

# Pen Tool Overview

- **Purpose:** Used to create precise paths, shapes, and selections. Ideal for complex selections, vector shapes, and smooth curves.
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## Types of Pen Tools

1. **Pen Tool:** Create straight lines and smooth curves manually.
  2. **Freeform Pen Tool:** Draw paths freely, similar to a pencil.
  3. **Curvature Pen Tool:** Simplifies creating curved and straight paths without manual anchor point adjustments.
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## Key Components

- **Anchor Points:** Points that define the start, end, or curves of a path.
  - **Handles:** Control the direction and curvature of the path.
  - **Paths:** Outlines created using the Pen Tool (can be open or closed).
  - **Fill and Stroke:** Determines the interior and outline color of a shape.
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## Steps to Use the Pen Tool

1. **Select the Tool:** From the toolbar or press P.
  2. **Create Straight Lines:**
    - Click once to place the first anchor point.
    - Click again to create a straight line segment.
  3. **Create Curves:**
    - Click and drag to create anchor points with handles.
    - Adjust the handles to modify the curve direction.
  4. **Close the Path:** Click on the first anchor point or press Ctrl/Cmd + Enter to convert the path into a selection.
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## Modifiers and Shortcuts

- **Ctrl (Cmd on Mac):** Temporarily switch to the Direct Selection Tool to adjust anchor points or handles.
  - **Alt (Option on Mac):** Adjust one handle of a curve independently or switch to the Convert Point Tool.
  - **Shift:** Constrain path lines to 45° increments.
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## Path Options

- **Shape Layer:** Creates a filled shape.
  - **Path:** Creates a path for further editing or selections.
  - **Pixels:** Directly creates rasterized shapes.
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## Editing Paths

- Use the **Path Selection Tool (A)** to move the entire path.
  - Use the **Direct Selection Tool (A)** to adjust individual anchor points.
  - Use the **Add/Delete Anchor Point Tool** to modify the path's complexity.
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## Common Uses

- Creating precise selections for masking.
  - Designing logos or custom shapes.
  - Drawing vector-based graphics.
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## Tips

1. Practice handling anchor points and curves to gain precision.
2. Use **Stroke Path** for a custom brush effect along a path.
3. Combine the **Pen Tool** with other tools like **Layer Masks** for advanced workflows