How to Make Masking in Adobe Premiere Pro

Masking in Premiere Pro allows you to isolate specific areas of your video for effects or corrections. Here's a step-by-step guide on how to create and use masks in Premiere Pro:

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1. Create a New Sequence

- Open Premiere Pro and create or open an existing project.
- Import your video clips into the project panel.
- Drag a video clip to the timeline to create a sequence.

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2. Apply Effects or Corrections (Optional)

- If you're planning to apply effects (such as color grading or blur) to specific parts of the frame, select the clip you want to work with.
- Open the **Effect Controls** panel (Window > Effect Controls).
- Apply the desired effect to the clip by dragging it from the **Effects** panel to the clip in the timeline.

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3. Select the Mask Tool

- In the **Effect Controls** panel, under the applied effect (e.g., **Gaussian Blur**, **Lumetri Color**, etc.), find the **Mask** section.
- You'll see several mask options:
  - **Ellipse Mask**: Creates an elliptical mask.
  - **Rectangle Mask**: Creates a rectangular mask.
  - **Free Draw Bezier**: Allows you to draw a custom, freeform mask.

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4. Draw the Mask

- **Ellipse Mask/Rectangle Mask**: Click the respective button (Ellipse or Rectangle). Then, click and drag on the video to adjust the mask's size and position.
- **Free Draw Bezier**: Click to create individual points and draw a custom mask around the object or area you want to isolate.
- Adjust the mask using the on-screen handles to fit the specific area you want to affect.

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5. Refine the Mask

- **Mask Path**: Use the **Mask Path** option to animate or adjust the mask's position over time (keyframe animation).
- **Mask Feather**: Adjust the feathering (softness of the edges) of the mask. Increasing the feather creates a smoother, more gradual transition between the masked area and the rest of the clip.
- **Mask Opacity**: Set the opacity of the mask if you want to make it semi-transparent.
- **Mask Expansion**: Use this slider to expand or contract the mask without changing its shape.

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6. Tracking the Mask (Optional)

- If your subject moves, you can track the mask by clicking the **Track Selected Mask Forward** (or **Backward**) buttons in the Effect Controls panel.
- Premiere Pro will automatically track the movement of the subject, keeping the mask aligned with the object.
- You can adjust tracking points if needed, by clicking and dragging them manually.

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7. Apply Effects to the Masked Area

- Once the mask is created and refined, apply any desired effects to the masked region, such as blurring, color correction, or sharpening.
- Only the area inside the mask will be affected by the applied effect.

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8. Keyframing (For Motion Effects)

- To animate the mask, enable **keyframing** by clicking the stopwatch icon next to the **Mask Path** property in the Effect Controls panel.
- Move the timeline playhead to different points, adjust the mask position, size, or shape, and Premiere Pro will automatically animate between keyframes.

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9. Finishing Up

- If necessary, add multiple masks to the same clip for different areas (e.g., foreground and background adjustments).
- Review the masked area for any issues like hard edges or misalignment, and make adjustments as needed.
- Once satisfied with the result, render the sequence to see your final masked effect in real-time.

Tips:

- Use a combination of feathering and opacity adjustments to create smoother transitions and blend the mask more naturally with the rest of the frame.
- For more complex masking (e.g., tracking objects with irregular movement), consider using the **Rotoscoping** tool in After Effects, which offers more advanced masking techniques.