# Digital Photomontage

This tutorial will combine two different way to make a montage. There is a cut and paste way using the selection tools and there is a way to use a layer mask to do this. Depending on what you choose to montage, one or both may be necessary. We will start with the former.

1. Open the file you want to select your subject from and open the file you want to paste your subject into.
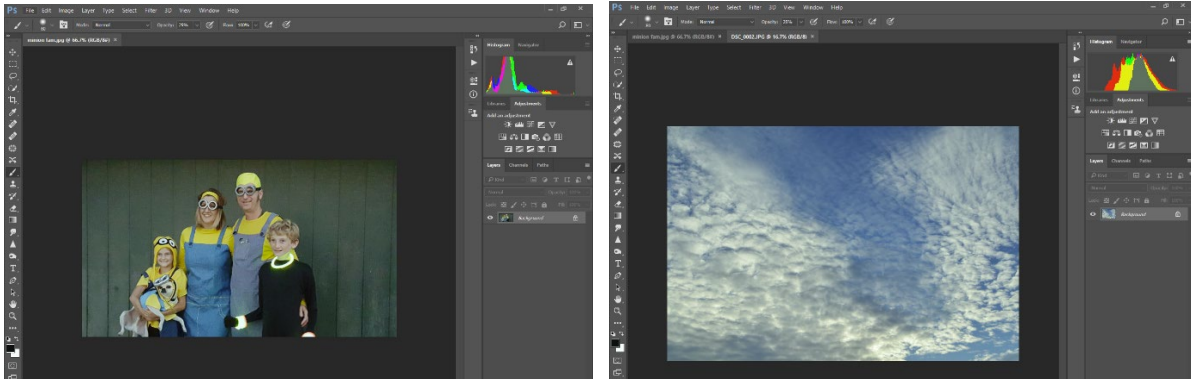

2. Go to the image you want to select from and look to your toolbar to your left and choose the quick selection tool (a brush with a dotted circle by it). Move your mouse so that your brush is over the image. You change the brush size most easily by using the bracket keys on your keyboard (if it does not work, your cap lock is probably on). You should see a circle with a plus sign in the middle. Hold the left click on your mouse and start selecting the subject. You will see the "marching ants." This indicates what you have selected.

3. If you accidentally go beyond the area you want to select, you can hold down the Alt key on your keyboard and left click and you will see a minus sign in a circle. Then move to the areas you want to deselect and this will clear it out. However, you do not have to make a perfect selection. You could actually skip the quick selection tool and go straight to this next step below.

4. At the top of your screen, click on "Select and Mask."
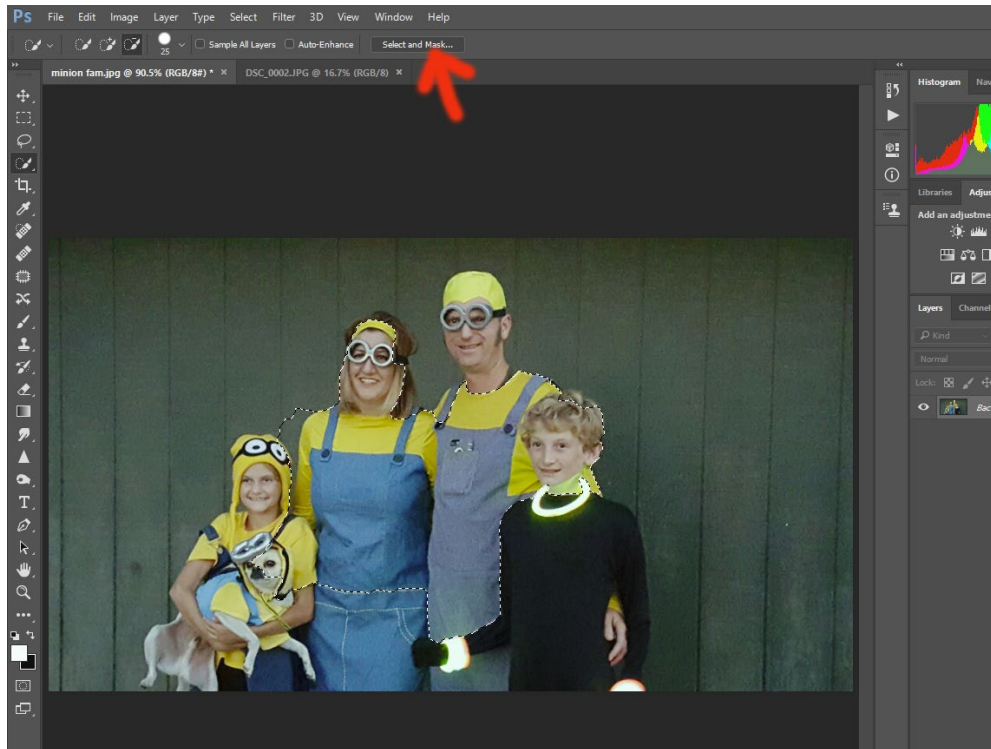
5. There are several options for how to view your selection. Photoshop usually defaults to "Onion Skin," but "Overlay" is often easier to view. To change your view mode, click on to drop down arrow by "View" and try different views. This tutorial will be using "Overlay" as it shows the most contrast between selected and deselected areas.
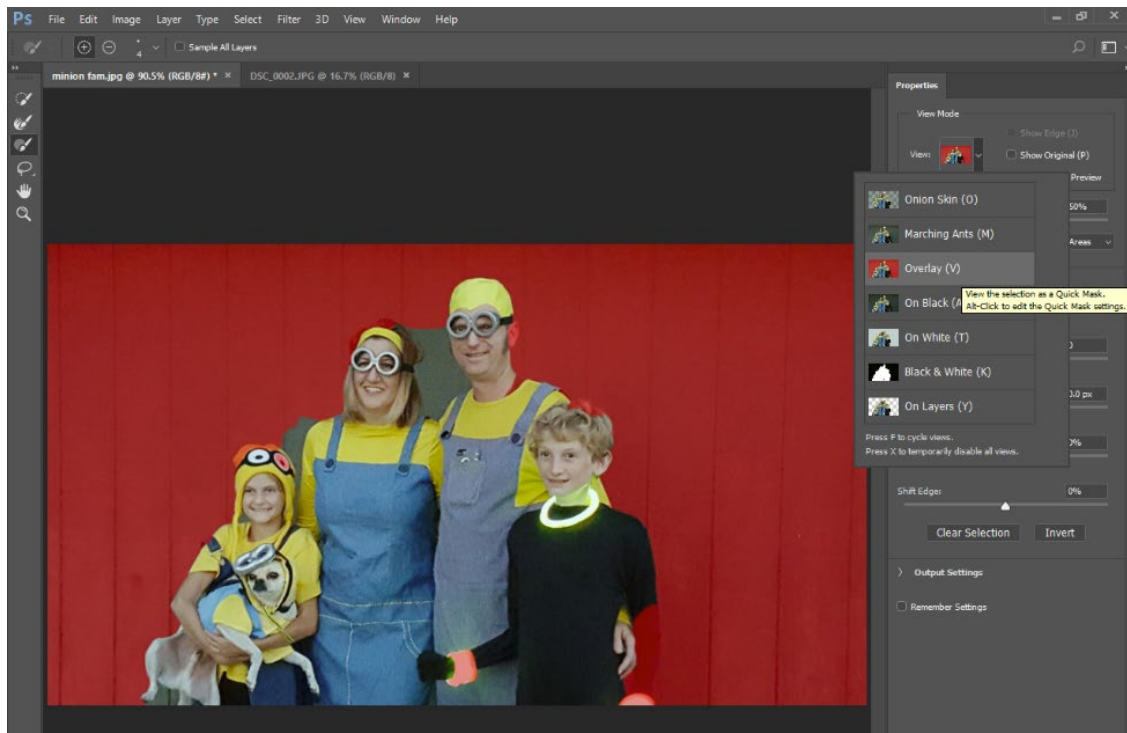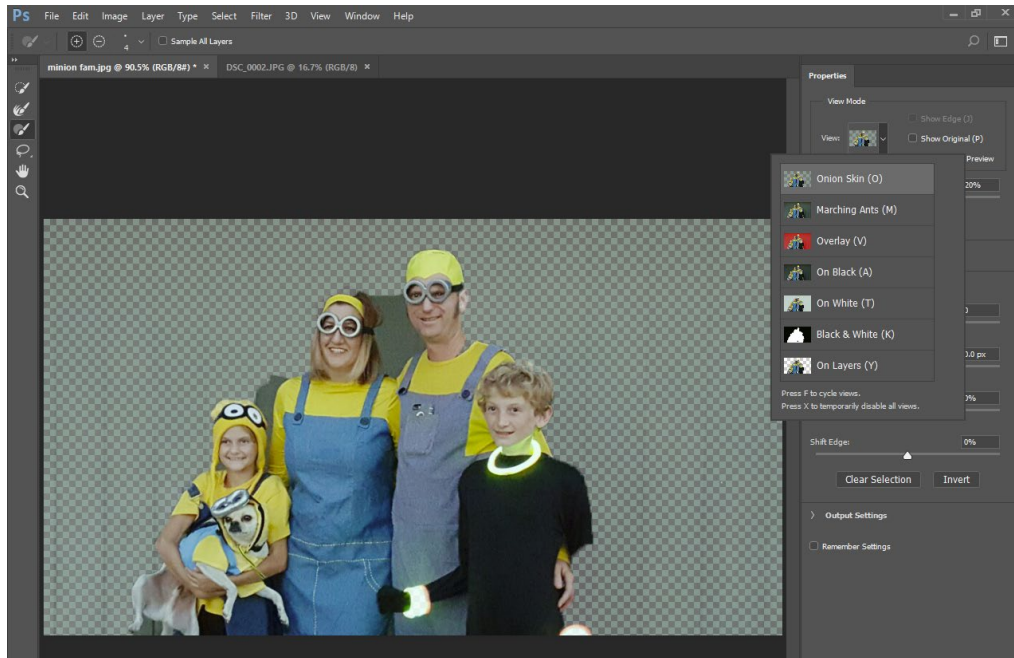
6. To the right of the screen, click on the third brush down. You'll want to zoom in on your subject so hold down Z on your keyboard, hold down the left click on your mouse and pull to the right to zoom in and pull to the left to zoom out. To move around the image, hold down the spacebar to have the hand tool engage. Left click to move the hand tool.
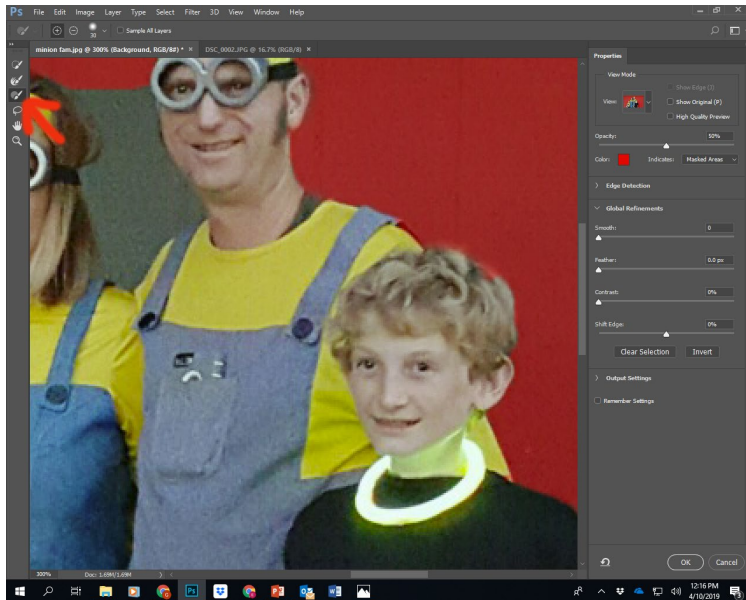

7. Once you have finalized your selection, you will want to soften the edges of your selection. To do this, look to the right of the screen and see the sliders "Smooth" and "Feather." Move the Smooth slider to around 5 to 7 and the Feather one to between 1-2 pixels. Once you have done this click "OK" on the lower right.
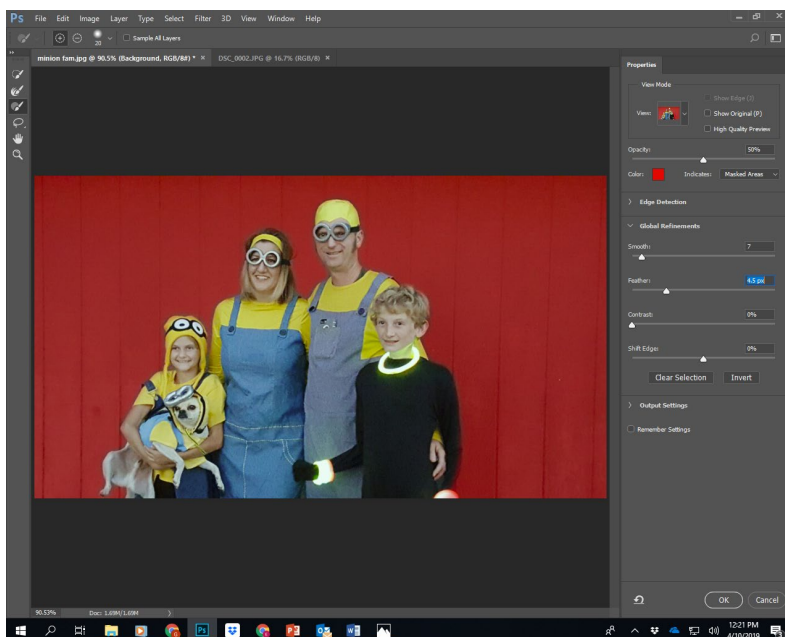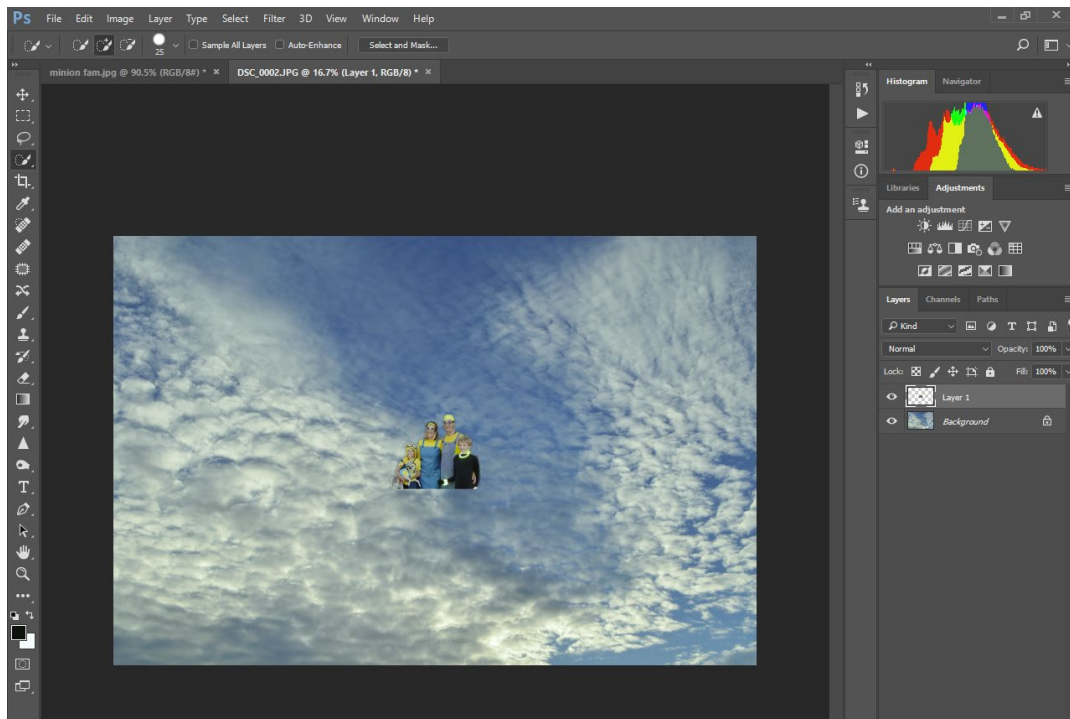
8. Now you will need to copy your selection and paste it into your background image. You can do this by holding down the CTRL key and click "C" on the keyboard or click on the Edit menu at the top of the screen and click on "Copy."
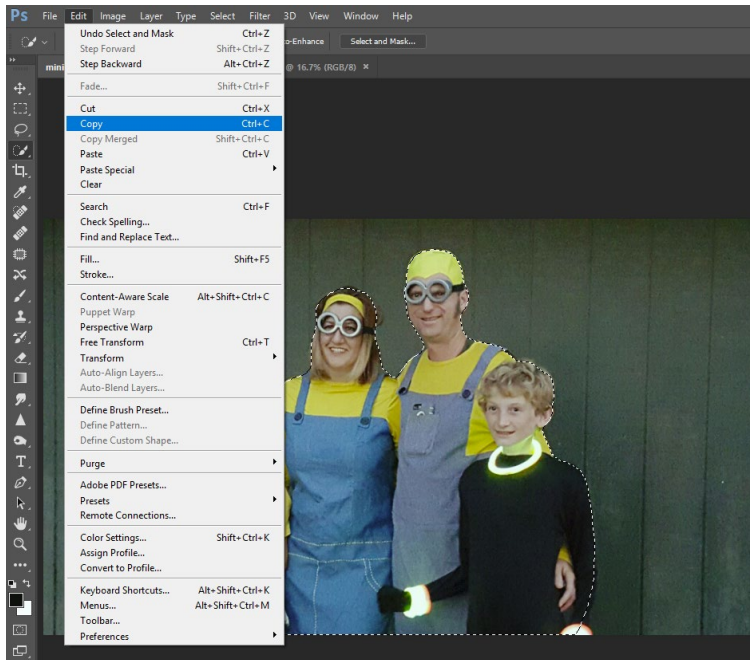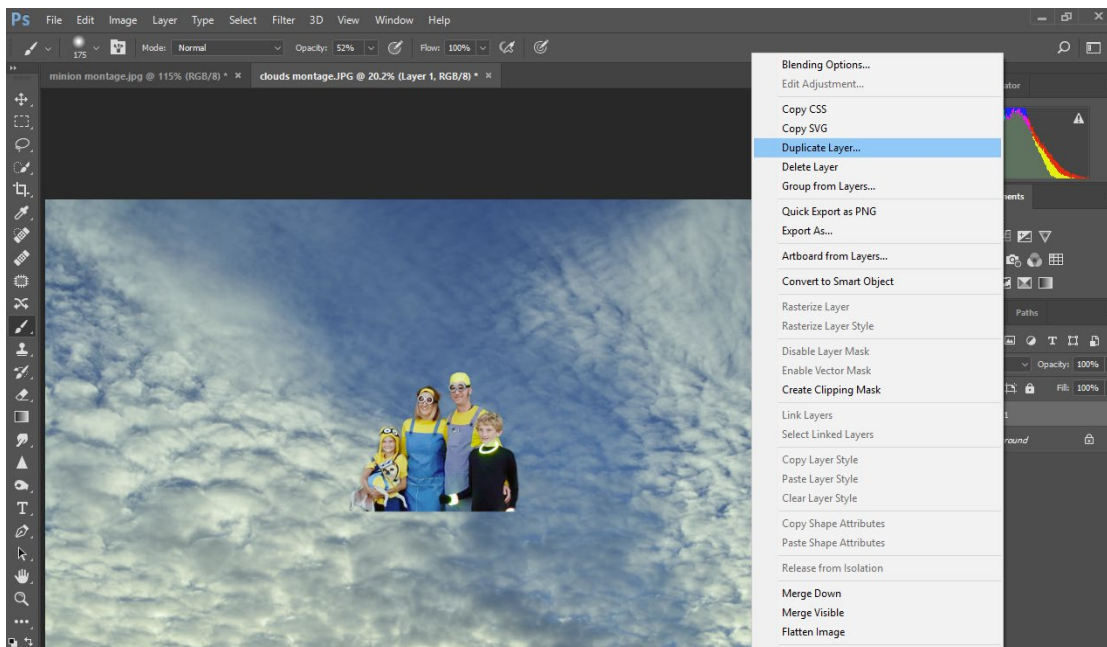

9. Go to your base image and hold CTRL and press the "V" key (or go to the edit menu and go to "Paste."
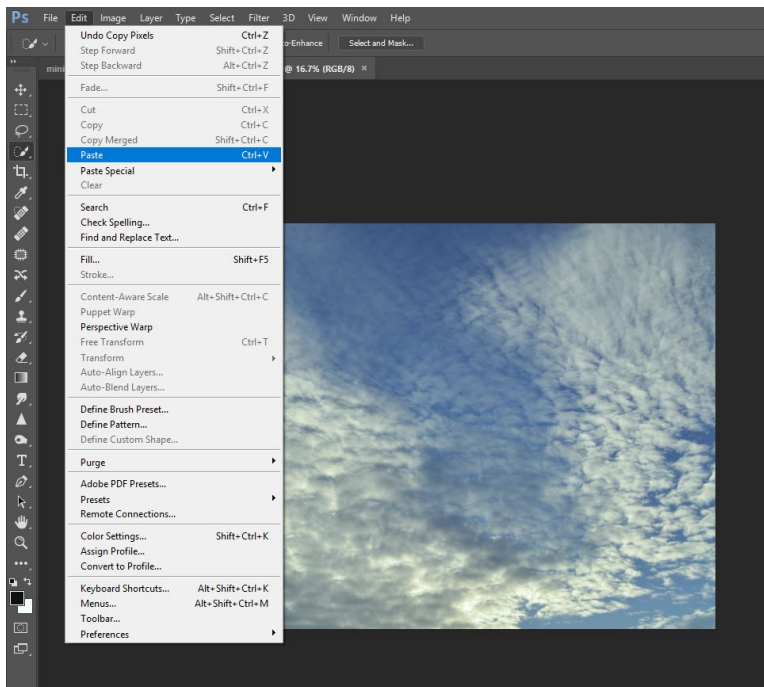
10. You may want to size, duplicate, flip, or transform your selected image. To duplicate the selected image, right click on Layer 1 to your right and select "Duplicate Layer"


When the dialogue box opens up you can rename the layer or just keep it as "Layer 1 copy" then click on the OK button.

11. Select the move tool from the tool bar (looks like a cross). Then left click on the selected image and move the subject.
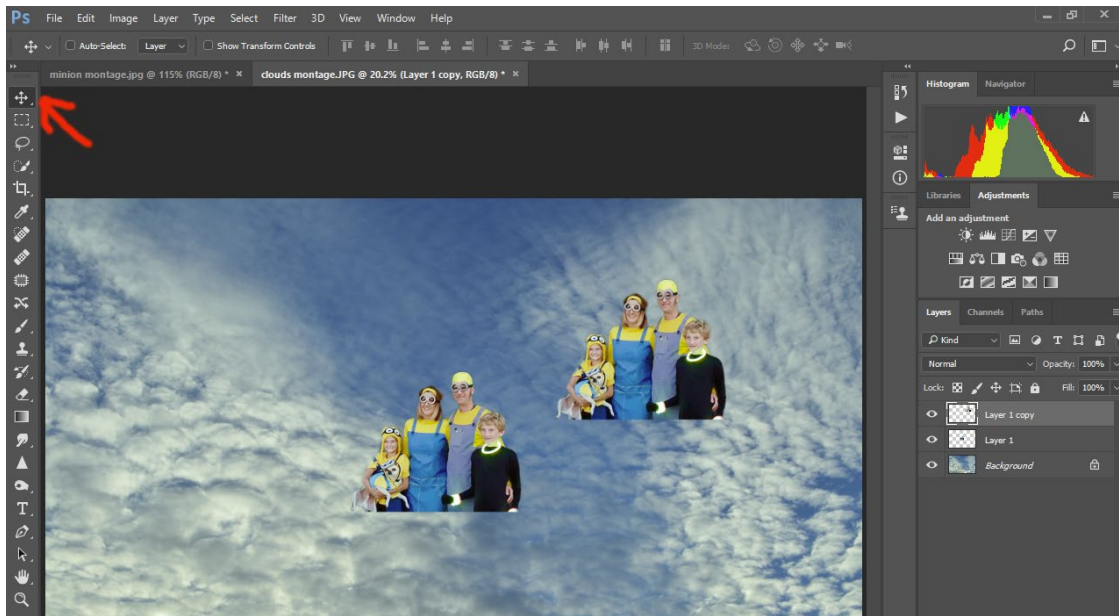

At this point you may likely be seeing on the upper left corner a box called "Auto-Select." It is very important that this NOT be checked. If this is checked, Photoshop will automatically direct you to the top layer when trying to edit with certain tools (a very strange update that was added to PS that I don't really see as necessary and often creates confusion).
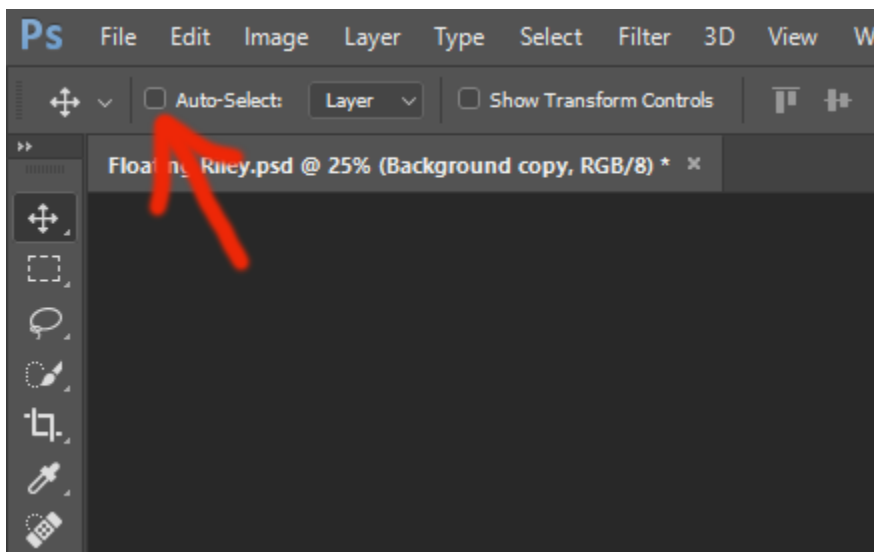

From here on out for this tutorial, we will not be using the layer 1 copy, so either hide the layer by clicking the eyeball on that layer or delete the layer by right clicking the layer and selecting "delete" or left click on the layer and hold and drag the layer to the trash can.

12. Now you will use the transform tool to change the size of the image. Go to Edit at the top click on "Transform" and then select "Scale."
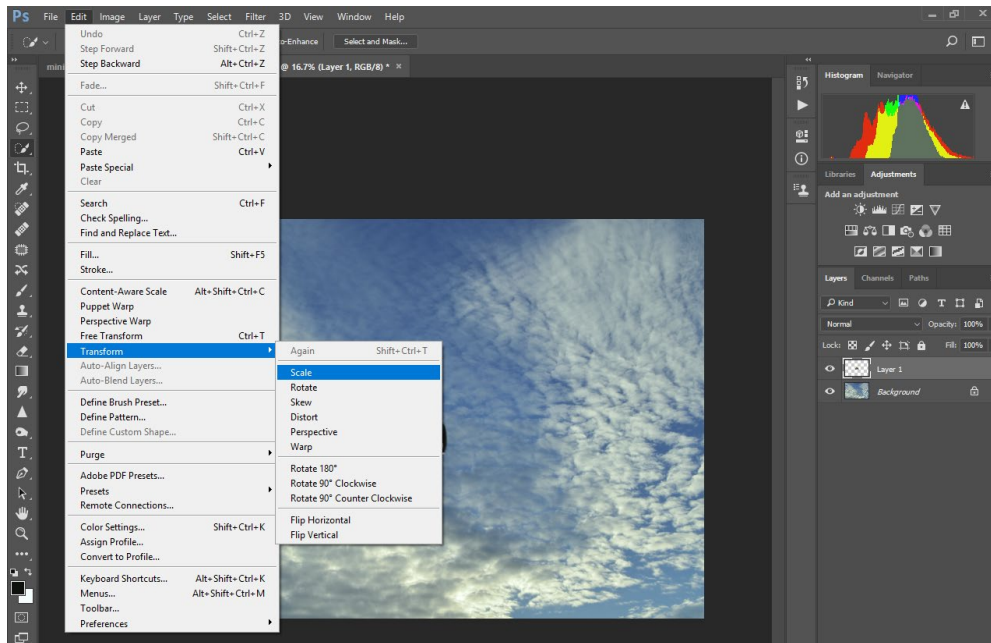

13. Now hold down shift on the keyboard, and left click on the corner of the Transform box, and size the image to your liking. Holding "shift" will keep the image in proportion. Once it is sized how you want, press "Enter" on your keyboard. If you wish to not keep a transformation, press "Esc" on your keyboard.
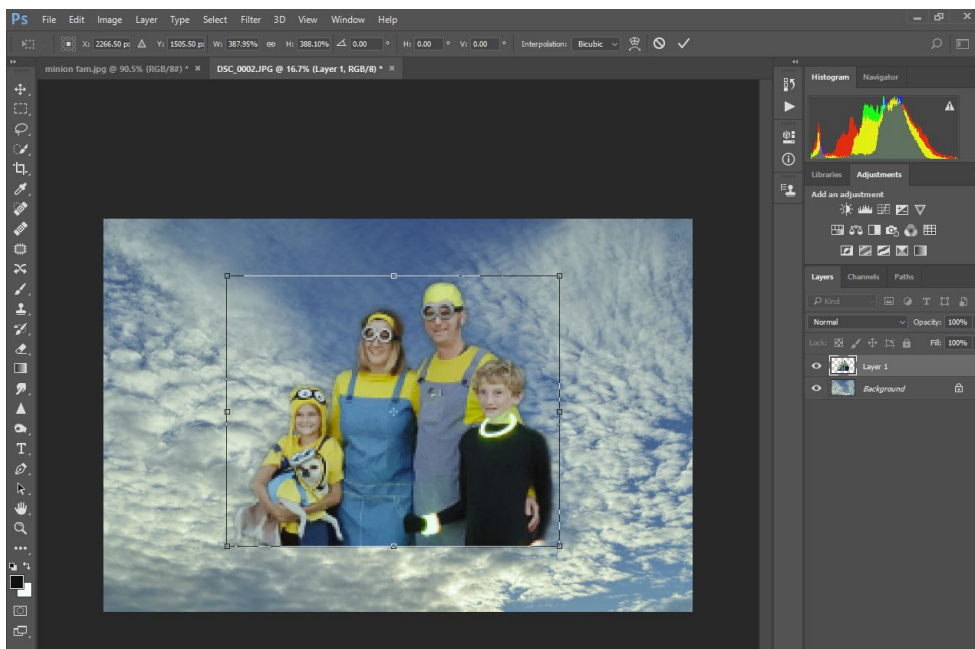
There are many more ways to transform your image. You can select Flip canvas horizontal or vertical, or use the Proportion, Warp, etc. Again, to save a transformation, press "Enter" to escape a transformation, press "Esc." Or you can use CTRL Z to go back a step.

At this point, you may be done, but you may wish to integrate your image into the background more.

14. Right click on the Background layer and select "Duplicate Layer."
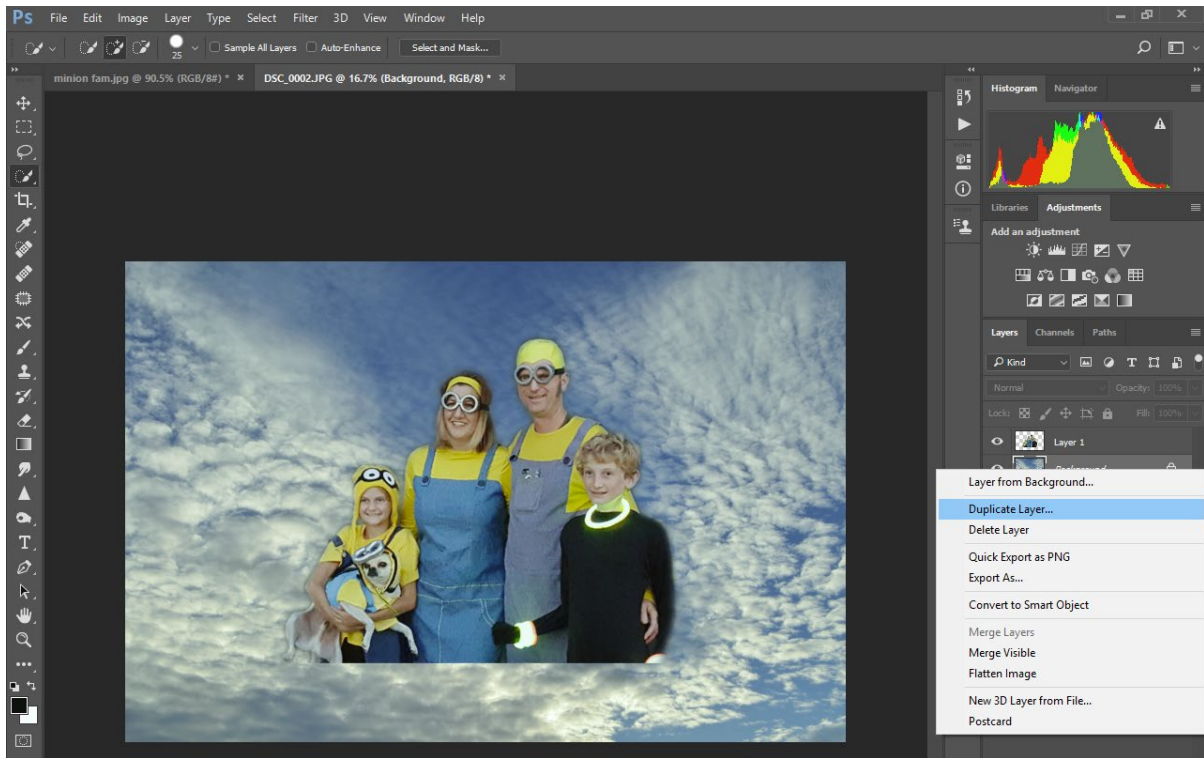
15. Now make sure the Background Copy layer is active, find the Opacity slider above the layers, and slide the opacity down to 35-50%. Then go down to the layer mask icon at the lower right of the screen (a white rectangle with a black circle in the center). Click on it and you will see a white box next the image on your layer palette. This is a manually created mask.
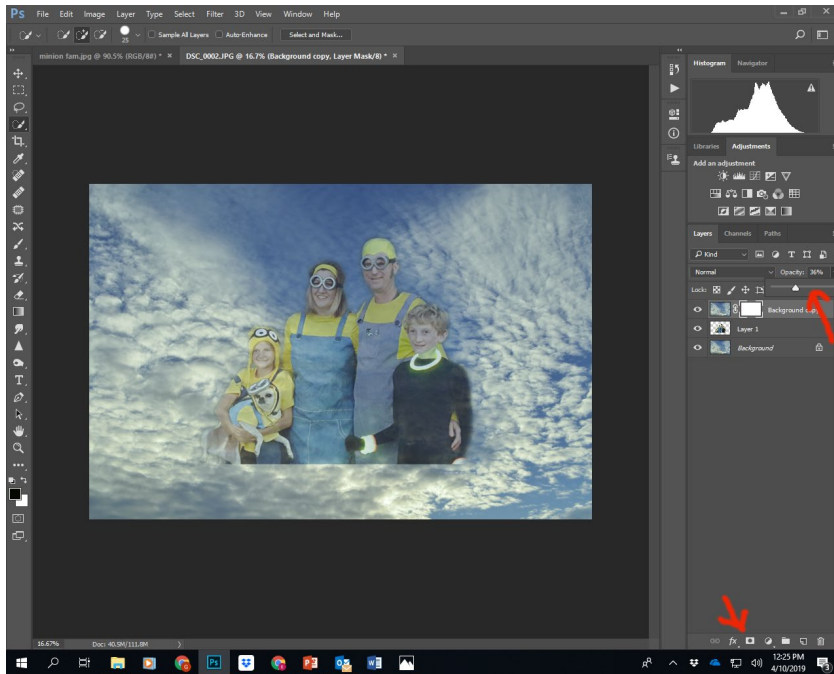
16. Now select the brush tool from your toolbar. Then click on the drop down arrow next to number (brush size) and reduce the hardness of the brush. Between 0-80% depending on how much of a blend you want.
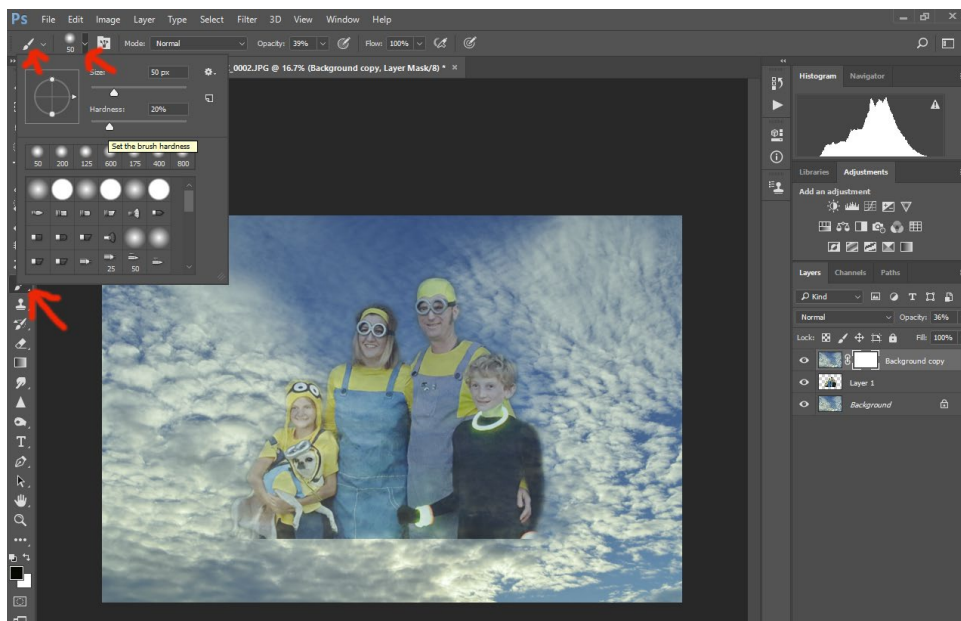
17. Now make sure the foreground color is black for your brush (in the lower left of your screen where the arrow is pointing in the diagram below). It's often best to start off at 100% for your opacity on your brush.

18. Once you have brushed out some of the subject you can bring the opacity of the Background copy to 100% to see how it is coming along. If you would like some of your subject the fade into the background, you can bring down the opacity of your brush as you clear out the mask.

19. If you would like to put the mask back in, switch foreground color to white and brush back the mask in. You can change the opacity of the brush the vary the amount that is added back to the mask.

After adding a bit more contrast using the levels adjustment layer and several back and forths on the mask with the brush at black or white at different opacities, this is final product: