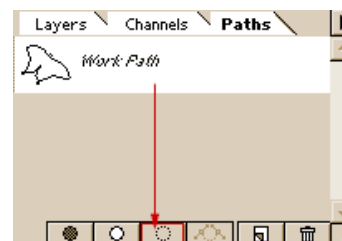


Removing the Background

Photoshop Pen Tool, page 2

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When you're happy with the path, you can go to the Paths palette. The paths palette displays all the working paths in your image. We will be converting this path to a selection. To do that, just drag the work path down to the Make Selection button on the paths palette.



The path is converted to a selection and the image is displayed with a selection marquee.



As always, I switch to quick mask mode to check my selection. If needed, the selection can be refined while in quick mask mode. See the [leaf example](#) for details on refining a selection in quick mask mode. The selection looks OK, so I won't be making any adjustments.



Ordinarily, at this point we could invert the selection and simply delete the background... but there's just one problem... I neglected to select the poor butterfly's antennae! Actually, it was intentional. The butterfly's antennae are so tiny they would be impossible to select. So, we're just going to draw them in freehand. To

do that I want to leave the background layer in place in order to trace over the antennae. We'll get out of quick mask mode, then go to the layer menu and choose Layer > New > Layer via copy. This places the selection on a new layer with the underlying layer left in place. Now we can go to the underlying layer and drop the opacity down to about 50 percent.



Next make sure the butterfly is the active layer and use a fine brush tip to trace over the butterfly's antennae.



After tracing the antennae, you can delete the background layer.



Here's the final image with a new background and a drop shadow added.



The pen tool is one of the more difficult tools to master, but I can assure you that practice and persistence with the pen tool is time well spent. The pen tool is useful in so many ways, not just for removing backgrounds and making selection, but for drawing shapes, curved lines, and so much more.

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