

Masking in Lightroom Classic

Dallas Camera Club/Plano Photography Club

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What is Masking in Lightroom?

- Masking tools let you apply an adjustment to one specific area of a photo, rather than the entire image.
- Emphasize or deemphasize a region or object.
- Bring tonal balance to images.
- Note: I use mask, selection, overlay, layer interchangeably.

What Adjustments are Possible?

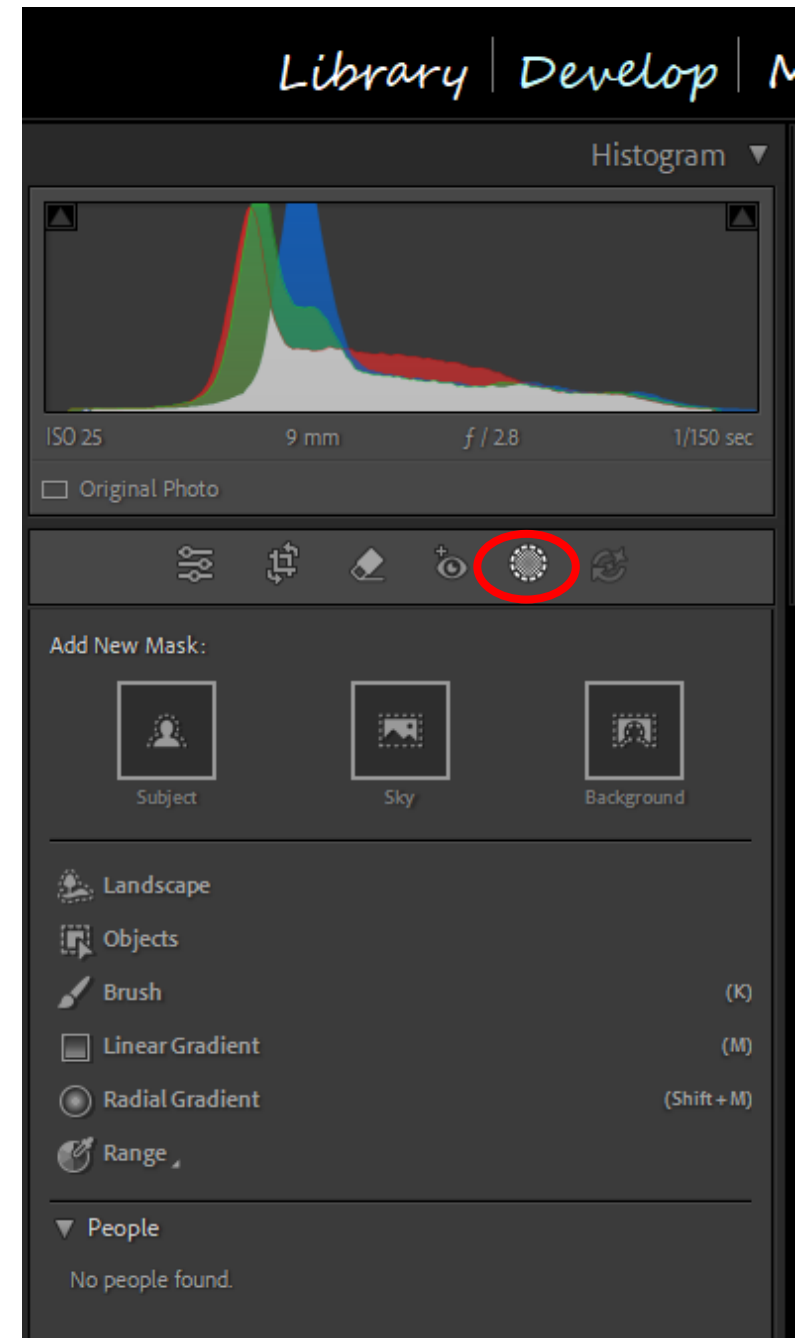
- Tone (Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Whites, Blacks)
- Color (Temperature, Tint, Hue, Saturation)
- Point Color
- Curve
- Effects (Texture, Clarity, Dehaze)
- Grain
- Detail (Sharpness, Noise Reduction, Moirè, Defringe)

What Selection Tools Are Available

- Subject
- Sky
- Background
- Landscape
- Objects
- Linear Gradient
- Radial Gradient
- Range: Color
- Range: Luminance
- People

Getting Started

- In the Develop Module, Click the Masking Tool 
- Choose a tool, e.g. Subject.





Masks

Create New Mask

Mask 1

Subject 1

Add Subtract

Show Overlay

Histogram

L 42.9 A 3.3 B 12.9

Original Photo

Select Subject

Mask 1

Preset: Custom

Amount 100

Reset Sliders Automatically

Tone

Exposure 0.00

Contrast 0

Highlights 0

Shadows 0

Whites 0

Blacks 0

Color

Point Color

Curve

Effects

Texture 0

Clarity 0

Dehaze 0

Grain

Amount 0

Size 25

Roughness 50

Size and Roughness are global settings and shared across all Grain tools

Detail

Sharpness 0

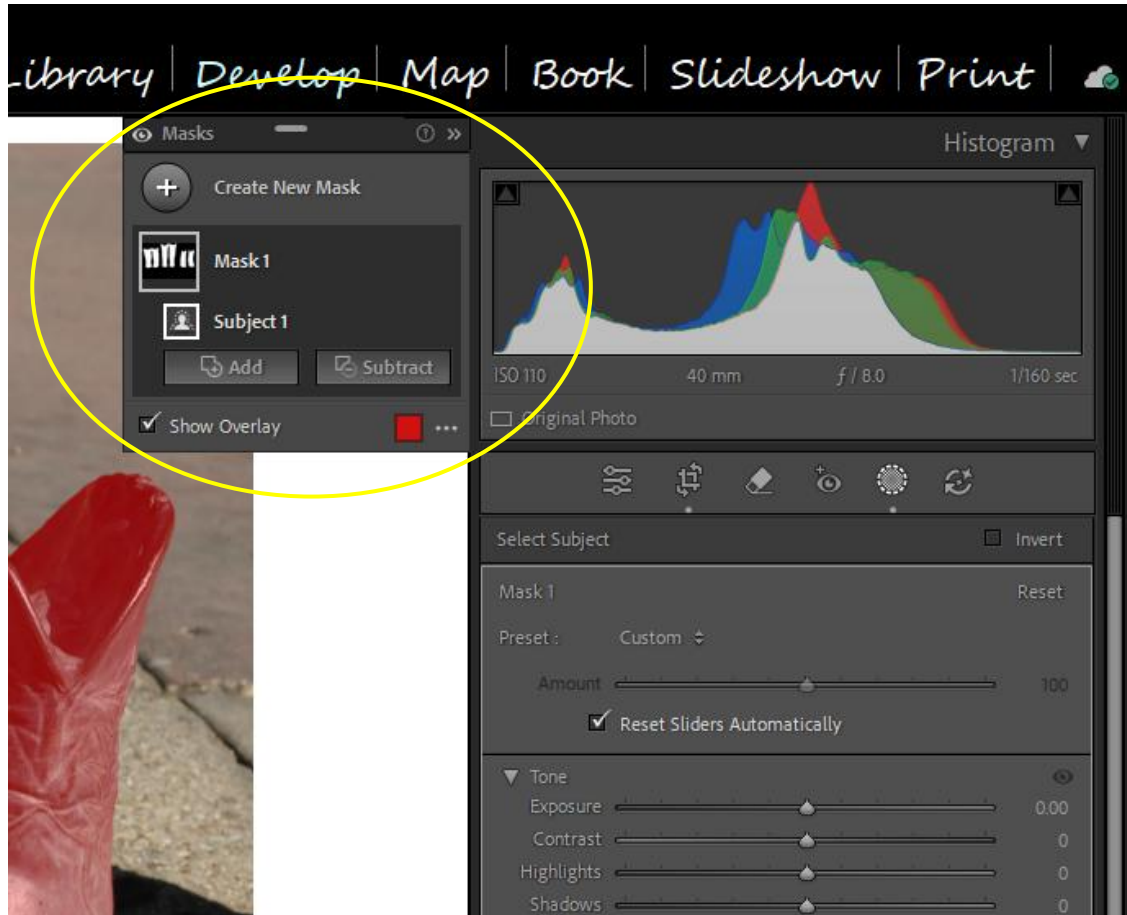
Noise Red. 0

Moiré 0

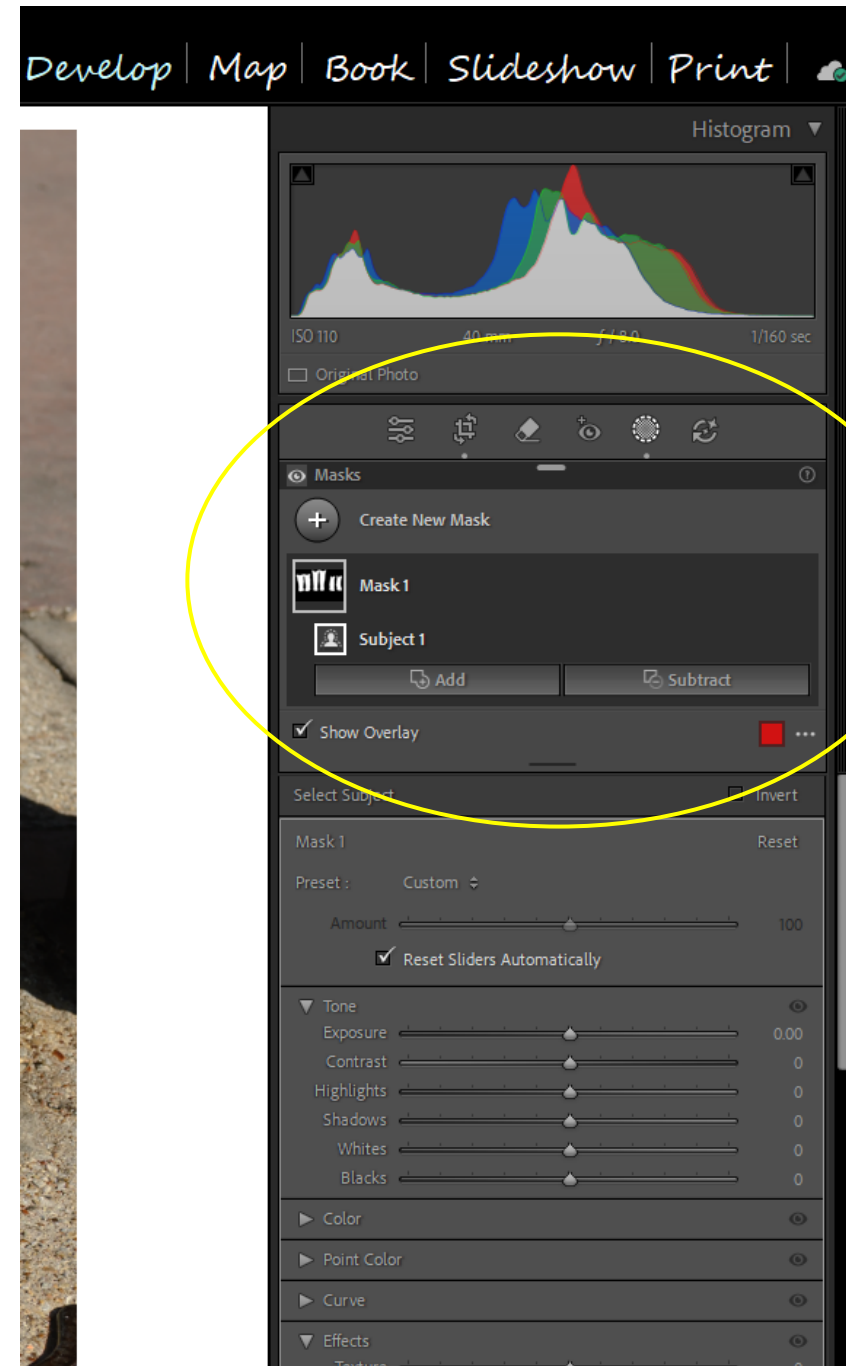
Defringe 0

Delete All Masks Close

Choose a Position for the Masking Panel

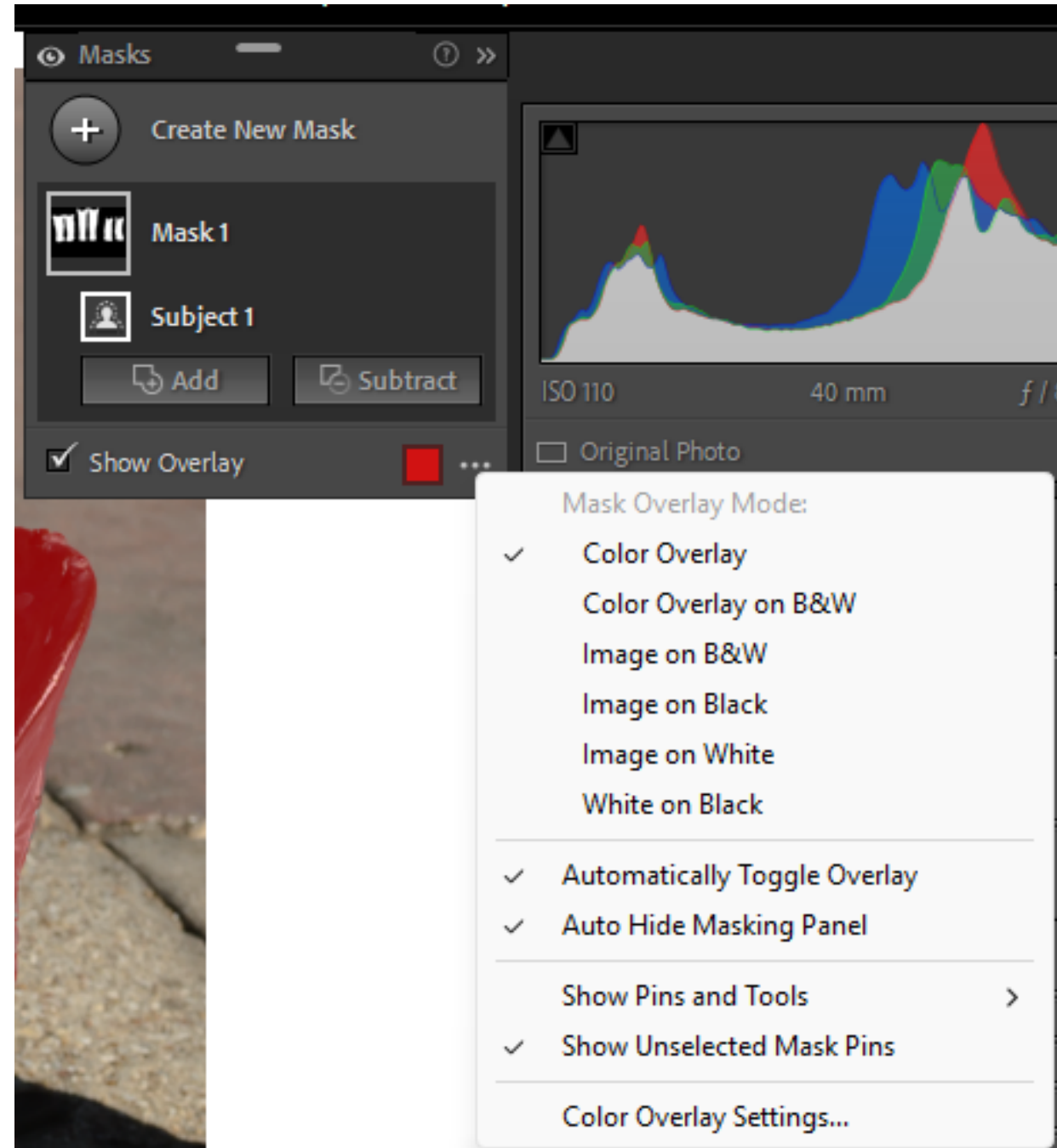


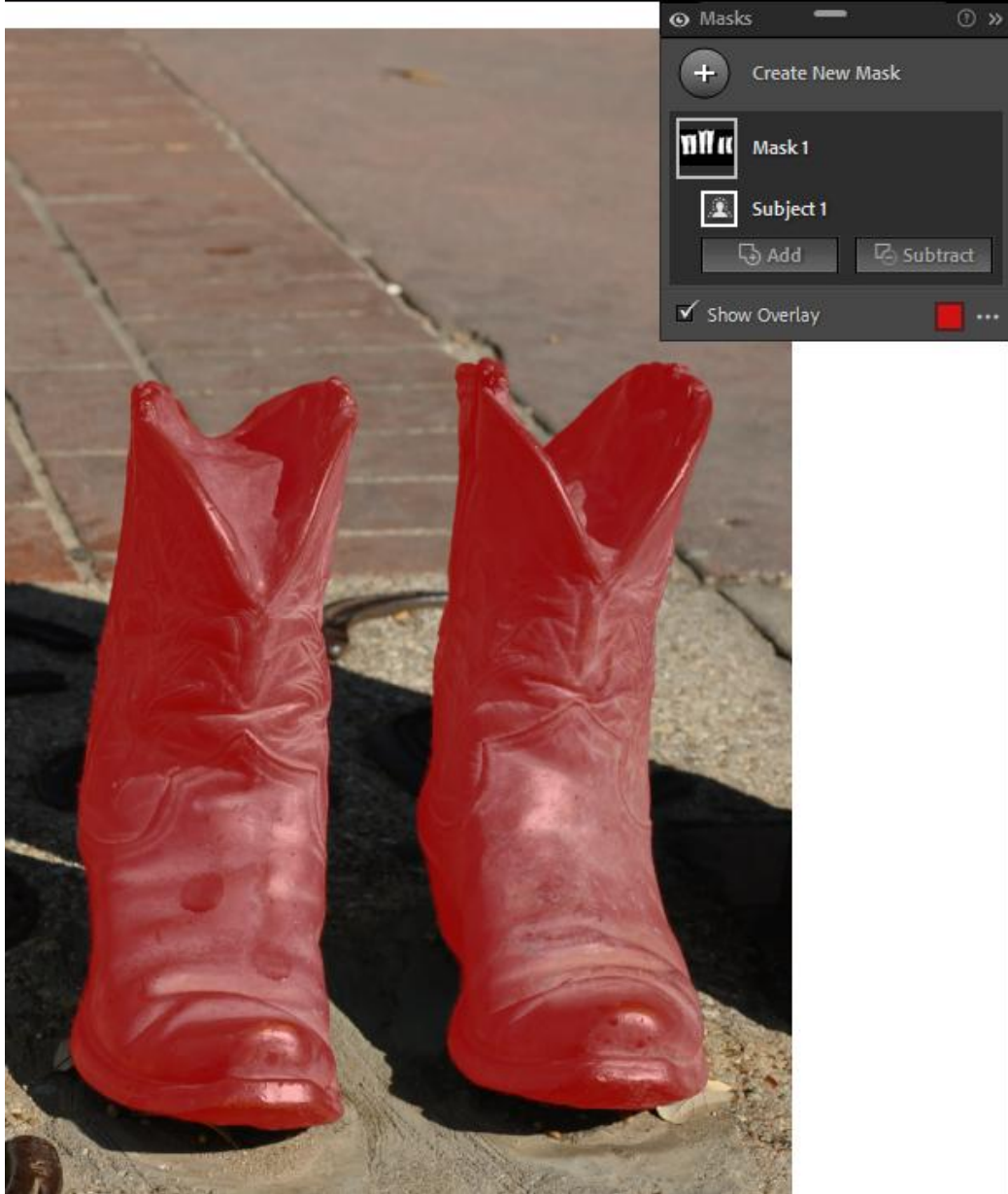
My Preference



Choose Mask Overlay

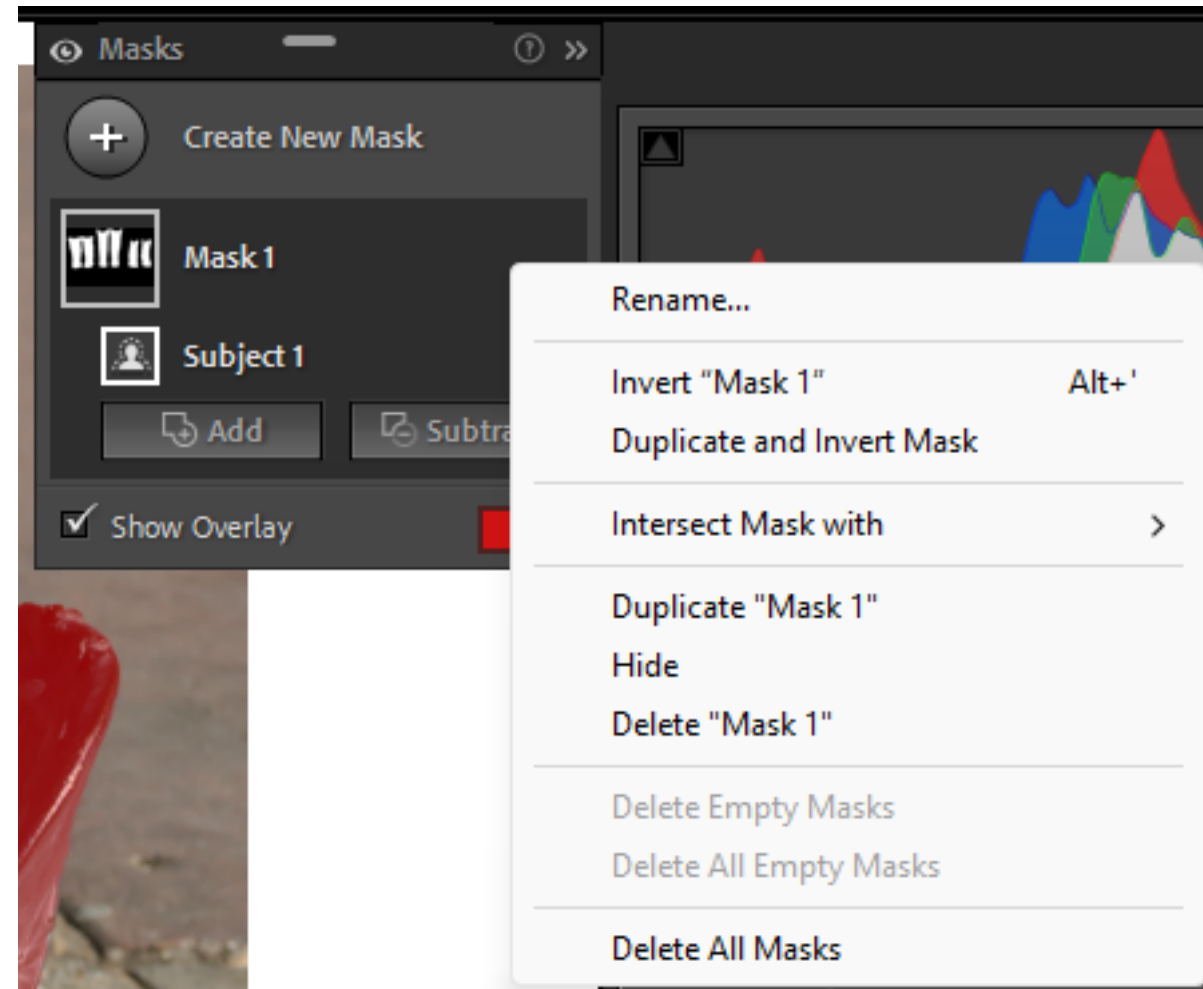
- Default Red Color Overlay is my preference most of the time.
- Sometime White on Black is Useful.
- Type “O” or “o” to turn overlay on and off
- You can change the color with “Color Overlay Settings”





Modifying a Basic Mask

- A basic mask, such as subject, can be modified by adding or subtracting other masks. This gives a great deal of flexibility in creating exactly the mask you want.
- Additional functions are possible.
 - Rename
 - Invert (panel or check box)
 - Duplicate and invert.
 - Duplicate
 - Delete
 - Intersect: allow you to combine two or more masks so that only the overlapping areas are affected, enabling precise and selective adjustments.



Subject

- Identifies the subject and selects it.
- This function was recently updated and yields excellent results.
- Always check the selection carefully and make editions if needed.

Old Select Subject



New Select Subject
Two minor errors



Select Sky

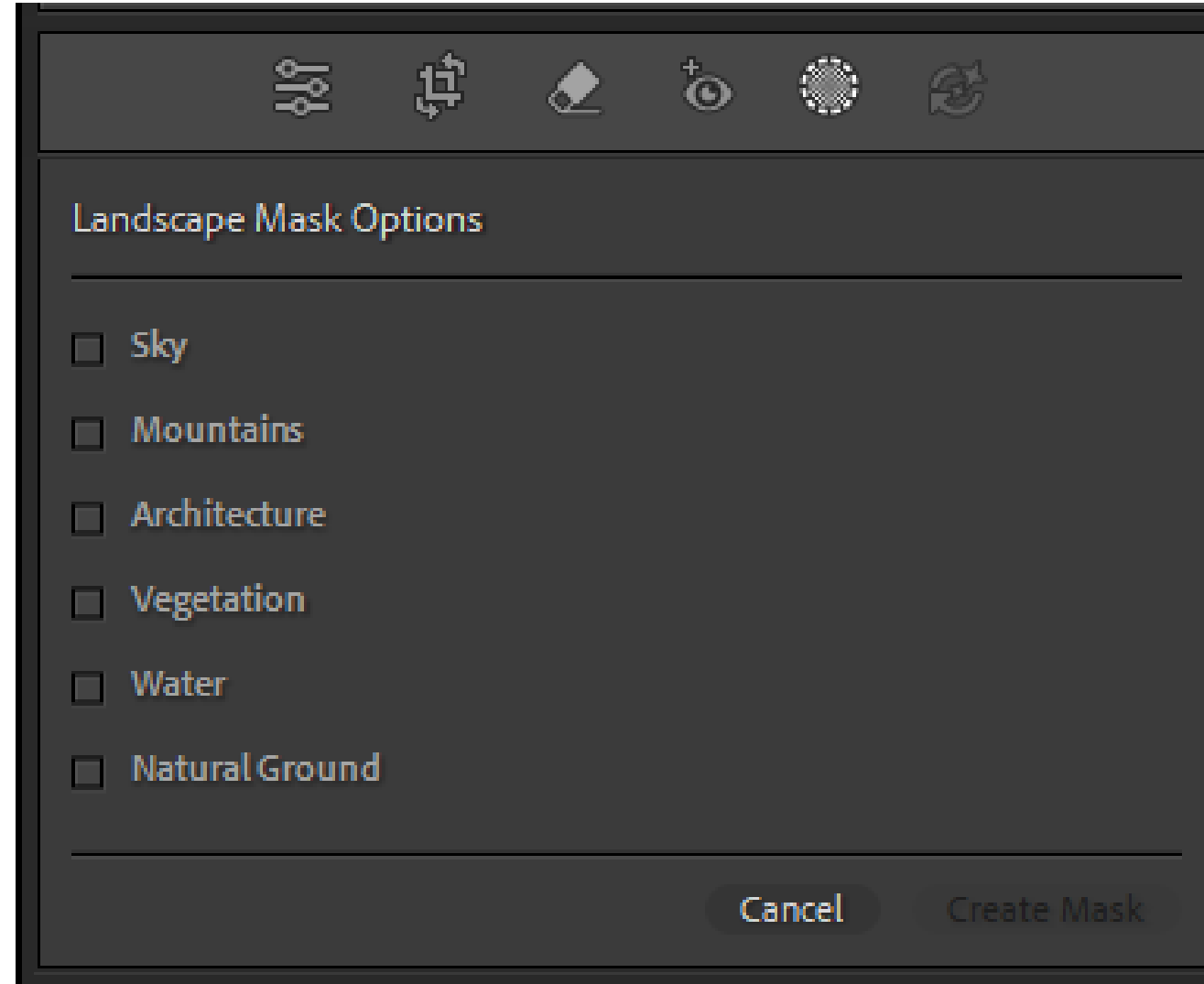
- Select sky will select the sky.
- By design, the selection overlaps with, say the ground, to avoid harsh lines. In most cases this is OK.
- If the sky overlaps in a way that causes issues, try these remedies.
 - Intersect the mask with the sky again.
 - Intersect with the sky color if it is fairly uniform.
 - Subtract an object like this tower.

Select Background

- Distinguishes the background and selects it.
- I have not had good luck and don't use it.
- Selecting the subject and then “duplicate and invert” gives whatever is not the subject.

Landscape

- Identifies regions of the landscape and allows you to create a mask for select features.
- The selections often have issues but are good starting points.
- Refine selected features for best results.

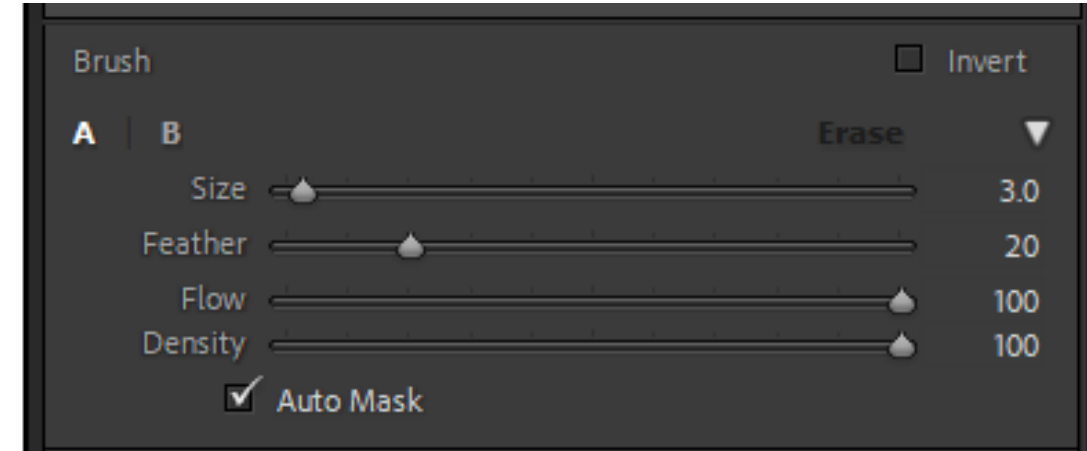


Objects

- Allows you to roughly identify an object with
 - Rectangle
 - Brush
- No need to be precise. The algorithms do a good job of identifying an object within the area you specify.
- It sometimes works better than select subject.

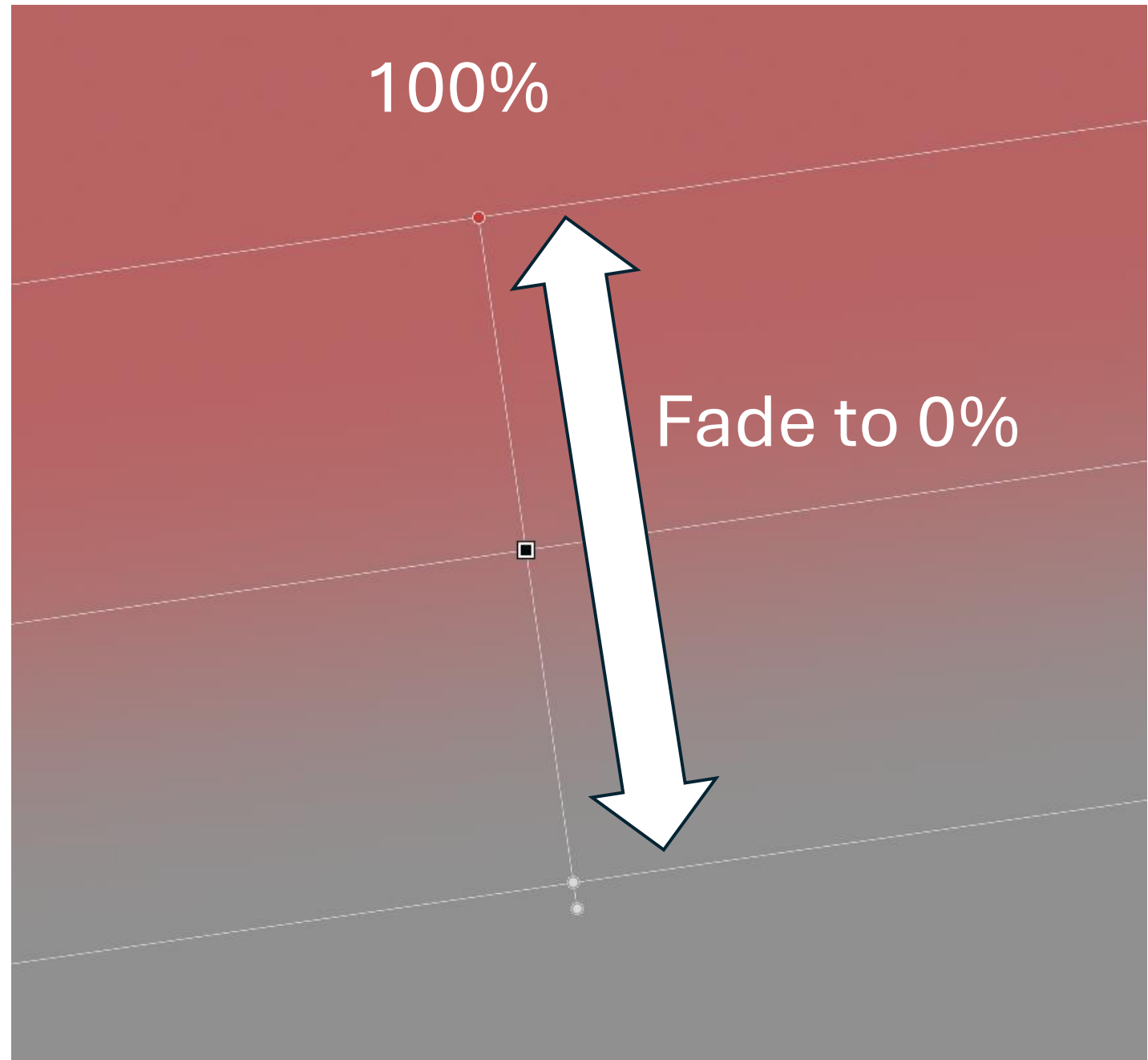
Brush (shortcut “K” or “k”)

- Size: also “[” and “]” and Scroll Wheel
- Feather: Amount of blending. Rarely want no feather. Also SHIFT “[” and “]” and Shift – Scroll Wheel
- Flow: controls the rate at which the brush applies the effect. A lower Flow value means the effect is applied gradually, allowing you to build up the adjustment over multiple strokes
- Density: determines the maximum strength or opacity of your brush effect. Think of it as a ceiling: no matter how many times you paint over the same area, the effect will never exceed the Density value you set.
- Auto Mask: helps you make precise adjustments by constraining edits to specific areas based on color and tone similarity, allowing for more controlled and effective photo editing



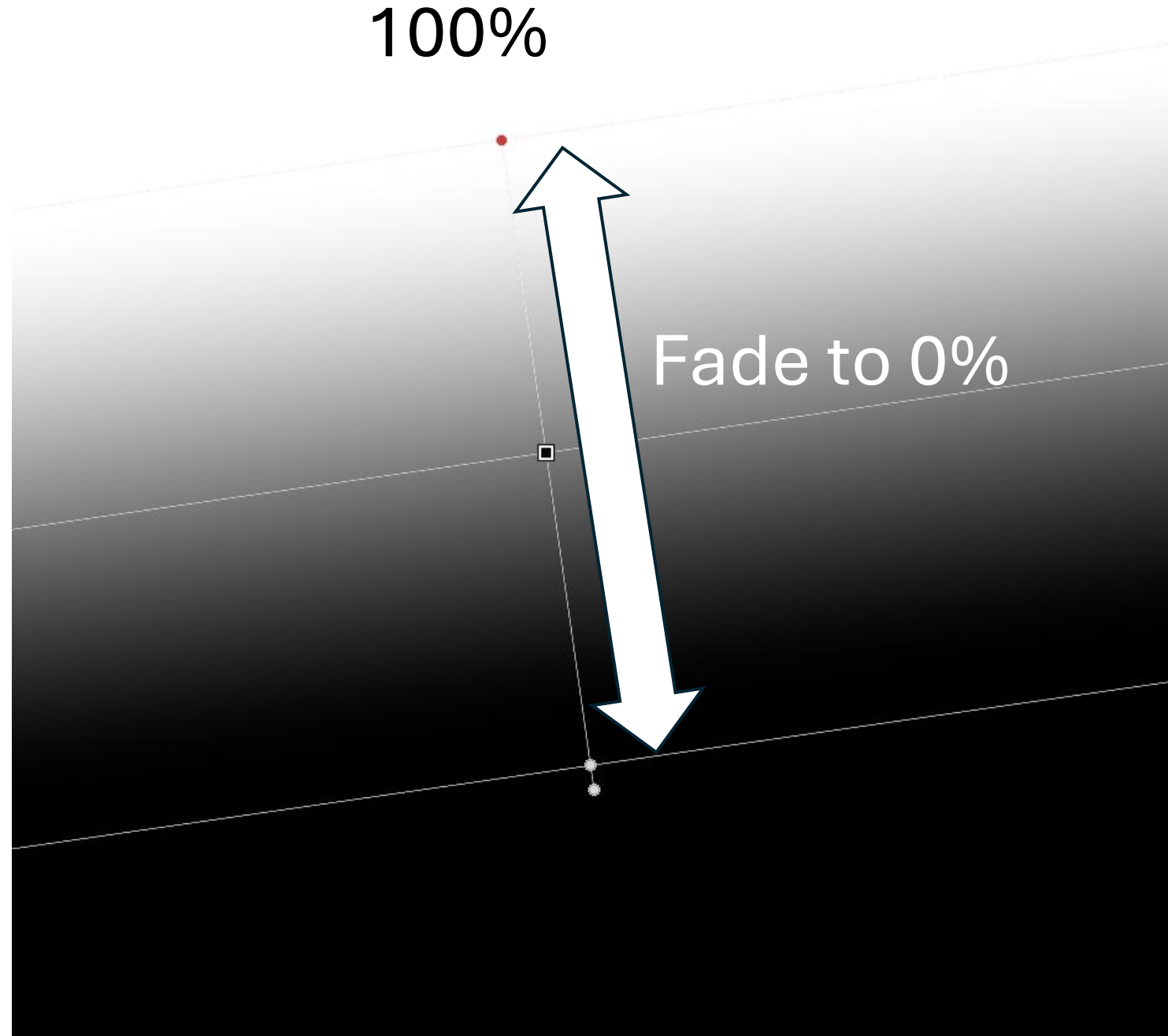
Linear Gradient (shortcut “M” or “m”)

- Click and drag in the direction from full adjustment to fade out.
- In this case top to bottom.
- Can rotate and tweak sizes.
- Hold down shift key while dragging to get perfectly vertical or horizontal edges.



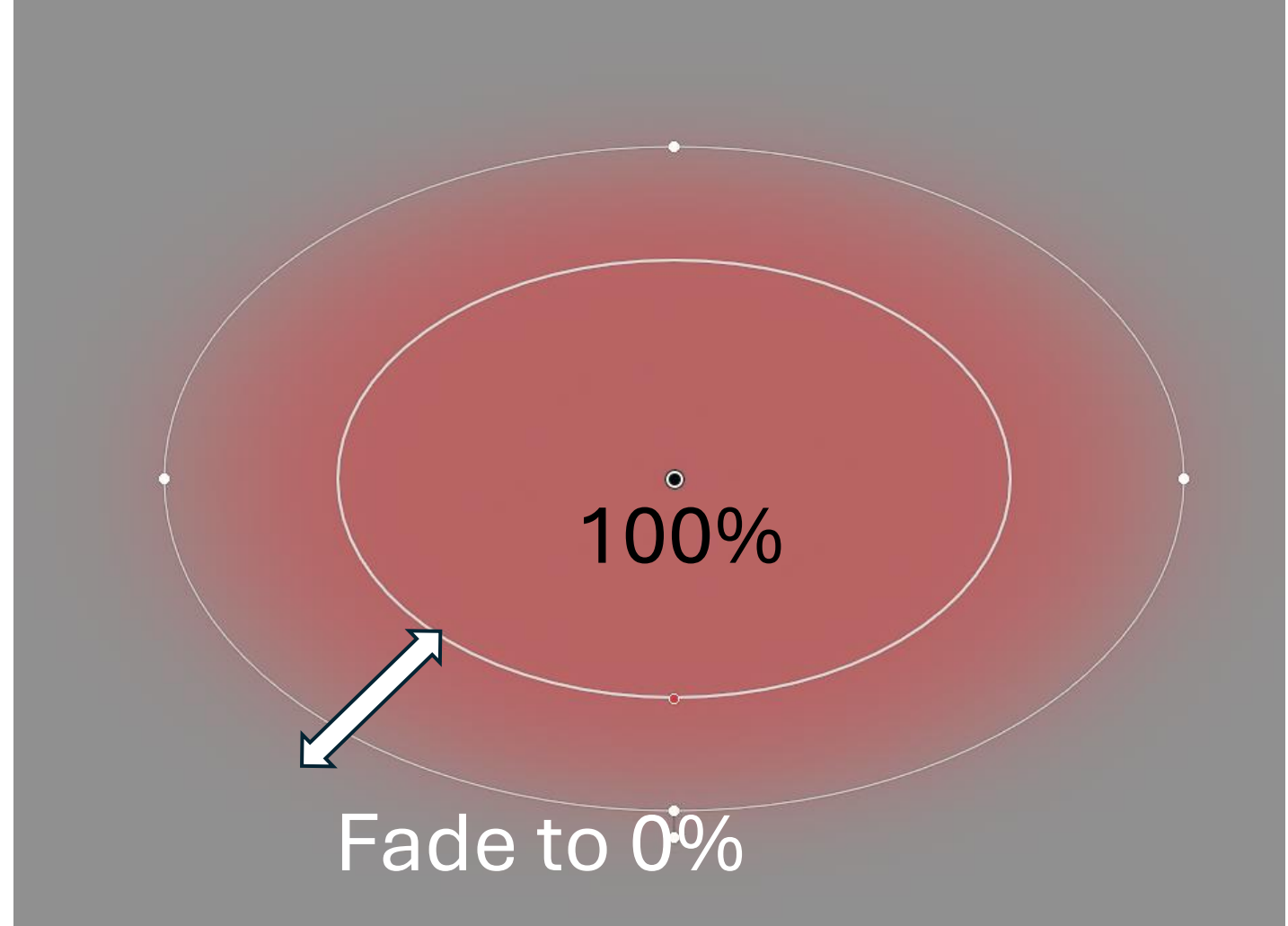
Linear Gradient

- Click and drag in the direction from full adjustment to fade out.
- In this case top to bottom.
- (Total white is full adjustment.)
- Can rotate and tweak sizes.
- Hold down shift key while dragging to get perfectly vertical or horizontal edges.



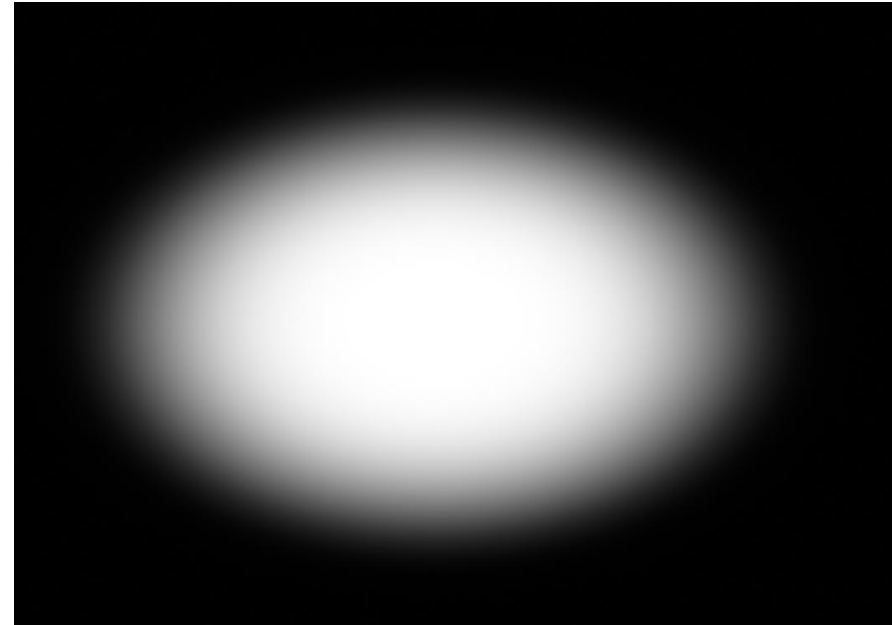
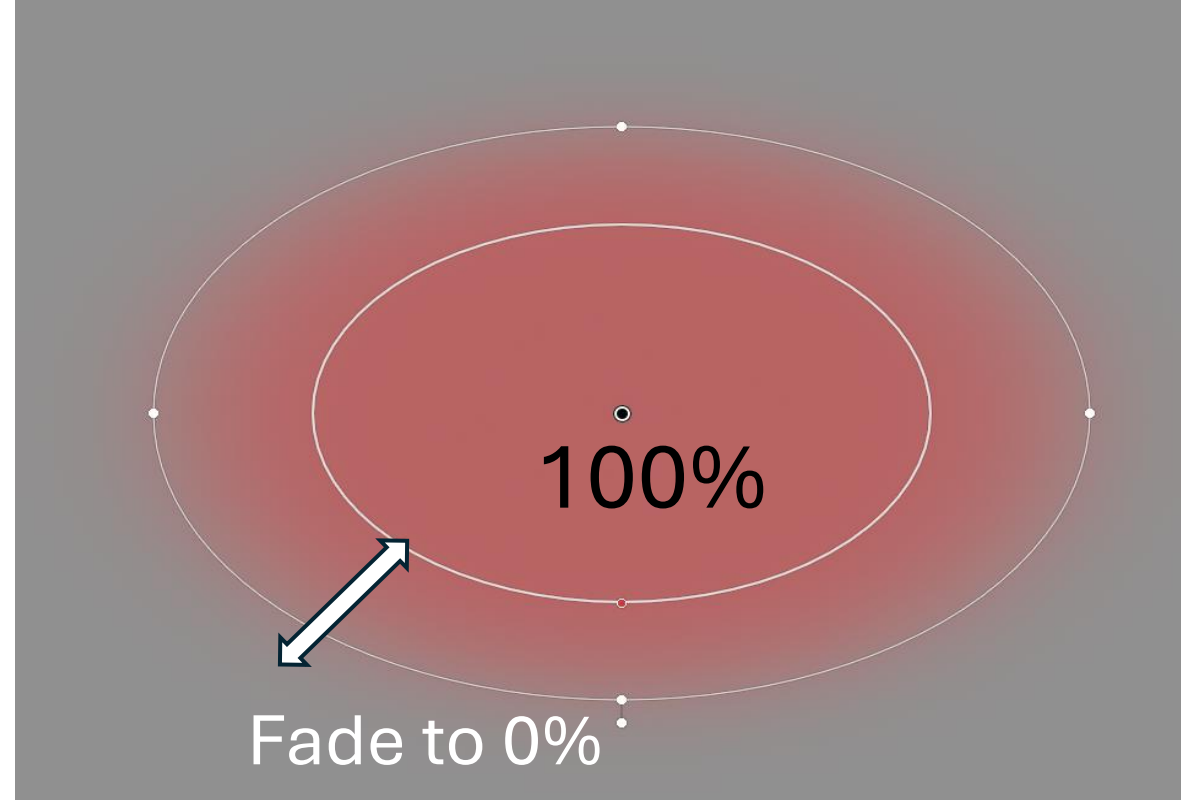
Radial Gradient

- Click and drag to form and ellipse.
- Hold ALT while dragging for circle
- Inside center is 100%
- Fade from inner ellipse.
- Resize overall with four white handles. (goes both directions horizontally or vertically)
- Hold ALT to Resize one-sided
- Can rotate and tweak sizes.
- Resize core with red handle.



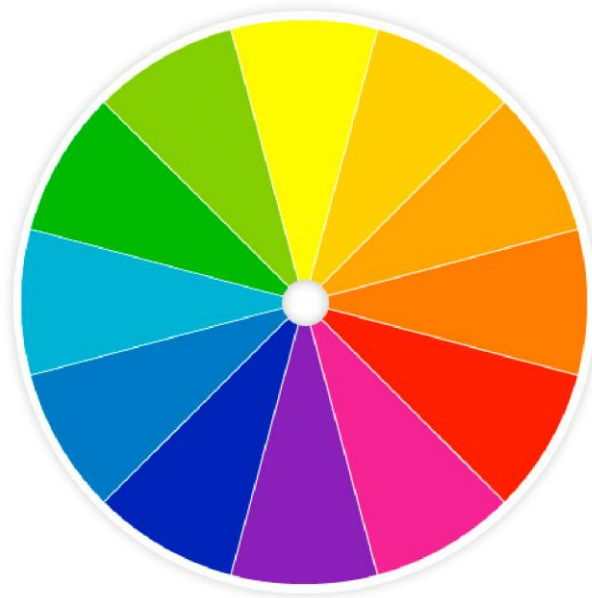
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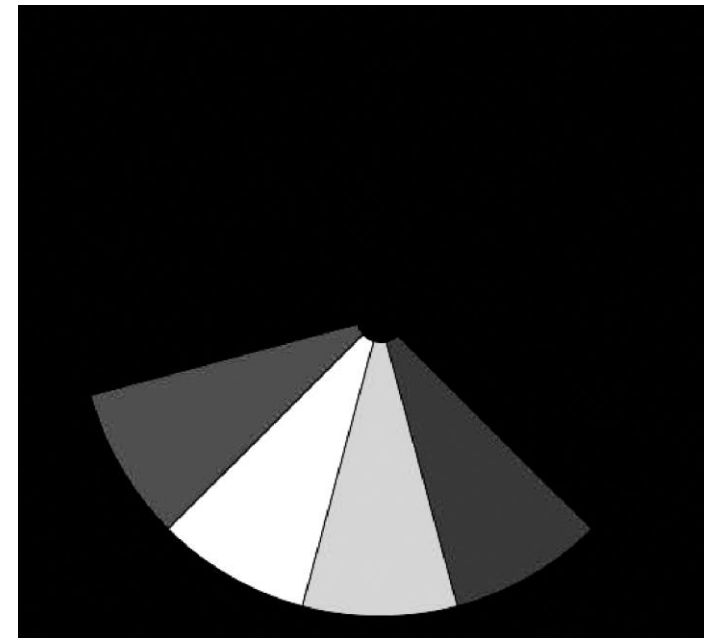


Range: Color

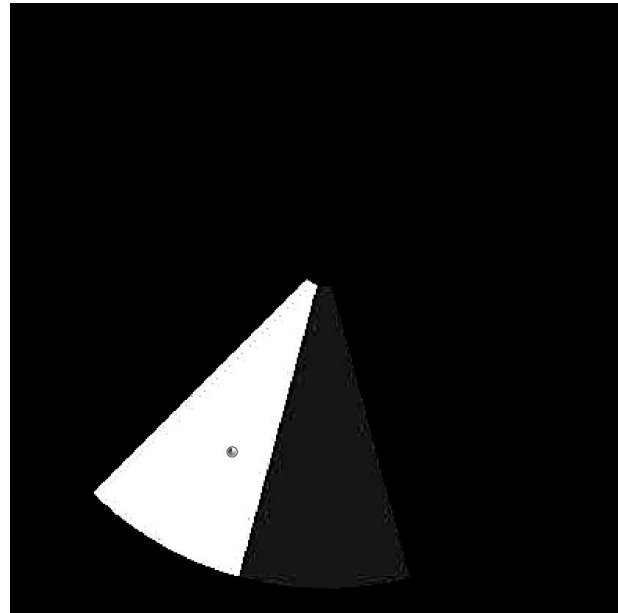
- Click a color
- Or draw a box to include more colors
- Shift-Click to add colors up to a limit.
- Refine: Adds more similar colors subtracts similar colors to be exact.



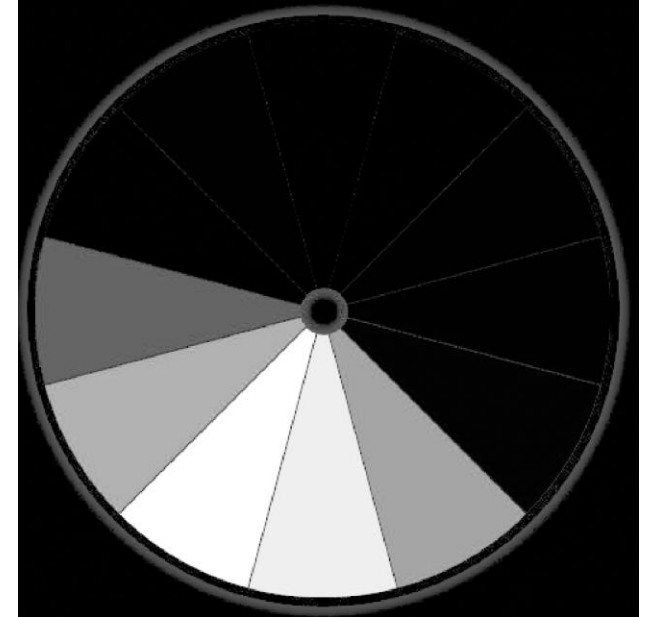
Target



Refine Default - 50



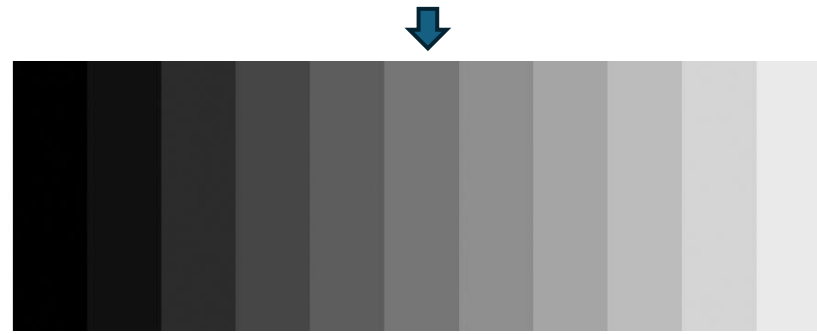
Refine Minimum - 00



Refine Maximum - 100

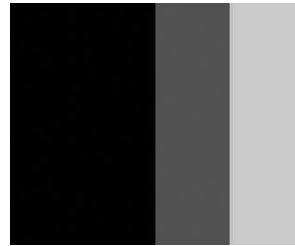
Range: Luminance

- Click a tone
- Example Mid-Gray
- Adjust Mid-point box and end points to expand or contract the range



at

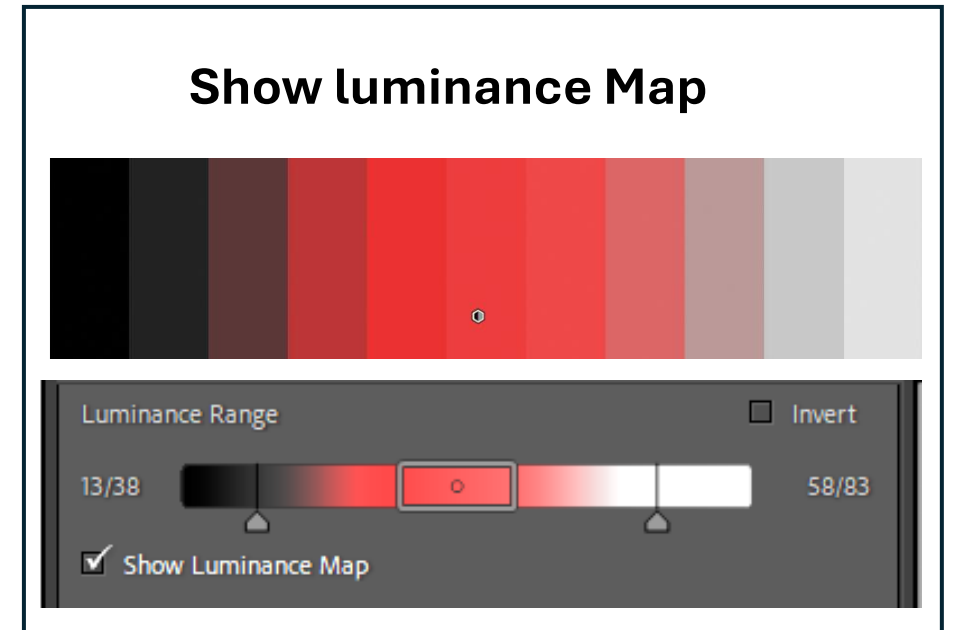
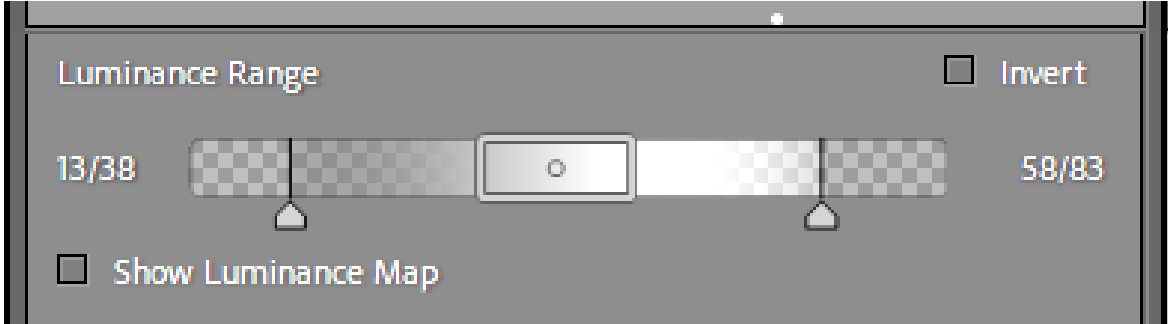
Refine Default - 50



Ⓢ

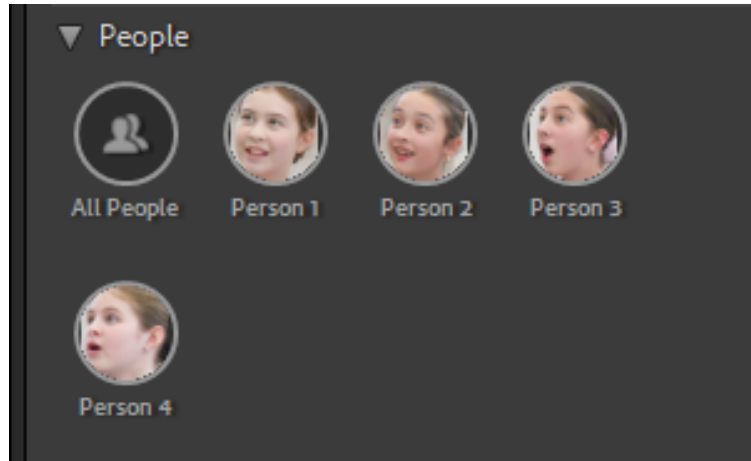
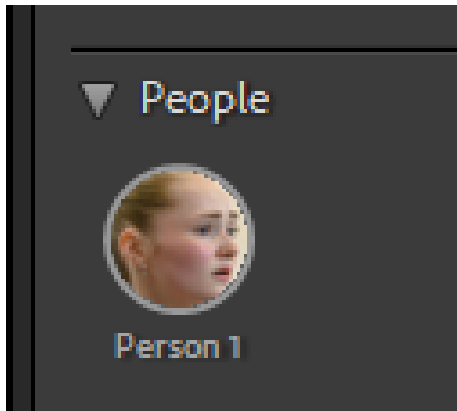


Default

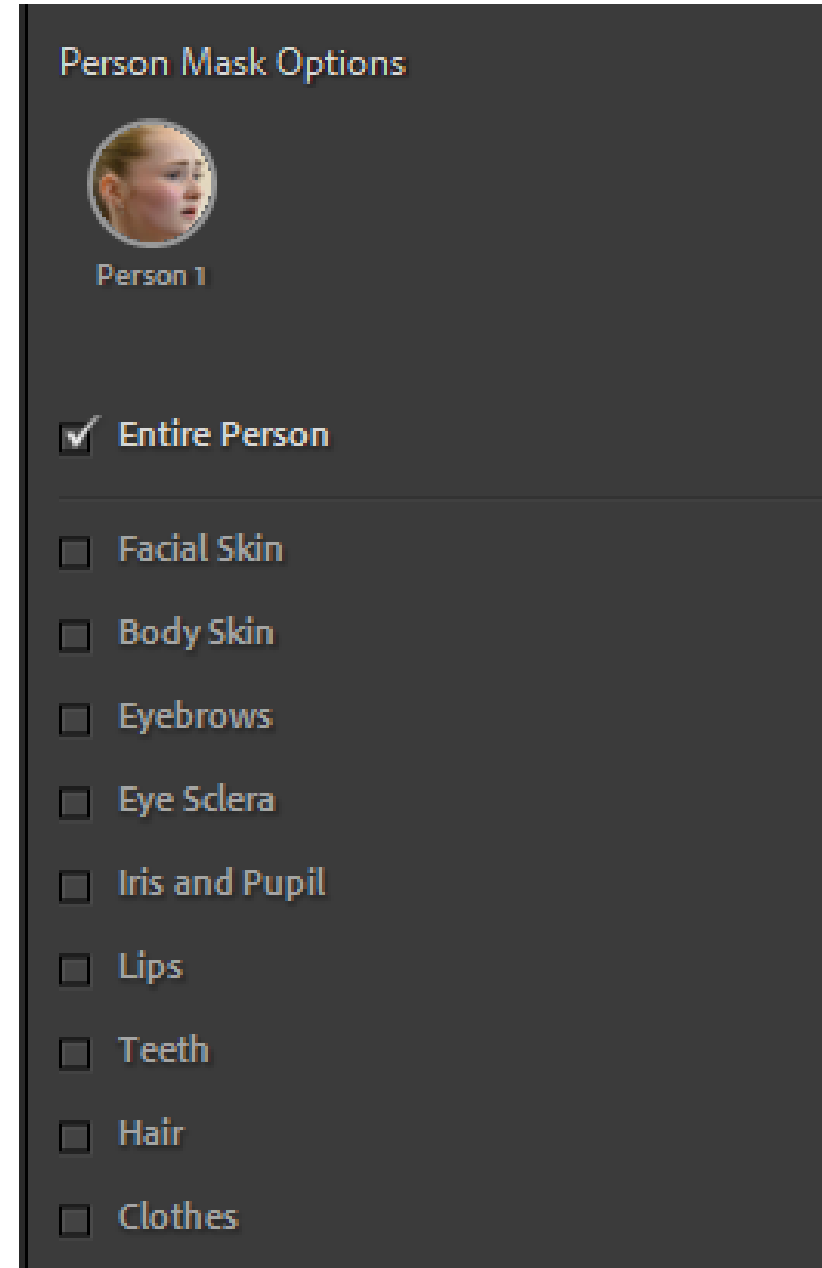


People

- Select a person or a person from several
- All People or Entire Person



- Choose Feature to Adjust



Update AI Functions

