



# Intro to Photoshop

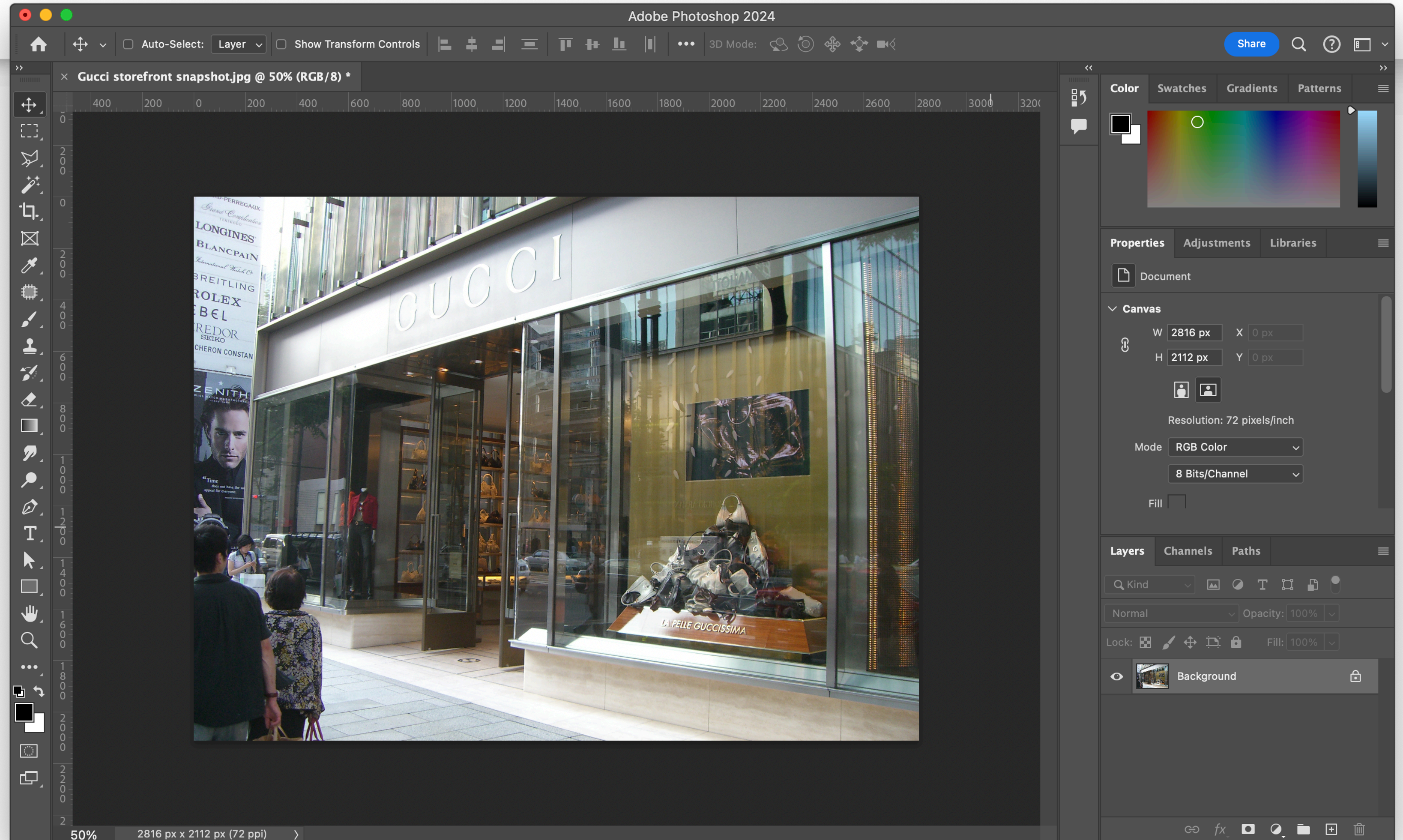
---

The industry-standard image editor:  
a quick tour of Photoshop's interface and features



# Photoshop's interface: overview

Surrounding the main image area are the *Tools bar* down the left, some *panels* on the right, and the *Options bar* along the top.





# The tools (on the left):

Photoshop has many, many tools, but don't worry: you can ignore most of them and just concentrate on the ones picked out here:



*Move* (drag a layer around in your canvas)

Selection tools:

*Marquee* (select rectangular areas)

*Lasso* (draw your own selections)

*Magic Wand* (select colours and shades)

*Eyedropper* (sample colours in the image)

*Brush* (paint the image)

*Clone Stamp* (paint part of the image into another part)

*Hand* (grab and move the whole canvas around)

*Zoom* (click to zoom in, alt-click to zoom out)

*Foreground and background colours* (used by the brush tool)

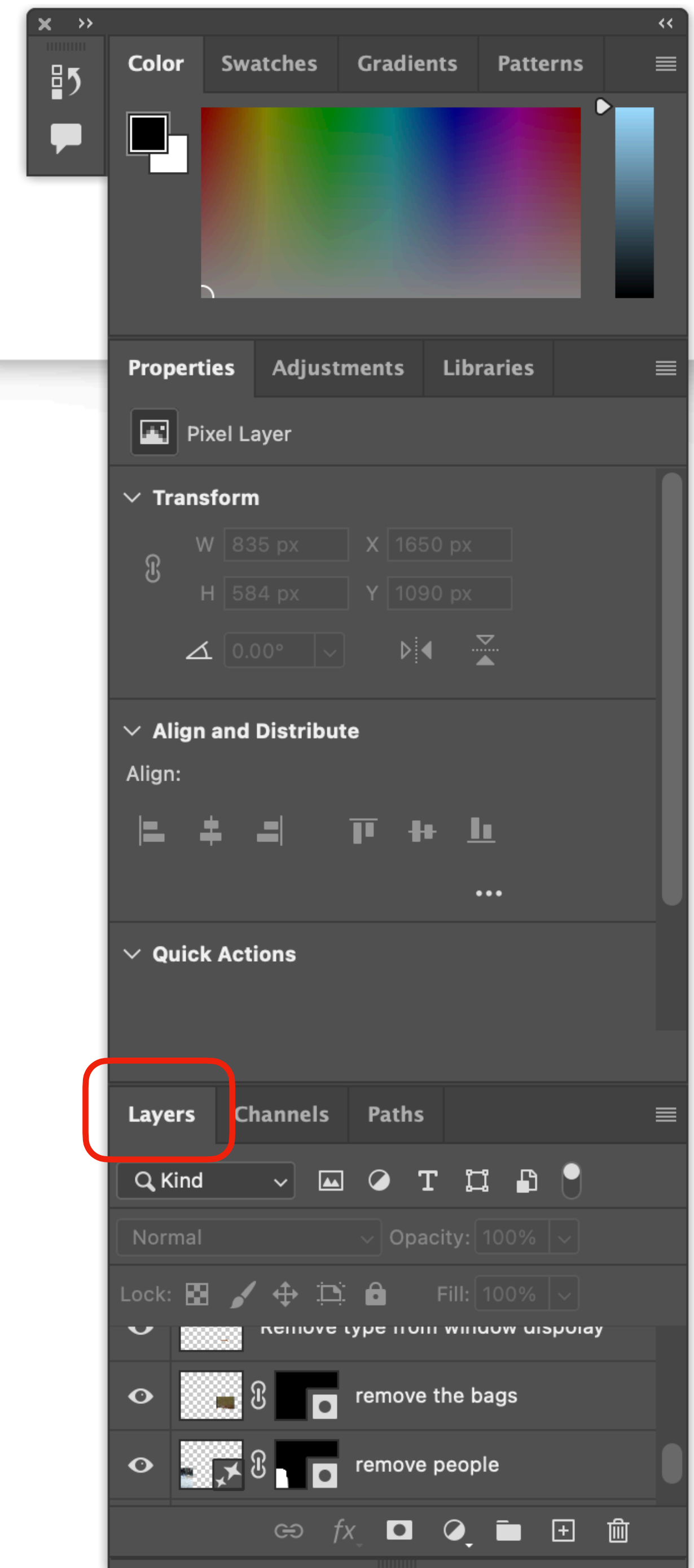
## The panels (on the right):

Photoshop also has many different panels for doing different things, but for now just remember the Layers panel.

This can be made taller by dragging the line between it and the panel above. Do this to see more layers at once.

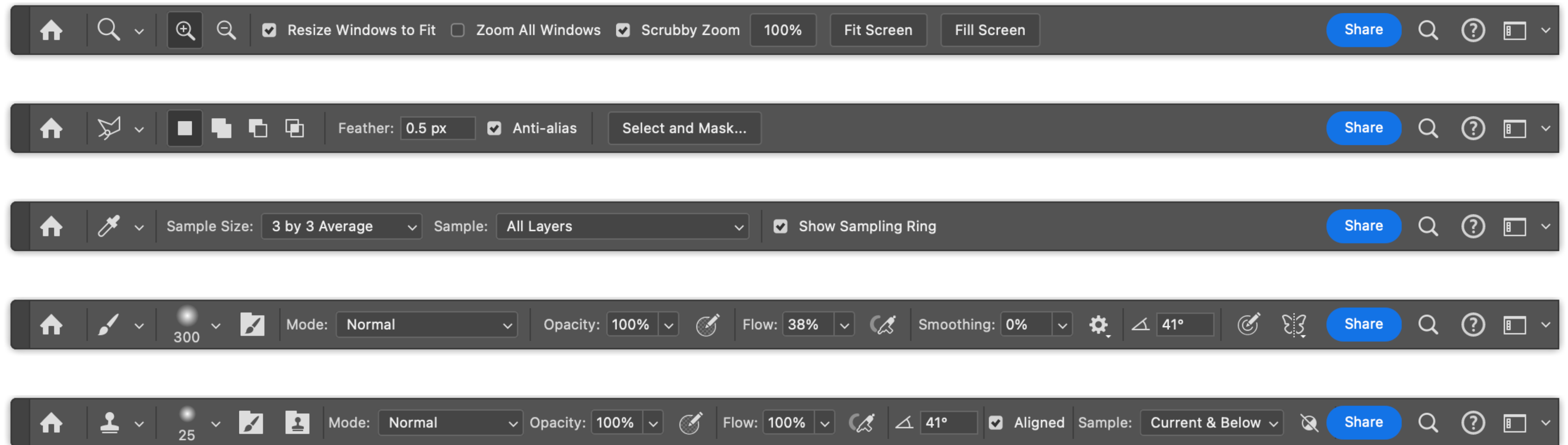
You can drag panels you don't want out of this set and close them, which can give you more space for the ones you need.

Reset these changes by choosing *Window > Workspace* from the menubar and the 'reset' option.



# The Options bar (at the top):

This changes depending on what tool you're using, so check it out as you work. It lets you adjust how a tool works, for example brush size and strength.



# Key Photoshop feature: layers

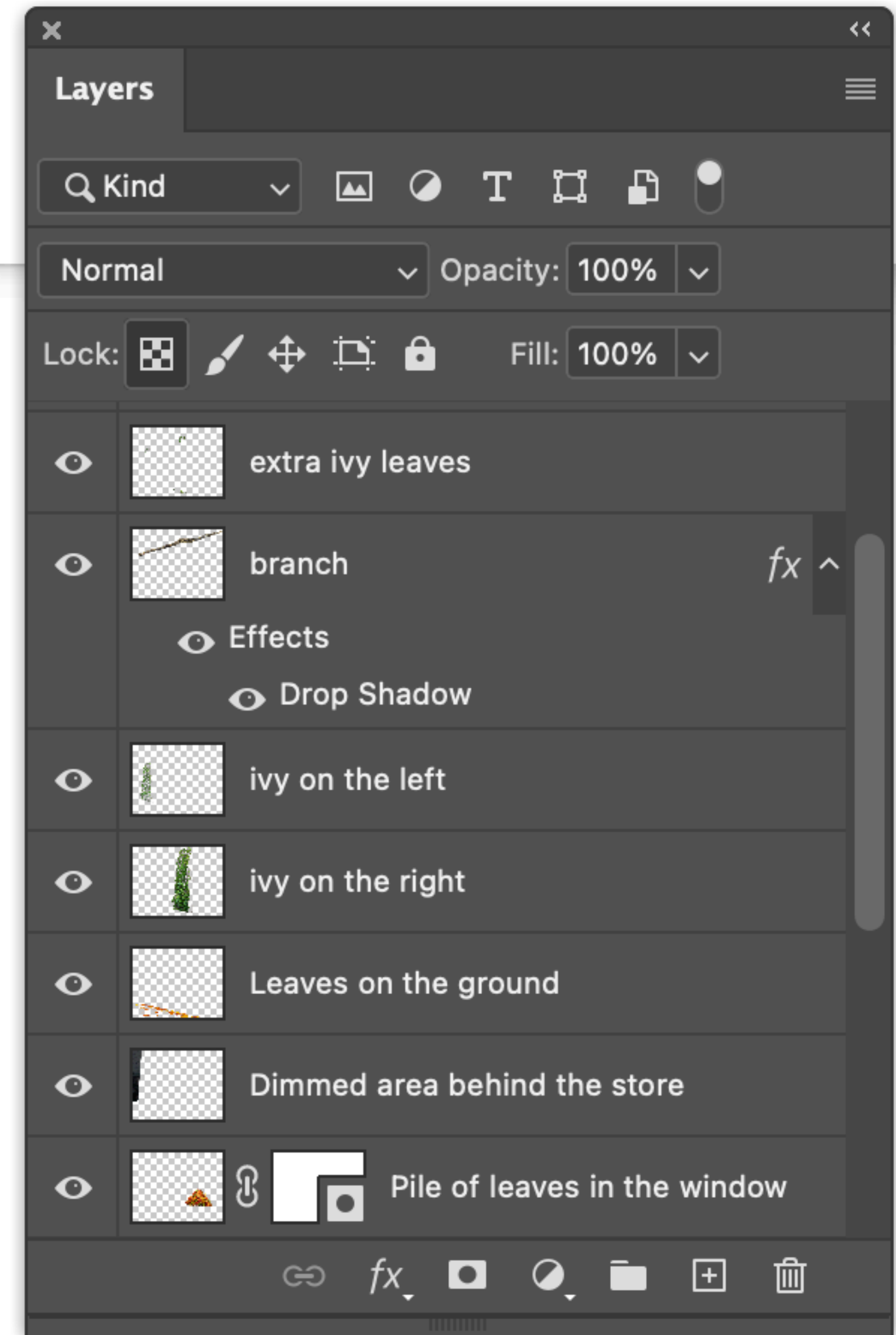
Using Layers is the best way to work in Photoshop. Copy-paste an image into another and it appears as a new layer ready to scale and drag around the document 'canvas.'

Use the 'eye' icons to hide/show layers. Change their opacity and 'blending mode' with the controls at the top of the panel.

You can change their layering order by dragging layers up or down. Double-click a name to edit the title.

Effects can be added to layers for easy drop shadows, glows, and other tricks. See *Layer > Layer Style* in the menus.

Sometimes it's useful to duplicate a layer to keep a 'safety' copy before you start editing: drag it onto the + icon at the bottom.





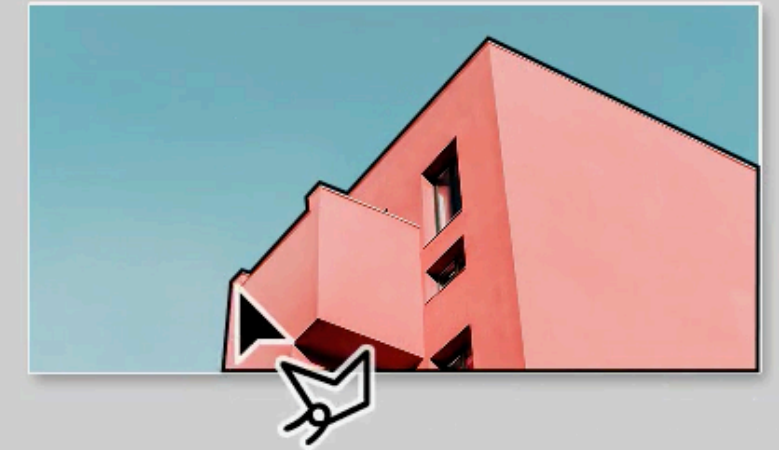
# Key skill: making selections

The Lasso tool is very simple: just press and drag to draw your selection. But it's REALLY clunky! Use the Polygon Lasso tool instead: press down on the tool icon and pick that from the three options. Click-click-click around a shape to select it.

Shift-click and use selection tools to add more to an existing selection, or alt-click to carve away at an existing selection.

The Magic Wand tool selects areas of colour and tone that you click on. If 'Contiguous' is NOT checked in the Options bar it selects these across the whole image, otherwise it only selects the 'connected' areas.

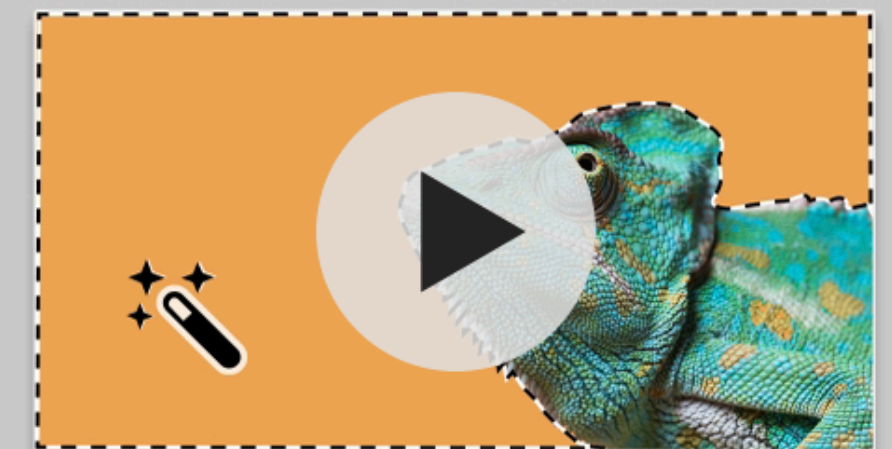
(Hover over a tool in the Tools bar and you can see these helpful examples and video clips.)



**Polygonal Lasso tool** L

Make selections by connecting straight lines

[Learn more](#)



**Magic Wand tool** W

Select an area based on its color.  
[Learn more](#)

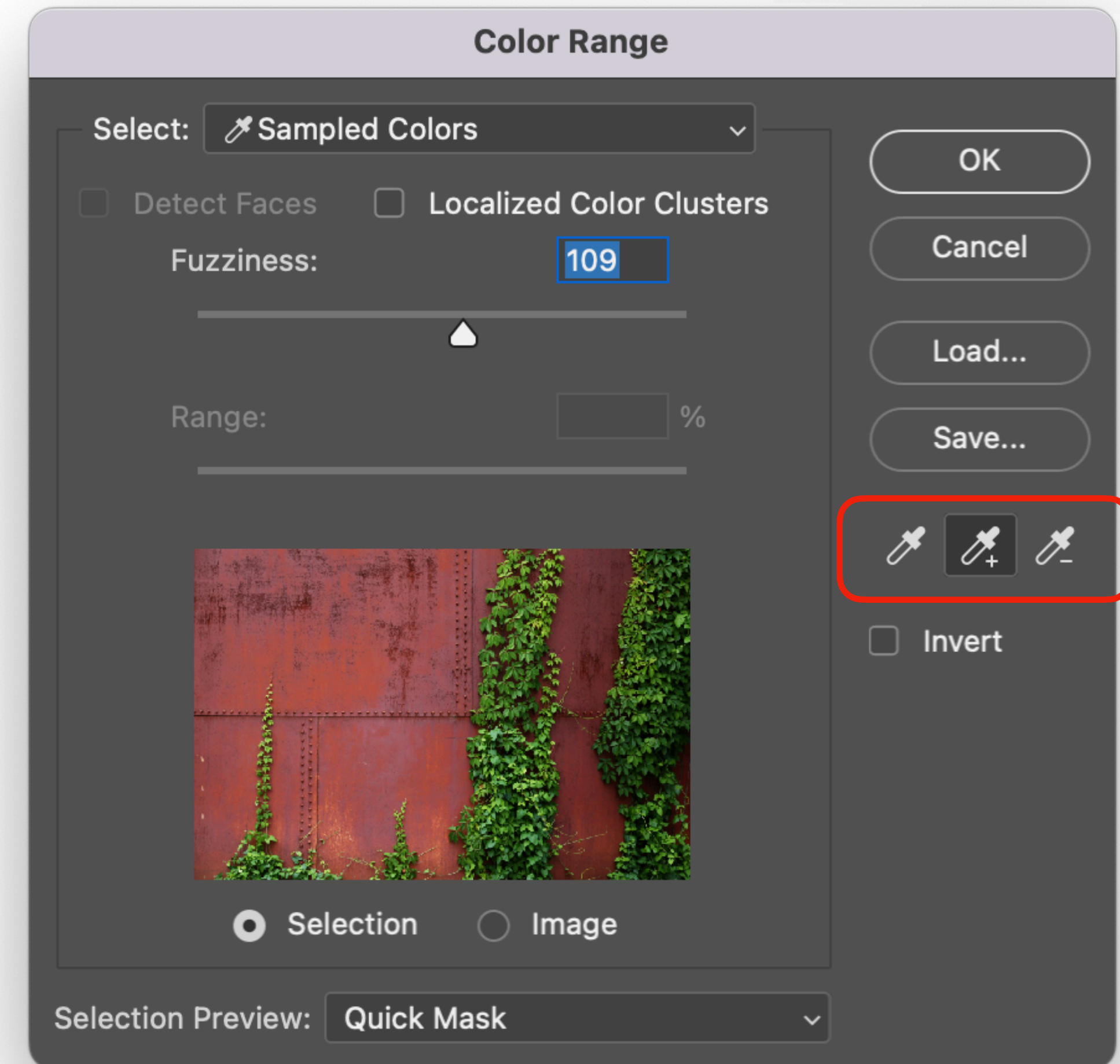
[Watch quick video](#)

# Key skill: making selections (continued)

Photoshop can make selections for you based on colours in the image, which can help when you're facing hours of click-click-clicking with the Lasso tool. Choose *Select > Color Range*, then then click on colour in the image – all other colours are masked out.

To add more colours to this, choose the eyedropper sample tool with the 'plus' icon and click on areas of green that weren't included. Try the Fuzziness slider too.

Click OK to make your selection. Copy this to paste somewhere, or try choosing *Layer > New > Layer Via Copy* to make a new layer with this selection.

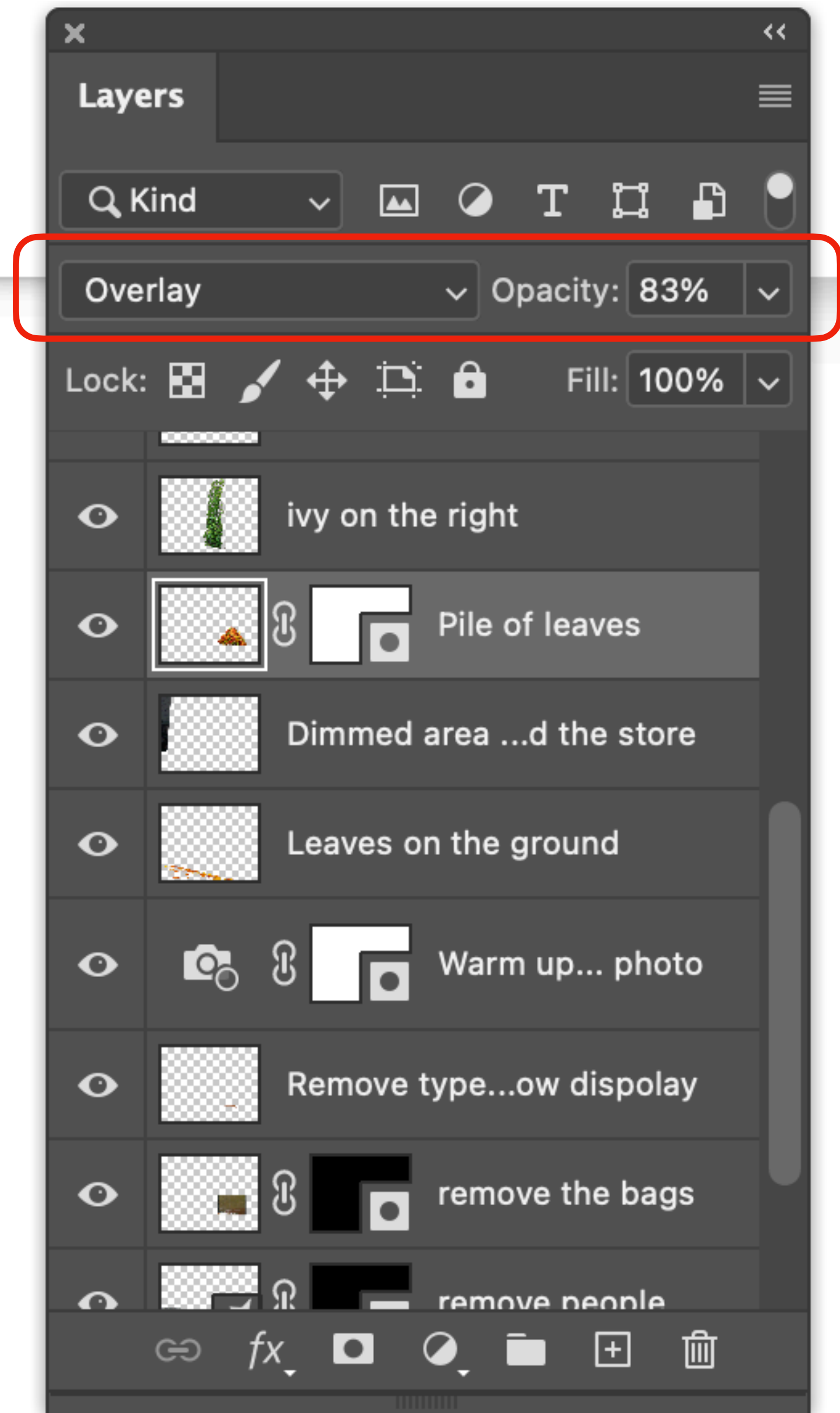




# Key skill: layer opacity and blending modes

Change a layer's opacity to let what's underneath show through. In the Layers panel, click the v button beside the opacity percentage box and drag the slider back and forth.

Blending modes let other layers show through in many different ways. The default is Normal; try changing a layer's mode to Lighter or Darker to show only the brighter or darker areas. Try out different modes by stepping through the blending mode popup menu. Some of the modes are more freaky than useful, but the effect depends a lot on the colours in your image so try them out.

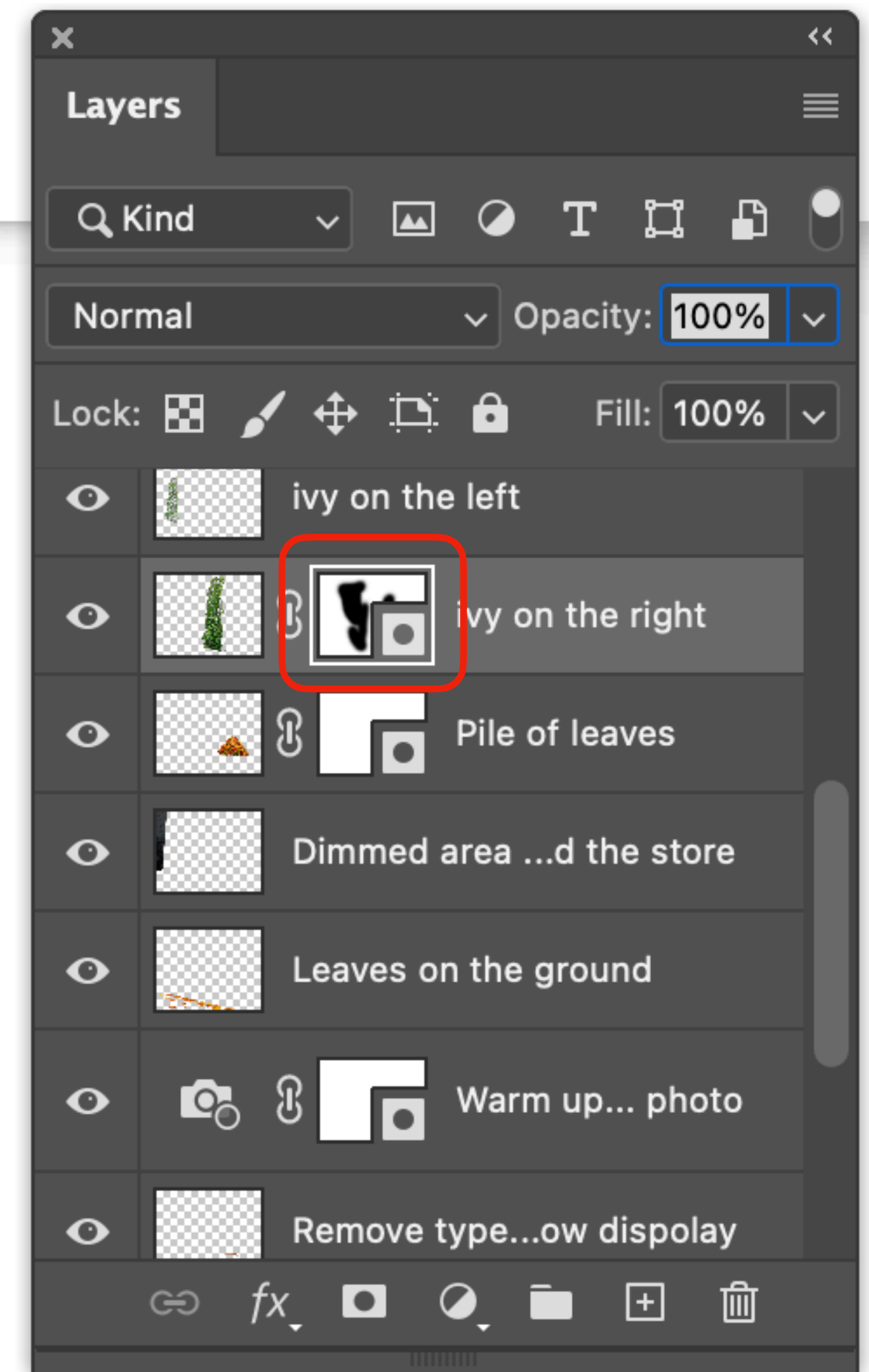


# Key skill: layer masks

Erasing parts of a layer allow areas below to show through, but that is a destructive process. Layer masks are a great way around this: use a layer mask to hide parts of a layer by painting black into the mask, and reveal areas again by painting white into the mask.

Select a layer, then choose Layer > Layer Mask > Reveal All to add a mask that doesn't hide anything. Note the new box in that layer in the Layers panel: when that box is clicked, use the Brush tool to paint black or white wherever you want to hide or reveal parts of that layer.

Switch between black and white with the curved arrows by the foreground/background colour blocks in the Tools bar:



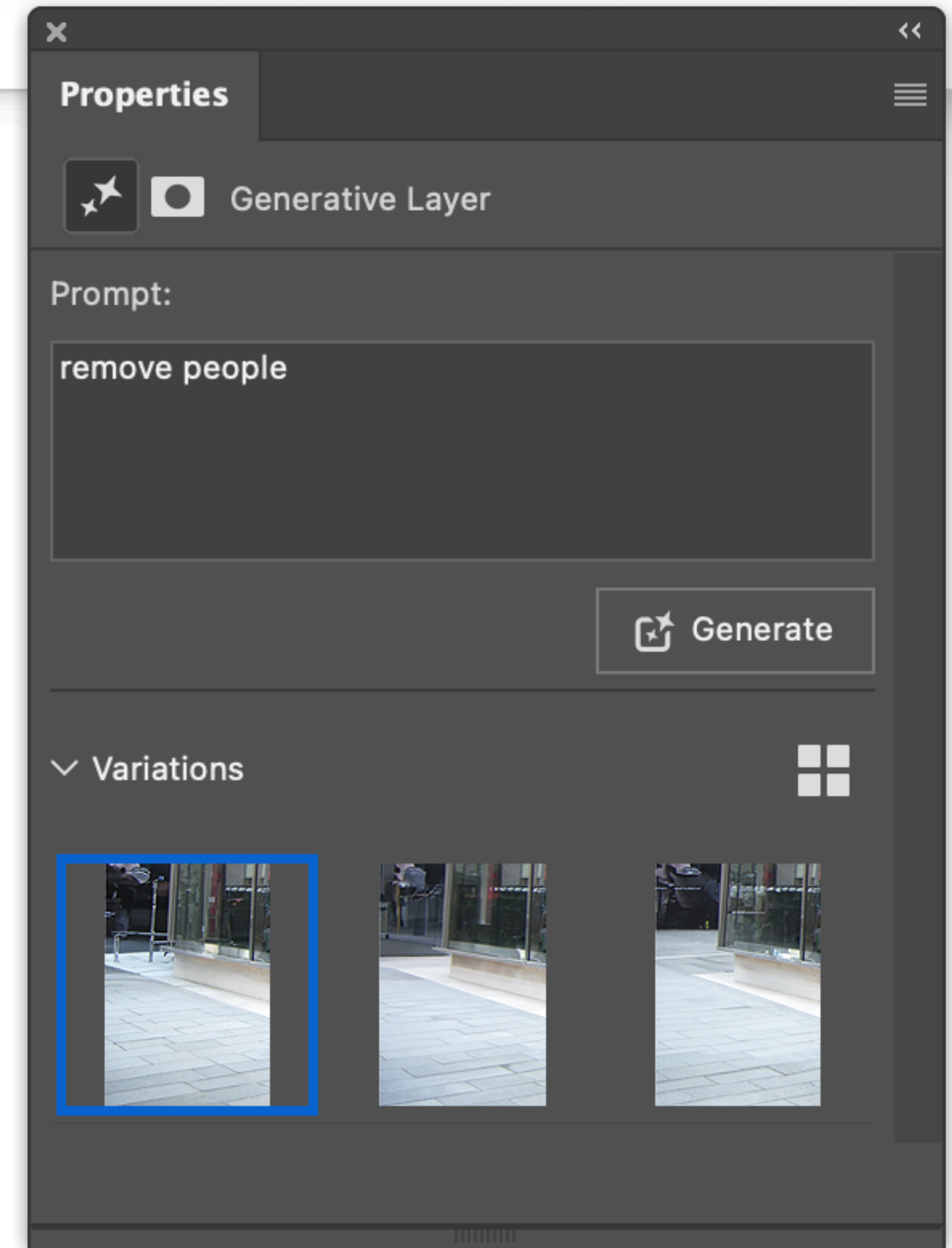


# New Photoshop feature: Generative Fill



The newest versions of Photoshop can use AI to generate images based on your selections, optionally with text 'prompts' to guide it. This can sometimes be incredibly useful, sometimes incredibly silly.

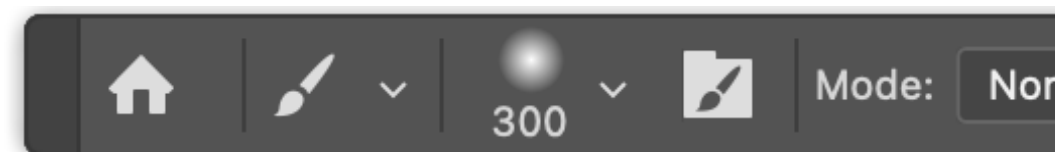
The Contextual Task Bar (*Window > Contextual Task Bar*) shows this option when there is a selection. Try it, see how the results look, but remember it's a bit 'hands free' so it won't always do what you want!



# Simple exercise: colourise part of an image

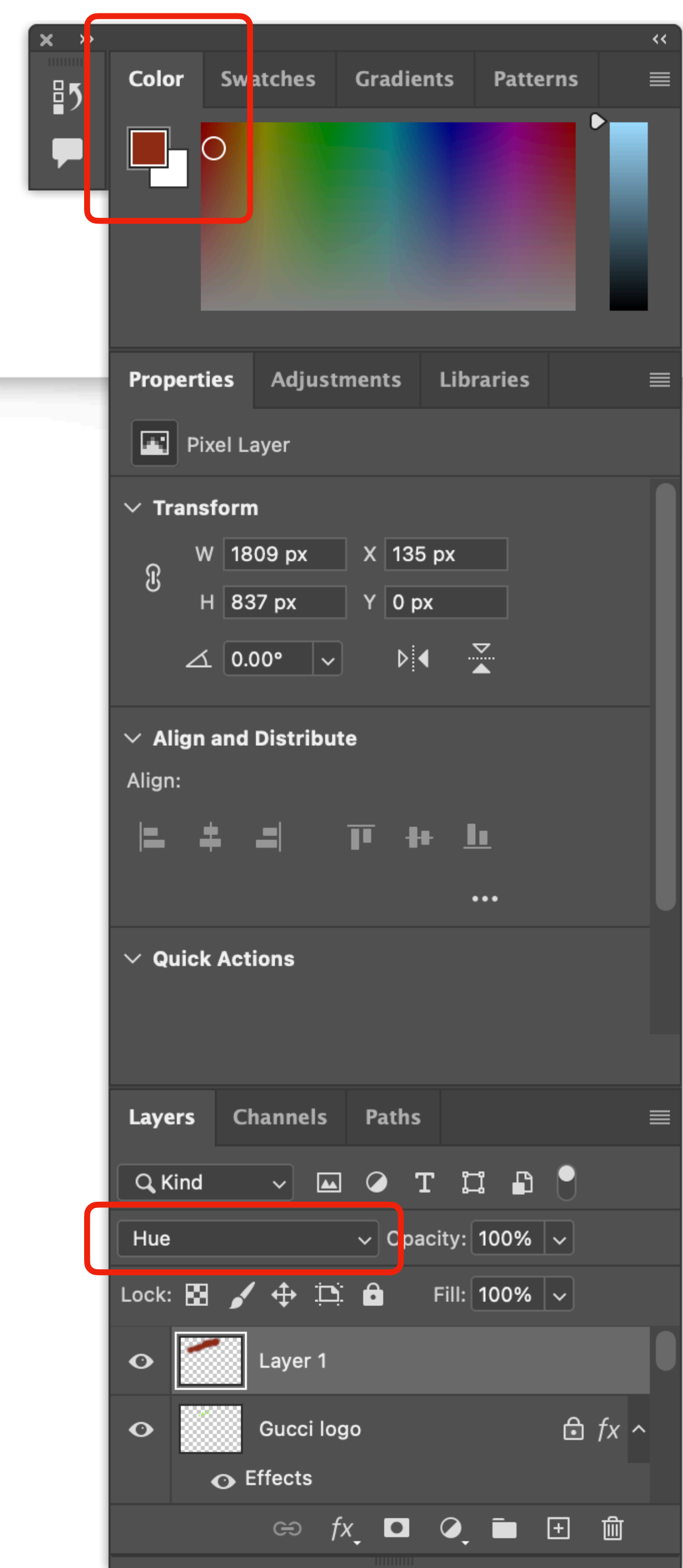
Open an image, then make a new layer: click the + icon in the Layers panel or choose New Layer from the panel's popup menu.

Choose the Brush tool, then in the Options bar click the 'brush preset' icon and make the size around 300 pixels and make sure the hardness is 0% so it's a very soft brush:



Pick a colour from the Color panel on the right and paint into this layer. It will cover your image, but don't worry, it's a separate layer.

Change the layer's blending mode to Hue, and the image will be recoloured. Paint more into this layer. Try different colours, and use the Eraser tool to remove anything not wanted.





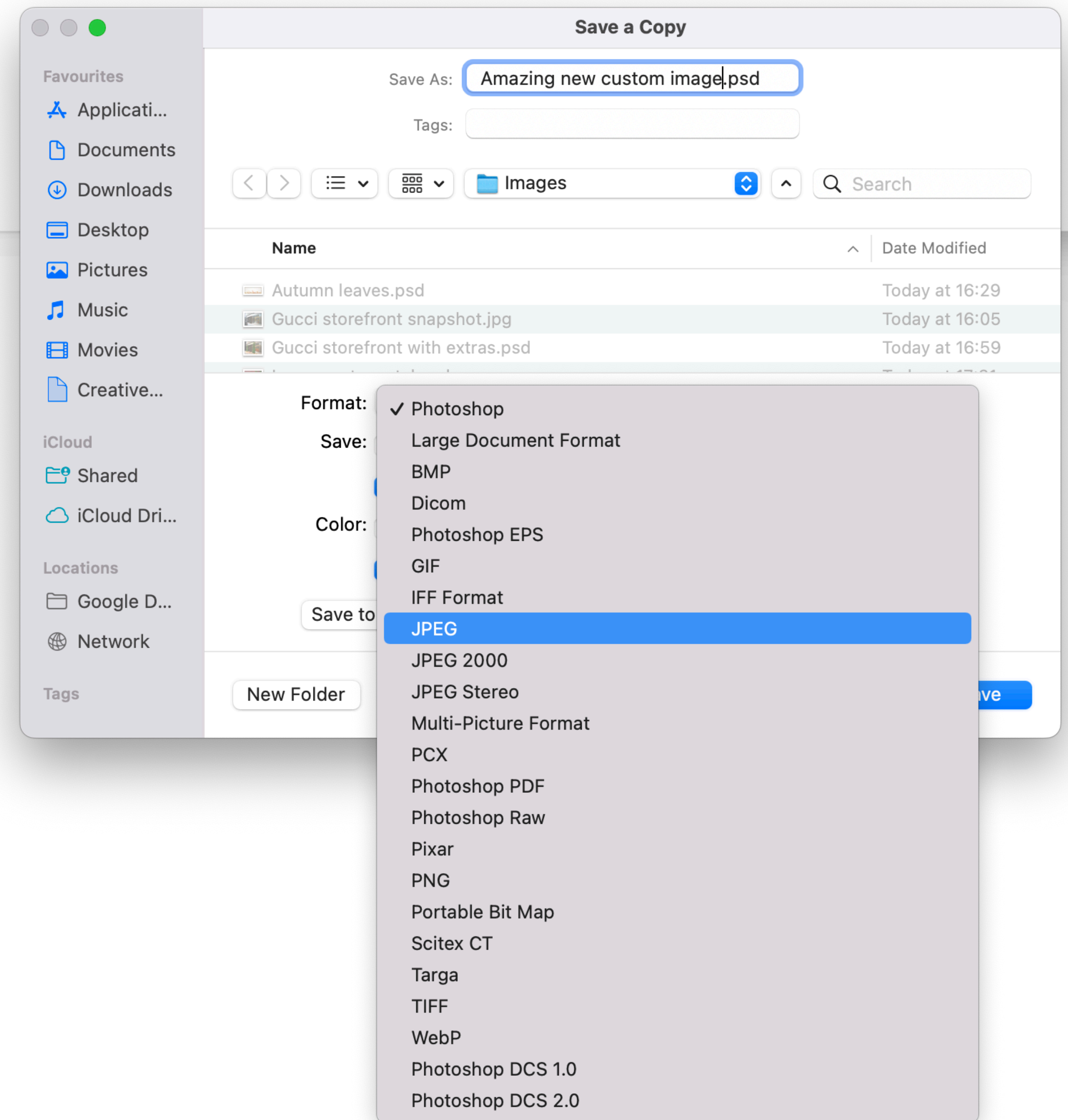
# Saving your work

Save your work regularly in case of problems.

Saving as a native Photoshop document (.psd) is best, as other formats will flatten your layers and mess up editing later.

If this is to go into an InDesign layout that's all you need to do. Give it a good name (be descriptive so you'll remember it later on) and save it somewhere logical.

However, if you want to post this online it needs to be a JPEG file: choose *File > Save a Copy*, and choose JPEG from the list of formats.



Hands-on demo time...

---

