To make a pattern in Adobe® Photoshop®, you simply select an area using the rectangle marquee tool and then choose Edit > Define Pattern. Almost always, however, filling an area with this pattern will leave telltale tiling lines, or grids. For a pattern to tile seamlessly, the edges of the pattern tiles must align exactly to create a continuous image. This technique shows how to create a pattern tile with edges that won't be visible when the tile repeats.

Luanne Seymour Cohen, Creative Director at Adobe Systems shows you how to make a Photoshop pattern without seam lines.

INTERMEDIATE

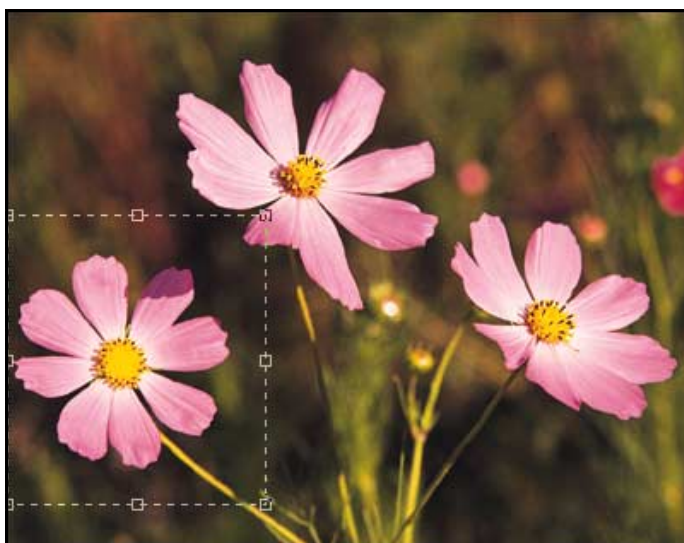# MAKING SEAMLESS PATTERNS

1. Open the image that contains the area you want to use for a pattern tile.

The tile image
Images with plain or textured backgrounds are the best candidates for a smoothly tiling pattern because it is easier to smooth away the tile lines. Try to avoid images with gradations because these are very difficult to touch up. Also, select an image or object that doesn't bleed off the edge of the tile.
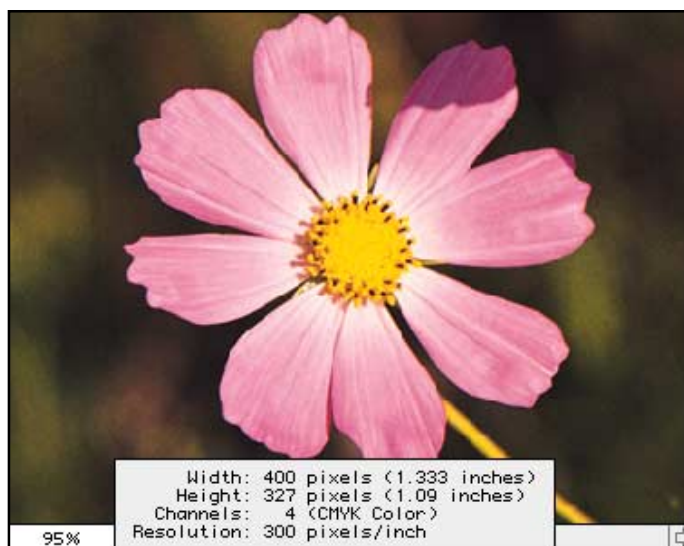
2. Crop the image to the size and area you want the pattern tile to be.
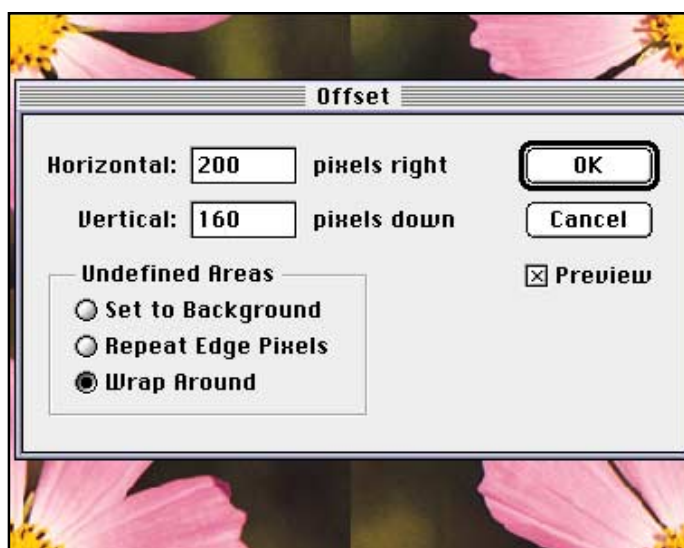
Shortcuts
Throughout this document, "Command/ Ctrl" means Command on the Macintosh and Ctrl on Windows. "Option/Alt" means Option on the Macintosh and Alt on Windows.

3. Check the size of the file by holding down Option/Alt and selecting the size box in the lower left corner of the window. Make a note of the width and height pixel values.


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          Width: 400 pixels (1.333 inches)
         Height: 327 pixels (1.09 inches)
       Channels:   4 (CMYK Color)
95%    Resolution: 300 pixels/inch
```

4. Choose Filter > Other > Offset. Select the Wrap Around option; for the horizontal and vertical values, enter approximately half the value of the width and height you noted in step 3.
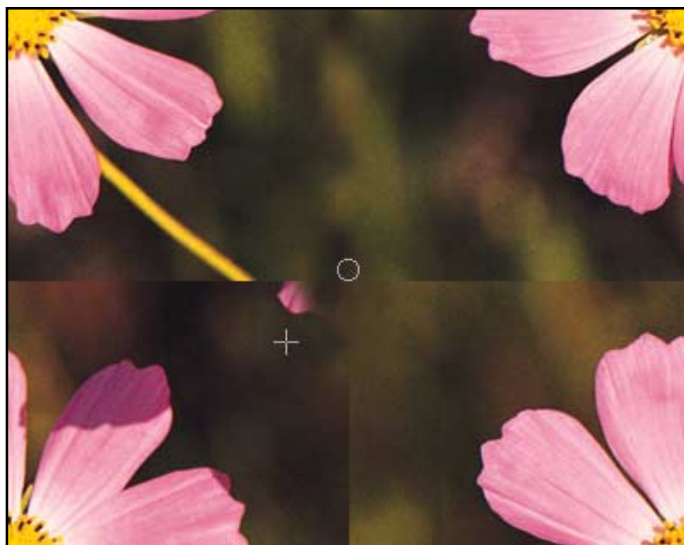

The Offset Filter
This filter basically slices up your image and moves it horizontally and vertically. It is helpful to do this so we can see how the edges of the pattern tiles will meet.

5. Click OK. The Offset filter splits the image into four sections. Notice that the left half of the image completes the right half and the top half of the image completes the bottom half.
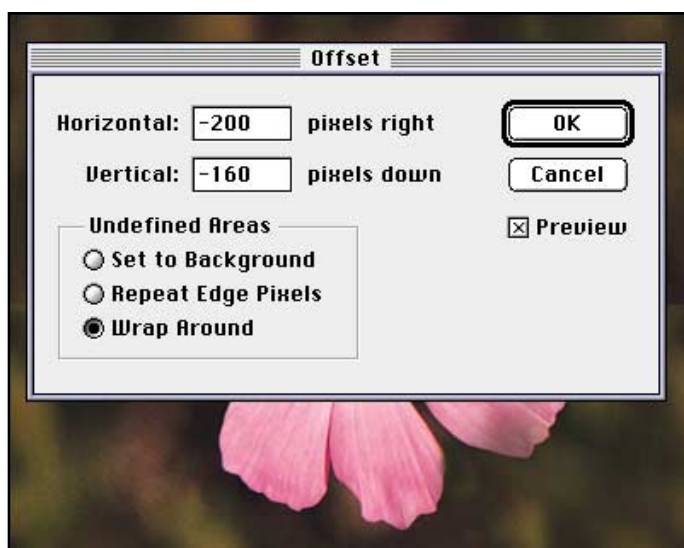
6. Now use the rubber stamp tool to blend the center seams between the four sections of the image. I use a soft-edged brush set at 50% opacity. The goal is to try to blend the backgrounds of each rectangle together and to remove other elements that you don't want to repeat. (In this example, I removed the stem and the stray bit of petal.)

Cloning a smooth background
Try to clone using multiple, short brush strokes so that the stroke itself is not visible. Use a brush that is similar in size and texture to the background. For this soft, diffused background I used a soft, transparent brush.

7. To put the finishing touches on the pattern tile, we must reverse the offset process. Choose Filter > Other > Offset. This brings up the filter dialog box last used. Add a minus before each of the pixel values to reverse the offset effect. Click OK.

Filter shortcuts
To apply the last filter you used, simply press Command/Ctrl+F. If you want the same filter but need to adjust some values, press Command/ Ctrl+Option/Alt+F. The dialog box of the last used filter will appear.
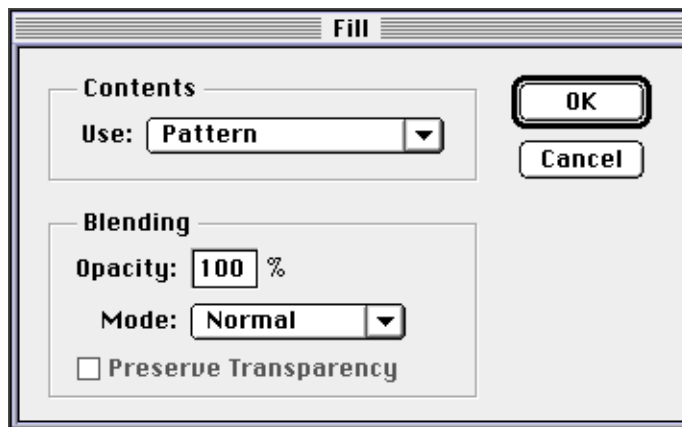
8. Check to see if any problems were created by painting or cloning near the edge of the tile in step 6. If so, carefully cover these up using the rubber stamp tool again. Use a small brush and be careful not to change any of the pixels right on the edges of the tile. In this example, the arrows point to the areas where I painted too close to the edge and need to repair.

9. Next, test the pattern tile for any flaws. Choose Select > All (Command/Ctrl A); then choose Edit > Define Pattern.

10. Create a new file to use as a pattern fill test. Make sure that the file is several times larger than the pattern tile. Select a large area (or the entire file), and choose Edit > Fill. From the Use pop-up menu, choose Pattern. Use a Mode of Normal and an Opacity of 100% so that you can easily identify any problems in the pattern. Click OK.

11. Evaluate the overall look of the pattern and identify any problem areas. If you like the effect, save the pattern tile file. If you want to touch up the tile, return to step 8.

Photograph: Digital Vision.