

TIMESTONE

SOFTWARE

performance imaging solutions



Chroma Key Module User Guide

Introduction

Welcome to the Timestone Software Chroma Key Module!

This user guide provides a simple, quick and easy guide to keying your green and blue screen images and replacing their background with a new one.

If you have used other chroma key software you will more than likely be able to “jump right in”. On the other hand if this is your first venture into the world of “Green Screen” this manual will help you become familiar with the concepts and tools of a chroma key workflow .

The workflow for the Chroma Key Module can essentially be divided into two parts:

- Keying the images (removing the background – usually green or blue)
- Placing a new background

This quick start guide also assumes the user is somewhat familiar with the other Timestone Software applications and is already comfortable with such concepts as template design, labeled images, importing a text file and data entry.

About the Chroma Key Module

The Timestone Software Chroma Key module is *not* a stand-alone application. It is an optional utility used in conjunction with any Timestone Software applications capable of image editing.

For programs running on the License Server a special chroma key license is required. Applications requiring a USB hardlock will need a chroma key enabled hardlock in place of the regular USB hardlock.

Keying the images

The process of removing the background from an image, thereby making the background transparent, is called “keying”. The background can be any color but generally is either a blue or green screen. For the purposes of this document we will assume the background is a green screen and will therefore refer to such terms as “green screen” and “green spill”

What makes a good green screen image?

The art of green screen photography is beyond the scope of this User Guide. Briefly the background should be lit with soft, even, shadow-less lighting and the subject well removed from the background to minimize the possibility of spill (green colored light reflecting off the background onto the subject.)

The process of keying an image is far simpler with good, clean images devoid of spill. Moreover the prospect of applying the result to bulk images in an automated workflow is greatly enhanced.

The Chroma Key tools

The Chroma Key tools are available either as menu items from the **Chroma Key** menu item or from the **Chroma Key Toolbar**. Many tools are also available as keyboard shortcuts.

Whether the toolbar is hidden or displayed can be set as a program default. (When not using the software for keying images you may prefer to hide the toolbar.)

To display or hide the Chroma Key Toolbar go to File>Options>Image Correct and check or uncheck the “**Use Chroma Key**” option as needed. Note the selection only takes effect when the program is re-started.

The Chroma Key toolbar

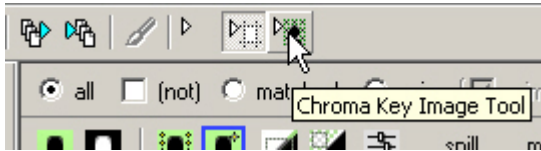
All the tools needed to successfully key your images are available from the **Chroma Key toolbar**. Many tools are also accessible with keyboard shortcuts.



The tools are grouped into sets according to their function. We shall look at each tool in more detail as needed.

Activating the Chroma Key toolbar

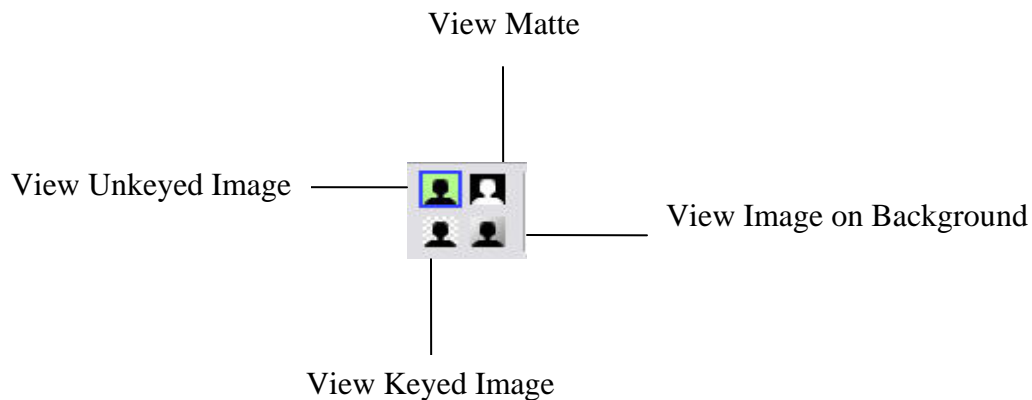
The tools in the Chroma Key toolbar are accessible after clicking the “**Chroma Key Image Tool**” from the main toolbar.



In the above screen grab, clicking the **Chroma Key Image Tool** button will take the images out of cropping mode and into Chroma Key mode.

The different views

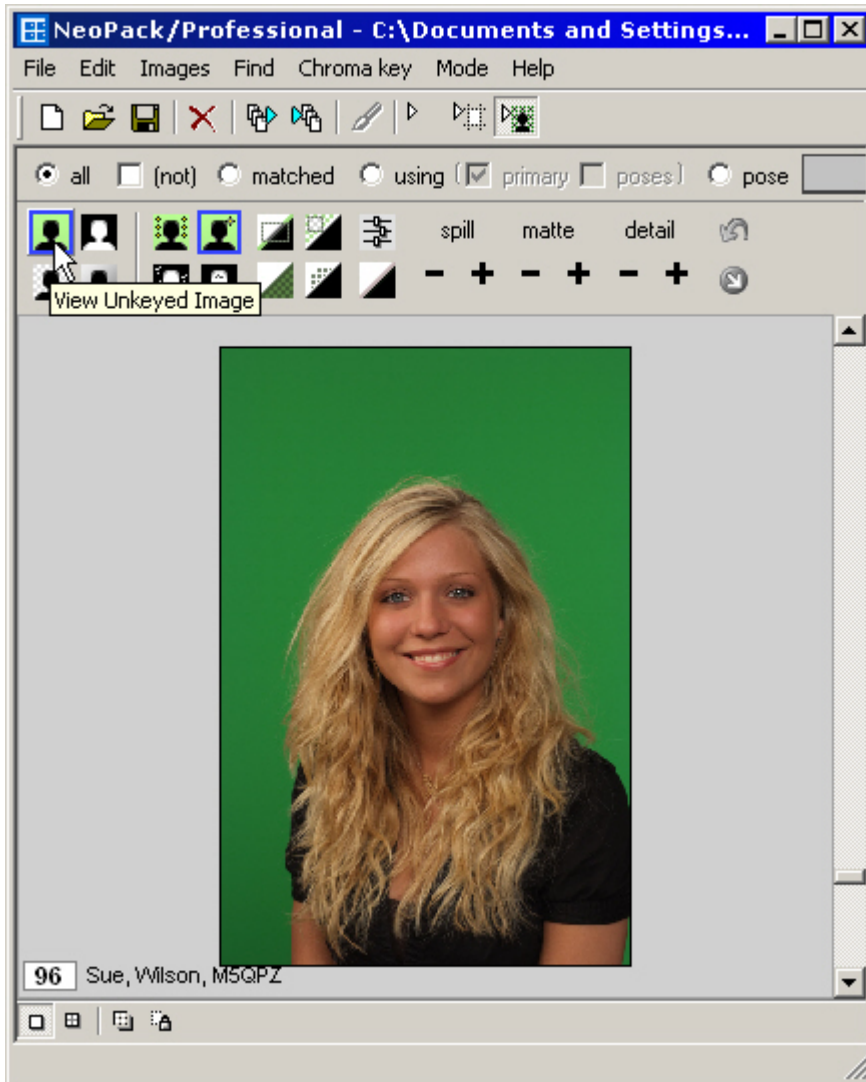
The first set of tools are not really tools but buttons to toggle your view of the images between four different states. It is important to realize the images when in Chroma Key mode.



The current view is designated by a blue rectangle around the icon. For example in the screen grab above, the current view is the Unkeyed Image view.

View Unkeyed Image

In this view the images appear as imported and the original background is always visible even after the images have been keyed.



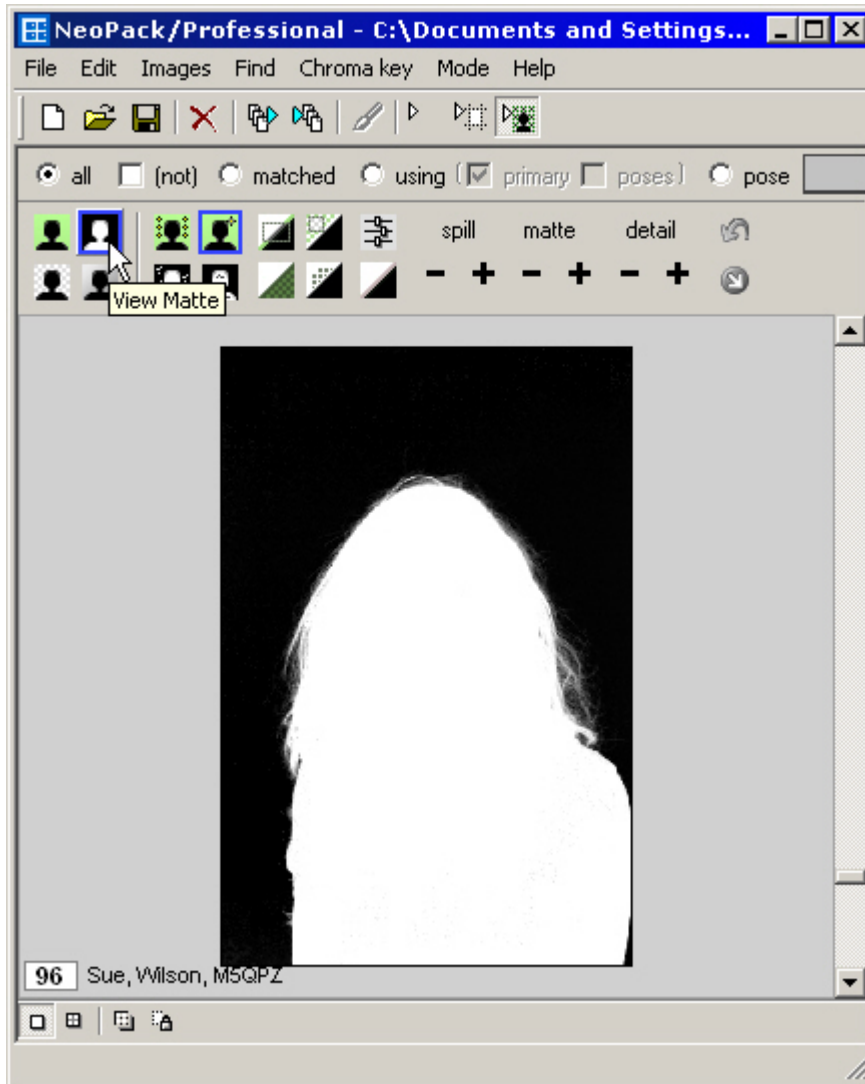
To quickly toggle to the Unkeyed Image view from any other view right click with the mouse

View Matte

Once an image has been keyed or partially keyed a matte is generated. The matte can be viewed in the View Matte mode.

The matte is essentially a monochrome mask in which pure black pixels are completely transparent while pure white pixels are completely opaque. Grey pixels are partially transparent.

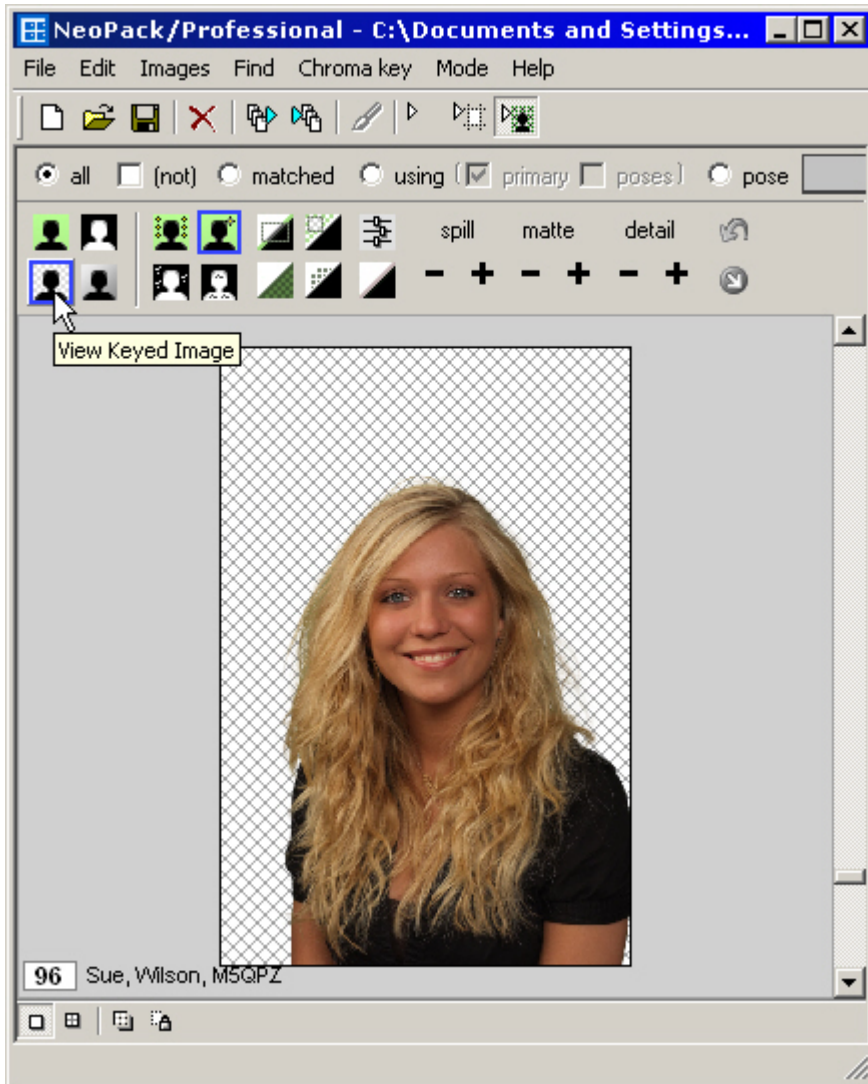
The matte is an important element in keying the images. The matte view is used when cleaning the background and foreground and its use will be discussed later.



To quickly toggle to the Matte View from any other view Ctrl-Right click with the mouse

View keyed image

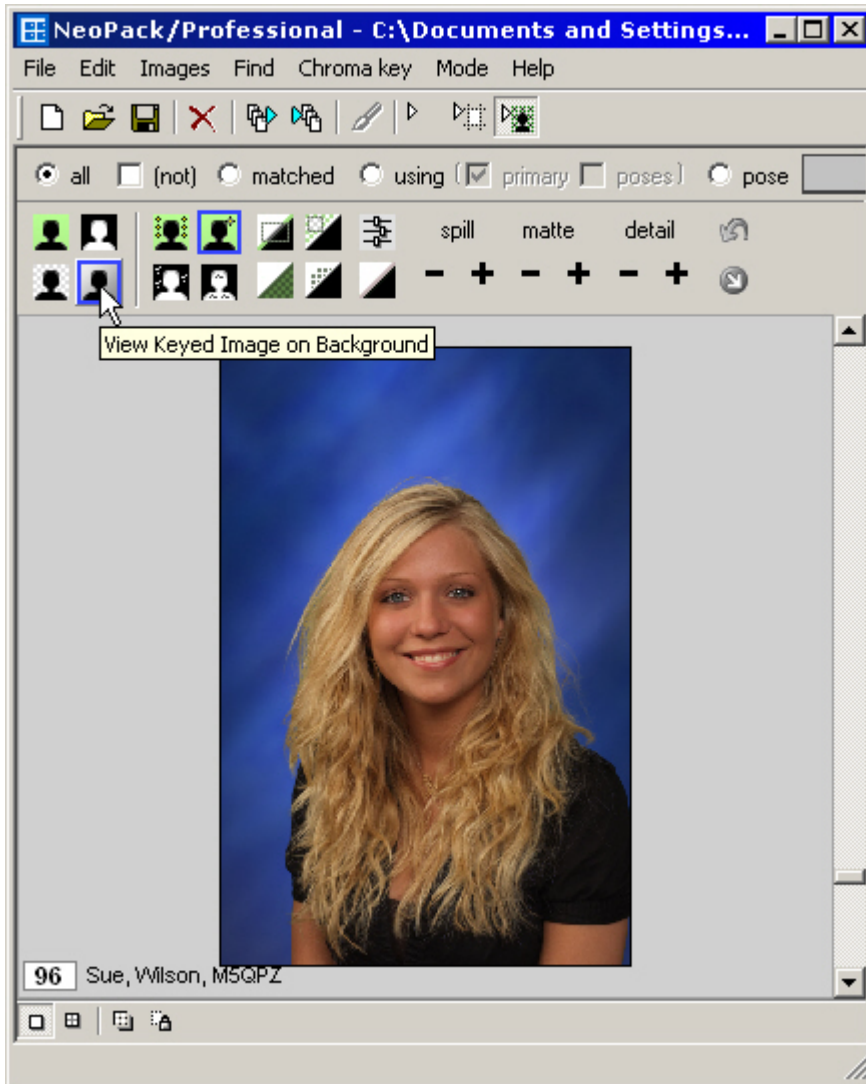
The View Keyed image mode shows the image as keyed (or partially keyed if the process has not been completed) on a transparent background.



To quickly toggle to the Keyed Image view from any other view Ctrl-Shift-Right click with the mouse

View keyed image on background

Once the image has been keyed and a background set, this view will display the image on the new background.



To quickly toggle to the Keyed Image on Background view from any other view Shift-Right click with the mouse.

Keying the images

In simple terms the process of keying the images can be subdivided into three steps

1. Selecting the background color
2. Cleaning the background and foreground
3. Dealing with spill

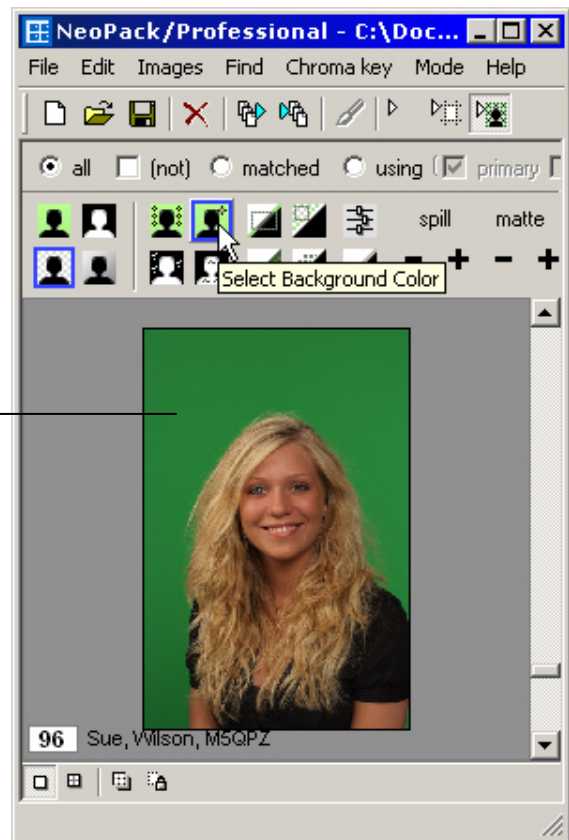
We shall look at these steps in more detail as we work through an example of keying an image.

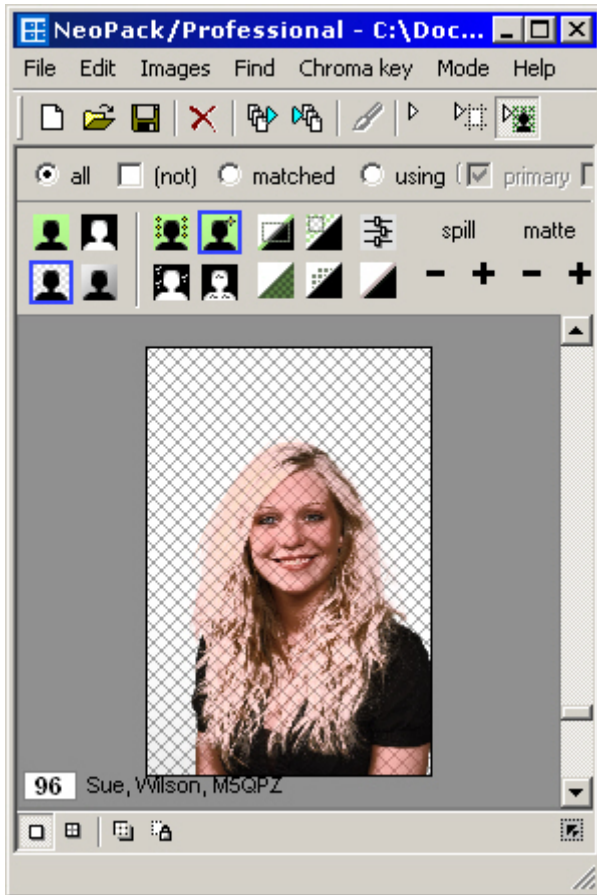
Step 1: Selecting the background color

The first step involves selecting the background. This will also “knock out” most of the background.

1. Select an image or set of images
2. Change the view to either of the two keyed image views
3. Click on the **Select Background Color** tool
4. Click in the background area
5. Release the mouse, most of the background will be removed

With the Select Background Color tool, click inside background area. Be sure to avoid sampling too close to the edges.





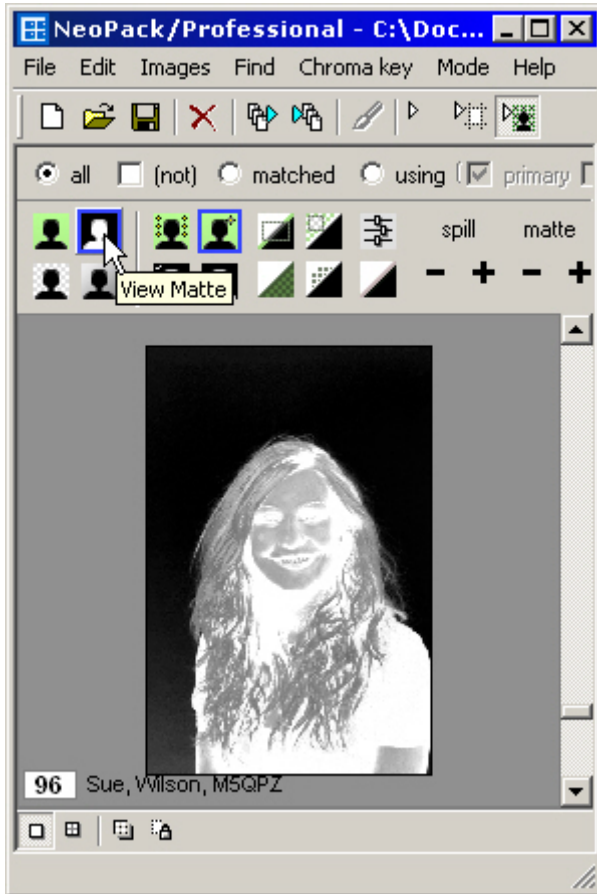
The result after selecting the background color.

Note the background is now transparent; however the foreground is also partially transparent.

Both the foreground and the background will be "cleaned up" in the next step.

Step 2: Cleaning the background and foreground

The first step selects the background color as the transparency and in doing so generates the matte. To view the matte, click the **View Matte** button.



The initial matte reflects the result obtained in our first step.

The background is predominately black indicating these areas of our image will become transparent. Note the presence of some dark grey pixels in the lower left portion of the matte.

The foreground has some white (opaque) areas but also several grey areas which have resulted in the foreground being partially transparent.

To “clean” these areas we use the **Clean Background** and **Clean Foreground** tools.

Note these tools (in fact, all tools) can be used in any view, not just matte view, however the matte view makes it easier to see the results of the **Clean Background** and **Clean Foreground** tools

Zoom and pan

To help work with specific areas of the image or matte, zoom and pan tools are available.

- To zoom in, roll the mouse wheel toward you
- To zoom out, roll the mouse wheel away from you
- To quickly return to the original un-zoomed view, Alt-double click the image or matte
- To pan a zoomed view, hold the Alt key together with the left mouse button while dragging the mouse

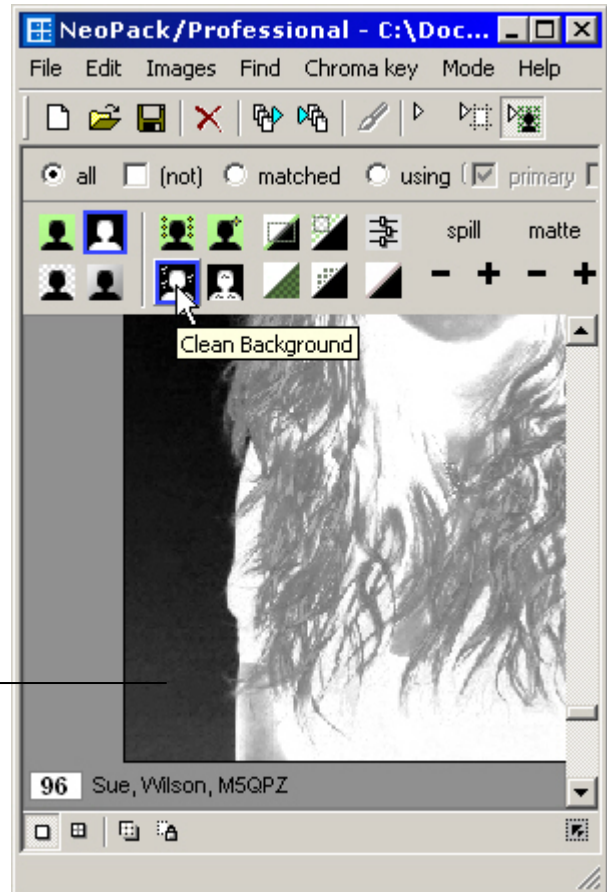
An important note about the zoom and pan tools

The zoom and pan tools do not crop or pan the images as in the “normal” modes of the software. In **Chroma Key Mode** the tools are simply used to assist with working with particular areas of the image.

Cleaning the background

Examine the matte for background areas that are not totally black. In the example above there is a grey area in the lower left corner. This will be cleaned with the **Clean Background** tool

1. Select the **Clean Background** tool
2. If necessary use the zoom and pan tools to help locate and clean any grey pixels.
3. Drag the mouse through any background grey pixels. Avoid sampling too close to the foreground edge
4. Use the zoom and pan tools to help locate and clean as necessary



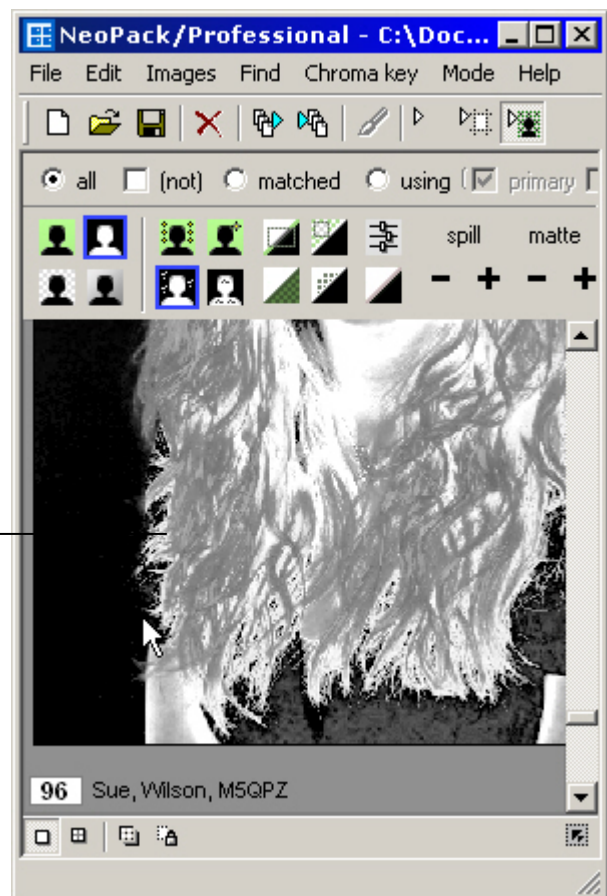
Unless the green screen has been perfectly, evenly lit during photography, some variation in the background exposure is inevitable. Use the Clean background tool to “clean” areas that are not totally black. Be certain not to sample too close to the foreground edge

Using undo, re-do and reset

If at any point an incorrect area has been sampled or an error made for whatever reason, it is possible to use the undo feature to go back one step at a time. A reset function is also available to return the image to the original, unkeyed state.

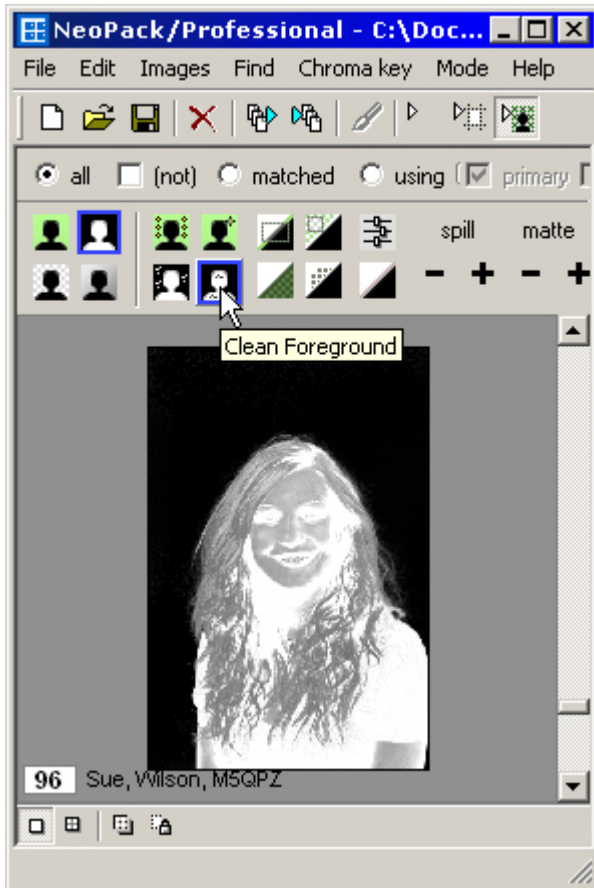
- Use Ctrl-Z to undo one step at a time
- Use Shift-Ctrl-Z to redo one step at a time
- To reset an image back to its original unkeyed state use the reset button on the Chroma Key toolbar

The result of trying to sample too close to the edge. Notice some areas of the foreground have now been clipped. Use the Undo feature to go back and re-sample elsewhere. If needed, it is possible to reset the image and start from the beginning with the reset tool.



Cleaning the foreground

Once the background has been cleaned and all pixels made transparent, it will be necessary to clean the foreground.



In most cases the foreground will require more cleaning than the background.

In our example notice the several foreground areas of the matte that are not opaque. These areas are cleaned with the **Clean Foreground** tool.

When cleaning the foreground it is even more important to not to try and get the matte too perfect by sampling too close to the edges as this may result in clipping of important foreground areas.

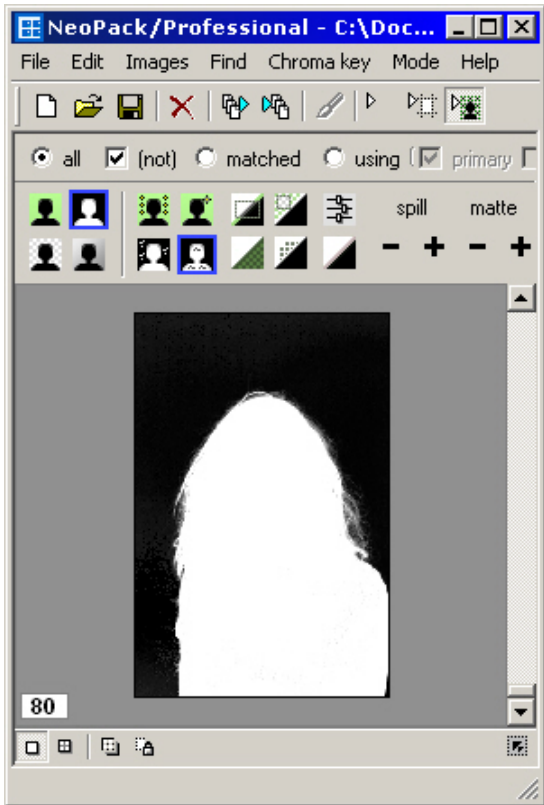
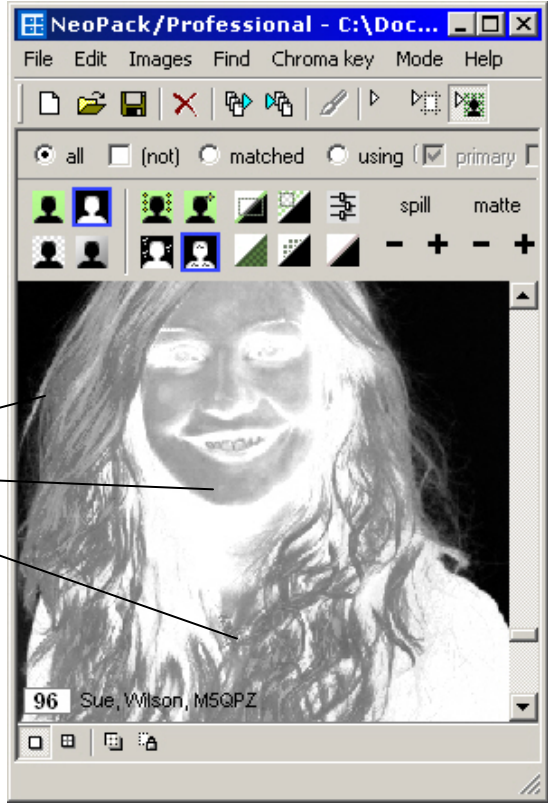
This is especially relevant when dealing with areas such as the hairline where background spill may be present. The **Chroma Key Module** has various spill removal tools for this purpose which will be discussed later

1. Select the **Clean Foreground** tool
2. Click and drag the mouse through foreground areas of the matte that are not completely white. Avoid sampling too close to the edges
3. If necessary use the zoom and pan tools to help locate grey foreground pixels that should be opaque
4. It is not necessary to clean every single pixel. Leaving a few grey pixels will not be noticed in the final result. In fact attempting to clean every single pixel may result in jagged edges on the foreground

Use the **Clean Foreground** tool to make opaque any areas of the foreground that do not appear completely white in the matte view.

The zoom and pan tools are useful to clean small areas.

Be careful to not sample too close to the background edge as this may result in loss of fine detail such as hair.



The finished matte should predominately contain pure black (transparent) and pure white (opaque) areas.

The only "grey" or semi transparent areas in our example are loose, translucent strands of hair. These areas contain "transparency spill" which will be discussed later.

Attempting to opaque these areas will result in losing fine detail. Instead we will remove the spill from the loose strands of her in the next step

Step 3: Spill replacement

Nearly all green screen images will suffer from spill in varying degrees. The final step in chroma keying green screen images involves removing (or replacing) the spill.

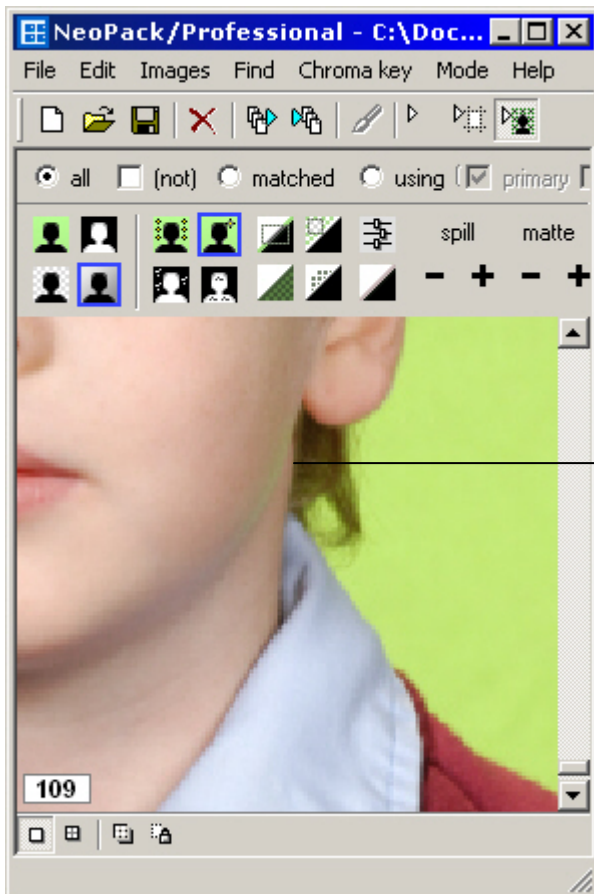
What is spill and how does it occur?

Spill occurs when reflected light from the background is visible on the foreground subject. To a large extent spill can be avoided or at least minimized during photography however since this is not always possible and number of tools are therefore available to deal with the occurrence of spill.

Solid spill versus transparency spill

Somewhat arbitrarily spill can be classified as either “solid spill” or “transparency spill”.

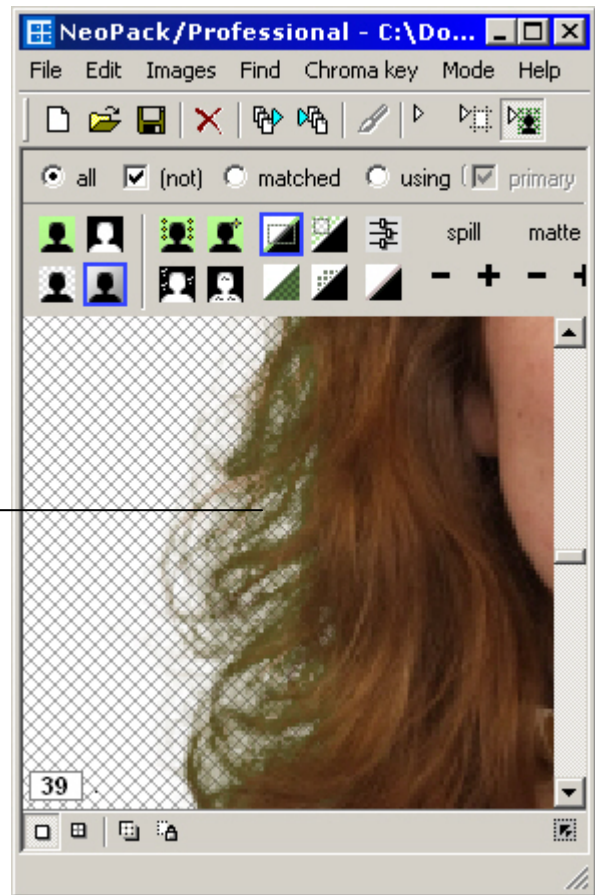
Solid spill is most easily avoided during photography and results when light reflects off the green background and is intense enough to rim light the subject with colored light. In some cases the spill may be severe enough to appear on the subjects face, especially the cheeks and nose. The best way to deal with solid spill is to avoid it and this can often be achieved by simply reducing the exposure of the background and/or moving the subject further away from the background.



An example of solid spill.
The background is over-exposed and reflected green light is visible on the subject's cheek.

Transparency spill on the other hand is less easily avoided during photography and is most often seen in the edges of blonde or fair hair especially with loose or stray hair. Given that such hair is translucent in nature it is inevitable that some background color will be visible in such areas.

An example of transparency spill.
In portrait photography such spill is most often seen in loose hair especially for fair hair types.
Such spill is less easily avoided in photography and is therefore the most common type of spill encountered.



Why is it called spill replacement and not spill removal?

When working with spill it is tempting to think of the spill as being *removed* from the image. In fact what is happening is the spill color is *replaced* with another color.

By default the replacement color is the complement of the background color. In green screen photography the spill color will of course be green tones and are therefore replaced with red tones.

The user has the option to change the replacement method from the complement color to either a solid color or a defocused copy of the background color. These options will be discussed later

The spill replacement tools

The Chroma Key Module offers three separate spill replacement tools each working in a slightly different way and with different degrees of sensitivity. It is not necessary to use all the tools for a given image - usually only one tool is all that is required.

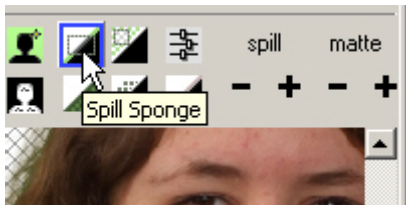
When working with spill it is important to realize you are working with color regions in an image rather than a precise physical location. Cleaning a light blonde area of hair for example will also affect any other similar color tones with spill.

The spill sponge

The spill sponge is possibly the quickest and simplest tool to use however it is also the “coarser” of the three tools and therefore may be unsuitable for certain images where a more subtle approach is needed.

To use the spill sponge:

1. Select the spill sponge tool from the Chroma Key toolbar
2. Change to one of the two Keyed Image views if not already there
3. Click in each of the areas of the image with spill. For example clicking in a dark blonde area with spill will clean any other dark blonde areas with spill
4. It may be useful to zoom into the problem areas to be able to click with greater accuracy



The spill sponge is a “one-click” tool. Clicking again in the same area will not modify the initial correction.

Clicking in a particular color region cleans all other similar color regions with spill. Remember you are working with color regions as opposed to exact physical areas of an image. Therefore click in each color region with spill such as dark hair, light hair, dark skin, light skin etc.

The fine tune sliders

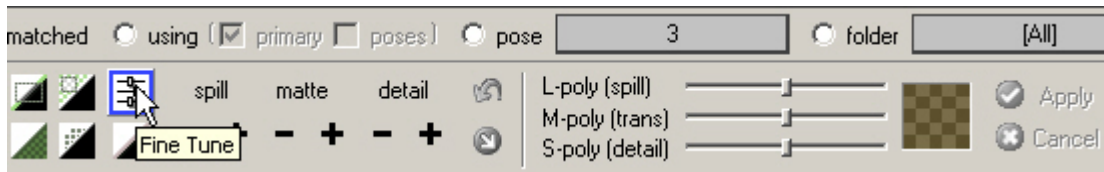
The spill sponge, being a coarser tool, may not be appropriate for most images. It is possible the spill sponge will only replace spill up to a certain point and not replace all spill. Conversely the spill sponge may be too aggressive and replace too much color. For both of these reasons the **Fine Tune** sliders or the **Spill Minus** tool may give a superior result.

The Fine Tune slider is a more subtle tool than the Spill Sponge. Additionally it is not a “one-click” tool meaning the user can sample several areas of the image to achieve the most desirable result.

Also unlike the spill sponge the Fine Tune slider has both a positive and negative aspect. Slide the tool to the right to replace spill. Slide it to the left to return some spill. This can be useful if an image has been over corrected.

To use the **Fine Tune** slider:

1. Change to one of the two Keyed Image views if not already there
2. Select the **Fine Tune** tool from the Chroma Key tool bar
3. The **Fine Tune Sliders** appear. Note the sliders are not active until a color has been sampled. We will only be working with the L-poly (spill) slider
4. Click in an area of the image with spill. Notice a color swatch appears adjacent to the **Fine Tune Sliders**. Use this swatch to confirm the sampled color is indeed a sample of color region containing green spill.
5. Move the **L-poly (spill) slider** to the right while examining either the image or the color swatch.
6. Release the slider when the desired result is achieved. Usually only a small slide is needed to see a spill correction.
7. Click **Apply** to accept the correction or **Reset** to remove the correction.



If the result from using the Fine Tune slider is too strong then either:

- Use the undo feature (Ctrl-z) to go back and try again this time sliding the control less distance than before
- Drag the slider to the left to add back some spill

A more desirable result is often achieved by making small adjustments in incremental steps rather than trying to correct all spill in one action. (Recall, unlike the Spill Sponge, the Fine Tune tool is a cumulative control).

- Sample areas of little spill first, working up to areas of heavier spill
- Only drag the slider until the complement color just becomes visible in the color swatch. Then release the slider and observe the result.
- Repeat as necessary to achieve the desired result

The Spill Minus tool

The **Spill Minus** tool (also referred to as the Spill (-) tool) together with its **Spill Plus** equivalent (Spill (+)) are possibly the tools of choice for dealing with spill. The tools are both incremental and repeatable

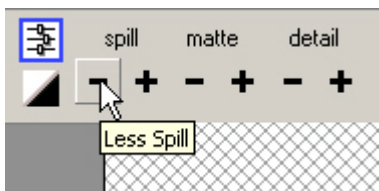
- Repeatable – unlike the spill sponge, the **Spill (-)** tool allows you to sample the same area repeatedly if needed
- Incremental – several regions of color spill can be sampled with each having only an incremental effect on spill replacement
- Subtle – the **Spill (-)** tool makes only very small corrections. Several clicks with the mouse may be needed before a change is noticed. This allows for greater control with less likelihood of over correction

To use the **Spill (-)** tool:

1. Change to one of the two **Keyed Image** views if not already there
2. Select the **Spill (-)** tool from the Chroma Key toolbar
3. Click in areas of the image showing spill. Several clicks may be needed to see a result.
4. If needed, sample other areas until the desired result is achieved

If the result from using the Spill (-) tool is too strong and the spill is over corrected then either:

- Use the undo feature (Ctrl-z) to go back to an appropriate point and try again perhaps sampling a different area
- Use the Spill (+) tool to add back some spill



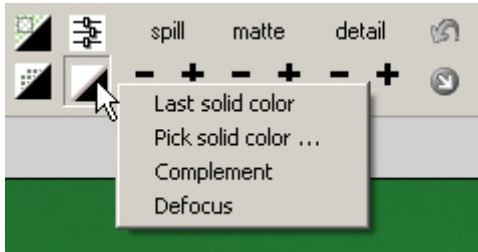
The **Spill (-)** tool is the most sensitive and flexible of the spill replacement tools.

The subtle nature of its action reduces the likelihood of over correction while the interactive method of working with the image allows the user to sample several areas incrementally in order to achieve the best possible result

The different spill replacement modes

As mentioned previously the default mode for spill replacement is to use the complement of the spill color. However two other spill replacement modes are available; solid color and defocus background.

The different modes are selected by clicking the **Spill Replacement** button on the toolbar



Each of the **Spill Replacement** tools described earlier will use one of three modes as the basis for determining the most appropriate spill replacement color – solid color, complement or defocus.

Complement replacement mode

The default spill replacement mode uses the complement of the selected background color as the basis for spill replacement. For green screen images this means magenta tones are used.

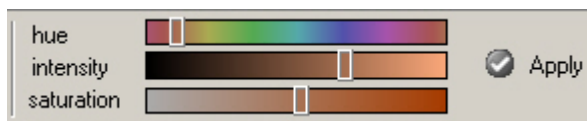
The complement mode is the method of choice for regions of transparency color spill often found in the edges of hair in portrait photography. However this mode may not be suitable when significant spill occurs in the foreground proper as can occur with solid spill.

Solid color replacement mode

The solid color mode for spill replacement makes use of a user definable color as the basis for spill replacement. This mode is most suited to regions of color spill in the foreground itself as can occur with solid spill.

To select the desired color

1. Click the **Spill Replacement** button on the **Chroma Key** toolbar
2. Select "**Pick solid color ...**" from the drop down list
3. Color sliders appear. Use them to select desired hue, intensity and saturation of the replacement color.
4. Alternatively (and perhaps more appropriately) click inside the image to choose a replacement color. Note the color sliders update to reflect the region sampled.
5. As a color is selected (either with the sliders or by sampling) the spill replacement mode is automatically updated to reflect the selection. You should notice a change in the image.
6. Click **Apply** to accept the result



The color sliders can be used to choose the appropriate color for spill replacement. More often however, the user will simply choose the desired color by sampling inside the image in which case the sliders will reflect the selection made.

Defocus color replacement mode

This method uses a defocused copy of the background as the basis for the spill replacement color. It is most useful for translucent or transparent foregrounds such as glass.

To use the Defocus color replacement mode simply:

1. Click the **Spill Replacement** button on the **Chroma Key** toolbar
2. Select Defocus from the drop down list
3. The image will change to reflect the new spill replacement mode

The results achieved with this spill replacement mode will obviously be affected by the current background. When a new background has not yet been set the software will use the “transparent” background (white with grey cross hatch pattern)

Becoming familiar with the different spill replacement modes

In most cases it is recommended the spill replacement mode be left in the default mode – complement. There is no harm however in switching to one or both of the other modes and observing the result. Remember the spill replacement, although visible in “real time” is not applied until the **Apply** button is clicked.

The other Chroma Key Module tools

The tools discussed thus far are the most useful and often used tools in green screen portrait photography. However the Chroma Key Module includes several other tools that may be useful in some circumstances.

Matte Sponge

The **Matte Sponge** works on partially transparent color regions, using the current spill replacement color to make these regions totally opaque.

Make Foreground Transparent

The **Make FG Transparent** tool works in the opposite manner to **the Matte Sponge**. It makes color regions partially transparent.

Restore Detail

The Restore Detail tool is used to restore fine detail that may have been lost in the keying process. It is used in the completely transparent background regions making these regions partially transparent thereby enabling fine foreground detail to become visible

Each of the three tools mentioned above have equivalent Fine Tune sliders and incremental Plus/Minus tools

Working with multiple images

The Timestone Software Chroma Key Module offers various methods for working with multiple images. The user is encouraged to explore each of the workflow solutions below to determine which method or methods works best for them.

Select multiple images

It is possible to select several images and key them all together. Use standard selection methods such as:

- Ctrl-A to select all images
- Ctrl-click to select individual images
- Shift-click to select a range of images.

Once images have been selected continue to key the images as described in the proceeding pages.

Whereas this method has merit in some circumstances it may result in sluggish performance when a large number of images are selected.

Key one image and apply to many

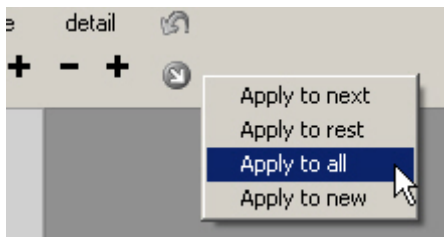
Once an image has been keyed, the results can be applied to other images. From the toolbar select the “Apply to ...” arrow (located next to the Detail + tool) then either:

Apply to next - to apply the result to the next image

Apply to rest - to apply the result to all subsequent images in the images pane

Apply to all - to apply the result to all images in the images pane

Apply to new - to apply the result to new images as they are imported



When using the **Apply to** feature it is important to understand the keying result will only be applied to the currently filtered images.

For example, let's say you have multiple poses per subject and have filtered for Pose 1. Using the Apply to all feature will key only the Pose 1 images.

Copy and paste

A very flexible approach is to copy the chroma key profile from one image to another.

To copy the chroma key profile from an image either:

- Ctrl-click inside the image
- Select Edit>Copy from the main menu
- Use Ctrl-Ins as a keyboard shortcut

To paste the chroma key profile to another image or images either:

- Shift-click inside the image
- Select Edit>Paste from the main menu
- Use Shift-Ins as a keyboard shortcut

Setting the background

There are several methods you can use to set a new background behind the images. Choose the best one for your situation

- Adding a new background directly to the images while in Images Mode
- Reading the new background image from the data
- Setting the new background image when you import a text file
- Placing the new background directly on a template
- Calling the new background onto a template via a labeled image

The first three methods place the new background behind the images themselves. You will see the images with their new background in Images Mode. Whenever you use an image the new background will be used along with it.

The last two methods place the background onto the template. The images themselves, although keyed, do not have a background associated with them.

Which method is best for me?

That's up to you! Each method has its advantages.

The template based approach means you will need separate templates for your chroma key work. This may or may not be an issue for you. This approach does mean the images themselves are not committed to a particular background. Once keyed the same image could be used in many different templates each with a different background. (Note even when a new background has been placed directly behind the images, the background may still be turned off and the image may be used, keyed without a background.)

Many users will prefer the power and automation of importing the new background via a text file, or reading the new background from data in a field, while the flexibility of manually adding the background to the images will also appeal to some.

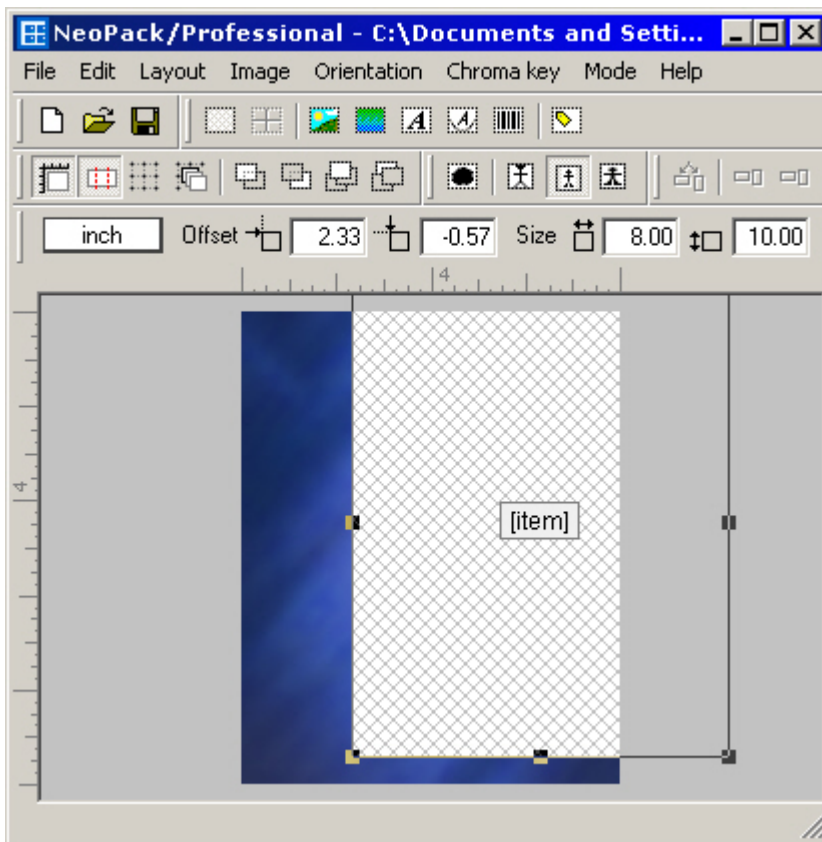
Placing the new background directly onto the template

In many respects this is the easiest method since you do not do anything to the images once keyed nor do you have any special data requirements. Simply key the images then use them on your templates. But it does have a couple of drawbacks

- You need separate templates for your chroma key jobs
- If offering several different backgrounds you will need a different template for each background

Method

1. Start a new template
2. Using the “Add graphic” tool place a graphic holder onto the template.
3. Browse to and select your new background image
4. Position and size the graphic as needed
5. Place the image hole (and any other template objects) directly onto the graphic
6. Save the template and use it in the normal manner.



A template under construction.

The new, blue, background has been placed onto the template canvas and an image hole placed directly over the graphic.

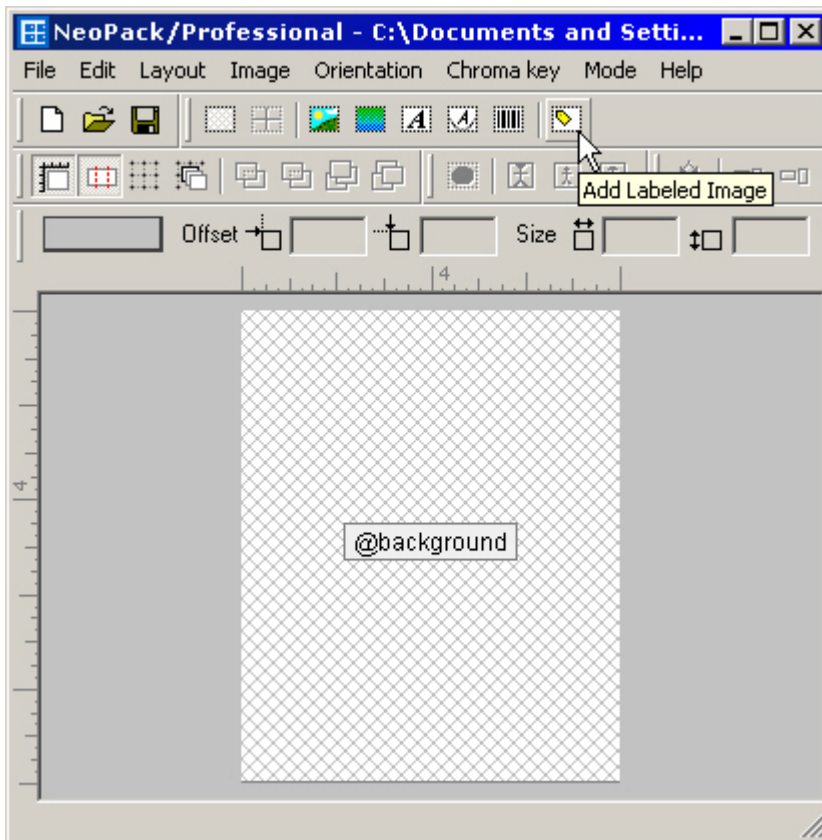
(The screen grab shows the image hole moved to one side to reveal the blue graphic beneath)

Calling the background onto a template via a labeled image holder

This method is similar to the one above as it does require specific templates however the templates are generic in the sense that they can be used with different backgrounds for the same job since the background is called onto the template via data.

Step 1: Designing the template

1. Start a new template
2. Using the **Add Labeled Image** tool place a labeled image hole to the template
3. When prompted enter *@fieldname* where *fieldname* is the name of the field containing the new background image. The fieldname can be anything but for this exercise let's call it "Background". The label is therefore *@background*
4. Position and size the labeled image holder as needed
5. Place the image hole and any other template objects onto the template
6. Save the template and use it in the normal manner



Here the new background graphic is not placed directly onto the template and a labeled image holder has been used instead, The image hole will then be placed directly over the labeled image holder.

Labeled image holes are used to call graphics onto a layout according to a field in the software. In this example the layout will use the graphic as specified in a field called "Background"

Step 2: Organizing the data

To make use of the template created in step 1 the data can be prepared in a couple of ways.

The first method involves importing the new background graphic directly into our field. Recall our template created in step 1 had the label **@background**. The procedure is therefore:

1. Define a new folder or file field. Call it **Background** and make sure it is a “graphic” type field
2. Go to that field. Double-click its value and import the desired background graphic
3. If importing into a folder field, repeat for each folder

This approach means the new background is global – either for the entire job via a file field or for each folder via the folder field. What if we want the new background to be subject specific and still make use of the background template we created in step 1?

Let’s consider a job where you are offering three different backgrounds. They are:

- marble.png
- grey.png
- swirl.png

We can proceed as follows

1. Define a subject field. Call it Background and leave it as a “text” type field.
2. For each subject enter the appropriate background as a text value

Obviously entering data manually is not an option for most jobs therefore such data would normally be entered by importing a text file or scanning a barcode.

Dropping the png extension

We can avoid having to enter the file extension (.png in our example) provided we make the extension part of the label on our template. So in the example above our label would become **@background.png** and the value in our field simply marble, grey or swirl.

Where do the graphics files need to be saved?

The new background files can be saved anywhere the software normally looks for graphics files. These locations include:

- As specified in File>Options>Paths>Graphics
- In the *jobname#images* folder if one exists
- In the same location as the subject images

Specifying the new background when importing a text file

When importing a text file it is possible to import the subject images at the same time (See knowledge base article “Importing Images via a text file”) When doing so it is also possible to set the new background for each subject or image.

Step 1 – The text file

The text file simply needs a field with the name of the new background. Here’s a simple example.

John, Smith,2222,100.jpg,marble.png

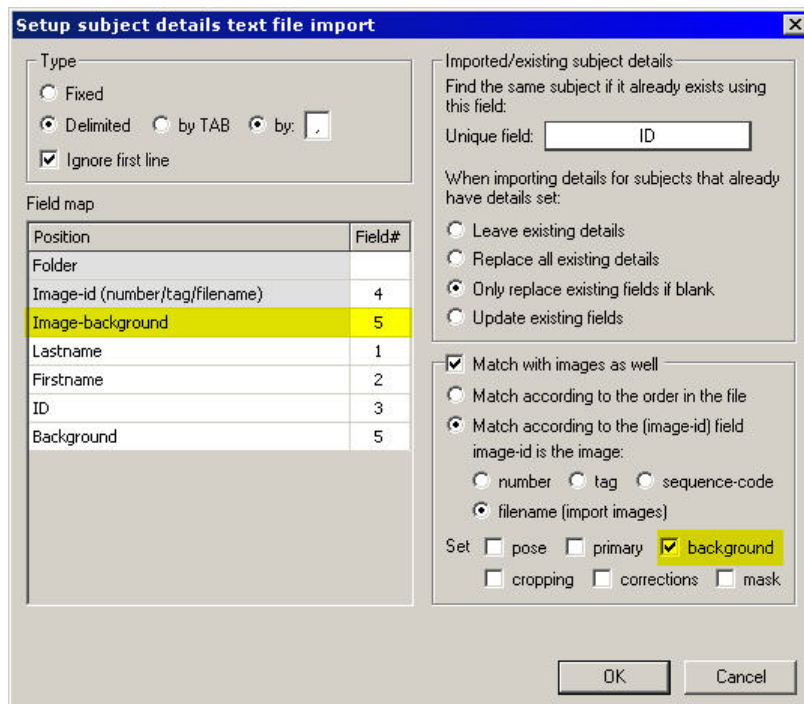
Alan,Martin,3333,101.jpg,grey.png

The fields are firstname, lastname, ID, image filename and background filename respectively.

Step 2 – Importing the text file, mapping the field

Making use of the above text file is just a matter of mapping the “Set background” field.

1. Enter the import text file setup window (Details Mode>Subjects>Import text file>Setup)
2. Map all fields as per usual
3. Check the “**Set background**” option. This presents an additional field to map
4. Map the background field and import the text file as usual



Step 3 – Placing the new background for each image

When setting the new backgrounds in this way they will appear as soon as the images have been keyed. No further steps are required

Reading the new background from data in a subject field

This is similar to the “Labeled image” method described above but now instead of a labeled image holder on a template reading the value of a subject field, the user selects the field with the background data from within the Images Mode itself.

Step 1 – Organizing the data

Let’s say we have a subject field called “Background” and it’s a text type field. Remember the field can be called anything you like; it does need to be called “Background” We enter the name of the new background into this field. Use whatever method you currently use to input data. These include:

- Importing a text file
- Keyboard entry
- The /%D barcode

Continuing the example from above we could simply enter the values, marble, grey or swirl into the field called background,

Step 2 – Point the images to the “Background” field

Once the data is in the field it is necessary to tell the images which field.

1. Select the images
2. Go to **Images>Background>Set from field ...** or use the **Ctrl-Alt-K** keyboard shortcut
3. A pop-up window appears allowing you to select the field with the background data

The new backgrounds will be imported and placed behind the images. If a large number of images are selected this may take some time. Note you may set the new backgrounds before or after keying the images, it makes no difference.

Setting the new background directly to the images

The new background can be set directly to the images while in Images Mode irrespective of any data.

1. Select the image or images
2. Go to **Images>Background>Set ...** or use the **Ctrl-K** keyboard shortcut
3. A pop-up window appears allowing you to browse to the background files

Turning backgrounds on and off

Once a new background has been set, it is on by default. The new background will be used whenever the image is used. Backgrounds may also be turned off. When turned off the background is transparent

1. To turn off the new background go to Images>Background>Off or use the Shift-Alt-K keyboard shortcut
2. To turn on the background go to Images>Background>On or use the Shift-Ctrl-K keyboard shortcut