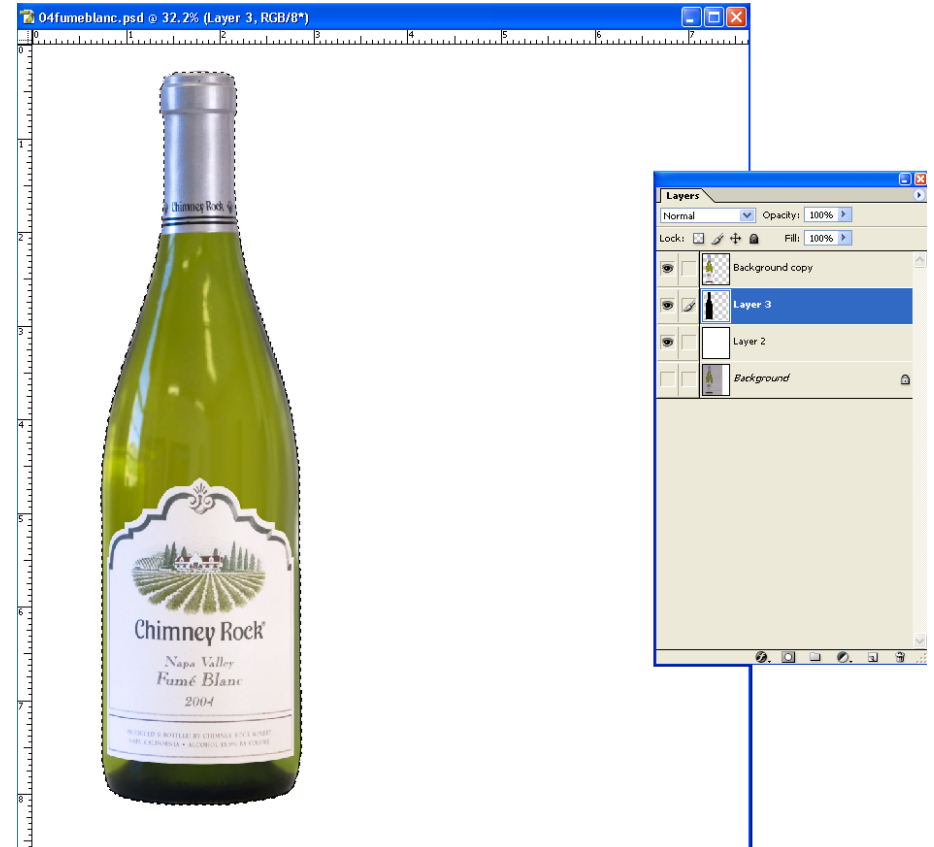
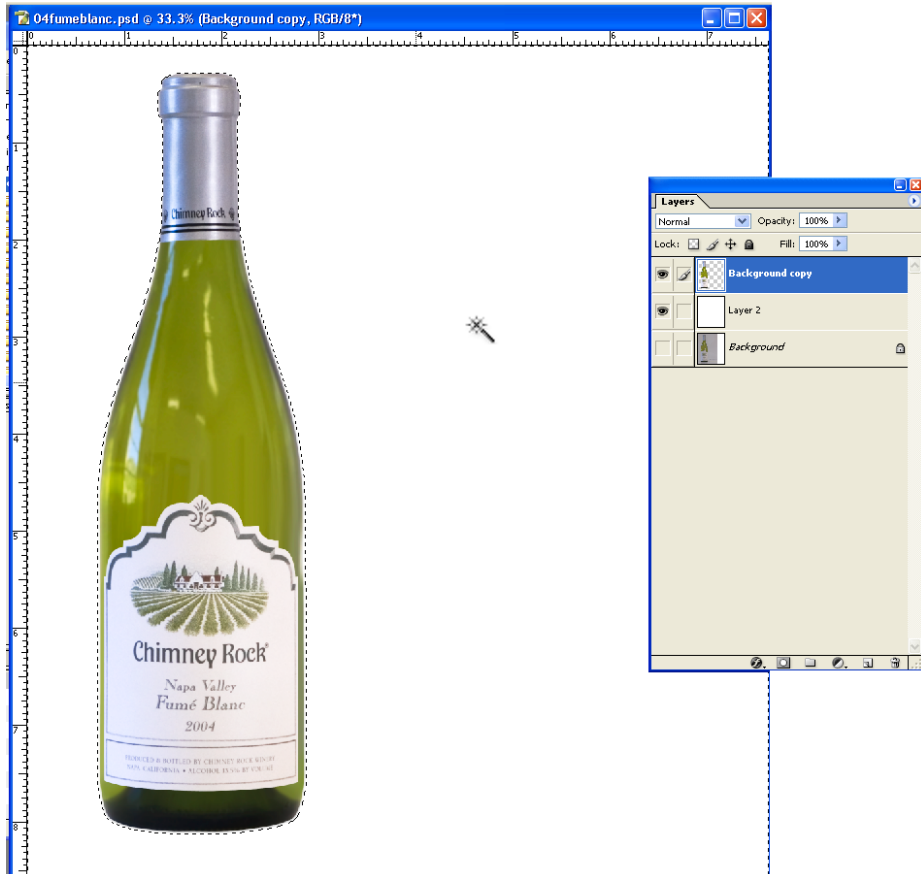


Creating a cast shadow (use your *Magnify* tool to see these layers palettes!)

Just a note before you go to the trouble of creating a cast shadow from scratch: If your subject already has a cast shadow before you cut it out from its background, you can skip this part and go right to [page six](#)!

If you do want to create your own cast shadow, even from a complex subject, here's how I do it.

Here I've selected my subject (perhaps painstakingly) and it's on its own layer. Now to begin, on the subject's layer, I use the magic wand to select the area away from my subject (selecting everything except the subject).



Then I press shift-control-i (select inverse) to select *just* the subject area. I create a new layer by clicking on the New Layer icon at the bottom of the layers palette, and press Alt-backspace to fill with my foreground color (default is black).

Having filled my selection with my shadow color, I press control-d to deselect the area.

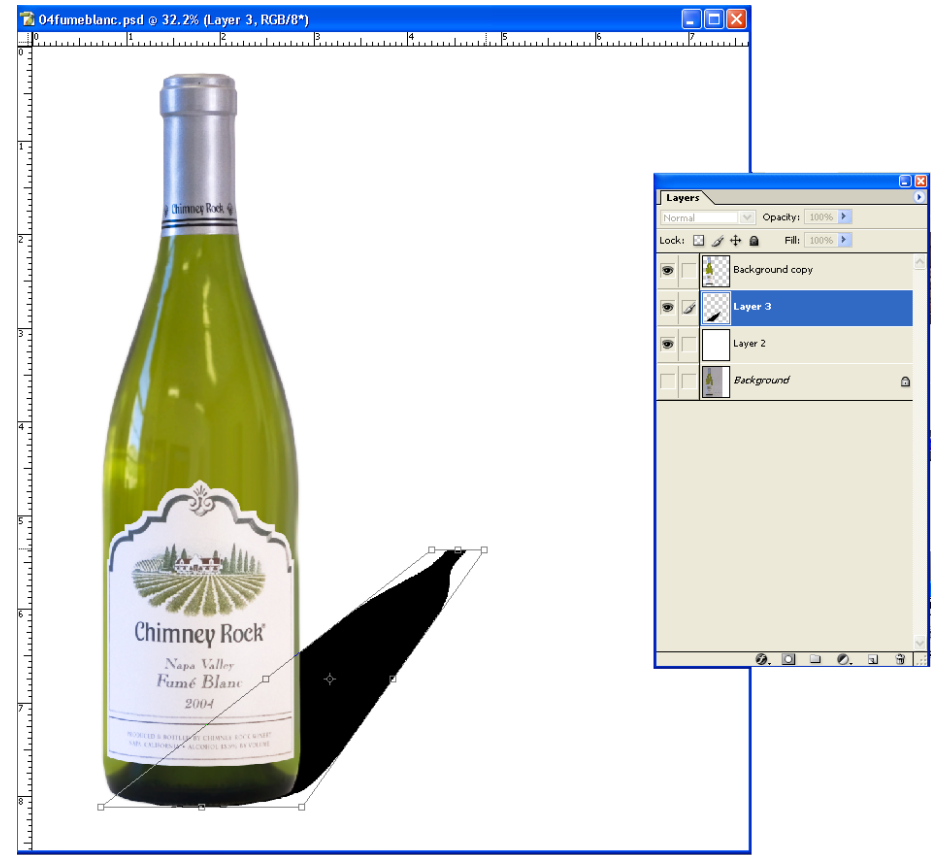
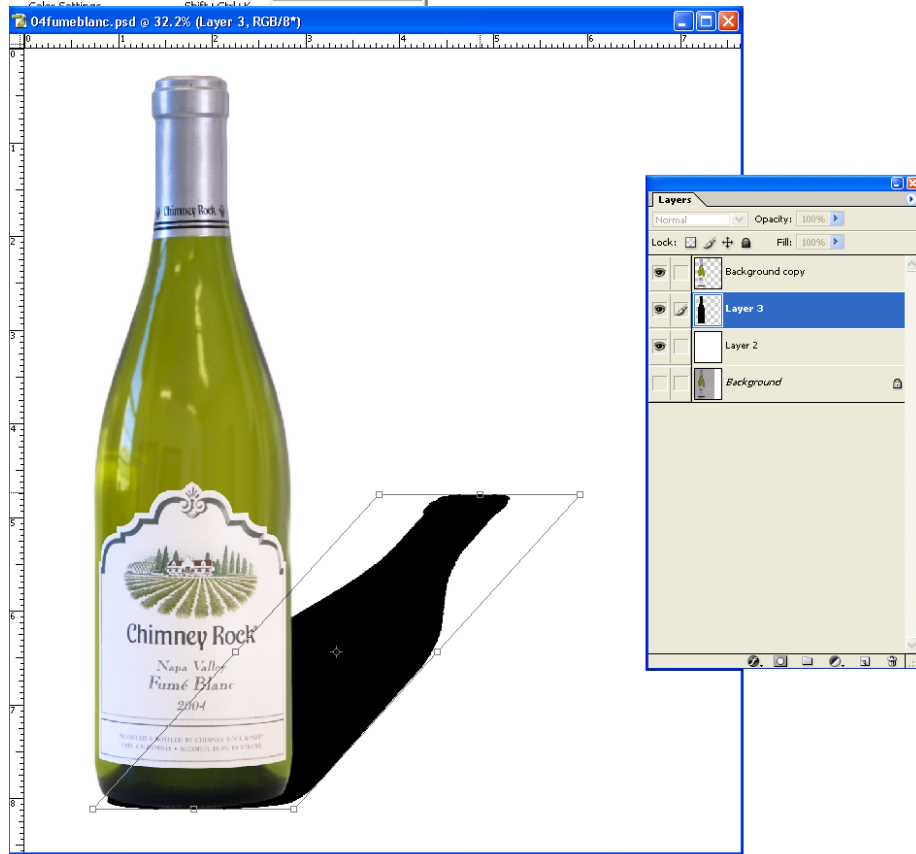
Then (while addressed to the same, shadow layer), I select Edit>Transform>Distort.

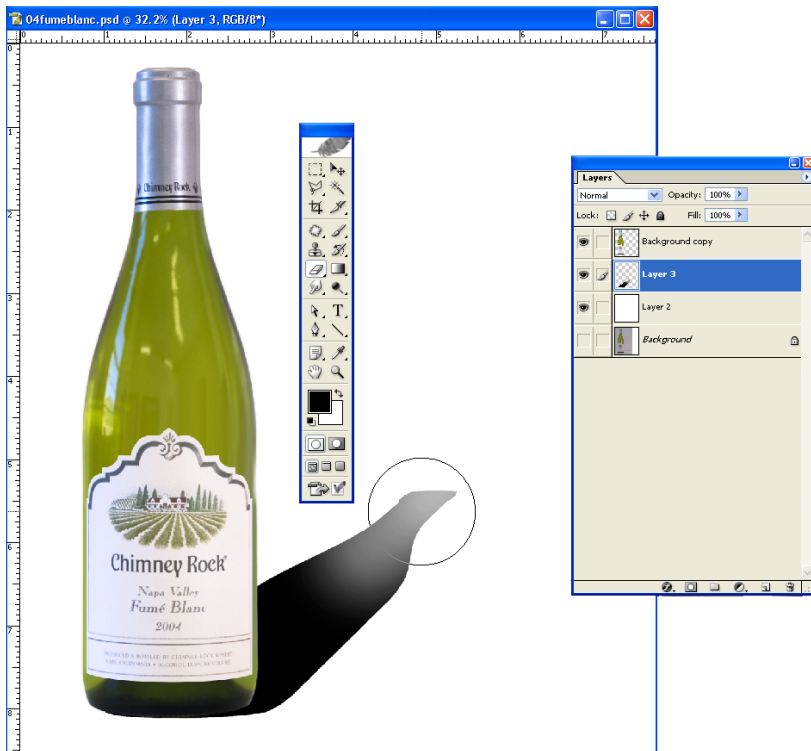


I drag the center, top “handle” to wherever I want the shadow to be cast. This must be appropriate to any shading on the subject itself. If the subject has no noticeable shading on itself, you’re free to place your shadow anywhere.

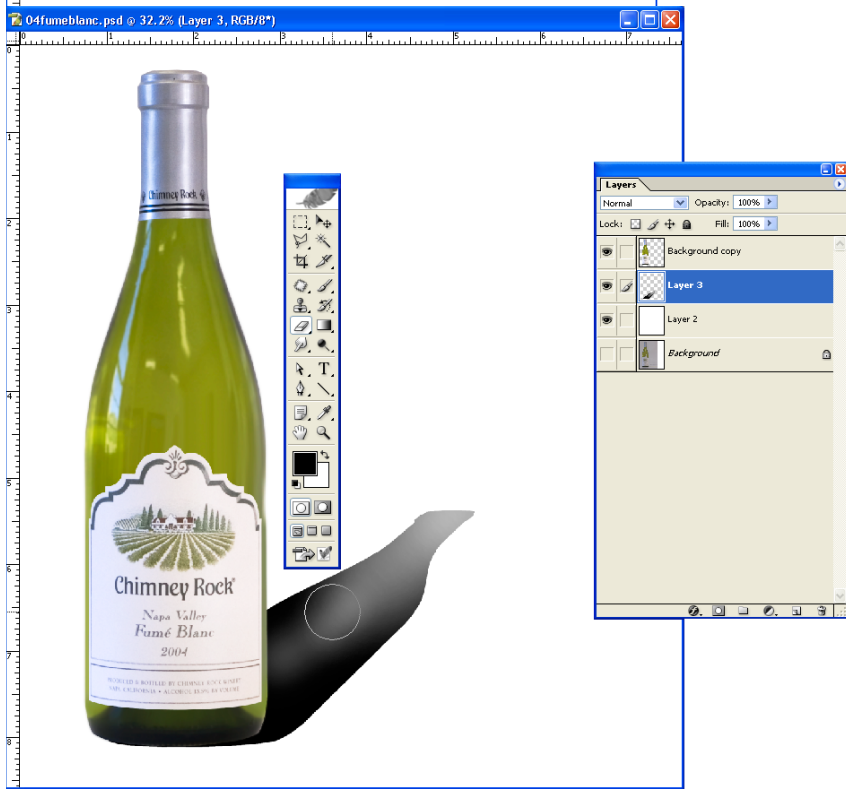
I drag the upper corners together a bit (exaggerated here, just to show you) as they would be in perspective: the further something is from you, the smaller it appears to be.

I click Enter when I like the shape of my shadow.



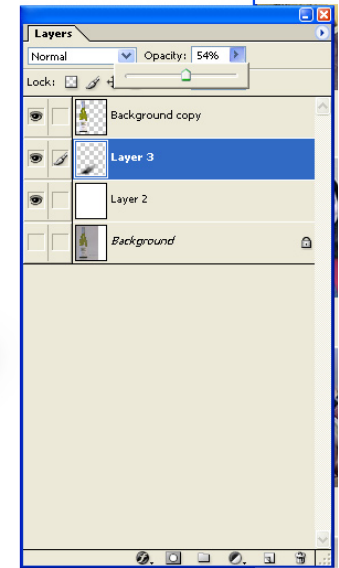
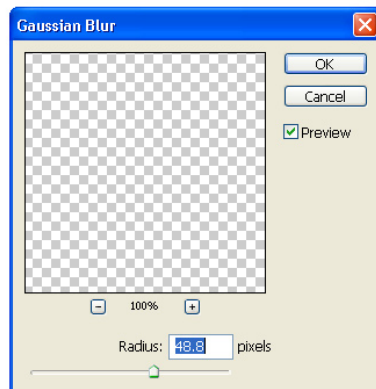
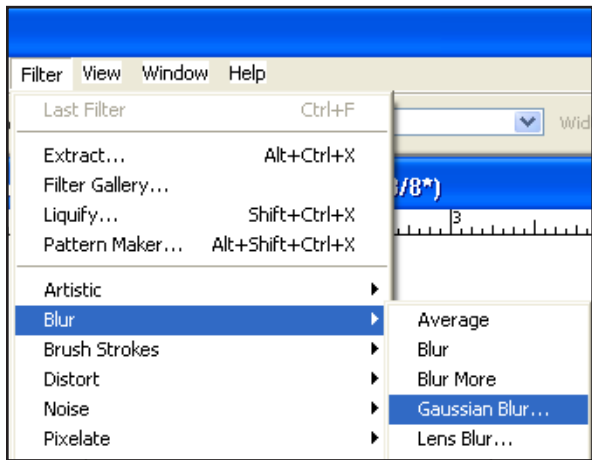


I use a soft brush eraser (with 30-ish opacity and flow) to subtly fade out the shadow from the distance to the foreground where it remains opaque.



Since my subject is translucent, I'm also erasing a bit of the center area.

I'm still addressed to my shadow layer, and I select Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur (the only blur which lets you choose the extent of the blur).



Then I reduce the opacity of my shadow layer to make it more subtle.

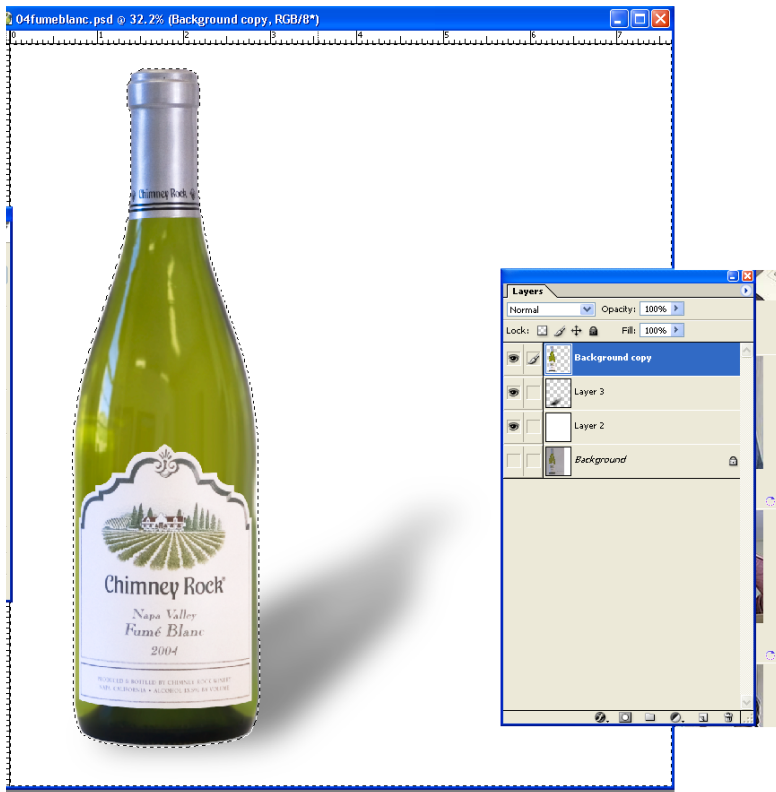
It doesn't look right does it? It needs a shadow *directly under* the bottle to make it look right.



None of the light bouncing around the scene is lighting the area called the "umbra."



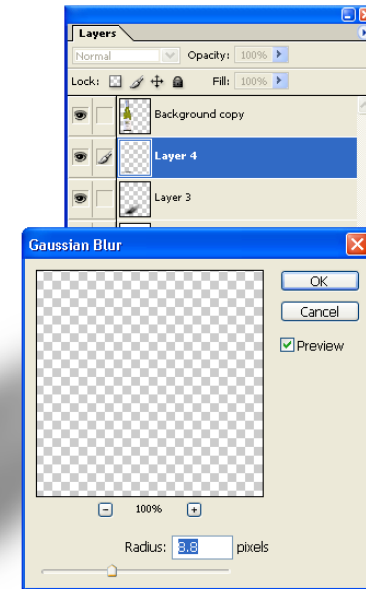
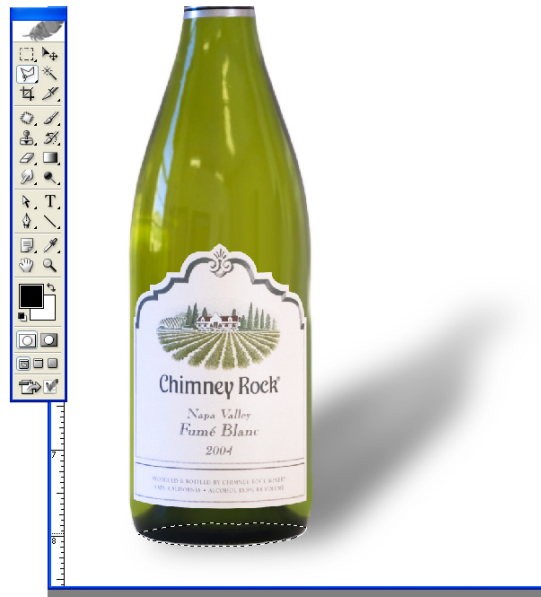
A little of that light *is* reaching the area called the "penumbra." We've made the penumbra, now for the umbra.



I go back to my subject layer, select everything else with the magic wand, and select inverse (just the subject area).



Using the polygon lasso, with the “Subtract from selection” option selected, I select all of my selection except the base of the bottle. When I close my selection “loop,” the unwanted area is not selected any longer.



I make another new layer and fill this selected area with my shadow color. I click my down arrow a couple of times to move the shadow down to the surface the subject is resting upon.

I then do a less subtle gaussian blur on this layer and maybe reduce its opacity, but less than I reduced the opacity of the penumbra.

Now my bottle shot is ready to be used anywhere!



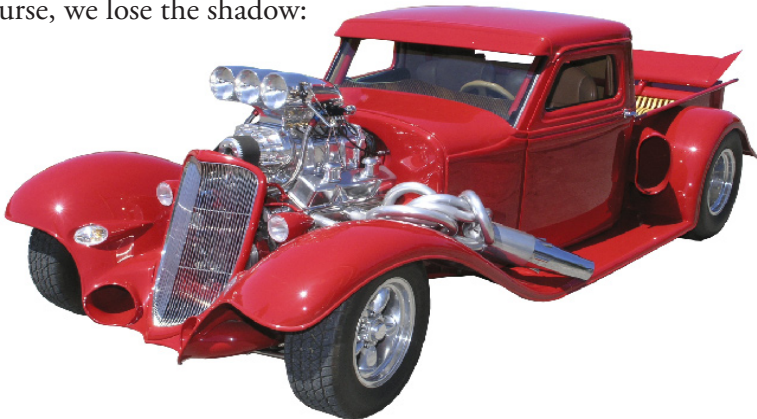
If your subject already has a cast shadow

If your subject has a shadow, but you're going to lose it as you remove the subject from its background, you're half way there!

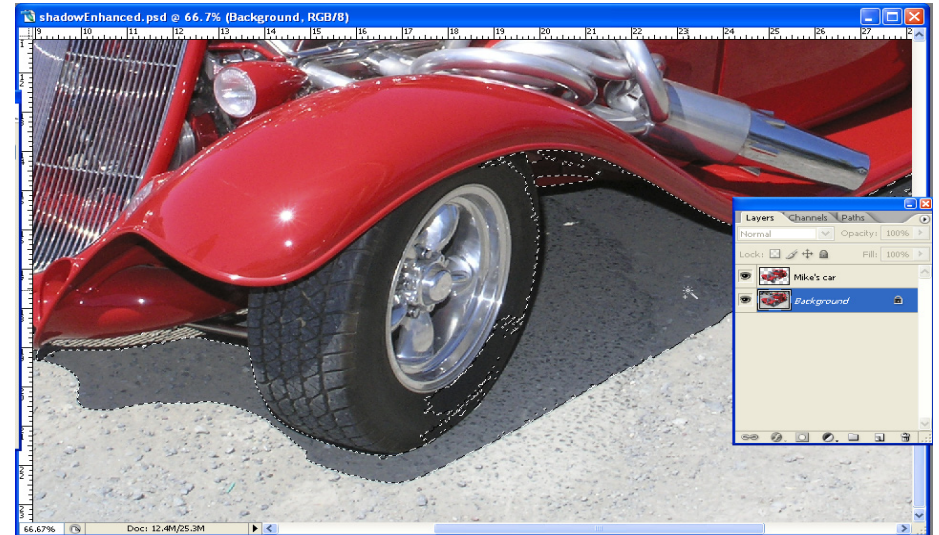


I prefer the moments just after sundown to take a photo of a beautiful car like Michael Cooper's hot rod, but this *is* about shadows... I took this photo around noon, filling the shadows a bit with my flash.

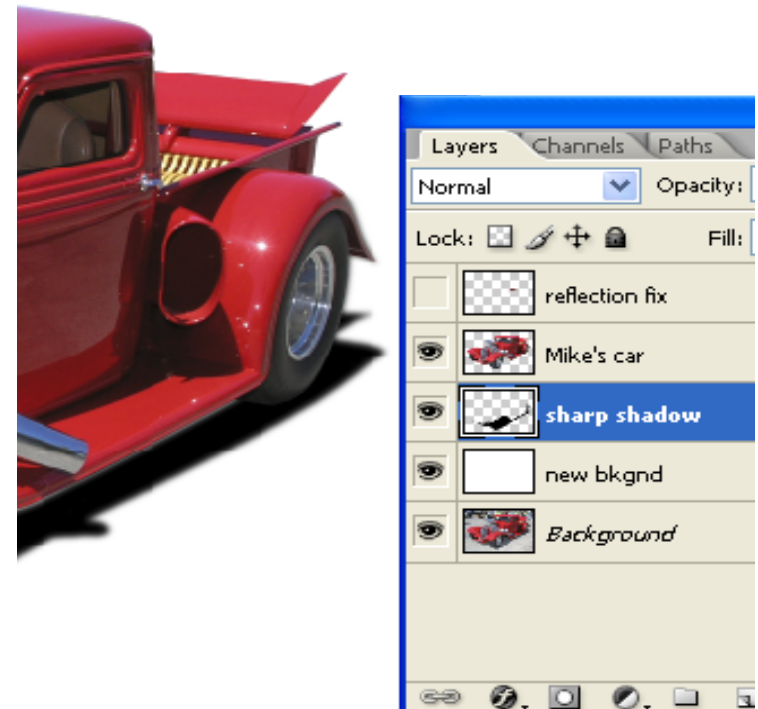
Above, we have a shadow, but when we separate the car from the background, of course, we lose the shadow:

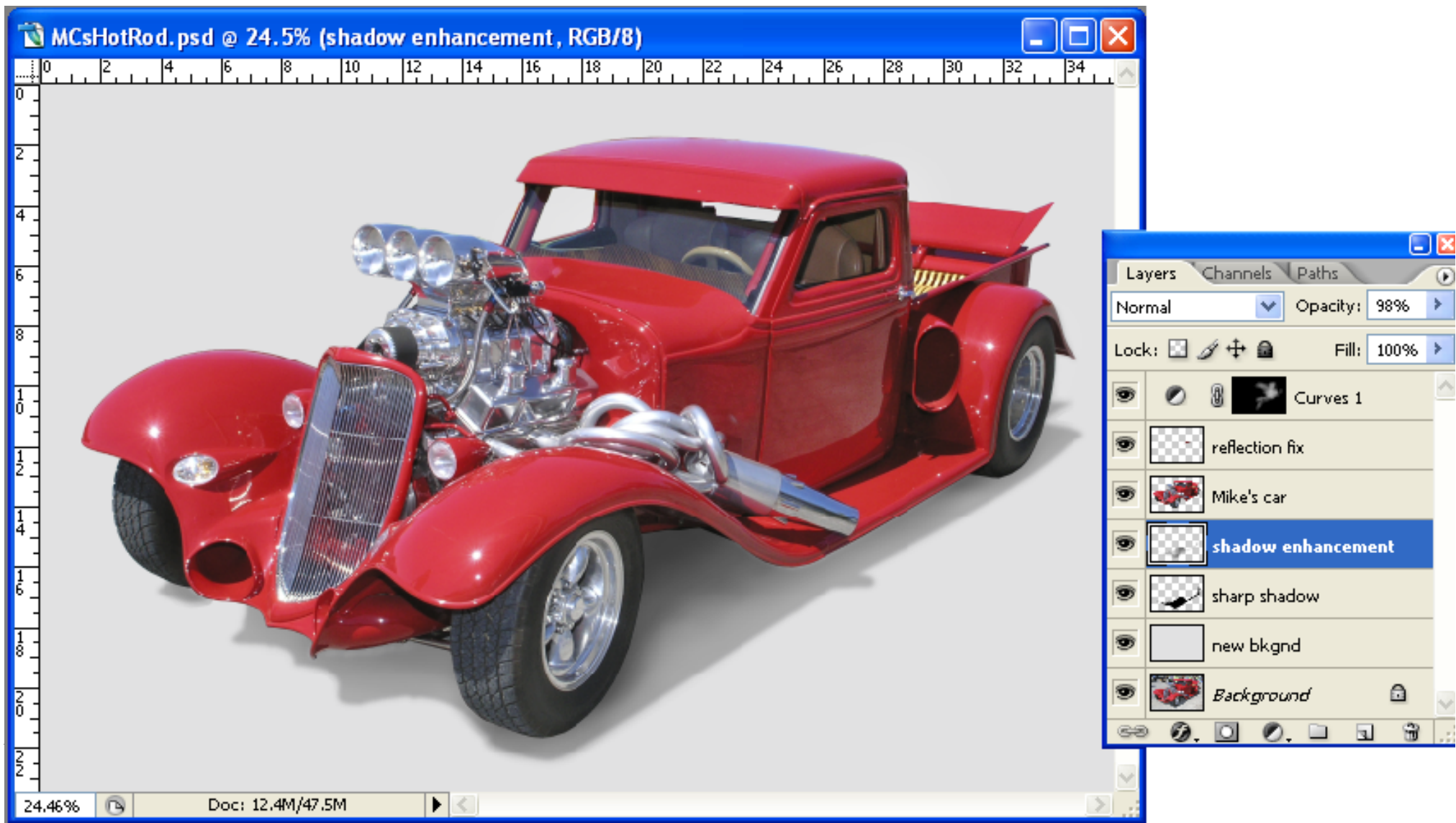


Below, I've gone back to the original, Background layer and selected the shadow of the car (using whatever selection method works best in the situation... in this case the Magic Wand).



Then I create a new layer and fill my selection with whatever shadow color I want. Then I deselect and use Gaussian Blur to soften the shadow, and I reduce the Opacity of the layer.





Re-selecting the shadow (Shift-Control/Command-D), using a soft edged brush, I paint in the [umbra](#) (shadow enhancement) on yet another layer. Then I add whatever background I want (now this can easily be changed in future versions), and tweak the reflections and make minor curves layer adjustments, and I'm *there* (see the next page for the final photo).

You can see many other intricate examples of my removed backgrounds and cast shadows at <http://susandrasculptpts.com/>

I do this type of thing so frequently that I've made an Action in Photoshop which will, in one keystroke:

- Copy my background layer
- Put three blank layers beneath the copy (for shadow, umbra and a new background)
- Put a Curves Adjustment Layer (no adjustments yet) and a Neutral Overlay Layer* over the copy of my (original) background layer.

* Page three of my [Photoshop Techniques](#) PDF.

