

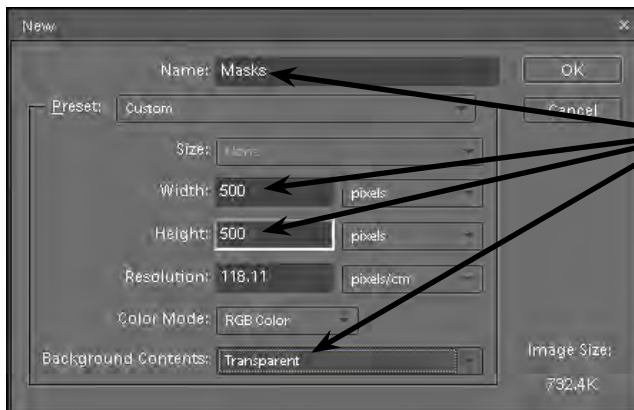
# Creating Masks

Layers are one of the most fundamental features of using Photoshop. They allow you to break a drawing up into small selections which makes detailed drawings much easier to manage. In this Exercise you will use layers to create a mask. Masks are covers that you place over things. In Photoshop you can set part of a photo to be seen through a mask that is placed over the photo.

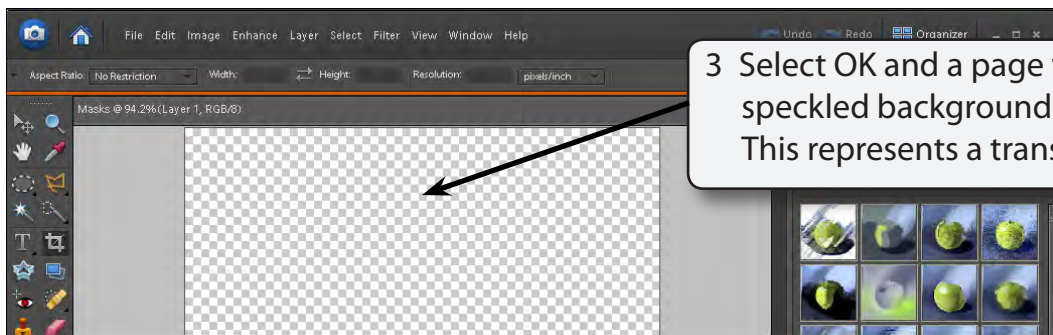
## Creating a Transparent Layer

Layers can be set to have different filled backgrounds. One with a white background, one with a coloured background and another with a transparent (or clear) background. In this case a transparent layer will be used.

- 1 Load Photoshop Elements or close the current files then display the FILE menu, highlight NEW and select BLANK FILE.



2 Call the file MASKS, set the WIDTH and HEIGHT to 500 pixels and set the BACKGROUND CONTENTS to TRANSPARENT.

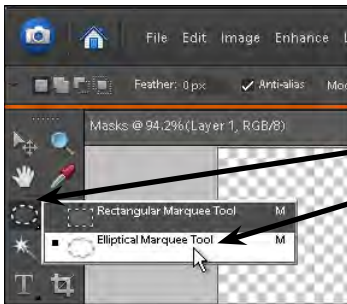


3 Select OK and a page with a speckled background will be created. This represents a transparent page.

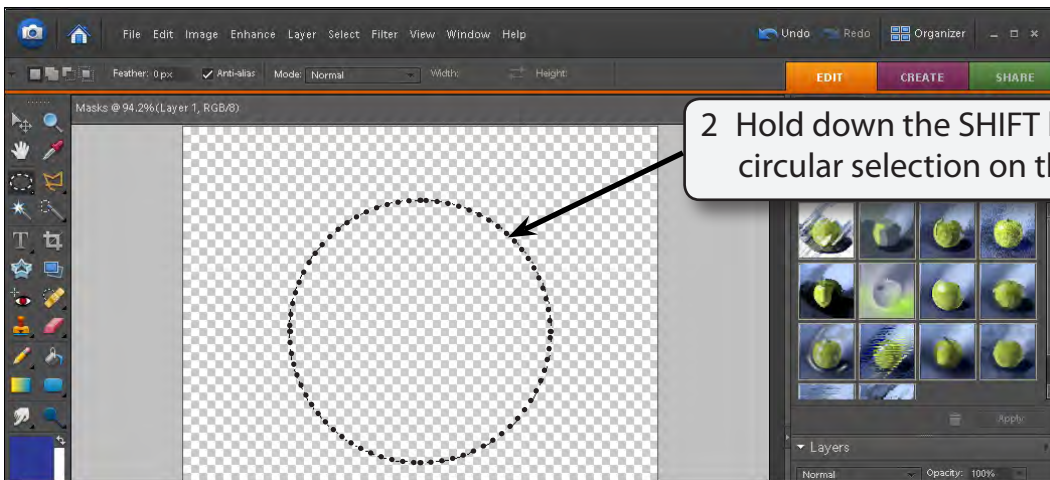
- 4 Press CTRL+0 or COMMAND+0 to set the view to FIT ON SCREEN.

## Drawing a Circular Selection Area

The ELLIPTICAL MARQUEE will be used to draw a circle on the canvas. This will be filled and then become a window (or mask) to view other images.



1 Set the EDIT MARQUEE TOOL in the TOOLS palette to the ELLIPTICAL MARQUEE TOOL.

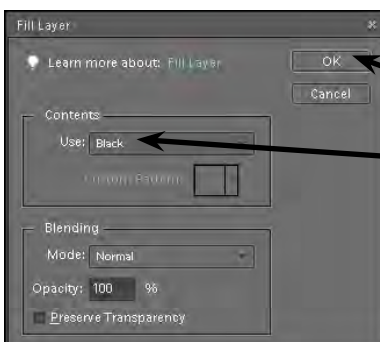


2 Hold down the SHIFT key and drag a circular selection on the canvas.

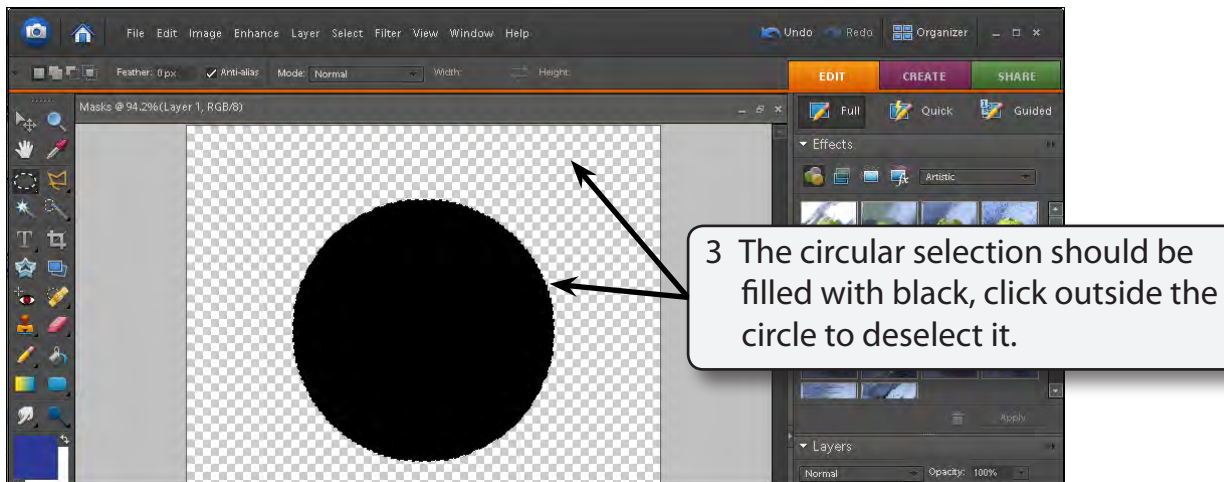
## Filling the Selection Area

The selection area can be filled with a colour. In this case we will fill it to black.

1 Display the EDIT menu and select FILL SELECTION.



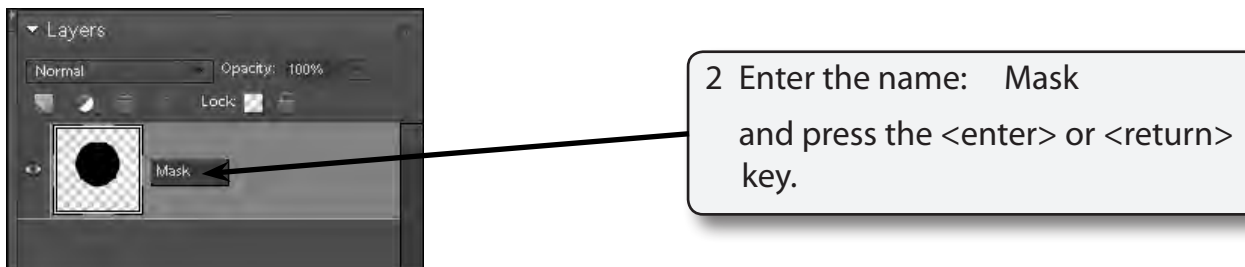
2 Set the USE box to BLACK and select OK.



## Naming the Layer

It is good practice to name layers so that you know what they refer to, particularly when you start creating more detailed documents.

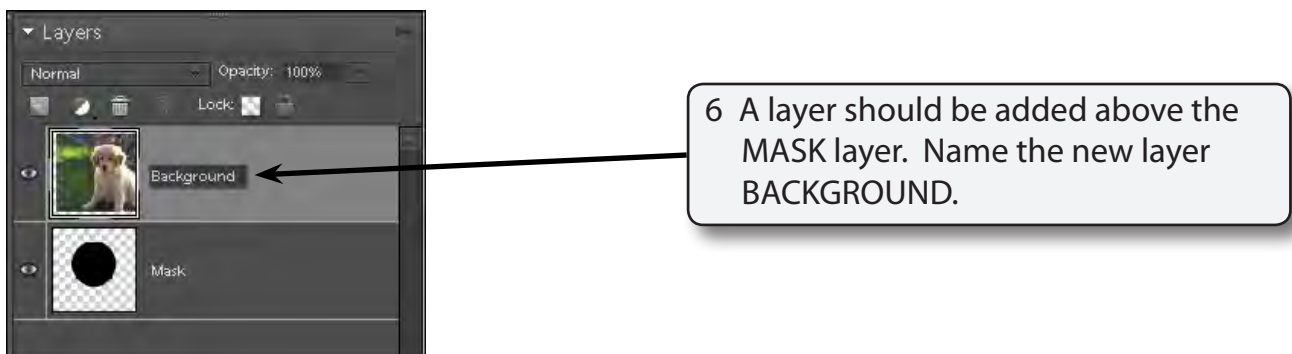
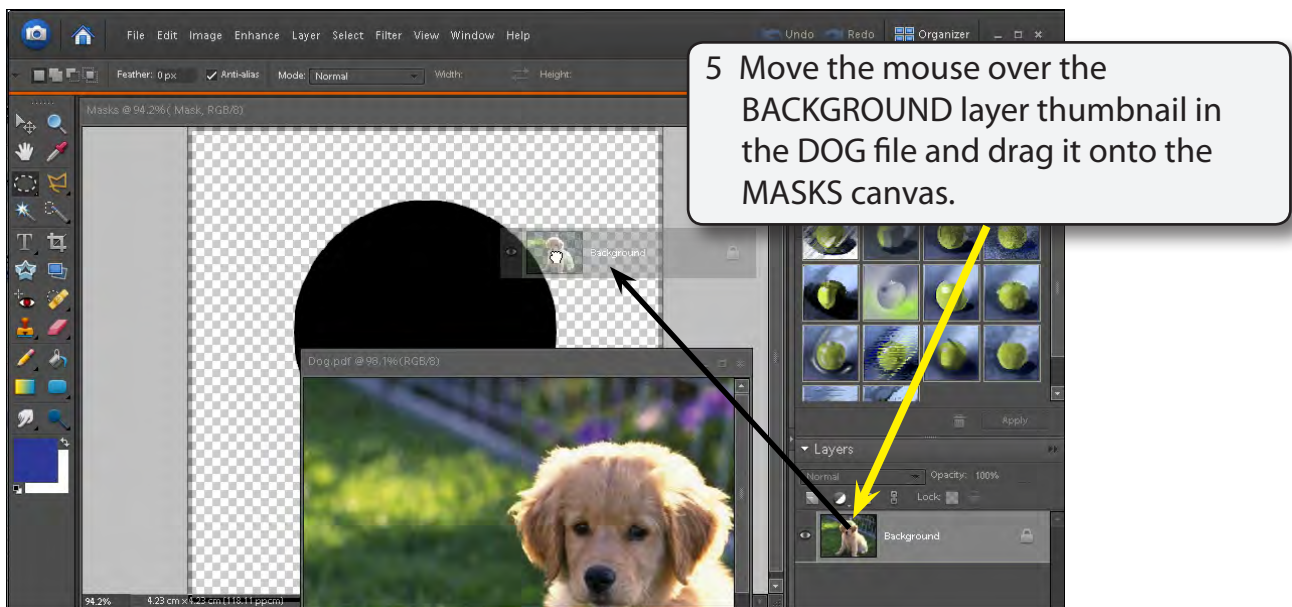
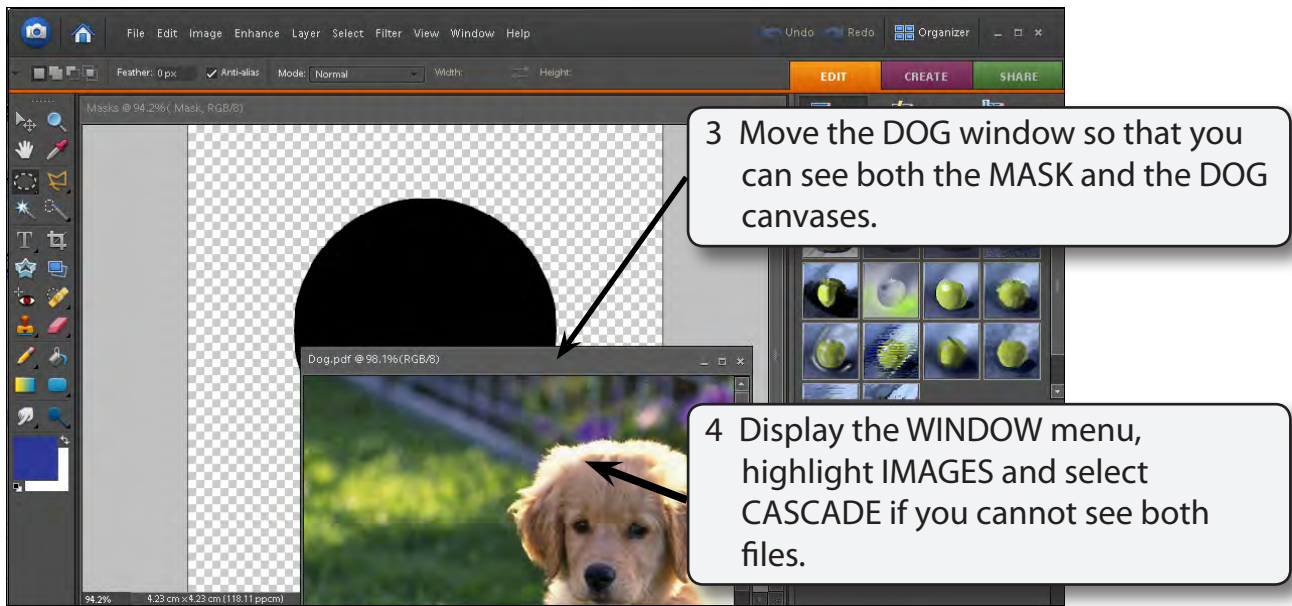
- 1 Double click on the LAYER 1 label in the LAYERS palette to highlight its name.



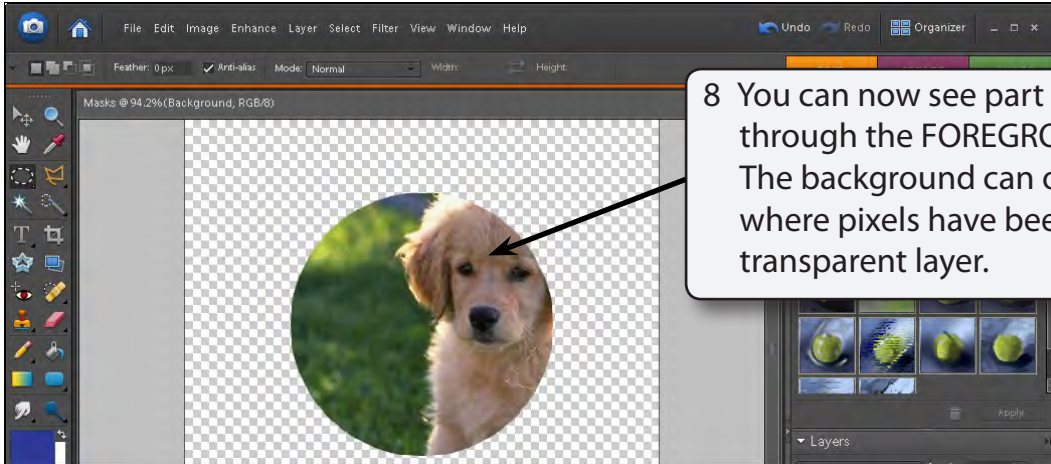
## Adding a Background File

We will use a picture of a dog to act as the background image.

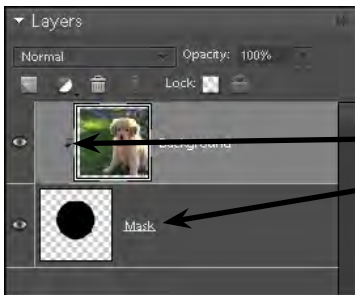
- 1 Display the FILE menu and select OPEN.
- 2 Access the PIT1 SUPPORT FILES, open the GRAPHICS folder and open the DOG file.



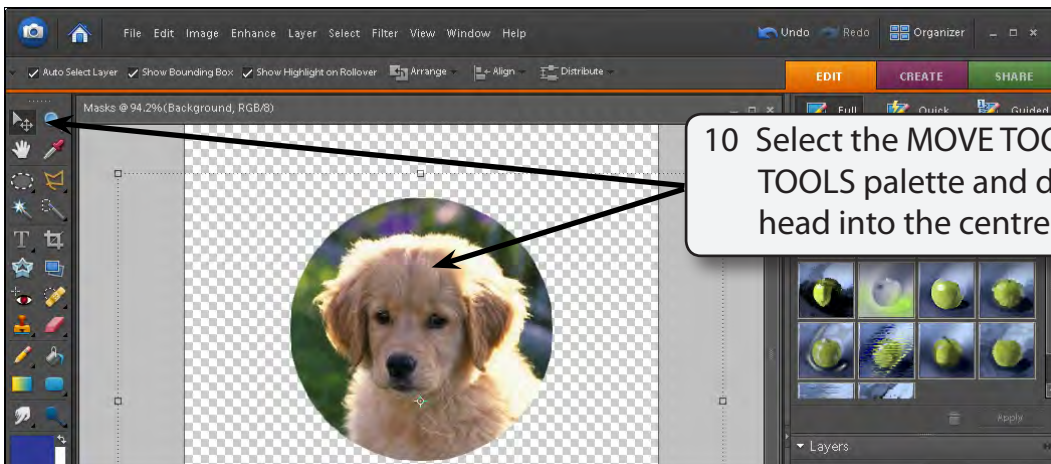
- With the BACKGROUND layer still selected, display the LAYER menu and select GROUP WITH PREVIOUS to combine the BACKGROUND layer with the MASK layer.



8 You can now see part of the dog through the FOREGROUND layer. The background can only be seen where pixels have been drawn in the transparent layer.



9 An arrow is added to the BACKGROUND layer and it is indented to indicate that it is combined with the MASK layer. The MASK layer is underlined to indicate that it is the host layer.



10 Select the MOVE TOOL from the TOOLS palette and drag the dog's head into the centre of the circle.

**NOTE:** You can turn the mask off by selecting UNGROUP from the LAYER menu.