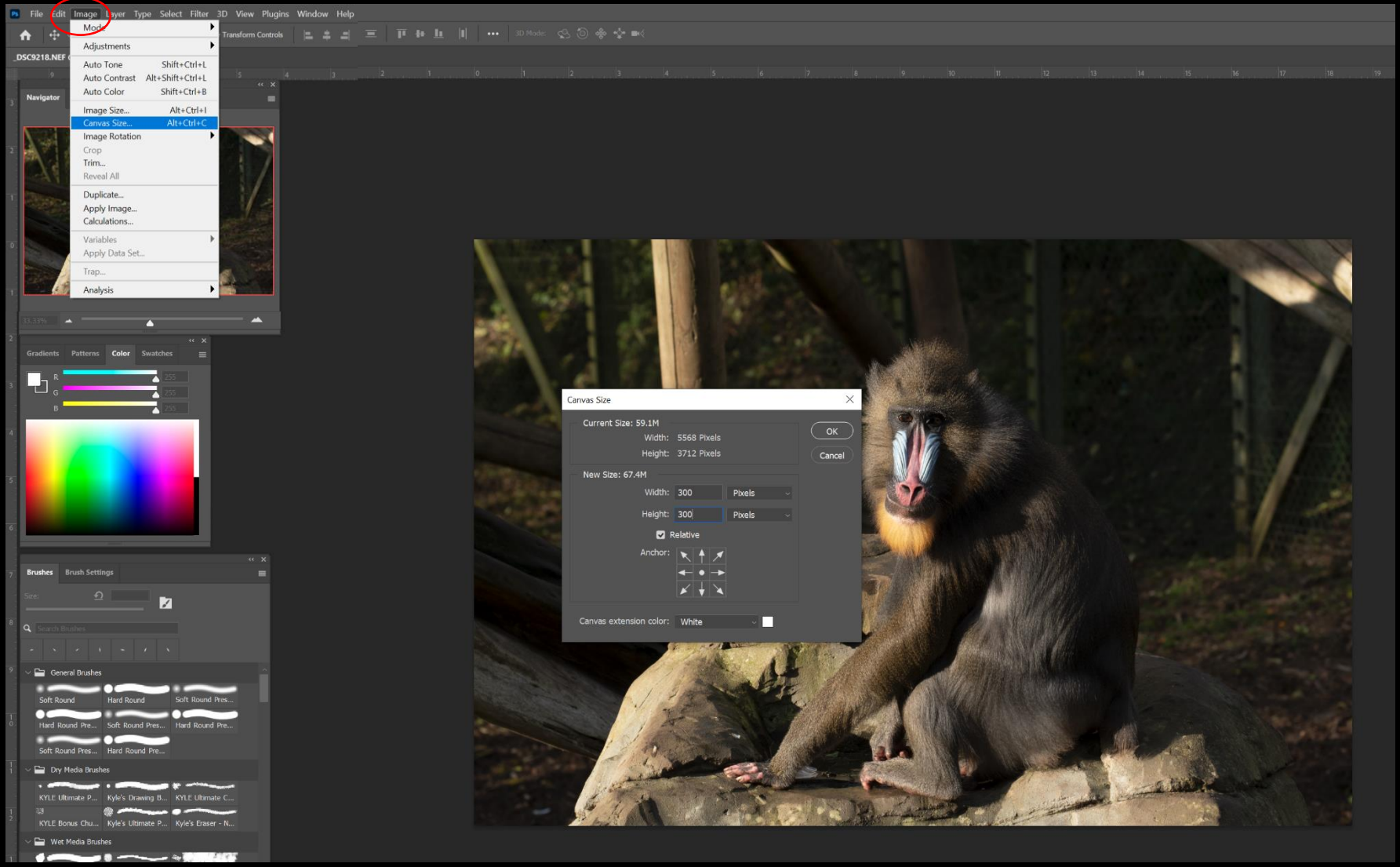
If you alter an image size by dragging the handles you will lose image quality.



Changing the size of an image and canvas usually left as last manipulation unless small image requires enlarging to work on.

LAYERS

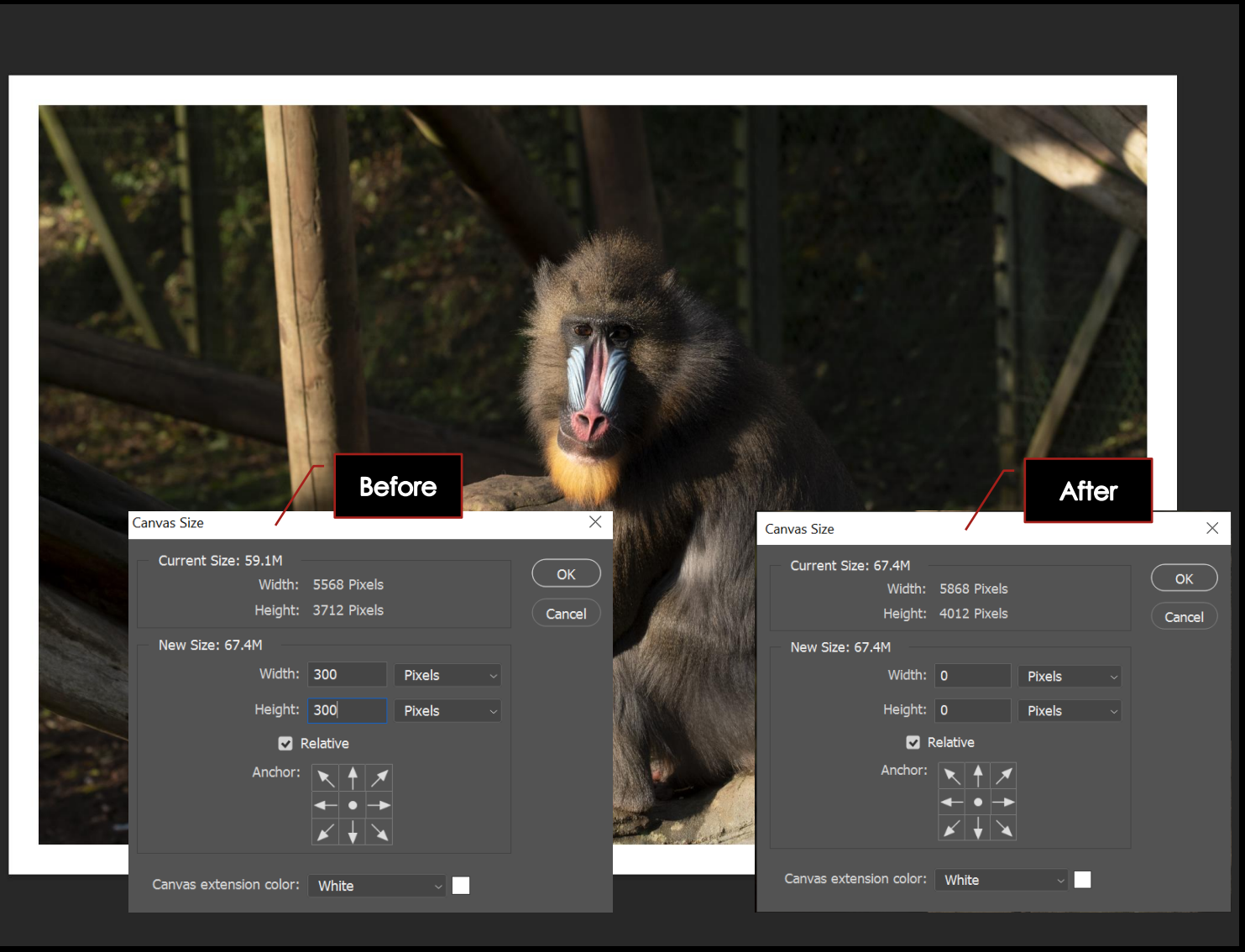
Photoshop - Changing Canvas Size



LAYERS

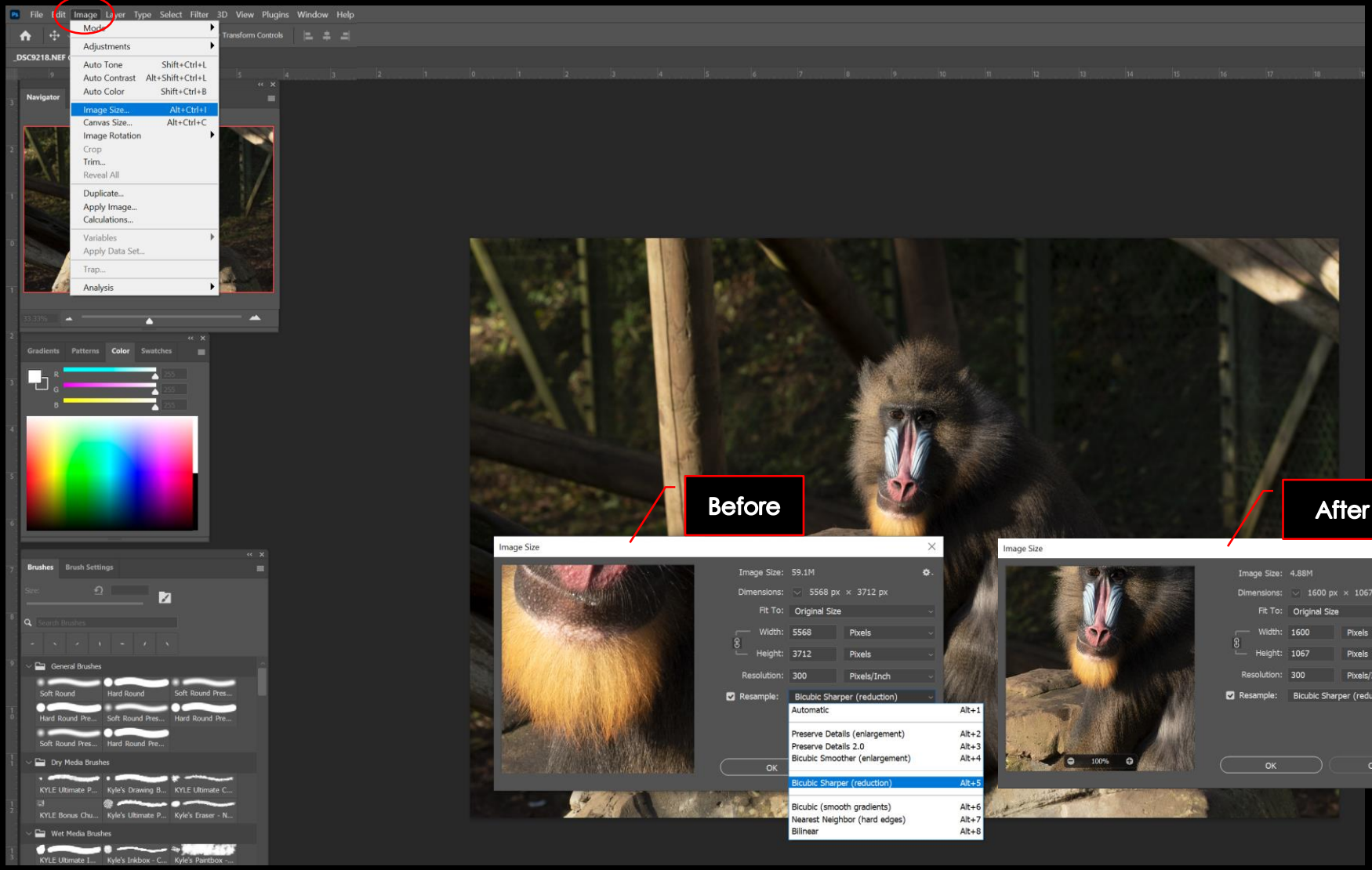
Photoshop - Changing Canvas Size

Easiest way to create a border for your image.



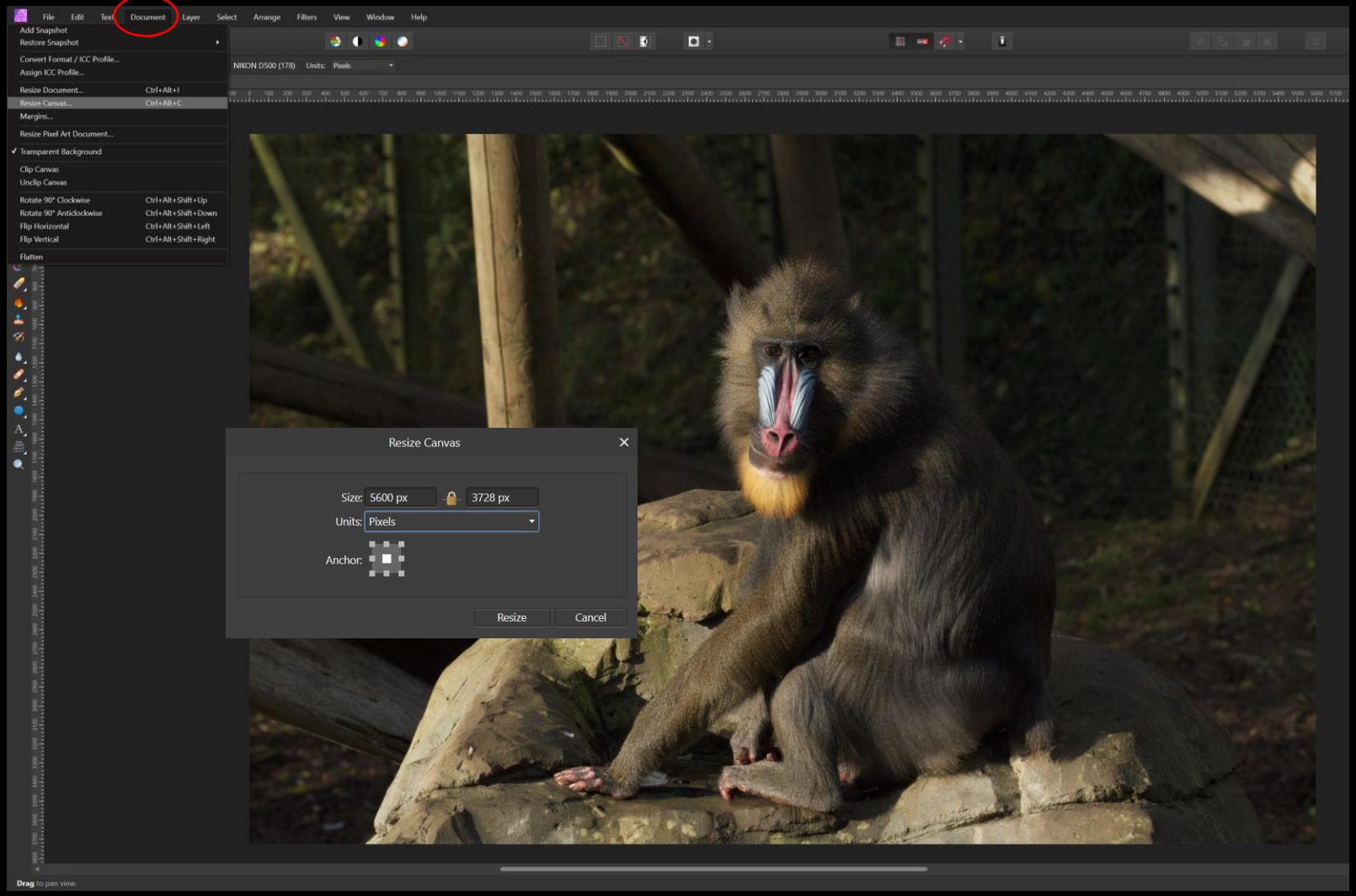
LAYERS

Photoshop - Changing Image Size (Use this to resize images for club competitions)



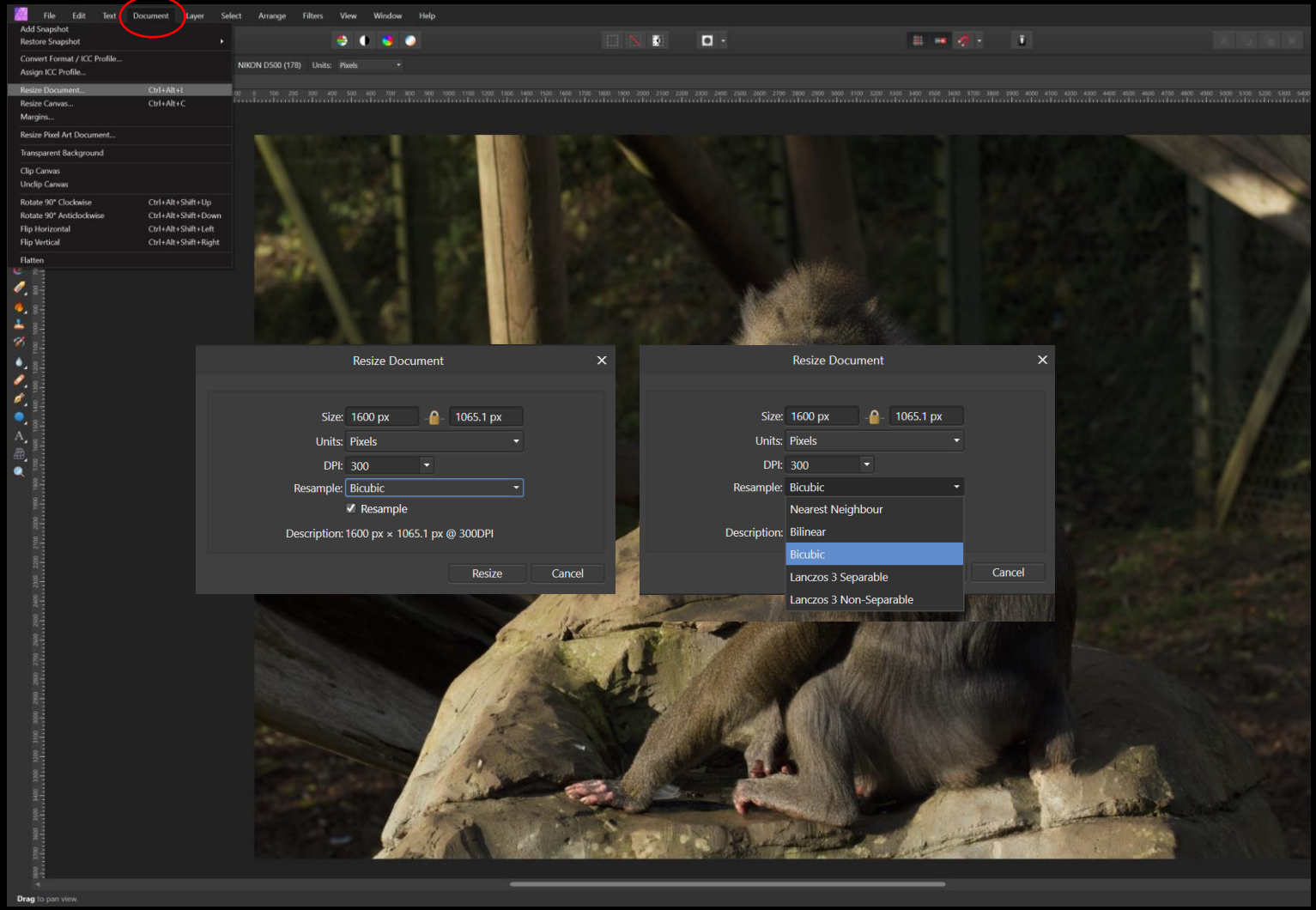
LAYERS

Affinity Photo - Changing Canvas Size



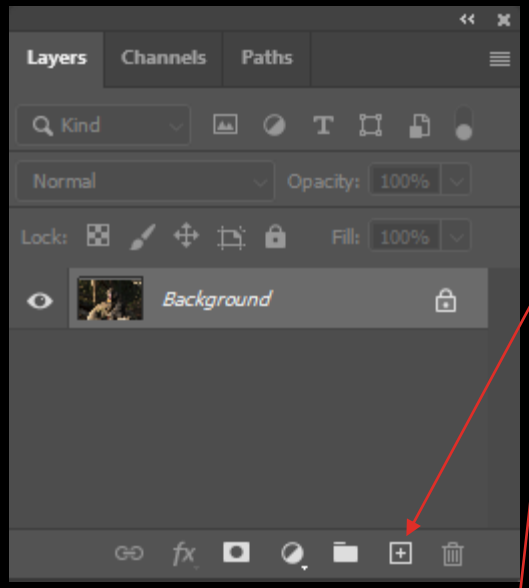
LAYERS

Affinity Photo - Changing Image Size

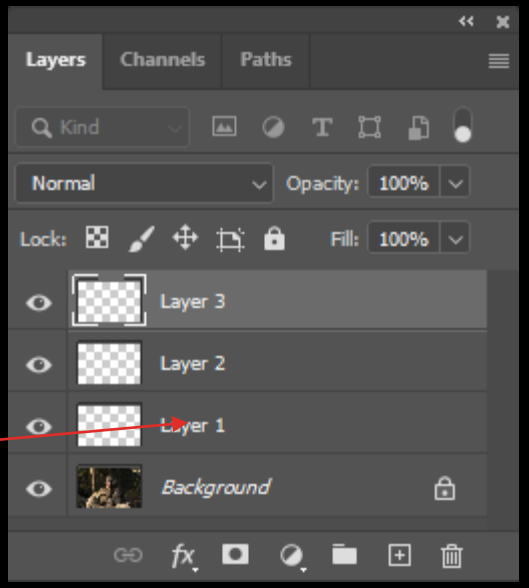


LAYERS

Photoshop

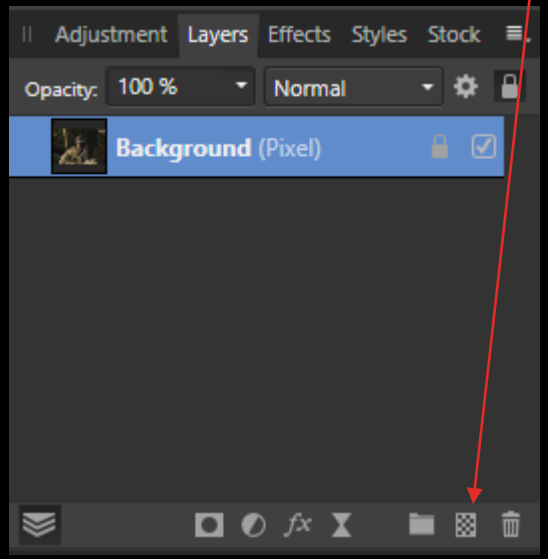


Add layers

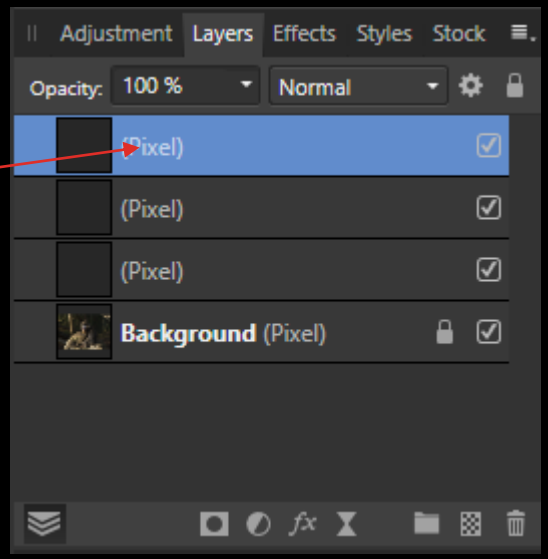


Rename by double clicking on Layer name

Affinity Photo



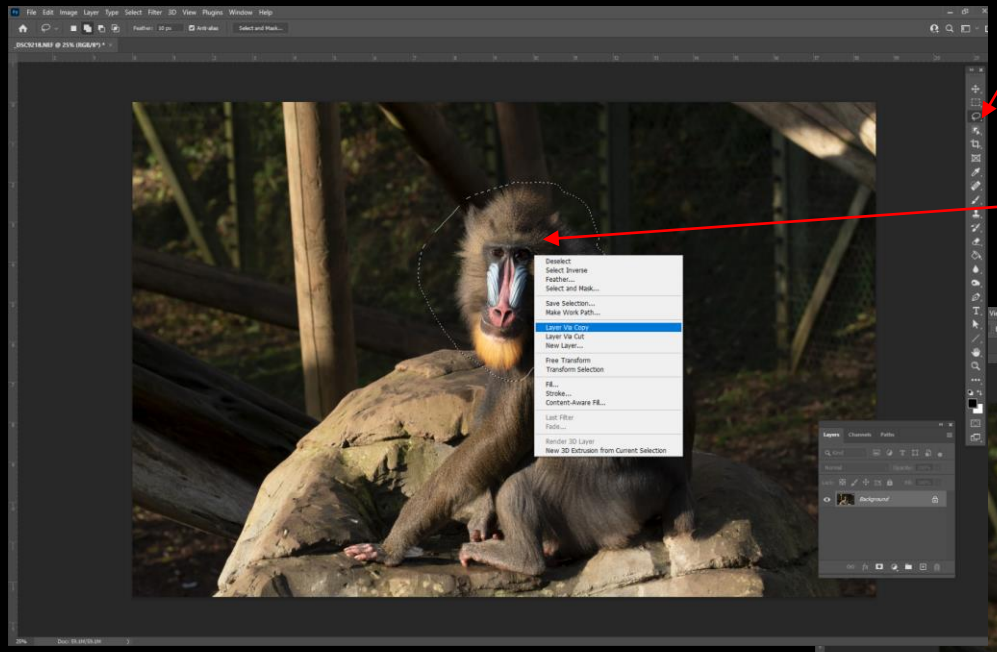
Rename by clicking on (Pixel)



LAYERS

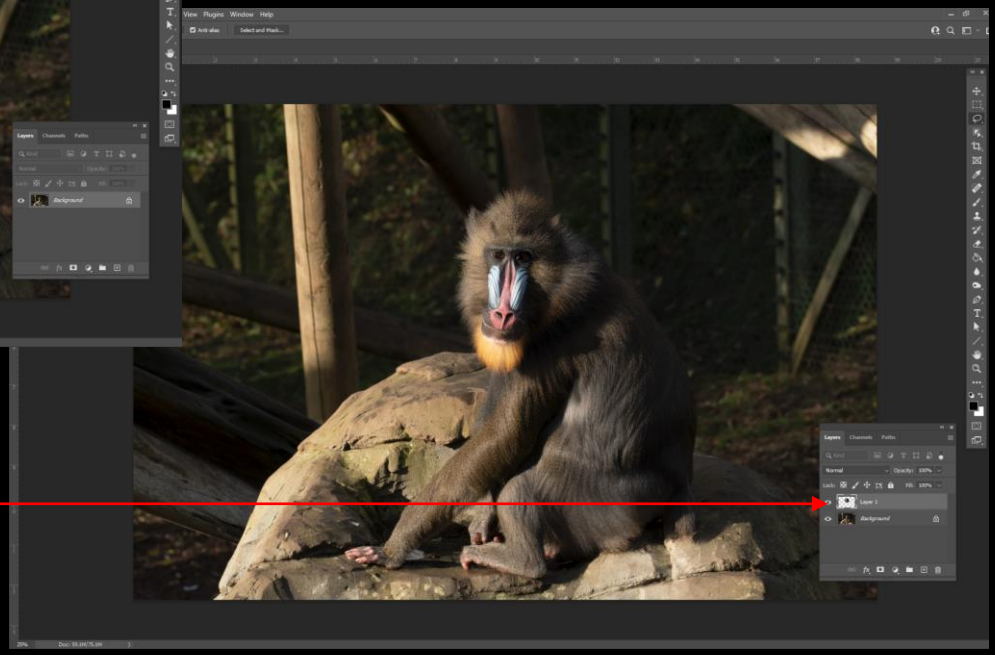
Photoshop

Layers can automatically be added by certain actions e.g.
copying parts of the photo.



Make selection with one of the Lasso tools.

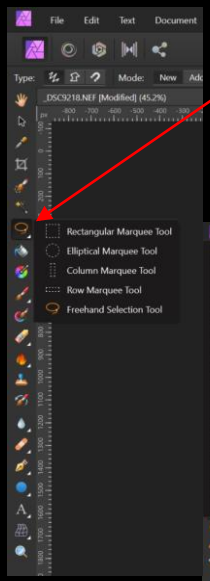
Right-click in your selection and choose ‘Layer via Copy’



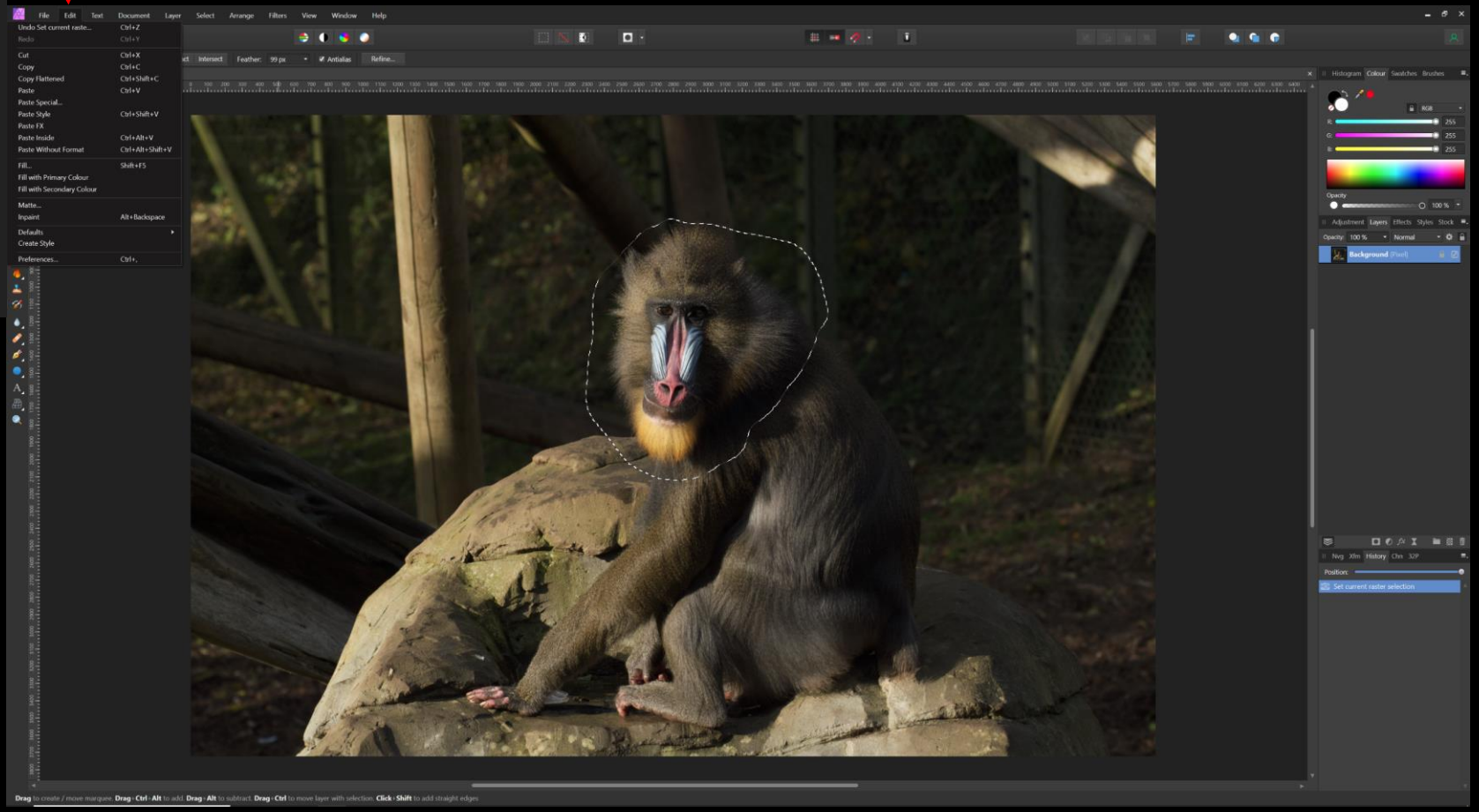
New layer with your selection appears in the Layers window.

LAYERS

Affinity Photo



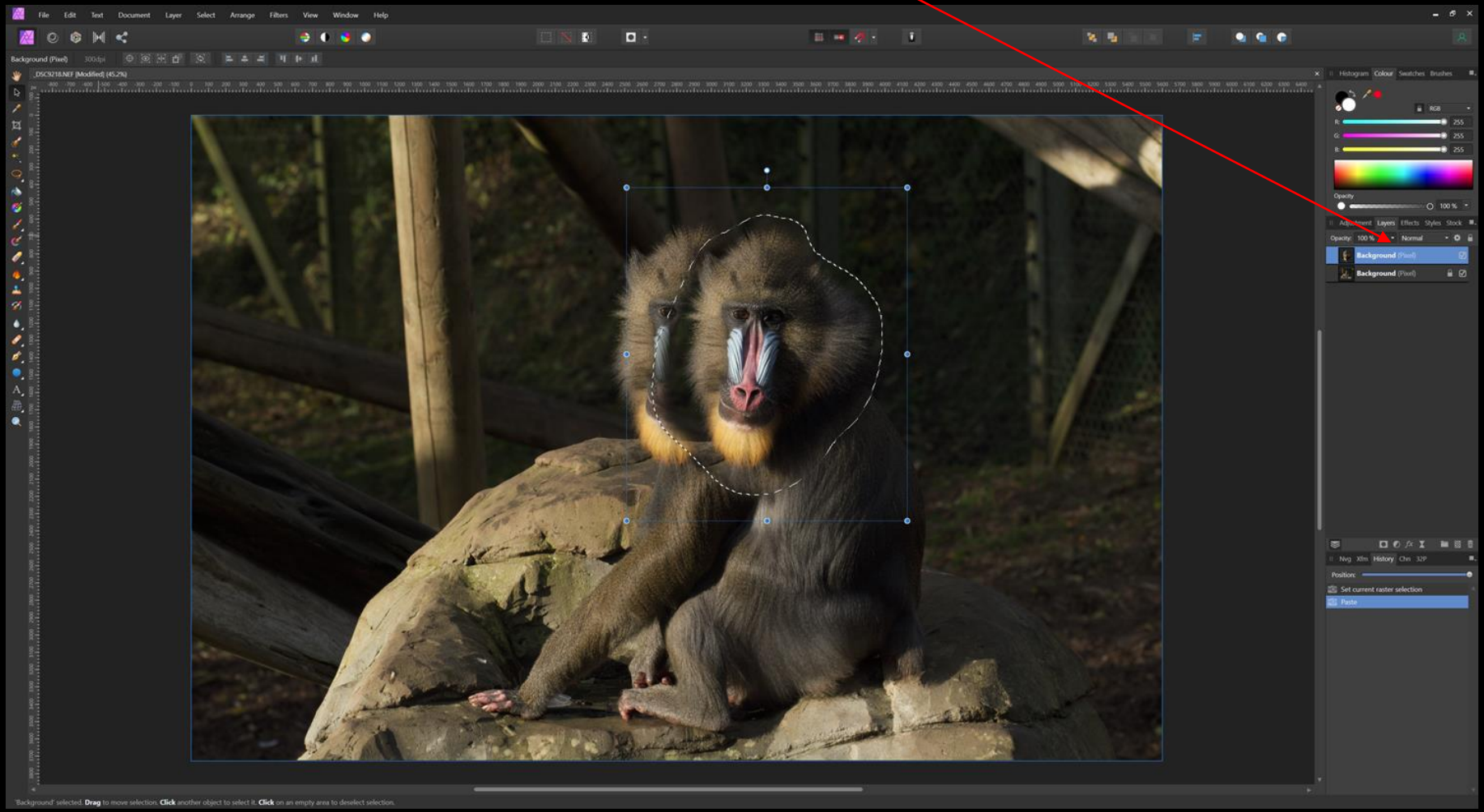
Make your selection, then choose Edit, Copy, then Edit, Paste from the drop down menu.



LAYERS

Affinity Photo

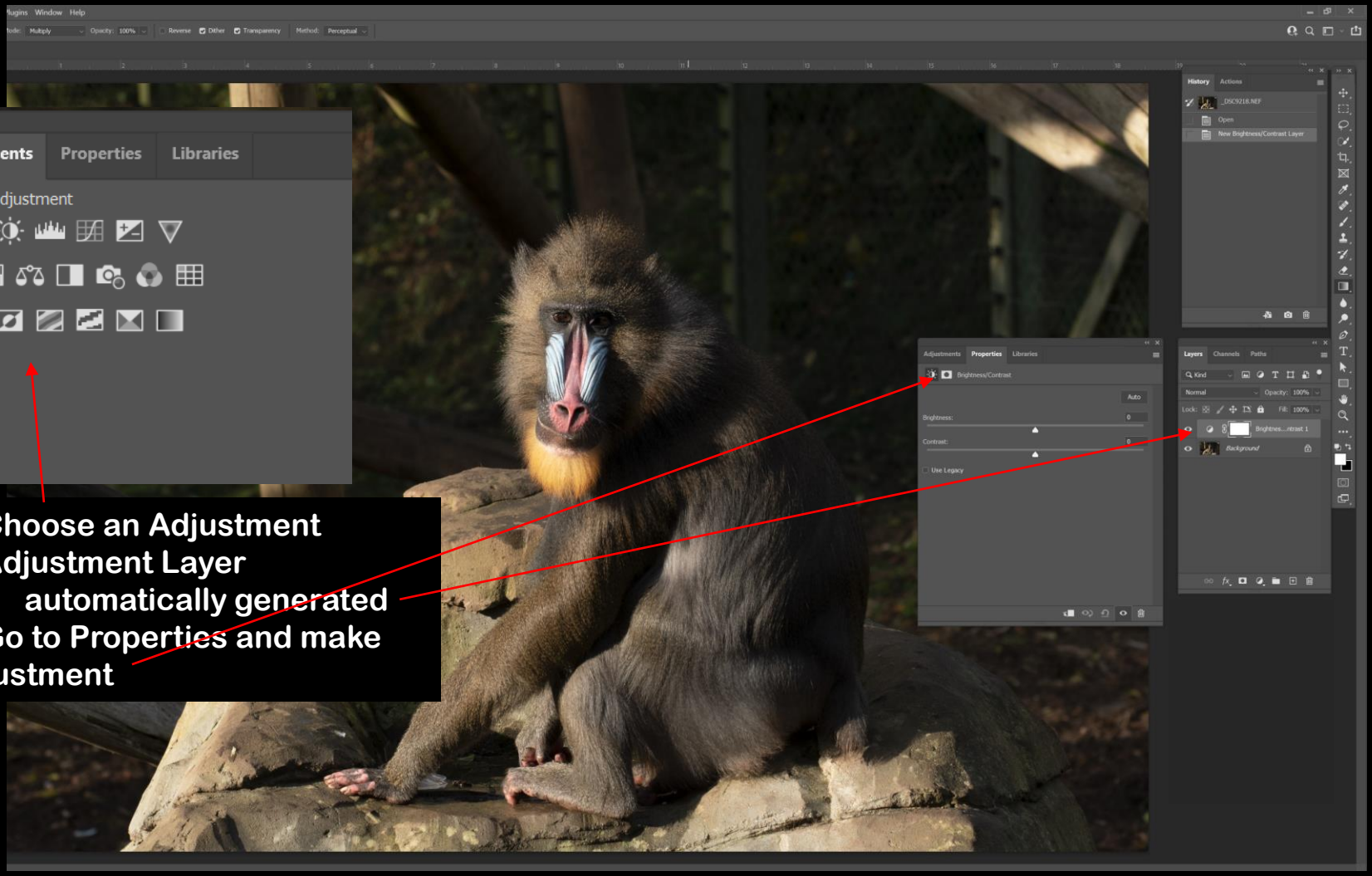
A second layer with your selection is made.



LAYERS

Photoshop

Layers can automatically be added by using Adjustments. Adjustment Layers are non destructive to the original image.

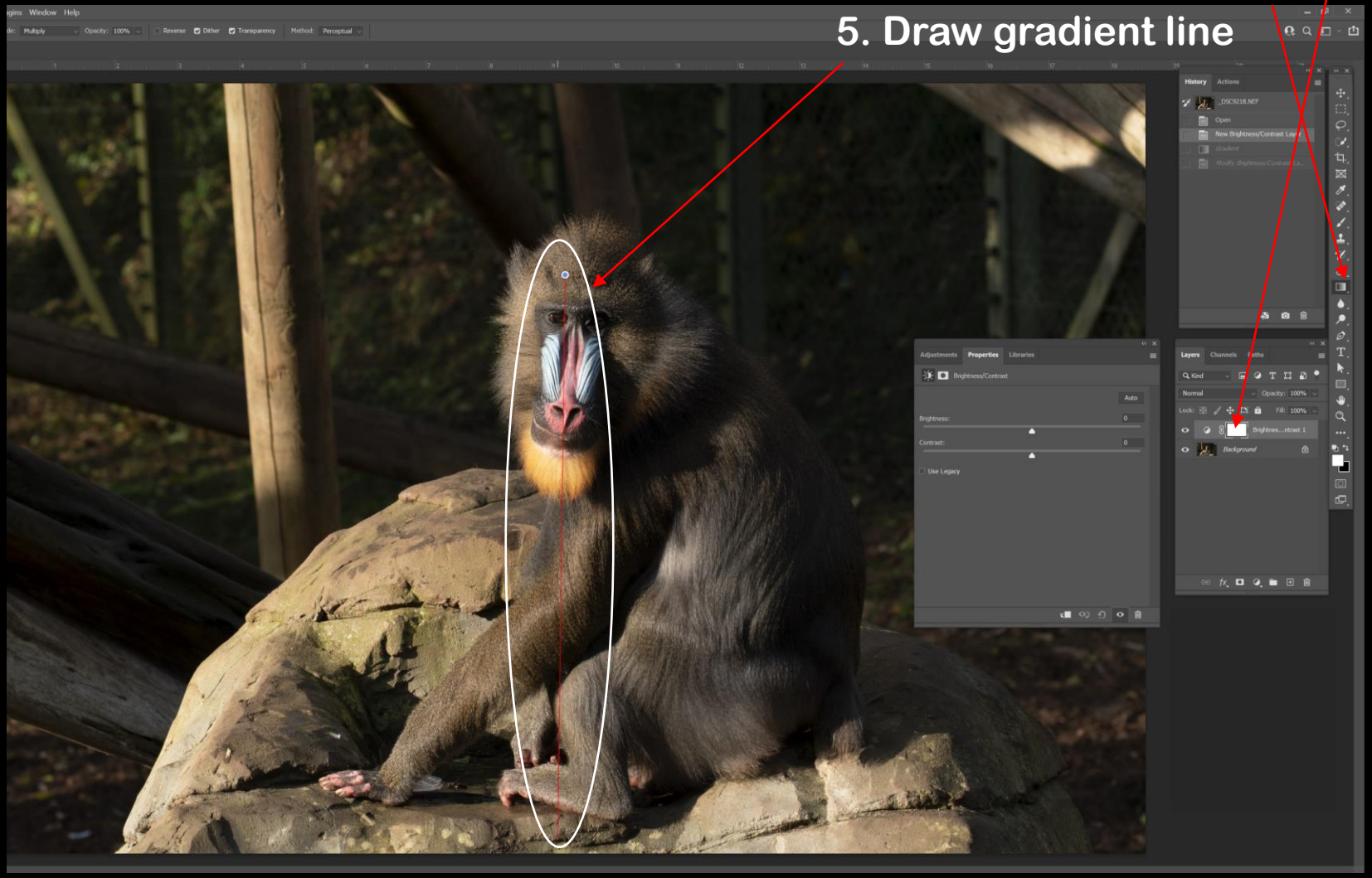


LAYERS

Photoshop

Graduated Adjustment. Repeat 1 & 2 as before.

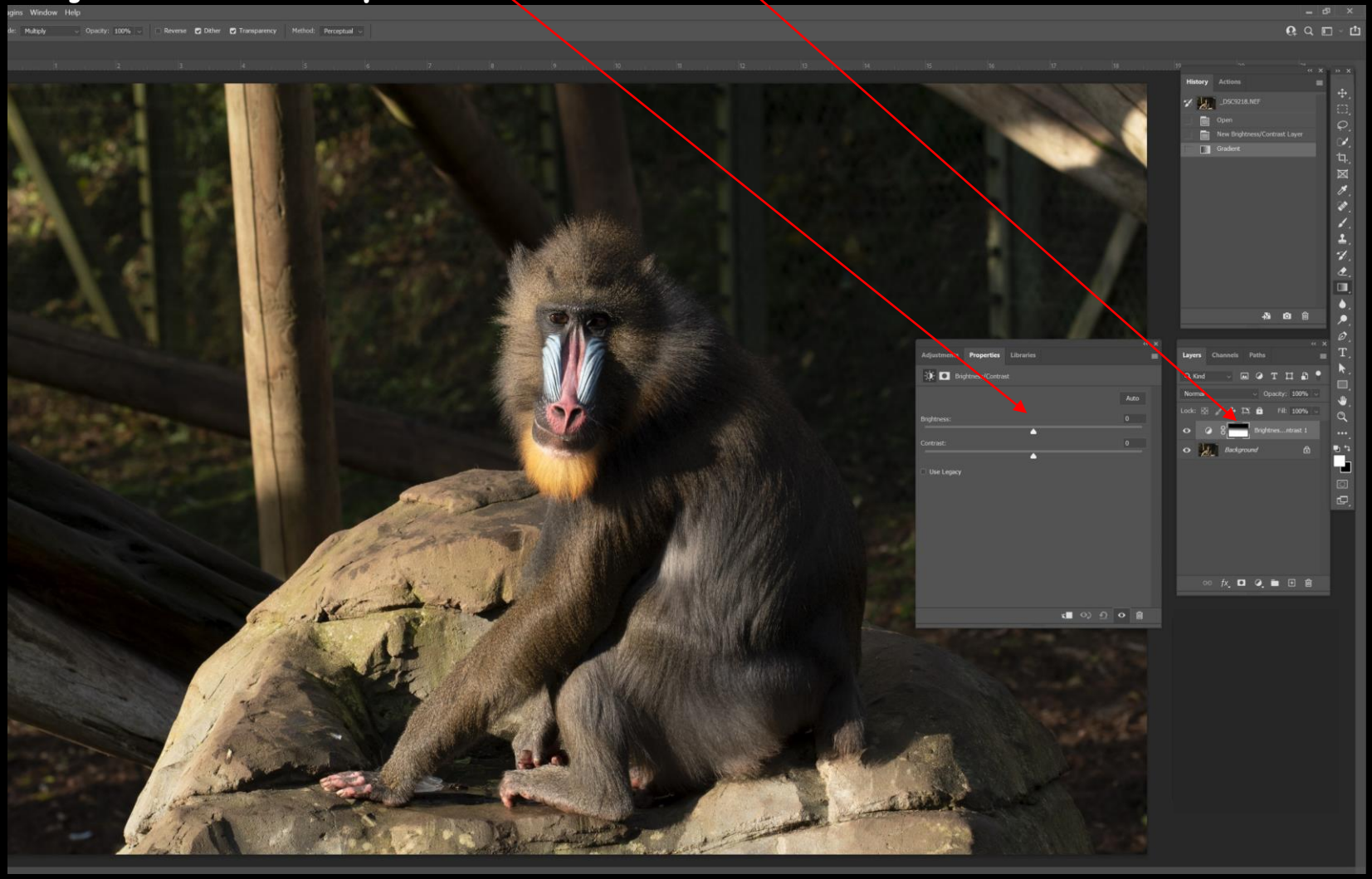
3. Click on New Layer Mask
4. Choose Gradient Tool
5. Draw gradient line



LAYERS

Photoshop

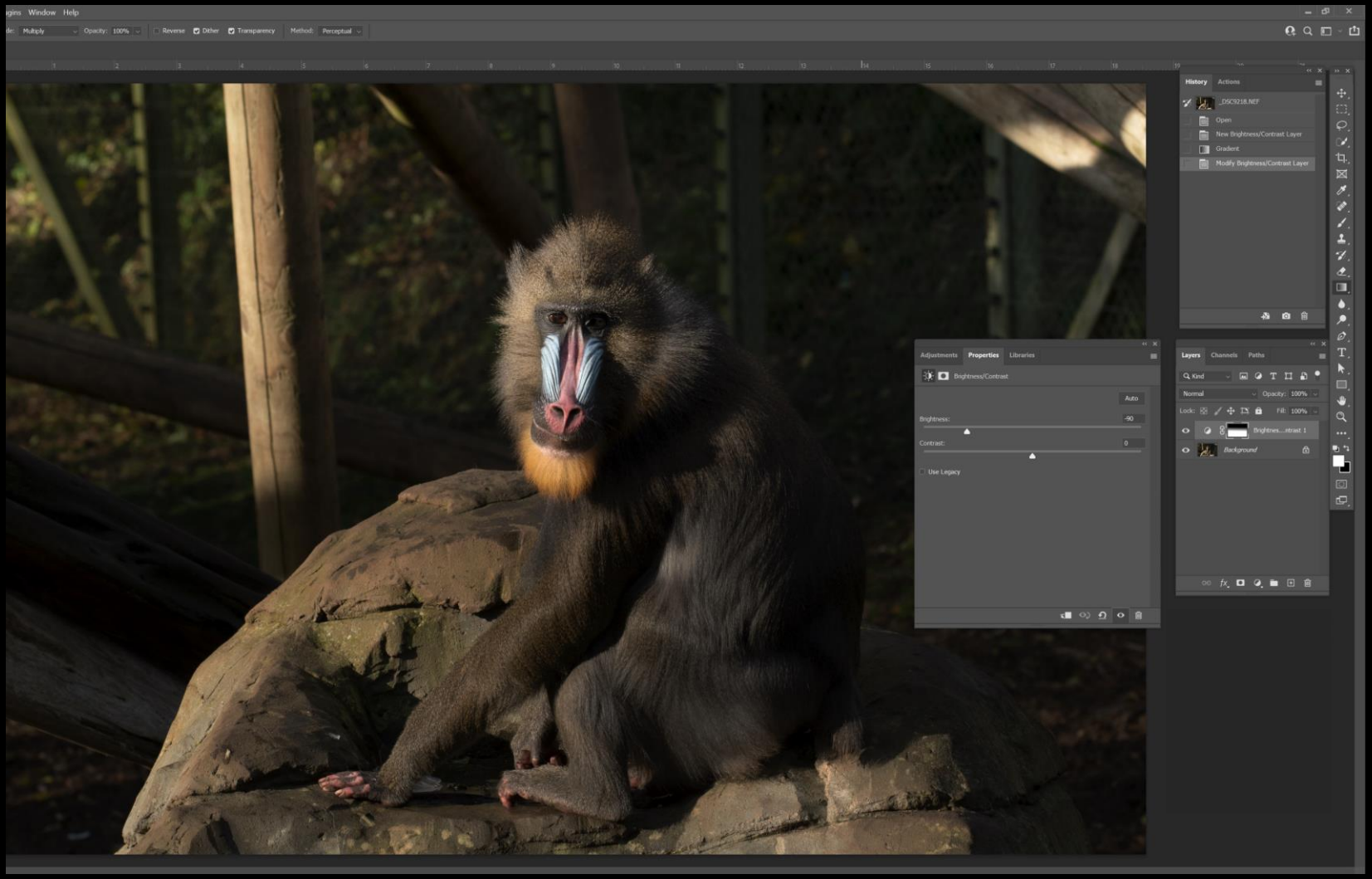
Gradient mask shows in the Layer mask.
Make adjustment in Properties



LAYERS

Photoshop

With Layer masks, Black protects from adjustment and white allows adjustment.

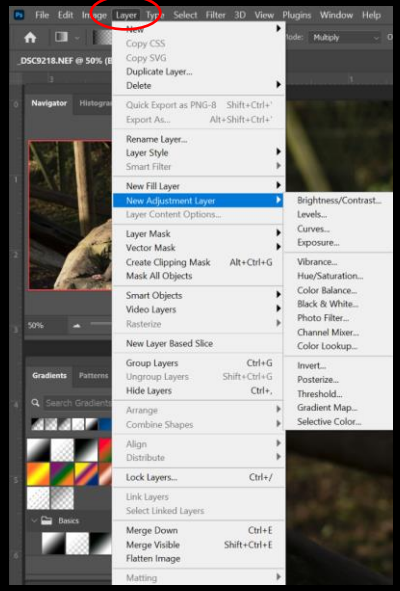


LAYERS

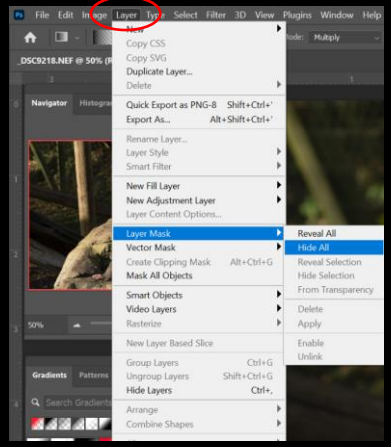
Photoshop

LAYERS

Photoshop



Adjustment Layers can also be found in the drop down menus



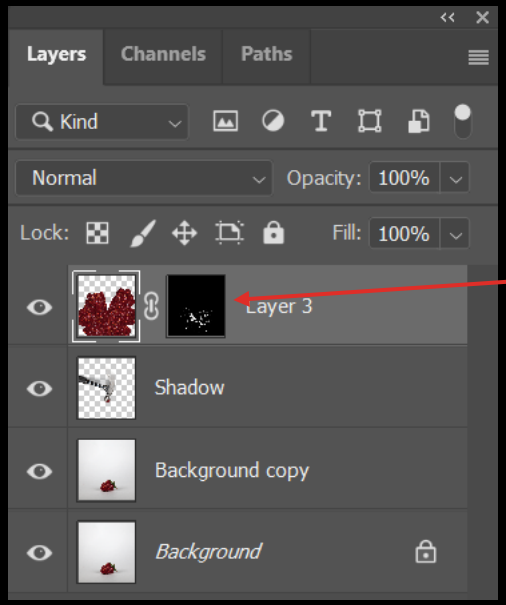
Use Layer Mask to either completely hide or reveal the image on the layer directly below.

Reveal Mask is White, to hide parts of the underlying image use brush with black colour.

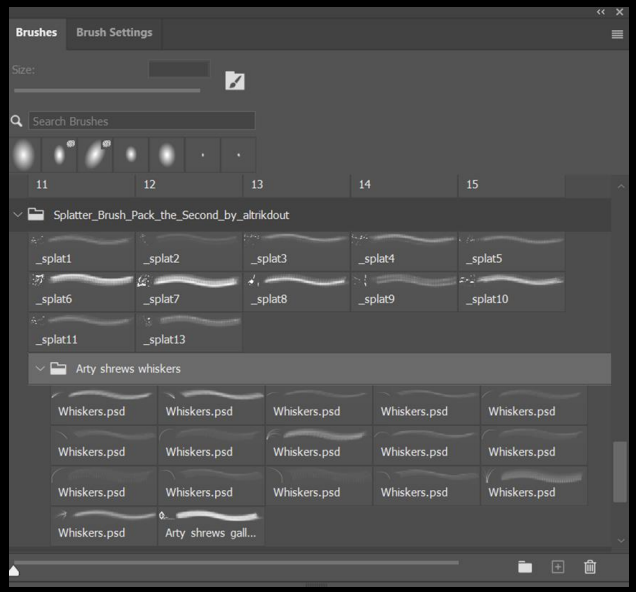
Hide Mask is Black, to reveal parts of the underlying image use brush with white colour.

LAYERS

Photoshop



Layer mask over strawberries used for splats.



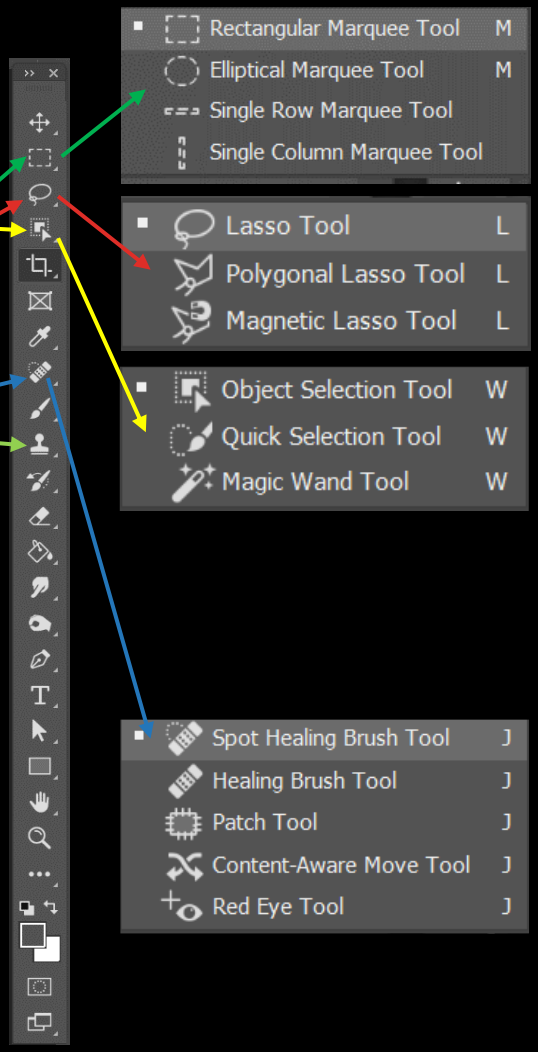
REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

There are many different ways to remove unwanted items. A few different methods are:-

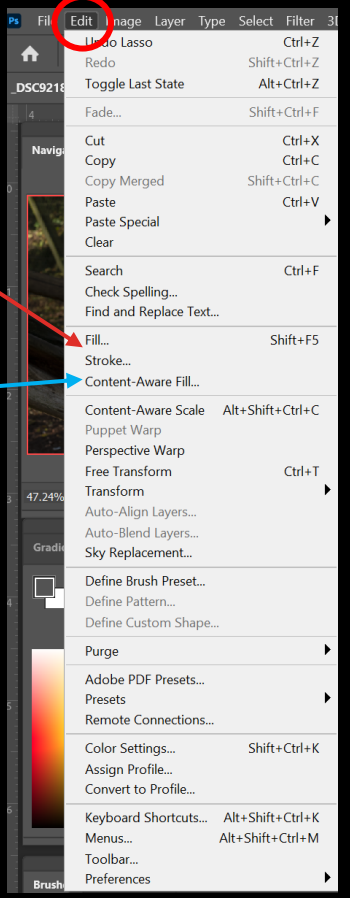
Copy & Paste

Cloning



Fill

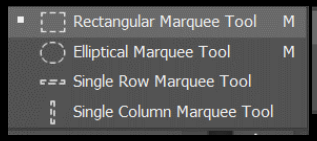
Content-Aware Fill

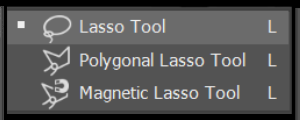


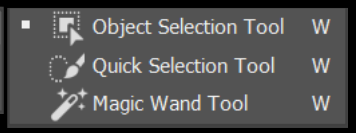
REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

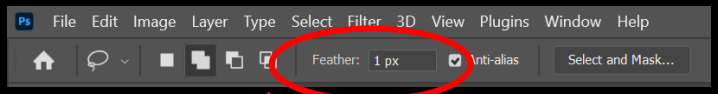
Copy & Paste







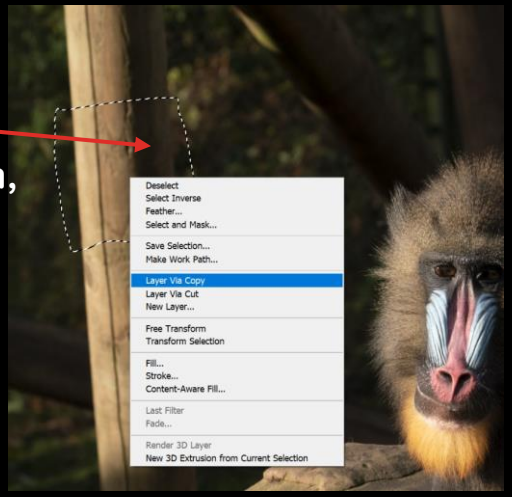
All these selection tools can be used together.

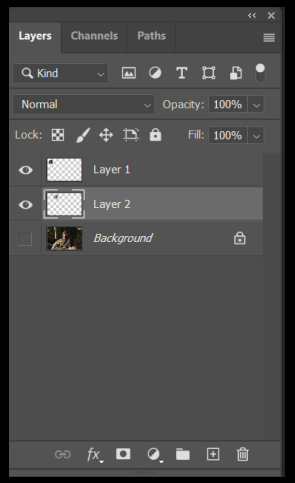


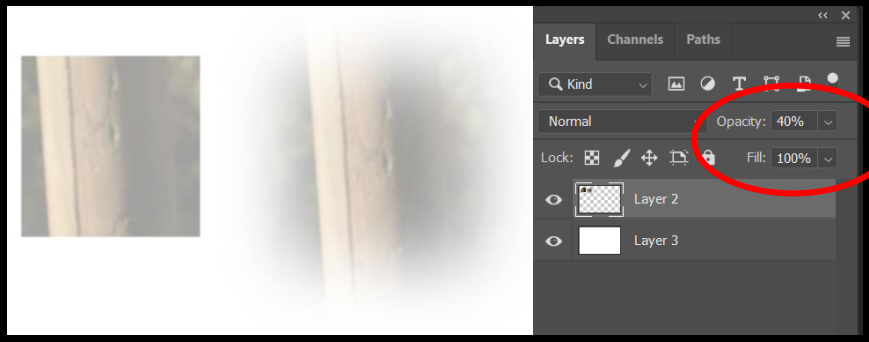
Feather 1px

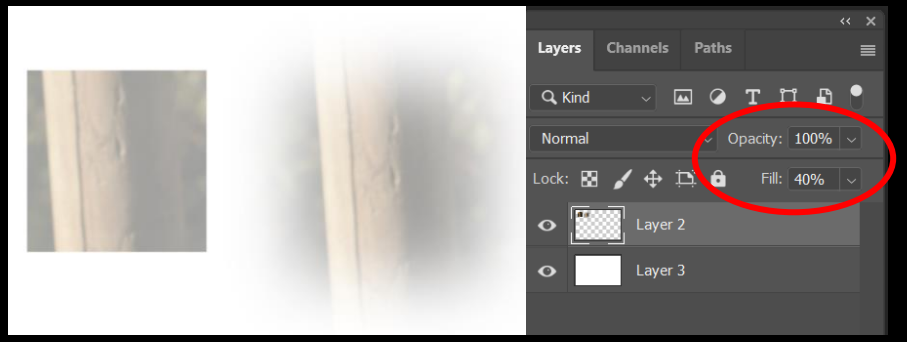
Feather 100px

Right click in selection, choose 'Layer via Copy'.





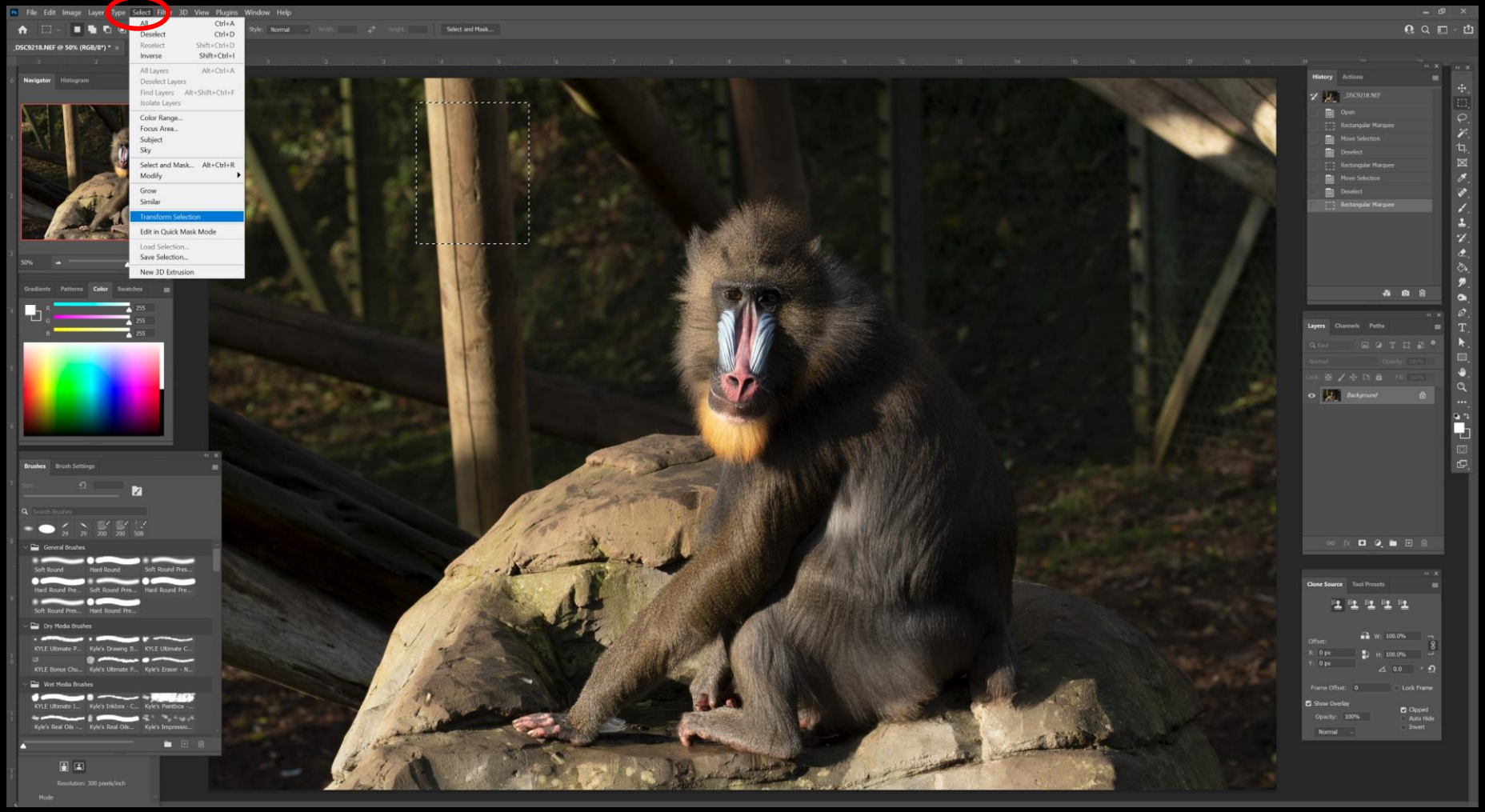




REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

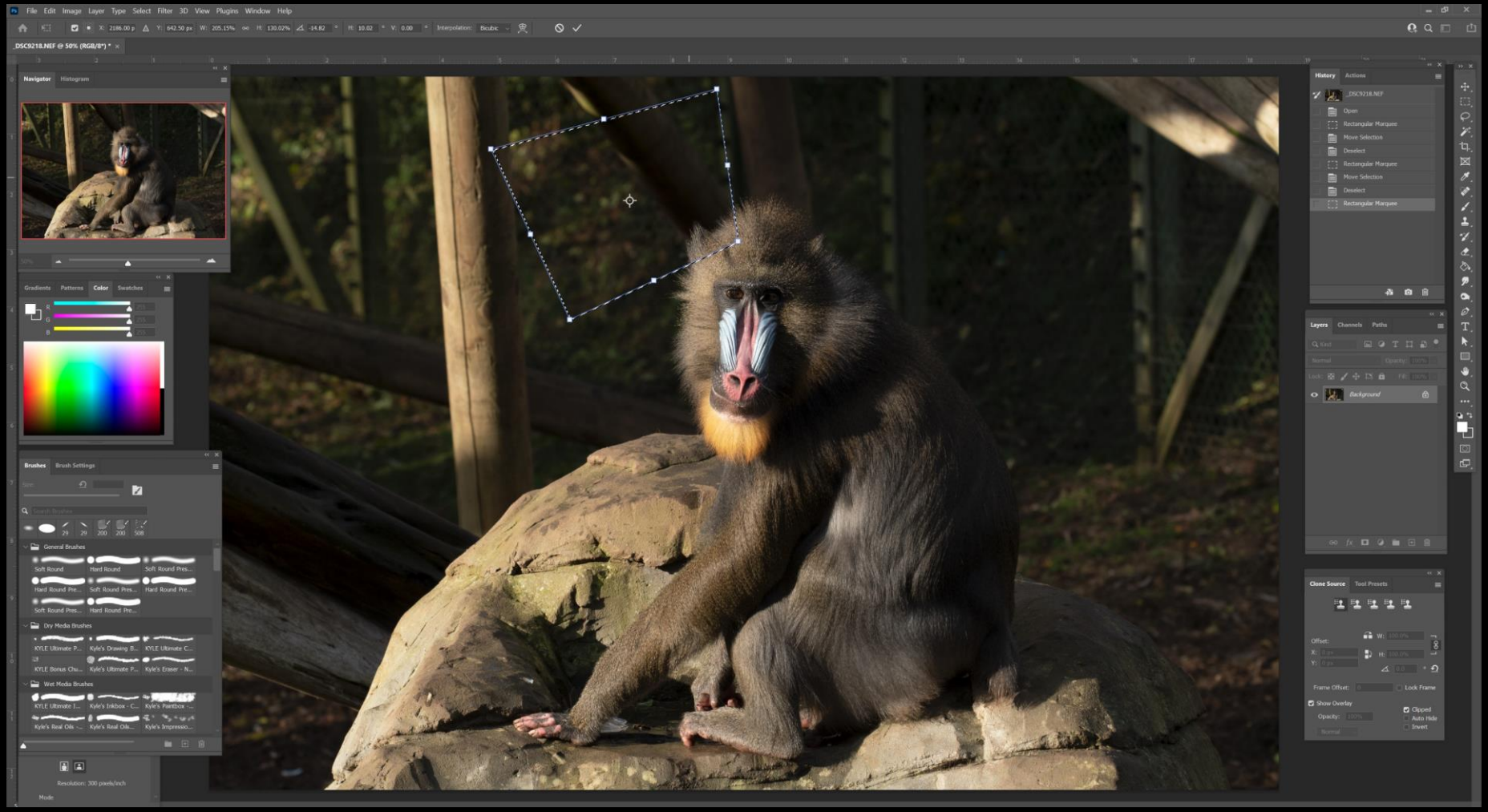
Copy & Paste – transform selection



REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

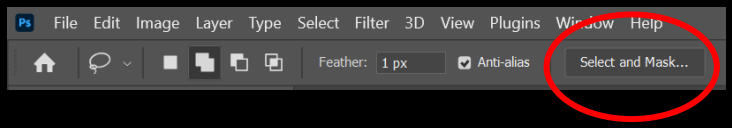
Photoshop

Copy & Paste – handles transform selection, then click Enter to set.

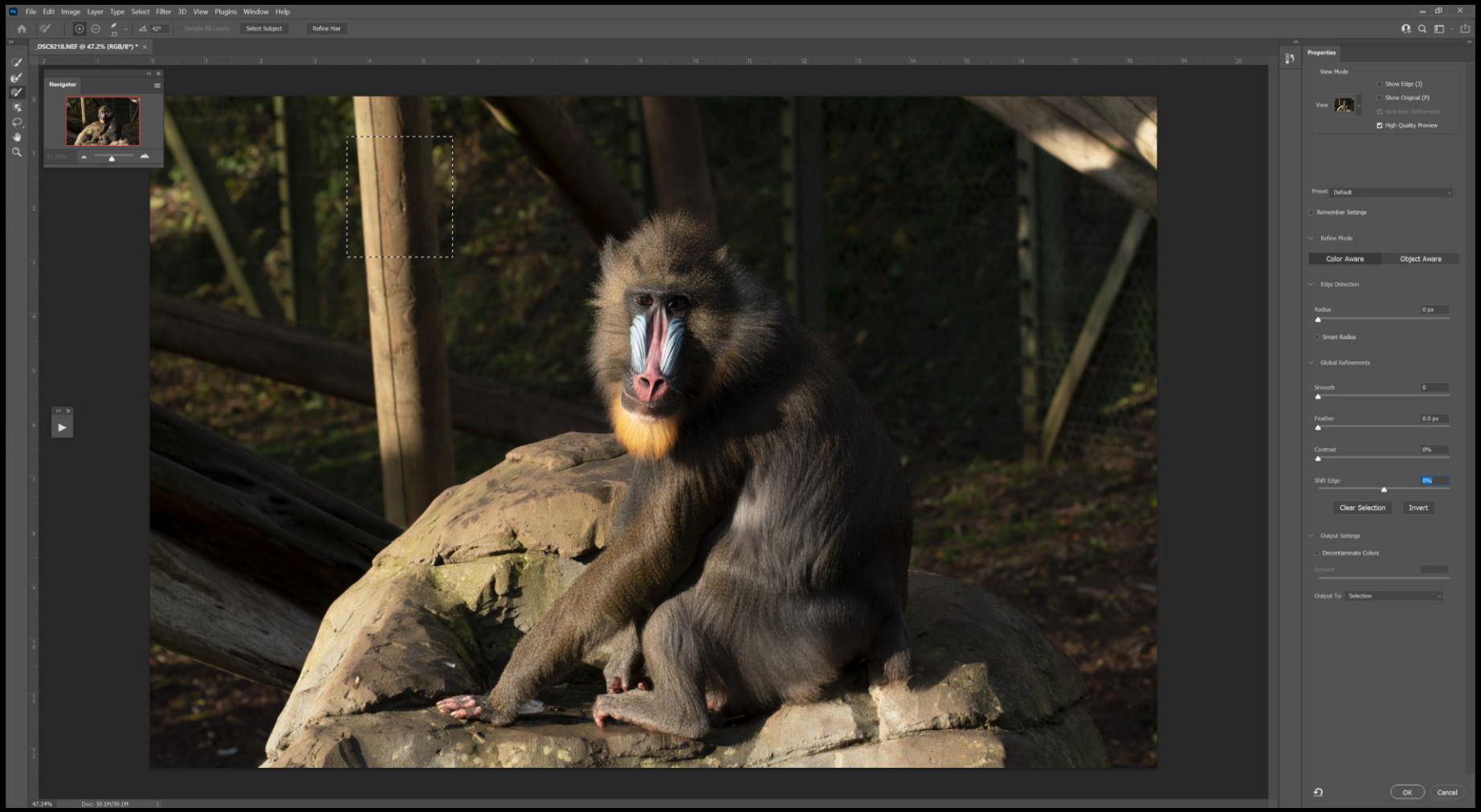


REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop



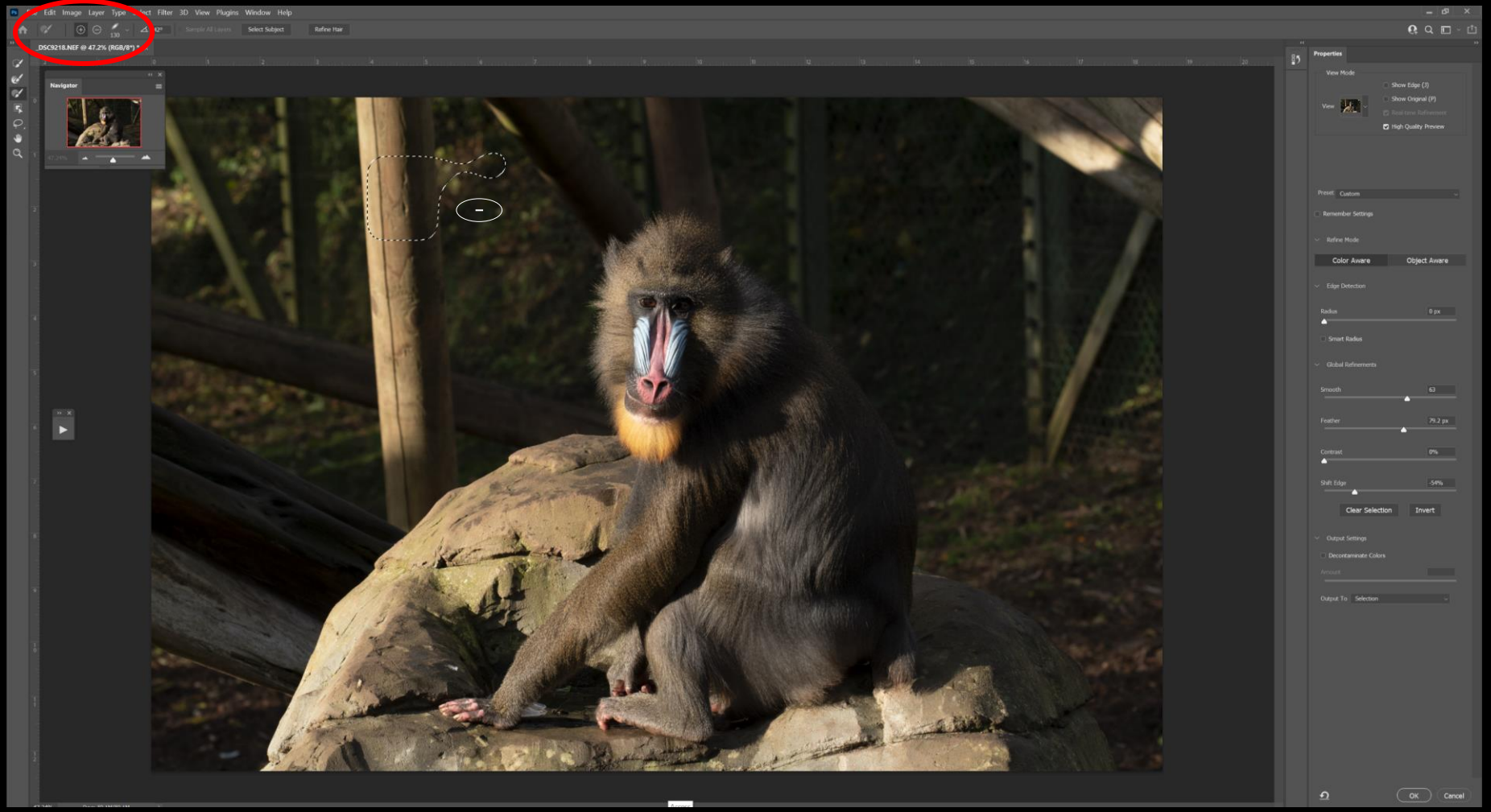
Copy & Paste – refine selection



REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

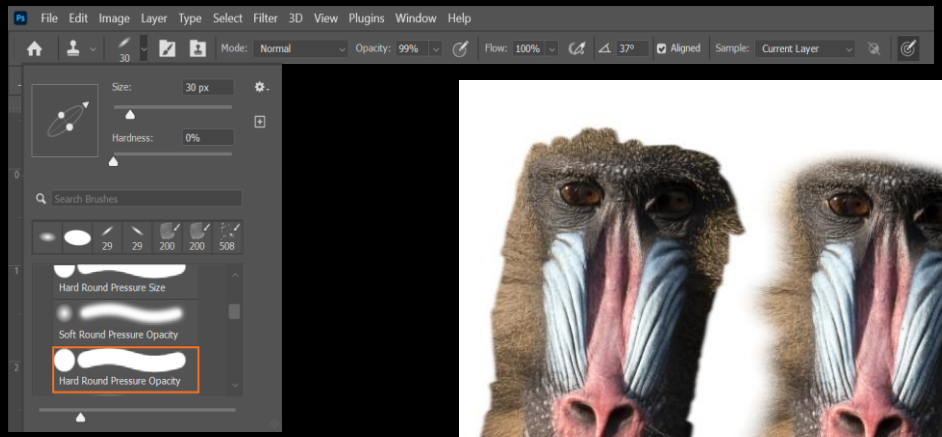
Copy & Paste – refine selection with cursor

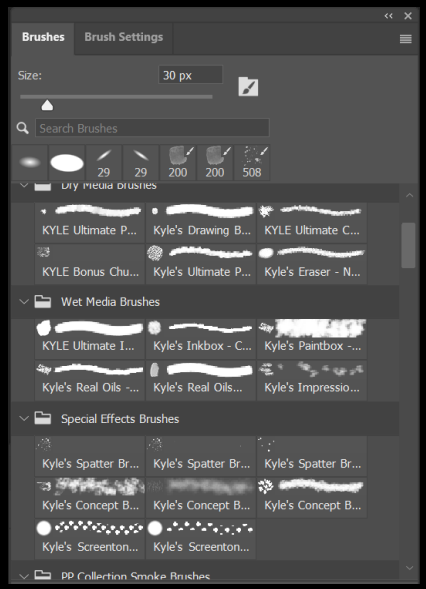


REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

Cloning can be done on background or on a layer if further manipulation may be required.



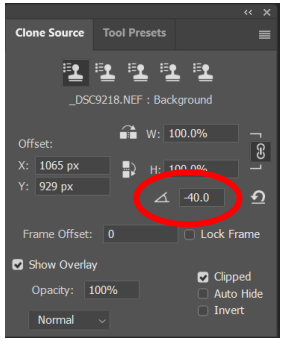


Brush 30
Hardness 0%

Brush 199
Hardness 0%

Brush 199
Hardness 100%

Brush 199
Hardness 100%
Angle 40°

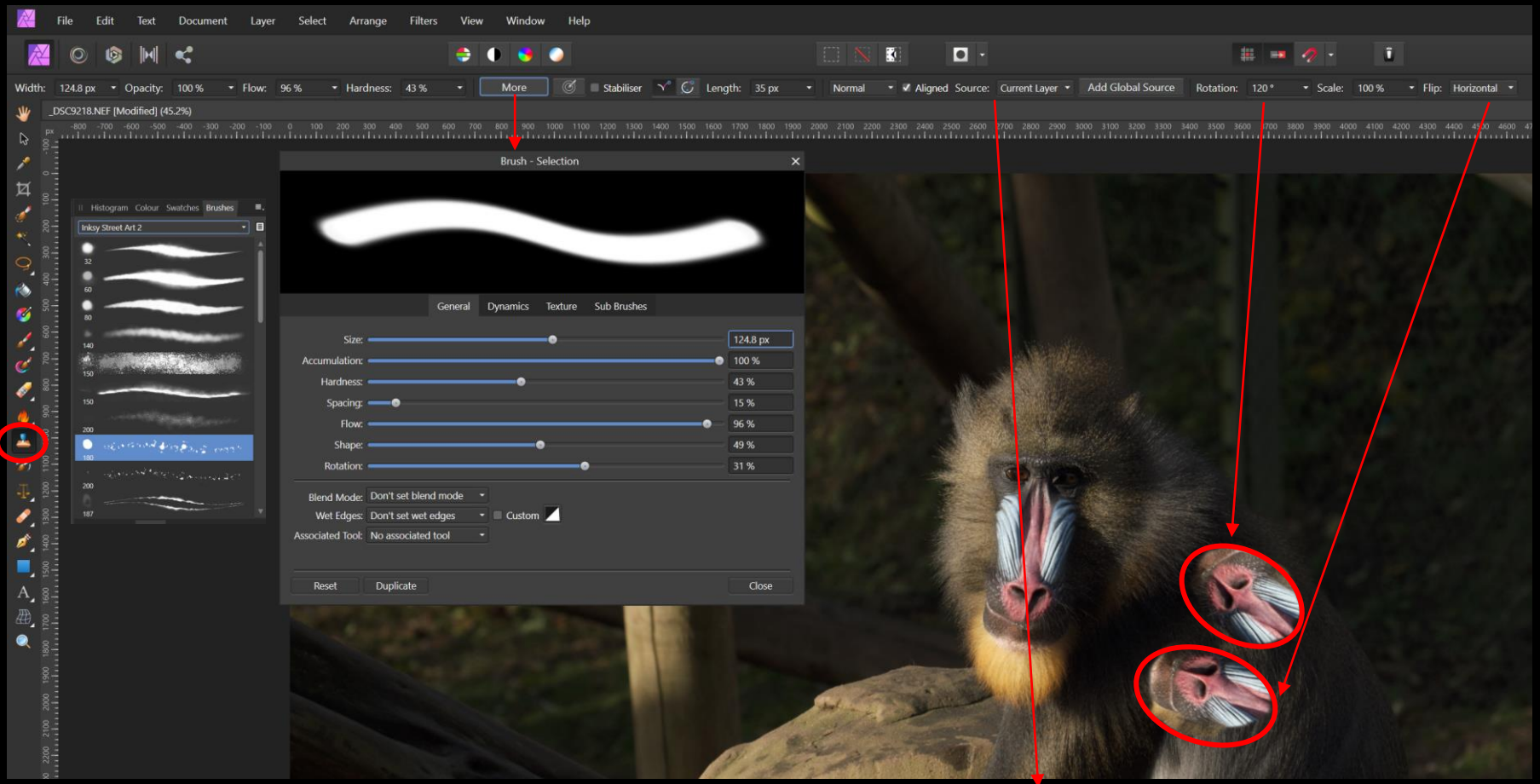


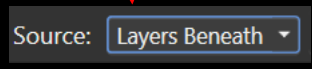
Brush 199
Hardness 100%
Angle -40°

REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Affinity Photo

Cloning can be done on background or new layer.

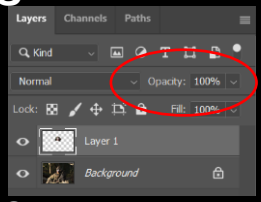


To clone on to new layer change the source to 

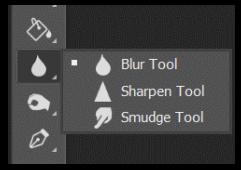
REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Hints

- Beware of multiple versions by duplication when using copy/paste and cloning.
- For copy/paste, lasso more than you require – always easier to take extra away than try to add more.
- Use the Erase tool to remove excess and also soften the edges.
- Reduce layer transparency to ensure perfect alignment.



- If layer item is correct but edges are still a bit hard gently use the Blur tool.

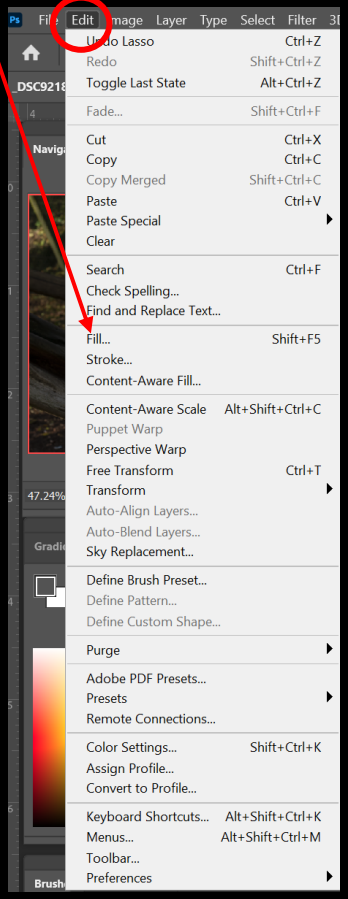


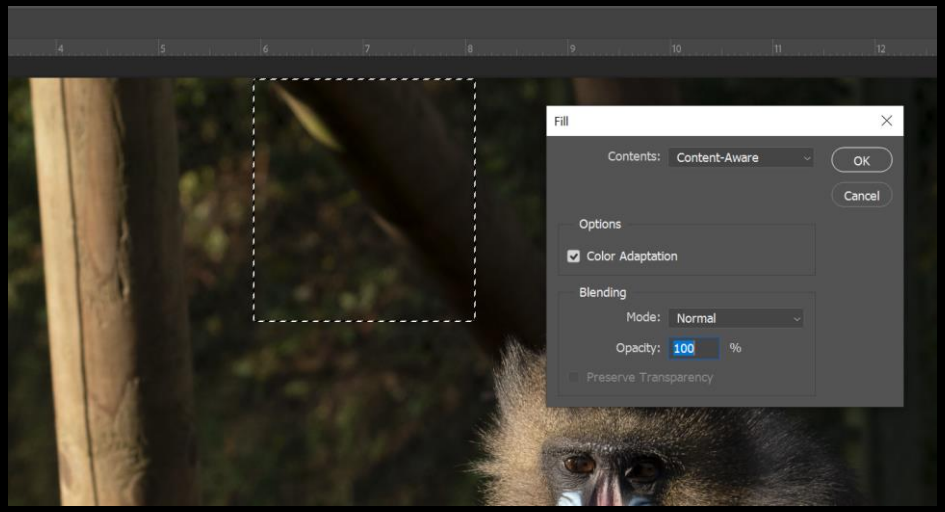
- Don’t forget about altering your brush shape and properties.
- Loads of free brush shapes from: https://www.brusheezy.com/free/photoshop

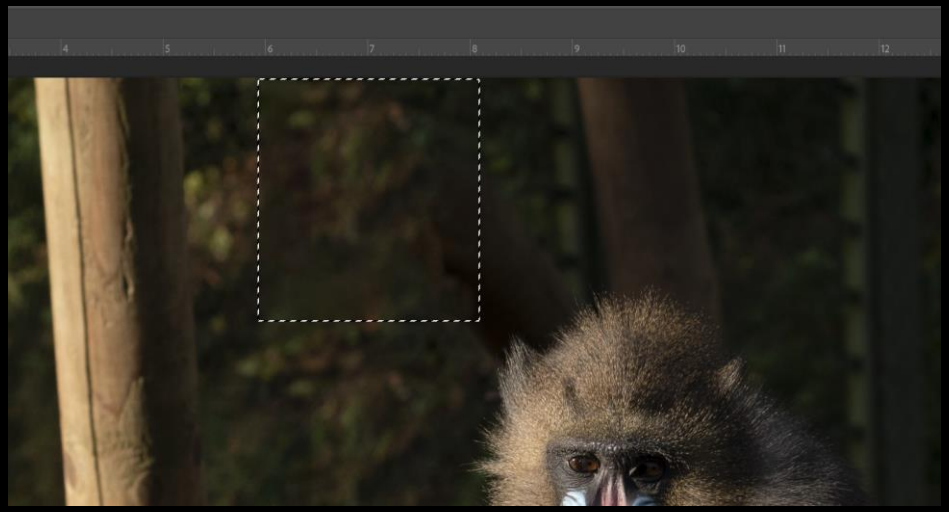
REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

Fill (menu or right-click)



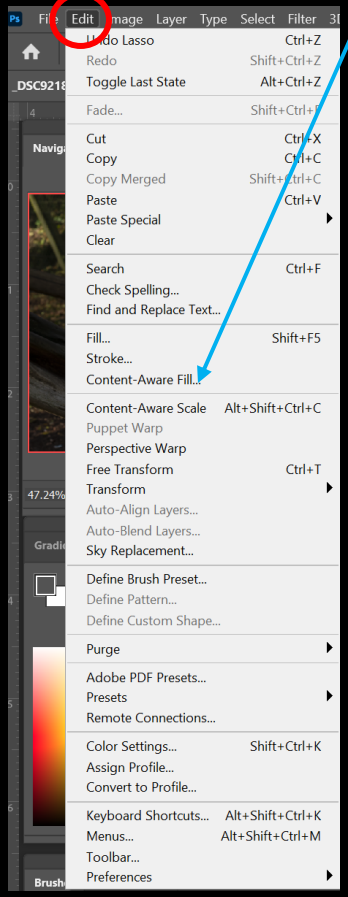


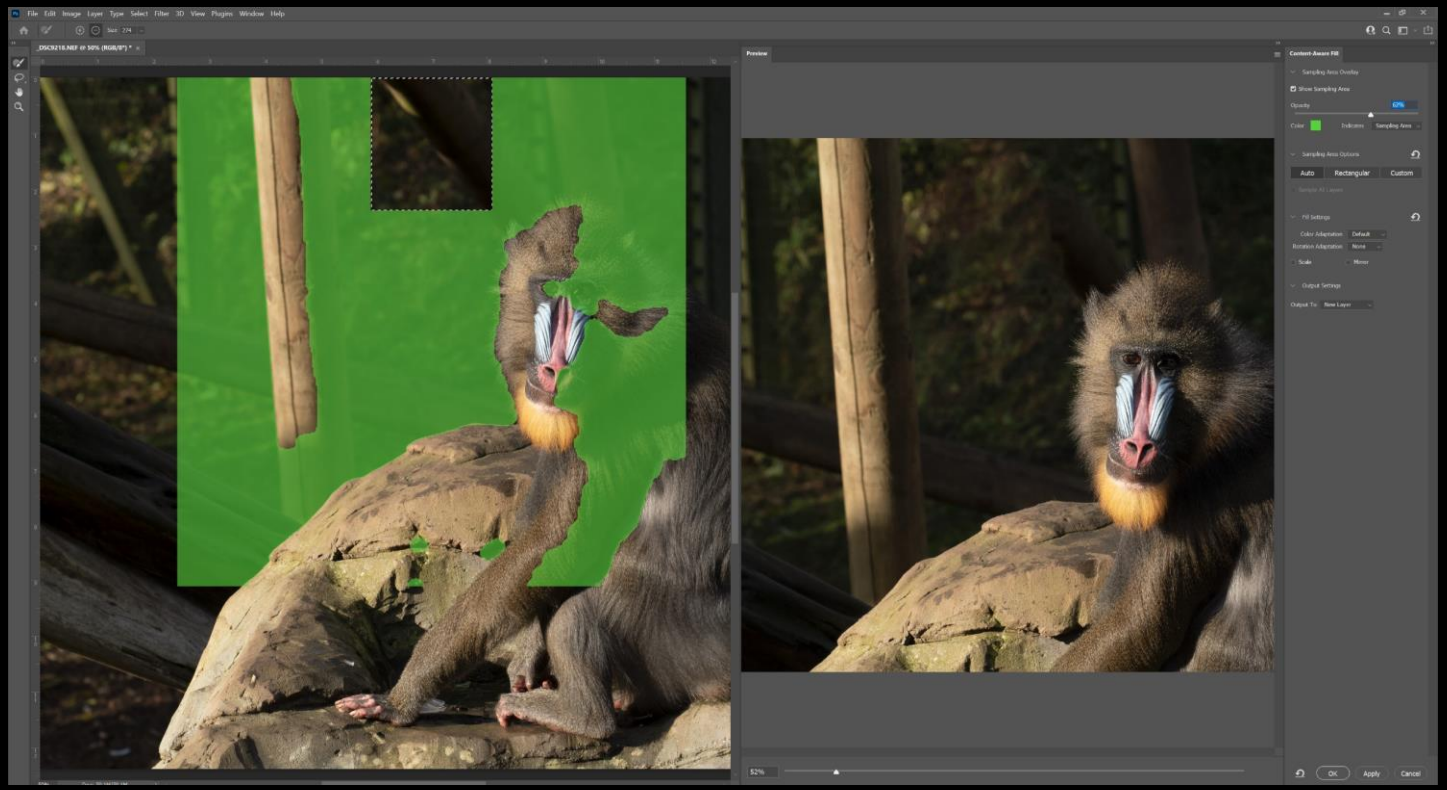


REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

Content- Aware Fill (menu or right-click)

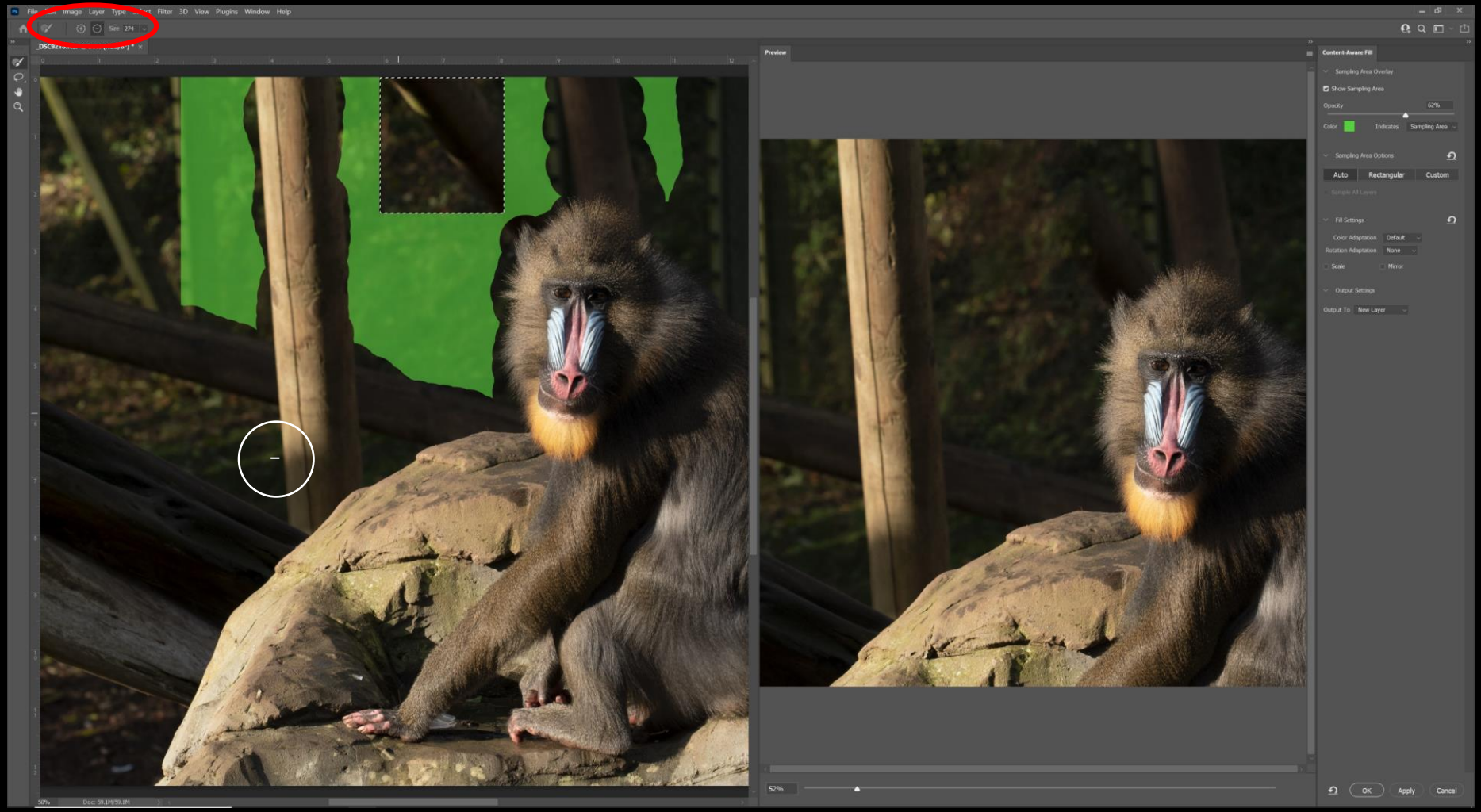




REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

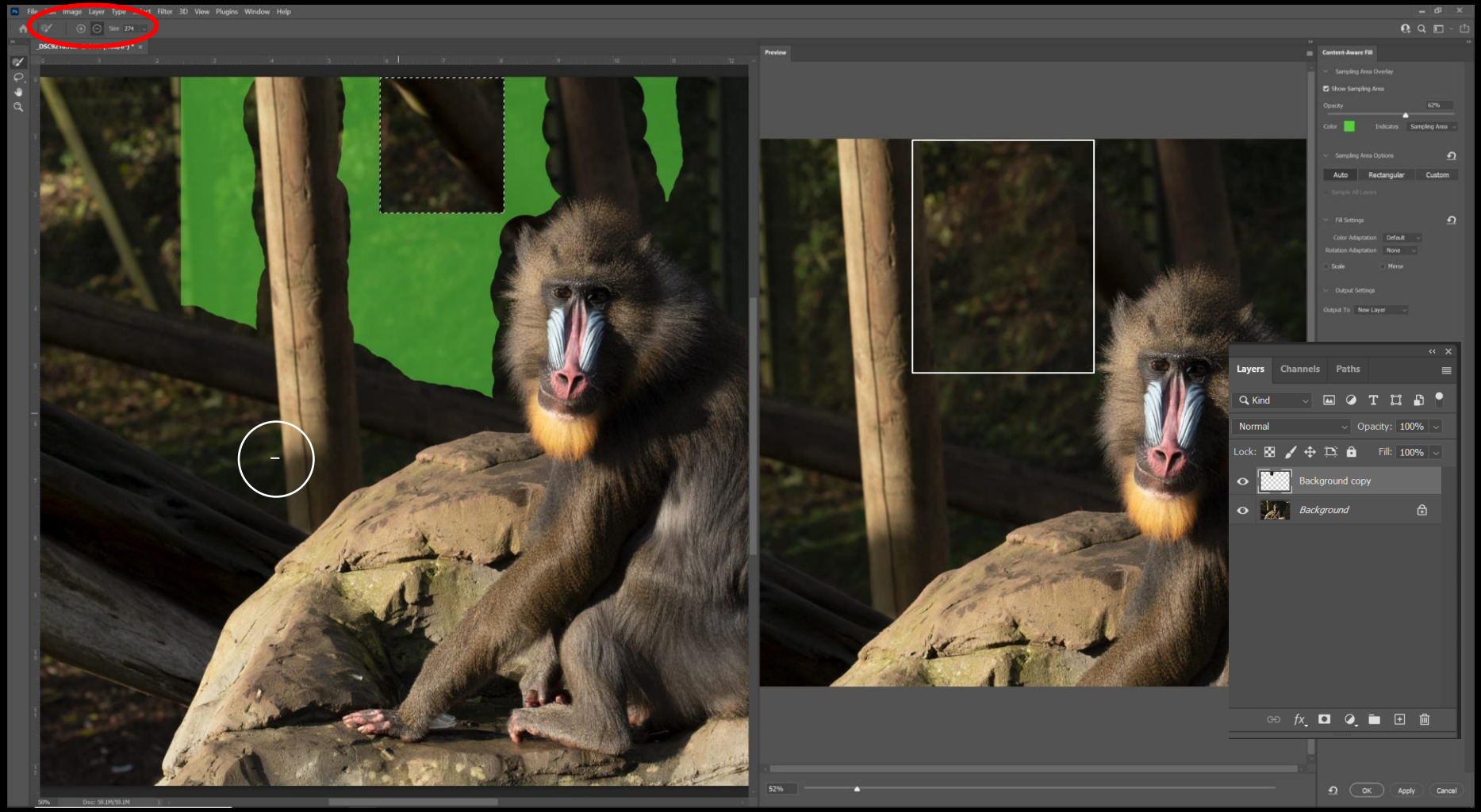
Content- Aware Fill (menu or right-click) – alter selection



REMOVING UNWANTED ITEMS

Photoshop

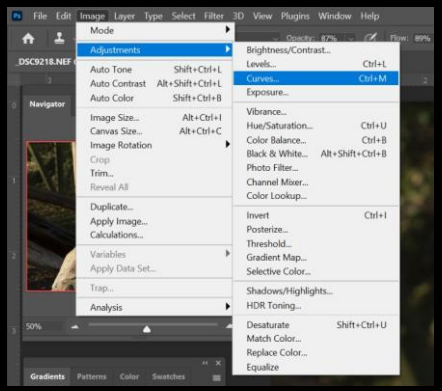
Content- Aware Fill (menu or right-click)

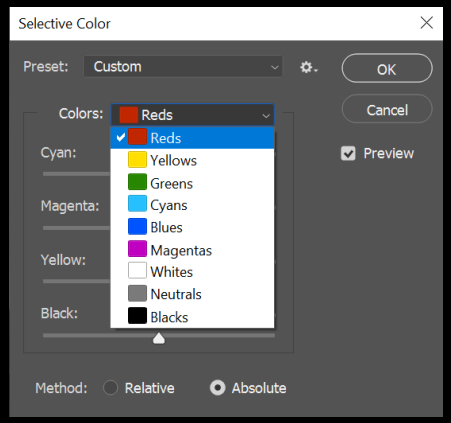


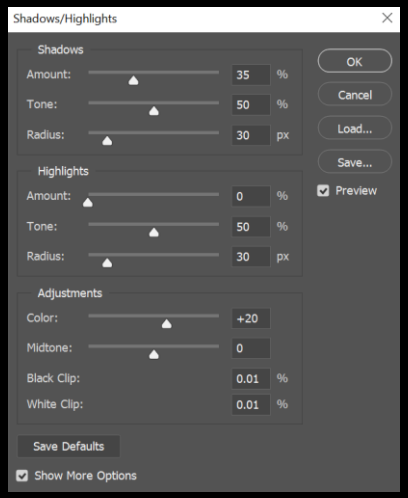
FINISHING TOUCHES

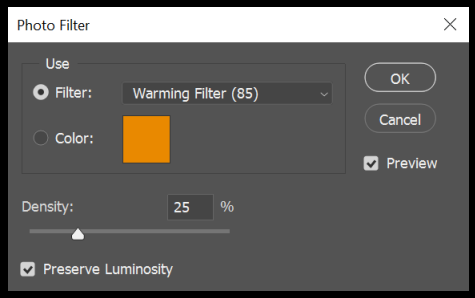
Photoshop

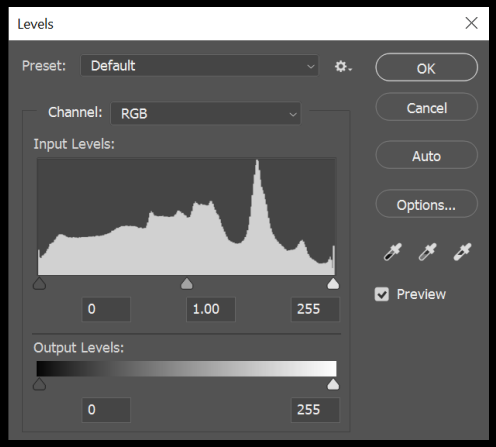
There are many different ways to improve the colour, brightness and contrast of an image. Have you tried.....

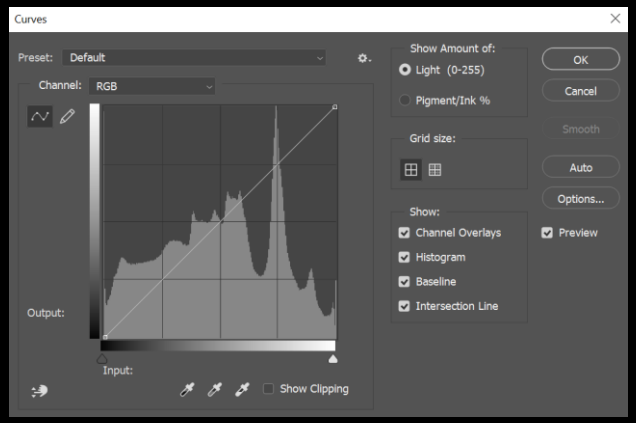


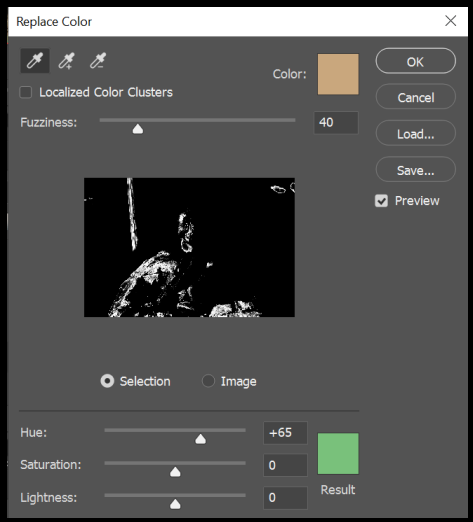








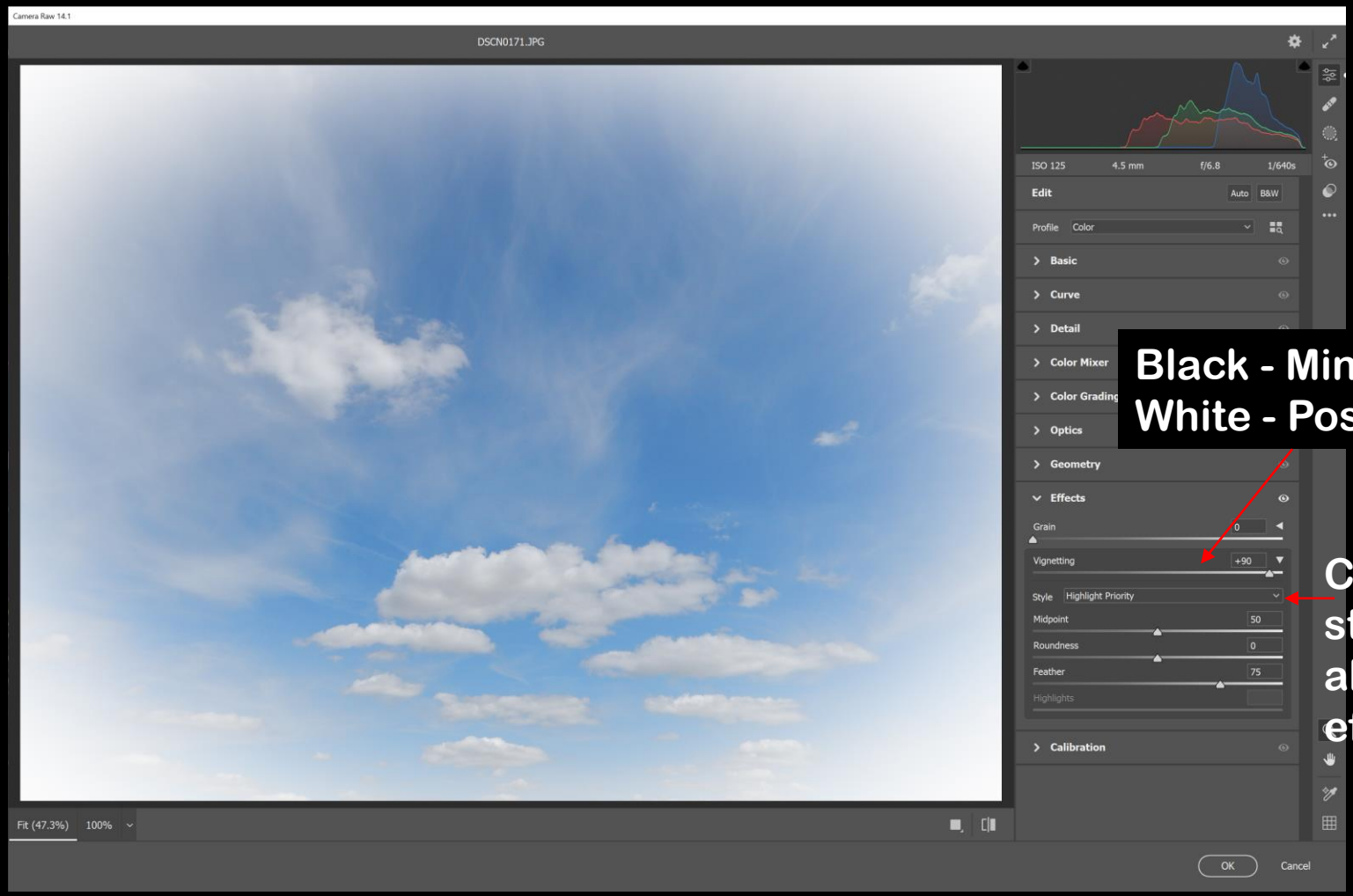




FINISHING TOUCHES

Photoshop

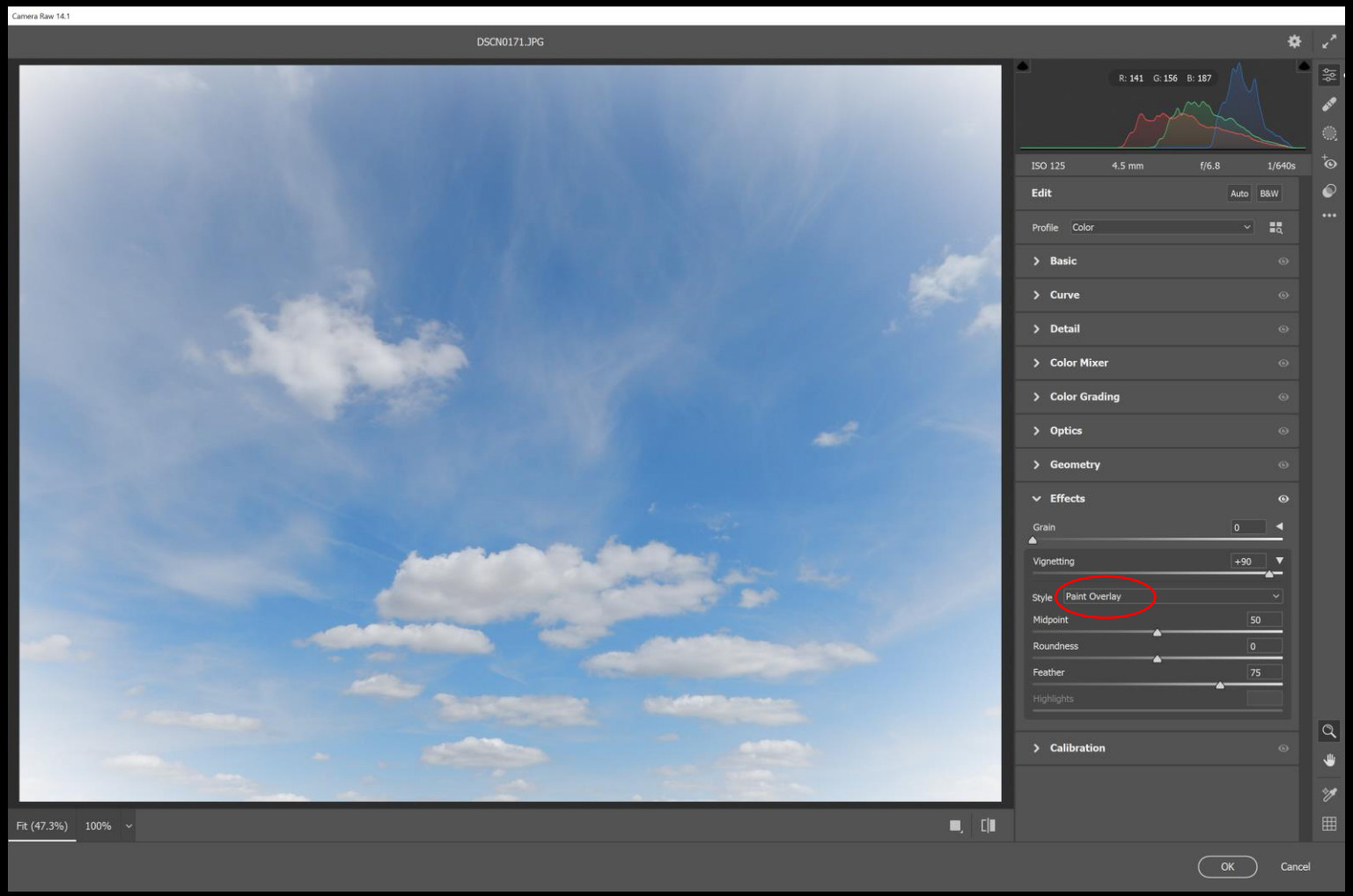
Vignettes using Camera Raw Filter.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Photoshop

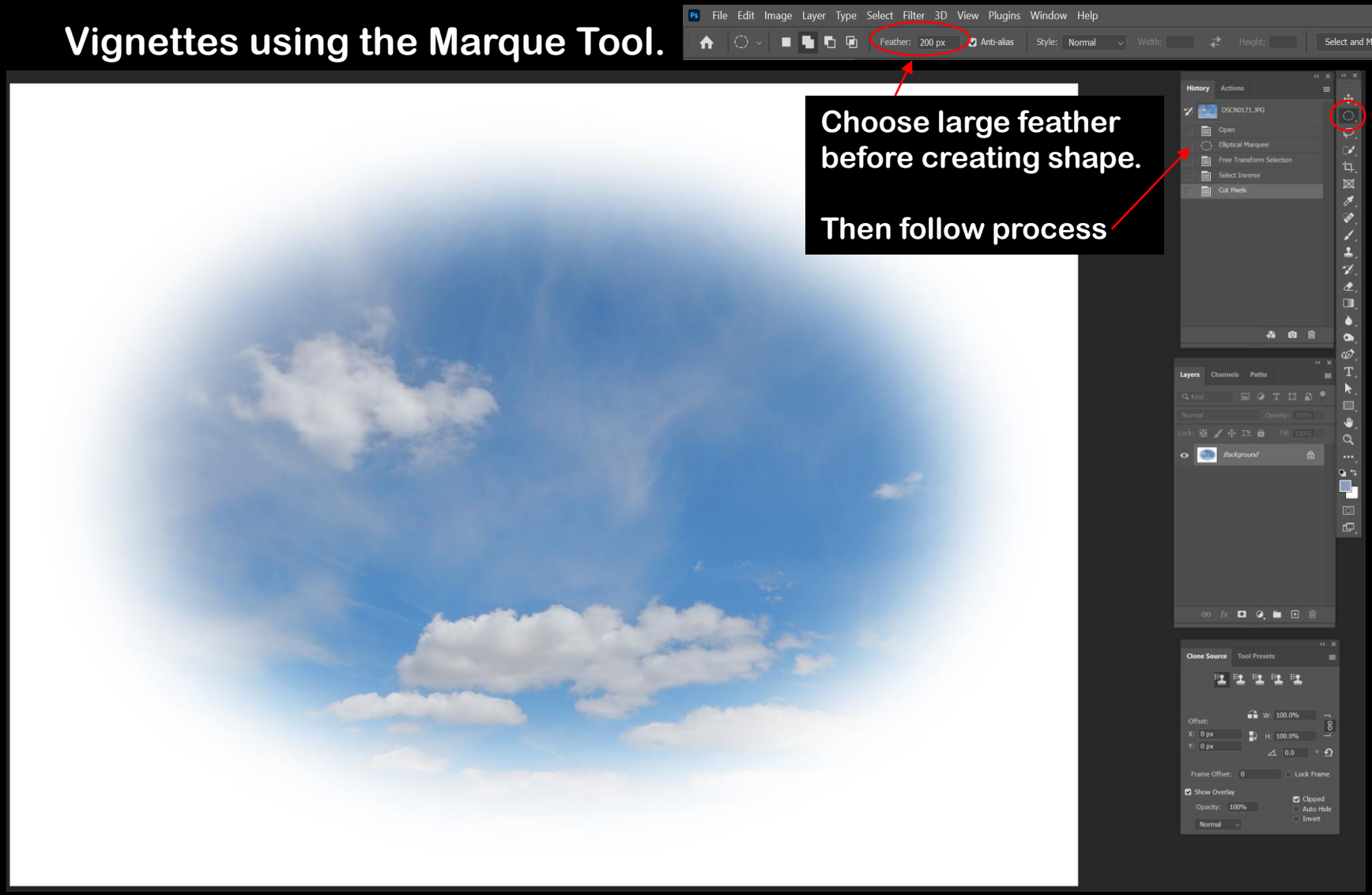
Vignettes using Camera Raw Filter.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Photoshop

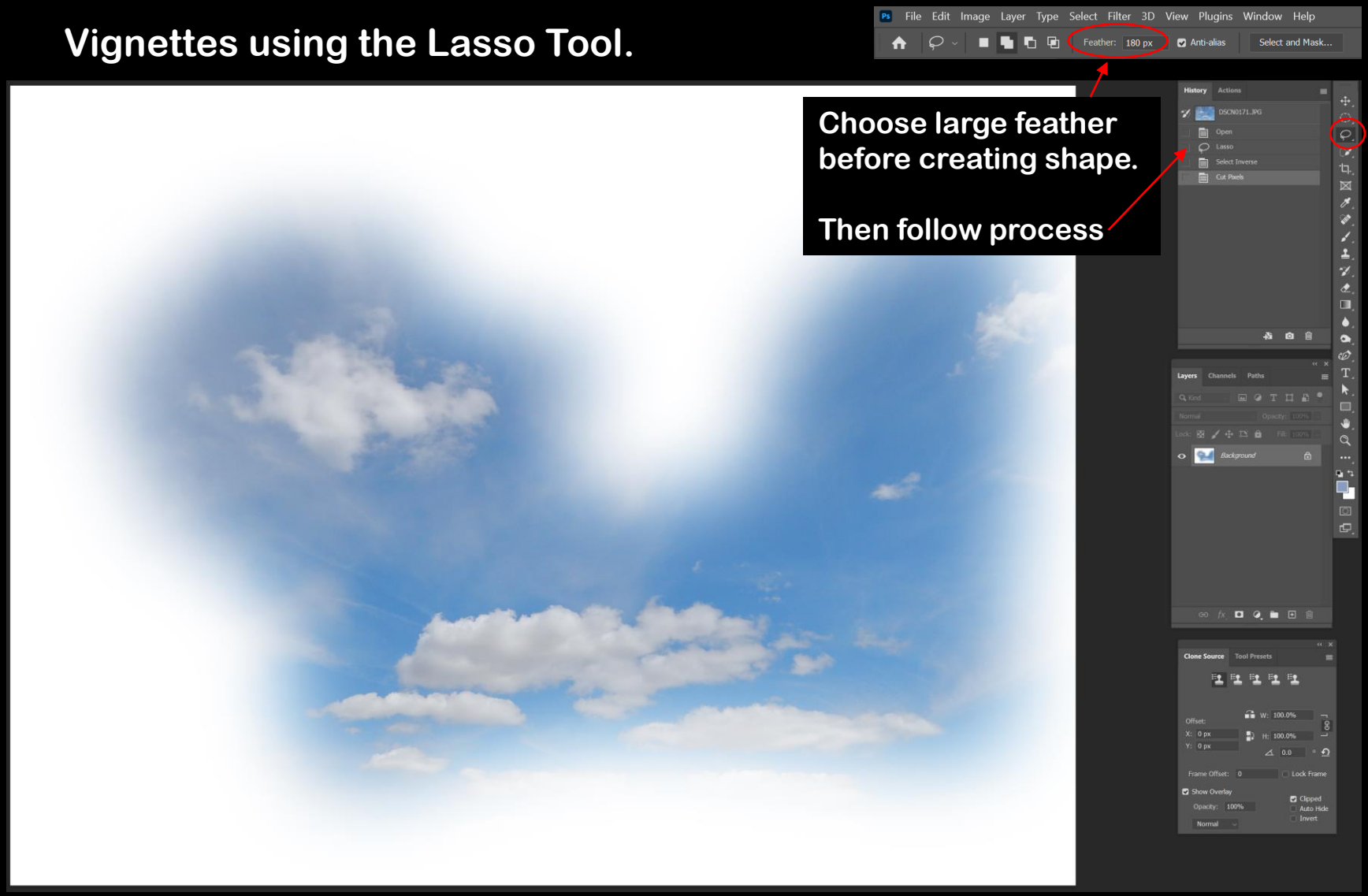
Vignettes using the Marque Tool.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Photoshop

Vignettes using the Lasso Tool.



FINISHING TOUCHES

Photoshop

Vignettes – Any colour you like.

Alter Background colour

FINISHING TOUCHES

Applying final touches in the correct order.

1. Now is the time to convert your image to MONO (it is so much easier to do corrections, etc., in colour then convert, as patching mono can be a nightmare!).

2. Check exposure/colour cast again.

3. Don't forget to do a final crop, then check the edges to eliminate any stray elements spoiling the overall image. *I usually leave the crop until near the end as some of the elements in the part of the image you are removing could be used else where especially when hiding unwanted items.*

4. Then apply a vignette, or other filters, e.g. Nik filters, if you want one (you may want to save the image before applying).

5. Finally add a border if required (you may want to save the image before applying).

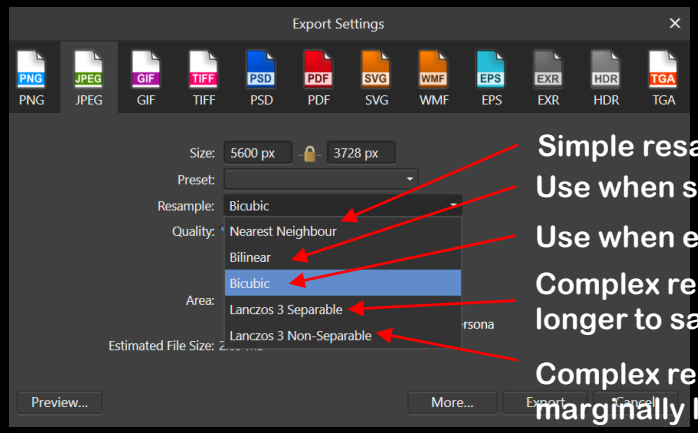
6. Save the finished image (TIFF or PSD preferable).

7. Resize and resave as JPEG if required for Club competitions.

FINALLY FINISHED!

SAVING IMAGE AS JPEG

Affinity Photo



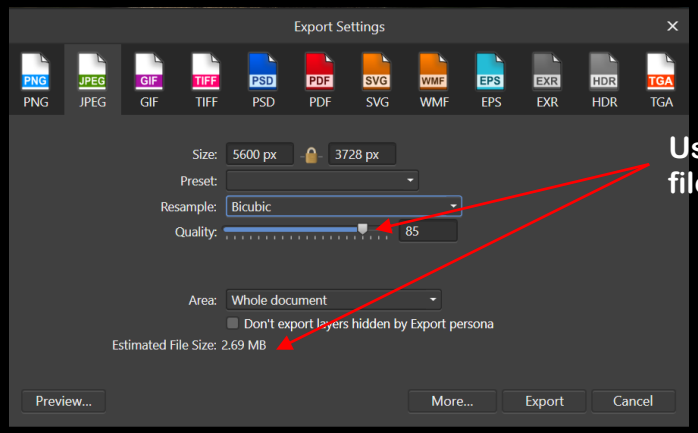
Simple resampling only for hard edge images

Use when shrinking images

Use when enlarging images as smoother

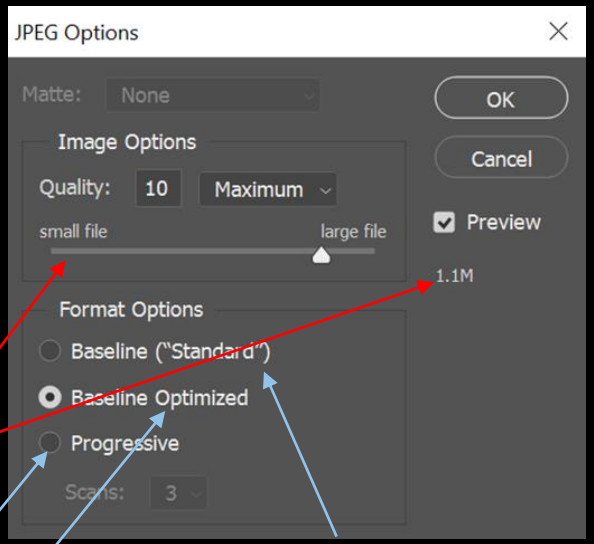
Complex resampling better result but takes longer to save

Complex resampling better result but takes marginally longer than Separable



Use slider for quality and check file size

Photoshop



Format recognised by web browsers

Optimizes colour

Displays a series of increasingly detailed versions of the image (you specify how many) as it downloads

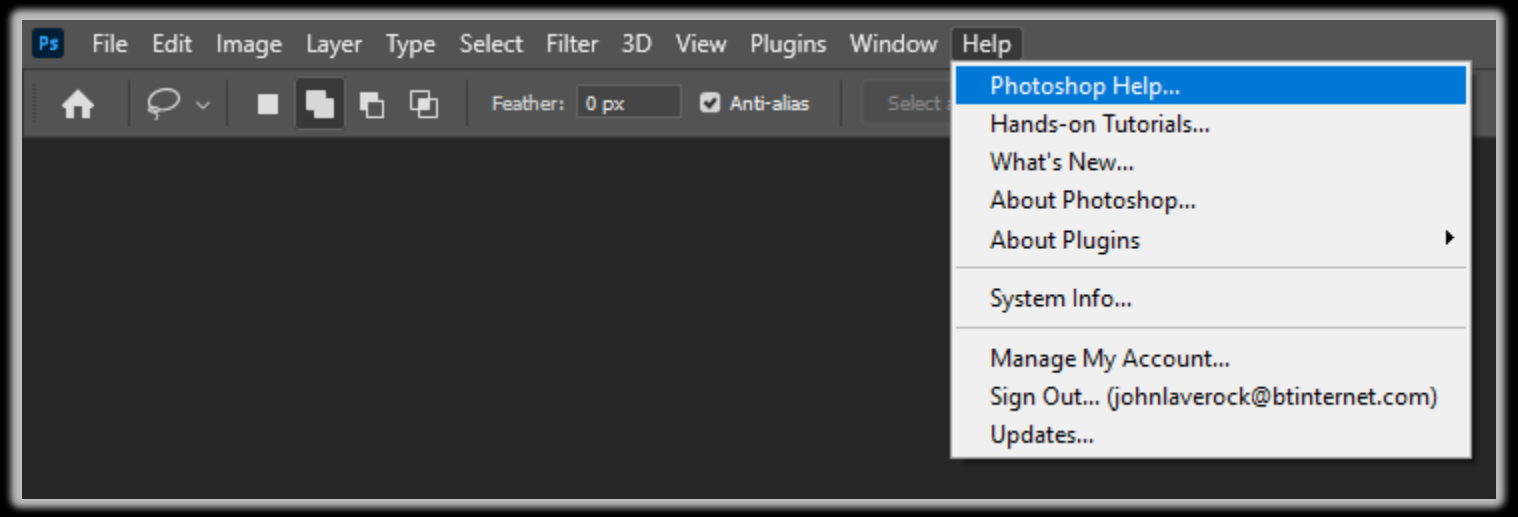
- Once manipulation is complete, if space allows, save the finished file as TIFF, PSD or PNG. You never know if you may want to return to it in a couple of years time! Only use JPEG (highest quality) as a last resort or for sending files in for competitions, emails, etc.

HARDWARE

You've conquered the software but what about your hardware?

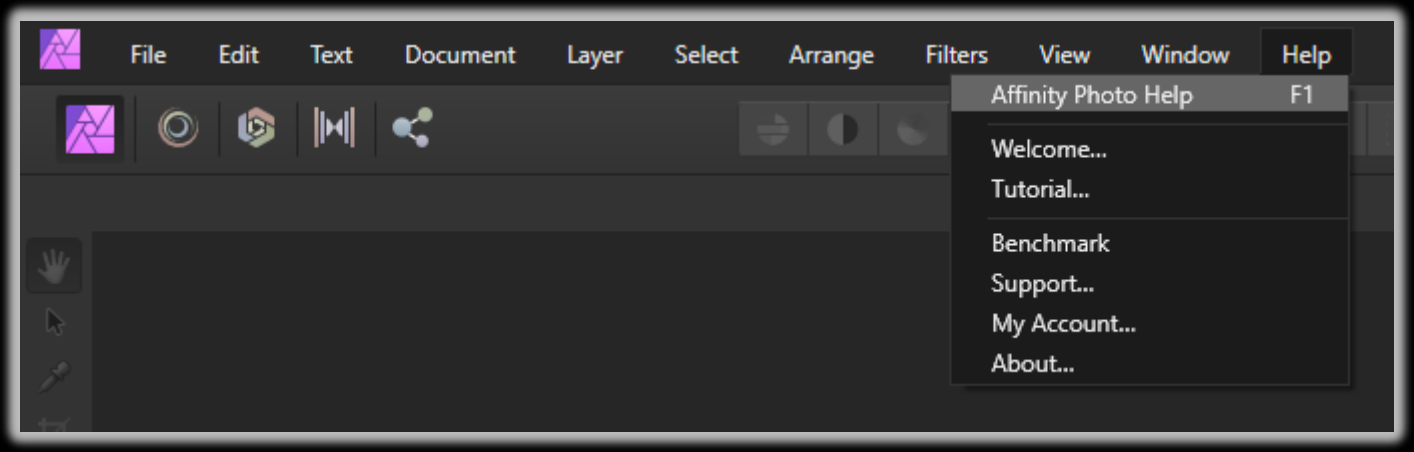
- **Ensure you have the latest programme updates.**
- **Check that the software has been set up correctly – from the menu choose Edit > Preferences.**
- **Has your hard disk plenty of spare capacity – when working on files they can become very large during certain tasks.**
- **Defragmentation of the hard drive will consolidate available space and the computer will work quicker (never perform this on a SSD disk).**
- **Calibrate your monitor for correct colour and contrast rendition.**
- **If your screen has a lot of dead pixels, it may need replacing.**
- **2 screens or 1 large one gives you more space to work in and helps stop you juggling tools and images constantly.**
- **If you are not very accurate when using the mouse, have you tried a track ball or even better a graphics tablet?**

~ PHOTOSHOP HELP ~



- https://helpx.adobe.com/uk/photoshop/tutorials.html
- https://www.photoshopessentials.com/basics

~ AFFINITY PHOTO HELP ~



- https://affinity.serif.com/en-us/tutorials/photo/desktop