A Cloning Tip

Use Adobe Reader's Zoom tool, above, to zoom in on these images so you can see what I'm describing.

Here's an easy way to make your Photoshop Cloning much more accurate, and therefore much faster. As an example, I'm going to clone myself out of the photo at the left, above.

If the subject is against a plain wall or a dappled pattern such as foliage, it's easy to clone him out. You probably already know that you select the Clone Tool ("S" for when it was called rubber **S**tamp) and put the cursor over an area you want to copy, press and hold alt/option and click. Now you have a "loaded" cloning tool and it will reproduce the image from its source wherever you click next.

Here's a slightly more advanced method.

Be sure you're at 100% Opacity & Flow with Aligned and Sample All Layers checked and that any adjustment layers above your image layer(s) are temporarily turned off.

I always, *ALWAYS* create a new layer to clone on so I'm not damaging the image layer pixels, and so I can always go back and change/erase what I've cloned.

Let's get to work:

Put your Clone Tool cursor over one of the straight lines in the image (here I'm starting with the frame) which needs to continue
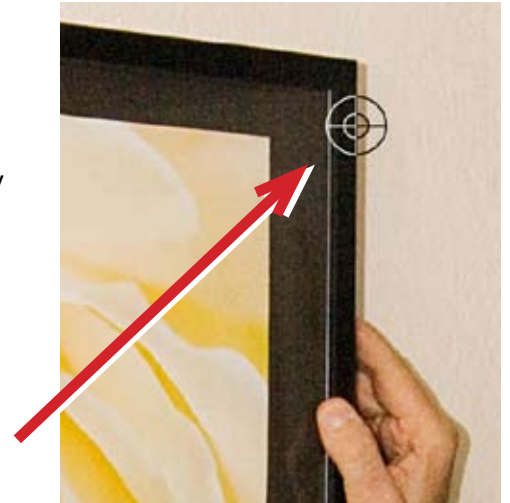
over the subject to cover him. Hold Alt/Option and very carefully align your cross hair with the straight line. Click your mouse and release Alt/Option, and you've "loaded" your Cloning Tool.

Position your Cloning cursor over an area you wish to cover up / "remove."

So far, nothing we've done is different from cloning a plain background over a subject. Now I'll show you the part I didn't catch onto for a long time.

Temporarily press Alt/Option *again* so you can see your cross hairs again, and use

them to precisely align with the edge again, where you want your Cloning Tool to stamp.

Release Alt/Option and click down and begin cloning.
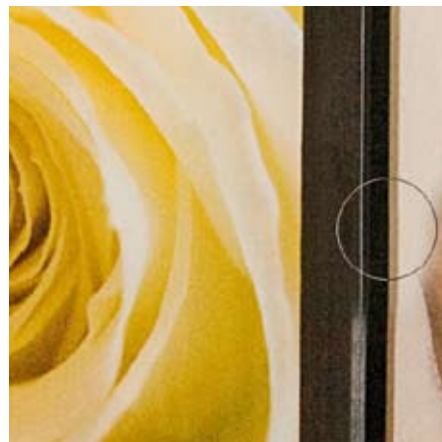
Your cloned image will be precisely aligned with the line you're trying to continue.

Notice that all of the lines which happen to be parallel to the line you selected first (such as the highlight on the frame, the molding around the window and the adjustment bar for the blinds) are also reproduced exactly where they would be if your subject weren't there. This is very cool!

If your background has a noticeable perspective (converging lines), you'll need to use your Vanishing Point Filter (PS CS2 & CS3) or, since you're cloning on a separate layer, you can Image > Transform > Distort your cloning to match the perspective of the photo (as I did on the blind slats in the finished photo).