

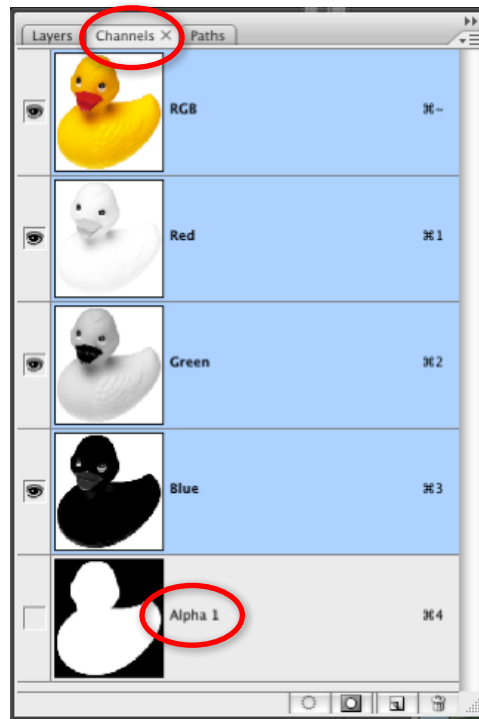
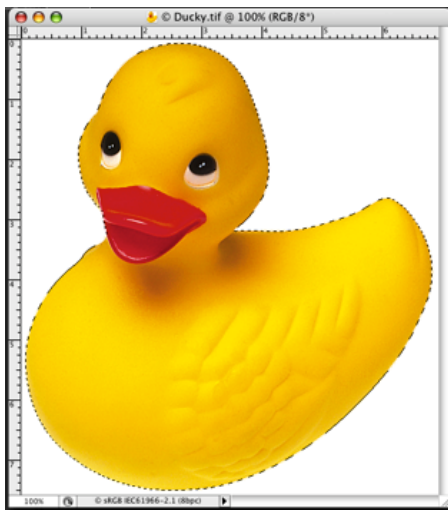
PHOTOSHOP: Alpha Channels

A selection in Photoshop can be called by many names:

Alpha Channel, Mask, Stencil, Opacity, Transparency, or Clipping Mask.

They all mean basically the same thing. The concept is that part of your image is *masked*—or protected. This masking controls areas of the image that are visible, or that can be altered by painting, erasing, colorizing, filtering, etc.

A selection can be saved & reloaded (Select > Save Selection -or- Reload Selection)



Saved selections can be found in the Channels Panel. →

Alpha Channels contain transparency information for the image:

White is visible • Black is invisible • Gray is partially visible

An Alpha Channel is always in Grayscale, with 256 possible shades of gray, and that means 256 possible levels of transparency.

Each RGB Photoshop image (.psd) has three important pieces of visual information:

1. **chrominance** (color info)
2. **luminance** (brightness info)
3. **alpha** (transparency info)

* **note:** The JPEG format does not support alpha channels or transparency.