Photoshop Tips

Tip #2:
Cropping

Contributed by:
## Eric Rasmussen
a.k.a. "Sylvanite"
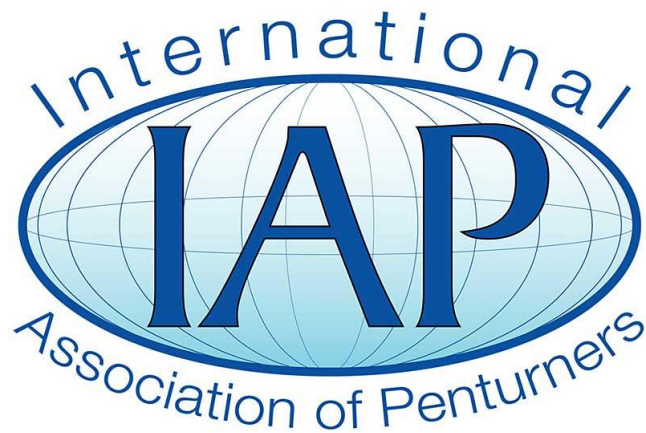
"More is not always better – sometimes more is just more." – Sabrina Fairchild

While it's generally a good idea to compose a photo in the viewfinder, there are times you wind up with extraneous area around your subject. Here is an example.


This photo has a couple of big problems. First of all, the pen is primarily vertical in orientation (which is called "portrait" format), but the picture is wider horizontally (called "landscape" format). This wastes a lot of space and makes the pen look small. Second, the background is not uniform. The gaps in the backdrop distract from the pen.

The solution is to crop the image. Click on "*Image->Crop*", or click on the "Crop Tool".
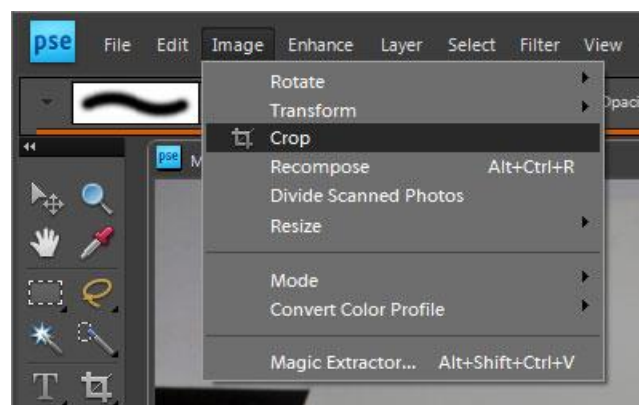
Now we need to choose the "aspect ratio". This is just the ratio of the horizontal and vertical dimensions, not the resolution of the image. One can choose a common value from the drop-down box, enter custom proportions, or select no restriction at all. If you want your final image to be a particular size (such as 400 by 600 pixels), set the width and height accordingly. This is useful for getting photos to line up on a web page, for printing the right size on photo paper, of if you simply like round numbers. In this case, I've chosen a width to height ratio of 4:6.
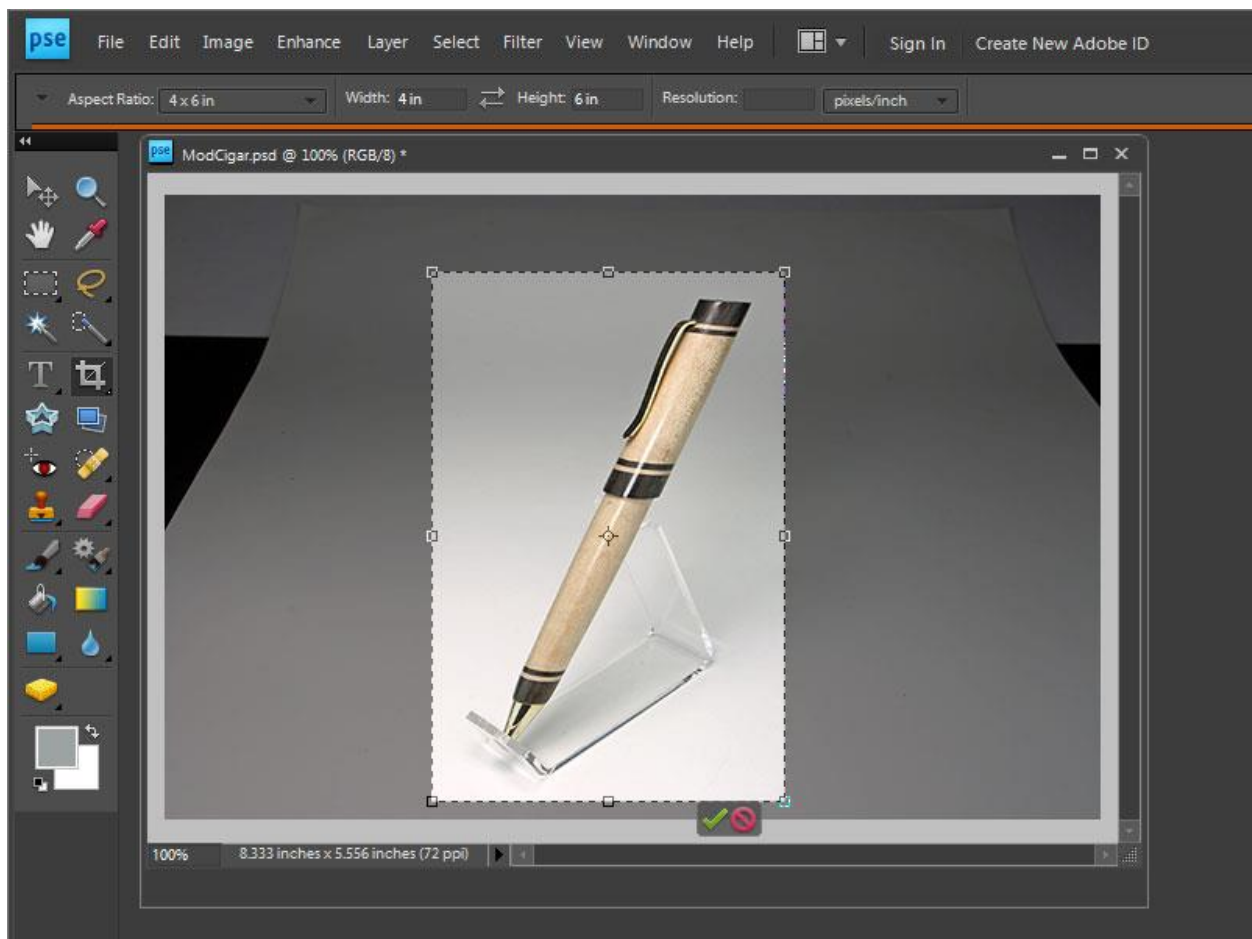
Drag the mouse pointer from one corner of the desired image to the opposite corner. The crop area will be highlighted. Don't worry if it doesn't come out exactly right. You can adjust the corners or the center by dragging them.

When you are satisfied with the results, click the green checkmark at the bottom.
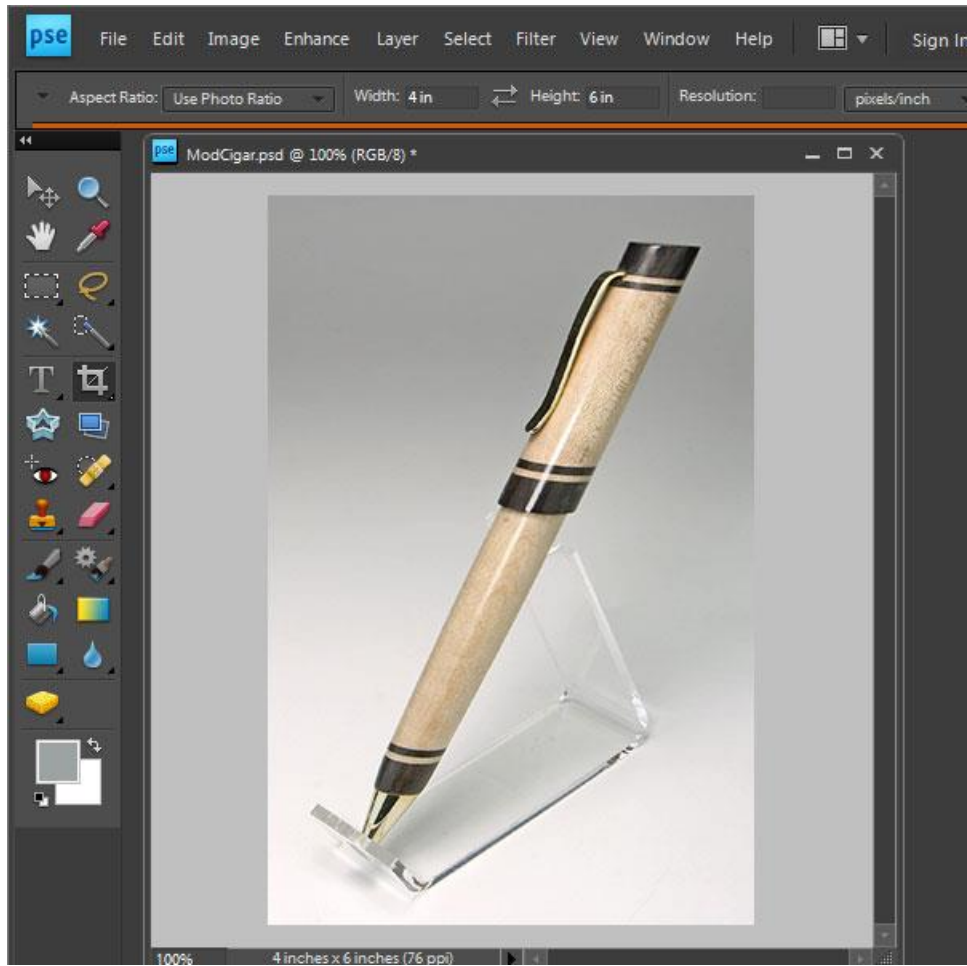
That's it! The extra area is gone. Only the subject remains. The pen occupies the entire frame and is in the correct orientation. Now it is a well-composed photo.