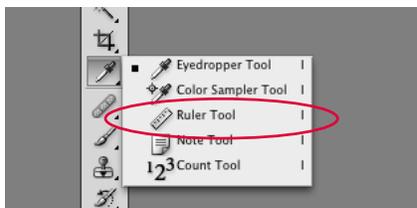


Straightening and Cropping Photographs



While attending the annual meeting of the Communications Committee in Austin this past October I was asked to snap a photograph of Bev's Buzzing Bees. The picture taken (above) is a bit crooked with some excess (note the door to the left). Well, there is an easy fix!

A little known or used tool in Photoshop is the **Ruler Tool**. In CS4 it is one of the *spring loaded* tools under the eyedropper. If you click and hold the eyedropper, five tools will pop up as options (hence *spring loaded*), one being the **Ruler Tool**. Simply click on the ruler. The cursor will change to a cross hair with a small ruler under it.



Click and drag a straight line using something in the photograph that is either true horizontal or vertical. In my photograph the top of the brick wall provided a nice horizontal line. Don't worry if your line isn't exactly straight the first time, simply click and drag a new line until you get the straight line you desire.

Now, the magic. On the menu bar click **Image, Image Rotation**, and then **Arbitrary**.



A Rotate Canvas dialog will open with the angle of the rotation calculated as well as the direction. You only need to click OK and the image will rotate to square up with the line drawn with the **Ruler Tool**....shazam.

Now we can crop out the excess in the image and size it for our needs.

There are several ways to crop a photograph in Photoshop but the **Crop Tool** (4th from the top in the tool bar) turns out to offer the most flexibility. Once selected, it is important to note the options that are now visible in the options bar on the top of the page.

Indicate the width and height desired in either inches (in) or pixels (px).



As cropping can both increase and decrease a photograph's size it is generally better to leave the resolution blank so that the photograph's resolution is

maintained to it's maximum for printing.

Industry standards for resolution are a minimum of 300 pixels/inch for photographs printed on photographic paper; a minimum of 225 pixels/inch for photographs or graphics used in newsletters or magazines; and for web use, a resolution of 72 pixels/inch is used to limit the file size and minimize page loading times.



To crop the photograph simply click on the image and drag a box over the portion of the photograph that you want cropped. Once you let go of the mouse a grey out area will appear over the area of the photograph that will be removed with cropping. Adjust as needed and press enter.



Now the picture is nice, straight, and ready for publication.

More of these tips and tricks, "Jim's Gems" (Bev's idea), will follow each quarter for editors, photographers, web masters and more from the Communications Committee. If you have a specific request or questions just E-Mail me at photographsbyjim@yahoo.com