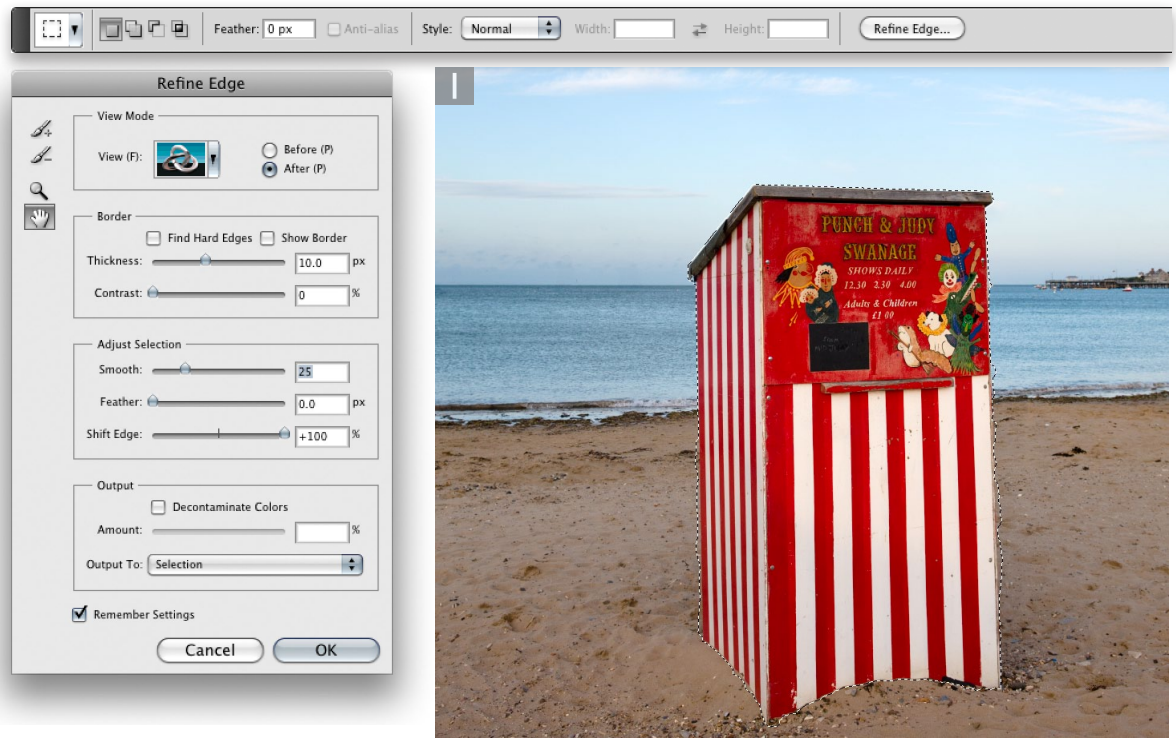
New Delete options

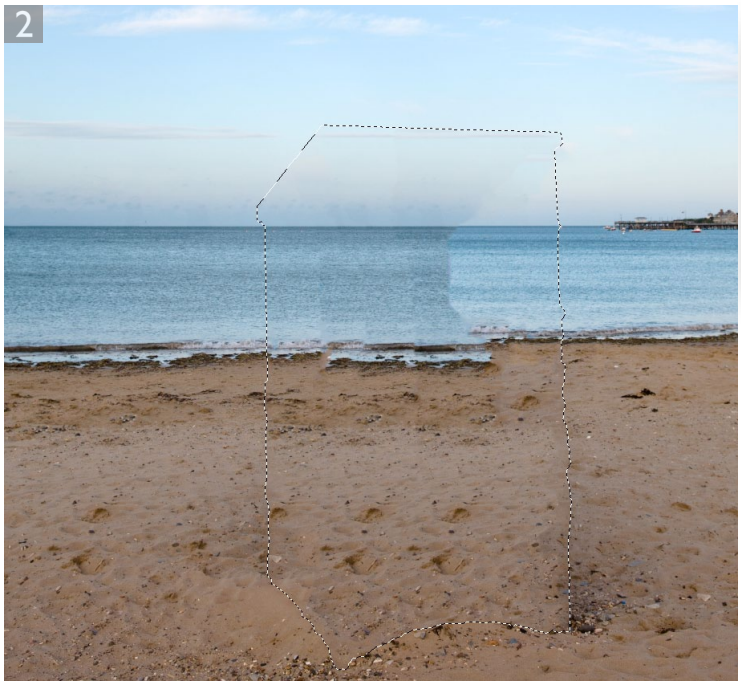
If you make a selection on a background layer, or a flattened image and hit Delete, you'll see a Fill dialog box pop up. This allows you to choose how you wish to fill the selected areas and will have Content-Aware Fill selected by default. In the past, hitting Delete with a Background layer selected would fill the selected region using the current background color. If you want to bypass this behavior, you can use ⌘ Delete ctrl Delete to fill using the background color.

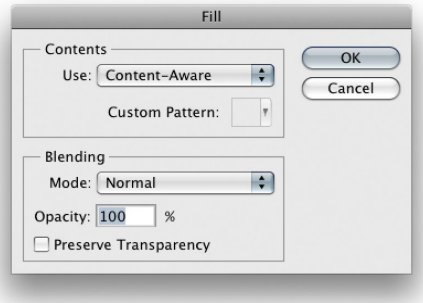
Content-aware filling

Content-aware blending is also available as an Edit ⇨ Fill menu option. This means that you can create a selection and use the Edit ⇨ Fill command to let Photoshop work out how best to fill in the gaps in the selection. As you can see in the example shown here, the result was not bad considering Photoshop was using the surrounding image data to replace about a third of the original image. Content-aware filling can usually do a good job of working out which are the best pixels to sample and construct a fairly convincing fill, but it is inevitable though that further retouching work may sometimes still be required. It is also recommend that you expand the selection slightly before applying a content-aware fill. You can do this by using the Refine Edge command or go to the Select menu and choose Modify ⇨ Expand.

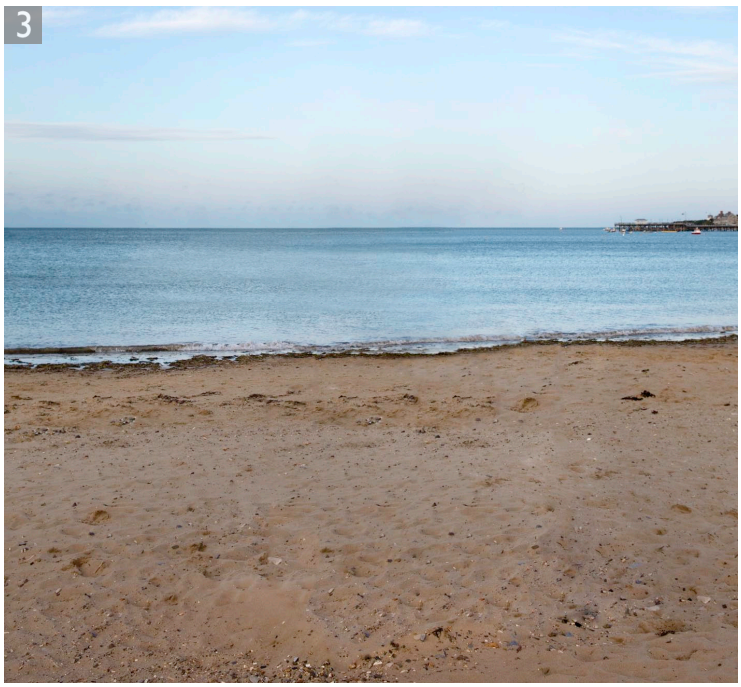


1 Here is a photograph I took of a Punch and Judy booth on a beach. The first step was to use the quick selection tool to define the outline of the Punch and Judy booth (this didn't need to be too precise). In then clicked on the Refine Edge… button in the Options bar and expanded the selection edge using the settings shown here.





2 The next step was to go to the Edit menu and choose Fill... (or, you may find easier to use the Shift F5 shortcut). This opened the Fill dialog shown here where I selected 'Content-Aware' from the pop-up menu in the Contents section. It may take a minute or two for the processing to complete and as you can see, the initial result was not bad, even if it had failed to make a perfect fill in one single step.



3 As with the patch tool example, you are always going to need to carry out further retouching work in order to produce a convincing looking retouch. In this instance I needed to carry out some additional retouching using a combination of the standard healing brush and clone stamp tools. The main point to make here is that this type of image manipulation, in which a huge chunk of the picture was removed, was only possible thanks to the power of the new Content-Aware filling algorithm.

Content-aware fill and Puppet Warp

I imagine some people will want to use the new Puppet Warp feature (described in the following chapter) to select an object and manipulate it directly. I therefore think the content-aware fill feature may prove very useful as a preparation step where you would select an object and copy it to a new layer and then use the same selection to apply a Content-aware fill to the original background layer.