

In **Adobe Camera Raw (ACR) V17.0**, several powerful masking tools are available for making selective adjustments in your images. These include AI-powered options and manual masking tools, offering flexibility for various editing needs. Here's a detailed look at the different masks available, where to find them, and how each works:

Types of Masks in ACR V17.0

1. Brush Mask

- Location**: Found in the Masking panel under Brush.
- How It Works: Allows you to manually paint over specific areas of the image. This is useful for making detailed, targeted adjustments. You can control the brush's size, feather, flow, and density to refine the mask's effect.

2. Linear Gradient Mask

- Location: In the Masking panel, select Linear Gradient.
- How It Works: This tool creates a gradient mask in a straight line, ideal for skies or areas with a natural gradient. Click and drag to create a smooth transition from one adjustment to another, such as lightening a sky while keeping the ground darker.

3. Radial Gradient Mask

- Location**: Found under the Masking panel in **Radial Gradient.
- How It Works: Creates an elliptical mask with a soft edge, perfect for highlighting subjects or adding vignette effects. You can adjust the feathering and invert the mask to apply effects inside or outside the selected area.

4. Color Range Mask

- Location: In the Masking panel under Color Range.
- How It Works: Selects and adjusts specific colors in the image. Click on a color to isolate and adjust it, or select multiple colors for more complex masks. This mask is great for enhancing or adjusting specific hues in a scene, like making blues in the sky richer.

5. Luminance Range Mask

- Location: In the Masking panel, choose Luminance Range.
- How It Works: Targets areas based on brightness levels. Use this to select highlights, midtones, or shadows for adjustments. You can refine the range for precision, ideal for enhancing tonal contrasts without affecting other brightness levels.

6. Depth Range Mask

(available if the image has depth data, often from certain phones or cameras)

- Location: In the **Masking** panel under **Depth Range**.
- How It Works: Allows you to make adjustments based on depth data in photos, typically for images taken with depth-sensing cameras. This mask is helpful for selectively editing background or foreground elements.

7. Select Subject Mask

- Location: In the Masking panel under Select Subject.
- How It Works: This AI-driven mask identifies and isolates the main subject in the image, which is particularly useful for portraits, wildlife, or objects. Once selected, you can apply targeted adjustments to just the subject, like brightening or enhancing clarity.

8. Select Sky Mask

- Location: In the Masking panel, choose Select Sky.
- How It Works: Automatically detects and selects the sky area. This is ideal for landscape photography, allowing you to adjust the sky's brightness, color, or contrast independently from the rest of the scene.

9. Portrait Masking (People Masking)

- Location: In the Masking panel under Select People (or People Masking).
- How It Works: Specifically designed for portraits, this tool allows targeted adjustments to facial features such as Skin, Eyes, Lips, Teeth, and Hair. It lets you fine-tune these features individually, enhancing the overall look of the portrait. It's particularly useful for subtle enhancements like brightening eyes or softening skin.

10. Background Mask

The Background Mask is not explicitly labeled as "Background Mask" in ACR, but it can be created by using the **Select Subject** mask and inverting it to apply adjustments specifically to the background instead of the main subject.

- Location: In the Masking panel under Select Background
- How It Works: After selecting Select Background, ACR's AI detects and isolates the main subject in the image.
- Uses: This mask is particularly useful for making the subject stand out by darkening or blurring the background, adjusting background color, or applying selective effects like vignetting.

11. Object Mask

The Object Mask in ACR V17.0 is an AI-powered tool that allows you to select specific objects in your photo by either drawing a rough selection or clicking directly on the object. ACR's AI then refines the selection to isolate that object accurately.

- Location: Found in the Masking panel under Object Mask.
- How It Works: After selecting Object Mask, you can either click on an object or paint roughly over it, and ACR's AI will detect the edges and create a precise mask around the object. This mask can be used to make targeted adjustments to specific objects without impacting the surrounding areas.
- Uses: Ideal for isolating elements like cars, buildings, trees, or any focal points within an image that you want to adjust separately. It allows you to control exposure, contrast, saturation, texture, and other settings specific to the object.

Accessing Masks in ACR V17.0

1. Open the Masking Tool: In Adobe Camera Raw, click on the Masking icon in the toolbar (circle icon with a line through it).
2. Create a New Mask: In the Masking panel, select Create New Mask and choose from the available types (Brush, Linear Gradient, Radial Gradient, Color Range, Luminance Range, Depth Range, Select Subject, Select Sky, Select People, Background Mask or Object Mask).
3. Control and Flexibility: Each mask type can be added, subtracted, or intersected with other masks, giving you detailed control over how adjustments are applied to the image.
4. Refine and Adjust: After creating the mask, you'll see controls like Exposure, Contrast, Highlights, Shadows, Texture, Clarity, and Saturation, allowing you to apply precise adjustments within the masked area.

Notes: