

Making a Fine-detail Selection

In this tutorial you will learn how to use the Smart Selection brush and Edit Selection mode to create a fine-detail selection, allowing you to replace backgrounds, isolate objects and combine images. We will review how the Smart Selection brush works and how it differs from other selection tools. There are multiple selection options and multiple ways to edit selections. Your preferred methods will come from what your needs are, the layout and composition of your images along with practice and trial and error.

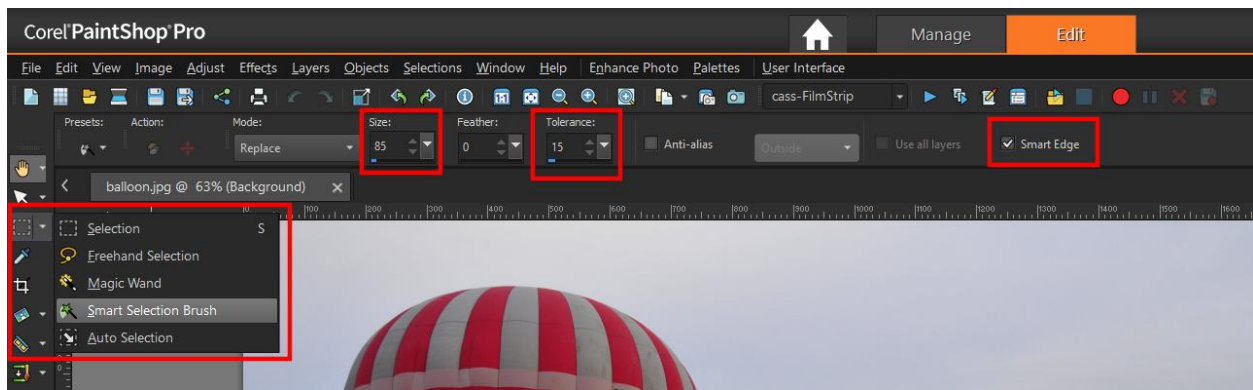
Step 1: Setup

To begin, open the sample images Balloon.jpg and StarrySky.jpg in PaintShop Pro's **Edit** workspace. Make sure you have your **Materials** palette and **Layers** palette open (go to **View > Palettes**).



Step 2: Creating a Fine-detail Selection with the Smart Selection Brush

Activate the **Smart Selection** brush from the **Selections** tool group flyout on the **Tools** toolbar. In the **Property** bar, set the **Tolerance** to 15, **Size** to approximately 85 and enable **Smart Edge**.



The **Smart Selection** brush works by clicking and dragging over the area you want to select. It will automatically add all other connected areas into the selection as set by your parameters in the **Property** bar.

You want to select the sky and none of the balloons or near mountains. Starting in the lower left corner of the sky, hold your mouse button down, go up, over and around the balloon and end in the opposite corner. The brush size we set makes it perfect for getting around the balloon.

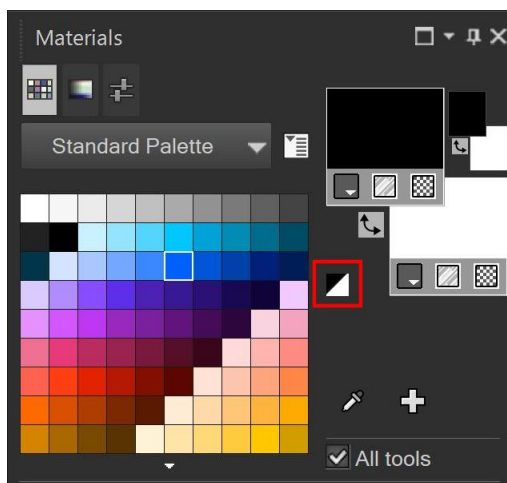


You can see the selection area is surrounded by the selection marquee, often called “marching ants”. The selection marquee will be easier to see on your screen than in the screenshot above.

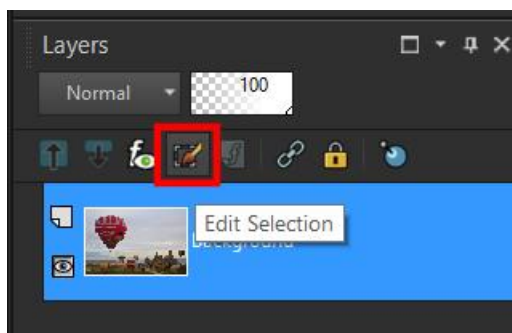
Step 3: Editing a Fine-detail Selection

A quick glance in the lower right shows that it didn’t select some of the faded distance mountains. You can try adjusting the settings for the **Smart Selection** brush and redoing the selection or hold down the **Ctrl** key and click on the missed area to add it. But an easier way is to use **Edit Selection** mode.

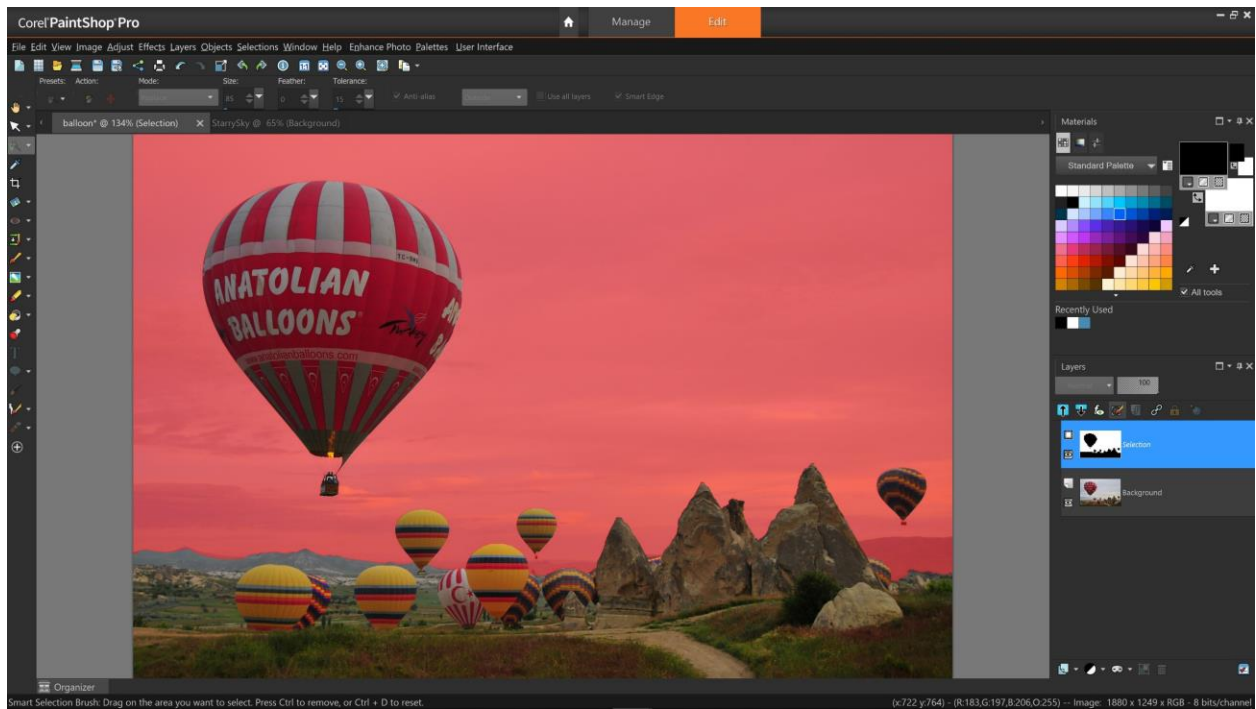
Note: Before activating the **Edit Selection** mode, make sure your **Materials** palette is set to black and white. Do this by clicking the small black/white square.



To activate **Edit Selection** mode, go to **Selections > Edit Selection**. Or click on the **Edit Selection** icon in the **Layers** palette.



Once you activate **Edit Selection** mode, you will see that your selection is now identified by the reddish hue, a bit easier to see than the marching ants. Now we can add and delete areas of the selection by using the **Eraser** tool.



As an example, we will remove one of the small hot air balloons from the selection. Activate the **Eraser** tool and set the **Size** to 45. Brush over the balloon with the **Eraser** tool and it will be covered with the red tint, indicating that it is now part of the larger selection area (which is the background sky).

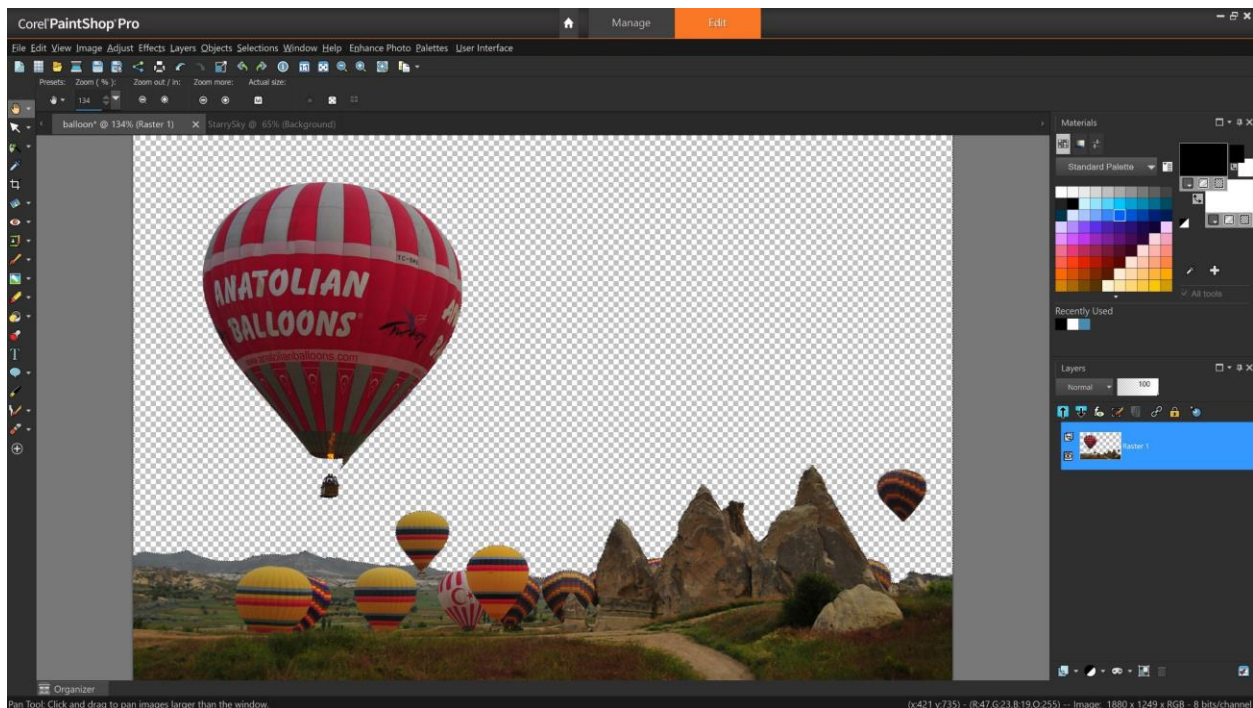


If you wanted to remove parts of a selection area, right-click with the **Eraser** tool and the red tint will disappear, indicating that the area is no longer part of the selection. Once you have fine-tuned your selection, you can exit the **Edit Selection** mode by clicking the same icon in the **Layer** palette, or by going to **Selections > Edit Selection**.

Step 4: Removing and Replacing a Photo Background

We're now ready to replace the background of the balloon image. First, we need to raise the image up from the background, so you can slide the starry sky background in behind it. In the **Layers** palette, right-click on the **Background** layer and choose **Promote Background Layer**.

The background layer will be renamed **Raster 1**. Now press the **Delete** key and the area you have selected will be deleted and you will see a checkerboard pattern in its place (this indicates the area is transparent). You can now press **Ctrl + D** to remove the selection marquee.



Go to the starry sky image and copy it (**Ctrl + C** or go to **Edit > Copy**). If you have the **Pan** tool (hand icon) activated, you can also right-click on the image and select **Copy**. Return to the balloons image and paste in the starry sky image (**Ctrl + V** or go to **Edit > Paste as New Layer** or right-click and select **Paste > Paste As New Layer**).

In the **Layers** palette, drag the starry sky layer underneath the balloons layer and congratulations, you're done!

