Photoshop 5.0 features/tips and tricks #1
Here are a few gems Adobe placed for us in Photoshop 5.0. Enjoy.

Curves:
Photoshop 5.0 has greatly enhanced curves controls, but these new features are not readily evident. Open an image in Photoshop 5.0. Call up the Curves dialog (Command M on Mac, Control M on PC). Now an insanely great feature is the ability to target an area in the curve itself from the image data in your open files (any file you happen to have opened). If you hold down the command key and click anywhere on the image, that tonal area will be selected as a point in the curve. The curves can be fine tuned in 5.0 in two ways. If you make one point on the tone curve (either using the technique above or simply by clicking a point on the curve), you can now tweak the curve numerically by entering figures in the small fields that show up below the curve (labeled Input or Output). A better, more controllable way to do this is to use the arrow keys on your keyboard. The up, down, left and right arrow keys will move the point on the curve: accordingly. Lastly, you can move more than one point on the tone curve by selecting and deselecting the points using the Shift Key. Shift click on a point to make it active or inactive. Then when you use the arrow keys on your keyboard, you can move some or all the points on the tone curve. Active points on the curve are points that look "hollow," points that are selected are black. To delete a point on the curve, hold down Command D/Control D and click on a point you wish to remove. You can use any of the tips above on the composite channel (RGB) or individual channels. Note that this feature does not work with CMYK files.
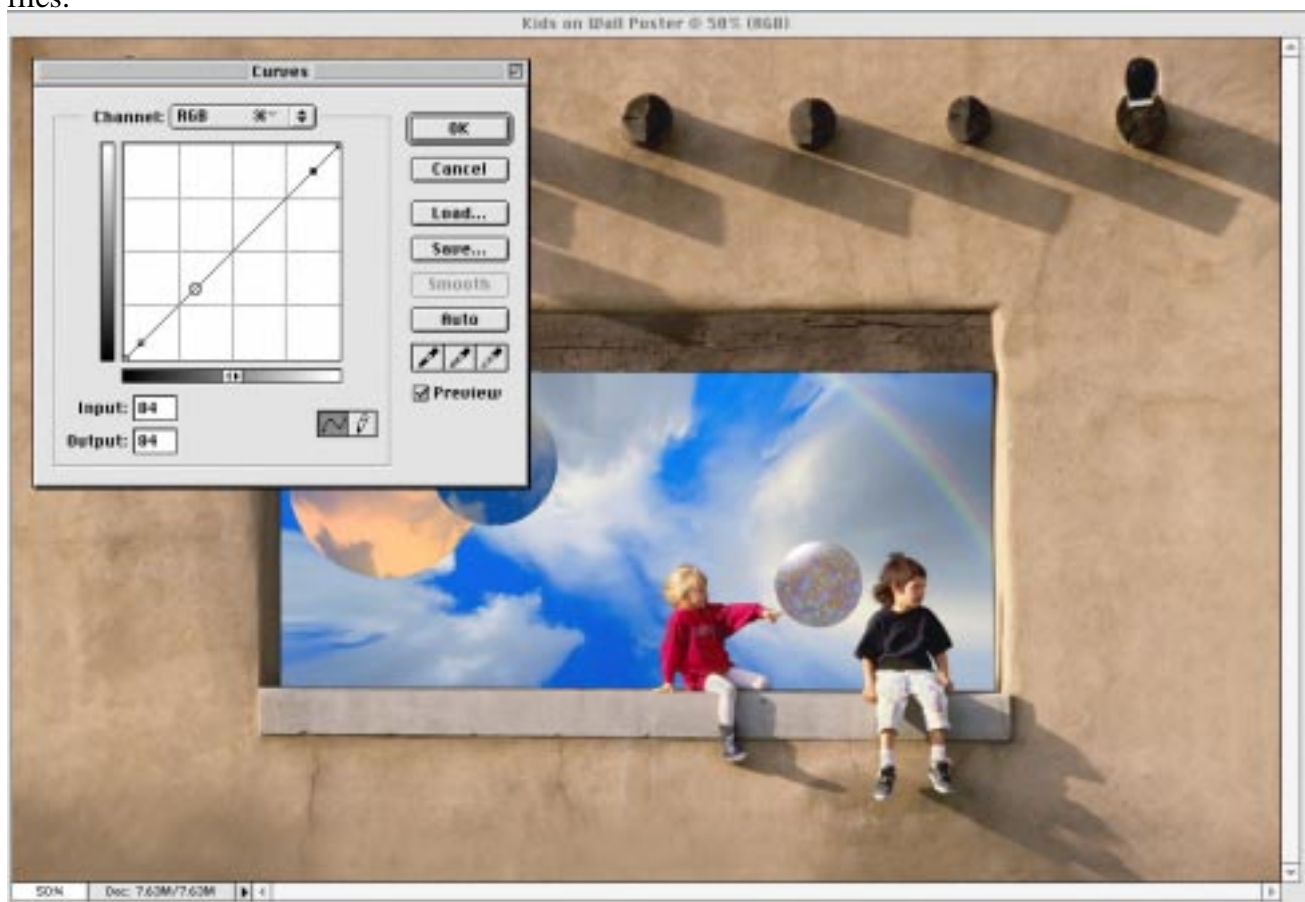
Here I have command clicked on the blue sky and that area of the RGB tone curve is showing up in the Curve dialog (larger, "hollowed" point). Notice I can manipulate this point with the two numeric fields below the curve dialog which currently indicate 84.

Crop Tool:
There have been a few subtle and useful changes made to the Crop Tool in version 5. The first is that you can now move the crop tool past the actual image area. First this may seem like a bug, but it is a great feature if you need to straighten out a scanned image by rotating the file while cropping. In versions before 5.0, if you tried to rotate the image and the crop marquee got to the edge of the image, it simply stopped. You would have to increase the canvas and then go back to crop. In 5.0, when the crop tool is extended from the image, you will end up cropping AND increasing the canvas past the image (as far as you moved the crop outside the image). Be aware of the background color because it will be used when new canvas is added to your image. Another change to the Crop tool is how it seems to "snap" to the edges of your image. This can sometimes be a problem when you want to really fine tune a crop very close to the edge of the image. To turn off this snap behavior, hold down the Command Key (Control Key on the PC) as you drag the crop marquee. Speaking of rotations of the crop, new in Photoshop 5.0 in this and other kinds of marquees and selections where rotation is an option is that small center point icon. Rotations will rotate around this center point, but you can click and drag it virtually anywhere in the image. This rotation icon can also snap to the edges of the image or snap back into the dead center of the image. Try moving this rotation icon around the image and then try rotating the crop by moving the cursor until you see a curved double arrow icon indicating the ability to rotate.

Magnetic Lasso and Polygonal Lasso:
I call this one "look ma, no hands." In versions before 5.0 if you where making a selection using the lasso tools and in the middle you took your hand off the mouse, the lasso would "snap back" to the origin of the lasso. If the phone rang in the middle of a complex selection, you didn't dare take you hand off the mouse! This behavior is still true for the standard lasso, but with both the Polygon and Magic lasso you can be making a selection and when you lift your hand off the mouse, the end point remains in place. But the real power is that you can now zoom in or out of an image and pan around the image as you are making a complex selection. The space bar will toggle on the Hand Tool so you can pan the image without losing the selection. You can use the Command and Plus or Command and Minus key to zoom in and out all while keeping your selection in place. Often it's necessary to zoom into an image when using the lasso tool, pan around and zoom out while making a complex selection and now you can. If you want to use the Polygon tool and the standard freeform lasso tool, just hold down the option key while dragging around the image and you can toggle back to the behavior of the lasso tool. What is great is that you can make freeform selections and when you release the mouse, the selection will remain in place so you can continue to zoom and pan or simply take a break. This is also true of the Magnetic lasso in that you can toggle it's behavior off by using the option key which will allow you to use both the Polygon and standard (free form) lasso tools. With the abilities of the Magnetic Lasso and Polygonal Lasso, why ever even use the standard Lasso tool?

Transform selections/paths:
One really useful new capability in Photoshop 5.0 is the free transform on selections and paths. In Photoshop 4.0, you could make a selection and apply a free transform (Command T) which allows you to rotate, scale, move, skew etc. to the selected pixels. In 5.0 you can now apply the same effect but rather then affect the image, you only affect the selection (or path). This is a great feature for those times when you make a complex selection but want to tweak it. The selections could be "Expanded" or "Contracted" by up to 16 pixels but the Free Transform provides far more control and allows you to move the selection as you transform the selection, thus making it easier to see exactly how much transformation is needed. To skew a selection, hold down the command key until the

cursor changes to a triangle and then simply click and drag on one of the anchor points on the selection. TIP: Try holding down the control key to call up many useful contextual menus that will affect the current selection (see below). Like earlier versions of Photoshop, use the Enter key to apply the transformation or use the Escape key to cancel the transformation.

Here is an example of using the Free Transform on a selection. Using the contextual menu features in Photoshop I was able to call up the menu you see here. By holding down the Control key and clicking in the image, this contextual menu appears providing many easy to select options.

Layer Effects:
Layer Effects are a new feature in 5.0 and they have some interesting possibilities that even 3rd party plug ins that appeared to compete with these features don't have. If you don't know about Layer Effects, we can apply several effects such as drop shadows, inner shadows, inner and outer glows and bevel and emboss effects on any layer. What I found very cool about the Layer Effects is the ability to copy and paste an effect from file to file even with varying resolution files. Try this: Make some type using the new editable type tool. When finished you will have a type layer. Verify this layer is active in the Layers palette. Now under the Layer Menu, select Layer Effect and experiment with various effects. You can combine multiple effects by insuring that the check boxes in each effect are on and so you can temporarily turn an effect on and off by using these check boxes. Here comes to cool part. Under Layer Effect, select "Copy Effect." Now open a new file and insure that the resolution of the file is different than the first file. Go ahead and make a new type layer by entering any text you wish. Under Layer Effect, select "Paste Effect." Notice that the effect is created perfectly despite the differences in the resolution of the two files.

Spotting and tiling:
When I spot an image after making a scan, I verify the image is set to 100% magnification (Command Option Zero on the Mac). I want to verify I have every area in my file examined and spotted so I use the new key commands to "tile" the image. Once the file is magnified to 100%, simply click on the "Home" key on your keyboard to move the view to the upper left corner (the "End" Key will move the view to the lower right corner). Once in the upper left corner, do your spotting with the clone tool and to move exactly one tile over to the right, use the Command + Page Down button. To move down one tile, use the Page Down button and to move one tile up use the Page Up button. But using the various combinations you can tile the entire image from top left to bottom right, spotting each tile as you go. Keep an eye on the Navigation palette so you can see where in the image the current tiled view is on. Note, Command + Page Up moves to the left.

Multiple Sample Points:
New in Photoshop 5.0 is the ability to create up to 4 different sample points in your image. The info palette will expand to show one or as many as 4 different readings. You can move the sample point about the image so that while doing corrections, you can get before and after readings as you work. Now the really cool part. Did you know that while you have a correction dialog open, such as Selective Color, you can actually move the points around the image? Simply hold down the Shift Key and drag on one of the sample points and you will see the before and after readings update immediately after you let go. This is an insanely great feature because it allows virtually unlimited feedback of the corrections you make, while you are actually making these corrections. After you are finished with the corrections, you can delete a sample point by holding down the Option key while your cursor is over a sample point until you see the cursor change into a pair of small scissors.

If you forgot to assign sample points prior to making a correction, hold down the Shift Key over an image while correction dialogs are open (Curves, Levels, etc.) and you can assign a sample point onto the image (up to 4) while the correction dialog boxes are open. Some corrections use the eye-dropper tool while open (such as Replace Color) and will not allow the shift key to pick a sample point unless you click on either the + eyedropper or - eyedropper tool first. Hue/Saturation also uses the eyedropper tools when specific colors will be selected from the image. However, when the Hue/Saturation "Edit" pop down menu is set to "Master," the eyedropper can be used with the Shift key to assign sample points, then switch to a color to edit to use the eyedropper to select colors in the image to pick. Or click on either the + eyedropper or - eyedropper tool first, then use the Shift key over the sample point to create or move it. Sample points can also be moved about the image while correcting if you hold the cursor over the sample point while holding down the shift key and moving the sample. To remove the sample point, drag it off the image. When you finish making the adjust-ments in a correction dialog box, you will notice that the sample points seem to disappear. They will reappear next time you open any other correction dialog box.

History:
You can't save history items or snapshots with your images. However, there's one way you can reconstruct them. Make a snapshot at a stage of your editing where you want to record a state in the editing session. Save that snapshot to disk by creating a new file (create new document from current state button on the far left of the History palette). Save to disk with a name. If you have several of these saved states, you can open up the original file and simply drag and drop the initially snapshot from the other files into the original file and each snapshot will show up in the history palette. If you do not have the History palette set to automatically make a snapshot upon opening the file (the default), you will need to make one when you open the files you wish to use for adding to a snapshot to the original file. This technique will not work if any of the files you saved are different in size and resolution from the original file.

Hue/Saturation:
This tool has been greatly enhanced. The Master pop down menu in the interface allows one to alter the hue, saturation or lightness of the entire image. But the power comes into play when you pick a specific color in this pop down menu to alter, making this a new and powerful selective color adjust-ment tool. Pick a color (Reds) and notice how the two color bars below the eyedropper tools now become real useful. The top bar represents colors you can select to alter; the bottom bar will show the changes you make using the Hue,Saturation or Lightness sliders. You have 3 different ways to carefully select colors in the image using the first slider bar. The dark area in the center moves the entire slider. The white bars allow you to pick the range of colors to be affected and the outer white triangles allow a fall-off of colors being selected. These 3 different sliders allow one to precisely pick a range and fall-off of colors to manipulate. But, a real easy way to pick colors to affect in the image is to use the first eyedropper. If you click on a color in the image, it will be selected in the bar we just discussed. But, a great way to precisely pick a range of colors is to hold down the shift key while dragging across the colors in the image you want to pick for manipulation. Notice when you do this that the entire range of colors in an object you drag over is automatically picked and the top color bar sliders update the selected colors. Once you have a range, an easy way to inspect what you've picked is to move the saturation slider all the way to the left, making all the selected colors gray. Use this like a "quick mask" to see whether you need to move the other sliders in the color bar (range or fall off) to add or subtract colors to be affected. The + and - Eyedropper allow colors to added or subtracted from the selection but it's more precise to use the actual range slider or falloff slider. Once you properly get all the colors selected, move the saturation slider back to 0 and then

start moving the hue (to change color), saturation or lightness to affected the selected colors. Notice the bottom color slider shows the changes you make using the Hue/Saturation or Lightness sliders. You can click on the Edit pop down menu and continue to edit other colors in the list (you can edit the Reds, then click and edit the Blues and so on). If you want to make multiple corrections to one area of colors (say Red) here's how you can make up to 6 individual edits. Once you make your first edit to the Reds, select a different color in the Edit Popdown (for example, Yellow). Now simply move that selection slider that appears in the yellow area of the color ramp towards the red area of the ramp. Notice that when you get into the red area, the pop down menu will change it's name from Yellow to Red2. Go ahead and manipulate the sliders to get the effect you want. If you want to further work on just the Reds, pick yet another color from the Edit pop down menu and move that slider into the red area of the color slider and so on.

Don't forget you can make a selection prior to using this great new tool. Usually, you don't need to make a very precise selection if the object you want to alter is different in color from it's surroundings. Since the new selection tools in Hue/Saturation are so powerful, you'll likely not affect any of these colors.
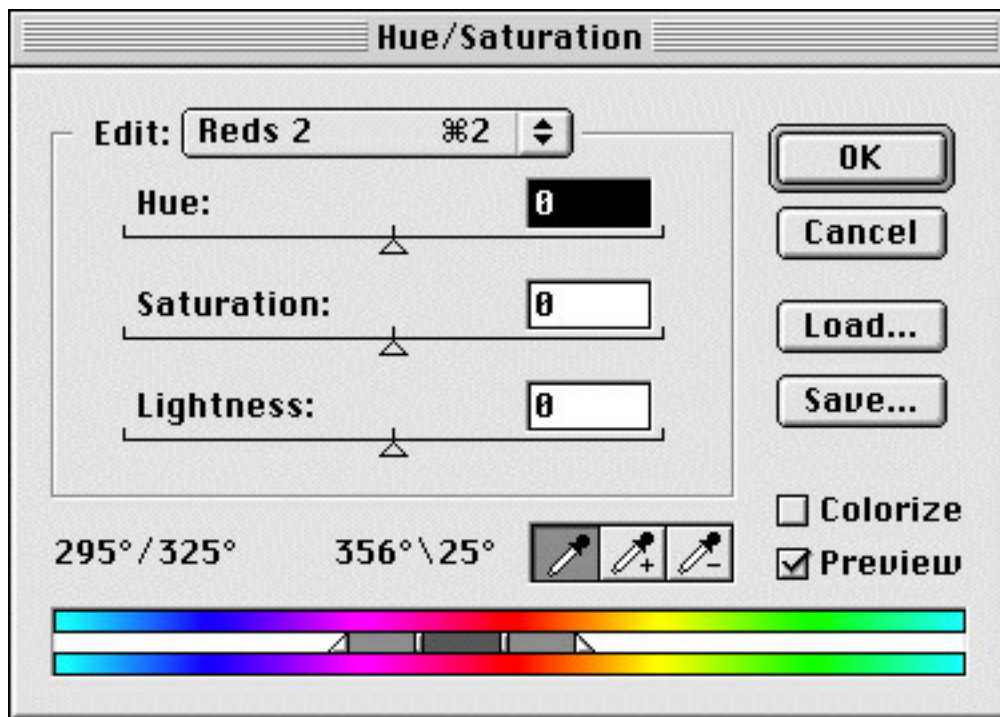
Here is an example of using the Hue/Saturation dialog. Notice that I have selected a second manipulation of the reds indicated by a Red2 label in the Edit Pop down menu. The top color slider shows the area of the reds in the image I've selected with a fall-off going from magenta on the left and orange on the right. If I move any of the 3 sliders (Hue, Saturation of Lightness), the bottom color bar will update and display the changes.