

10 Selections

In the first book in this series, we looked at a number of the basic selection tools. In this chapter we will expand on that knowledge by looking at alternative ways to make selections and also methods of manipulating and refining selections.

Quick selection tool

The Quick Selection tool (fig10.1), is like painting a selection onto the image. The tool will attempt to follow edges of high contrast in order to make a selection. There is little in the way of controls for this tool, but there are buttons that allow you to add to and subtract from your current selection, fig 10.2.

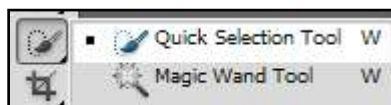


Fig 10.1 the Quick Selection Tool is found grouped with the Magic Wand tool in the Tools panel



Fig 10.2 add or subtract selection areas by choosing one of the settings in the Options panel

The Auto Enhance check box in the Options panel adds a slight amount of smoothing to the selection edge, making it less blocky. The accuracy of the Quick Selection tool is largely dependent on the brush size. Typically, the smaller the brush size, the more accurate the selection will be.

The Quick Selection tool is often a good place to start when making a selection. However, it will often need to be used in conjunction with other selection tools or the Refine Edge function, to provide an accurate selection.

Refine Edge

The Refine Edge function can be accessed from the Options panel when you choose any of the selection tools and you have an active selection. It can also be accessed from the Select menu. When Refine Edge is chosen a dialogue box will appear which will allow you to edit the current selection, fig 10.3.

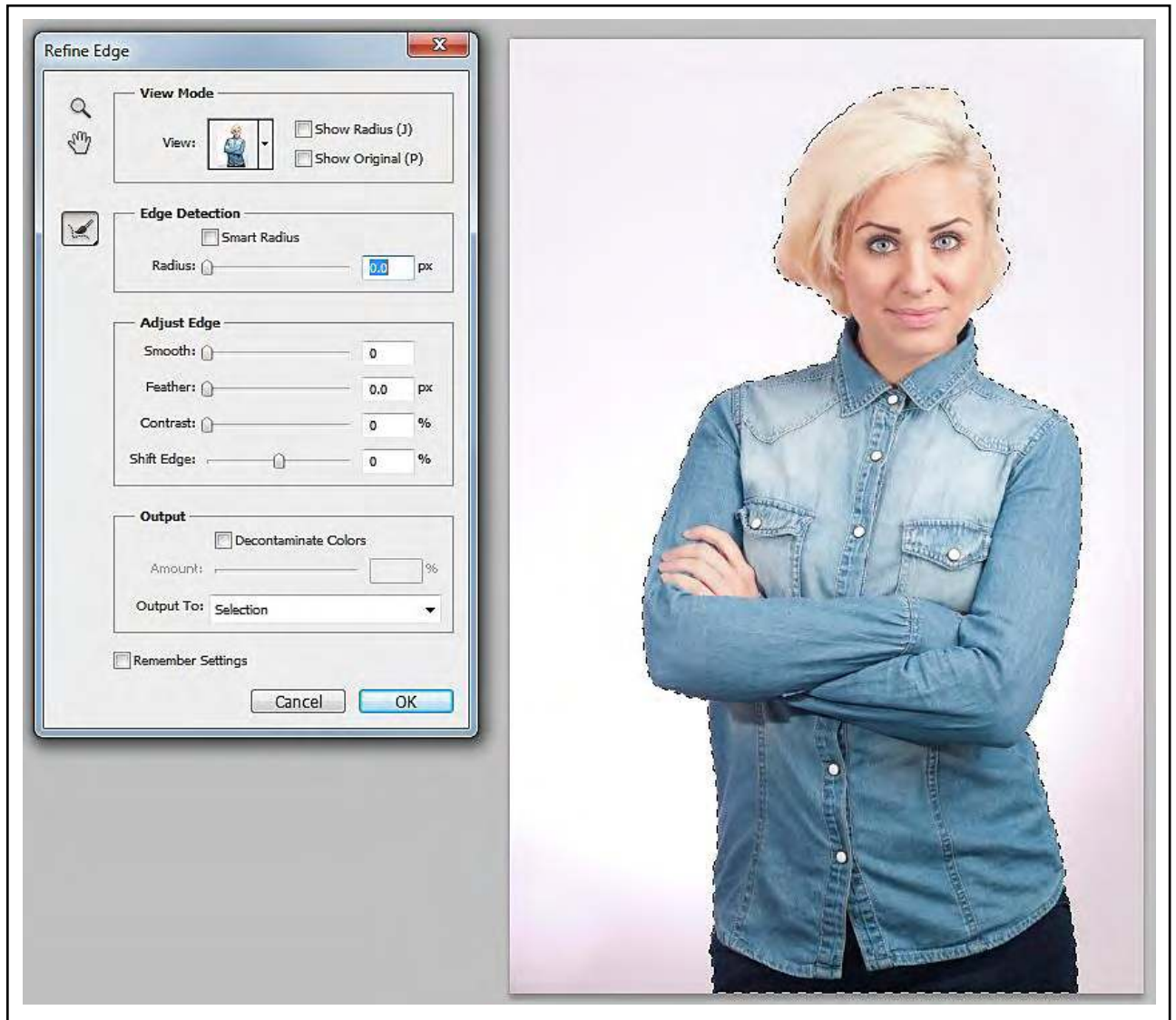


Fig 10.3 the Refine Edge dialogue box

Refine Edge settings:

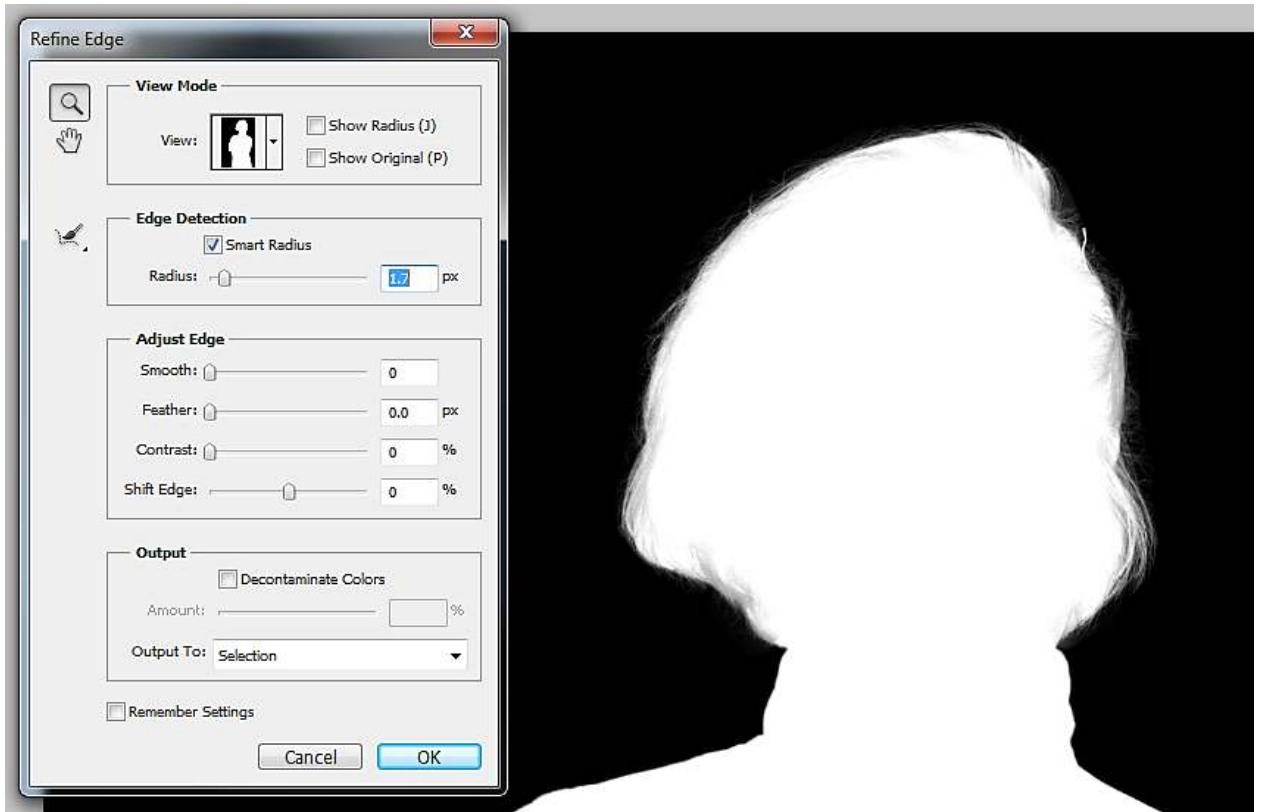


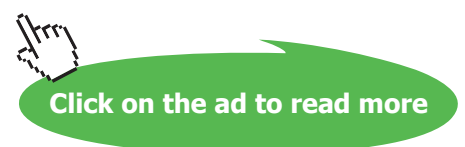
Fig 10.4 an example of a selection with hard and soft edges.

360°
thinking.

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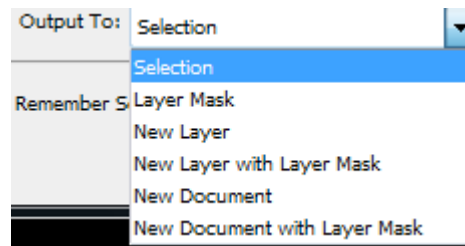


Fig 10.5 the selection can be Output in a number of different ways.



Fig 10.6 a composite image made possible by the Refine Edge function.

The Refine Edge function has made creating composite images (fig 10.6) easier and much quicker than was previously possible. In fig 10.6, the move tool has been used to drag the selected model into a completely different image.

Transform Selections

In chapter 3 of this book we looked at Transformations. It is also possible to Transform selections using the same methods and modifiers. However, to transform a selection you must access the function from the Select menu and not the Edit menu. Another difference is that you don't have access to the different Transformation types from the Select menu. However, you can still access them by Right clicking inside Transformation bounding box or using the Modifier keys.


Saving and Loading Selections


Once you've gone to the trouble of making a complex selection it's a good idea to save it in case you wish to return to the document at a later date to re-edit it. The Save and Load selections function can be found in the Select menu. Once you save a selection, a new Channel is created and can be viewed and edited in the Channels panel.

Color Range

This selection method is available from the Select menu. There is also a Color Range function which can be used to edit Layer Masks and works in the same fashion. It is very useful for selecting areas of strong colour such as skies, fig 10.7.

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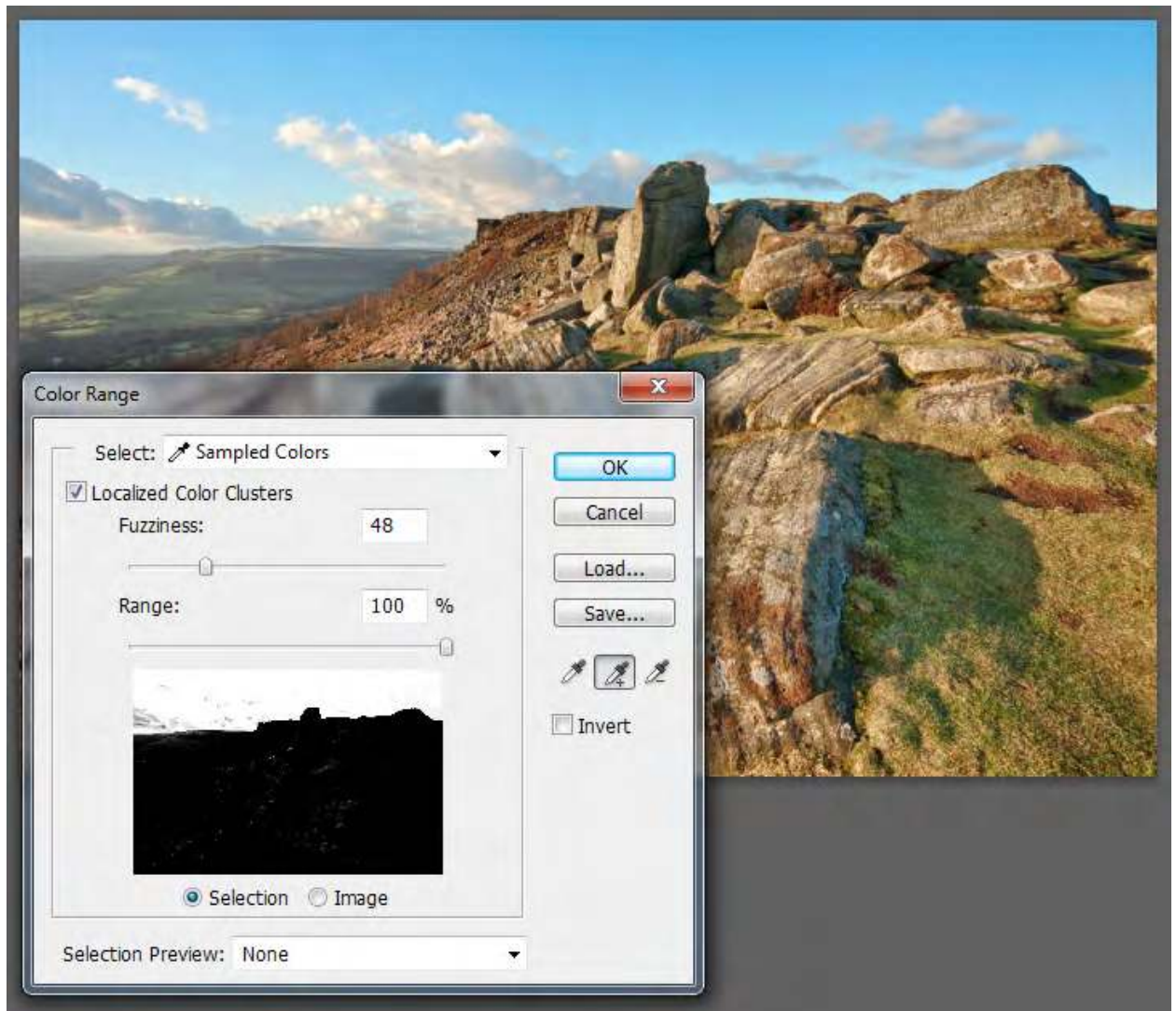


Fig 10.7 the Color Range dialogue box.

The Color Range dialogue box is used by choosing the eyedropper tool and either clicking in the image or corresponding selection area in the preview panel of the dialogue box. The original selection can be added to by using the + eyedropper or subtracted from using the – eyedropper. The selection can be adjusted using the Fuzziness slider to add or subtract similar colours. The selection can also be Localized to the original sample point and the surrounding area by using the “Localized Color Clusters” check box in association with the Range slider. The “Select” drop down menu can be useful to target specific colours or Shadow, Midtone and Highlight areas of an image for editing.