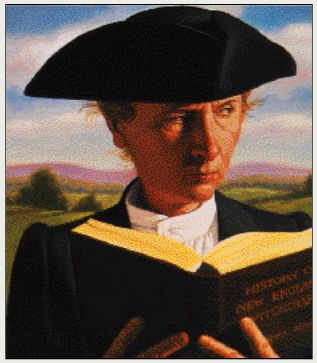
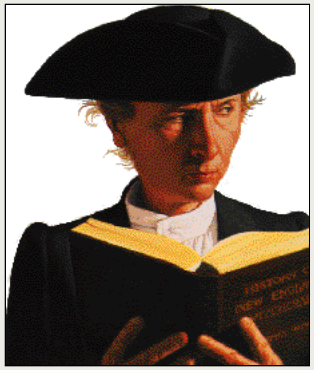
Up and Running with Mask Pro 1.0

Extensis Mask Pro:
Photoshop's Mask Creation Plug-in





Mask Pro provides unprecedented masking capabilities

Welcome to Extensis Mask Pro

Extensis Mask Pro

Extensis Mask Pro™ 1.0 for Macintosh is a powerful Adobe Photoshop plug-in that takes the pain out of creating image masks. Its innovative color matching technology and elegant vector-based clipping paths slash the time it takes to create professional quality masks compared to using tiresome and exacting conventional tools.

How can Mask Pro help me?

Mask Pro makes quick work of cutting an image out of a background. Use Mask Pro to:

- Create high quality prepress-ready images with smooth vector clipping paths for problem free printing.
- Quickly and easily create image cutouts for optimal web designs.
- Gain complete control over the masking process with Keep and Drop color selections, edge softness, brush sizes, unlimited undo and redo, and more.

How can this Quick Start Guide help me?

Use this guide as a quick way to get "up and running." When you're finished, you'll know enough about Mask Pro to cut a simple image out of its background. To learn more about Mask Pro and the other features available, refer to your Mask Pro User Manual and the ReadMe files found in your Mask Pro application folder.

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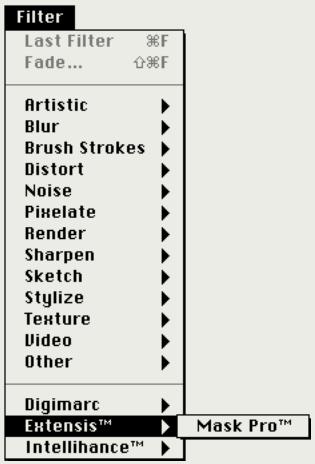
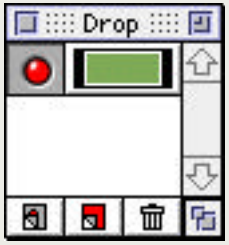




Using Mask Pro

Installing Mask Pro

To install Mask Pro follow these five steps:
1. Insert the Mask Pro CD-ROM into your computer.
2. Double click on the Mask Pro installer icon located in the Mask Pro Folder under one of the Installers Folder.
3. Click the continue button.
4. Select the version of Adobe Photoshop that you want to use with Mask Pro.
5. Exit the installer.

A Mask Pro Folder will also be installed on your hard disk with sample images and a tutorial file. It is strongly recommmended that you use the tutorial in addition to this Quick Start Guide.

Crop Your Image

In this sample water lily image (which can be found in the Mask Pro Folder installed on your hard disk), you want to cut the flowers out of the lily pad background. Start by cropping the image down to the smallest possible area that you think you will want to use. This will make Mask Pro work more effecient as it will not have to address unecessary pixels you don't want anyway.

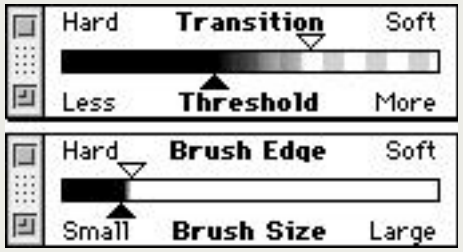
Choose a Target Destination

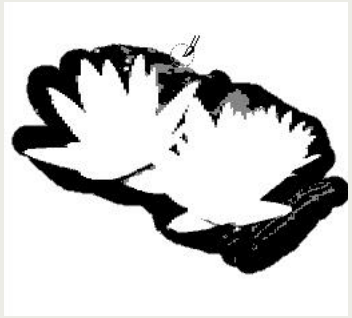
If the image you are working on has a single Background layer in it, double click on the name of the layer and rename it something else. If you don't want to permanently remove the original image pixels, then add a layer mask to the active layer. Access Mask Pro under the Filter: Extensis sub-menu.

Define Keep & Drop Colors

Select the Keep Color tool (press the "I" key) and drag through one of the flower petals to define what you want to keep. Select the Drop Color tool (press the "O" key) and drag through one of the leaves away from the flower petal edge to define what you want to cut out.

USING MASK PRO





USE THE MAGIC BRUSH

Select the Magic Brush tool (press the “M” key). Adjust the Threshold and Transition to a setting similar to that shown in the image to the left. Note that the up and down arrow keys will adjust the threshold. Remember, if the Threshold is set towards the Less setting, less of the original image will be kept, if it is set towards the More setting, less of the original image will be masked. Adjust the Brush Size and Brush Edge to an appropriate setting (the left and right arrow keys will adjust brush size).

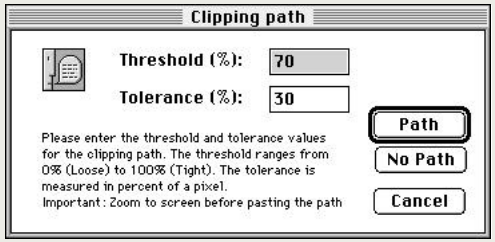
Start working the Magic Brush along the edge of the flower petals. Don’t worry at this point if parts of the flower are being cut out as well. You can always back up as far as you want by continuing to hold down the Command and Z keys. If the flower is being cut, slide the Threshold towards More and paint over that area again. Keep adjusting the Threshold and dragging over the area until you are satisfied with the results.

COMPLETE THE MASK

Switch to the Hole Finder View (by clicking on the right radio button in the lower left corner of the image window) and look for any holes in the black ribbon around the edge of the flowers. If you see any, use the Magic Fill or Brush tool to fill the holes before completing the mask. Switch to the Greyscale View (by clicking on the middle radio button in the lower left corner of the image window), select the Bucket tool (press the “K” key), and fill in the remaining areas of the mask outside the flowers by clicking.

If areas of the mask filled in that were not supposed to, then you have a leak somewhere. Undo the fill (by pressing Command and Z keys), check for leaks again and fix them with the standard brush. Then use the Bucket tool again to finish the mask.

USING MASK PRO



GENERATE A CLIPPING PATH

When you are satisfied with the mask, choose Save /Apply from the File menu and click the Path button. When you return to Photoshop, double-click on the Hand tool to fit the image to the window and paste your path (Command–V). Go to your paths palette, double-click on the words “work path”, and give the path a name.

SAVE

If you are plan on placing this cut out image in a page layout program, then use the Save a Copy command from the File menu. Choose an appropriate file format that supports clipping paths, such as EPS or TIFF, and save your file.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION

LEARN MORE ABOUT MASK PRO

This Quick Start Guide presents a number of features avaialable in Mask Pro, however the information is necessarily limited. But more information is available both on the features demonstrated here, and on many helpful features and options that went unmentioned. We invite you to take advantage of the following additional information covering Extensis Mask Pro:

- Extensis Mask Pro User's Manual
- ReadMe—a text file located in your Mask Pro application folder with late-breaking information
- The Mask Pro web page located at http://www.extensis.com/products/Mask Pro/

OTHER TIME-SAVING PRODUCTS FROM EXTENSIS

In addition to Mask Pro, Extensis offers a variety of application-specific products that extend the capabilities of many popular graphics and layout applications such as QuarkXPress, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe PageMaker, and Macromedia FreeHand. Extensis products enable advertising and design professionals, production artists, and desktop publishers, as well as multimedia developers, graphic, game, and world wide web designers, digital image professionals, and photographers to maximize their investment in their graphics application software.

A brochure (in Adobe Acrobat® PDF format) for each Extensis product is located in the "Brochures" folder on the Extensis CD. To view a product brochure simply double-click on the icon, this will launch Adobe Acrobat and open the brochure.

Note: You must have the Adobe Acrobat Reader installed to view the product brochures. If Acrobat has not been previously installed, use the "Install Adobe Acrobat Reader 3.0" program located in the "3rd Party Products" folder on the Extensis CD.