PERFECT FIT
Crop and Resize Originals to Fit any Picture Frame

Candid action photos leave little time for composition and can usually be improved by cropping to remove unwanted detail. New megapixel cameras allow final images to be cropped and resized to fit any picture frame using this procedure while still retaining enough resolution for quality prints. These instructions are based on PhotoShop but can be adapted depending on the version used or for any graphics editing program that supports layers. Apply this technique to improve the impact of your pictures.

Example: A 6 megapixel photo (3000x2000 pixels) named clown.jpg will be copied, cropped and resized to make a new file clown6x4.jpg suitable for making a 6"x4" print.
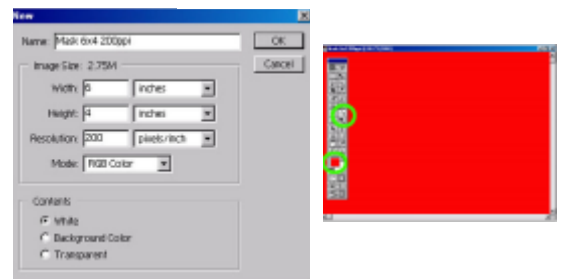

Original photo showing intended 6x4 area for final cropped and resized picture.

1 CREATE A FINAL SIZE MASK
a) *Create a new mask file:*
   Open Photoshop. Menu (top of screen): File>New
   Name: Mask6x4_200ppi.jpg Width: 6 inches, Height: 4 inches, Resolution: 200 pixels/inch
b) *Fill the mask with a color ready for overlaying on the photo*
   Menu: Select>All
   Toolbar (Floating): Foreground color - red, Select Paintbucket tool. Place cursor on image and left click
   The entire mask file image area should now be red.
c) *Save the mask file for use again on other photos*
   Menu: File>Save As>Mask6x4_200ppi.jpg
   Reuse this file for additional photos at this size.
c) *Copy the final mask to the clipboard ready to apply to the photo*
   Menu: Select >All, Edit>Copy

2 MAKE A COPY OF ORIGINAL PHOTO AND OVERLAY MASK
a) *Copy original file to preserve it for other uses*
   Menu: File>Open>original.jpg, Image>Duplicate>As: Clown6x4_200ppi.jpg
   Menu: File>Save As>Clown6x4_200ppi.jpg
b) *Overlay the mask from step 1 that is on the clipboard*
   Menu: Edit>Paste
c) *Reduce the Opacity to see through the mask*
   If the layers palette is not visible, select Menu: Windows>Show Layers
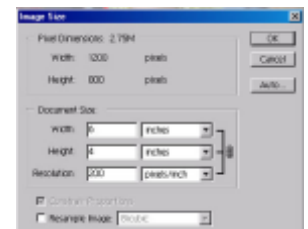   Layers Palette: Opacity>50%

Set image dimensions to final required picture size eg 6"x4" and resolution for typical print output of 200 dpi

3 RESIZE MASK TO FINAL SIZE AND CROP
a) *Size the mask for the desired final picture size*
   Menu: Edit>Free Transform
   Left click anywhere on the red mask and drag to place the upper left corner at desired location
   Hold down the SHIFT key to constrain proportions, place mouse over lower right corner and drag the lower right corner to the desired location. Mask proportions should not change as it is resized.
   Double left click on the mask to apply the transformation.
   Toolbar: Move tool. Left click on mask and drag to position
   Repeat if necessary to exactly size the mask over the desired final image.
b) *Crop picture to the final selected image size*
   Toolbar: Select Magic wand. Ensure the mask layer is selected. Click on mask.
   An outline should appear around the mask. Menu: Image>Crop
c) *The final size image should now fill the window. Delete the mask.*
   Layers Palette: left click the mask layer, drag it to the trashcan icon at the bottom of the palette
d) *Save the final correctly sized image as a jpg file*
   Menu: Image>Image Size> Width 6 inches, Constrain Proportions - checked,
   Resample Image -unchecked.   The height should automatically scale to 4 inches. Only change resolution setting if more than 300 pixels/inch to reduce upload times at no loss of quality.
   Menu: File>Save As>clown6x4_200ppi.jpg

Free transform mask to the desired final size ready for final cropping.

Set image size to final dimensions. Resample only if more than 300 pixels/inch

Final 6"x4" picture after cropping and resizing

4 UPLOAD FINAL FILE TO ONLINE ALBUM OR PRINT SERVICE
a) *The final image clown6x4.jpg is ready for uploading to an online album or making prints*
   Enter cachelan.com in a browser and log in as WEBCARD using the PIN from a webcard
   Upload the file clown6x4.jpg and put in an album. It will be automatically sized to fit the screen when displayed. Alternatively, send to a photo finisher for making a 6" x 4" print.