Saving your Photoshop document to a PDF file.
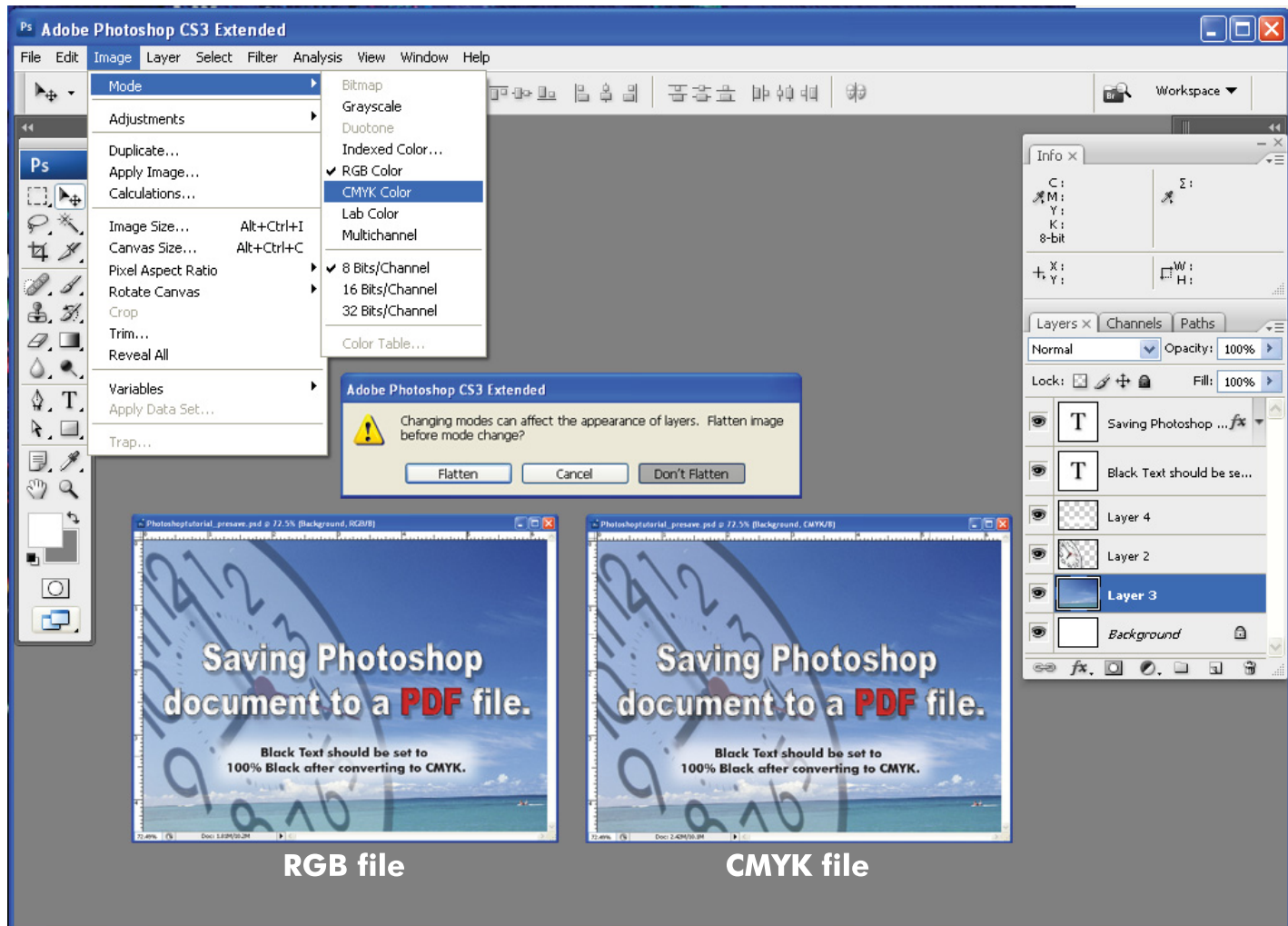
This tutorial is designed to show the best way to save a Photoshop file to a PDF, for use with our system. It will also show the best setting to save time when uploading the files to the website.

Pre-Save options

It is always a good practice to prepare and simplify the document before saving to PDF. This includes Converting file to CMYK, Merging all Raster Layers, Setting all black text to 100% black and Creating Shape Layers from all text.
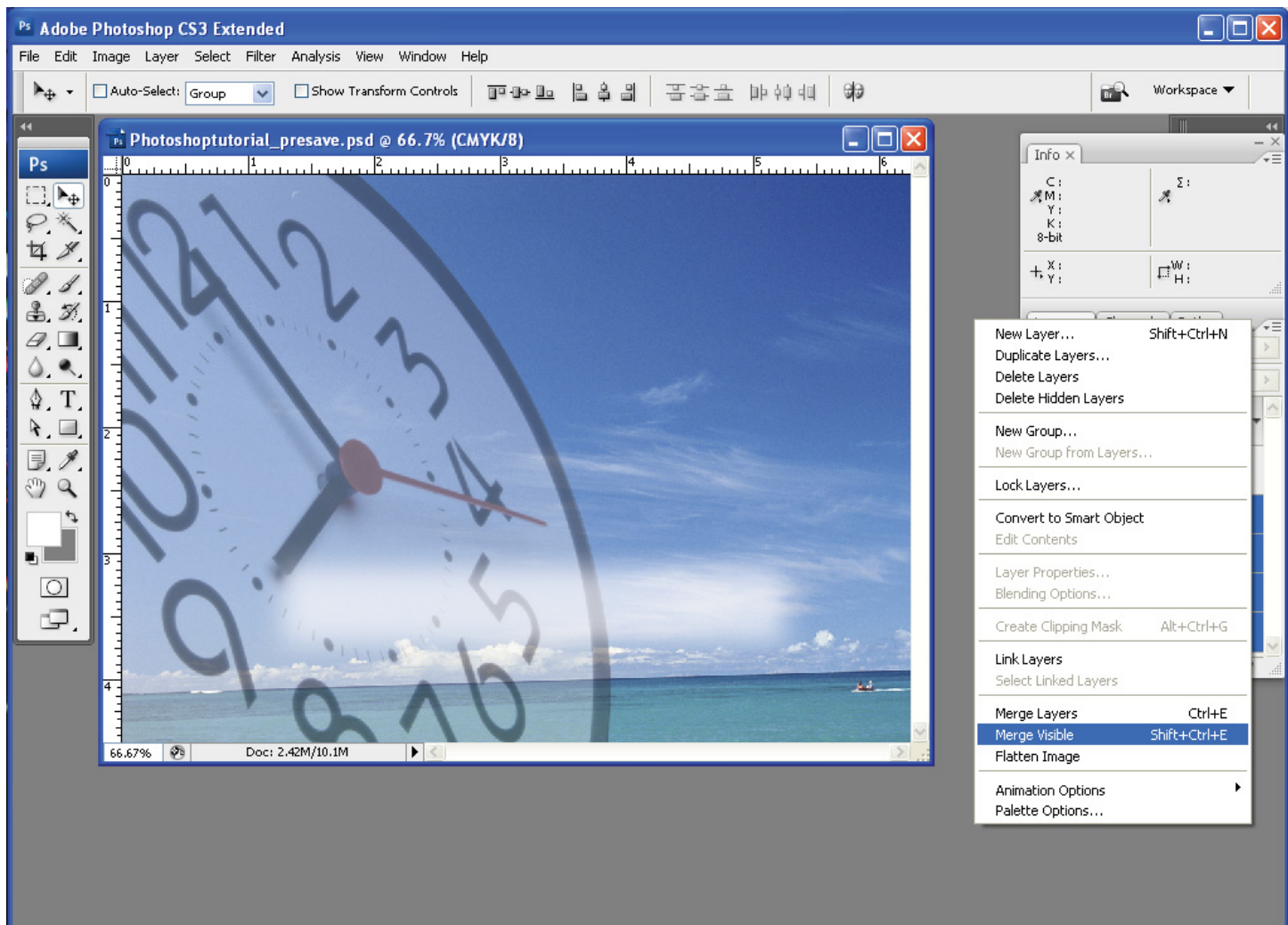

RGB file   CMYK file

Converting to CMYK: It is very important to convert all Photoshop documents to CMYK before saving PDF. There are very often major color shifts when doing this and it is best to see those shifts before it prints.

Under the "Image" menu choose "Mode" and then "CMYK"

Choose "Don't Flatten" from the Pop-Up Menu. This will leave your layers intact so you can do final edits to your file.

Note: Skipping this step my result in the final PDF being RGB, which may delay your order. Also please take a very close look at the file for any color shifts.

Merging Raster Layers: Photoshop PDFs have a tendency to become overcomplicated and have problems ripping. For this reason we ask that they be simplified before saving the PDF. This will make the file smaller and have a better chance of running smoothly through our system.

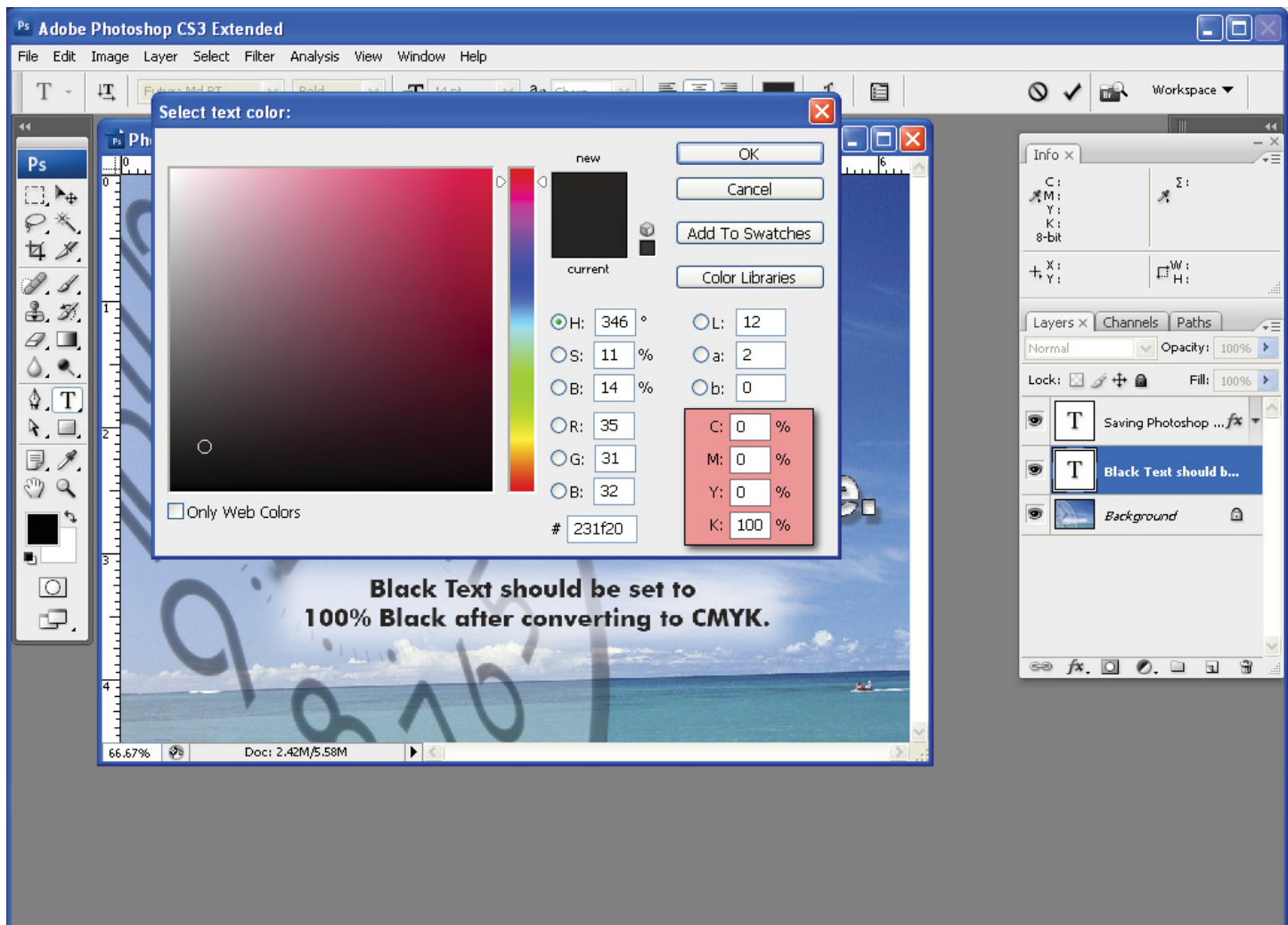First hide all text and shape layers that can be hidden without effecting the art around it.

Then select any layer that is showing.

In the Layer palette select the palette options *(arrow in the upper right side)*, and choose "Merge Visible".

After merging, show all layers again.

If the merged layers are not set to a background layer, go to the "Layer" menu then under "New" and select "Background From Layer".

Note: Doing this step will significantly reduce the size of most files and save time when uploading. As always take a close look at the file to be sure that everything is still as you intend it to be.
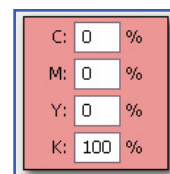
Converting text to 100% Black: It is always a good practice to convert any black text to 100% black with Cyan, Magenta and Yellow set to 0%.
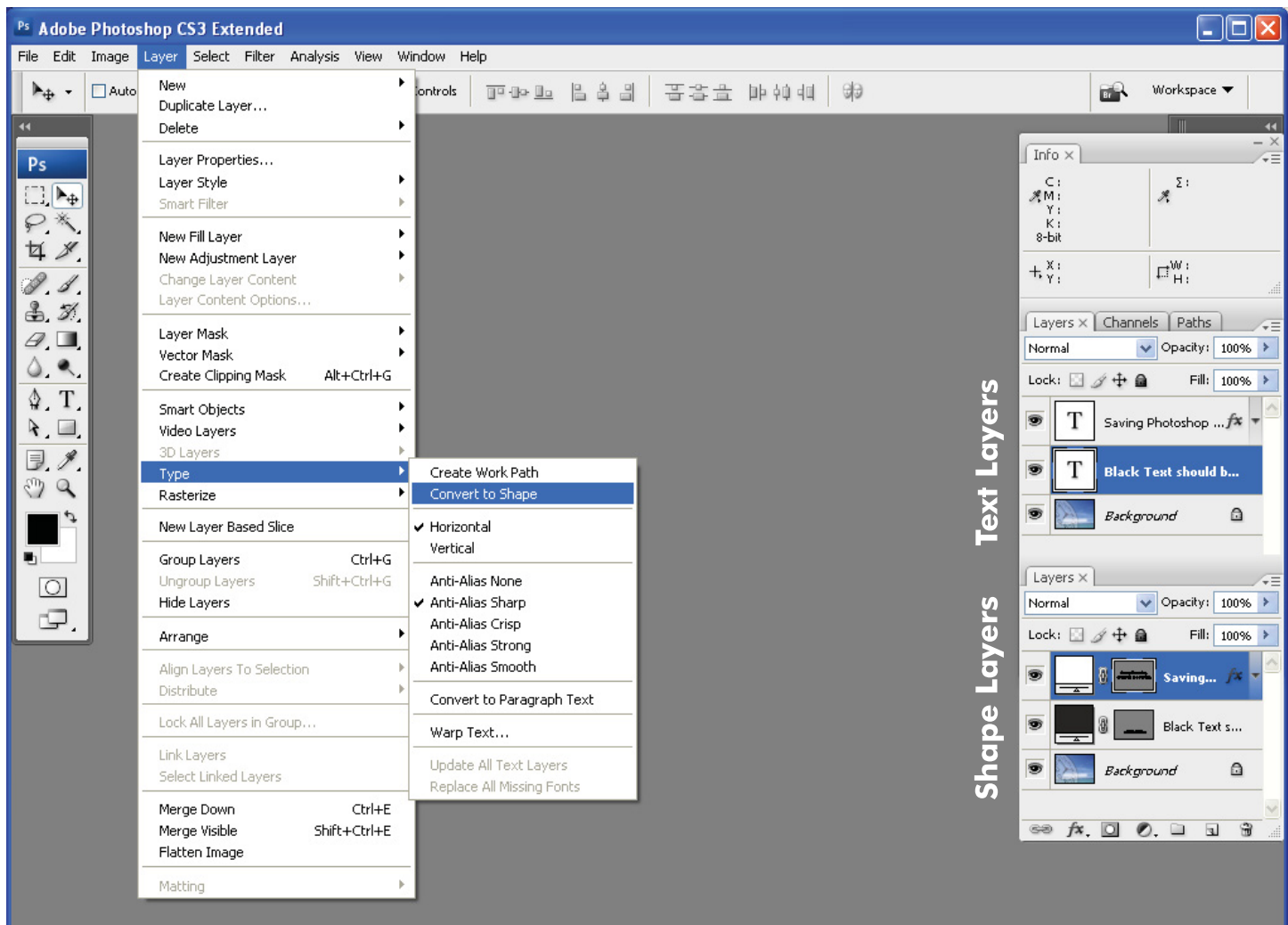
Select any black text layer and click on the black picker in the option bar *(the option bar is under the menu bar).*

Set your values in the CMYK section of the Color Picker.

Repeat this for any black text layers.

Note: Vector text that is Black will print better when it is set 100% Black only.

Converting Text Layers to Shape Layers: Another way to simplify the file is to convert all text to Shape layers. This is much like creating outlines in Adobe Illustrator. Doing this will insure that the file has no font issues when it goes though our preflight and RIP.

Select any text layer and go to the "Layer" menu and then "Type" select "Convert to Shape".

Repeat this for any remaining text layers.

Note: In Photoshop CS2 and CS3, you can do this step to all type layers at one time. Please be sure to take a close look at the file after doing this step to be sure that everything still appears as you intend it to.
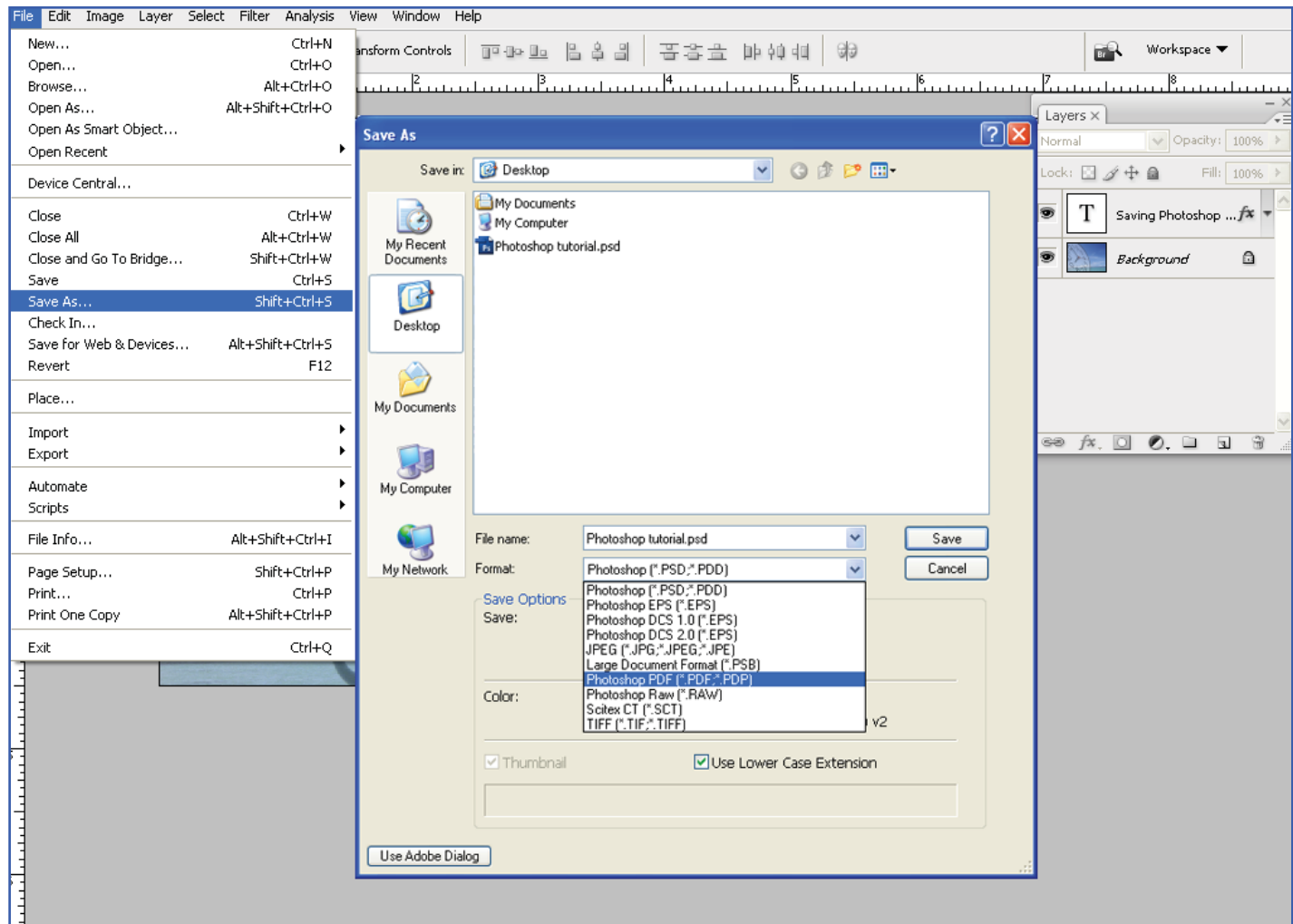
After the file has been prepared and simplified, we are ready to save it as a PDF.

Step 1

Under the "File" menu choose the "Save As" option.

To start choose the "High Quality Print" or "Press Quality" setting. (We will be modifying the settings a little).
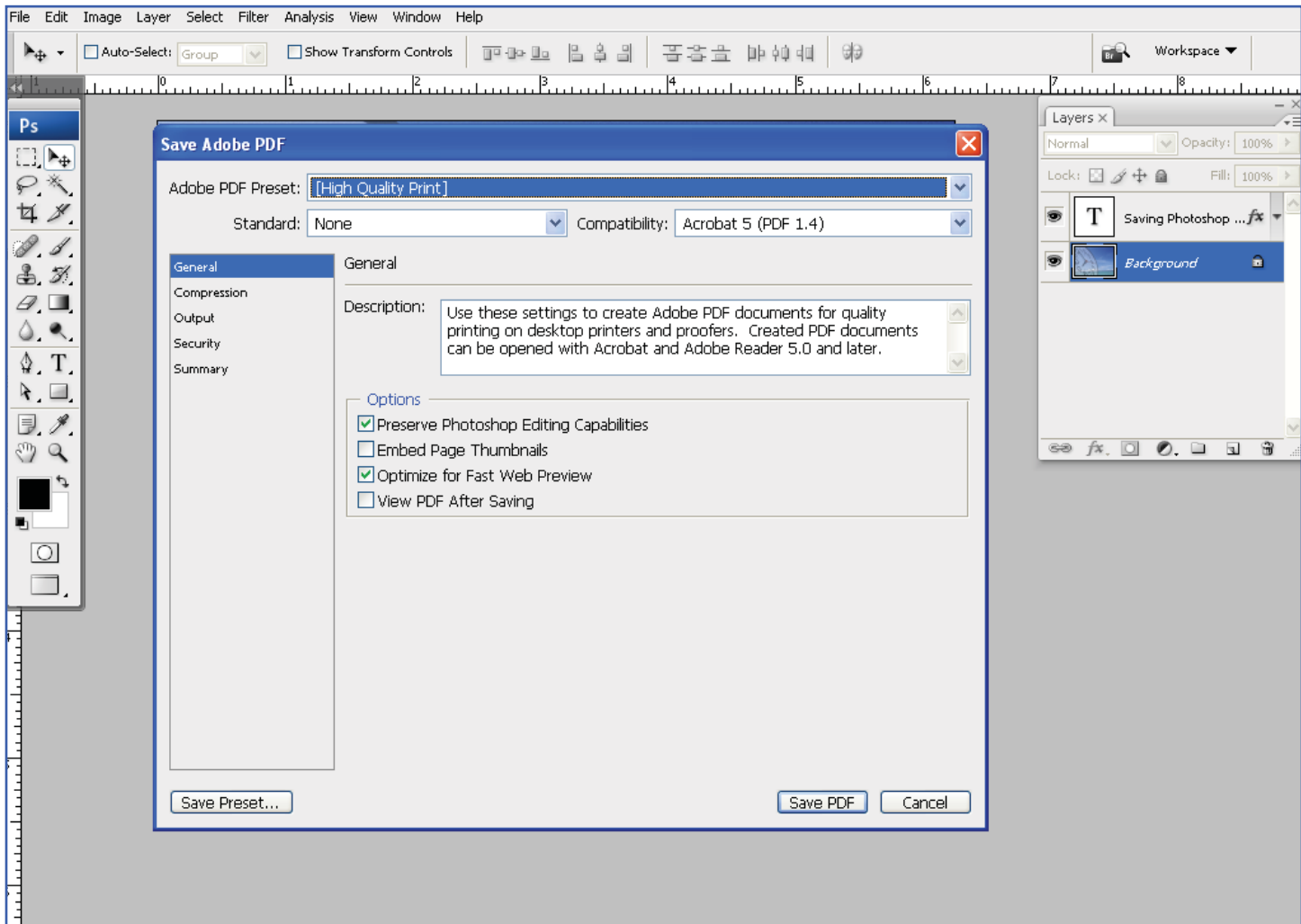
Under "Format" choose "Photoshop PDF".

Step 2

GENERAL:

Uncheck the "Optimize for Fast Web View" setting under "Options".

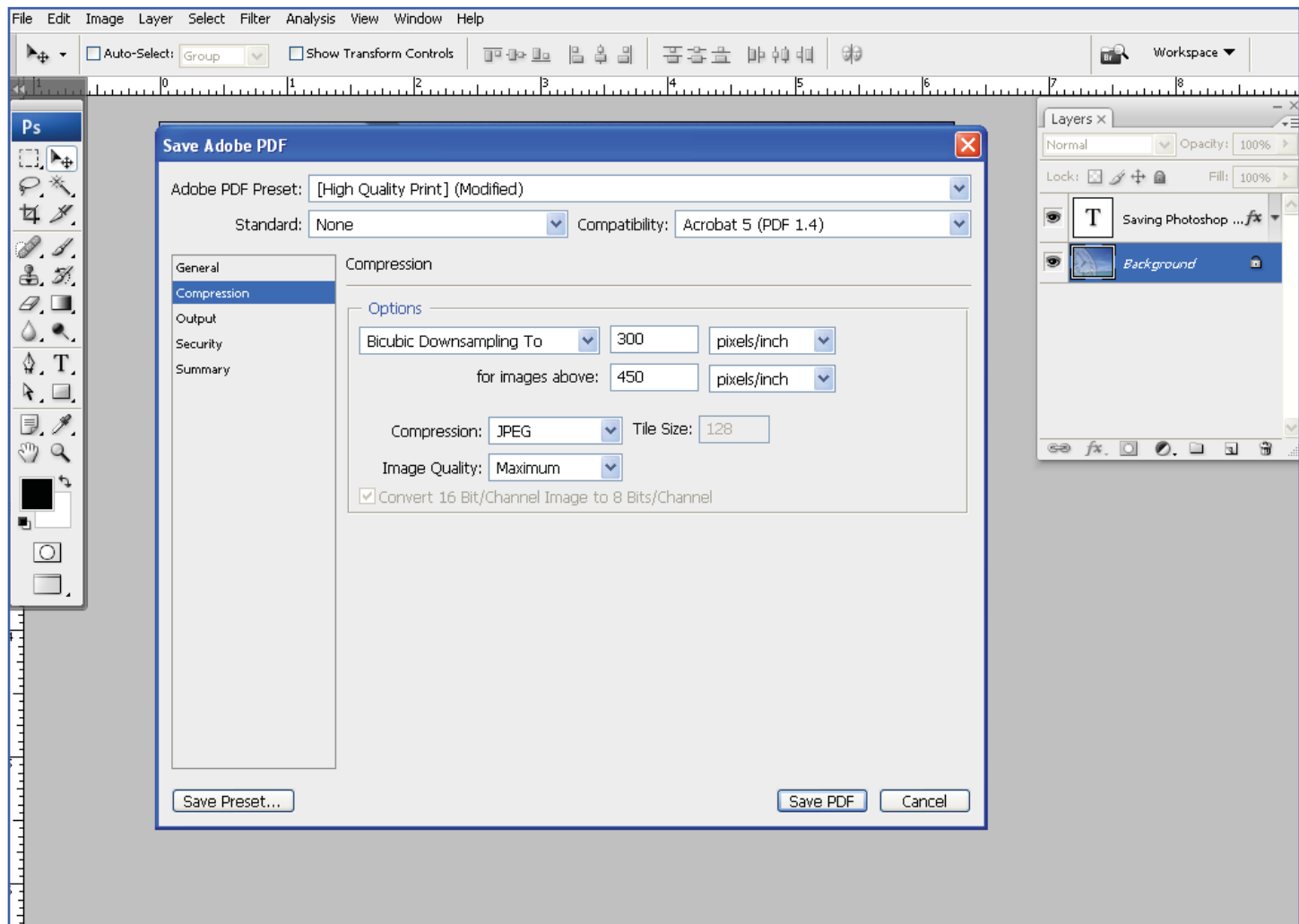Leave the "Preserve Illustrator Editing Capabilities" option checked.

Step 3

COMPRESSION:

Set "Compression Options" to 300ppi for images above 450ppi with the compression set to "JPEG" and the Quality set to "Maximum"

Note: You can also use ZIP compression because it uses non-lossy compression. It will make a larger file that will take longer to upload, but with smaller files, such as business cards and postcards, the larger size is usually minimal.

Step 4

OUTPUT:

Under the "Color" option set "Color Conversion" to "No Conversion" and set "Profile Inclusion Policy" to "Don't Include Profile".

Note: It is very important to be sure that your file is CMYK, before saving PDF. It is also very important to be sure that the file has the 1/8" bleed before saving PDF. That is 1/4" added to the with and height. Failing to do this may result in delays with your order.