

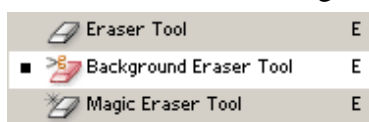


7 Background Eraser



**Used for removing portions of images
Found at #6 in the Toolbar diagram at left**

Choose the background eraser by clicking on the eraser in the toolbar and holding the mouse button down. Drag to the background eraser's icon, and release.

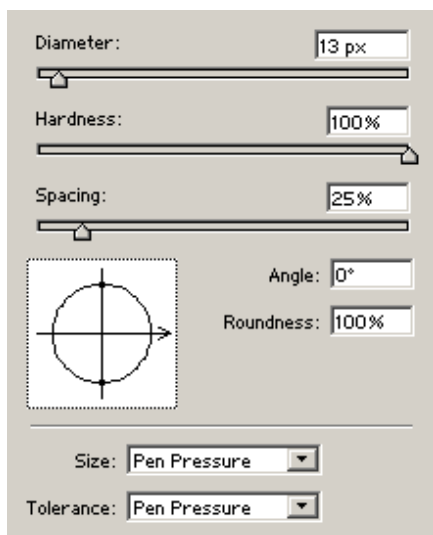


The eraser tools act like paintbrushes in reverse. Instead of laying down color, they pick it up. It's like watching a movie running backwards.

The background eraser erases the color on which you first click, while leaving other colors untouched. This allows you to more easily work around edges that you don't want to erase. However, results can be somewhat unpredictable, so be prepared to experiment.

The background eraser is used to erase to transparency on the active layer. If you apply this eraser to your background layer, it will be automatically changed to a regular layer. You cannot have transparency on a background layer.

Once all options are set in the options palette [see below], choose a brush from the pop-up palette and drag in the image to erase to transparency on the selected layer. Unlike most of the other painting tools, this brush does not use the new mega-brushes engine. You build a brush using the old pre-7 brush options palette. If you've never seen previous versions of Photoshop, this palette used to be the only way you could customize brush tip application.



The Diameter sets the brushes total size. Hardness sets how much fuzziness or feathering there is on the edges of the brush. Spacing determines how often each brush 'footprint' is laid down. At the default 25 % the brush tips give the appearance of a solid line. At greater settings, you will begin to see gaps between the tip imprints.

You can either type values into the Angle and Roundness text boxes, or drag on dots or arrowhead in the proxy image on the left to reshape the brush tip. From the Size and Tolerance menus, you can choose Pen Pressure, or Stylus Wheel if you have a tablet hooked up to your computer.

The background eraser cursor has a crosshair in its center showing the hotspot which is used to choose the colors affected, according to your settings in the options palette.

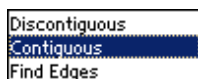
A shortcut for changing brush sizes while using this tool is to press the left bracket [to decrease brush size, and the right bracket] to choose a larger brush.

When editing an image with any tool that uses brushes, you can right click on the image and the brushes pop-up palette will appear next to your cursor. Press Enter or click on your document title bar to close the palette after choosing a new brush.

The keyboard shortcut for the eraser is the letter E. To cycle through all three eraser tools, hold down the Shift key while repeatedly pressing the shortcut key.

The illustration on the **below**, is the background eraser tool's options bar. To find any tool presets that have been made for this tool, click on the tool's thumbnail at the left end of the options bar. To reset the tool to its default settings, right-click on the tool's thumbnail and choose Reset Tool from the menu that appears. To choose a brush size and type, click on the brush thumbnail as described above.

The **Limits** menu offers constraints on the extent of the erasing. Contiguous will allow erasing in areas containing the designated color which are also connected to the spot first clicked. Discontiguous will allow erasing in any part of the image containing the designated color. Find Edges allows erasing in contiguous areas while better preserving the sharpness of distinct edges found during erasing.



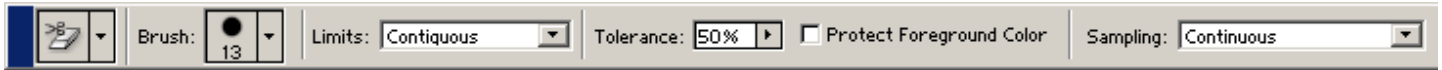
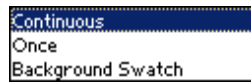
Photoshop Tips

Go

In the box titled **Tolerance**, enter a value for the degree of variation in color that you want to erase. A low setting limits erasure to colors very similar to the one first clicked on. A higher setting allows more shades of the selected color to be erased. You can type a value into the box, or access its slider by pressing on the arrow at the right side of the box and dragging. If you check the **Protect Foreground Color** box, the current foreground color (found in the [foreground box](#) of the toolbox as well as the [Color palette](#)) cannot be erased and will be left untouched in the image.

Sampling determines what colors are erased. If you choose Continuous, the eraser will sample new shades within your tolerance setting as you drag. This allows the gradual addition of new colors which can be erased as you progress around the image. Choosing Once will make the original click point the only sample designated for erasure, and will limit activity during that drag stroke to that sample's color. The Background Swatch option will cause that to be your sample color, no matter where

you click. You will only erase the background color from the layer while this option is selected.



If you have doodled with a tool's options and want to get back to the default settings, right-click that tool's icon at the far left end of its options bar (in Photoshop 6, left-click). Choose either Reset Tool to reset only the current tool, or Reset All Tools to restore default settings to every tool.

Please note that all descriptions, and illustrations featured refer to files which are in Photoshop's .psd format, and which are in RGB color mode. Other file formats, and color modes may generate different options. Some Photoshop features are not available for images not in .psd format, or RGB color mode. To find what color mode your image is in, choose Image > Mode.

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