

## Image Color and Trace

Goal: Use Photoshop to turn a drawing into a vector-style image.

### Instructions

Creating a drawing using layers is a lot like making an image by stacking different colored pieces of paper that are cut into the right shapes.

Find a large, color **drawing** of a **person or character**. No machines! Choose a fairly detailed image that uses shading and color variation, and has clear lines. Comic book pictures work well.



Nope. Too simple.



Nope. No outlines. Color changes are too subtle.



Good choice. Multiple colors, distinct outlines.

This example is going to use the full image of Superman. This is the original:



I'm going to zoom in on just the area around his face so it's easier to see what I'm doing, but you should use your entire image.

- Open your image in Photoshop.
- Select the crop tool.
- Set the crop tool mode to “W x H x Resolution.”
- If your picture is taller than it is wide:
  - Set width to 7.5 inches
  - Set height to 10 inches
  - Set resolution to 150 pixels per inch
- If your picture is wider than it is tall:
  - Set width to 10 inches
  - Set height to 7.5 inches
  - Set resolution to 150 pixels per inch
- On the menu, select File, then Save As.
- Change the file type to Photoshop file.
- Give your file a descriptive name. If you were tracing a picture of superman, you might choose `Superman image trace.psd`.

**NOTE: Every layer needs to have a name to tell you what you are filling in. I use very specific names below, but you might use different ones. As long as each layer is named for the part you are filling in, you are doing the right thing.**

- Look at your image. Think about how you would put it together using pieces of colored paper.
- Create a new layer and name it to match the part you plan to put on the bottom. I’m going to start with his head, so my first layer is called **head**.
- Select the polygonal lasso tool. Make sure feather is set to 0 px and anti-alias is checked.
- Trace the outline of the shape.
  - Don’t worry about the details on the face—we’re going to add them on other layers.
  - Don’t worry about the edges that will be covered by other shapes. If you look at the example, you’ll see that I was careful around his ears, but not his collar or hair. I know I’ll be covering up those edges.



- Select the foreground color. Use the eyedropper tool to copy the color that seems to be most common on the head (or whatever you are coloring).



- Press **option-delete** to fill with the foreground color. It will look terrible, but remember: this is only the first layer!
- Press **command-d** to deselect everything.
- Hide the layer you just filled.

- Create a new layer above the hidden layer. I'm going to add the face shadows, so I'm calling my layer (surprise!) **face shadows**.
- Use the polygonal lasso tool to choose the parts that belong on this layer. You can choose multiple areas by holding down the shift key when you start to select each area. You can remove area from a selection by holding down option when you start to select an area.



- Use the eyedropper to pick a color on that matches most of the selected area.
- Press **option-delete** to fill the selected areas.
- Press **command-d** to deselect all areas.

If you want, you can turn on the hidden layer to see how the parts fit together. If you look at the example, you'll see that the face is already becoming visible.



- Hide the color layers you have created.
- Follow the same steps listed above to add all of the colors of your image.
- After all colors are in place, make a layer called **black lines**. Trace out the black lines on this layer.

Stuff to know and remember:

- Doing this right takes time! I will be looking at how carefully you have traced the original work!
- Don't try to match every single color. Pick colors that match areas well, but don't try to be perfect.
- DO NOT USE THE MAGIC WAND. **DO NOT USE THE MAGIC WAND.**
- Don't use the brush for the main figure in the image, but you may use it for the background.
- Make sure your image is the right size. My sample image is much smaller than your image will be.