

Cloning (PE6)

If you are going to touch up a photo, you will need to learn Cloning. This is a little tricky, but you can learn this by repetition. It is a trial and error process, and don't be afraid to try. Remember, you always have Ctrl+Z to fall back on to undo anything you don't like.

In our example here, I will use the picture of the dog begging that I developed in the Cropping tutorial.



It is a nice picture, but I want to remove that glass table in the lower left foreground. To do that I first click on the Clone Tool in the Tool Bar. It is the little tool that looks like a rubber stamp.



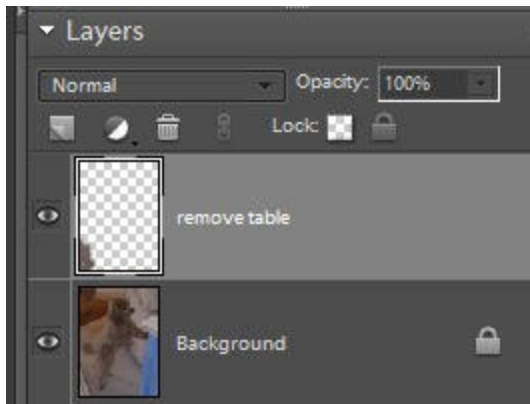
Now, check the defaults in the tool bar immediately above the picture. They should be set in Normal Mode, 100% Opacity, and a check mark by Aligned. Then add a check mark by All layers. This allows the clone tool to sample all the layers when choosing color and texture, which I find works well for me. The size of brush that you use will depend on the detail you are trying to clean up in the picture. I used a 100 pixel brush for this photo.

Before we do anything else, add a New Layer right above the background layer. I renamed this layer "remove table", since that's what I want it to do. (To rename a layer, just double click on the layer's name, and type in a new one.) Leave the new layer active (It will be blue).

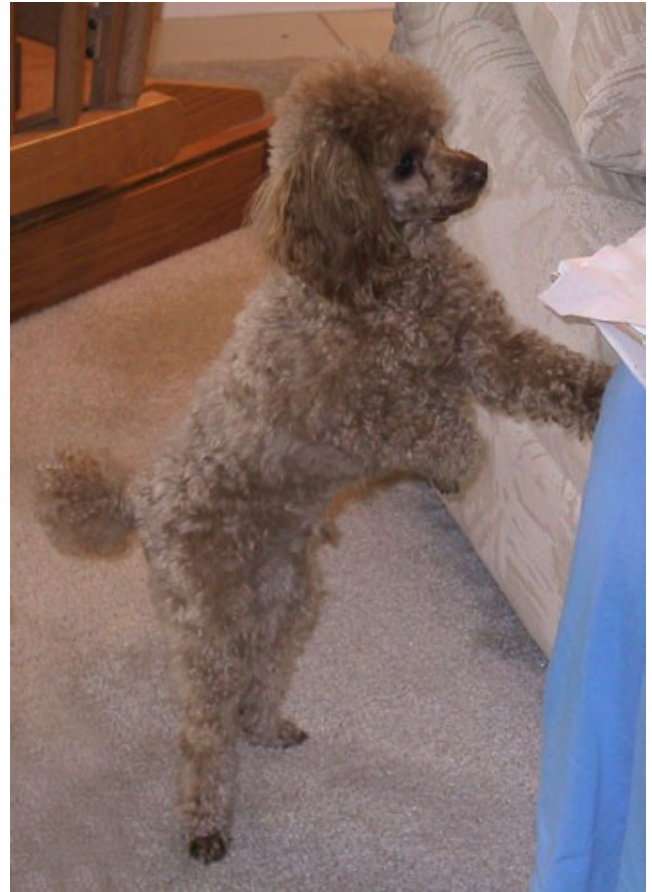
To use the Clone Tool, I hold down the Alt key and move the mouse to the area I want to use as the source for my cloning. When I hold down on the Alt key, the mouse pointer turns into a target shape. I click to set the source, and then I move the mouse over the upper edge of the table. I click and drag the mouse (which is now acting like a brush that is using the rug as a source) over the table until it has been eliminated. This is how the screen looked when I started the clone process.



Sample to clone, and then paint over the table. I resampled several times, in different parts of the rug to make it look more natural. In the end, the layer stack looked like this.



That little bit of color in the lower left corner of the thumbnail in the "remove table" layer is what was cloned to cover up the table. The final result, with the table removed, is shown next.



Cloning can help clean up your pictures and remove unwanted elements. It is a good tool to have in your bag of tricks.

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