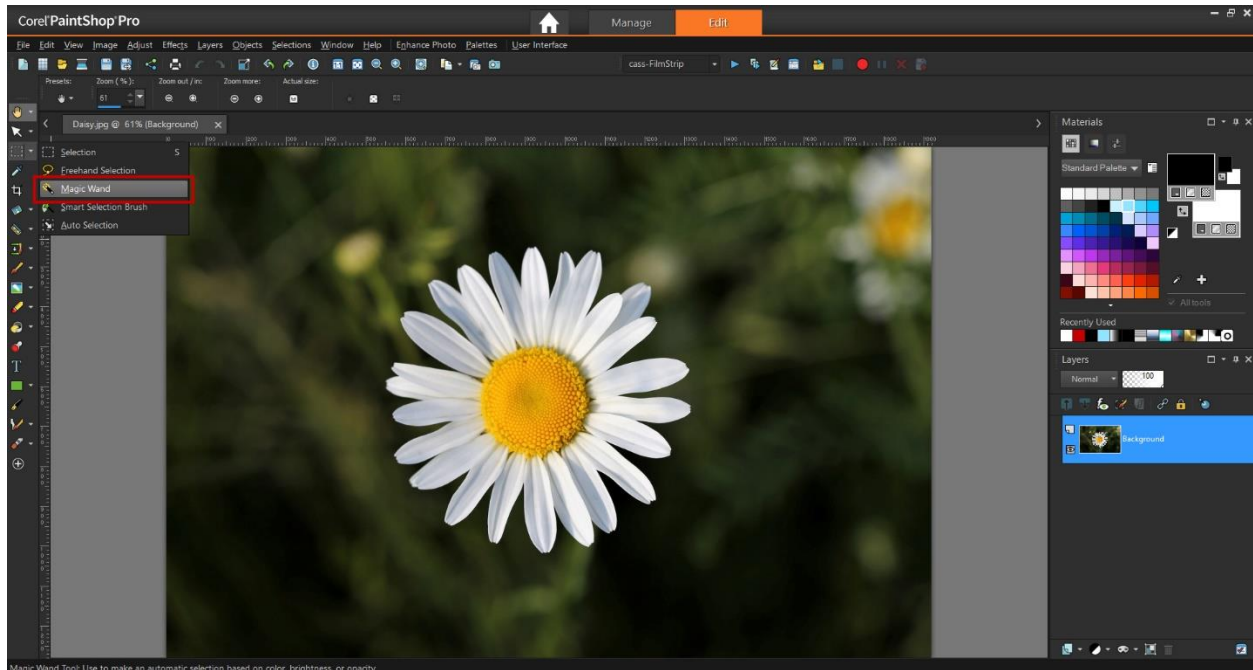# Creating Masks from Selections and Brush Strokes

This tutorial explores advanced masking concepts, using PaintShop Pro's Selection tools and Paint Brush tool to create masks.

Creating a Selection

We will begin with using a selected object in a photo to create a new mask. Open the Daisy photo in the **Edit** workspace. Activate the **Magic Wand** brush from the **Selection** tool group.

On the **Property** bar, set the selection **Mode** to **Add**, **Tolerance** to **30** and uncheck **Contiguous**.
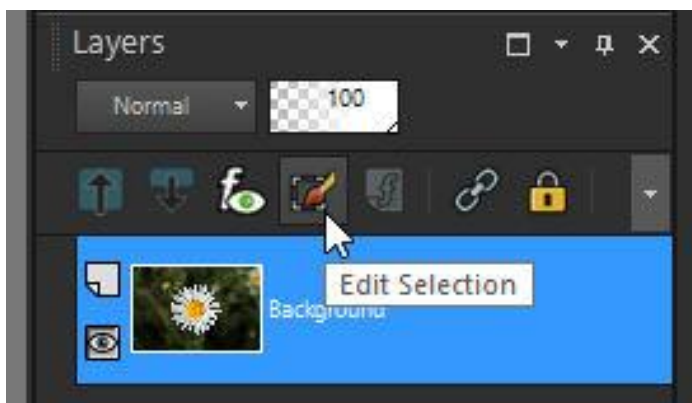

Click on one area of the flower and the Magic Wand will select all pixels of similar color. If you click on any areas that were missed, they will be added to the selection along with any matching pixels.

With this particular image, there are areas outside the daisy that have been selected as well, because they are close in color to the petals.
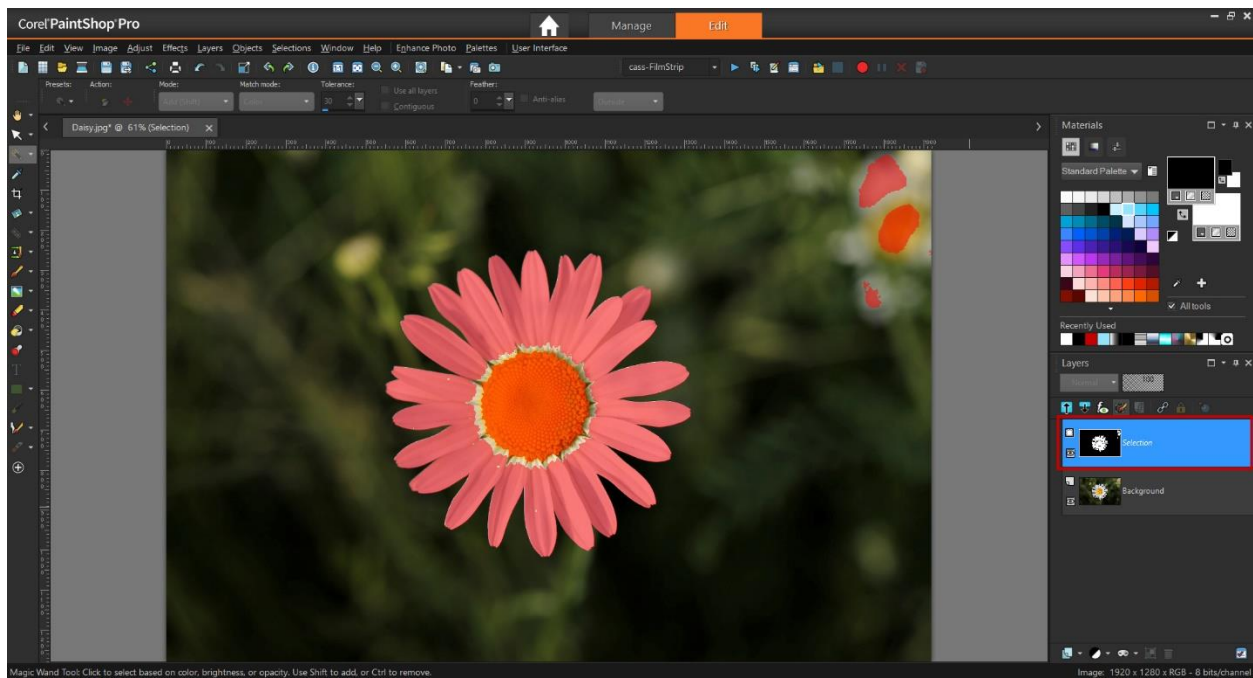
You could keep trying to adjust your selection by changing the **Mode**, **Tolerance** and other settings. But you can also use **Edit Selection** mode to perfect your selection.

With the selection marquee still active, click on the **Edit Selection** icon in the **Layers** palette.

When **Edit Selection** mode is activated you will see a red overlay indicating what's currently included in the selection area. This creates a new temporary layer as well, on which you can modify what's selected. This layer is black and white, with white representing what's selected.

We will use the **Paint Brush** tool to pick up the unselected bits in the center.

- In the **Materials** palette, set the **Foreground** (top) swatch to white.

- Activate the **Paint Brush** tool and choose the **Default** brush tip.

- Now use it to brush over the unselected areas.

Tip: for smaller areas, you can change the brush size by holding down the **Alt** key while dragging the brush.
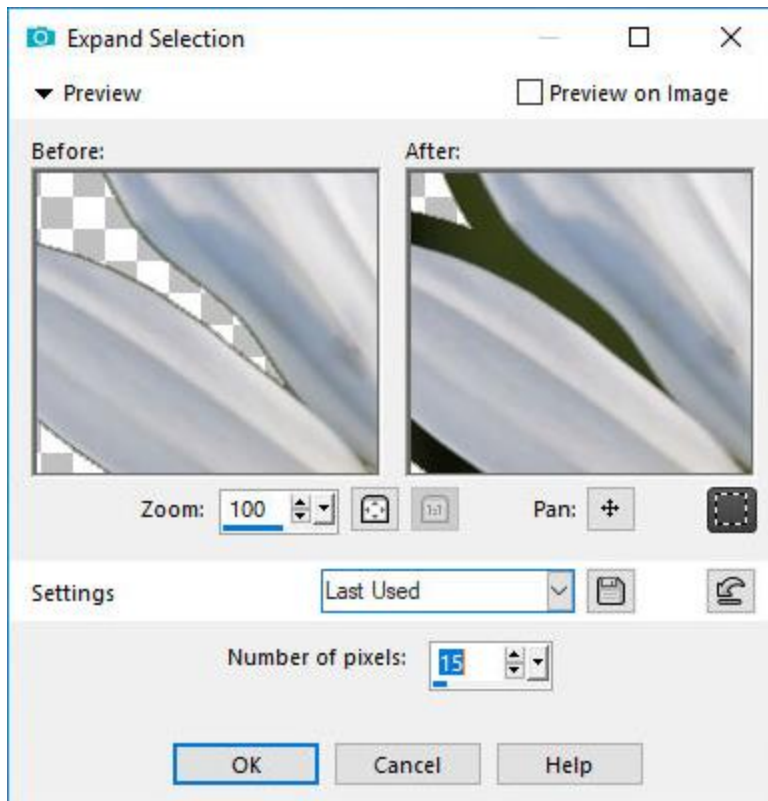
To remove the extraneous selected areas outside the flower, switch the **Foreground** swatch to black and use the **Paint Brush** tool to paint over the areas you want to remove. Once you are finished perfecting your selection, click the **Edit Selection** icon again to exit. Keep the selection marquee active - it now includes the entire flower and nothing else.

To soften and round out this mask shape, go to **Selections** > **Modify** > **Expand**.

In the **Before/After** preview windows, pan to an edge of the flower where you can see the narrow spaces between petals – these we want to get rid of. Increase the **Number of Pixels** until the gaps are filled in.
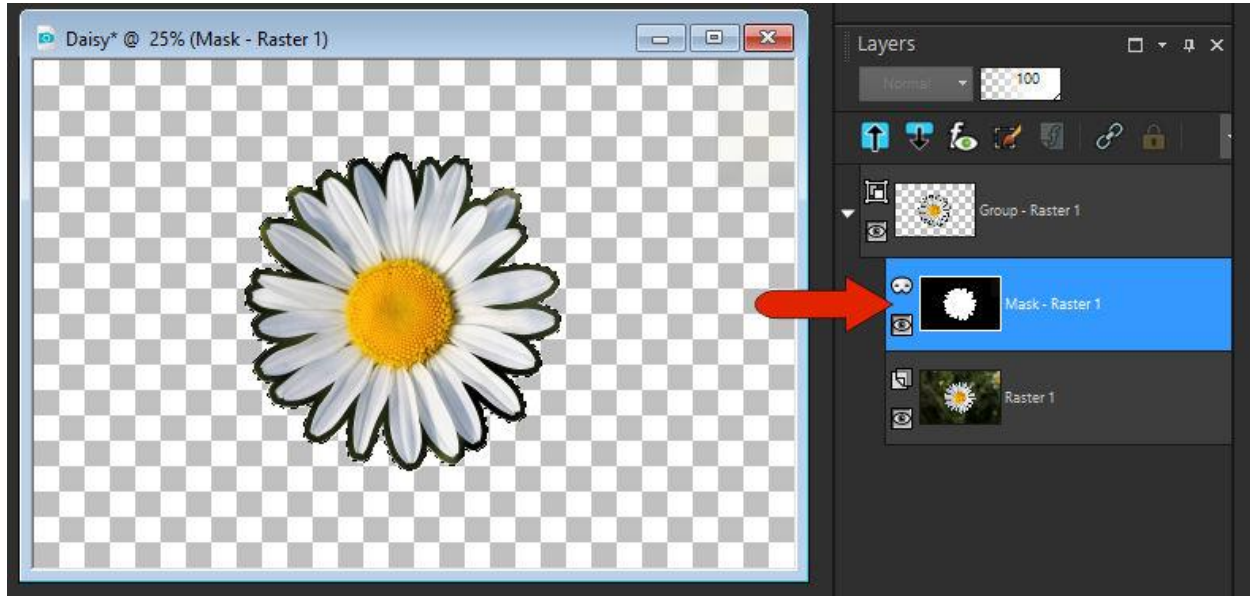
Pan around the selection border to make sure it looks ok everywhere. Then click **OK** to see the expanded marquee.
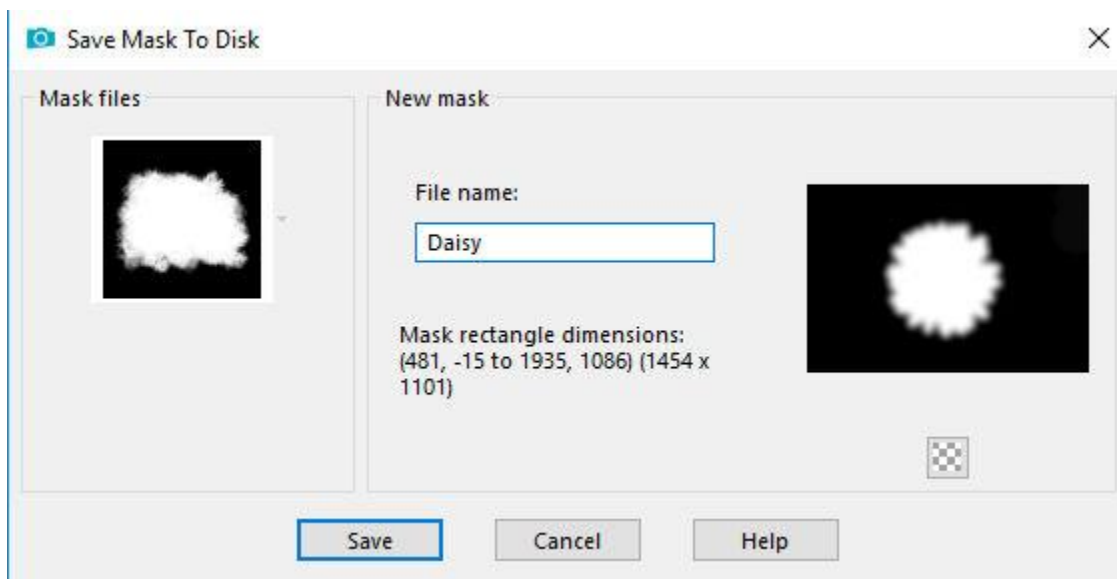
Creating a Mask from the Selection

Now we are going to create a mask from the daisy selection. Click the **New Mask Layer** icon in the **Layers** palette and choose **Show Selection**. The mask appears in the mask layer group, with white representing the area that will show and black for what's blocked.

*Tip: If you want to blur the mask edges, first unselect with **Ctrl + D**. Then choose **Adjust > Blur > Gaussian Blur**.*

To save the mask, make sure its layer is still selected and go to **Layers** > **Load/Save Mask** > **Save Mask To Disk**. Name it "Daisy."
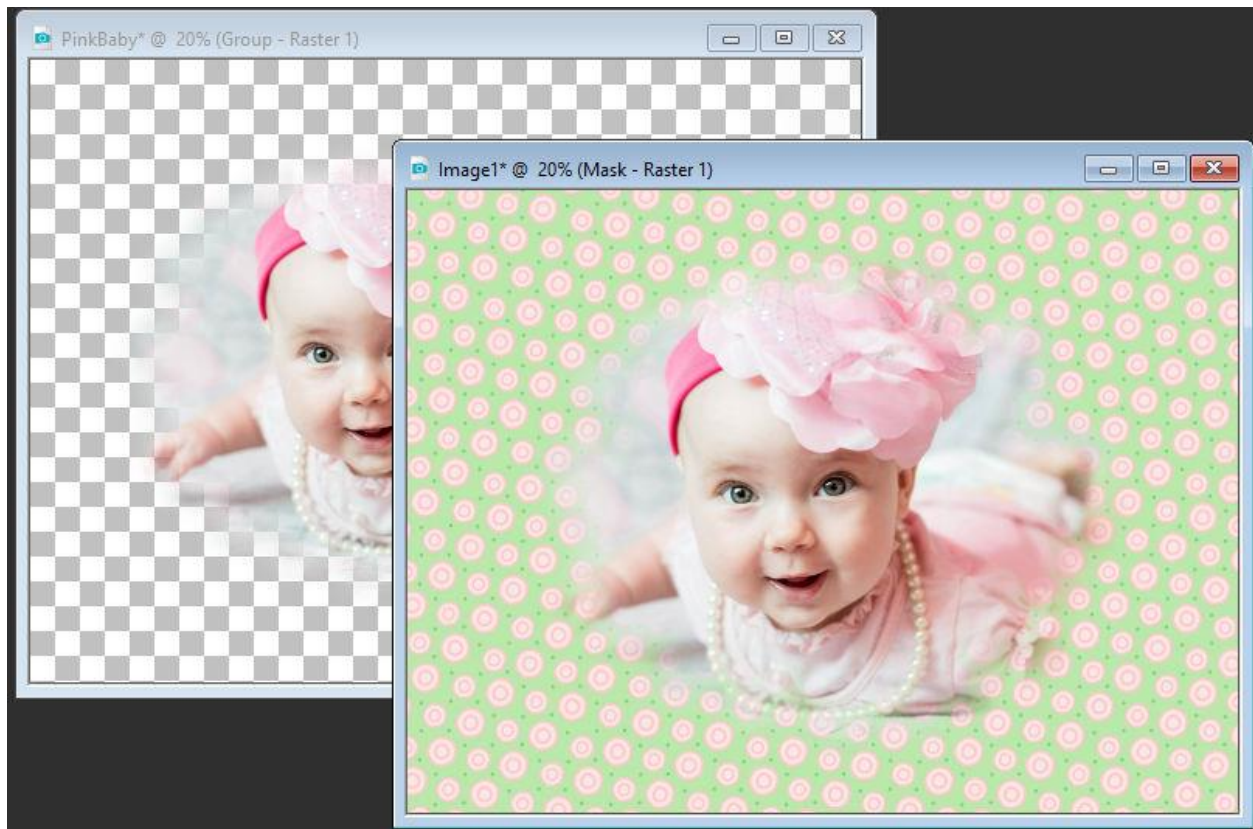
Applying your New Selection Mask

To apply the new daisy mask you created, open the PinkBaby sample photo, or any photo you like.

- Go to **Layers** > **Load/Save Mask** > **Load Mask From Disk**.

- Select the daisy mask.

- Set the **Orientation** to **As Is** and choose the **Hide all mask** option.

- Click **Load** to see your new mask applied to the photo.

- If necessary, use the **Pick** tool to adjust the mask size and placement.

Tip: for a creative option, add a new **Raster** layer below the mask group layer. Use the **Flood Fill** tool to fill with a color or textured background or copy and paste a background image onto the new layer.
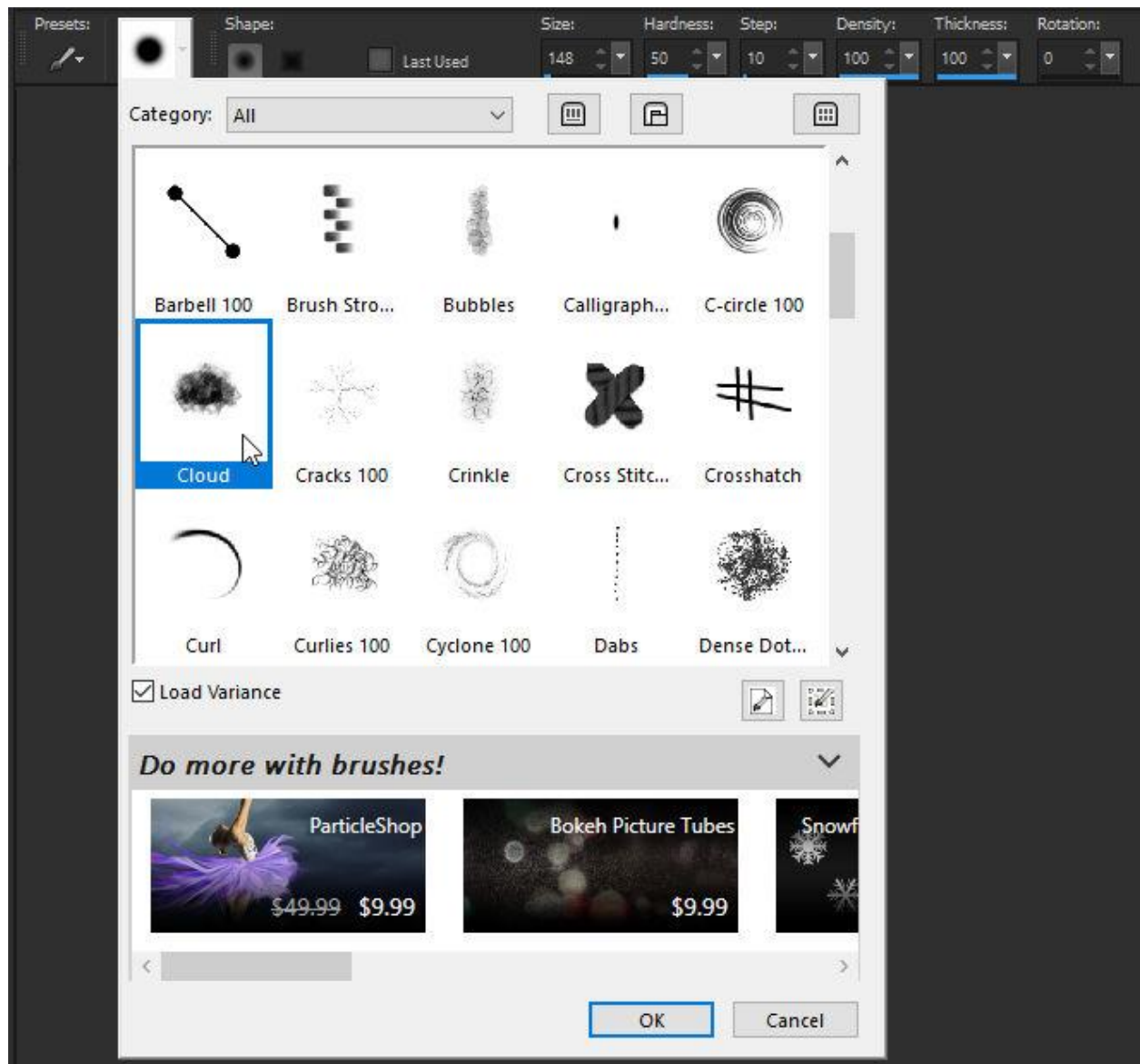
Creating Brush Strokes

To demonstrate creating a mask from brush strokes we will start with a new image.

- Go to **File** > **New** and set the image size to **1024** x **800** pixels.

- Activate the **Flood Fill** tool and fill the image with black.

- Change the **Foreground** swatch to white.

- Activate the **Paint Brush** tool and click on the brush tip in the **Property** bar to open the brush library.
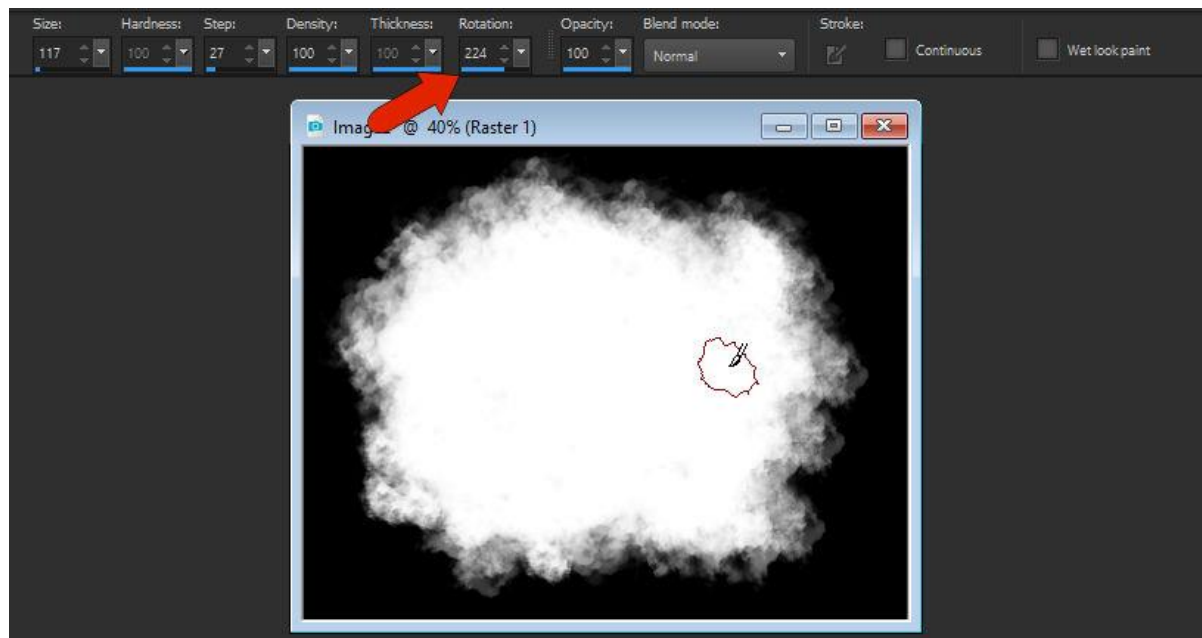
In the brush library you will see many more brush shape options. In this example we are using the **Cloud** brush tip.

Now use the **Cloud** brush tip to "paint" your mask area. There are many options to experiment with:
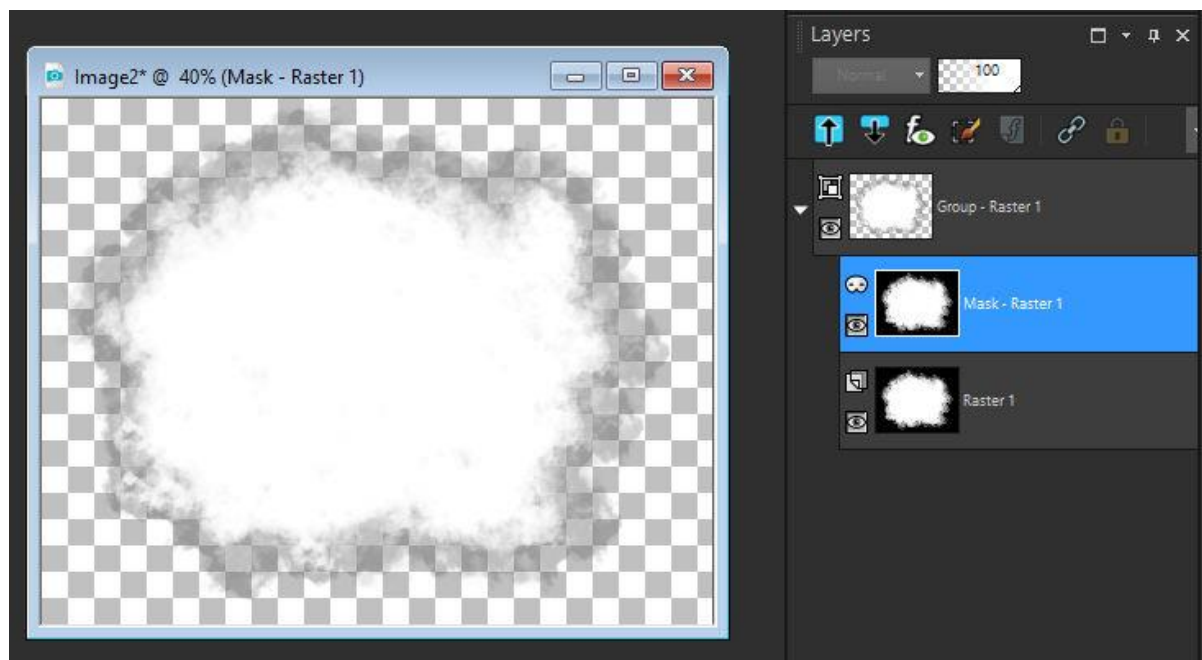
- Click once for one brush dab.

- Click and drag to fill in a larger area.

- Adjust the brush size by holding down the **Alt** key while dragging the mouse.

- Click on top of existing brush strokes to make the white area larger and more opaque.

- Randomize the strokes by changing the **Rotation**, **Size** and other parameters on the **Property** bar.

Creating a New Mask from the Brush Strokes

Once you are satisfied with your brush strokes you can turn the image into a mask. Here is the easiest way to do this:

- Click on the **New Mask Layer** icon in the **Layers** palette and select **From Image**.

- In the **Source Window** choose this new image you created and click **OK**.

- In the **Layers** palette, make sure the mask layer is active.

- Go to **Layers** > **Load/Save Mask** > **Save Mask To Disk** and name it Cloud.

Applying your New Brush Stroke Mask

In this example we are using a wedding photo and a raindrop pattern image to show off our cloud brush mask. We'll apply the mask to the wedding photo, which will allow the rain pattern image to show through around the edges.

- Open the sample photos RainyWedding and RainWindow.

- Copy (**Ctrl** + **C** or **Edit** > **Copy**) the wedding image and paste it into the rainy window image (**Ctrl** + **V** or **Edit** > **Paste as New Layer**).

- In the **Layers** palette, the wedding image should be the top layer, and the active layer.

- Go to **Layers** > **Load/Save Mask** > **Load Mask From Disk**.

- Select the cloud mask you created and set the **Orientation** as **Fit to Canvas**.

- Click **Load**.

Want more brush tips? Open the Welcome Book and go to the **Get More** section. On the **Creative Content** tab, scroll down to find the **Creative Brush Pack** that has 30 free brushes you can download.