

NEW



90 FREE BRUSHES

Photoshop® for Beginners

An independent guide to
getting started with Adobe Photoshop

For
Photoshop
Elements,
CS & CC



100% independent
Improve your images in minutes
Master all the essential techniques
Learn about layers, brushes and filters

Welcome to **Photoshop** for Beginners

Photoshop has grown to be a part of our everyday lives, particularly as we can capture images so easily on our smartphones these days. So it's no wonder why more and more people are familiarising themselves with Photoshop's image-transforming capabilities. While it might seem to first-timers that there are a baffling array of buttons and icons on the Photoshop interface, we encourage you to imagine it as an artist's toolbox, and that space in the middle is your blank canvas. From basic photo-editing skills to colour corrections, filters and selections, this newly revised Photoshop for Beginners will guide you through all the techniques you need. Not to mention some fun creative projects to try. We even provide online resources such as tutorial files, brushes, textures and video guides to start you on your Photoshop journey. You'll be creating artistic masterpieces in no time!



Photoshop® for Beginners

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Printed by

William Gibbons, 26 Planetary Road, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 3XT

Distributed in the UK, Eire & the Rest of the World by:

Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU
Tel 0203 787 9060 www.marketforce.co.uk

Distributed in Australia by:

Gordon & Gotch Australia Pty Ltd, 26 Rodborough Road, Frenchs Forest, NSW, 2086 Australia
Tel +61 2 9972 8800 www.gordongotch.com.au

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Photoshop for Beginners Eleventh Edition © 2016 Imagine Publishing Ltd

ISBN 978 1785 464 119

Part of the

**Photoshop®
creative**
bookazine series



Contents

26
Take your
first steps in
Photoshop



08
**Ultimate
guide**

Basic corrections

- 44** Get the best from Auto commands
- 46** Quick Edit mode
- 48** Improve composition in photos
- 52** Master the Transform tool
- 54** Utilise the Recompose tool
- 56** Use the Gradient tool
- 58** Discover Camera Raw



58
Discover
Camera Raw

Layers

- 62** Understand the Layers palette
- 64** Organise Layers
- 66** Navigate the Layer menu
- 68** Learn to control layer opacity
- 70** Perfect your blend



62
Work with
layers



Getting started

- 18** A guide to the Photoshop family
- 26** First steps in Photoshop
- 28** Resize your images
- 32** Save, export and share your photos
- 36** Learn to copy and paste
- 38** Elements 14 Organizer
- 42** Photoshop shortcuts

Colour & tone

- 76** Colour in Photoshop
- 78** Use Levels to improve photos
- 80** The Sponge tool
- 82** Isolate colour



82
Isolate colour in
your shots



120
Take control
of your
selections

146
Create with
Blur Gallery
filters

160
Combine
photos and
illustrations

Retouching

- 86** Conquer the Clone Stamp
- 88** Sharpen your photos
- 90** Improve shadows and highlights
- 92** Enhance eyes and teeth
- 94** Erase and merge with Content-Aware
- 96** Master the Content-Aware Fill Move tool

Brushes

- 128** Grasp the Brush tool
- 132** Use tools with brushes
- 134** Use the History tools in Photoshop
- 136** Learn to paint from photos

Adjustments

- 100** Discover what adjustment layers can do
- 102** Improve exposure and contrast
- 104** Meet the Curves adjustment tool
- 106** Use Black & White
- 108** Use the Channel Mixer
- 110** Edit photos with Hue/Saturation

Filters

- 142** What are filters?
- 144** Discover the Blur filters
- 146** Master the Blur Gallery filters
- 148** Lighting Effects filter
- 150** Apply the Reduce Noise filter
- 152** Use the Cutout filter creatively

Selections

- 114** Select with the Lasso tool
- 116** Understand Quick Mask
- 118** Wield the Magic Wand tool
- 120** Master the Refine Edge tool
- 122** Get more from Smart brushes

“Once you have learned all the basic tools, you can put them to the test”

Creative projects

- 156** Create a panorama
- 160** Combine photos and illustrations
- 164** Design your own craft materials
- 168** Use the Pen tool for gradient art
- 172** Make a kaleidoscope

Glossary

- 174** Glossary of key terms

Ultimate guide



The ultimate guide to Photoshop



Get ready to fall in love with Photoshop! You have taken the plunge and bought your first copy and it's just waiting to be explored. Don't be put off by the endless tools, functions and features that you see before you at the moment, as it won't be long before you've mastered them all.

Photoshop is the gateway to endless creativity. Speak to any Photoshop professional and they will tell you they are still discovering exciting new ways to produce beautiful work. The great thing about this program is that there really is something for everyone. Whether you're a complete novice starting from scratch or a seasoned pro looking for a fresh take on a familiar technique, Photoshop provides everyone with the tools to create something wonderful.

As you start to investigate the tools palette and menus, you will soon see just how much Photoshop is capable of. With it, you can transform regular photographs into stunning images worthy of an exhibition. It provides the tools to tweak holiday snaps or produce painted masterpieces as good as Van Gogh, Turner and Picasso. And it can also offer a new hobby in digital form, with practices such as scrapbooking, card marking and web design – all easily achieved when using this software. The possibilities are literally endless. Now let's explore some of Photoshop's essential features and functions.

Editing photos

Tweak your images to perfection

As the name suggests, one of the main uses of Photoshop is photo editing. In a world where we are always snapping our friends, families, pets and surroundings, we all have plenty of images to get creative with in Photoshop. Whether you rely on your iPhone or other smartphone to capture a moment, or prefer to have a compact camera or digital SLR with you at all times, Photoshop can tweak your images to perfection. It makes no difference what the subject matter is or what device you used to capture the shot, there is always a way to make improvements with a little help from Photoshop.

For landscape lovers, your first task will be to learn how to straighten your pictures in order to achieve the perfect horizon. A wonky photo is an obvious sign of an amateur shot, so it's a good technique to master from the start. You will call upon items such as the Crop tool and the Transform tool to achieve a poker-straight shot – Photoshop CS6 and CC have a dedicated Straighten option built into the Crop tool. Photoshop also enables you to use rulers and guides to help you line up your images perfectly.

Landscapes will often benefit from a colour and contrast boost before you print them off, which is an easy task using one of the many image-adjustment features. You will find Levels and Curves will become frequent friends to help boost your photos and give them extra pop. As your skills progress, you can introduce adjustment layers, which allow you to make alterations to specific areas of your photo as opposed to the whole scene.

Photoshop is an essential ally when it comes to fixing your portraits, and once you've mastered a few simple retouching skills, you'll be hounded by family and friends asking for their teeth whitened, wrinkles smoothed and double chins removed. All these tasks are easy to achieve in Photoshop, mainly due to features such as the Clone tool, which can hide blemishes and wrinkles.

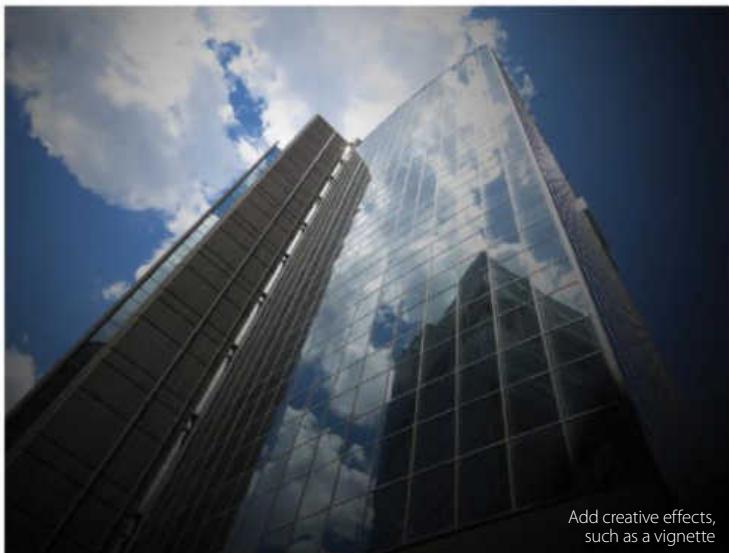
You can employ Masks to help smooth the skin, while keeping the eyes and lips perfectly sharp. You can also get creative with your image editing by altering the colour of eyes and hair to give your friends an entirely different look. These skills are easily achievable with a little practice.

There are plenty of other fantastic ways to improve your images in Photoshop. By using the Dodge and Burn tools you can lighten and darken areas of your shot, which is ideal if you find your image is slightly over or under exposed. You can also enhance the colour of the scene by adding a Photo Filter, ideal for boosting the warm tones of a sunset for example.

No matter what you choose to do to your shot in Photoshop, there is one task that is vital before you hit that print button. That is to learn how to sharpen your images. Every photographer should master this quick and easy editing skill to ensure their photos are full of punch when you hang them on the wall. With this skill under your belt, your photos will really shine.

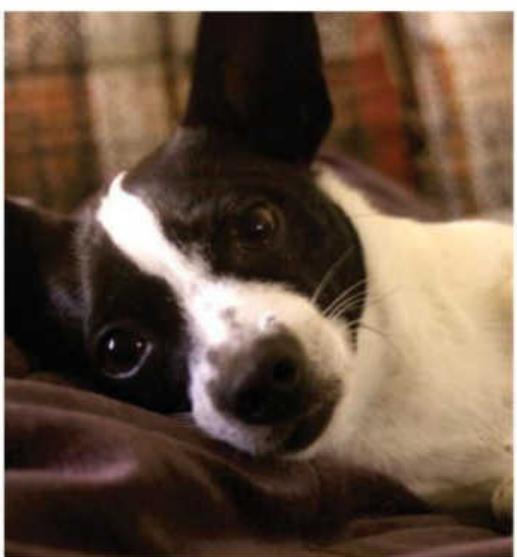


Experiment with selective colour and black and white when editing



Add creative effects, such as a vignette





5 PHOTO-EDITING FIXES

AFTER



BEFORE

01 Fix the exposure

You'll often find your photographs appear too dark or too light. This can be fixed in Photoshop using a number of methods. First of all you can head to the Image menu in the top toolbar and select Adjustments. Here you will find an Exposure slider, which you can use to lighten or darken a shot. Alternatively, use the Dodge and Burn tools to lighten and darken specific areas of an image for a more localised correction.

AFTER



BEFORE

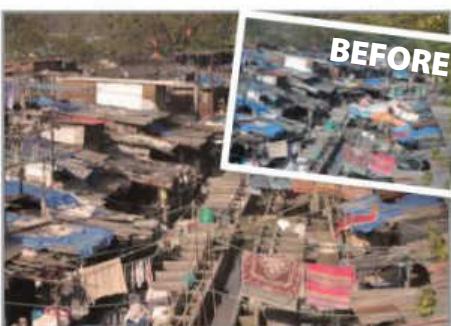
02 Straighten the horizon

A wonky horizon is a common photographic error that can be easily fixed in Photoshop. Pre-CS6, open up your image and select the Crop tool. Now draw a rectangle over your image and head to one of the top corners. A curved arrow will appear, which enables you to move your image to straighten it up. In CS6 and CC, there is a dedicated Straighten button, which lets you draw a line where the horizon should lie and you Photoshop will straighten and crop for you.



04 Add a photo filter

There are plenty of photo filters that imitate the effect of the filters used in photography. These are perfect for changing the atmosphere of a picture. Here we have added a Warming filter to a cool blue shot to add warmth and a feeling of sunset tones. Use the sliders to intensify or reduce the effect.



03 Convert to black and white

It's really easy to change a picture to black and white to add a fantastic documentary feel to your images. Simply open your photo in Photoshop and go to Image>Adjustments and select either Black and White or Hue/Saturation. The latter option provides more tonal control. Add a Curves adjustment to boost the contrast.



05 Selective colour your shots

Selective colouring is a technique used to accentuate a particular part of your shot. Go to Image>Adjustments>Selective Color to adjust a specific colour without affecting other hues in the image. You can turn the rest black and white, keeping your chosen colours vivid.



Create abstract scenes
by manipulating your images

Photo manipulation is quite different from image editing, as it involves taking a photo and transforming it into something new rather than simply tweaking the original composition.

You will have undoubtedly heard a lot about layers in Photoshop, but may not be aware of what they actually do. In their most basic sense, they enable you to build up a sandwich of images and effects. Each layer of the sandwich interacts with the other fillings until you have a whole new sandwich, or image. For example, you may start with a portrait photo and then add a new background onto a new layer. You can add some text on a different layer and then an illustration on another. Before you know it, all these layers have added up to create a brand-new image full of details.

You'll find that the Selection tools are useful for photo manipulation, as they enable you to cut out parts of your image. You can then use these cutouts in other designs, move them about the page, or simply discard them. By getting to know some of the Selection tools (the Pen tool and Lasso tool being two of the most called upon), you'll soon see your creative opportunities opening up.

You will be able to select the outline of a person and add them to a completely new background in a few simple steps. Add in a few more new skills, such as lighting effects, and you will be able to make your person and background look as if they had always been together.

By exploring the Filter menu, you will be able to transform your photos in exciting new ways. Completely change the weather by adding a rain effect, or turn a dull sky into a bright backdrop. By using layers, you can form composites, which are images made up of lots of different parts. This is a great technique if you want to create new and interesting landscapes, sci-fi scenes or fairytale glades. These are made by combining different images and textures that result in a whole new world.

For an abstract touch, how about creating scenes within scenes? You can literally make a storm in a teacup by adding a raging sea to a regular-looking cup of tea for a fantastic visual play on words.

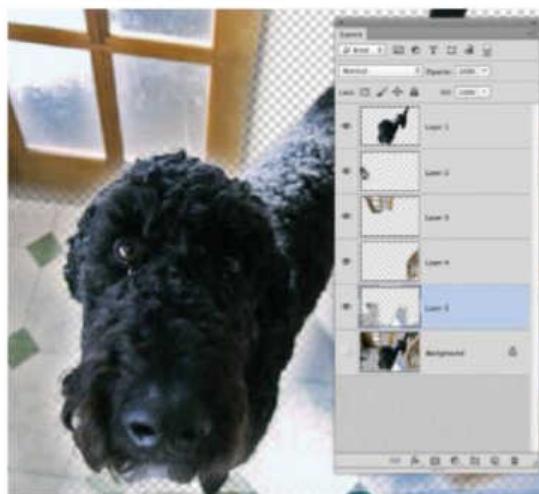
Another great photo manipulation technique is to create wonderful tricks for the eye. You can call upon the Liquify tool to bend and shape your photographs into Dali-esque creations that drip across the screen, which was massively improved in Photoshop CS6 to make it faster and easier to use. Alternatively, you can use Lens Blur and masks to transform a shot of a city scene into a miniature toy town.

The only limit is your imagination when it comes to photo manipulation. Photoshop provides all the tools you need to make your ideas come to life on screen. The tricky bit is deciding which is the best method to use. Often there are multiple ways of doing the same thing using various tool combinations – you just have to figure out your preferred way of working.

5 PHOTO MANIPULATION TECHNIQUES

01 Get creative with a single shot

By using a multitude of repeated layers and the Crop tool, you can transform a single shot into a multidimensional image reminiscent of David Hockney's famous creations. You can control how many portions you divide the image into. Use the Transform tools to slightly angle each frame to give the impression they are piled up on top of each other. Adding Blend modes to some frames alters the intensity of colour for each shot.



03 Lighting effects

Play tricks on the eye by introducing creative text effects to your images. Add completely new signatures to walls and buildings by applying a careful and considered use of the Lighting effects filter. This will take some practice, but the results are very convincing and can transform a regular, bland image into something extremely engaging. Blurring the outline can create a fall-off of light onto the surrounding areas to help your image look even more realistic.

05 Change the seasons

Photoshop is such a powerful tool that you can quite literally control the seasons at the touch of a button. By using a combination of Photoshop brushes, filters and blending modes you can produce distinguishable changes to a single image. Use gradients to alter the sky colour, and the opacity sliders to determine the strength of the effect on your photograph. You will be amazed by the power that's at your fingertips.



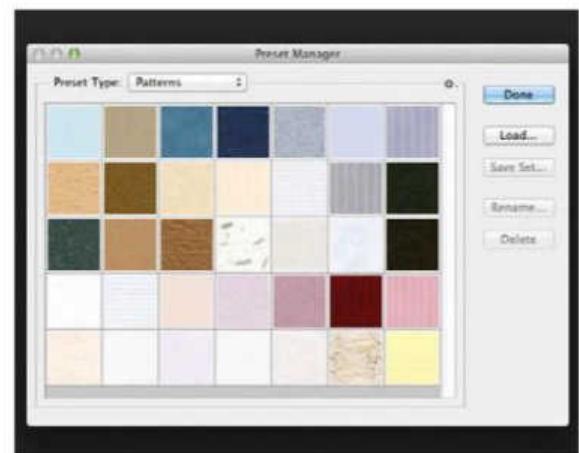
02 Change the weather

Photoshop is a fantastic tool to help change the background and add dramatic effects such as weather conditions. By exploring the extensive Filter Gallery, you can produce convincing rain effects. Adding Blur can give the impression of driving rain or soften the effect for a light shower. This can entirely alter the atmosphere of an image and, in this instance, add mood and drama. Snow and ice effects are also easily achievable in Photoshop.



04 Get creative with textures

A simple way of manipulating images is by introducing new textures and backgrounds to the shot. Textures can be added by using the Texturizer filter, or you can head online and source hundreds of free textures, which can be imported into Photoshop. Whether you are looking for paper textures, stone textures or even animal textures, you will find an overwhelming supply with a quick internet search.



Digital art

Create visual masterpieces

Consider Photoshop an artist's treasure trove of tools, paints and media. Even if your artistic skills are limited to stick men, Photoshop can provide all the features to help you realise your inner Van Gogh.

Unlike traditional drawing and painting, Photoshop makes it as easy as tracing over an image. You can literally sketch or paint over any photograph to create a stunning masterpiece. By using layer masks, you can create a host of drawing and painting styles.

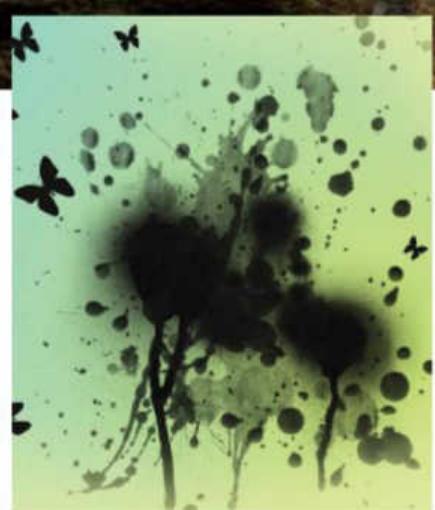
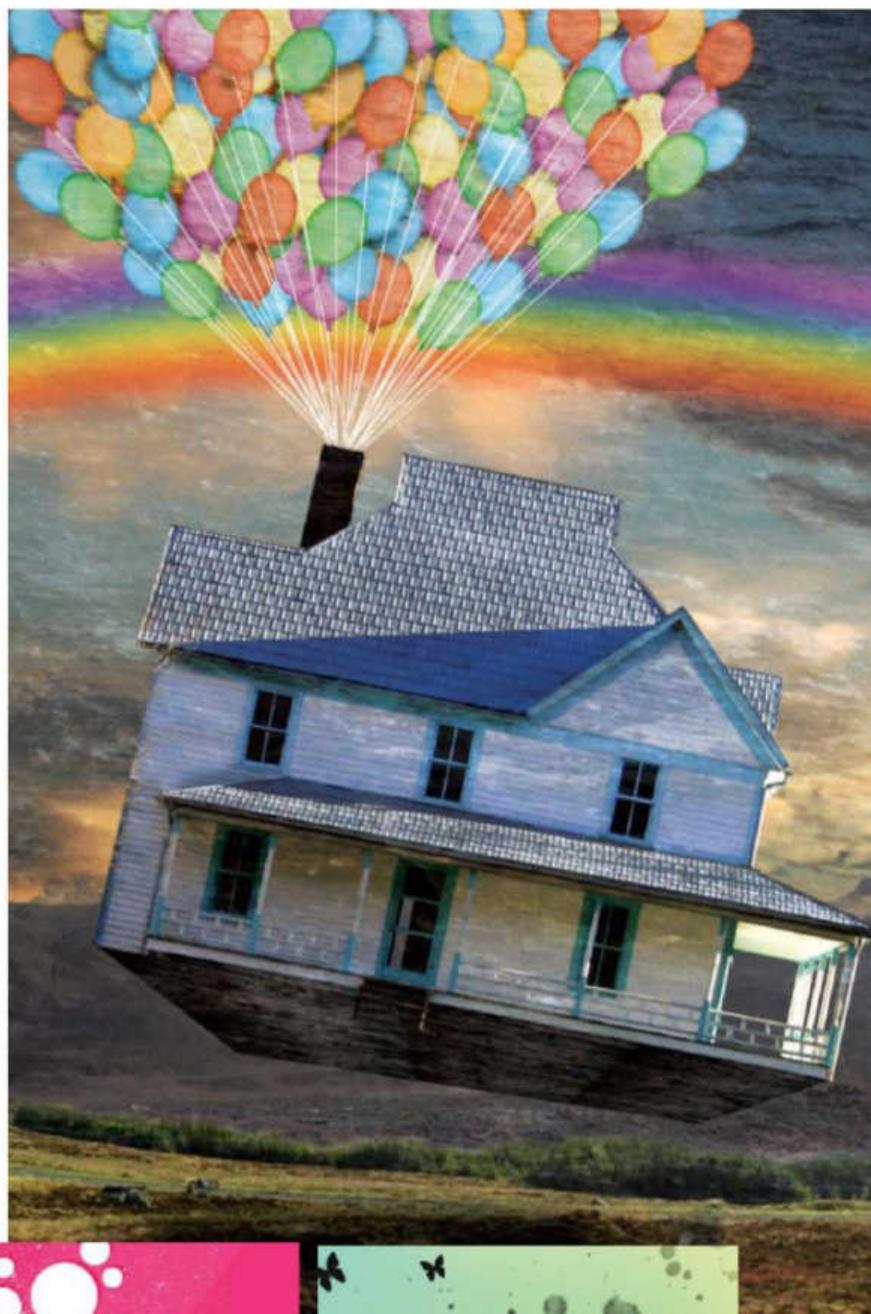
On the drawing side of things, you will discover there are far more options than a simple pencil sketch. Open your eyes to the world of chalk and charcoal drawing, sketching in watercolour, and pen and ink effects. By carefully selecting the right type of brush and combining it with the right kind of filter, you can create realistic artwork of which you can be proud. Photoshop CS5 and CS6 both introduced new brush types which are even more like their real-life counterparts, making it easier than ever to get realistic results.

You can choose from a wide range of paper types too. Work on canvas, rough paper, smooth paper, chalkboard, rag paper, and so on – any surface is possible. Some can be simulated using Photoshop's default textures and others can be downloaded as texture libraries online and imported into Photoshop.

If traditional painting styles are more your thing, then get ready to delve into the endless supply of brushes, paint swatches and blending modes. Photoshop provides a wealth of painting tools, and if you use a graphics tablet, these can be further extended by setting the Pen Pressure settings to emulate the pressure of a paintbrush. You can create light, feathery paint strokes or strong, bold strokes depending on the style you want to achieve. You can also create custom brushes depending on the style you have chosen, and there are plenty of free brushes you can use from the internet too.

You aren't limited to painting with brushes either. In fact, the Filter menu is capable of producing plenty of painting effects of its own. Experiment with Dry Brush and Pointillize filters to create a rough textured effect which, when layered over a start photo, can create something rather beautiful. The new Oil Paint filter introduced in CS6 is also a powerful way to turn photos into paintings with little effort.

Digital painting in Photoshop is one of the most satisfying activities. Granted, it takes time and patience, but you'll find that the results can be truly awe-inspiring and well worth the effort.



5 GREAT DIGITAL ART PROJECTS

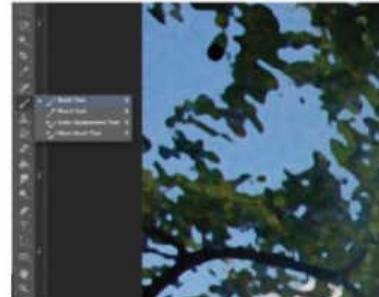
01 Vector art

Vector art is a modern trend and popular with many digital artists for its clean, bold impact. The effect is achieved predominantly by using the Pen tool, which enables you to cut out specific parts of your image. The tool is very precise and lets you trace around both curved and straight edges. After a little practice, this tool becomes second nature and will open up a wealth of creative opportunities to you.



03 Get creative with brushes

You can create a Van Gogh masterpiece thanks to the extensive range of brushes and brush options. You can alter your brush shape, intensity, width and pressure to help recreate works like this. You also have an endless supply of colour swatches so you can find the right shade of paint you're looking for. Add in a canvas texture and you're ready to start painting your incredible work of art.



04 Retro effects

Photoshop CS6 introduced many new Airbrush options, which you can customise to vary the intensity and the area of spray. There are presets for common brush setups too. A graphics tablet and pen can alter the pressure settings so you can press hard for a saturated spray or press softly for a light smattering – just as if you were using a real-life airbrush.



05 Learn to shade

The key to successful digital art relies on the same principles as traditional methods, which is building up the shading and toning gradually. This particularly applies to areas such as the hair and skin, which normally feature a wide range of tones instead of one base colour. By introducing a number of similar shades, you will easily add depth and realism to any images that look lacklustre and one-dimensional.



Utilise the extensive range of brushes and textures



Use your own photographs to create awe-inspiring results

Getting started

18

A guide to the Photoshop family

Find out the differences between CS6, Elements and Creative Cloud, and discover which one will suit you best

26

First steps in Photoshop

Make those all-important first steps with our guide to opening, closing, saving and resolution

28

Resize your images

Discover the tools and tricks that enable you to control the size of your images

32

Save, export and share your photos

Send your first edits to friends and family, or prime them for printing

36

Learn to copy and paste

Find out how compositing works with this guide to the basics of combining image elements

38

Elements 14 Organizer

Categorise your pictures by people, place and time with this tool

40

Photoshop shortcuts

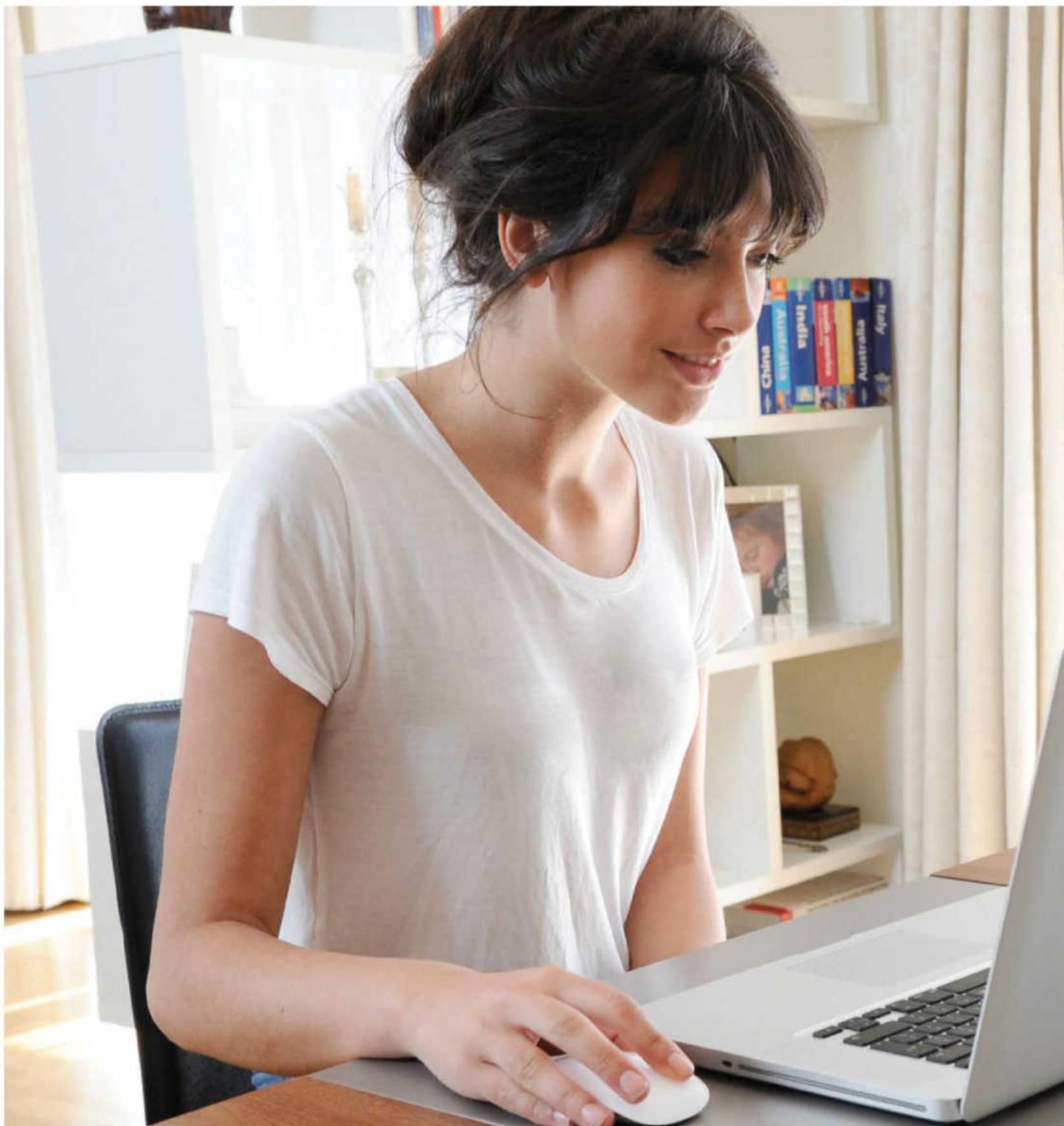
Learn keyboard shortcuts to enhance your speed and efficiency in Photoshop

“While daunting at first, Photoshop is surprisingly easy to get to grips with”





Getting started



A guide to the Photoshop family

Whether you have a subscription to the Creative Cloud, an old version of Photoshop's Creative Suite, or Photoshop Elements, we explain what each one has to offer



PHOTOSHOP

Photoshop CS6 no longer exists as a standalone product, but you might still have the Standard or Extended version.



ELEMENTS

Perfect for the complete beginner, Photoshop Elements 14 has a more approachable interface that's full of quick effects and one-click answers.



PHOTOSHOP CC

Upgrading requires a monthly subscription that caters for different users. CC offers Cloud storage and the ability to get new features when released.

Getting started



Photoshop CS

◀ No longer available to purchase as a standalone product

Photoshop has become a staple for many, if not all, digital artists. We pick out the best bits from the expert program

Photoshop gives you the room to create artwork and edit photos with complete control over layers, adjustments, filters and much more. Daunting at first, Photoshop is surprisingly easy to get to grips with. Photographers will find an array of tools for editing photos and if you are an artist from a traditional background, Photoshop has exciting

tools to imitate real media effects. What's more, in Photoshop CS6, there's a whole bunch of tools and filters that make applying effects much easier than before.

We reveal some of the best features in Photoshop CS6, so you can familiarise yourself with them if you already have the Standard or Extended version and are about to start using it.



EXPERT TIP

The big difference between the Standard and Extended versions is the 3D feature. This is kept in Extended. In Photoshop CC, 3D is all part of the price as Adobe has done away with the two separate versions.

HOW OLD IS PHOTOSHOP?

A brief history of the program that's become part of our everyday language

Has that been 'Photoshopped'? Likely a phrase many of us have heard before. In fact, the verb 'Photoshop' comes with an entry in the English Collins dictionary. Starting with the release of version one way back in 1990, the program has evolved to bring bigger and better features.

Version three introduced layers to transform the way compositions were created and with

Creative Suite, video editing and 3D tools paved the way for more varied and three-dimensional artwork. In Photoshop CC, there have been major improvements to how we connect and work with friends and co-workers. Photoshop has become an integral part of our lives, and the chances are every image that looks too good to be true, has been processed in Photoshop beforehand.

THE BEST OF PHOTOSHOP CS6

Take advantage of the most recent tools and filters that have changed the way we edit our images



01 The face

Photoshop CS6's interface has a number of helpful additions. Try the Properties palette for controlling adjustments and masks in one place, or the Layers palette filtering option for finding the right layer quickly.



02 Content-Aware tools

Content-Aware is embedded in the Patch and Content-Aware Move tools. Prior to these, it would have been down to some heavy cloning and use of copy-and-paste to remove objects from your images that you no longer wanted.



03 Non-destructive cropping

With Photoshop CS6 came an improved Crop tool. This crops images without losing those parts of the image for good. Using the Move tool, the image can be shifted around to fit with the composition.



04 Powerful filters

Photoshop's newest filters include Oil Paint for converting a photo to a painting, and Adaptive Wide Angle. There are also three Blur filters, Iris, Field and Tilt-Shift, to help add depth of field and toy-town effects.

A closer look at Photoshop

Here are some of the creative and powerful features of CS6



POWER TO THE PLUG-IN

Plug-ins of all varieties help you edit with ease

Third-party plug-ins are available for all sorts of reasons, whether that's for providing those extra photo effects or for adding simple

embellishments to give greater impact to a project. Rather than seeing plug-ins as an alternative to Photoshop, they actually

complement and expand the toolsets and features that are already available in the supplied version of the software.



01 Photo effects

Plug-ins such as FilmPack by DxO Labs or Silver Efex Pro from Google's Nik Collection apply instant photo effects to any image. If you're really short on time then the range of pre-made effects will be exactly where to look first.



02 Painterly styles

AKVIS is a company that makes a variety of plug-ins, including ArtWork for painterly effects. Alien Skin's Snap Art plug-in aims to convert normal photos to a range of painted styles such as watercolour, pencil and sketch effects.



03 Essential edits

Detail by Topaz Labs improves the contrast and micro-detail between each pixel. Portrait Professional by Anthropics offers a complete workshop for retouching and shaping the faces in your images.

Getting started



Elements

Cost: £64.81/\$79.99US

The beginner's choice that makes image editing accessible

If you're new to image editing then opting for Elements is a great way to ease yourself in slowly. Elements has been designed to help beginners create artwork and edit photos with minimal hassle.

Unlike Photoshop CC, Elements is entirely standalone, so there's no need for a monthly subscription. What's more, you can upgrade from any previous version of Elements to get the latest tools and features.

Key features in Organizer

Elements Organizer helps keep images tagged and stacked

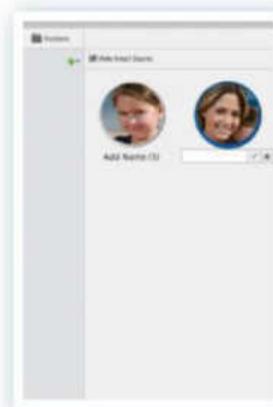
Categorise and organise
The Organizer can launch as a standalone program, separate to Elements 14, and is used to categorise your pictures before you take them into Elements ready to edit.

Photo fixes
The Organizer lets you perform simple edits to images before heading over to the Editor. These include cropping, colour adjustments and red eye reduction.

Search by content
Tag images according to what's on them with Organizer's Keywords and Rating function. Using the Search bar at the top, images can be located more quickly.

Share your ideas
The Organizer's Share link lets you show others your images and ideas. Connect with Facebook, Flickr and Twitter or load them onto your Revel account.

View images
Images are displayed as thumbnails inside the Organizer's central window. Using the Zoom slider at the bottom, the number of images in this window can be altered.



GROUPED SHOTS

Sort your shots

You can sort the shots that you've imported into Elements 14 by people, place or even event. Elements can recognise whether shots belong together; it has the capability to group similar faces for you to edit together, and shots that are taken within a similar time frame are recognized as being from the same place or event.

MAP YOUR IMAGES

Just got back off holiday?
Pin your images to a map!

In the Organizer, images can be pinned to the location where they were taken using the Maps feature. By clicking on Add Places, you can drop your images onto a specific place in the world. This is just another way to sort images so you know where to find them when you need them.



The Elements Editor

Edit and perfect images using the Quick, Guided and Expert modes

Expert tools

Elements includes the Magic Wand and Quick Selection tools for making selections around subjects, with the help of Refine Edge in version 14.



Three modes

The Editor is a where all the tools and adjustments are kept. This in turn is split into three sections: Quick, Guided and Expert.

Image-fixing tools

Tools such as the Straighten and Recompose will quickly fix images in need of some rearranging. These are some examples of helpful additions to Elements over the past couple of versions.

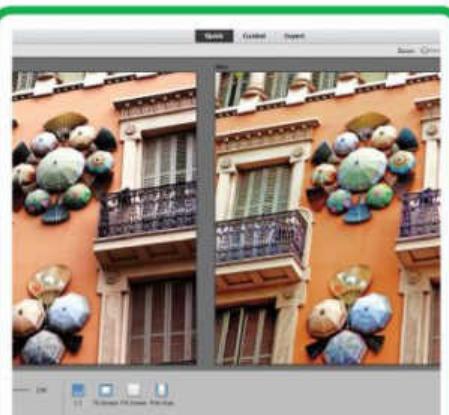
Graphical elements

The Graphics contains preset designs for forming a new backdrop, or texture effects for images.

GUIDED EFFECTS

Special effects are effortless with easy to follow steps

The Guided interface is what makes Elements so efficient. Images can be given effects such as a soft focus, high key or Lomo image styles. Guided effects have been added with each new version and now include Motion Blur effects and Resize Your Photo. Following on-screen instructions, you can transform an image in seconds.



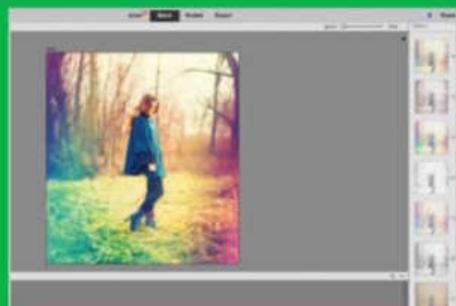
QUICK EDITS

Fix images in the Quick mode with simple tools

Quick mode has a bundle of image adjustments designed to restore lighting, colour and detail, and all the layering is taken care for you. Apply Smart Looks to your photos; these retro filters judge the lighting and colour and apply effects accordingly.

Instantly apply artistic frames

Embellish your images with preset frames and effects



01 Choose a preset

Load up Elements 14 and head straight to the Quick interface. Click the Effects option. Select one of the ten presets available. Light Leak was used here.



02 Texturise

Select the Texture button next to Effects to load the presets. Click on the Blue Grid preset to give your image a grainy, retro finish to complement the effect.



03 Frame to finish

Apply one of the preset Frames inside Quick mode to give the image an artistic flourish. We chose a frame with a fun and funky finish that really stands out.

Getting started



Creative Cloud

► **Cost:** £17.15/\$19.99US per month (single app)
£45.73/\$49.99US per month (all apps)

Get new features and tools as soon as they come out with Photoshop CC

The Creative Cloud has changed the way we use and update Photoshop for good. Photoshop CC is based on a monthly subscription with access to content, storage and features that you don't get with Photoshop CS versions. Since Photoshop CS6 is no longer available to purchase as a standalone product with a one-off price tag, Photoshop CC is the way forward. Here are some great features that come with signing up to the Creative Cloud.



BENEFITS OF PHOTOSHOP CC

Subscribing to the Creative Cloud comes with its advantages

01 Cloud storage

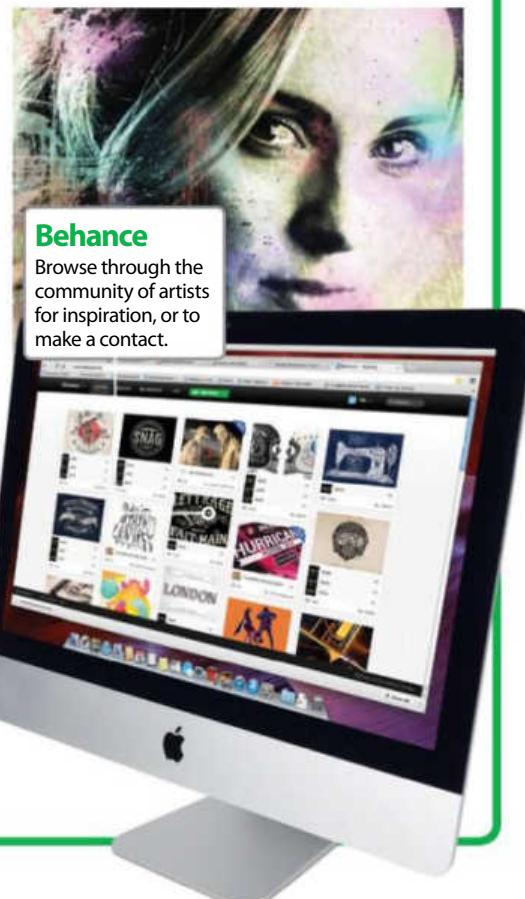
For artists looking to edit, connect and share artwork, the Creative Cloud is a good place to start. Signing up to the Single App or Complete packages gets you 20GB of cloud storage so you'll have plenty of space to back up your images.

02 Instant updates

Updates are sent to you as and when they're made available. This means you'll never be left out of the latest features to be released from Adobe. Where previously you had to buy a new version of Photoshop to get the latest features, your Photoshop will notify you with updates to install.

03 The Behance connection

As part of the Creative Cloud membership, you are given your own customisable Behance portfolio to publish and share artwork with other like-minded people. This is especially useful if you're a freelance artist who's reliant on gaining exposure and looking for the next big design job. It's directly accessible from inside Photoshop CC and could prove key for getting noticed for what you do.



SUBSCRIBING TO THE CLOUD

How much does it cost?

Subscribing is not as difficult, or as expensive, as it may seem. What's important to realise is that you don't have to pay for the entire Creative Cloud services; you can just pay for Photoshop CC. Opting for Photoshop CC will set you back £17.15/\$19.99US per month for an annual subscription, compared to the full Creative Cloud price for new customers which is £45.73/\$49.99US.

There's also a stripped back Photography plan, which just offers Photoshop and Lightroom without extras such as the Behance ProSite. This is only £8.57/\$19.99US.

Regularly check www.adobe.com/CreativeCloud as you can find some great discounts on purchases and upgrades. Offers are always changing, so keep your eyes peeled.

Photoshop CC

All-in-one Photoshop gives you full creative control with whatever you need to create



REASONS TO GET CREATIVE CLOUD

Multiple programs and constant updates are two main distinguishing features of Creative Cloud



01 Create in multiple programs

If you opt for the full Creative Cloud subscription you will have access to all Adobe programs, including Illustrator, Muse and more. This means you can work across multiple applications to suit the artwork you're creating.



02 Always be up to date

Whether you're a retouch artist, painter, or just enjoy photo manipulation, Photoshop CC has all the tools you'll need. With Content-Aware editing and the Refine Edge at hand, you can create compositions to an industry standard.



Getting started

First steps in Photoshop

First time in Photoshop? Get up to speed with the basics in our essential guide

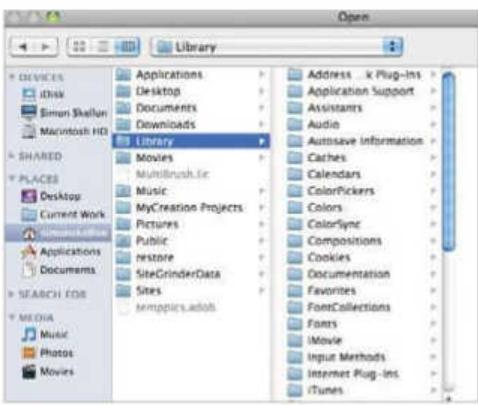
The first time you open Photoshop it can seem a bewildering mess of icons, menus and palettes. We have already introduced you to the flavours of Photoshop: Photoshop CS, Photoshop CC and Photoshop Elements. It is generally thought that Photoshop is for professionals and that Elements is purely for beginners. The interface of Elements is a bit more intuitive than Photoshop, and features such as the Quick Edit mode mean that it's incredibly easy to make your first edit. But Elements still has a lot of the same tools as Photoshop so don't dismiss it as 'Photoshop Lite'.

Between the two versions it might be that the tools are named or located slightly differently, but there's generally a work-around to give Elements users the same wealth of editing options as CS and CC users. Here, where there is a difference between Photoshop and Elements features, we've included the Elements technique. If you don't see an alternative way, assume it's the same.

There are three core skills that you need when you first start using Photoshop. You need to be able to load a file, open a new file and save a file. These three tasks all require extra knowledge, such as understanding resolution and file formats.

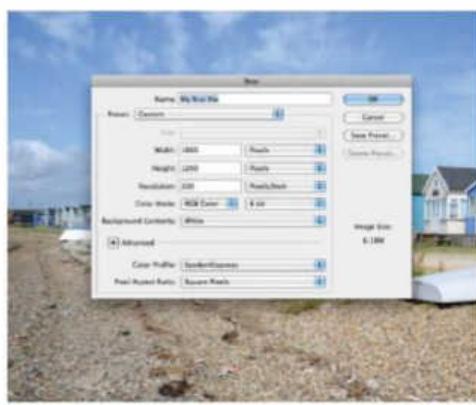
The other essential ability that you need is to get access to all of the tools. If you think the Photoshop interface is confusing as it is, it would cause your brain to explode if all of the tools were on display at once! To avoid this, a lot of tools are grouped together and hidden behind a major tool.

One other thing that is worth mentioning is shortcuts. We always give the menu commands for performing tasks as it's a good way to get used to where things are and how things are organised. But once you get more comfortable with moving around the interface, you can start using your keyboard to carry out the most common commands.



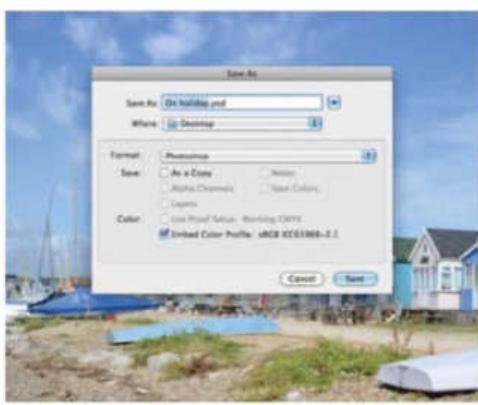
01 Open a file

To load an image, go to File>Open and then use the window browser to navigate to the file you want. Once found, simply click Open.



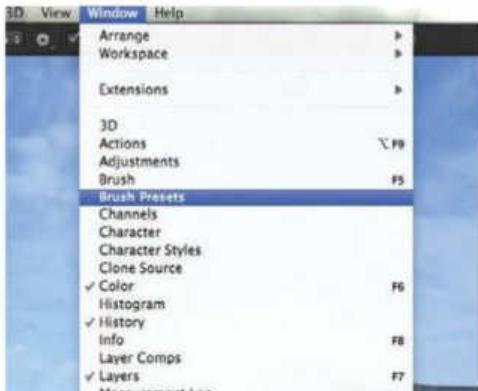
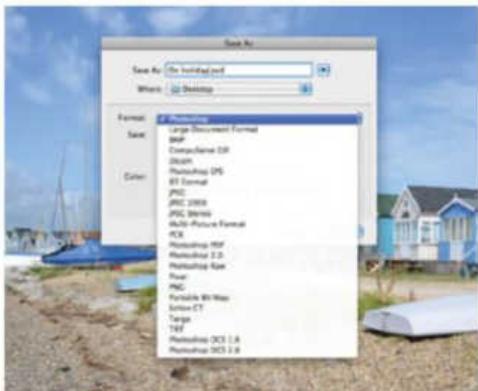
02 Create a file

To open a new file, go to File>New and enter a name, a size and a resolution. Click OK to create it. In Elements, go to File>New>Blank File.



03 Save a file

Saving is also a straightforward affair. Go to File>Save As. You can rename the file if you want and, more importantly, set the file format.



04 File formats

Adobe has supplied a lot of different file formats for you to save your image in and we'll be looking at this in more detail throughout this book.

05 Selecting tools

Adobe has bundled similar tools together. If you see a small arrow in the bottom-right corner of a tool, there are other tools hidden behind.

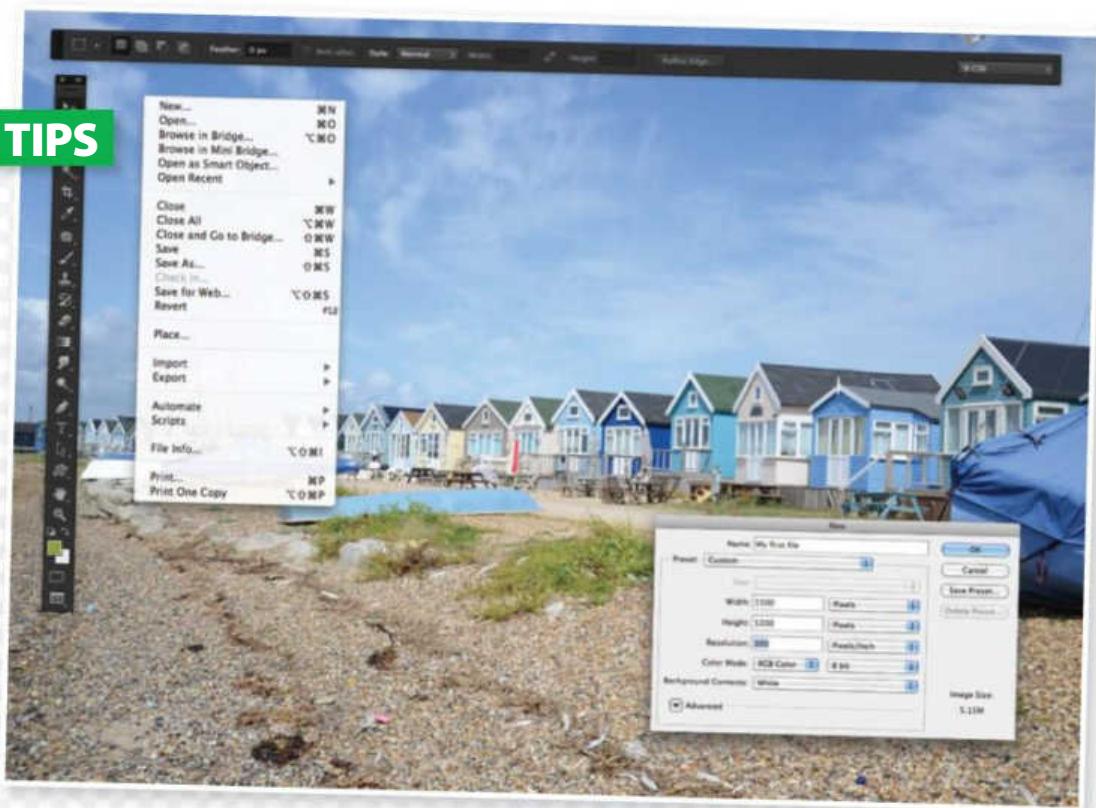
06 Options

Tools and commands are found in a series of palettes. You can set which palettes are seen using the Window menu.

QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

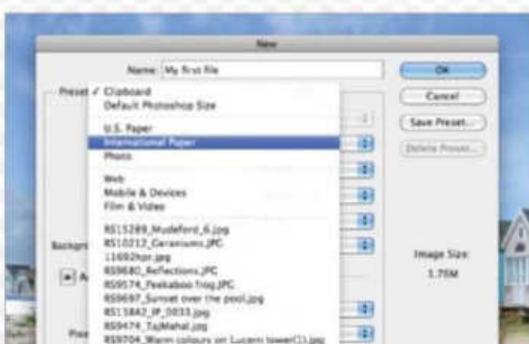
Quick save

The first time that you save a new file, use the Save As command as we have described, so that you can set the file name and format. Then, if you continue working on the image, you can just use File>Save instead, which saves your progress to the same file. It can be easier to get used to the keyboard shortcut, which is the Apple/Cmd key if you're using a Mac, or the Ctrl key if you're using a PC, plus the 'S' key at the same time.



File sizes

When you are creating a new file from scratch, you can use the Preset menu to see different pre-defined sizes. International Paper offers you A4 and A5, for example, for quick setup of new documents to the right dimensions.



Common file types

JPEG is the most common file format. It is used because it offers smaller file sizes but it sometimes compromises on quality. When you choose to save in JPEG, you are given a slider to set the quality. PSD is a Photoshop document and is needed if you are saving a multi-layered document. TIFF produces larger but good quality files. Use this when you need the optimum quality.

Resolution Get it right the first time



What is resolution?

All images are made up of square pixels. These pixels control how detailed an image is – put simply: the more pixels, the better the image.

Start with 72ppi

Photoshop measures pixels in inches (or ppi). Our screens work in 72ppi, so if you are doing something that will never be printed, 72ppi is fine.

Go 300ppi for quality

If you need quality or you want to print an image, work in 300ppi. The extra pixels mean that an image has more information.

Getting started

Resize your images

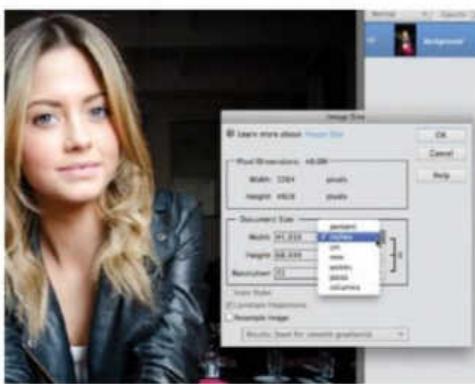
Discover the tools and tricks that enable you to control the size of your shots

When it comes to resizing images, the most important task is understanding how images are constructed. Open up an image, zoom all the way in and you'll see that all the detail is constructed from small squares called pixels. Photoshop handles these pixels on a pixel-per-inch basis (ppi). This is as it sounds – the number of pixels contained in an inch. The rule is simple: the more pixels there are, the more detailed the image will be. When we talk about the pixels in an image, we are referring to its resolution. A resolution of 300ppi is a general goal, as it's high enough for most uses and is certainly fine for printing.

When resizing images you have to be aware of resolution, because this will dictate your end result. Going smaller is no problem whatsoever, however once you start to go larger, you will start to see some quality issues. This is because pixels have to be generated and added to the image in order to make it larger.

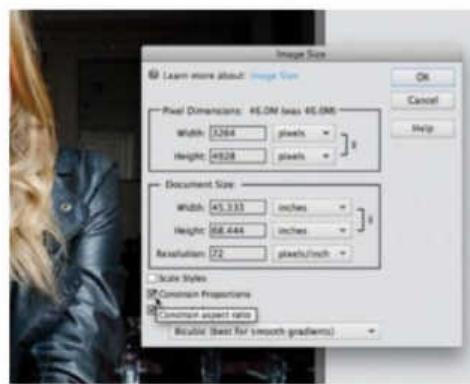
Most resizing is done within the Image Size dialog. From here you can alter an image's physical size as well as its resolution. However, the Save For Web function is a useful tool for trimming images down. Here we're going to look at both of these, explaining how they work, in addition to showing a good way of enlarging images.

"Most resizing is done within the Image Size dialog. From here you can alter an image's physical size as well as its resolution"



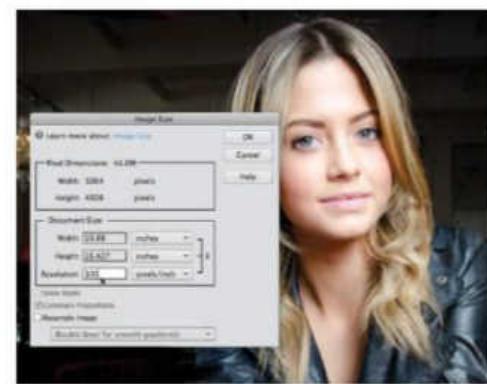
Physical size

Open up the Image Size dialog. Professionals will use pixels to measure an image but the rest of us can get by with the physical dimensions. Look at the Document Size area and use the dropdown menu next to Width to select the unit you want to work in. Here we've picked Inches.



Constrain your elements

If you want to alter the size of your image, chances are you will want to keep the proportions. You can do this by ensuring the Constrain Proportions box is checked. If it isn't activated, check the Resample Image box, select Constrain Proportions and then deselect Resample Image.



Alter the resolution

There is a dance between the resolution of an image and its physical size. You can increase the resolution, but to keep the quality you have to make do with a physically smaller image. Here we have a large 72ppi image. We need 300ppi for printing, so type this into the Resolution box.

ALTER SIZE AND RESOLUTION

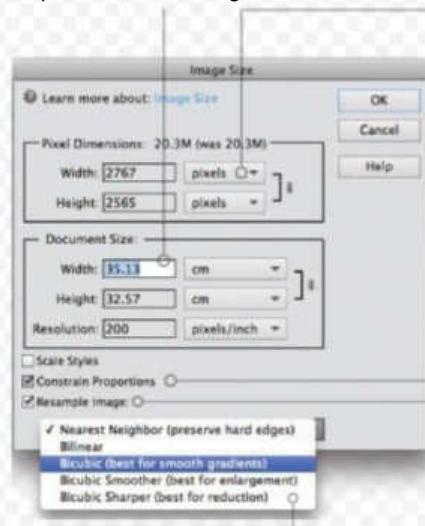
Edit an image with the Image Size dialog box

For anything related to an image's size and resolution, the Image Size dialog should be your first port of call. Photoshop users can find this under the Image menu, while Elements users will have to navigate to Image>Resize.

Once open, you can check the size of your image and then move to editing the resolution and/or dimensions. There are various dropdown menus that can make things seem confusing, but we'll explain what they all do below.

Document Size

You can use this to view the physical size and resolution of your image. You can alter the units of measurement from the dropdown menu on the right.



Resample options

When resampling you can use this menu to access options for achieving the best results.

Pixel Dimensions

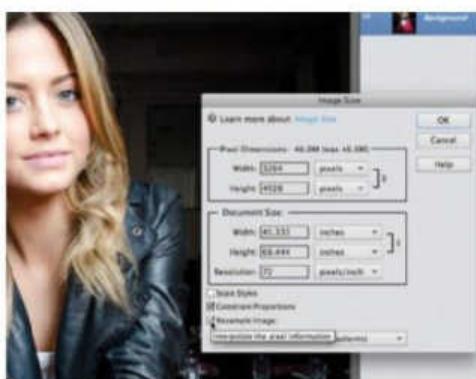
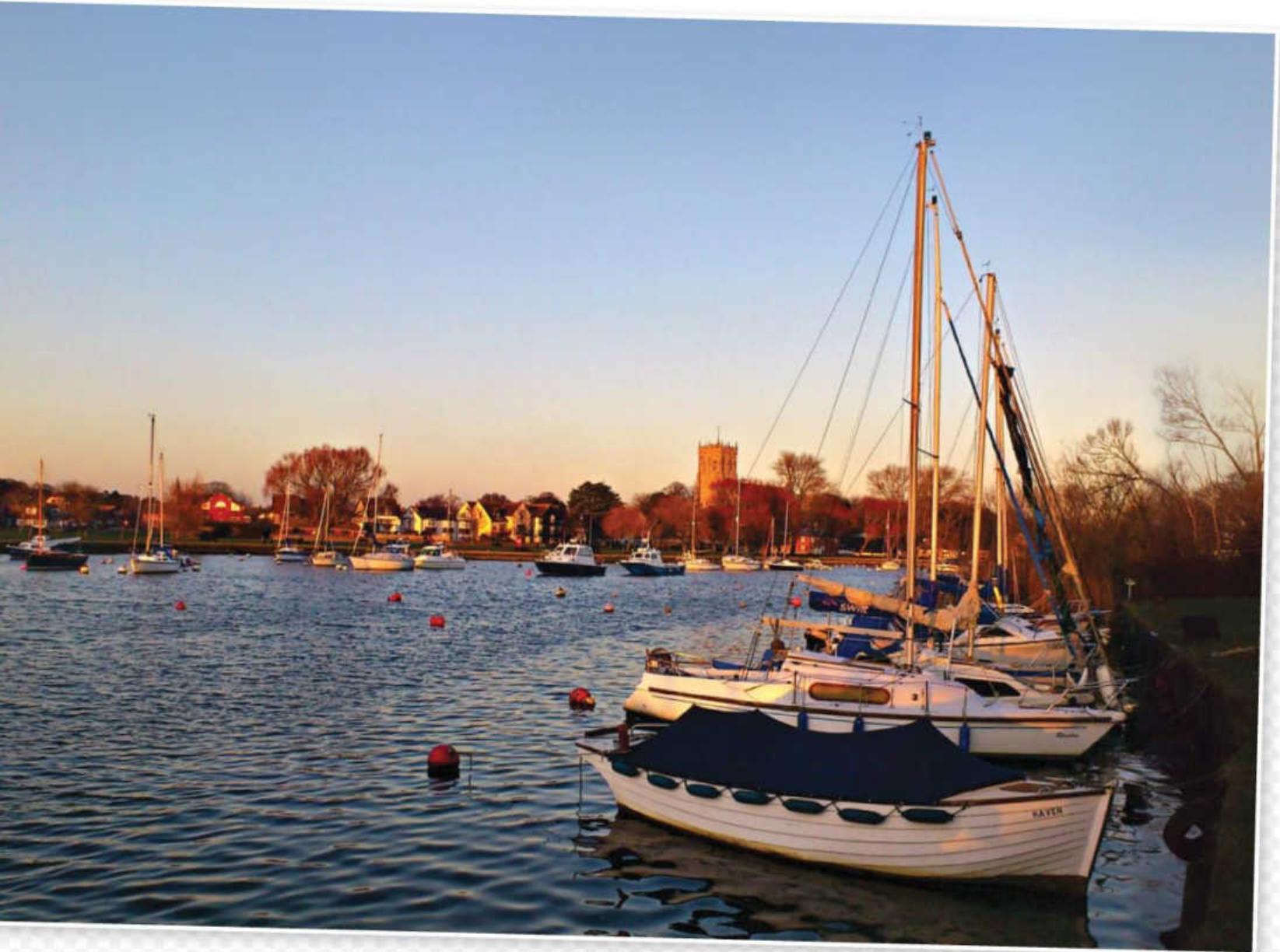
This area reveals the number of pixels, along with the width and height of your image.

Constrain Proportions

Enable this option to keep the proportions of your image. If you edit the width, for example, the height will follow suit.

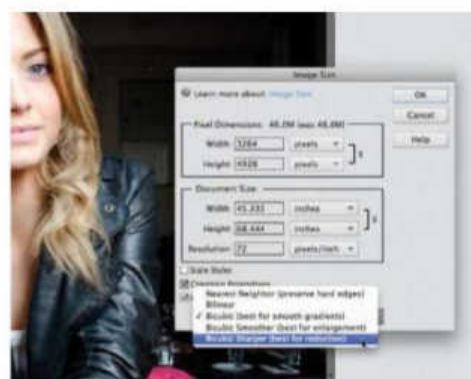
Resample Image

Choose this option to alter the resolution of your image. Once altered, the size of the image will also change.



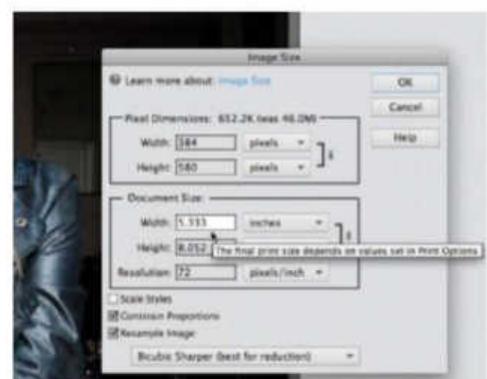
Resample images

When you would like to keep an image's resolution the same, but alter its size slightly, you need to resample that image. It is always advisable to make an image smaller, as this still keeps the image quality high. To get started, click the Resample Image box.



The resampling options

Once you've checked the Resample Image box you'll be able to get to the dropdown menu below it, which holds different resampling options. We are going to be reducing the size, so pick the Bicubic Sharper option, as it automatically applies sharpening to keep the image looking good.



Make the change

You can alter the number of pixels or the physical size of the image by first entering a new width in inches. As Constrain Proportions is ticked, the height will alter and you'll see the new file size up in the Pixel Dimensions area. Hit OK to confirm, or Opt/Alt-click on the Cancel button to reset.

Getting started

Save an image for the web

Quickly reduce an image's size with the Save for Web command

The Save for Web dialog used to be essential in the early days of the web, when a large image would bring a modem to its knees. While the connections are much improved now, it's still good practice to shave file sizes down when posting images online or sharing via email. The Save for Web command makes light work of this.

Easy options

This dropdown menu gives you a choice of preset edits based on image quality. You can also manually enter a quality value in the Quality area.

Alter the pixel size

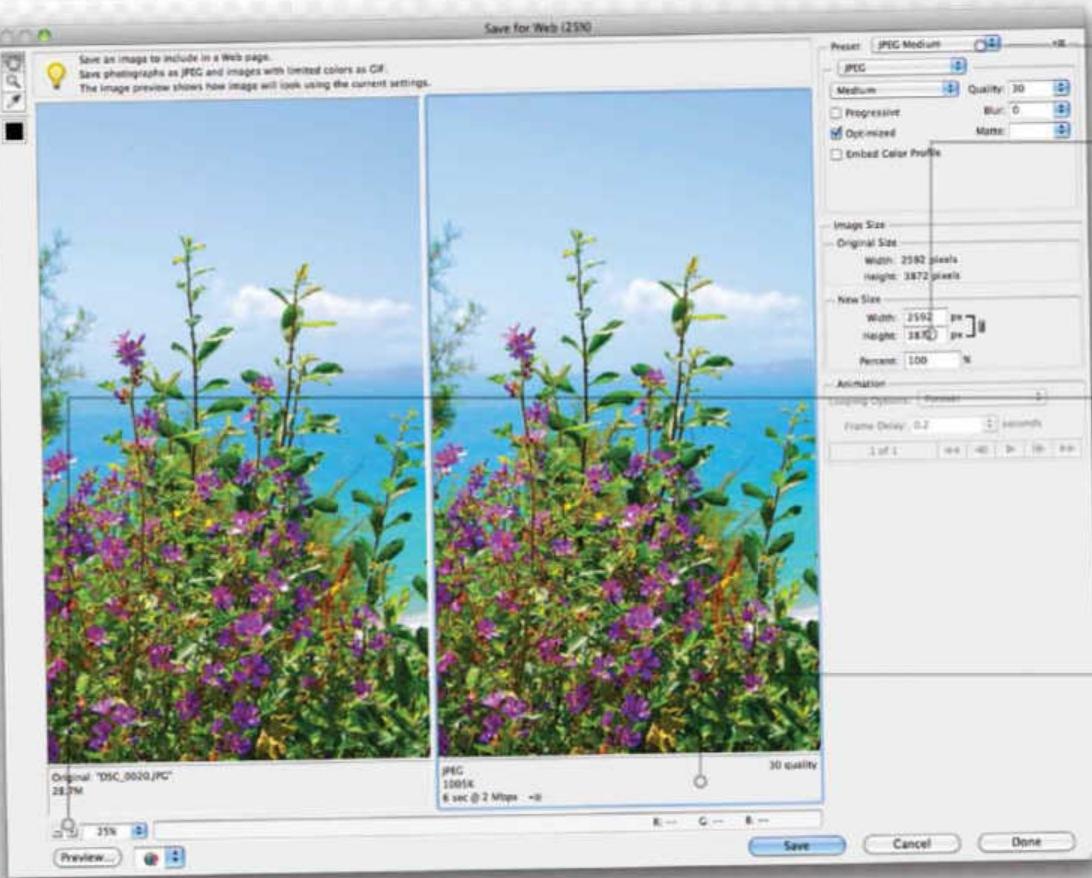
If you want to alter the number of pixels along the width or height of an image, enter a value here.

Zoom in and refine detail

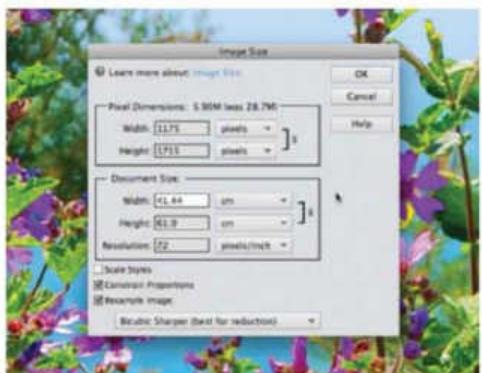
To properly assess the quality of the edited image, use this area to click and zoom in or enter a Zoom value.

Before and after

You can instantly see the results of any edit in the main window, including the new file size and loading time underneath the image. Click the arrow to pick different Download options.

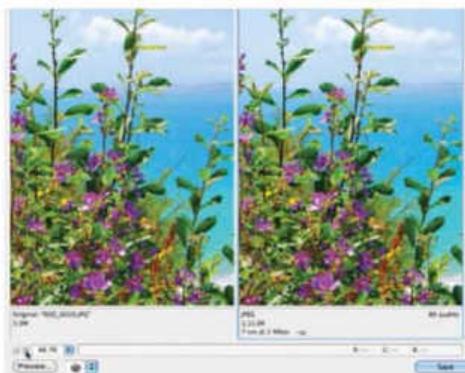


Reduce the file size of an image Make a photo that's lean, mean and ready for the web



01 Prepare your work

The Save for Web command isn't meant to shrink huge images, so if yours is a mammoth, use the Image Size dialog to reduce either the resolution or the physical size.



02 Adjust the view

You will now see two versions of your image. Go down to the bottom-left and use the plus (+) icon to zoom in on an area. Click and drag on the image to move to a specific point.



03 Reduce the size

Use the dropdown menu on the right panel to set the quality. The higher the quality, the larger the file size, so keep an eye on the numbers underneath the preview and pick the size you want.

Enlarge an image

Keep quality when you go bigger

Ideally you should never force an image to go beyond its bounds, but there are times when this is unavoidable. This is especially true when it comes to old photos that have been scanned in. You won't get the perfect result, but there is a way to get pretty close.

New size

When you resample any image, you will see the new size as well as the old one. Because we have increased the size and resolution, our pixel dimensions (and file size) have also increased.

Resolution

When you are scanning images, always do so at 600ppi so you have lots of options for altering the physical size. If the image is to be printed, you will need 300ppi as a minimum.

Smooth edges

There are various edits that can help fix any problems from the enlarging process, but the first one is the Bicubic Smoother resampling option.



01 Good scanning practice

A trip to the Image Size menu reveals that this was scanned at 180ppi and is physically small. As a rule, you should scan images in at 600ppi to get decent-sized results by lowering the resolution.



02 Take things larger

A professional printer would demand the image be 300ppi. With Image Size open and Resample Image checked, pick the Bicubic Smoother option and enter 300 in the Resolution area.



04 Sharpen the edges

To counteract smoothing the edges, you now need to sharpen them. Go to Filter>Stylize>Diffuse and pick the Anisotropic option. Zoom in close to an edge to see the results and, if happy, click OK.

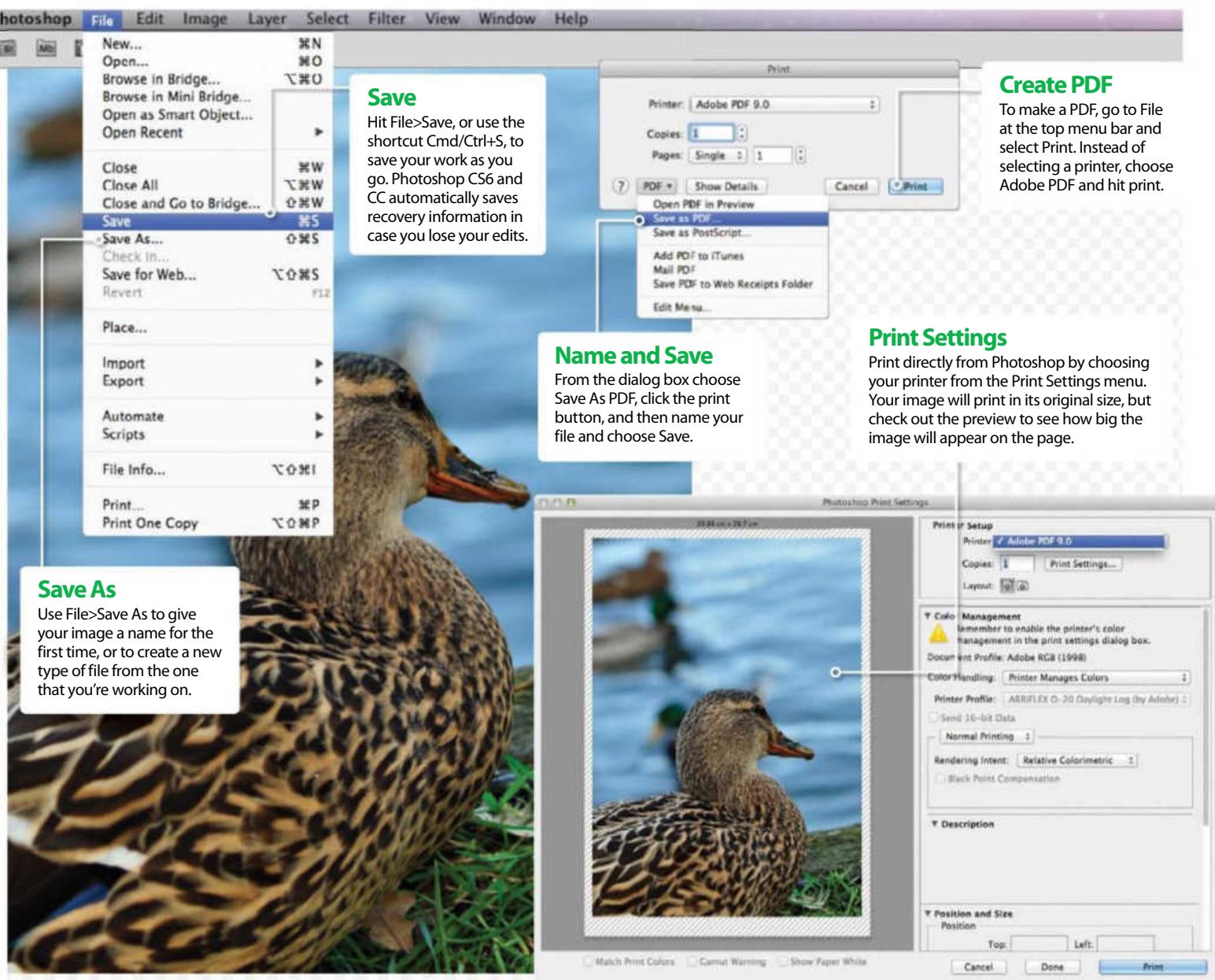
05 Use the Unsharp Mask

It's time to go to Enhance>Unsharp Mask (or Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask if in Photoshop). Generally a high Amount, small Radius and small to zero Threshold tends to work well.

06 Final Touches

To finish we can add noise, as this makes the image seem more uniform. Go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise and enter a small amount. Go to View>Print Size to see what the image will look like when printed.

Getting started



Save, export and share your photos

Get your images ready for the web or a printed masterpiece

The process used to save an image changes depending on what that image is going to be used for. Size really does matter when you're printing out a photograph or a piece of artwork, as you want to include as much image information as possible. This helps the image come out bright and clear when on a large canvas, but also means saving work as large, high-resolution files.

On the other hand, when saving an image for the internet you will want to do away with any information that isn't necessary so that it will load up quickly on a page. Emailing images to friends and family also becomes easier when you work with smaller file sizes. Photoshop gives you the option to save in 23 different file formats, but luckily most users will just need a handful of these for

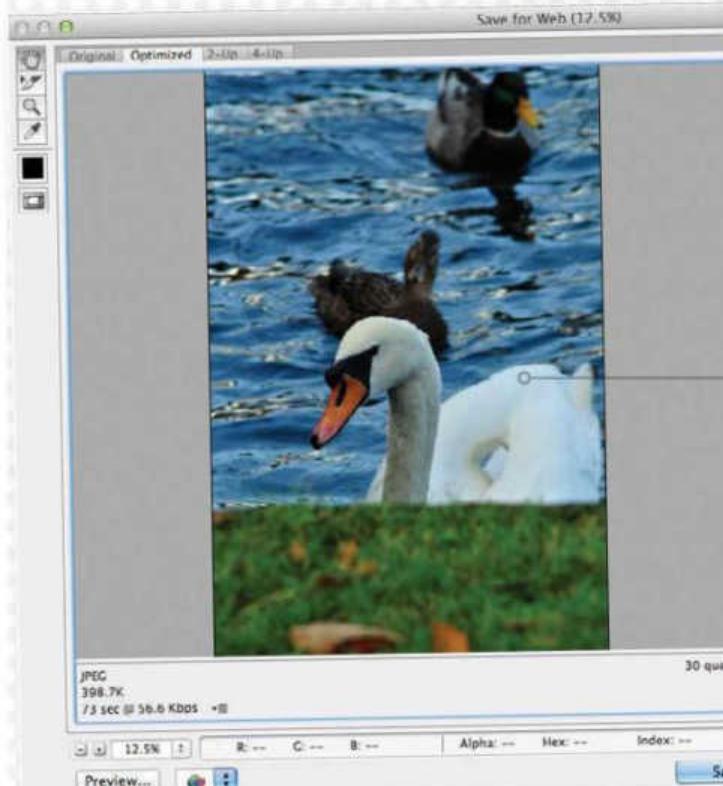
their everyday editing. One format to take note of is the Photoshop file, or PSD for short. This is a layered file that saves all adjustments made when you edit your image. It's always a good idea to save a layered copy of any image that you're working on, as going back to make changes to the photo later on will be much easier.

"Size really does matter when you're printing out a photograph or a piece of artwork"

Save photos for uploading online

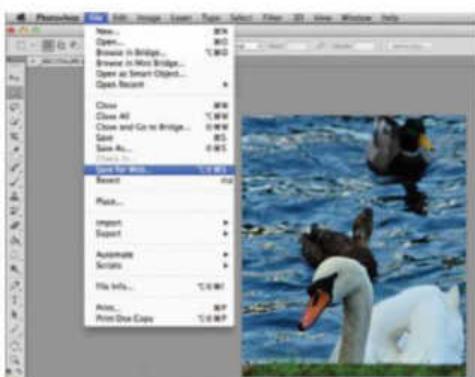
Take your photos out of Photoshop and on to the web

The smaller an image is, the better it behaves when displayed online. Photoshop's Save For Web feature guides you through the process of trimming your image of all unnecessary information. This makes it a pleasure to upload to web galleries or to share with friends and on a blog. The menu is dauntingly large, but here are a few simple settings to get your image ready for the web.



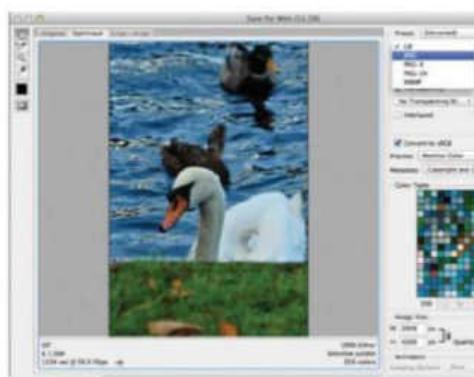
Save for web

Prepare your images with Photoshop's Save for Web feature



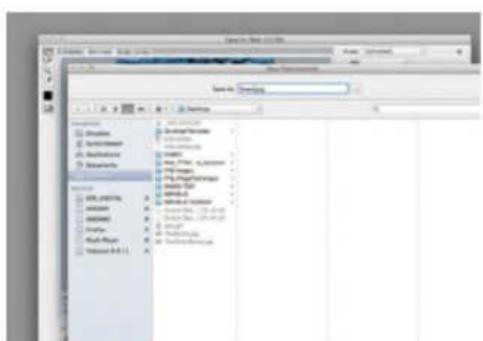
01 Load up menu

Once you've made the final adjustments to your image and you're ready to save, click File in the top menu bar and find the Save for Web option. This will take you into a completely different menu for setting up your image.



02 Select file type

From the box menu, change the file format from the default GIF to the JPEG format. From the Compression Quality option below choose Small. Leave all other settings as they are. Hit Save once these are all set in place.



03 Name and Save

At the top of the Save As menu, type the name you would like to give your photo. Choose a location on your computer where you would like to save your file to, such as the Desktop, and then hit Save. This image is now set up and ready for uploading online.

GIF files

The GIF file format is very popular for the web because it is small. It's best suited for graphics and is rarely used to save photos.

Quality

Lowering the quality of your image means getting rid of unnecessary information. The file size will become much smaller too and will load up quicker.

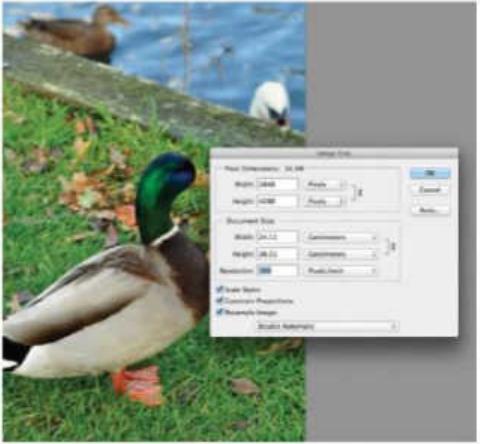
Preview

The preview screen shows what your image will look like after saving it. Use the plus and minus buttons to zoom in and out and check the final image quality.

Back out

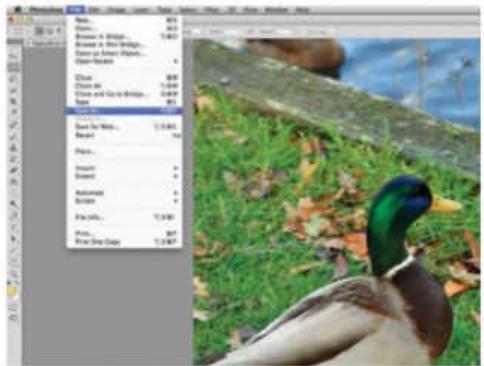
If you change your mind while saving your image, hit Cancel and this will take you back to your original image.

Getting started



02 Check DPI

Check that your image has a Pixels/Inch setting of 300. If its value is below this number then feel free to change it to 300, but note that this will make your image size a lot smaller.



05 Choose TIFF

When you're happy with your image, head over to File>Save As from the top menu. Then choose TIFF from the Format options. This is an uncompressed format which means it will keep your image's size large for printing.

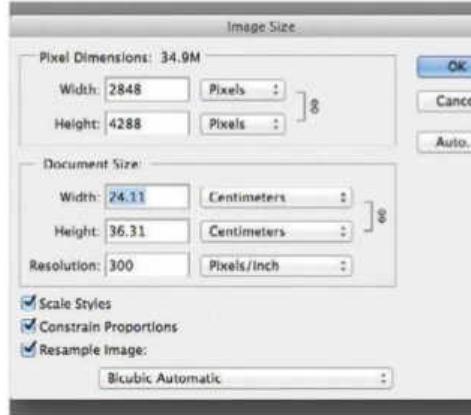
Printing artwork

Prepare your image for print

Achieving outstanding results when printing artwork requires a little bit of know-how.

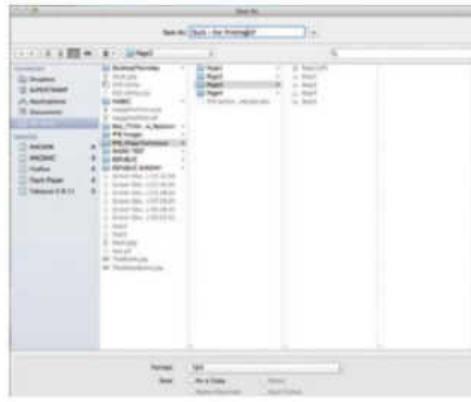
Printers look at individual pixels in an image, which means that with more detail and a higher number of pixels, the printout will look better.

If your image has a small resolution, with little detail, then it's quite possible you might be disappointed with the final print. First decide whether you're going to print the image yourself or whether you're going to use a service. If you're using a service then don't worry about setting up the image's size. Just follow on from step five, where we discuss a file format for printers.



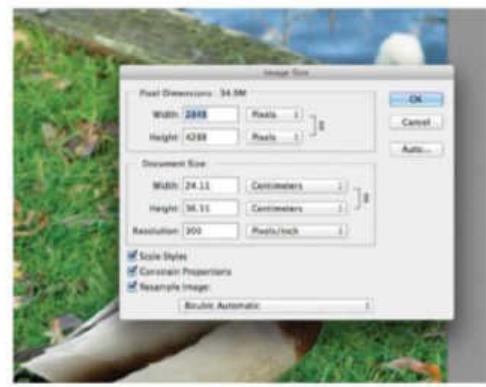
03 Stick to original size

If you plan on printing smaller than the original image size, you won't need to adjust the size options in Photoshop. Simply specify the print size in your printer's settings when you come to that important final stage.



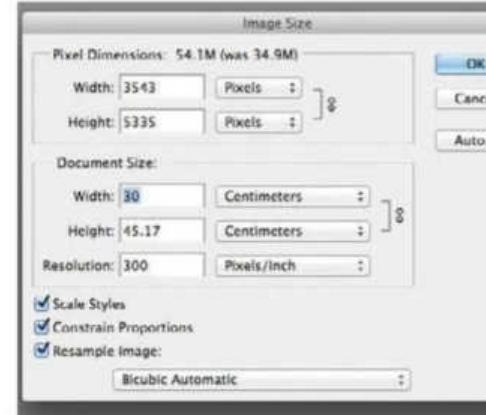
06 Name your file

At the top of the Save As dialog box, name your file and select a location on your computer. Hit Save to complete the process of formatting your image, which should now be ready for printing.



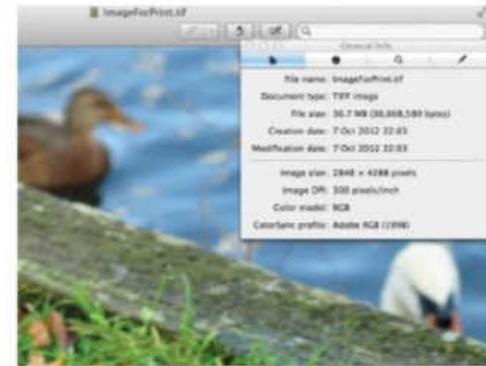
01 Image Size

From the top menu select Image>Image Size. This will show you how large your image is. Printing any larger than this size will reduce the quality.



04 Printing bigger

It is possible to print an image larger by entering a new value in the Height and Width columns. Unfortunately, the printout will lose quality, so this is not recommended, but there is room for enlargement up to a point.



07 Working with the file

Your photo can now be printed and, as it's high resolution and uncompressed, it is very large in size. If you're moving the file to another computer then use a device such as a memory stick, because it's not ideal to email an image at this size.

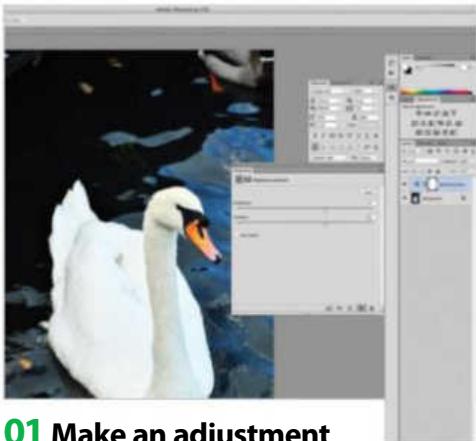
Save layered artwork or a flattened version

Keep your options open by saving a master copy

Photoshop works with layers, allowing you to edit and adjust images at any stage.

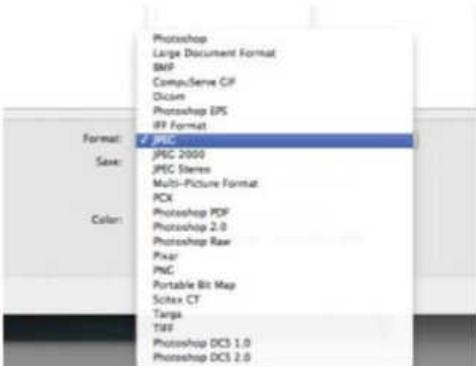
When you save an image as a JPEG, the file is flattened and the layers are lost.

It's a good idea to keep both a layered and a flattened version of the image on your computer. That way, if you want to make changes it's as simple as opening your master, layered copy and making the adjustments.



01 Make an adjustment

With your image open in Photoshop, add an Adjustment on a new layer, such as the Brightness/Contrast Adjustment (Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast). This could be to improve the lighting in your image if slightly under or overexposed.

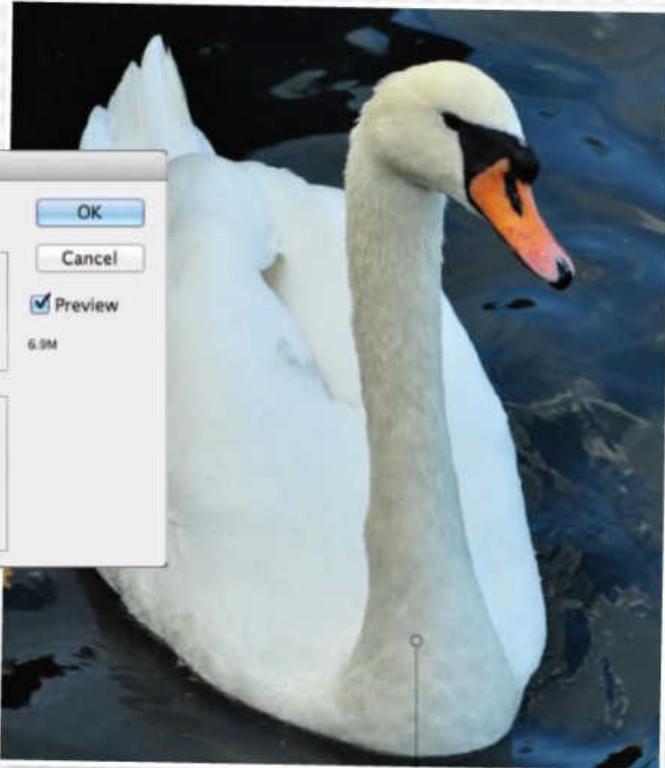
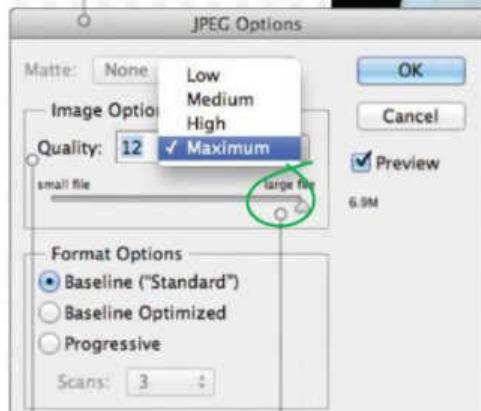


02 Save flattened file

Save your image as a flattened file by choosing File>Save As and selecting JPEG as the file format. Name your file, choose the JPEG quality you need and then save it. The High and Maximum options will increase the size of the file significantly.

Flattened images

JPEG is the file type most commonly used with photographic images, as it supports CMYK, RGB and Grayscale colour modes. This will, however, remove all layers and flatten the image.



Quality

JPEG files can be compressed selectively, which means that you can choose the final file size of your flattened image.

File size preview

Select the quality using the slider, depending on whether you want to output a small or large file. Keep an eye on your image behind this menu to see how the changes will look.

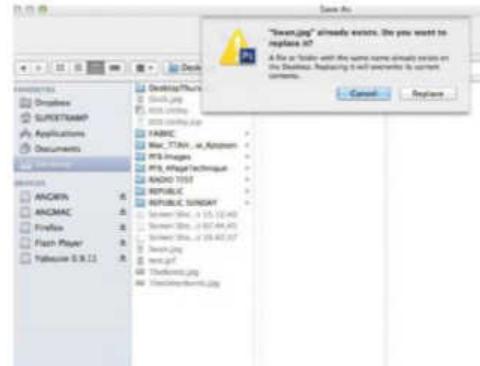
Save with layers

Layered files will be saved at their original quality, so you can always go back and use the Save As option to store your image at a different size using the JPEG options.



03 Keep a master copy

Choose File>Save As to save a layered copy of your image. Choose Photoshop under Format and then give your image a name. The file extension for this format is PSD – Photoshop Document – and it can be opened within all versions of Photoshop.



04 Update old files

To adjust an image, open the layered file to make the changes. Save your file as before and then choose Replace when prompted. This will update your previously saved image. Save the changes to your layered file and then you're safe to close it.

Getting started

Learn to copy and paste

Discover the basis of composites by taking elements from one picture and adding them to another

The words cut and paste describe two very simple actions. You cut out (or copy) an object in one photo into an internal memory buffer called the clipboard and then paste it again into a different position or photo. However, it's the processes that leads up to the cut and what you do after the paste where all the work and complexity comes in, and with Photoshop it can be very complex indeed.

But before you cut something out of a photo, you have to select it first, either by using one of the selection tools: the Marquee tool, Lasso, Polygonal Lasso, Magnetic Lasso, Quick Selection, Pen tool, Magic Wand or the Quick Mask mode. After you paste an object it can need cleaning up or adjusting, so at this stage even more tools like masks and the Transform options come into play.

"From the most basic pasting to complicated, layered collages, copy and paste are Photoshop fundamentals"

How to copy Select one area to move to another



01 Get the right background

The most common example of cut and paste is to take someone from one photo and paste them into a more scenic one. This is made much easier if the person is stood against a plain background to start with. Start by loading the subject photo.

02 Magic Wand settings

Select the Magic Wand tool and set the Tolerance in the top Options bar to 30 so it picks up all of the white. Put ticks into the Anti-alias box for a soft edge and Contiguous so only the background is selected. Now click on the white area.

03 Refine and copy

Hold down the Shift key and click on any unselected areas. Go to Select>Inverse to select the figure, and then Select>Modify>Contract and enter a value of 1px. Finally, use either Edit>Copy or press the shortcut combination Ctrl/Cmd+C.

Paste a subject

How to retrieve your copied selection



01 Tackle the pasting

Close your subject image and don't save it. Load the scenic picture and go to Edit>Paste or press Ctrl/Cmd+V. She has appeared but is floating in midair. Select the Move tool and tick Show Transform Controls.

02 Position carefully

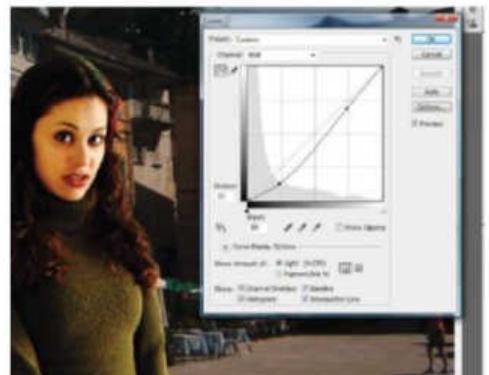
If you click on the subject and hold the mouse down, you can drag it around the screen. In this case her head should be no further than halfway up the screen, so we move her down to a more realistic position.

03 Rescale

The model is so close we've now lost part of the subject. Click and hold the corner gadget of the Transform box then move the mouse left and down. Click on the Aspect Lock button between W and H then apply.

Clean up your copied image

Integrate the elements



01 Refine the edges

To clean up the pasted object, make sure you are on its layer and click the New Layer Mask icon in the Layers palette. Select the Brush tool with a black Foreground colour. Start to brush over any untidy areas carefully.

02 Color balance

To match colours between the two images, work on the subject layer and go to Image>Adjustments>Color Balance. Move the sliders to adjust the tone. In our case, we removed the yellow hue.

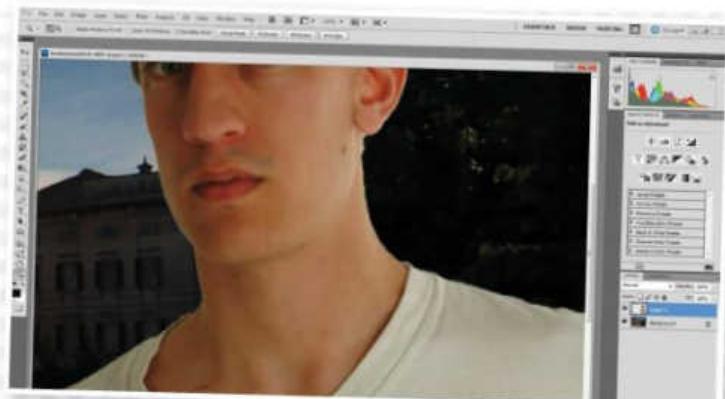
03 Brightness reduction

Go to Image>Adjustments>Curves. Create two control points by clicking on the curve. One should darken the shadow areas and the other the highlights. You could also add grain or use the Lens Correction filter.

MISMATCHED RESOLUTIONS

If picture A is a low-resolution image and picture B high resolution, when you copy the object from picture A and paste it into B it will appear to be too small. If you use the Transform tool to make it bigger, the quality will suffer as a result. There are only two things solutions to this fairly common problem. The first is to increase the size of picture A using specialised plug-in software

like Alien Skin's Blow Up 3 or onOne's Perfect Resize 7 rather than Photoshop's tools. The second is that you could find pictures that are the same kind of resolution. However, if picture A is of a higher resolution than picture B, the problem is easily solved. Now that the object being pasted appears too large, simply use the Transform tools to scale it down to the right size!



Getting started

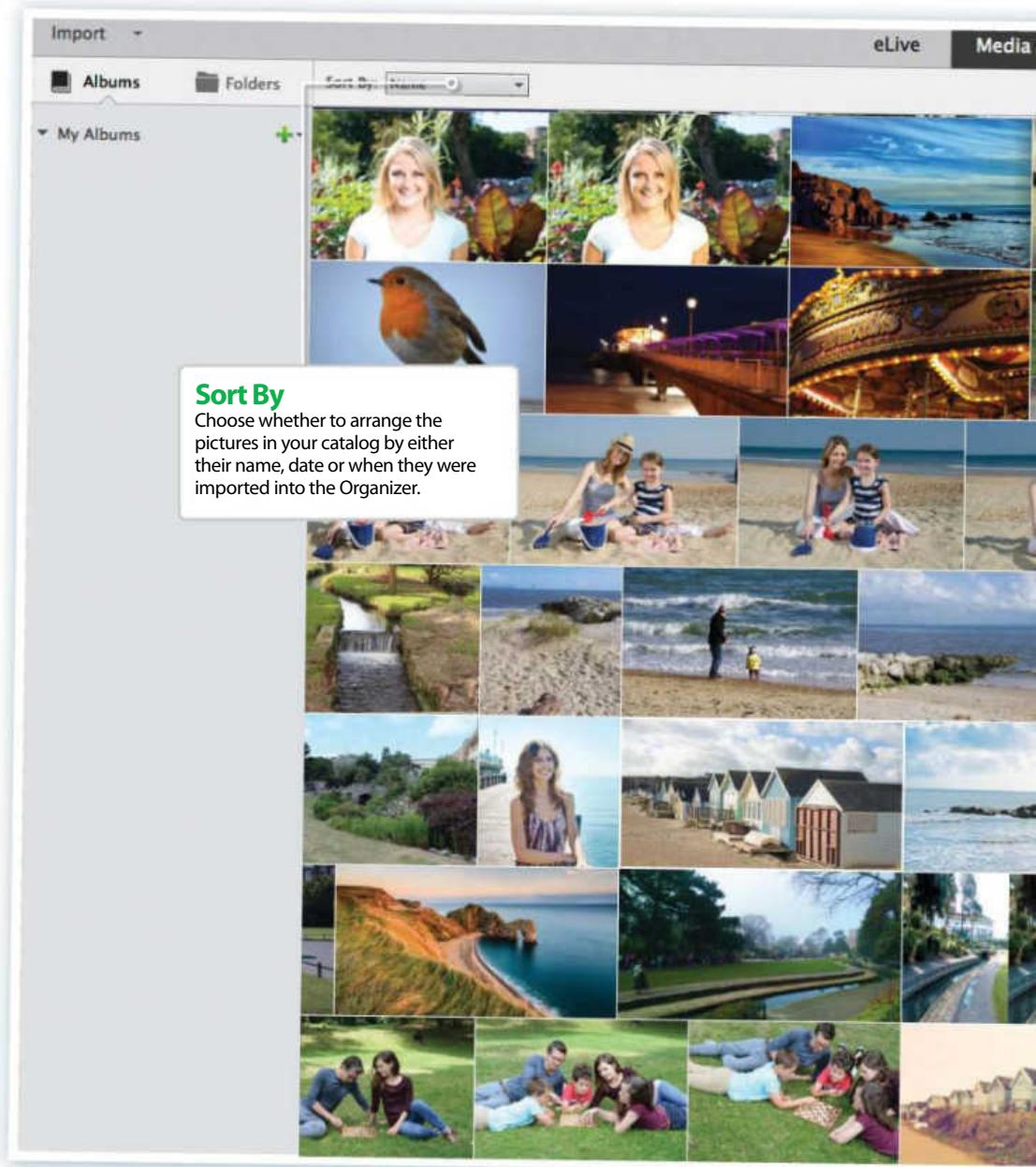
Elements 14 Organizer

Categorise your pictures by people, place and time with the all-improved Elements

Photoshop Elements is the perfect option for anyone just getting to grips with photo editing, and Elements 14 is the biggest and most complete version of the software yet, with brand new tools scattered across the program, and all the old favourites revamped.

Though the sleek, grey design of the program has remained, this new edition of Elements seems a lot more visual than it ever has been. It's much easier to find pictures in the Organizer section of the software with added People, Places and Events capabilities, and this new aesthetic continues into the Quick and Guided sections of Elements. There are new tools, but Elements 14 is more of a gentle revolution than anything radical, with the program simply moving more in line with Photoshop and Adobe's other apps. Elements 14 is a program for mobile users as much as photographers, and this version is packed full of great new tools for imaginative projects.

The best place to start, though, is right at the beginning. The Organizer is the ideal tool to organise and categorise all your pictures, so let's delve into the starting point of any Elements user's editing experience.

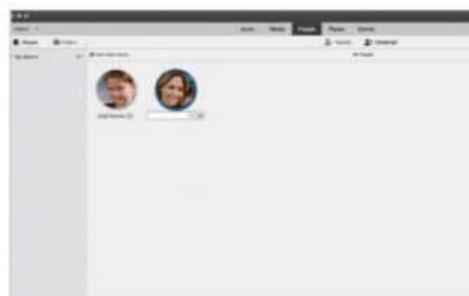


Using the Organizer How can you catalogue your photos?



Import

Start off by heading to the top-left corner of the Organizer and then selecting a set of files or folders to import into the program. Organizer will automatically sort your pictures by time, and then it will group shots that were taken together at similar periods.



People

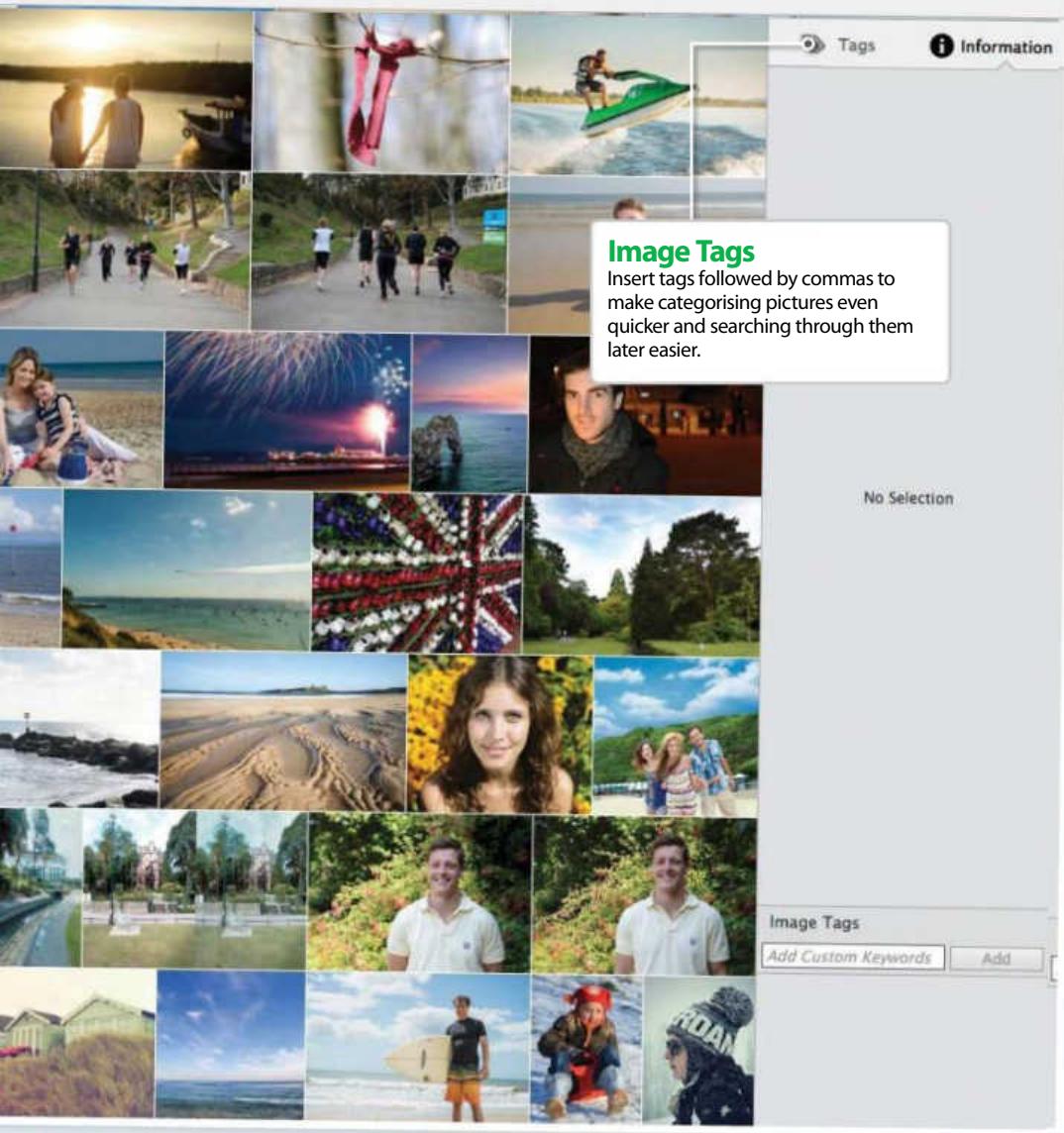
Sort pictures by the people in the shots. Organizer automatically recognises similar faces, and then groups pictures accordingly. You can add people by double-clicking the pictures and entering names. Roll over people to view all pictures featuring them.



Places

Organizer recognises pictures that have been taken during the same day as probably having been taken at the same place. You can input exactly where these pictures were taken and then drag them onto a map to visually place your albums all over the world.

All Media



Events

In addition to placing where your pictures were taken and who was featured in them, you are also able to assign specific events to your photos in order to make them even easier to find. Roll over events if you want to view all the pictures taken from that time.

Slideshow

As a nice touch, once you've ordered your pictures into categories, you are able to view them all in a slideshow afterwards. This comes accompanied by music on your computer, and will display any captions that you have given your pictures.

FAQ



Will I be able to access Adobe Stock within the new version of Elements?

At the time of writing, Elements 14 doesn't incorporate the option to import photos purchased via Adobe Stock. Though Adobe is keen to improve the Creative Cloud's interconnectivity, Elements isn't actually available on CC. It's a standalone program, so it wouldn't make sense to link it intrinsically to other CC products; this isn't to say it will never become a member of the Creative Cloud family, though. If you wish to use Adobe Stock pictures, you can simply download individual ones from www.stock.adobe.com.

What is Premiere Elements?

Just as Photoshop Elements is a scaled-down version of Photoshop CC, Premiere Elements has a similar relationship with Adobe Premiere CC. Premiere is a video-editing program, and as a brand new feature this year, it launches from the same menu as Organizer and Photoshop Elements. This is just another example of Adobe's interconnectivity; you can export pictures for use in Premiere Elements, and store videos in your Organizer.

Is there any way for me to get my pictures from my iPhone to Elements?

With Creative Cloud, you simply have to upload pictures to the Cloud, and download them straight back down to the desktop Photoshop. With Photoshop Elements, it's much more like a traditional digital camera: connect your iPhone to your computer, and there's an option within Organizer to download images via iPhoto. It's easy to connect and doesn't need drivers.

What new features has Adobe added for smartphone photographers?

Adobe recognised that a lot of pictures its users take are selfies. The Shake Reduction Feature in Elements 14 was designed with this phenomenon in mind, but the visual aspect of mapping your pictures in the Organizer is something that will come in handy with your smartphone snaps.

Getting started

Photoshop shortcuts

Dramatically speed up your workflow with these handy shortcuts

Once you've got to grips with the basic Photoshop tools and features, it's a great idea to start practising some of the shortcuts. Whether you are editing, retouching, creating or more, you can save loads of time by learning shortcuts. Over these two pages we've compiled an essential shortcut guide, which we've split into sections based on the type of tasks you perform. Make sure you have this cut-out-and-keep guide close to your computer and use it whenever you have a Photoshop project on the go. We're certain you will know these shortcuts off-by-heart in no time! We have given both Mac and PC commands, so Cmd/Ctrl means the Apple or Command key on a Mac, and Control on a PC.

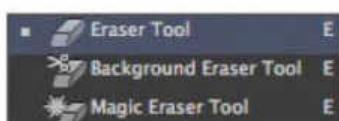
Handy shortcuts for everyday tools



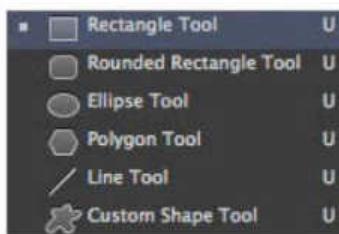
Crop Tool: C
Perspective Crop Tool: C
Slice Tool: C
Slice Select Tool: C



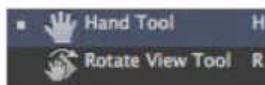
Eyedropper Tool: I
3D Material Eyedropper Tool: I
Color Sampler Tool: I
Ruler Tool: I
Note Tool: I
Count Tool: I



Eraser Tool: E
Background Eraser Tool: E
Magic Eraser Tool: E



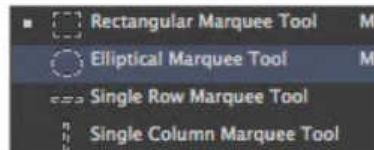
Rectangle Tool: U
Rounded Rectangle Tool: U
Ellipse Tool: U
Polygon Tool: U
Line Tool: U
Custom Shape Tool: U



Hand Tool: H
Rotate View Tool: R

Zoom Tool: Z

Select and Selection tools



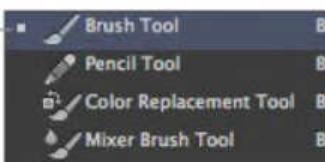
Rectangular Marquee Tool: M
Elliptical Marquee Tool: M
Single Row Marquee Tool: M
Single Column Marquee Tool: M



Lasso Tool: L
Polygonal Lasso Tool: L
Magnetic Lasso Tool: L
Quick Selection Tool: W
Magic Wand Tool: W

Toggle Standard/Quick Mask modes: Q
Cycle Path/Direct Selection tools: Shift+A
Toggle Slice/Slice Select tools: Shift+K
Cycle Lasso tools: Shift+L
Toggle Rectangular/Elliptical Marquee: Shift+M
Toggle Pen/Freeform Pen tools: Shift+P
Select All: Cmd/Ctrl+A
Select All Layers: Cmd+Opt+A/Ctrl+Alt+A
Deselect: Cmd/Ctrl+D
Feather: Cmd+Opt+D/Ctrl+Alt+D
Inverse: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I
Reselect: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+D

Painting tools



Brush Tool: B
Pencil Tool: B
Color Replacement Tool: B
Mixer Brush Tool: B

Decrease/Increase Brush Size: [/]

Decrease/Increase Brush Hardness: {/}

Previous Brush: ,

Next Brush: .

First Brush: <

Last Brush: >

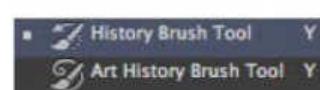
Brush tool: B

Pencil tool: B

Gradient tool: G

Paint Bucket tool: G

Sponge tool: O



History Brush Tool: Y
Art History Brush Tool: Y
Tool Opacity 10%-100%: 1-0
Flow/Airbrush Opacity 10%-100%: Shift+ 1-0

Image-editing tools

Spot Healing Brush Tool: J

Healing Brush Tool: J

Patch Tool: J

Content-Aware Move Tool: J

Red Eye Tool: J

Clone Stamp Tool: S

Pattern Stamp Tool: S

Dodge Tool: O

Burn Tool: O

Sponge Tool: O

Toggle Clone/Pattern Stamp: Shift+S

Auto Color: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+B

Auto Contrast: Cmd+Opt+Shift+L/Ctrl+Alt+Shift+L

Auto Levels: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+L

Canvas Size: Cmd+Opt+C/Ctrl+Alt+C

Color Balance: Cmd/Ctrl+B

Color Balance (last settings): Cmd+Opt+M/Ctrl+Alt+M

Curves (last settings): Cmd+Opt+M/Ctrl+Alt+M

Curves: Cmd/Ctrl+M

Desaturate: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U

Hue/Saturation: Cmd/Ctrl+U

Hue/Saturation (last settings): Cmd+Opt+U/Ctrl+Alt+U

Image size: Cmd+Opt+I/Ctrl+Alt+I

Invert: Cmd/Ctrl+I

Levels: Cmd/Ctrl+L

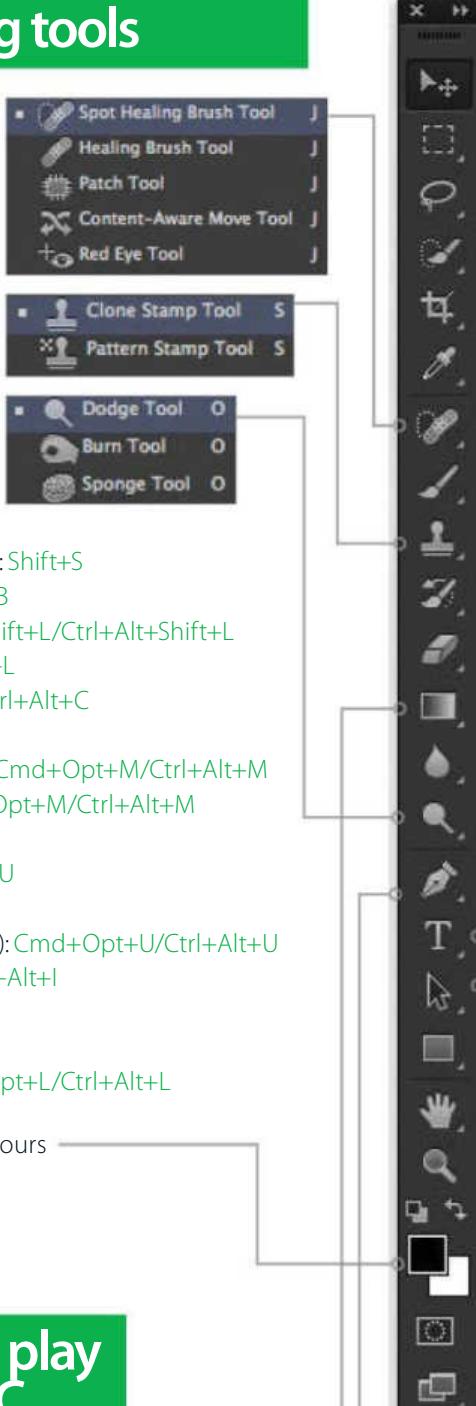
Levels (last settings): Cmd+Opt+L/Ctrl+Alt+L

Foreground/Background colours

Default colours: D

Switch colours: X

Edit in Quick Mask Mode: Q



Type tools

Horizontal Type Tool: T

Vertical Type Tool: T

Horizontal Type Mask Tool: T

Vertical Type Mask Tool: T

Path Selection Tool: A

Direct Selection Tool: A

Horizontal Type Tool: T

Vertical Type Tool: T

Horizontal Type Mask Tool: T

Vertical Type Mask Tool: T

Path Selection Tool: A

Direct Selection Tool: A

Align Left: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+L

Align Right: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+R

Bold (toggle): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+B

Centre text: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+C

Decrease/Increase Type Size by 10pt:

Cmd+Opt+Shift+</> / Ctrl+Alt+Shift+</>

Hyphenation (toggle): Cmd+Opt+Shift+H/

Ctrl+Alt+Shift+H

Italics (toggle): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I

Justify Paragraph (Force last line): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+F

Justify Paragraph (Left align last line): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+J

Underlining (toggle): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U

Uppercase (toggle): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+K

Layers

Bring Forward: Cmd/Ctrl+[

Bring to Front: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+[

Create/Release Clipping Mask (toggle): Cmd+Opt+G/

Ctrl+Alt+G

Group Layers: Cmd/Ctrl+G

Layer Opacity 10%-100%: 1-0

Layer Via Copy: Cmd+Opt+J/Ctrl+Alt+J

Layer Via Copy (with dialog): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+[

Merge Layers: Cmd/Ctrl+E Merge Visible: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+E

New Layer: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N

New Layer (no dialog): Cmd+Opt+Shift+N/Ctrl+Alt+Shift+N

Next Layer: Opt/Alt+[

Previous Layer: Opt/Alt+]

Select Previous Layer: Opt/Alt+Shift+[

Select Next Layer: Opt/Alt+Shift+]

Send Backward: Cmd/Ctrl+[

Send to Back: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+[

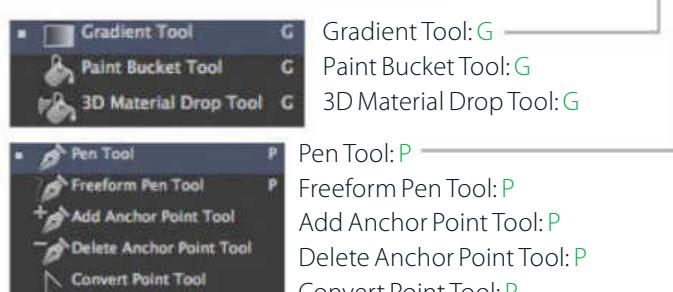
Stamp Down: Cmd+Opt+E/Ctrl+Alt+E

Stamp Visible: Cmd+Opt+Shift+E/Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E

Select Bottom Layer: Opt/Alt+,

Select Top Layer: Opt/Alt+.

More tools to play with in CS6/CC



Gradient Tool: G

Paint Bucket Tool: G

3D Material Drop Tool: G

Pen Tool: P

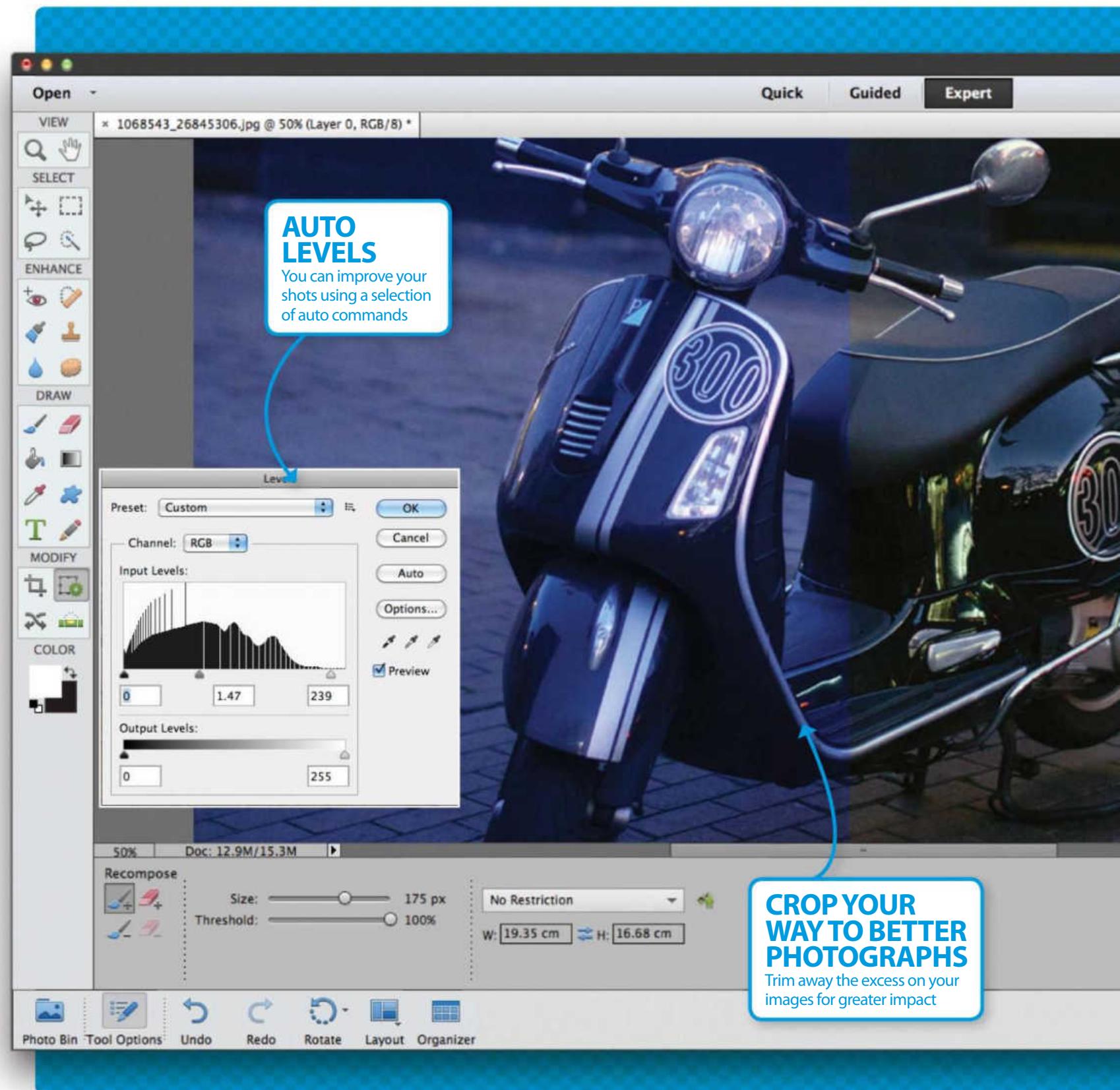
Freeform Pen Tool: P

Add Anchor Point Tool: P

Delete Anchor Point Tool: P

Convert Point Tool: P

Basic corrections



RECOMPOSE
Get greater control over how your image looks

44 Get the best from Auto commands
Speed up your everyday edits and apply instant fixes with these basic but highly powerful commands

46 Quick Edit mode
Make touch-ups and add filters with a click, using the revamped Quick Edit mode

48 Improve composition in photos
Fix the very basics of your photos with three simple projects

52 Master the Transform tool
Warp, skew, rotate and flip your images with the Transform tool

54 Utilise the Recompose tool
Reduce the distance between objects using this rather clever tool

56 Use the Gradient tool
Adjust the tint and colour in your images for maximum impact

58 Use Camera Raw in Photoshop Elements
Discover what this powerful image editor can do for your images

"Do a bit of exploring and you will find many one-click edits located inside the Adjustment menu"

Get the best from Auto commands

Work with Auto commands in Elements to speed up edits and apply instant fixes

When Photoshop Elements version 12 was released, users wanting swift editing solutions rejoiced in the fact that the number of Auto commands increased, including the new Auto Smart Tone. This not only fixes lighting, colour and tone, but also has an intelligent memory for recalling the last used settings. This enables them to be adapted and applied to new images.

These handy little fixes don't stop there, though. Do a bit of exploring and you will find many more quick one-click edits located inside the Adjustment (Photoshop) and Enhancement (Photoshop Elements) menus. They've been

designed to control contrast, tone and colour using clever algorithms to find the right settings that Photoshop deems best for the job.

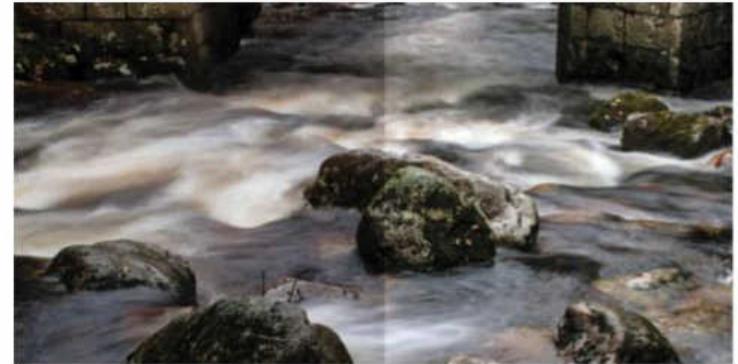
Although Photoshop does have auto options, Elements has more to choose from, such as Auto Levels and Sharpness, which go a long way to reducing the time taken to edit a big batch of images.

"You will find many quick one-click edits inside the menus"



Auto fixes in Photoshop Elements

Make the most out of these handy one-click edits



01 Auto Smart Tone

Introduced in Elements 12, dragging a target over the image towards an edge or corner changes the overall balance of exposure and contrast. Four previews adorn this menu, helping you to reach the best end result.



02 Auto Smart Fix

The Auto Smart Fix option in Elements is a very effective way to quickly improve an image. The command takes into account all manner of different aspects, such as lighting, contrast, colour and sharpness.

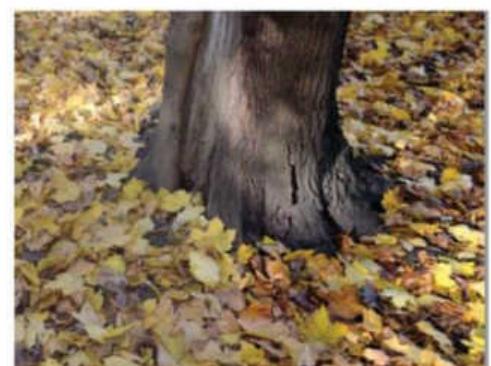


03 Auto Sharpen

Make your image appear sharper and crisper with this instant fix. Sharpness isn't always visible from a distance, but zoom into your image before using this one, and then apply it to notice the difference.

Instant fix for tone, colour and contrast

Make quick fixes with Auto commands



01 Auto Tone

This Auto option works best on dull images that lack vibrancy. The changes can be quite big in some cases, and not so big in others.

02 Auto Color

This command fixes problems in the colour and contrast areas – a handy one for removing orange or blue tints that images can sometimes acquire.

03 Better exposures

The Auto Contrast command detects the brightest and darkest parts of an image and adjusts the dynamic range to improve the overall lighting.

Basic corrections

Expert tip

EDITING FURTHER – Quick Edits are designed to make adjustments with minimal effort, however, they are by no means the end of the editing process.

You are able to flick between the different modes in order to touch up a picture before you begin more thorough edits, or to apply quick filters to finished compositions.

Quick Edit mode

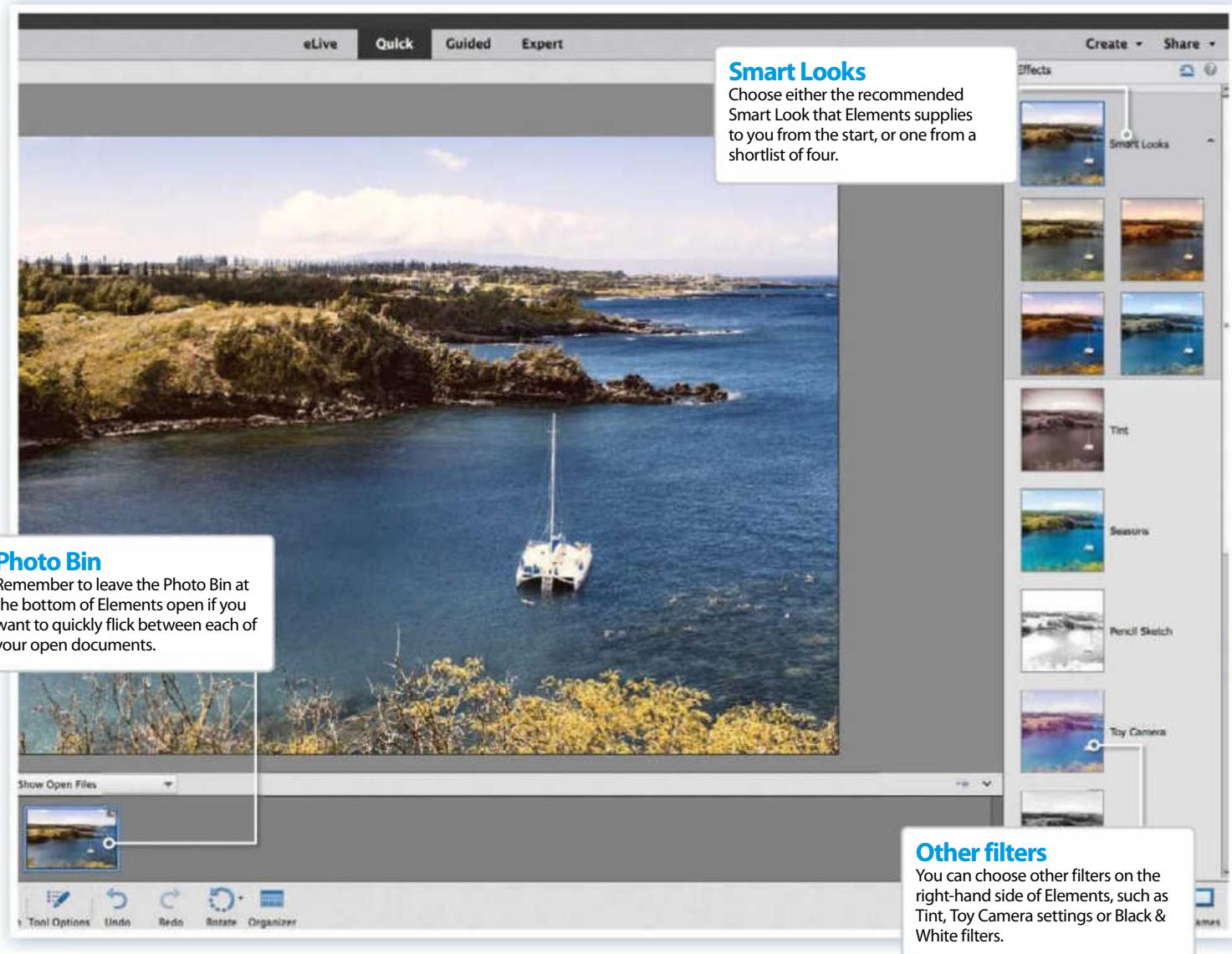
Make simple touch-ups and add filters with a click, using the revamped Quick Edit mode

Modern society can be an incredibly busy place, especially for any budding photographer. These days, you are far more likely to take photographs on the go with your smartphone than you are to make time for a day out with the digital camera, and more and more people upload pictures straight to social-media accounts, rather than importing them onto their computer.

But it isn't just the process of taking images which has shifted over recent years. The modern photo-editing process is having to play catch-up to our own hectic schedules, and the Quick Edit mode of Photoshop Elements certainly has a role to play in all of that. For quite a while now, it has been the

go-to place to make simple tweaks to your pictures without being a massive drain on your time. With Elements 14 however, it is even more intuitive and capable of creating wonderful and unique pieces of art.

Open your picture, head to the Quick Edit section of Elements and you will notice the new Smart Looks feature added to this latest version of the image editor. It's a product of the Instagram generation in that it generates five unique filters based on a bank of hundreds, and transforms your shots instantly. It's a great fix, it offers creative and colourful alternatives for your pictures, and the best thing is that it's a speedy answer to anyone who wants (or needs) to edit in a rush.

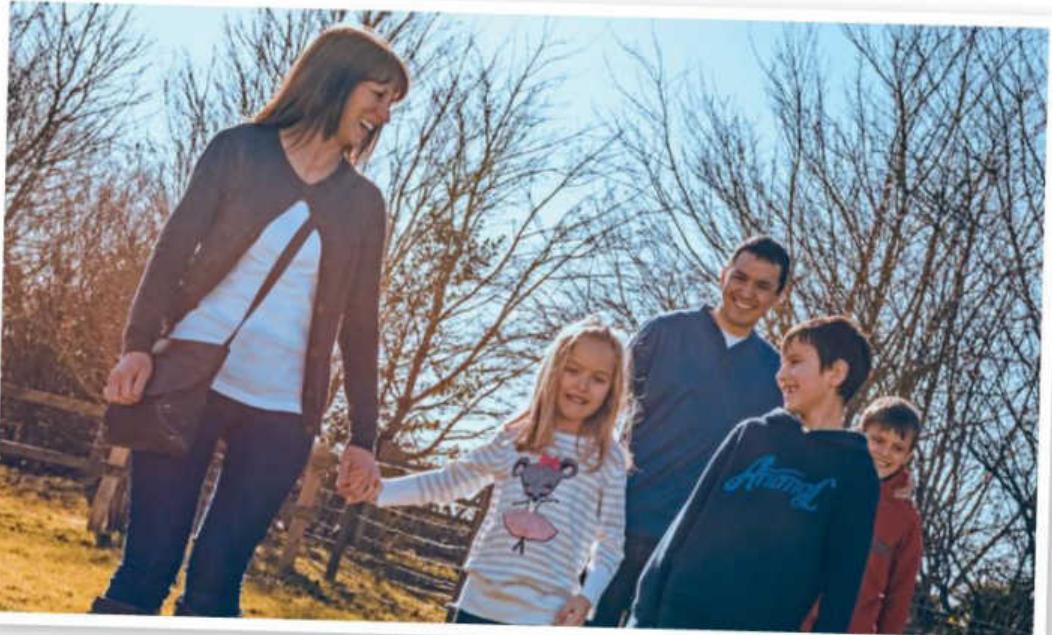


Use Smart Looks filters

Choose from five pre-picked, perfect filters

With the arrival of Elements 14 on the scene, it's now easier than ever before to create distinctive effects in the Quick Edit mode.

Smart Looks is a bank of hundreds of filters. When you open up a photo in Quick Edit, you'll be shown five possible filters, chosen from this bank especially as filters that will suit your picture. Here, you can have more individuality with photos, as well as edit with speed.



01 Fix up slightly

Start off by making tiny tweaks to your picture as you see fit. This could involve improving the lighting, exposure or colour, or just applying a Smart Fix to your picture. You may not need to make huge changes, as Smart Looks does this too.

02 Apply a look

Click on Smart Looks. Elements will present a filter that it recommends most from its extensive collection, along with four others, based on what will complement this picture in particular. Choose your look by clicking on it.

03 Edit further

If you want to make any further tweaks to this filter, click on the Expert tab at the top of Elements. Your Smart Look is applied as a layer with a mask; this means you can mask out the changes in some places, or reduce the Opacity to lessen the effect.

Fixing with filters

Smart Looks can be used for all sorts of edits



Night-time shots

As well as adding colour and tone to pictures, you can fix any underexposure in your pictures with the Smart Looks. Any night-time shot produces a series of Smart Looks that can brighten up your picture, as well as add colour.



Black & whites

Increase the contrast in your black-and-white pictures with Smart Looks, but also add a touch of colour, such as a sepia tone, or just a tint of red or yellow. This can give a classic retro feel, and brighten up monochrome.



Bleached photos

Even washed-out photos can benefit from Smart Looks, which can completely transform overexposed shots. Smart Looks takes this low contrast into account when producing filters to use for your picture.

Basic corrections

SOURCE FILES AVAILABLE

Improve composition in photos

Fix the basics of your photos with these three simple projects

The rules of composition in photography are often overlooked. Many photographers simply shoot on instinct rather than angles, and it's not particularly vital to give your picture the perfect crop or vignette if it looks great as it is.

There are certain rules, though, that can improve any picture, and they're some of the subtlest tweaks that you could possibly make to a project. Cropping and straightening your pictures is a given, but Elements and Photoshop make it easier than ever to be 100 per cent accurate. Whether you're a photographer who has taken the perfect snap, or you've created a composition with hundreds of layers, using one of these simple composition-fixers as a finishing touch can be a great way to end your work. Ultimately, these are the kinds of fixes that correct the structure of your pictures, shift the focus to the right part of the image, and give your shots the correct perspective and visual balance.

These aren't the most creative projects that you'll ever master, but they're some of the most important. There's more to a picture than what's in it: it's about how you frame it, too.



ORIGINAL

What does it mean?

RULE OF THIRDS – The rule of thirds is a common term and states that an image is most pleasing when its subjects or regions are composed along imaginary lines that divide the image into both horizontal and vertical thirds. Use Photoshop's guides to align the subject with an intersecting point.

TECHNIQUE 1

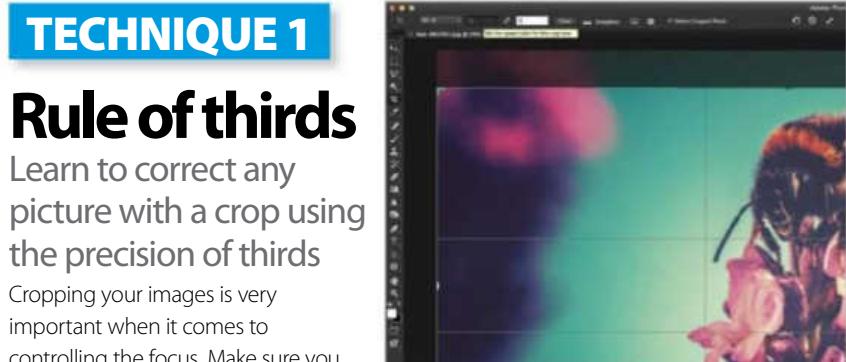
Rule of thirds

Learn to correct any picture with a crop using the precision of thirds

Cropping your images is very important when it comes to controlling the focus. Make sure you get into the habit of seeing your pictures through a viewer's eye, and notice what your attention is drawn to. Photoshop and Elements can make your cropping even more accurate with its Rule of Thirds option.

Space

Think about how an image falls in the grid and how much dead space is in the final image. Space isn't necessarily a bad thing when used correctly.



01 Enter ratio

Hit the Crop icon, and use the two boxes from the top panel to enter a ratio to crop to. A drop-down menu contains some popular preset ratios too; this just keeps your crop neater.

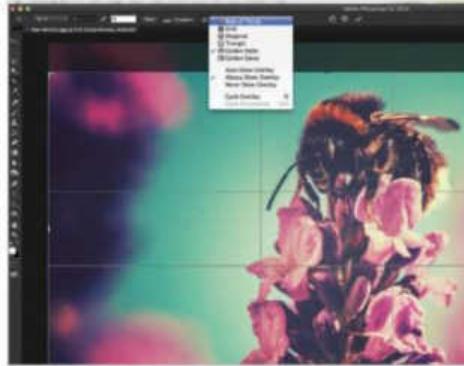


Rule of thirds

This splits your preview into nine squares. Keep the focus on the intersecting points for the ultimum impact.

Off-centre

Don't automatically place subjects in the middle of the frame – an off-centre arrangement works well.



02 Set Rule of Thirds

To the right of the Straighten icon, you'll see an icon with a grid on it. Click this to see the Rule of Thirds option. Click on this, along with Always Show Overlay, and you're ready to crop.

03 Crop

Using the corner handles, resize your crop area to fit over your subject. Ensure that the main subject fits over the intersection of the Crop preview grid, and simply hit Enter/Return to apply.

Rule of Thirds

Grid

Diagonal

Triangle

Golden Ratio

Golden Spiral

- Auto Show Overlay
- Always Show Overlay
- Never Show Overlay

Cycle Overlay

Cycle Orientation

Basic corrections

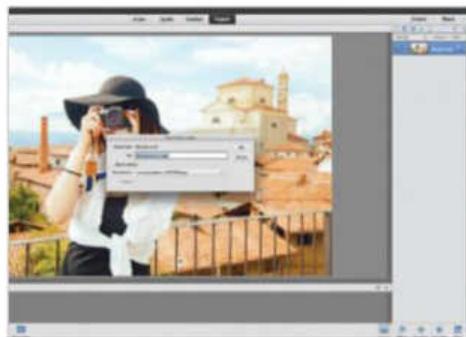
TECHNIQUE 2

How to add a vignette

Use simple layer techniques in Elements to create darkened edges

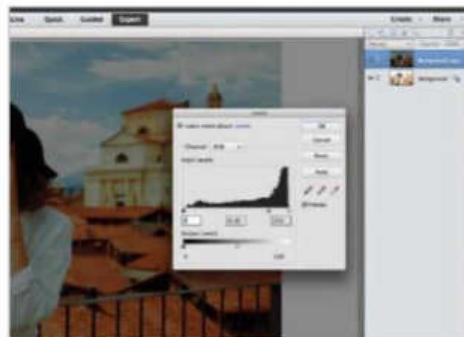
A vignette is often seen as a creative technique. It's an effect that can add drama or style to your pictures, and it's possible to create in the Camera Raw section of Photoshop.

But if you're simply looking to create a centre of attention in your picture, a vignette is perfect for adding focus and dulling the edges. Use your cropping skills to give your picture a neater finish.



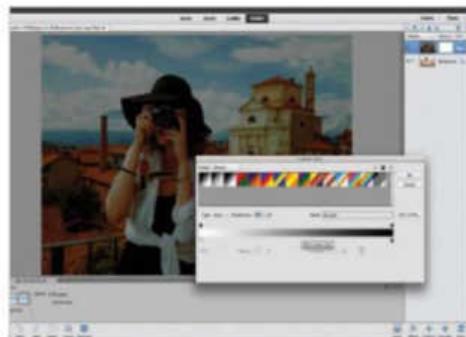
01 Duplicate your layer

This effect works best on pictures that have a strong subject that isn't as prominent from the background as you would like it to be. Open your image and begin by duplicating your layer by pressing Cmd/Ctrl+J.



02 Darken the layer

Hit Cmd/Ctrl+L in order to access the Levels. Move the middle stopper to the right and the white stopper of the output levels into the centre in order to darken the image. This is the basis of your vignette.



03 Add a gradient mask

Press the mask icon on your darkened layer. Go to the Gradient tool, select a white to black gradient and then click OK. The gradient will give a perfect finish on the mask to bring the subject back into the picture.



04 Mask

Using the Gradient tool, hold down Shift and drag from the centre of your subject to the edge of your picture to create a perfect vignette. You may have to do this a couple of times to get the right amount of darkness from the edges.

05 Crop

Grab the Crop tool and resize the box to take the centre of your subject into account. This is going to frame the picture and the vignette helps; you can now see exactly what needs to be cropped out, as it's darker than the rest of the shot.

06 Lower opacity

You can inject a little more subtlety into your vignette by lowering the Opacity slightly down to 85%. You might want to go for a stylish, fully opaque vignette, but even the lightest ones can still enhance your pictures hugely.

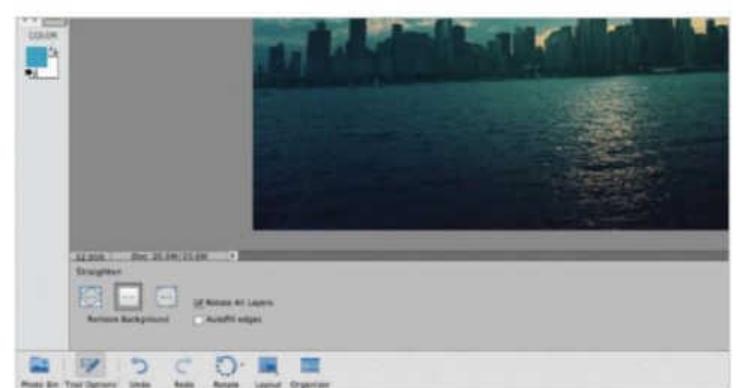
TECHNIQUE 3

Straighten horizons

Use the Straighten tool in Elements to correct those annoying crooked skylines

It can often be hard to tell if a picture is straight or not, whether it's a framed painting on a wall, or just a photograph you're editing in Photoshop or Elements.

Unlike the other two techniques here, this is a project that you can undertake before you start editing, rather than after. Straightening shots is a great habit to get into, and makes you a better picture editor.



01 Select the Straighten tool

Go to the left-hand menu of Elements, where you'll find the spirit-level icon for the Straighten tool. You can straighten by rotating or transforming your image, but this is the easiest way to swiftly level off a wonky horizon.



03 Straighten

Now it's a case of simply dragging your cursor from left to right across your horizon to straighten your picture. Elements will automatically crop your shot with this line as parallel to the top and bottom edges of your picture.

02 Prime the tool

The bottom menu has options for the Straighten tool. Click Remove Background to prevent needing to crop afterwards. If you're straightening a composition, hit Rotate All Layers to apply your straightening to everything.



04 Crop to finish

Finally, grab the Crop tool again and use the Rule of Thirds grid to re-frame the shot. This is only an optional final step, but sometimes it's a necessary one, as straightening your picture can affect the original composition.

Master the Transform tool

Rotate, skew, warp or flip your images in Photoshop with the amazing transformation tools

Hiding under Edit>Transform you will find a menu with a whole host of useful tools that will literally transform the way you use Photoshop. The Transform tools allow you to alter the entire shape of an object, group, vector, smart object, path or selection. – but they can do a lot more than this too.

Showing you how to use these tools is our objective, so the first thing to learn when using any of them is that a bounding box will appear around the object. On each of the corners sits a square, and hovering your mouse over one brings up the rotate icon but to shift the item's shape you will need to click onto and move these squares.

In this two-page guide we will cover which tools suit your needs best and suggest how to use them effectively. All of the essentials will be explained here and we will present some clever uses of the tools that you may not have even considered before. Before you know it, you will have learnt the subtleties of each variation enough to know when each one is appropriate to be used.

You might have noticed another transform option under the Edit menu, called Free Transform. Using this means you can use more than one of the transform options at one time, saving you from having to hit Enter and select another option if needs be. Once you have learnt how to use all of the options, this tool will be (almost) all you need. So let's start working our way through the menu and see what you can do with these great options.

"Alter the entire shape of an object, group, vector, smart object, path or selection"

Rotate

A slightly wonky angle is easy to correct with the Rotate tool in Photoshop. Double-click on your background layer to make it editable. Make sure rulers are showing (Cmd/Ctrl+R) and drag a line from the top ruler so you know where your horizon line should sit. Go to Edit>Transform>Rotate and a bounding box will appear with four corner squares. Hover over one square and you will see a rotate icon appear. Now move the image round until it's lined up with the guide line. Hit Enter when you're happy and then select the Crop tool. Get rid of any excess chequered background and hit Enter.



FREE TRANSFORM TOOL

This tool allows you to amalgamate many of the transform features. Use it to rotate, scale and add perspective all in one neat package.



Flip direction

To begin, drag the cutout car image into our street image so we can create a convincing scene. Go to Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal so the car is facing the right way. Go back to Edit and select Free Transform.

Scale the car

We need to resize the car so, holding down Shift, increase the size of the car slightly to sit more naturally within the image. When you're happy with the size, do not hit Enter yet because we are now going to alter its perspective.



Add perspective

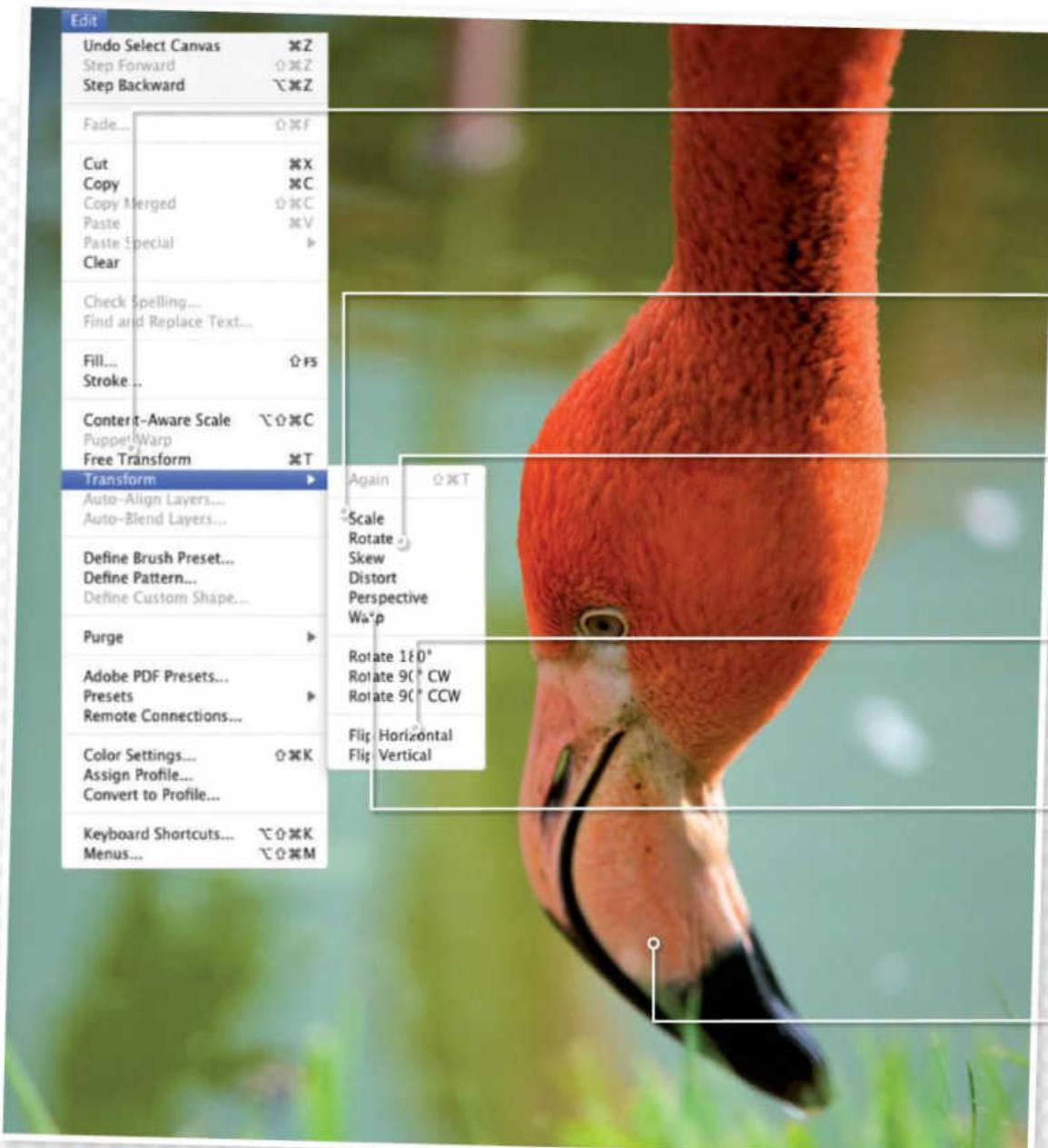
To add perspective, hold down Cmd/Ctrl+Alt+Shift or Cmd/Ctrl+Option+Shift and drag the top left corner downwards. The bottom left corner will lift up, creating a vanishing point. Then hit Enter.



Work to scale

When you need to combine several images into one, the chances are you will need to resize elements within a canvas. To do this we will use the Scale tool. Open up the two images and drag and drop one onto the other (with some images you will need to cut it out first and get rid of its original background). Go to Edit>Transform>Scale and a bounding box will appear again. We want to scale and keep the image proportions correct, so hold down Shift and drag one of the top corner squares inwards. The whole image will resize evenly. Hit OK when done with your perfectly proportioned image.





Free Transform

If you want to make general transformations to an object just press Cmd/Ctrl-T to activate the Free Transform tool. Using keyboard shortcuts like this saves precious time.

Scale it up

Use the Scale tool to increase or decrease the size of elements within the image. Make sure that objects are in proportion to one another though.

Rotate

Select Rotate from the Transform menu or use the Free Transform tool. When the bounding box appears, hover over a corner to make the Rotate symbol appear and move. Hit Enter to finish the transformation.

To flip or not to flip

Remember you can flip images horizontally or vertically in the Transform menu so you don't need images to be facing the right way before using them.

Perspective

Use the Perspective transform option to make adjustments to your subject so they sit within the image a bit better. Using this tool makes items seem less plonked in place.

Finish it off

Make the scene look natural when compositing images together. Use the Levels tool to even out colour tones and blend bits in. For example, use the Smudge tool to add the effect of grass.

Get some perspective

Sometimes adding a vanishing point to an image makes for a more convincing effect. Even a small amount of perspective can make a big difference. Make sure your layer is editable (double-click on the Background



layer before starting) and go to Edit>Transform>Perspective. The usual bounding box with four squares will appear. Move one of the top corner boxes downwards and the bottom corner on the same side will move upwards. This works if you move a top corner side to side too. Remember to crop away any excess background afterwards.

Warp

Go to Edit>Transform>Warp and a bounding box with a mesh will appear on your image. Move any of the control pointers on the mesh to move parts of your image. Start with the corner pointers then move any internal pointers if needed. Directional lines will appear on the corner squares when moved. Move these and lengthen or shorten them to alter image areas. This tool will require some practice but you can fix camera lens flaws with it as well as adding pages to a book convincingly, for example.



Basic corrections

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Utilise the Recompose tool

Reduce the distance between objects using Photoshop Elements' Recompose tool

This is a tool that really doesn't get the attention it deserves. Its purpose is to bring subjects closer together without changing their actual size or shape in any way. This is done by recognising areas in an image of similar pixels, such as a blue sky or the rough surface of tarmac, for example, and shrinking them down. The main subjects, which are often composed of more variation and irregular shapes, are unaffected so they will remain exactly as they are as the composition is altered.

The Recompose tool has been around in Elements for a few versions now, however, it has gone somewhat under the radar. The tool can be found at the very bottom of the Tools panel, so if you are using Elements 14, look within the Modify section in order to find it (its icon has a cog symbol over a square).

This is quite a powerful tool in terms of what it can do for an image, but the quality of the results can vary greatly – it is all down to the image and type of composition that you are dealing with. Following these steps will get you started with the Recompose tool on your own images.

"The purpose of the Recompose tool is to bring subjects closer together without changing their actual size or shape in any way"

GET A CLEANER FINISH

Tidying up the results

The Recompose tool does a good job in getting us started with resizing the image without shrinking or distorting the main subject. But results aren't always perfect. To clean up the image, use the Clone Stamp tool in Elements with a soft brush tip. Gradually blend away patchy areas for a much cleaner finish.



A quick resize Use the transformation boxes to recompose the image



01 Duplicate background

To be able to compare how the tool changes the subjects, duplicate the Background layer of the image by pressing Cmd/Ctrl+J. Hide the original Background layer so only the top one is visible.

02 As if by magic!

Press W to go to the Recompose tool and eight boxes will appear around the image. Drag both side boxes to the centre. Resize the image while keeping the size and shape of the main objects.

03 Resize to fit

Move one of the corner boxes inwards to adapt the height and width of the entire image. This means that the people and objects have stayed the same size!

CORRECTED



ORIGINAL

Keep or delete objects

Remove or protect certain parts of the image



01 Keep the main subjects

Before recomposing your image, tell Elements to keep or remove parts of the image. Paint green over the objects you want to keep using the Mark for Protection brush in the Options panel.

02 Mark as red

Use the Mark for Removal brush to paint red over the parts of the subjects to get rid of in the recomposing process. This works on parts of the image between the main objects being moved.

03 Recompose pixels

Now when you resize the image by dragging the transformation points around the edges, Elements is able to read which areas to get rid of to improve the final result.

Basic corrections



SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

The Gradient tool

Find out how to use this simple, yet essential, tool to create colour effects

The Gradient tool is found in both Photoshop and Photoshop Elements. In Elements it has its own slot on the Toolbar, but in Photoshop, you will find it hiding alongside the Paint Bucket tool.

A gradient is essentially a blend of different colours that seamlessly transition from one to the other. They come in various shapes, but the most common is a linear gradient, where the colours are in consecutive lines next to one another. Photoshop has a load of preset gradients built in consisting of popular colour combinations. There are also gradients that use the Foreground and Background colours, so you can change the colours of these to create new

and interesting gradients. Some may also use transparency, so the colours will gradually fade away into nothing at the end of the gradient.

If you have a specific effect in mind, you can create a custom gradient using the Gradient Editor (just double-click on the gradient colour swatch or hit Edit). You will see a coloured bar, which is the gradient, with little arrows and squares underneath. The arrows determine where a colour in the gradient stops and where the next one starts. The squares show you what colour is being used in the gradient. Experiment with the different balloon images in the supplied files and have fun with different gradients!

“Photoshop has preset gradients built in, which are popular colour combinations”

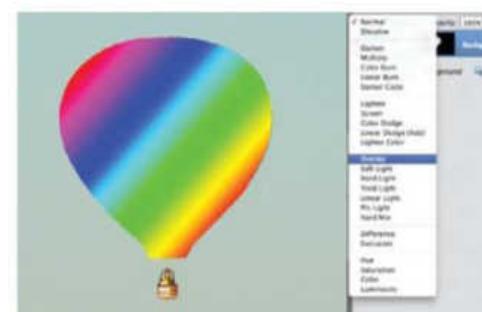
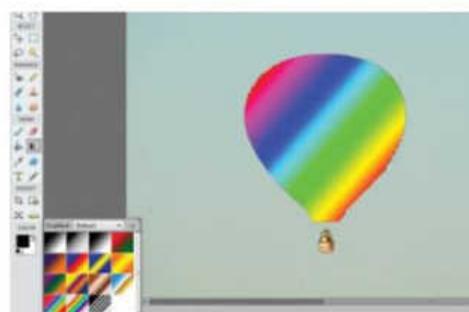
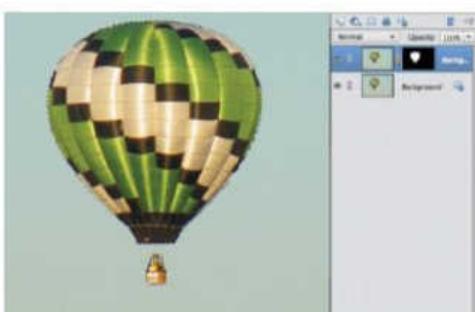
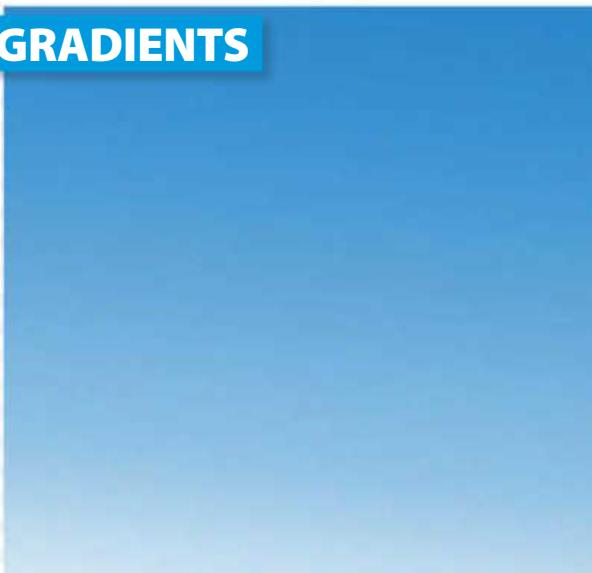
MORE WITH GRADIENTS

Make new backgrounds

Create a new layer. Set Foreground colour to a sky blue and Background colour to white. Apply a Foreground-to-Background gradient to your empty layer.

Enhance

Duplicate the photo layer and set Foreground colour to black. Apply a Foreground-to-Transparent gradient to your image so the sky turns black. Set it to Overlay blend mode and adjust the Opacity to suit.



01 Select the balloon

Duplicate the Background layer (Layer>Duplicate) and make a selection of the balloon. Use whatever method you prefer. We used the Magic Wand to select the sky, and then went to Select>Inverse to select the balloon. Add a mask by clicking the mask icon in the Layers panel.

02 Add the gradient

Select the Gradient tool from the toolbar (press G). In the Tool Options panel, untick Reverse, but tick Transparency and Dither. Pick the Linear Gradient icon and select a coloured gradient from the presets. With your balloon selected, draw a line across the balloon to apply the gradient.

03 Layer options

We need to let some of the original balloon show through. Set the blend mode of the layer with the gradient on to Overlay. Then, adjust the opacity of the layer until you are happy with the result. We also added a new background to this image (see below for more on this).

Basic corrections

Richer effects

Quickly enhance colour and detail by editing images in Camera Raw.



ENHANCED

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Use Camera Raw in Photoshop Elements

Discover what this powerful image editor can do for your images

Photoshop's Camera Raw editor has been around for quite some time now, but was only introduced into the Elements interface in version 11. This means it's now available to users straight from the File menu, and gives you an incredible array of adjustment sliders to take control over the lighting, colour, sharpness and noise in an image.

What's most useful about Camera Raw is that you can apply instant fixes from a range of sliders. This removes the need to skip back and forth from one filter to the next or load multiple adjustment layers. The Camera Raw function was originally designed for photographers looking to edit images taken by a

DSLR in RAW format. Camera Raw meant that image detail and its 'raw' settings were available to edit, as opposed to working on a compressed JPEG file.

With Camera Raw in Elements, we can apply many of the same edits to a JPEG image as we could have done with a RAW photo. Read on to find out more about taking a dull image to the next level.

"The Camera Raw editor gives an array of adjustment sliders"

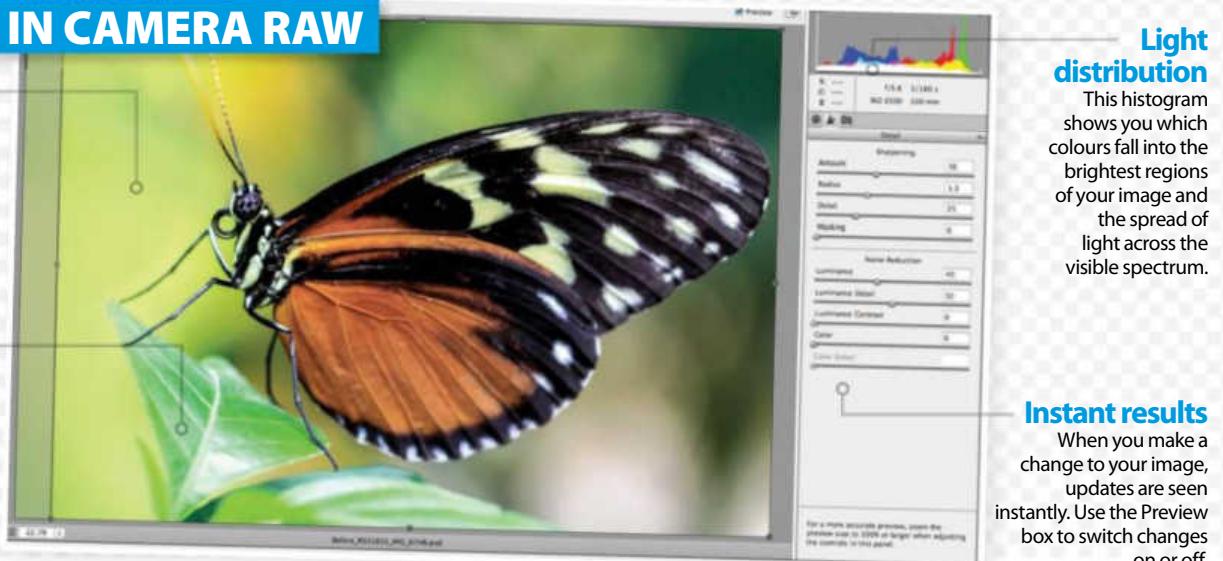
FIX IMAGES IN CAMERA RAW

Crop down

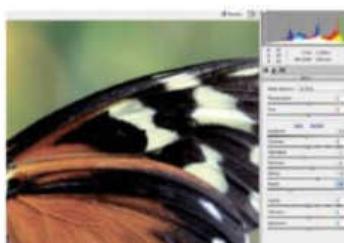
Camera Raw includes a Crop tool for snipping off the edges of your images in order to improve composition. Locate the tool from the top-left of the screen.

RAW edits

Although images like JPEGs are not strictly RAW files, we can still take advantage of the powerful tools and sliders in Camera Raw.



Open in Camera Raw Invigorate exposure and colour, and fix noise easily



01 Open an image

To open an image into Camera Raw, go to the File menu in Elements and click on Open in Camera Raw (or press Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+O). Choose an image from your computer and hit Open.

02 Adjust details

For this image, we need to adjust the colour and lighting. Set Exposure to -0.30 and Highlights to -11. This reduces the faded look of the image. Finish this step by setting Shadows to +8, Whites +22 and Blacks to -45.

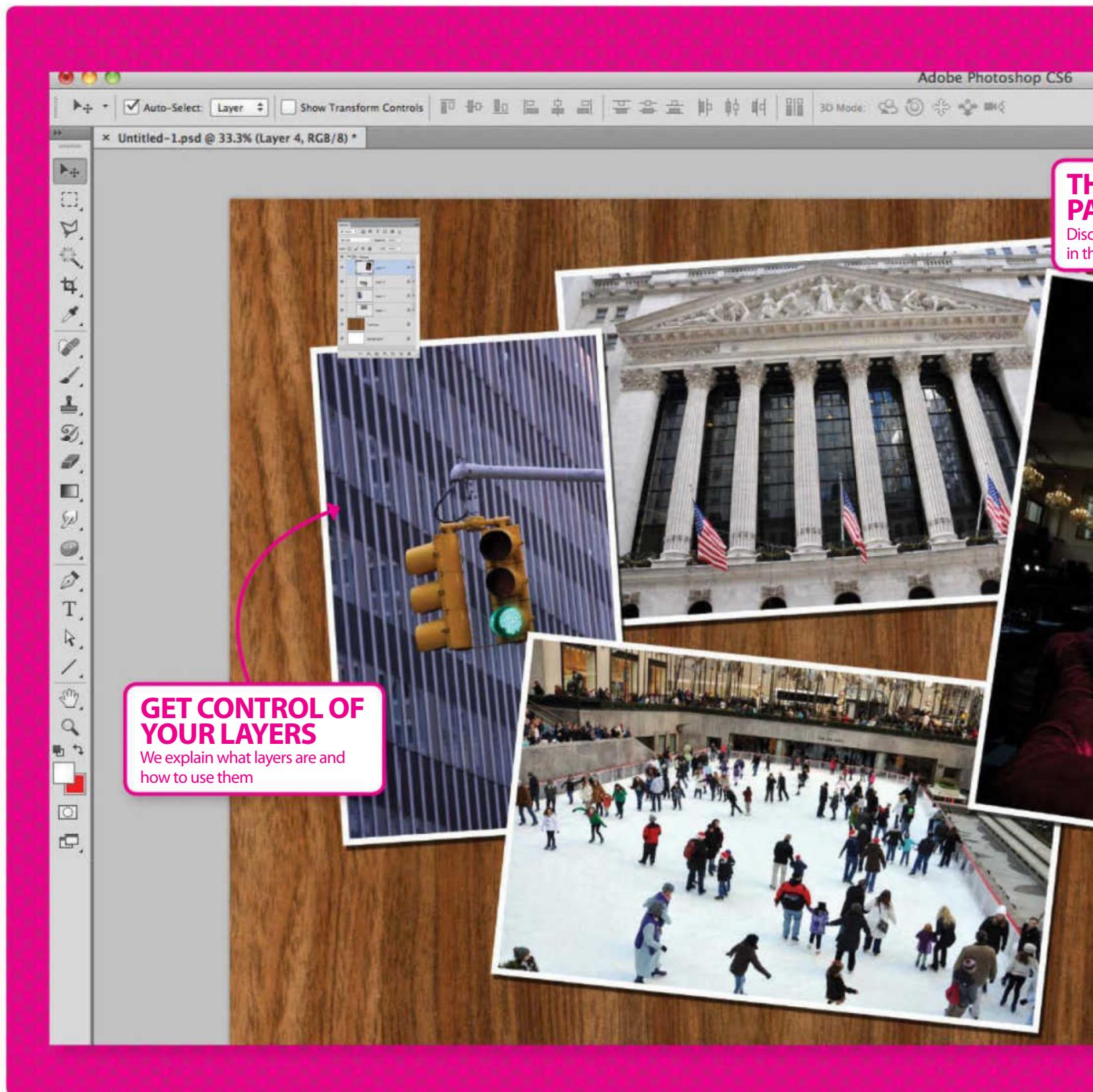
03 Control colour

To rescue some colour and make the subject more vibrant, slide up the Clarity to +49. You should notice a big improvement but noise could occur. Also set the Vibrance slider to +48 and Saturation to +8.

04 Reduce noise

Click on the Detail tab. Under Sharpening, set Amount to 56, Radius to 1.3 and Detail to 25. This will help to improve the focus. Set Luminance to 44 and Luminance Detail to 50 for some serious noise reduction.

Layers





- 62** Understand the Layers palette
Learn what everything does in this palette and how layers are arranged
- 64** Organise Layers
Control, duplicate and structure your layers with a few straightforward techniques
- 66** Navigate the Layer menu
Get the most from the menu options and discover what each tool offers
- 68** Learn to control layer opacity
Control layer transparency and discover the Opacity and Fill tools
- 70** Perfect your blend
Find out what each of the blend modes can bring to your creative projects

“Layers are the most adaptable aspect of Photoshop. There are no limitations to how useful they can be in your edits”

Understand the Layers palette

Get to grips with this essential palette and learn how layers are arranged

Here's a palette that no Photoshop user should be without. Learning how layers are arranged inside this palette, and how to move them around, will open up many possible effects and ultimately improve your artwork. Layers come in many guises and can attach themselves to a composition in different ways. From blending together your photographs with seamless precision to using layer styles and adjustment in your work, they are

the most adaptable aspect of Photoshop, and something we all should use. There are different levels of using layers, from the basics to the impressive. Read on through our guide to the Layers palette and find out how to do the bare essentials like adding new layers, organising them, blending them together and deleting them too. Whether you want to use just one layer or many, there are no limitations to how useful they can be in your edits.



Layers in Photoshop

What to expect when using layers in Photoshop

Blend modes

If you have more than one layer, select one of these blend modes to change the way they interact. From Multiply to Screen, and Soft Light to Luminosity, they create slightly different effects.

Opacity

The opacity, or transparency, of each layer is adjustable and shown as a percentage. This lowers the visibility of the contents of a layer to help blend everything together. 0% Opacity completely hides the layer, whereas 100% shows it all.

Layer effect

Layer effects, also called styles, appear just below a layer with their own eye symbols. Bevel and Emboss, for example, is added by double-clicking on a layer. There are many styles available, opening up a whole different side to photo editing.

Layer stacks

New layers in an image are always added to the top of the stack. Drag layers around to reorder them and to change the appearance of the image. To unlock layers, simply double-click them.



Adjustment layers

Every adjustment layer automatically comes with a mask, which appears just before the layer's name. These types of layers affect everything beneath them and can be altered with a blend mode and opacity options to change their appearance.

Rename layers

To help show what's on each new layer as you work, double-click its name to change what it's called. Labelling layers as they're added keeps a busy Layers palette more organised and a workflow smooth.

Work in Photoshop Elements

How the palette works in Elements

Layer masks

Layer masks are shown either as solid black, solid white or a mix of both. Black parts of a mask show whatever's underneath, while white keeps the current layer visible.

Empty pixels

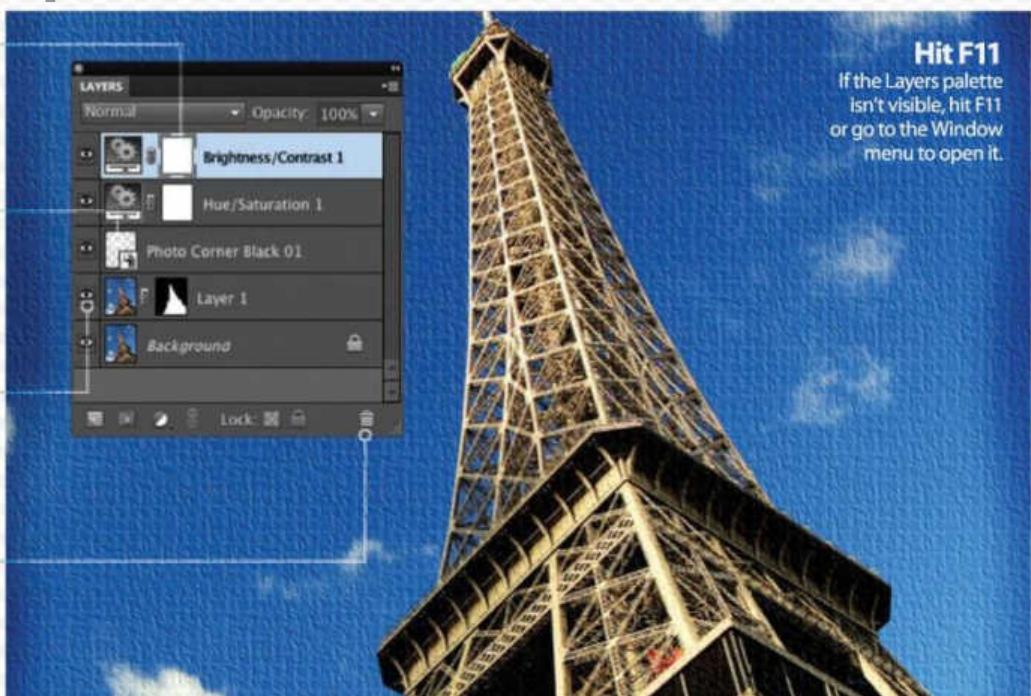
Layers showing the chequer board pattern are mostly empty layers. There may be a small object on it somewhere, such as a photo corner. Cmd/Ctrl-click over this thumbnail to convert it to a selection to reveal its location.

Switch layers on and off

Use the eye symbols next to each layer to turn them either on or off. Running your cursor across multiple eyes is a good way to turn more than one off quickly.

Deleting layers

If, for any reason, you no longer need to keep one or more layers, drag them onto the trash-can icon to remove them. If you change your mind, simply press Cmd/Ctrl+Z to undo and bring them back.



Organise layers

Photoshop wouldn't be Photoshop without layers

Layers form the basis for all editing, either from scratch or with a photo to start you off.

Every layer contains new information that changes the way your image looks. Adding a new layer is easy enough, but keeping them organised is usually more difficult.

We take you through the various ways in which you can arrange a busy Layers palette. It could be a matter of merging or grouping a bunch of layers, so that you have a better sense of where everything is located inside the palette.

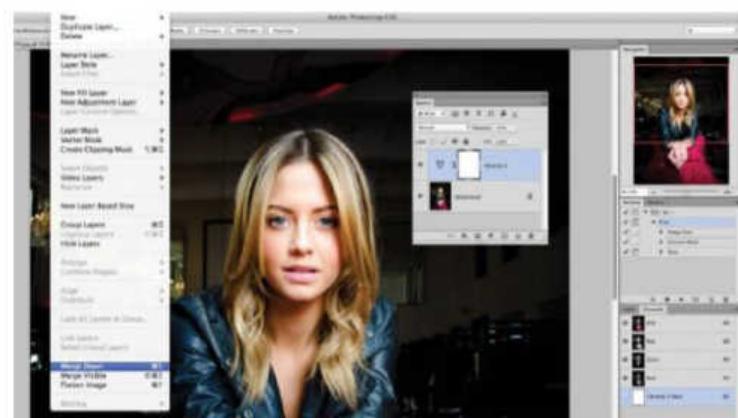
These techniques should help you become a more efficient Photoshop artist. Understanding the basics of using layers, and ordering them in the palette, is essential before jumping straight in the deep end. Try creating your own photo collage by following the steps opposite.

"Layers form the basis for all editing"



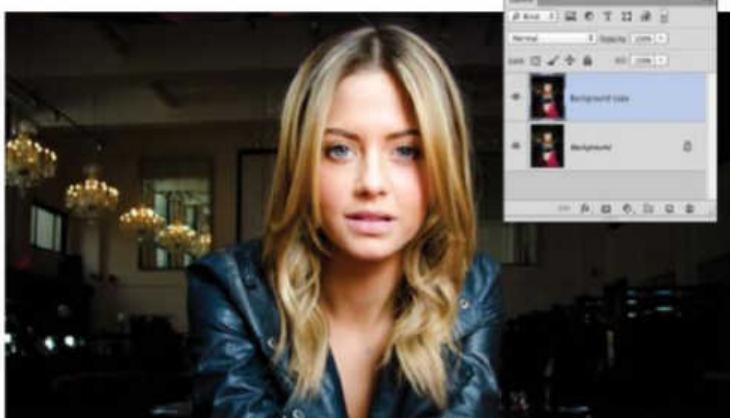
Controlling layers

Explore the different ways in which layers can be handled



Merge layers

Multiple layers in an image can be merged together for easier editing. This reduces the number of layers in your palette, and there are no limits on how many layers can be merged. To do this, select the layer you want to merge and go to the Layer menu and down to Merge Down (or press Cmd/Ctrl+E for its shortcut). When a layer is merged it joins with the one directly underneath it in the palette.



Making duplicates

If you ever want to make a direct copy of one layer during the editing stage, press Cmd/Ctrl+J, or drag a layer onto the Create a New Layer button in the palette. This makes an exact duplicate of whatever's on that layer and is usually called the same, except for having 'copy' after their name. Get into the habit of pressing this shortcut whenever you open an image, so that you always work non-destructively.

Create a Group

Keep a closer eye on your layers in a photo collage



01 Create a new document

In Photoshop, go to File> New. From the Preset drop-down list select International Paper, and then A4 for the Size. Give your file a name at the top of the Open dialog box, such as Photo Collage. Hit OK.

02 Place images

Go to Image>Image Rotation>90 CW. To open images one by one, head to File>Place and pick your first image. Hit Place and rotate and resize holding down Shift and using the corner points. Hit Enter to confirm its position.

03 Group up

When all of your photographs have been placed, click on the first image in the Layers palette and the last while holding Shift. Choose Layer>Group Layers. The layers should hide away inside a new Group folder.

04 Reorder layers

To change the order in which the layers overlap, click and drag a layer up or down the palette (Cmd/Ctrl and [J]). The current active layer is always highlighted blue, so you know at any stage which one you're working on.



Moving layers

The Move tool (V) set to Auto-Select: Layers at the top of Photoshop will instantly recognise the image's layer clicked on in your canvas.

Groups

Group folders can contain multiple photos, which will keep your palette looking tidy. Click on the drop-down arrow next to the folder's icon to hide or show the contents.

Rename layers

To rename a layer, double-click on its name inside the palette. Doing this regularly will help you recognise what's on a layer, especially if its content is small.

Layer styles

Layer styles show up with the letters fx on the layer. The Stroke and Drop Shadow styles were added to these images (from Layer>Layer Style) to add an extra dynamic to the design.

Locked layers

To lock a layer into position, click on the third button in the Layers palette under Lock. The wooden background in this image has been secured into place under the images.

Navigate the Layer menu

Identify the essential functions the layer menu has to offer



This is the control centre for all things layered. From a layer mask to Smart Objects and adjustment layers to groups, there is a long and extensive list of handy options available to you.

Getting to know this menu will make your general Photoshop experience much easier. There are helpful options for applying photo edits, controlling the placement of layers, adding masks and merging layers

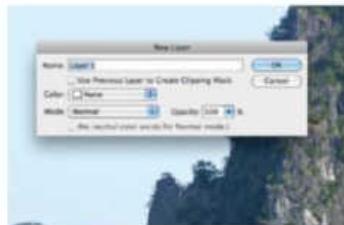
together all in the same place. In this feature we look at the most important options in the Layer menu, comparing it with what Elements has to offer in this department. The two versions have a similar array of options – but Elements is minus a few of the more advanced offerings that Photoshop CS users can revel in. The best place to start is at the top – so what are you waiting for?

QUICK TIP

Rasterize

Layers containing type or custom shapes are un rasterised, but this means they're not editable with most tools. The Rasterize option turns these layers into editable ones.

Layer menu



New layers

Head into New at the top of the Layer menu and you have the option to perform a number of different tasks. Either add a layer or add a new group to contain layers in. Also, use Layer Via Copy to place the current selection onto a layer of its own.



Smart Objects

Convert a layer to a Smart Object to edit its contents in a separate document. They're especially useful if you have a part of your image with lots of detail, making it editable on its own. When Smart Objects have been edited, save the changes and your image will be updated.

WHAT'S IN ELEMENTS

How the Layer menu looks in Photoshop Elements

Duplicate and delete

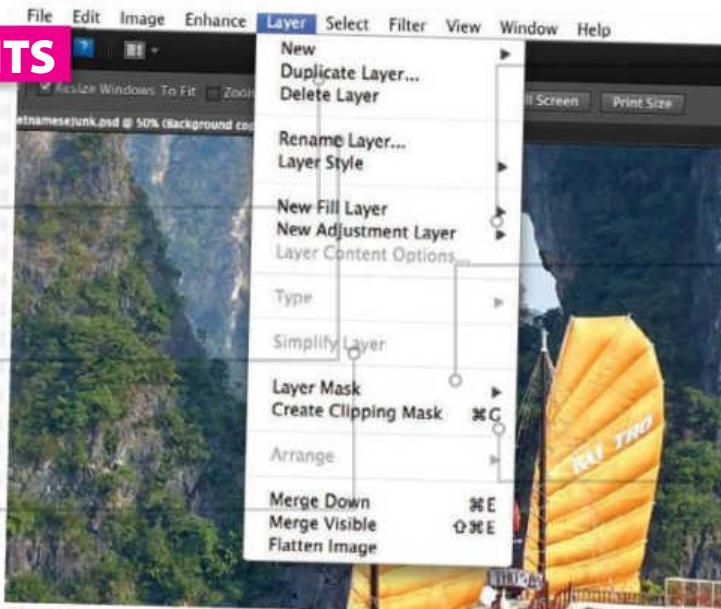
The Duplicate and Delete Layer commands are in Elements. These will remove the layers completely from the document or create a direct copy in the palette for you to use.

Rename Layer

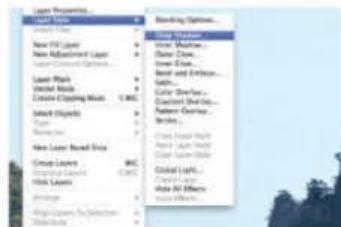
Use Rename Layer to stay organised when editing multiple elements. When a new layer is added you can give it a name in the pop-up box.

Simplify Layers

There's no Rasterize option in Elements, as the Simplify Layer command does the same job at turning vector layers into normal working ones. This means you'll be able to use the Eraser tool, among others, to edit it.



Which options to look out for...



New Adjustment Layer

Elements has fewer adjustment layers than full Photoshop, but all the vital ones are there, enabling you to apply creative effects, which can be edited later on.

Layer Mask

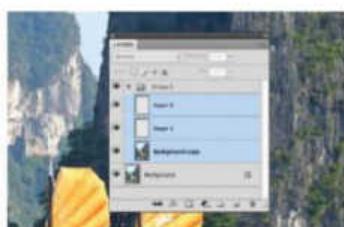
Just like Photoshop, the layer mask options are the same in Elements. You'll add new masks to either show or hide parts of a layer. They can also be removed using this option in the Layer menu.

Create Clipping Mask

You can add a Clipping Mask through the Layer menu. This will place one layer into the contents of another, making it appear inside it. Clipping masks can be released just as quickly as they can be added.

Duplicate Layer

You can take the entire contents of a layer and place them onto a new one using the Duplicate Layer option. A new dialog box will pop up where you can set the Destination for the duplicate, whether that's a new document or the one you've got open.



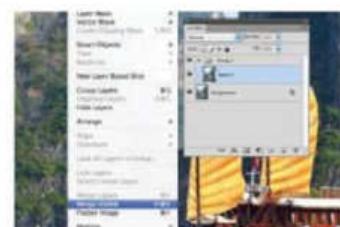
Layer styles

The list of layer styles holds effects such as Drop Shadow and Inner Shadow, Bevel and Emboss, and Gradient Overlay too. These only change the layer you're working on and can be edited at any stage. A new layer style is attached in the Layers palette.



Create new adjustment layers

This is where the editing tools are kept. Adjustments – when applied as new layers – can be re-edited as many times as you need. Adjustments include Levels, Curves, Hue/Saturation and Photo Filter, for endless edits.



Layer masking

This provides a different route for adding and removing a layer mask. A Hide (black) or Reveal (white) layer mask can be applied through here, and if you have a selection you can use the additional options to apply a mask to that too. The best advice is to experiment with the tool.



Group layers

To help organise your Layers palette, select more than one layer and click on Group Layers. This will arrange all of the selected layers into one folder so you can hide or show its contents and navigate to them easily. Use Ungroup Layers to remove the folder and release the layers.

Arrange layers

The menu has options to move layers around and rearrange them in the palette. Under Arrange you can use the Bring Forward and Send Backward commands to go one by one up or down the Layers palette. Invaluable when you're using blend mode effects.

Merge layers

Merge Down and Merge Visible at the bottom of the Layer menu will compress multiple layers into one. This not only keeps your Layers palette looking tidy, it also means you can edit the contents of both layers at once, rather than having to repeat the process multiple times.

Flatten Image

To merge all layers into one single one, select the Flatten Image option. The result is a locked Background layer that cannot be edited. Be sure to save a layered version of your image before flattening, just in case you change your mind and need to make edits later on.

Layers

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Learn to control layer opacity

Discover how to control the transparency of layers and added layer effects with the Opacity and Fill controls

Positioned at the top of the Layers palette, next to the blending mode dropdown menu, the Opacity box that contains a percentage figure. You can alter this value by clicking the triangle to the right and using the slider or, alternatively, you can click inside the figure box and enter a new number manually. But just what does Opacity do?

A layer's overall opacity determines to what degree it obscures or reveals the layer beneath it. A layer with 1% Opacity appears nearly transparent, whereas one with 100% Opacity appears completely opaque. If you think of these layers as sheets of acetate, you're essentially fading any work that you've applied onto that acetate as you drop the opacity.

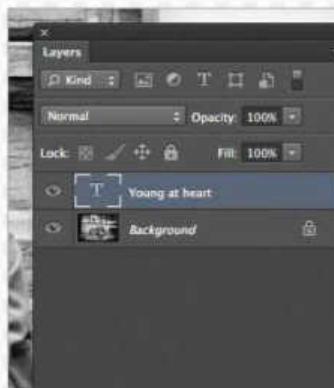
There are a number of great uses for this. It can be helpful for temporarily lining up areas you've added to the image. Bring in eyes from another image, for example, and you've got to guess where they go unless you drop Opacity to something like 50%. Then you can easily see the detail behind and reposition with the Move tool before pushing Opacity back up to 100%. It can also be used to reduce the strength of an adjustment layer without having to go back into its settings. Just below the Opacity bar you'll notice a slider called Fill. This does the same thing as Opacity until you add a layer style such as Drop Shadow using the fx button at the base of the Layers palette. Dropping the Fill value reduces the opacity of pixels as per usual but doesn't touch the layer style – a great way of controlling one without touching the other.

"A layer's opacity determines to what degree it obscures or reveals the layer beneath it"

UNDERSTANDING OPACITY AND FILL

Alter style settings

The added style is also listed underneath. You can turn visibility on and off using the 'eye' icon next to each layer and change settings by simply double-clicking the text.



ORIGINAL



01 Add text layer

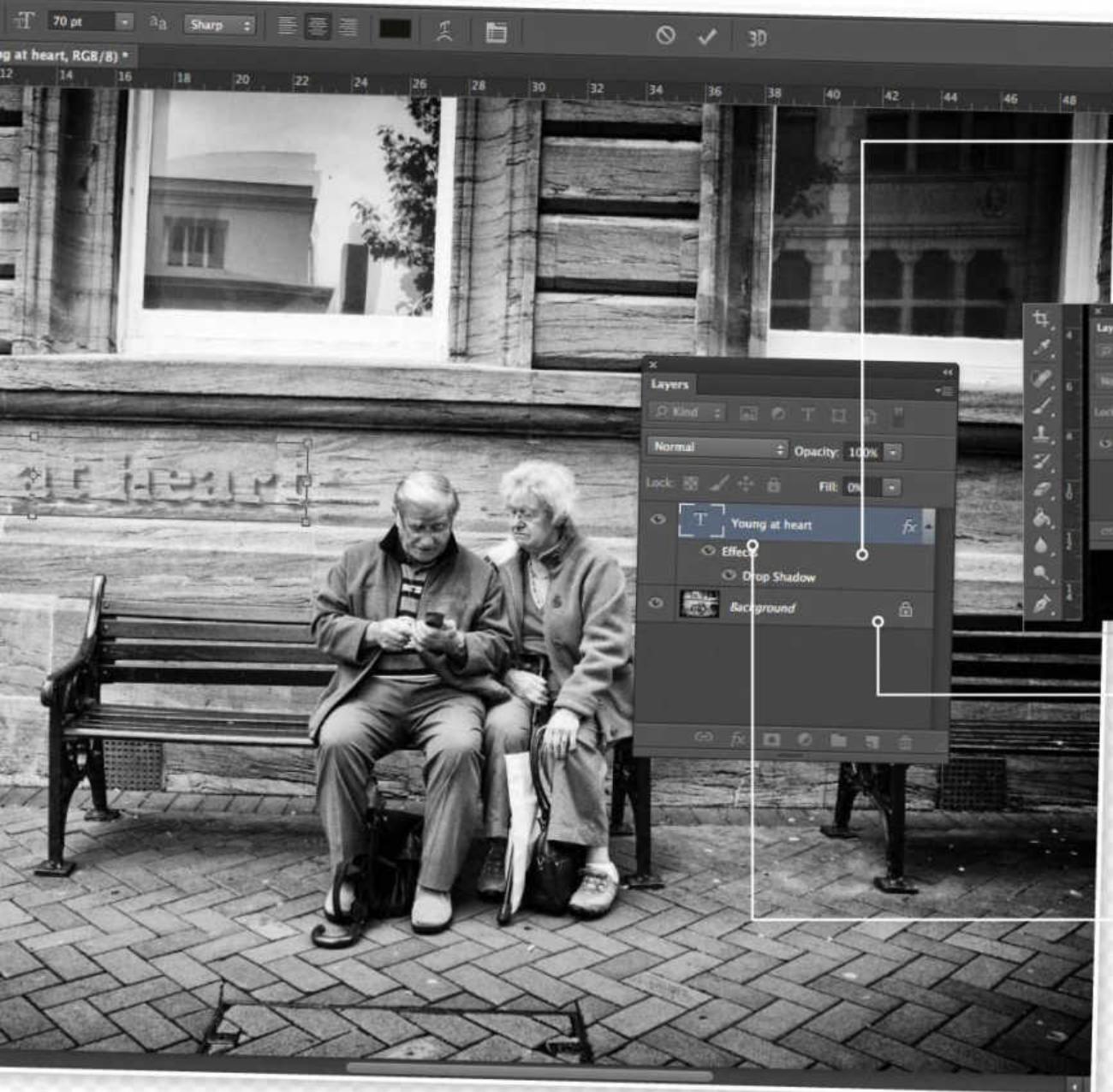
Here's an image we've turned into an antique-looking photo, to which we want to add some realistic text. Press 'T' to call up the Text tool.

02 Write on

Choose a suitable font (eg Cooper), colour and font size from the Options bar, click where you want the text and type. Simply click and drag to reposition.

03 Drop Shadow

To add a shadow effect to the text to help it stand out, hit Enter then click the fx menu in the Layers palette and select Drop Shadow.



The Opacity control

The Opacity slider adjusts the opacity of the whole layer, including any added layer styles, such as Drop Shadow in the case of our image.

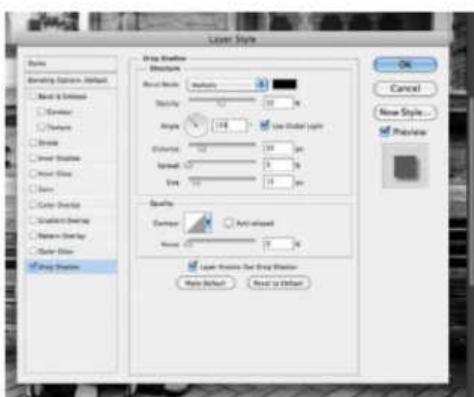


The Fill control

The Fill slider controls opacity in the image too, however it only drops opacity of any pixel-based information on the layer, ignoring any added layer styles.

Adding layer styles

You can apply a layer style by clicking the fx button at the base of the Layers palette. An fx icon appears next to your layer to indicate a style has been added.



04 Shadow settings

In the Drop Shadow dialog, Angle is fine but we need to alter Distance to 20px. We use 15px Size to blur it a little and lower the Opacity to 50%.

05 Opacity slider

Next we need to fade the text to make it look realistic. Dropping Opacity to 20% doesn't look great, mainly because of Drop Shadow settings.

06 Fill slider

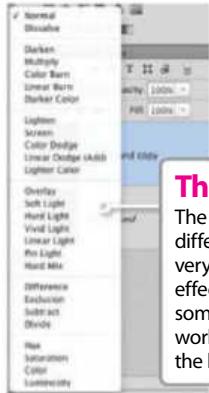
Time to try something different. With Opacity at 100%, we drop Fill to 0%, removing the text and just leaving the shadow. This does the trick nicely!

Layers

Perfect your blend

Understand the blend modes in Photoshop

When people are new to Photoshop, they often tend to head to the Toolbar first. The Healing Brush, Dodge, Burn and Lasso tools can certainly help you make powerful adjustments to your images, but to unlock the full potential of Photoshop you need to take a closer look at the Layers palette and the options it holds. It is in this palette that you will find the power to stack several elements and adjustments on top of each other, which can later be combined into one final image. In order to tell Photoshop how we want these individual layers to interact with the others, we can use blend modes and create exciting effects in no time.



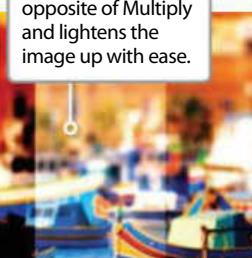
Multiply

A useful blend mode that enables you to make the image significantly darker.



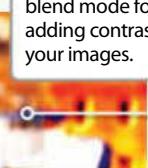
Screen

Screen is the exact opposite of Multiply and lightens the image up with ease.



Soft Light

Another handy blend mode for adding contrast to your images.



Two layers

Blend modes can only be applied when there are at least two layers, so you have to drag your background layer to the Create a New Layer button next to the trashcan at the base of the Layers palette.

BOOST CONTRAST WITH SOFT LIGHT

A quick and easy way to improve overall image contrast

Soft Light is one of the most useful blend modes for so many different effects and outcomes. It adds great contrast without being as drastic as some of its neighbours, such as Overlay or Hard Light. One of the best uses for the blend mode is to ensure that your black and white shots don't look too flat.

Deeper shadows

When you use the Soft Light blend mode you will notice that the shadow areas become slightly deeper and richer.



ORIGINAL

Brighter highlights

Simultaneously, the highlight areas get brighter when using Soft Light. It's this combination of deeper shadows and brighter highlights that creates the high-contrast appearance.

Crispness

When you use Soft Light the image looks crisper and sharper, appearing to have gained clarity and definition.

Improve monochrome shots

Blend for a quick and easy way to add impact



01 Duplicate the background

The first step is always to make a duplicate of the Background layer (for safety) by dragging it to the Create a New Layer button at the very bottom of the Layers palette.

02 Select Soft Light

Now you should select Soft Light from the Blend Mode menu at the top of the Layers palette. You'll instantly see a big difference in your image, giving it a lot more impact.

03 Opacity

The Opacity slider enables you to reduce the effect of the blend mode if it looks slightly too strong for the image. Lowering the opacity can correct this quickly and easily.

BLEND MODES AT A GLANCE

A quick look at what each blend mode can do



Dissolve



Darken



Multiply



Color Burn



Linear Burn



Darker Color



Lighten



Screen



Color Dodge



Linear Dodge (Add)



Lighter Color



Overlay



Soft Light



Hard Light



Vivid Light



Linear Light



Pin Light



Hard Mix



Difference



Exclusion



Subtract



Divide



Hue



QUICK TIP

Same mode,
different effect

It's always worth remembering that while this guide is handy as a quick reference, the result is completely dependent on each individual image. Inevitable factors such as the colour and opacity of the layer beneath can massively alter the effect each mode has. When it comes to trying blend modes, the best advice is always to experiment!



Saturation



Color



Luminosity

Layers



ORIGINAL

ENHANCED

Use Multiply for a subtle vignette

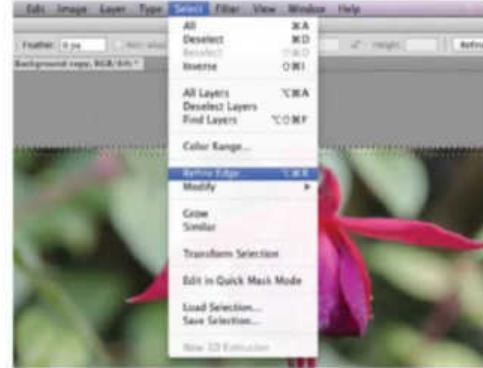
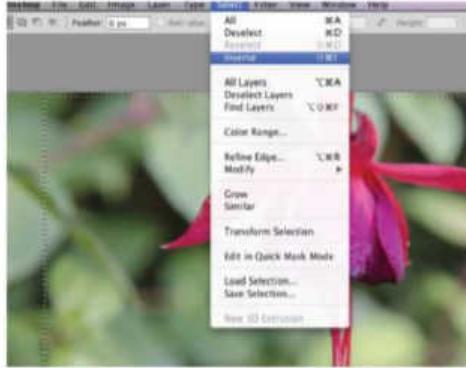
This mode can darken your images

Multiply is perfect for overexposed shots and works best when applied selectively to specific areas. One of the best applications for Multiply is for creating a subtle vignette around the corners of your shots.



01 Create a new layer

Again, begin by duplicating your Background layer. Drag the Background down onto the Create a New Layer button at the bottom of the palette.



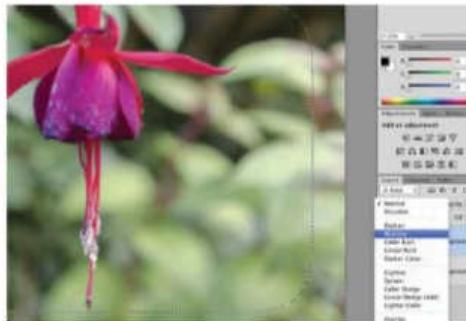
02 Create a selection

Now, using the Rectangular Marquee tool (M) start to drag a selection somewhere around the perimeter of your image.



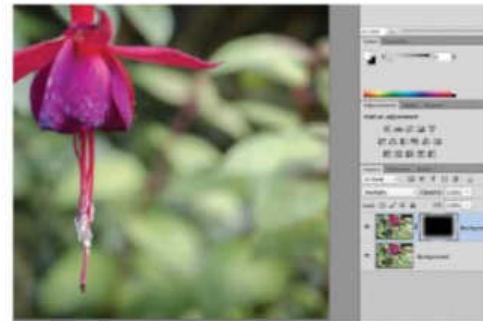
03 Invert the selection

Press Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I on your keyboard to invert the selection – this ensures that it's the perimeter of the image, rather than the centre that is selected. You can also do this via Select>Inverse.



04 Refine the selection

Go to Select>Refine Edge. This will bring up a dialog box that enables you to feather the selection so that the transition to the darker edges from the lighter central area is smooth and subtle.



05 Adjust the Feather amount

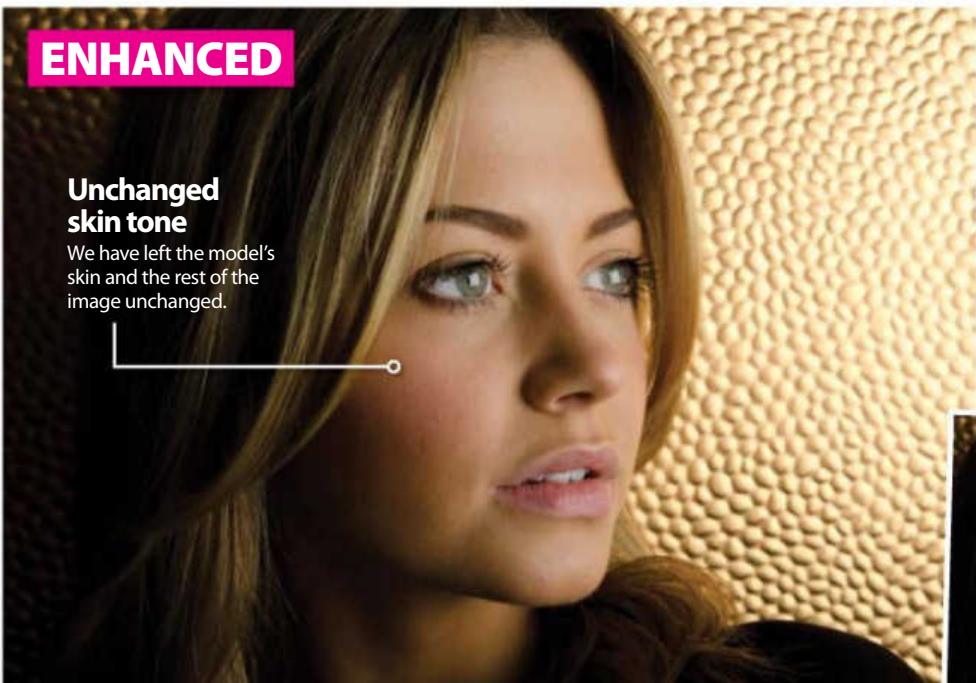
Choose an appropriate value for the Feather. For high-resolution images, you should opt for a pixel value of around 204.

06 Multiply mode

Now select Multiply from the blend mode dropdown on the Layers palette. This will darken the whole image at this stage, but don't worry.

07 Add a layer mask

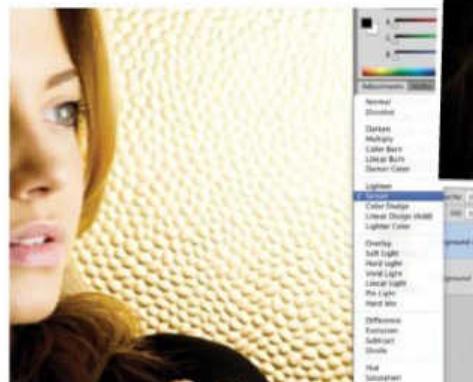
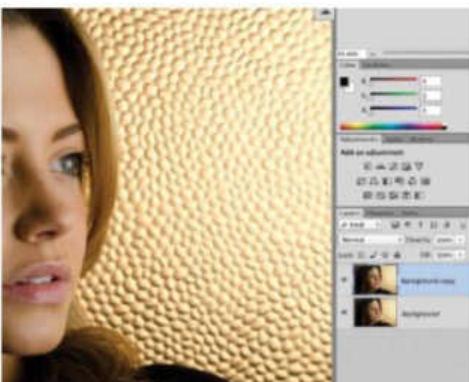
Now head to the bottom of the Layers palette and click the Add Layer Mask button, which is the third icon from the left.



Use the Screen blend mode for a brighter view

Use this mode for beauty retouches

When you apply the Screen blend mode to a layer, the whole image gets much brighter. Much like the Multiply blend mode, this works far better when applied as a local adjustment rather than to the entire image. Once again, you can use layer masks to refine which areas of the image are adjusted.



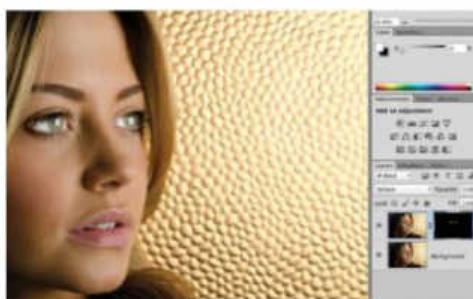
01 Begin the adjustment

As before, you must begin by duplicating your Background layer. This enables you to begin the process of applying very selective, localised adjustments to the image.



02 Select Screen

Use the drop-down menu to select the Screen blend mode. You'll notice the whole image will look far brighter and overexposed, but you'll soon be able to easily fix this.

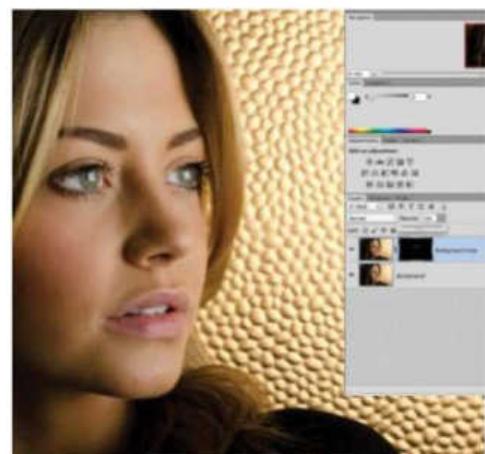


03 Behind the mask

Be sure to hold down Opt/Alt on your keyboard and then click Add Layer Mask at the bottom of the Layers palette. This creates a black layer mask and makes the effect of the Screen mode invisible.

Bright eyes

Using the Screen blend mode and a layer mask enables you to brighten the model's eyes.



04 Brushstrokes

Press B on your keyboard to select the Brush tool. Set your Foreground colour to white at the bottom of the Toolbar. Paint over the eyes, ensuring that the layer mask is highlighted in the Layers palette.

05 Opacity matters

There's a fairly high chance that this effect will be too extreme, so go to the Opacity slider at the top of the Layers palette and simply drag it to the left to reduce the effect of your Screen layer.

Colour & tone

76

Colour in Photoshop

Enhance atmosphere in your artwork and offset colour casts

78

Use Levels to improve photos

Solve photographic problems by tweaking lighting and colour

80

Harness the Sponge tool

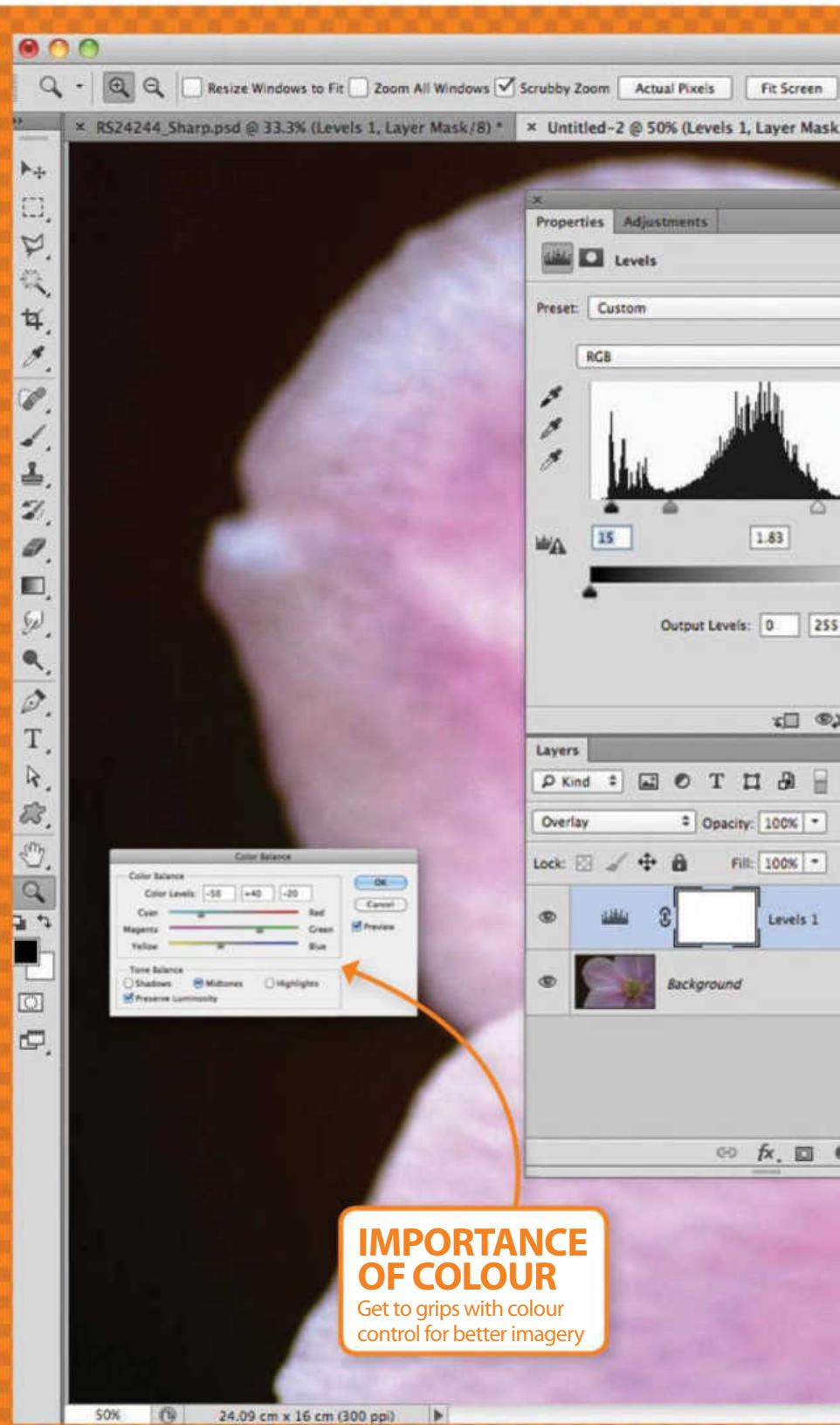
Make your photos stand out from the crowd with a boost of colour

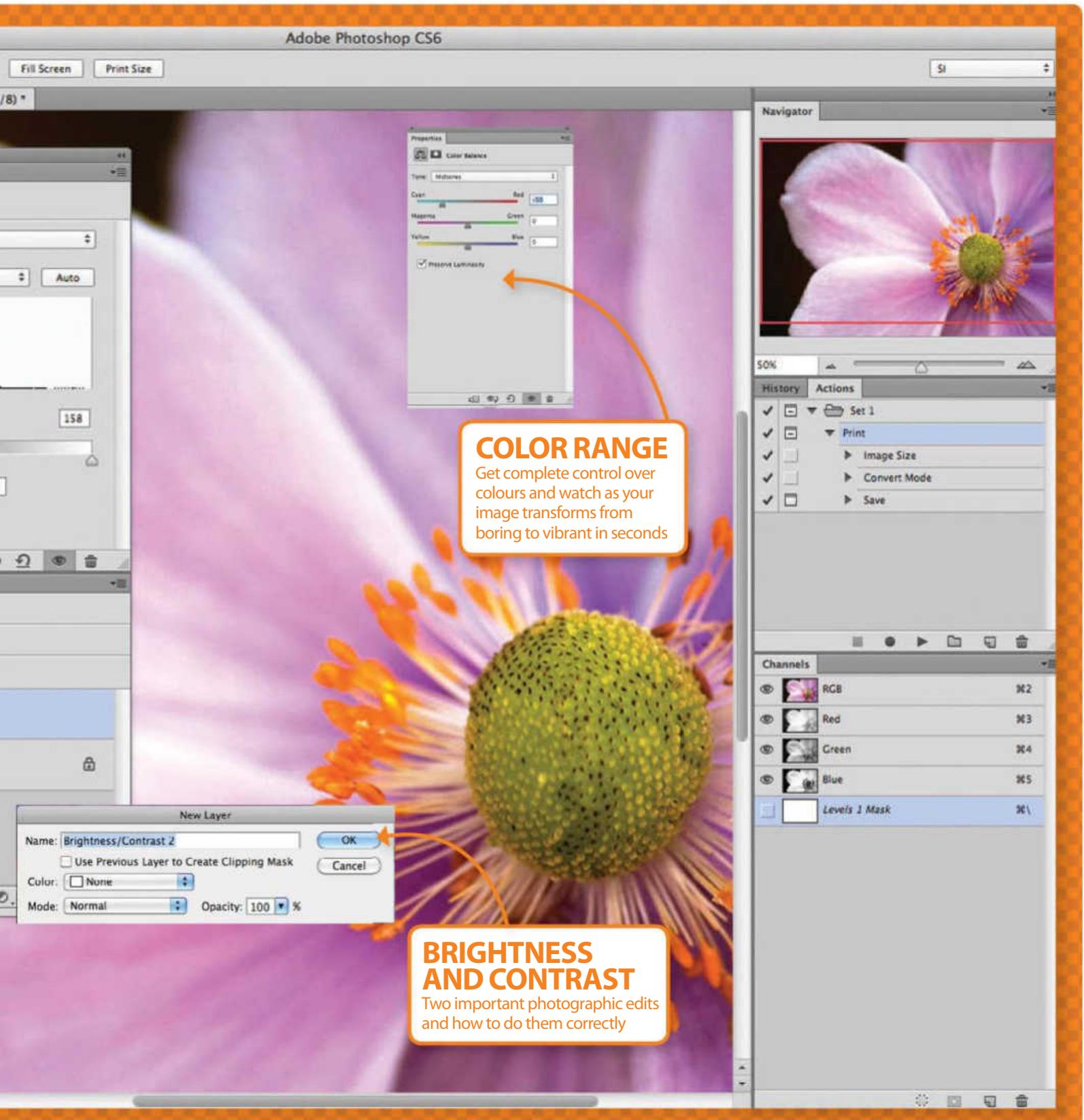
82

Isolate colour

Use brushes and blend modes to create wonderfully striking colour effects

“When evaluating a photo, consider the tonal range and contrast”





Colour in Photoshop

Offset colour casts and enhance atmosphere in your artwork

Colour is an inevitable part of photo editing and, as a result, seeps into all parts of Photoshop in some form or another.

Controlling it is usually done with the Color Balance adjustment, which is best for offsetting colour casts, but it can also be used for changing colour to more abstract hues for artistic effects.

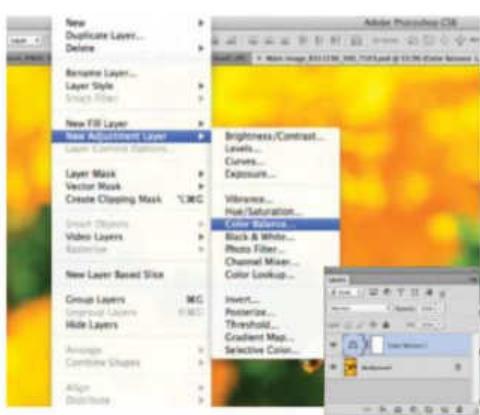
The Color Balance adjustment is only a small part of Photoshop. The best thing about using Color Balance is it's non-destructive. Here we show you how to intensify the yellow and green hues in this image of an insect in flowers.

You'll also find two swatches, Foreground and Background, at the base of the Toolbar for picking out colour and using with tools and adjustments.

"The best thing about using Color Balance is it's non-destructive"

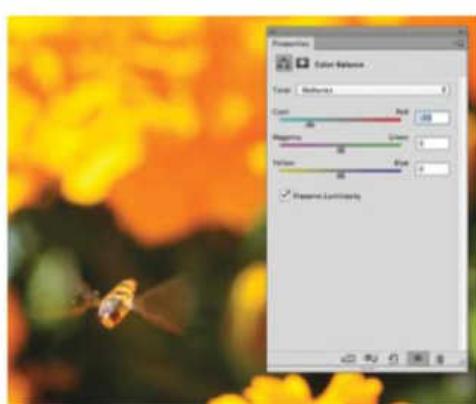
Adjust colour

Color Balance as an adjustment layer



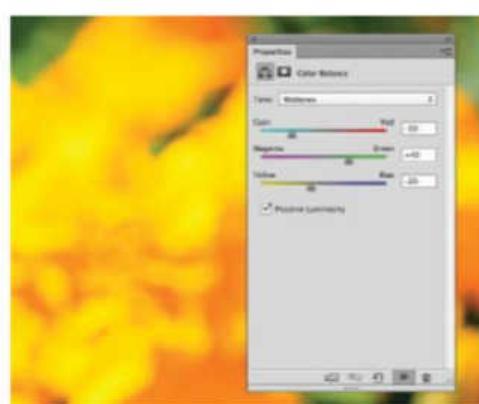
01 Load adjustment

To load the adjustment go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer and select Color Balance. In the name dialog box, hit OK and there should now be a Color Balance 1 layer in your Layers palette.



02 Set tone

For basic alterations, set the Tone option in the Color Balance adjustment to Midtones. Start with the Cyan/Red slider. Slide it left to cool down the image, or push it right to warm it up.



03 Alter colour

Tweak the other two sliders depending on how far off your colours in your image. As an adjustment layer, the colours can be re-edited later on by double-clicking on the layer's thumbnail.

COLOR BALANCE ADJUSTMENT

The Color Balance adjustment presents a set of sliders that work by adding and subtracting quantities of colour. This is helpful when the tone of an image isn't quite right, such as when there's too much orange in an image that was taken indoors. Here's what the adjustment looks like and how it can be used.

Colour sliders

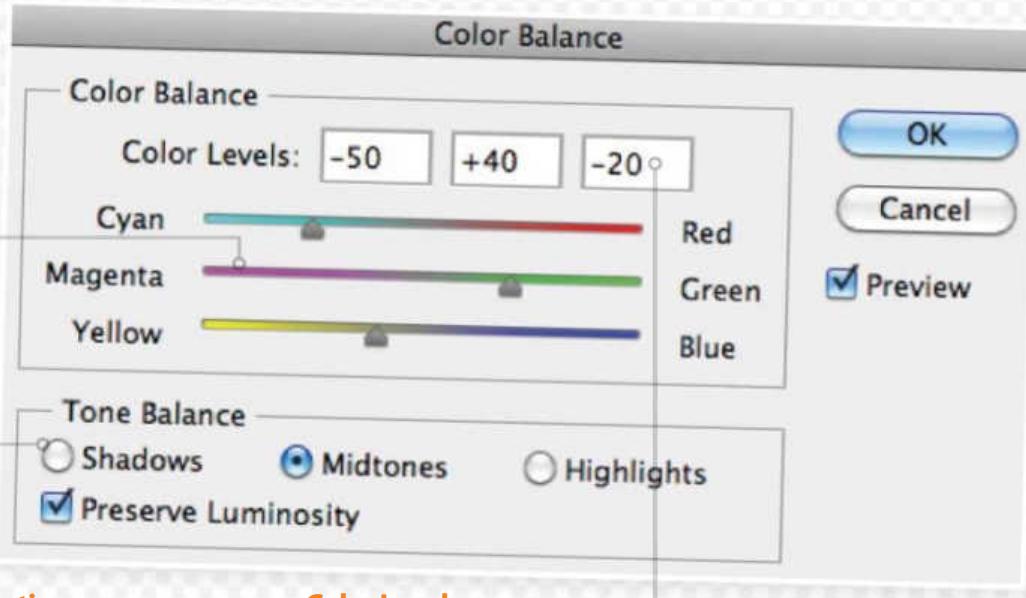
There are six colours inside the adjustment. They work in pairs, and when one colour is reduced the opposing one is increased.

Tone Balance

The Tone Balance section of the adjustment is split into Shadows, Midtones and Highlights. This is where colour in all three regions of your image can be tweaked to perfection.

Adjustment location

The Color Balance adjustment can be found inside Image>Adjustments, as well as Layer>New Adjustment Layer. The latter option comes with a mask on its own layer.



Color Levels

If you know the exact amount of colour to adjust in your image, enter the values under Color Levels.

Add a swatch

When you've found a colour you like, click the Add to Swatches button to send the colour to the Swatches palette. This palette is found inside the Window menu.

FOREGROUND & BACKGROUND SWATCHES

The Color Picker menu is where colour for your Foreground and Background swatches are set in place. From saturation to brightness, it's all done here.

Change saturation

The strength, or saturation, of colour is adjusted by sliding the picker left or right. The far right contains the colour in its strongest form, whereas the far-left side contains less.

New and current

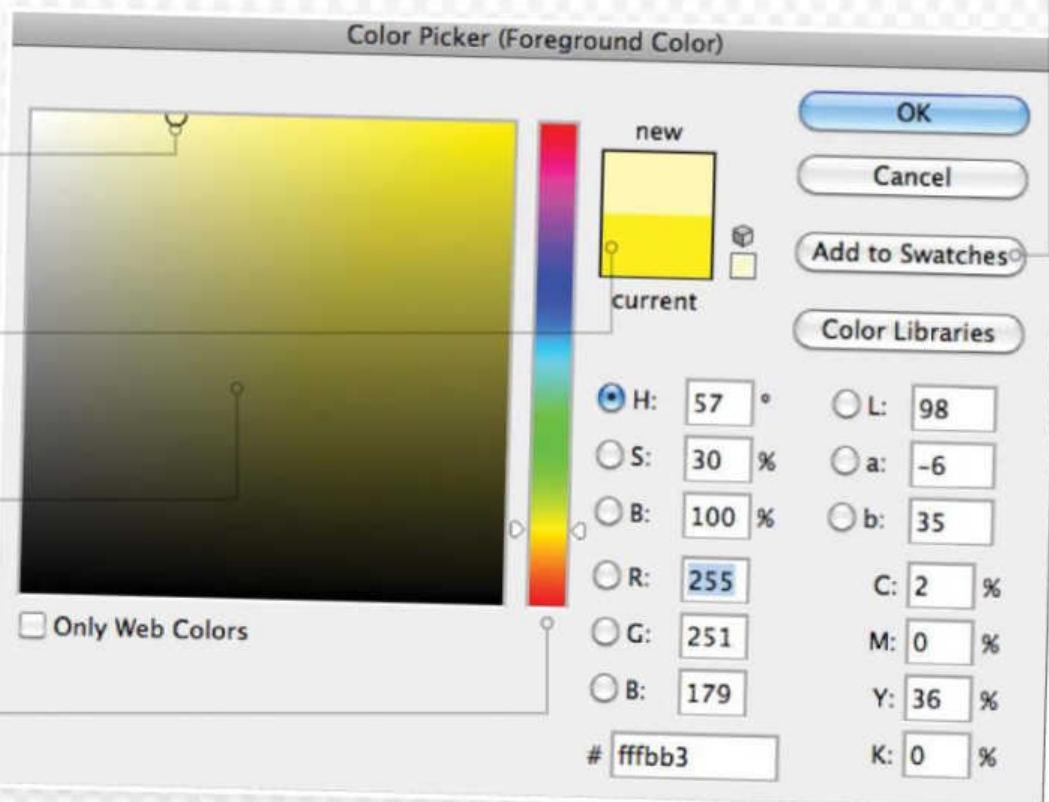
The current colour is shown just underneath the new colour being chosen, so you can see just how they differ.

Choosing brightness

The brightness of a colour is changed when the picker is moved up and down the colour chart, with complete black at the bottom and the brightest tone at the top.

Hue

The hue of the colour is selected by sliding the arrows up and down the vertical spectrum.



SOURCE FILES AVAILABLE

Use Levels to improve photos

Photoshop's trusty Levels adjustment is a must-have for solving a range of photographic problems

The Levels adjustment layer is a staple of Photoshop and should be one of the first places you go to tweak lighting and colour. In fact, it is so versatile that it can be used to perform multiple fixes in one go, which makes it purely indispensable for any budding Photoshop artist.

Here we'll guide you through the different uses of the Levels adjustment and demonstrate how even dull images can be completely turned on their heads with new life, colour and better overall lighting.

The Levels adjustment is commonly used to correct undesirable lighting, but due to its relationship with colour channels it's also helpful for correcting tinted images.

When applied as an adjustment layer, a mask enables you to selectively brush away areas on certain parts of the image. This is a great way to get creative with lighting, as well as add or even distort colour.

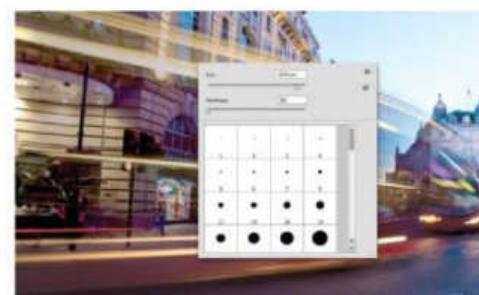
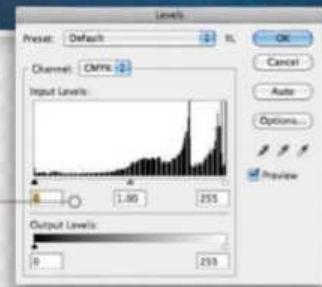


Fool the eye

The Levels adjustment lets you mask away parts of your image, like the sky, to control just the foreground and balance exposure.

Control light

Boost shadows and highlights in areas of underexposure using the Levels adjustment, like on the road in this image.



01 Open Levels

Find the supplied 'Headlight trails.jpg' to replicate the results shown in this tutorial. Load your Levels adjustment by going to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Hit OK in the pop-up box.



04 Improve the sky

Select the adjustment's layer mask from the Layers palette, paint over the sky in order to reveal the unedited version and then balance the exposure.

02 Middle of the road

We can brighten up this dim street by shifting the middle of the three sliders to the left. This lightens the dark road, but as a result of this the sky will lose its impact.



05 Focus on the red

Click on the adjustment's icon in the Layers palette and change the Levels from RGB to Red using the list of options inside the graph. Also slide the Midtones marker to the right until it reads 0.84.



06 Boost the contrast

To give the image one last injection of contrast, switch the Levels adjustment back to RGB. Grab the white marker to control the highlights and slide it up to 200. This gives the light more vibrancy.

Take it to the next level

Combine Levels with blend modes for extra contrast

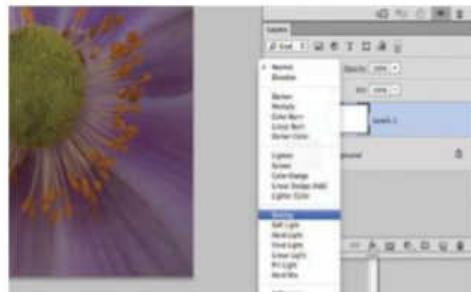


ORIGINAL



Try using Levels with selections

The mask that comes with the Levels adjustment can be used creatively to stop changes being made to a particular colour. Apply the Magic Wand tool (W) to create a selection (unchecked Contiguous) around one colour. To finish, apply the Levels adjustment and invert its mask (Cmd/Ctrl+I).



01 Fix the flat contrast

Open the supplied 'Close up flower.jpg', which will currently lack a bit of contrast. Load up the Levels adjustment from the Layers palette by clicking on the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer button.



02 Use a blend mode

Before making any changes to the adjustment, change its blend mode from Normal to Overlay in the Layers palette. This improves things slightly, but we can tweak settings to suit the blend mode.



04 Alter the shadows

Pull the black marker to the right in the Levels adjustment until you find that the contrast is balanced. Slide the Midtones marker to the left to enhance this result.



05 Original detail

Use the Brush tool (B) set to 10% Opacity, 400px Size and paint over the highlights on the petals. This reduces any over-exposure in these areas by revealing the original Background layer.

03 Control the highlights

Grab the Highlights marker inside the Levels adjustment and slide it to the left to boost contrast and brightness. Be wary of the brightest parts of the image, but these can also be fixed later.

"The Levels adjustment layer is so versatile that it can perform multiple fixes in one go"

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Harness the Sponge tool

Make your photos stand out from the crowd with a boost of colour

You can edit photos to make them more attractive by simply boosting the strength, or saturation, of colours. Photoshop's Sponge tool is one way in which you can achieve this effect, and it has to be one of the easiest methods. In just a few steps we show you the ropes in using this simple yet powerful tool.

The techniques used here are particularly useful if you need to make a model or an object stand out from distracting or cluttered backgrounds, such as the busy wallpaper in this example.

You can find the Sponge tool in the drop-down options when clicking and holding on the Dodge or Burn tools. After selecting the tool, head to the

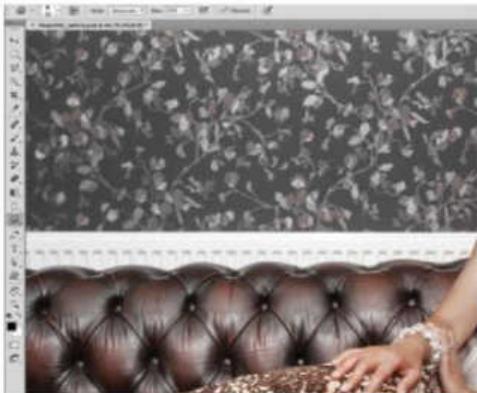
Options bar to change a number of key settings. You can alter the tool's size and its overall hardness to create softer edges and transitions between colours. You can also change the mode to either Saturate or Desaturate, and turn on the Vibrance option for protecting colour from becoming too bright or over-saturated. In no time you'll be eliminating flaws from all your portrait shots to make your subject shine.

"Make a model or an object stand out from distracting backgrounds"



Add impact with colour

Desaturate areas of an image with little fuss



01 Let's desaturate

Set the Sponge tool to Desaturate in the Options bar and set Flow to 50%. Check the Vibrance option and brush over the wallpaper and sofa.

02 Improve colour

Change to Saturate mode and keep the Flow value as it is. We want to make the dress stand out. Brush over the dress until the colour increases.

03 Beauty retouch

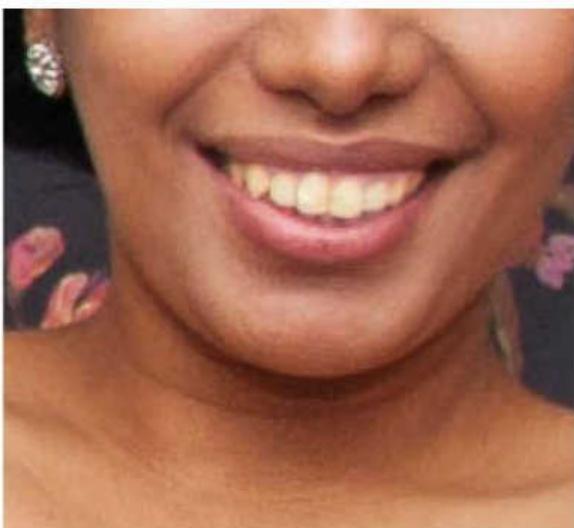
Continue using the Sponge tool, set to Saturate and a Flow value of 30%, over the model's lips to increase the saturation. Brush over the model's skin.



Eliminate fringing

Tackle chromatic aberration

Images can often show purple fringing around the edges of a model or object that has a strong contrast with its surroundings. The purplish edge can be eliminated or reduced by setting the Sponge tool to Desaturate mode. Using a small brush, simply paint over the these areas.



Whiten teeth and eyes

Realistic enhancement

To whiten yellow teeth or bloodshot eyes, set the Sponge Tool to Desaturate mode. Set the Flow setting to a low percentage. Do not overuse the Sponge tool in these types of edit, because if you go too far it can look odd. Try to be as accurate as possible with your brushwork to guarantee good results.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Isolate colour

Use brushes and blend modes to create wonderfully striking colour effects in Elements

Colour is a much more powerful tool than a lot of people give it credit for, and creating colours that really pop in an image can be rather difficult. But when you have a vibrant image and you're looking for one subject or a particular shade to shine brighter than most, why not reduce the saturation completely of everything else in the picture?

In the Oscar-winning film Schindler's List, a girl's red coat was the only bright, colourful object in a monochrome world. It was an extremely powerful, evocative image, and it's one that's easy to create in Elements. It doesn't have to be used for such dramatic effect though; you might want to just draw attention to one thing in particular in your picture. You might even want to keep everything else in your picture semi-monochrome.

Play around with this effect in various pictures. It's one that you can be as creative with as you choose; why not use splatter brushes to let colour fly out of the subject? Try it out and see what you can create.

What does it mean?

LEVELS – Altering Levels can improve contrast, which is great for monochrome images. When you improve the contrast of a coloured picture, the hues can become overly saturated and look messy; improving the contrast in monochrome makes the blacks darker, and the whites lighter.



Activate the isolation

Find your subject and grey out everything else



01 Make a selection

Start off by opening the image that you want to isolate a colour or object in. Choose something with a bright foreground in front of a less exciting background. Grab the Quick Selection and drag it around your foreground to select it. Don't worry about being too precise when you select it. Next, add a new layer.



02 Fill and blend

With your object selected, Ctrl/right-click and hit Invert Selection. When you select black or white as your Foreground colour and press Alt/Opt+backspace now, you will fill in the background white. Change the blend mode of this layer to Color. This is your monochrome background to let your colourful foreground really show.



03 Touch up manually

You are able to refine your selection once you have made it, but it is just as easy to touch it up now. To do this, all you need to do is get a soft, white brush and a soft eraser, and toggle between the E and B keys, touching up your edges and perfecting exactly what's bright and colourful, and what's in the grey background.

04 Alter levels

Duplicate your background layer. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and click the preview of the layer with the brushed monochrome background. Hit the mask icon; you have a separate layer for your background. Head to Enhance>Adjust Lighting>Levels and tweak either side until your picture has a good contrast to complement the colour in the picture.

Alternative methods

If you use Photoshop, try these other colour-controlling commands



Select colour

Head to Select>Color Range; use the eyedropper to select a colour to isolate. Use the plus and minus icons to refine. Click OK, then Ctrl/right-click and press Layer Via Copy to create a new layer from this colour. Create a grey-filled colour layer beneath this layer.



Channels

Click the Channels palette next to the Layers palette; here, your picture is split into red, blue and green. We want to isolate the blue, so click the blue layer, Cmd/Ctrl+A, copy and paste as a new layer. Set this layer to Darken, and the blue will be highlighted.



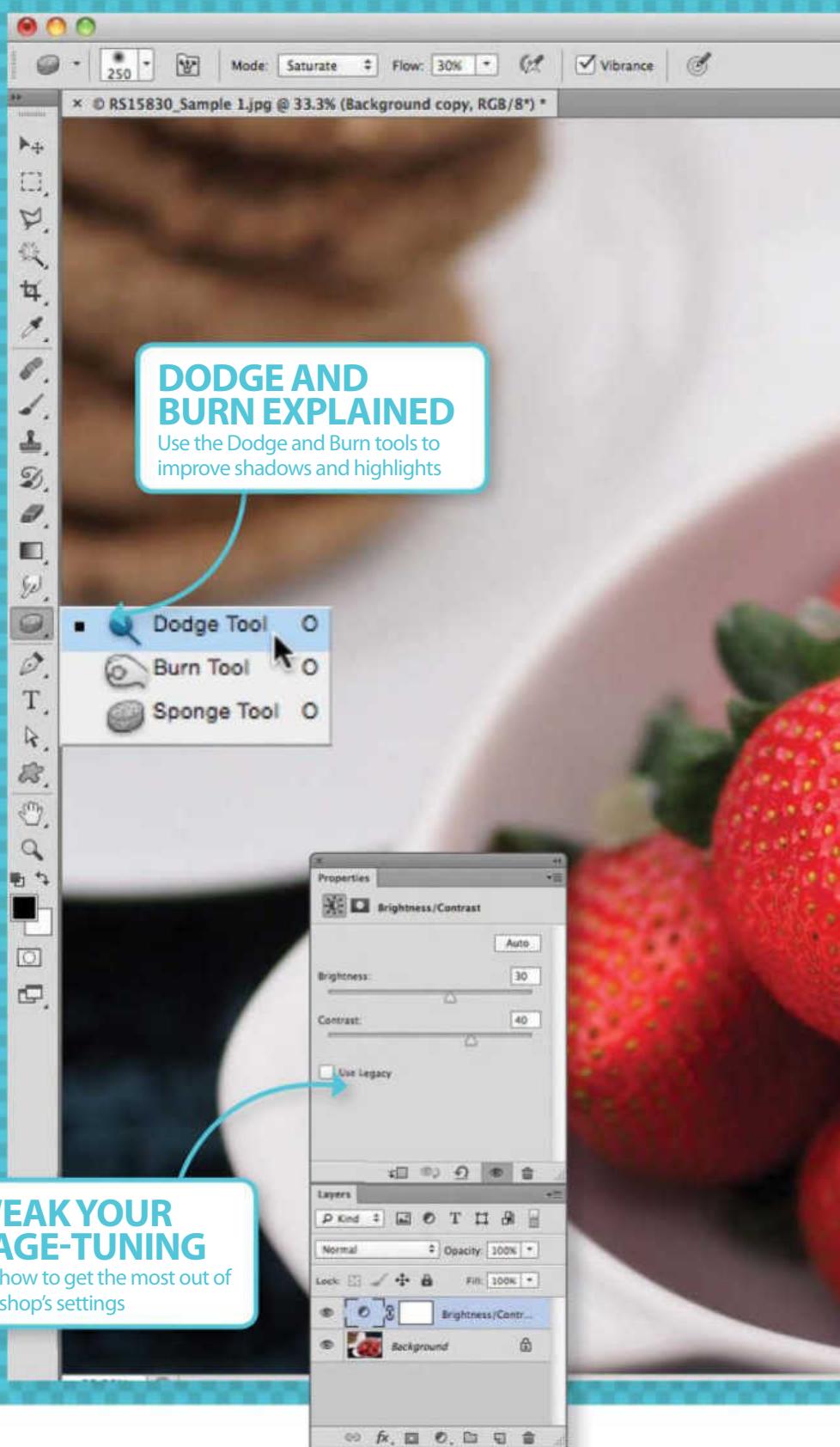
Hue/Saturation

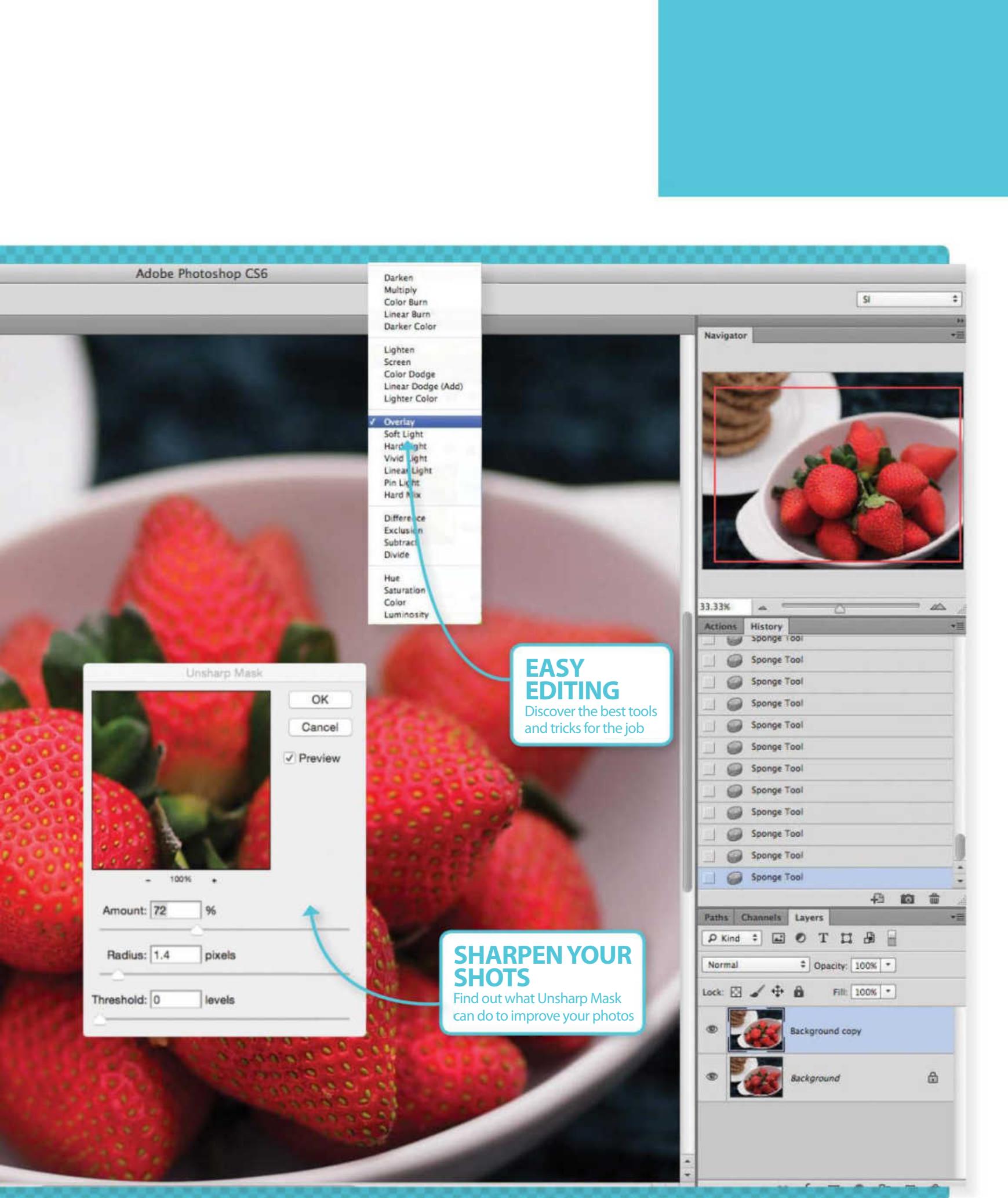
Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer over your image. Decide which shade you would like to keep, and then reduce all of the other colours to -100. Adjust your shades by using the spectrum sliders, in order to add or remove hues from the isolated space.

Retouching

- 86** Conquer the clone stamp tool
Stamp your authority all over an image with this intelligent brush
- 88** Sharpen your photos
Correct camera blur using the Unsharp Mask filter
- 90** Improve shadows and highlights
Image edits made easy using the Dodge and Burn tools
- 92** Enhance eyes and teeth
Give your model some cosmetic enhancements in no time
- 94** Erase and merge with Content-Aware
Remove unwanted elements with one of the most magical tools
- 96** Master the Content-Aware Fill Move tool
Use the power of content aware to fill in the blanks on your artwork

“The Dodge and Burn tools are highly important when creating digital art”





Retouching



SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Conquer the Clone Stamp tool

Stamp your authority all over an image with this intelligent brush

Cloning is one of the most time-consuming, patience-testing tricks that you can master in Photoshop, but like most things that require skill and effort, the results can be absolutely stunning.

Cloning is often used as a very useful touch-up tool for photographs, as it brushes over an image, using the original as a basis. It relies on the Opt/Alt key; press on whatever area of the image you want to be your guide, and then brush away over the image, replacing an area with another part of the photo.

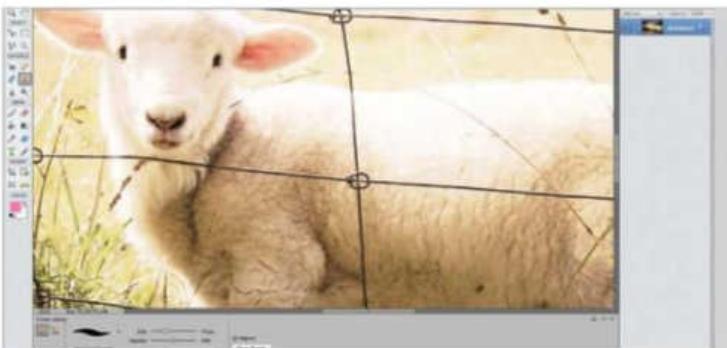
It can be used to heal blemishes or even just face-swap. It's simple enough to learn, but there can be hours spent touching up your photos once you've mastered how to use the stamp.

Sure, it might take so much precision that you wonder halfway through: would it be quicker to just set this sheep free from the field, and photograph it again without the fence in the way? However, in the end, there are few things more satisfying in Photoshop than completing a masterful clone. Read on and learn some techniques and ideas to turn you into a cloning pro.



Cleanly delete obstructions

Erase fencing and more by cloning it out



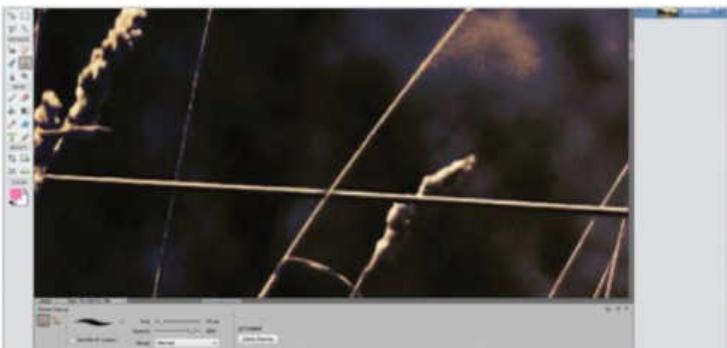
01 Familiarise yourself with settings

Along the bottom are the basic settings for the Clone Stamp. You can change the Brush, Size and Hardness, and there's an option to align or clone in a new place every time. Choose 50% Opacity and a soft brush. This will allow you to touch up and be more accurate.



02 Begin cloning

Press Opt/Alt+click to select the patch you want to duplicate. Then simply brush over your chosen area. It really is that simple, but remember to choose an area of a similar tone and colour, so you don't create a jarring between the clone and the destination.



03 Clone strands

When cloning strands like hair or grass, make sure you clone them specifically rather than cloning around them. Never clone up to the edge of subjects or strands, because then you create soft and unbelievable edges – clone real edges instead.



04 Watch for duplication

To make your cloning look believable, make sure you don't leave obviously cloned parts of the image alongside where they've been cloned. If you've cloned a patch, clone over the original spot, otherwise the effect becomes really obvious.

Additional uses

Create a composite with the Clone tool



Clone whole forests

Trees can be hard to select, but why let that stop you creating a forest? Simply clone one tree all over the picture by adding a new layer for each one. Then you can touch up using the Refine Edge tool.



Swap fur texture

You can clone between pictures. Simply set the Opt/Alt option on one picture and then clone it onto your destination. Lower your opacity and you can create incredible effects, just like this fur swap.

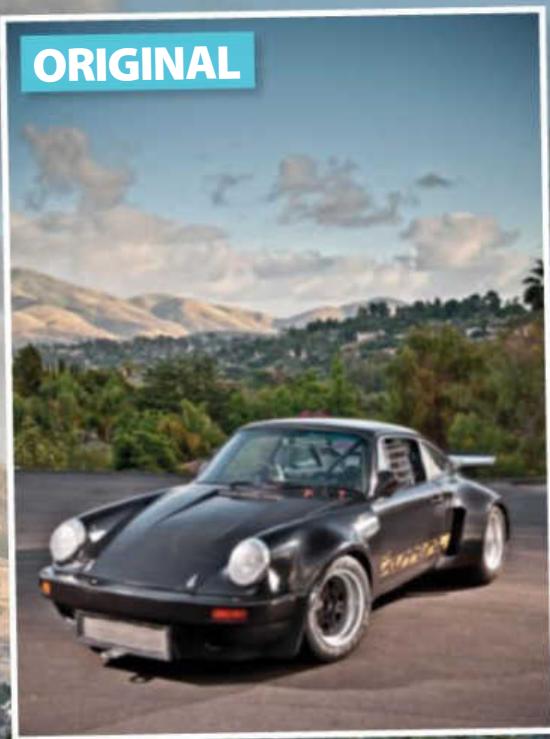


Novelty effects

Rather than duplicating a photo, set a mask and brush through the mask. Then clone with a big soft brush and you can create quick yet effective novelty features, just like the Bohemian Rhapsody-style image we have done here!

Retouching

ORIGINAL



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Sharpen your photos

We show you how to fix camera blur using the Unsharp Mask filter

Camera blur is an extremely common problem, and if you are like us, you will have your fair share of images that aren't as sharp as you'd like. Luckily, Photoshop and Photoshop Elements have a whole host of tools to help you to correct this flaw. You can use the Sharpen filters (see the Filters section of this book) or you could use the Sharpen tool to selectively sharpen certain areas of an image for effect, however there is a quick and easy method, which is what we are going to be looking at in this mini tutorial.

Whether you have Photoshop or Photoshop Elements you have at hand a nifty way of dealing with blurring problems in the shape of the Unsharp Mask filter. It seems strange that something called 'unsharp' actually does the opposite, but that's just one of Adobe's little quirks! It's easy to access the tool by going to either the Filter menu or the Enhance menu, depending on which version of Photoshop you are using.

You control the tool using a series of sliders in the dialog box that comes up, and the Preview window means you can see exactly what effect the edit is having. It works by emphasising the object edges in an image, tricking the eye into thinking that the image is crisper than it is. This transforms soft, blurry images into crisper renditions of themselves.

We're going to show you quickly and easily how to use the Unsharp Mask for yourself using a typical image which is blurred. We have provided this image for you to practise on, but you may want to use your own.

"Transforms soft, blurry images into crisper renditions"

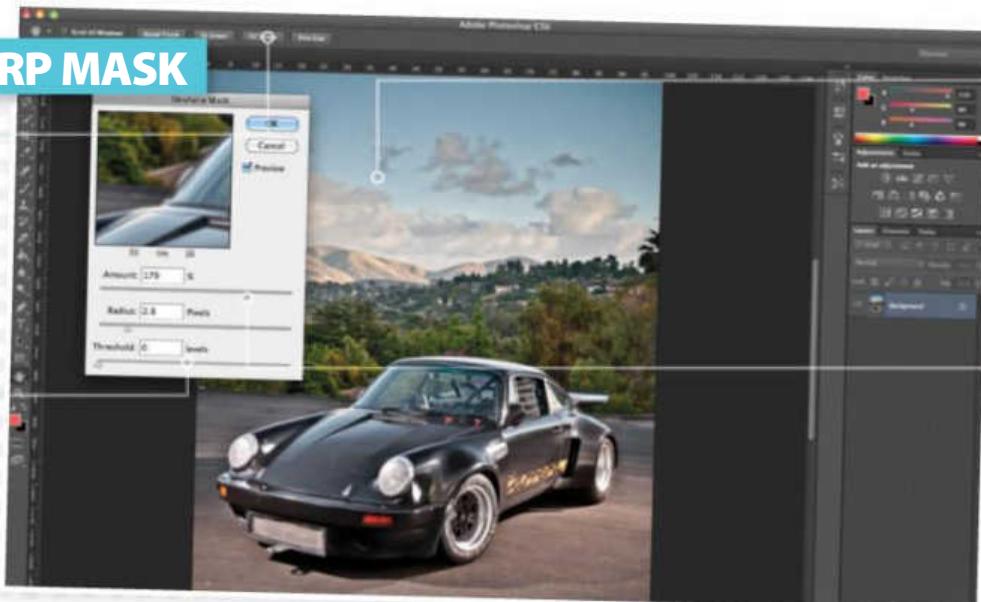
THE UNSHARP MASK

Finding the tool

Click the Enhance or the Filter menu, depending on which version of Photoshop you are using, then select the Unsharp mask option from the drop-down list.

Dialog box

This is the Unsharp Mask box that pops up, which has all of the tools that you need to sharpen your image to perfection using a selection of sliders.

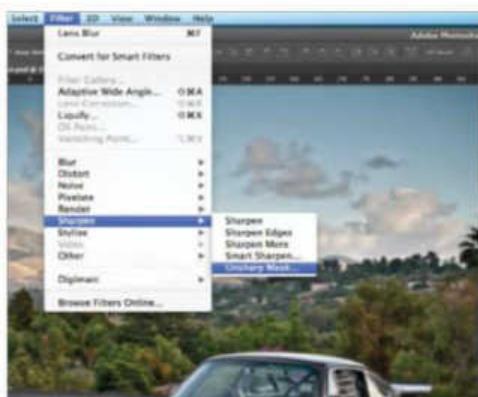


Preview

Make sure that Preview is ticked so that you can see the changes as you make them on your photo. The window in the dialog box lets you zoom in closer to see what's happening.

Amount

Experiment with the Amount control to change how strong the effect of the filter is. To keep it realistic try and use the lowest value possible for the effect that you want.



01 Open the command

In Photoshop, go to Filters>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask, in Elements go to Enhance>Unsharp Mask. Make sure the little Preview box is checked.

02 Set the Amount

This sets how intense the sharpening is – move to the right to increase the intensity. We have a bit of work to do here with this image, so move it to 179.

03 The Radius

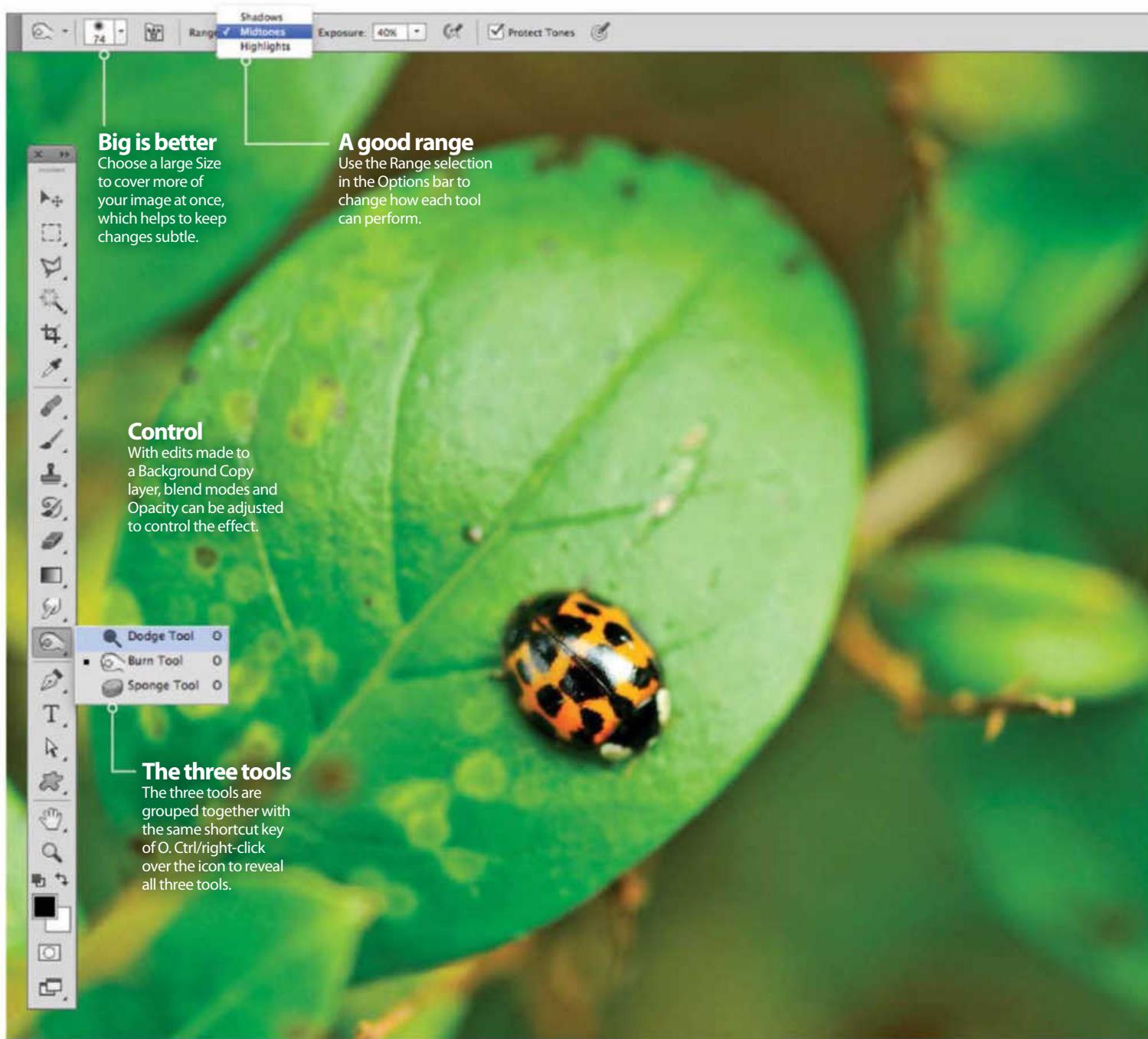
The higher the setting, the more extreme the effect. We used 2.8. Threshold calms the edit down but a setting of 0 was all that was needed here.

Improve shadows and highlights

Image adjustments are made easy with Dodge and Burn

The Dodge, Burn and Sponge tools are designed to edit exposure and colour in an image. Being tools, rather than adjustment layers or filters, they give you a great deal of control and accuracy. They enable you to choose the exact position and strength of the effects by painting them onto the image. Adopting a brush as the main way in which you apply the treatments to your imagery, you use your mouse to add the effect wherever you need to.

Let's start with the Dodge and Burn tools, which are highly important when it comes to creating digital art and making subtle but effective photo edits. The two tools reflect the traditional photographic techniques used to enhance lighting, with Dodge brightening areas and Burn darkening them. You may have one subject in your image that has been under or overexposed, and that's where these two come into play. Lastly, the Sponge tool deals with colour, and can be set up to add or remove colour to a subject.



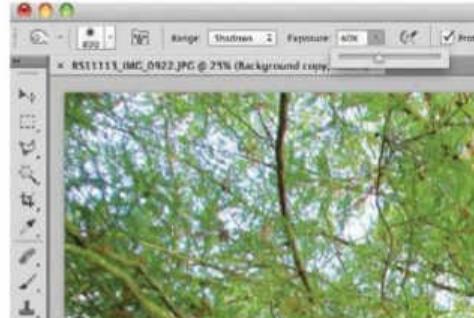
Dodge and Burn tools

Change how the light falls in your images



01 Burn tool

The Burn tool is used to darken parts of your image. Select the tool from the Toolbar or by pressing O on your keyboard. Check that you have the Burn tool selected – not the Dodge tool – by clicking and holding over the icon to view all available options.



02 Range

In the Options bar, there are three Ranges to choose from: Shadows, Midtones and Highlights. We'll only need the first two for the Burn tool. Select Shadows and set the Exposure to 40%. Drag the Background layer onto the Create a New Layer button to duplicate it.



03 Darken

Set your brush size to a large, soft tip from within the Options at the top. Paint with the tool over the shadows in the background parts of your image. If the effect is too strong then lower the Opacity of tool. Use this sparingly over your image until the shadows darken.



04 Add contrast

Set the Range option to Midtones. Paint once more over the background elements to add further contrast. Try not to paint over one area too many times, as the effect will get increasingly stronger.



05 Dodge settings

Grab the Dodge tool, which is used to brighten up subjects. In the Options bar, set Range to Midtones and set Exposure to 40%. Paint over foreground parts of your image to brighten them up.

06 Overlay mode

See how much the lighting has changed by clicking on the eye symbol of the duplicate layer to turn it on and off. Alter the blend mode to Overlay and lower its Opacity to 70% for more contrast.

Make colours sing

Boost colours with the Sponge tool



01 Layers palette

Load your image into Photoshop or Elements. Duplicate the Background layer by dragging it from the Layers palette onto the Create a New Layer button. A Background Copy layer will appear.

02 Tool's Mode

Select the Sponge tool (O) and, in the Options bar, set Mode to Saturate and Flow to 30%. Tick the Vibrance box. Select an appropriate brush size for your image and then set it to 0% Hardness.

03 Paint saturation

Paint with the Sponge tool over the colour in your image and you'll see the saturation increase, adding more life. Don't overdo the effect, as noise will start to gather and degrade the quality.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Enhance eyes and teeth

No Curves? No problem. Elements has plenty of built-in solutions for image editing

Practically every photo can be improved with a quick amendment here and there, no matter how meticulous you are when you shoot the snap. It's perhaps no surprise that usually the most edited photos are the ones of themselves. However, while most people assume that teeth-whitening and eye-correction improves what a subject naturally lacks, that is not always the case. Warming filters and lomo edits can turn teeth a yellowy colour and bad lighting can dramatically affect eyes. Quite often, the key to photo fixes is in the name – most of the time you have to fix the photo, not the subject.

Enhancing facial features in photos can also be wildly creative. You may choose to brush spectrums of colour into a subject's face or straighten every individual tooth inside their mouth. Whether you're ambitious or just after a simple touch-up, these are the techniques that all Photoshop users need in their photo-fix toolbox.

"Most of the time you have to fix the photo, not the subject"



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Work on the eyes

Often bad lighting, filters and edits can affect the eyes, so experiment with what looks best.

Dodge tool

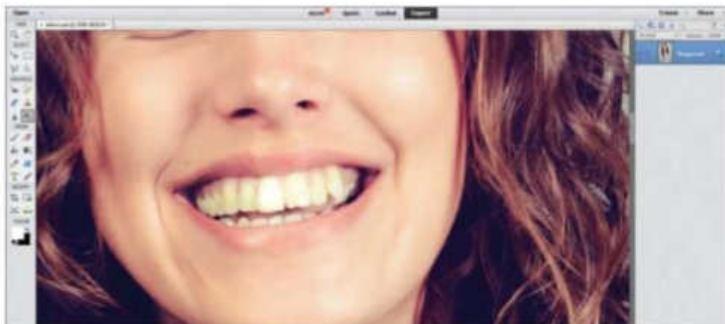
The Dodge tool is paired with the Burn tool, and both are used to alter exposure on the chosen point of an image: Dodge lightens and Burn darkens. They're used a lot during digital painting and picture fixing, but the Dodge tool is perfect for amending dark or off-colour teeth and eyes.

Whiten the smile

Whitening teeth is a popular change to make when editing portraits. Here, we have subtly removed the yellow tint.

Whiten teeth

Get a perfect smile with the Dodge tool



01 Dodge teeth

The Dodge tool is great for the whites of eyes and the enamel of teeth. It whitens subtly, and by gently brushing over the yellowy parts of a smile, you can transform a photo. Keep the Exposure at 50% and the range as Midtones for best results on teeth.

Boost eyes

Use colouring methods to improve the irises



01 Brush eyes

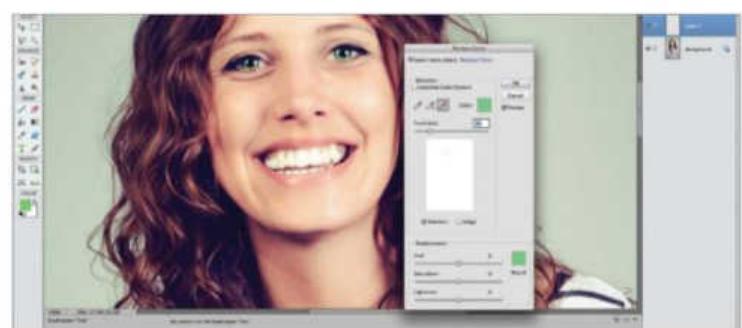
To improve the colour of a subject's eyes, pick a soft brush and paint over them on a new layer. Be sure to erase any bleed from the brush so that you're only painting the irises, and choose a colour with a greyish tint, as too bright a brush will look too obviously edited.

02 Eye highlights

Reduce the Opacity of this layer and set the blend mode to Color. This layer's Opacity is completely up to you to decide, depending on the brightness of the eyes. Pick a colourful tint and choose a smaller brush to add dabs of colour to give more tone.

Extra enhancements

If you're feeling extra-ambitious



Screen layer

To add extra shine, create a new layer and lightly brush in with colour. Use white on the teeth and whatever colour the eyes are. Add a small Gaussian Blur to this layer and set it to Screen before reducing the Opacity. This can look unnatural unless done subtly, but it adds a nice glimmer to the eyes.

Change the eye colour

If you don't want to brush a new colour over the eyes and prefer to stick to the original tones of the photo, go to Enhance>Adjust Color. You can eye-drop the colours in the eyes from here to select them and use the Hue slider to change the overall colour.

Retouching



ERASE CONTENT

Content-Aware is primarily used as an aid to retouching, as it can remove any object from your photo.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Erase and merge with Content-Aware

Remove unwanted elements with one of the most magical tools

Content-Aware is, quite simply, the most exciting retouching tool that you can use in your work. Like the Clone Stamp tool, it enables you to fill areas of your work with other areas of your photos, only it's much, much faster, and often astounding in its results.

The Content-Aware tool can be used for so much, but primarily it's a photo-editing feature that's used by retouching artists as much as it is by photomanipulators. It was first introduced by Adobe in Photoshop CS5, but so many Elements users can't live without it now, thanks to its quick, straightforward nature. It revolves around selecting and filling, which is as simple as it sounds, yet it can be one of the most powerful tools that Elements offers.

But Content-Aware isn't perfect. Often it leaves elements of the object you are trying to remove or it fills in objects with areas of the background. Unfortunately there's no option to choose which areas of the background it ignores. That isn't to say that Content-Aware can't be a one-click fix for some projects, but it's important to be aware that others might require a few extra tweaks.

One thing Content-Aware does offer is the ability to Photomerge. Photomerge combines filling with blending to create one great photo from multiple pictures in your Photo Bin, and there are a range of options you can pick, depending on whether you want to fix exposure, create a panorama or even merge two faces into one.



Remove objects

Use Content-Aware to clear a scene and tidy photos



01 Make a selection

Start off by grabbing a selection tool, preferably the Polygonal Lasso as it's the easiest one to use. Click around an object you wish to remove in your picture – in this case the male runner. You need to leave enough gap for Content-Aware to fill, but not so finely selected that edges from the object will still be visible.



03 Touch up areas

Content-Aware relies on the space around it, so often it can be unreliable and fill in the space with other objects that you may not actually want in the background. Simply repeat the process of selecting and filling again to remove any leftovers.



02 Content-Aware

Next, simply Ctrl/right-click on your selection and choose Fill Layer. You are able to choose to fill your selected space with the Foreground or Background colour, but you need to pick Content-Aware. This will fill in the space with pixels from around the image, guessing what the background behind the object looks like.



04 Clone for perfection

Select the Clone Stamp tool. Alt/Opt-click on the source that you wish to copy to another part of the image; then simply brush over the part of the picture you want to cover. The Clone Stamp will apply the source area over the area to edit.

Using Photomerge

Head to the Guided section for more Content-Aware tools



Exposure

Photomerge uses Content-Aware to blend and merge images together, and remove unwanted objects. The Exposure option equalises light and dark photos to produce something between the two; click on the chosen photos from your Photo Bin and manually add shade and light, or let Elements find the perfect medium.

Face Merge

Face Merge works in a rather similar way to Exposure in that it aims to create a perfect final picture from a collection of shots you might have taken. Where it differs, though, is that it enables you to be creative, letting you pick the best parts of a series of photos you've taken with the Pencil and Eraser tools.

Panorama

Content-Aware can merge photos together and fill in gaps. This is best demonstrated with the Panorama option in the Guided section. Select a series of photos from the same location in your Photo Bin, and add them to the process. Photomerge will order them and use Content-Aware in the corners to create a panorama.

Retouching



What does it mean?

TRANSFORM ON DROP – This command lets you transform an object before it's placed. It's good to get in the habit of keeping this box checked, as there are often tweaks that you can make to a subject, even if you don't use the resize handles every time you use the Content-Aware Fill Move tool.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Master the Content-Aware Fill Move tool

Use the power of content aware to fill in the blanks on your artwork

When you're turning a sketch into a digital masterpiece, or building a composition from existing photos, Photoshop is fantastic for creating something out of nothing. But it also has a set of tools that can do the opposite; taking a complete photograph and magically removing an object or subject from the picture.

The Content-Aware Fill Command is similar to the Clone Stamp; it covers a patch of your picture with a patch from somewhere else to seamlessly cover over something. It's most commonly used by Ctrl/right-clicking and

selecting Fill – it's available on the drop-down option that appears – but also comes in useful when you're moving objects in your picture.

Content-Aware Fill Move combines the intuition of the Content-Aware technology with the Move tool. It's great for touching up a portrait, but can also handle bigger edits, like moving a subject to a completely different area of an image. It's a versatile tool, and one that's been improved further with the latest Transform On Drop checkbox from the CC 2015 update, so let's explore how to make a quick but ambitious photo fix with it.



ORIGINAL

Move and fill

Merge the power of two Photoshop tools into one, quick action



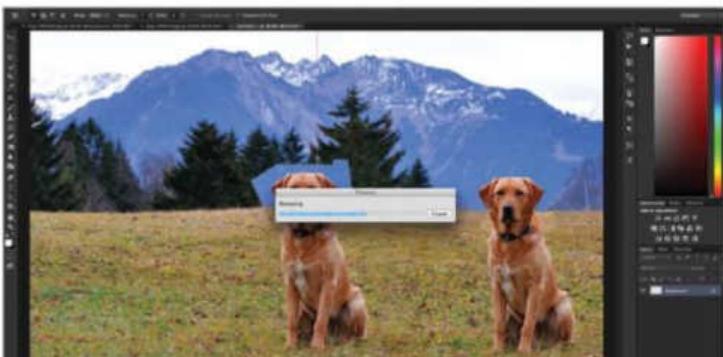
01 Make a selection

Start off by selecting what you want to move in your image. Grab the Polygonal Lasso to select with, as you don't want to be too precise; the Content-Aware Fill Move tool feathers greatly, so it's important to leave a big enough area around the subject.



02 Alter Structure and Color

Once selected, grab the Content-Aware Fill Move tool. Across the bar at the top, you'll see options to adjust Structure and Color. This will handle detail and colour inconsistencies; slide to 7 and 8 to cut down the amount of cloning you have to make.



03 Move your subject

Once you're happy with how you've primed your tool and selected your subject, drag it to wherever you like in the image. Photoshop helpfully provides a pink line once you've dragged to the centre of the image; simply double-click to drop the image.

04 Clone to finish

It's rare that you won't be able to notice a moved subject; you can often tell at its edges, so it's important to tidy everything up. Select the Clone Stamp with an Opacity of 50%, a soft tip and just gently touch up to remove any inconsistency.

Transform on Drop

Use CC 2015's new checkbox for even more possibility



01 Make a selection

As before, select whatever you want to move in the picture. We've chosen to use the Rectangular Marquee this time, but the Polygonal Lasso works just as well. Check the Transform on Drop box.

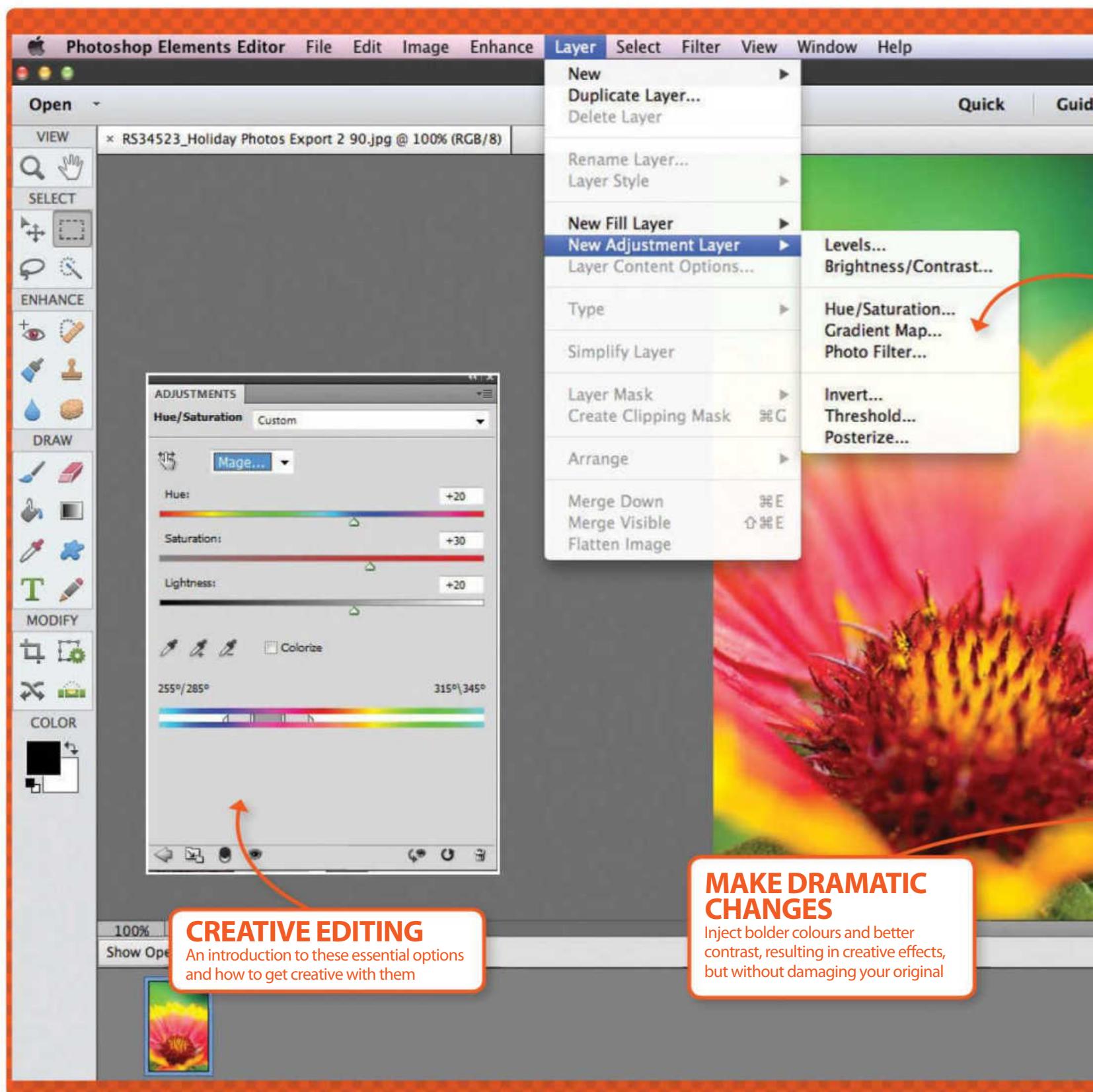
02 Move and transform

Move the object that you've selected, just as before, and use the corner handles of your selection to resize it. You can skew your selection too, by holding Cmd/Ctrl and dragging.

03 Clone

Clone around where you've dropped the object with a 50% opaque, soft brush to hide noticeable edges. Here, clone over the now bigger waves to hide the fact that they've been transformed.

Adjustments

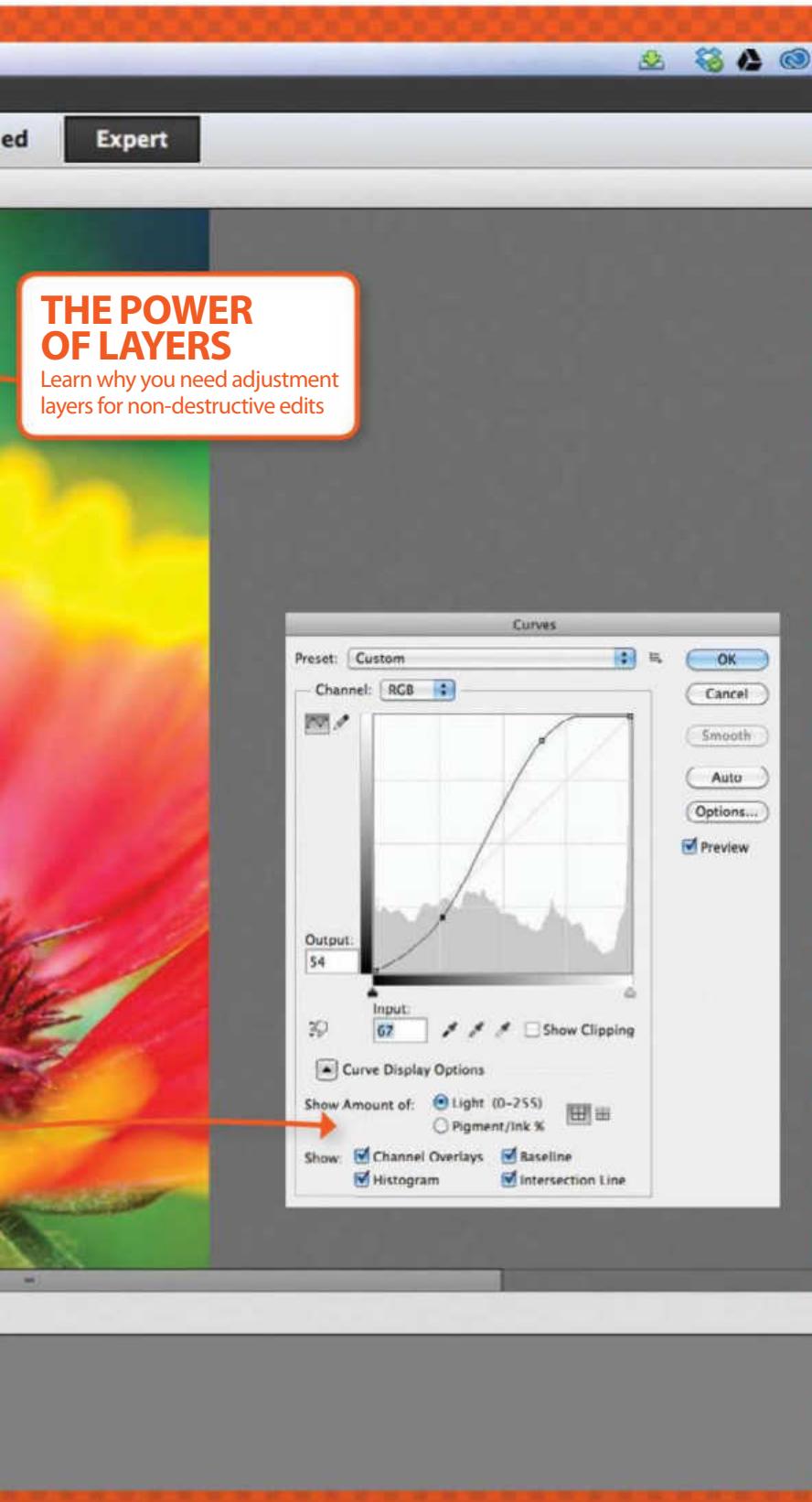


CREATIVE EDITING

An introduction to these essential options and how to get creative with them

MAKE DRAMATIC CHANGES

Inject bolder colours and better contrast, resulting in creative effects, but without damaging your original



100 Discover what adjustment layers can do

Find out about these powerful image-editing tools

102 Improve exposure and contrast

No Curves? No problem. Elements has plenty of built-in solutions for image editing

104 Meet the Curves adjustment tool

Transform contrast, colour and tonal range with this useful tool

106 Use Black & White

Give a photo a new lease of life by applying a monochrome effect

108 Use the Channel Mixer

Improve a night-time photo with filters and colour channels

110 Edit photos with Hue/Saturation

Use this command as an adjustment layer to enhance colour

"Adjustment layers are some of the most powerful tools in Photoshop"

Adjustments

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Discover what adjustment layers can do

When it comes to keeping images safe, adjustment layers are king

Adjustment layers are some of the most powerful tools in the entire range of Photoshop's editing options. They consist of different edits that you can make to your images – but rather than applying them directly to the photo, they are applied on a separate layer. What's more, you can also click on these layers again at any point to make edits to them.

Here, we will be showing you how you can turn a drab landscape into a vivid scene by using just three adjustment layers in combination. It doesn't take long, but the effect is superb. We will also be delving into making a simple selection, so we can work on the foreground and background layers separately. By following this tutorial, you'll become acquainted with the Magic Wand tool, and Photo Filter and Brightness settings. You'll also discover how to make inverse selections.

When you make a selection and then apply an adjustment layer, the edit is applied only to the selected area. A mask is automatically added to the adjustment layer with your selection on it, which is useful if you need to go back and select the same area more than once.

"When you apply an adjustment layer, the edit is applied only to the selected area"

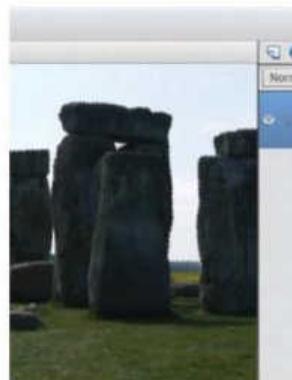
Make editing re-editable

Six steps to stunning landscapes and vivid colours



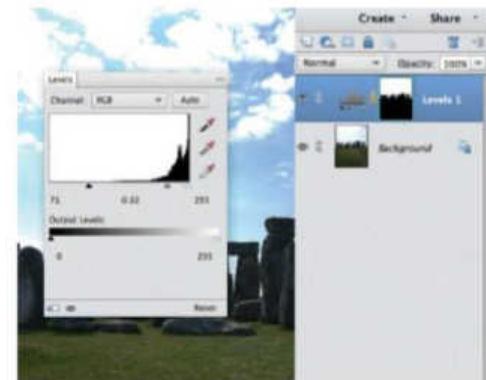
01 Magic Wand

Choose the Magic Wand tool from the main toolbar on the left – it might be hiding behind the Quick Selection or Selection Brush tool. Simply click anywhere in the sky to select it.



02 Add to the sky

Zoom in to the middle of the image. Now hold down the Shift key and to enable areas to be added to the sky selection. Click between the stones where the sky shows through.



03 Add the first adjustment

Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Make the sky vivid by dragging the left-hand and middle triangles to the right. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and click the thumbnail for the mask to reselect the sky.

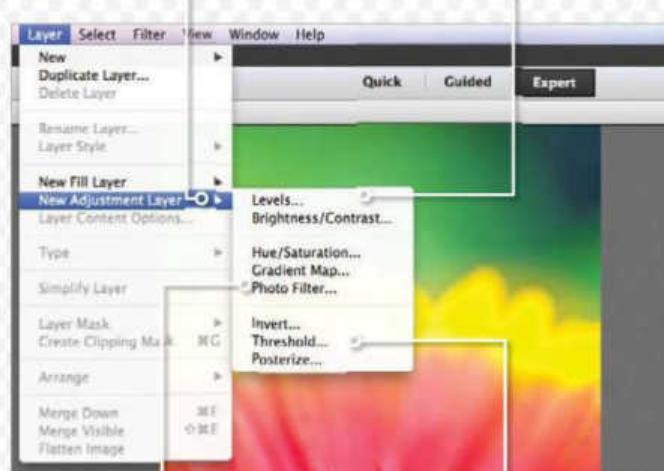
THE ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

The menu

The adjustment layers can be found under Layer>New Adjustment Layer, or from the Layers palette by clicking the icon.

Tonal edits

The first two adjustment layers in the list alter the tones or exposure of your image by darkening or lightening the pixels.

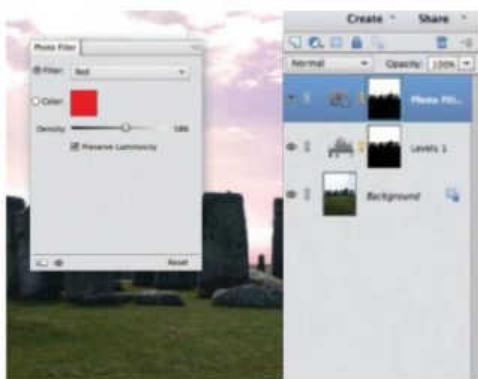


Colour tweaks

The second set of adjustments affect colours. Using these, you can add a completely new range of tones to your photo.

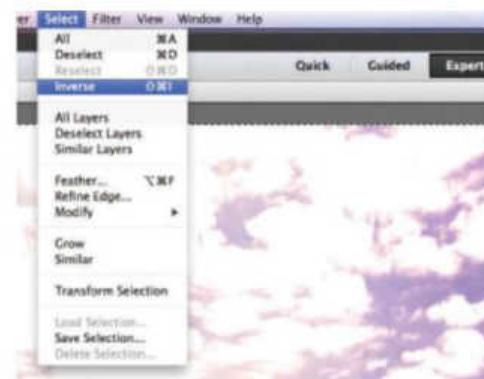
Get creative

The last three adjustments offer creative effects. These are used in photomanipulation projects, rather than photo editing.



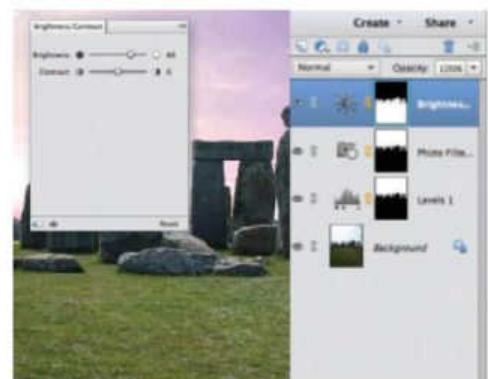
04 Photo Filter

Add a nice sunrise-red tinge to the sky using Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter. From the Filter drop-down menu pick the Red filter and then raise the Density until you like the effect.



05 Select the foreground

We need to select everything bar the sky. Select the sky again as in Step 3. Next, go to Select>Inverse, which flips the selection. This will mean that the foreground is selected.



06 Brighten the scene

Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast. Pull the Brightness slider up and the foreground will lighten and complement the sky. Pull the Contrast down a touch to finish.

Adjustments

SOURCE FILES AVAILABLE

Improve exposure and contrast

No Curves? No problem. Elements has plenty of built-in solutions for image editing

Both Photoshop and Photoshop Elements offer a range of tools for improving the exposure, contrast, colour and tone of your photographs. A good place to start fixing these things is usually the Levels command, which works in the same way in both programs, editing three points in your image.

However, in Photoshop there is also the Curves command. This is an incredibly precise tonal control, giving you 14 points to adjust, making it far more powerful than Levels. It does have a steeper learning curve (if you excuse the pun) though, and it can be intimidating for beginners to get to grips with how it works.

Photoshop Elements doesn't have Curves. There is a similar option under Enhance>Adjust Colors>Adjust Color Curves, which enables you to improve the colours in your images by selecting from presets and adjusting sliders to change the curve. This only offers three points of adjustment, however, the same as Levels and targets colour tone. Also, Levels can be applied as an adjustment layer, whereas Color Curves can't, so it is a destructive process (always work on a duplicate!).

Over these pages, we will look at ways you can improve exposure and contrast, without the power of Photoshop's Curves.

ORIGINAL



More detail

One advantage of improving exposure and contrast in an image is that it helps draw out detail, such as this boat texture.



What does it mean?

BLOWN HIGHLIGHTS – This term is often used when talking about overexposed images. It is when the bright areas are so light that they merge together and lose detail. It depends how 'blown' the details are as to how much you can fix it – unfortunately you can't restore detail that doesn't exist.

Use Elements' quick fixes

If your image needs a boost, let Elements do the hard work



01 Control Exposure

In Quick mode, the first thing that you can try is the aptly named Exposure fix from the left-hand menu. It is easy to use, as you simply go through the thumbnails and pick the one that is best for your image. You can fine-tune using the slider.



02 Work with Lighting

The Lighting option is a great way to play with the tones of your image without having to use the Levels dialog box. You can again pick from the thumbnails, but you can target the Shadows, Midtones or Highlights separately.

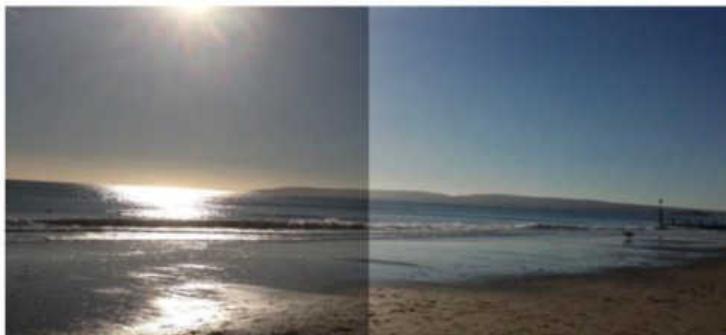


03 Use Auto controls

In the Lighting tool box are buttons for Auto Levels and Auto Contrast. Access these from the Enhance menu, along with Auto Color. Automated controls analyse images and edit to improve exposure/contrast without you having to do more than click.

Other methods

More ways you can edit the exposure and contrast in Elements



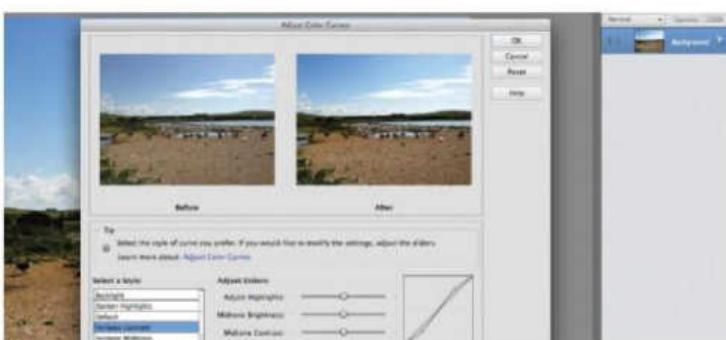
Fix underexposure

An underexposed image has tones that are too dark. A quick fix for this is to open the image in Photoshop Elements in Expert mode. Duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J), then set the duplicate's blending mode to Screen. Adjust the Opacity to suit.



Fix overexposure

Overexposed images are usually too light. You can fix this in the same way that we fixed the underexposed image, except that you set the blending mode to Multiply. It's difficult to hide blown highlights, but for mild overexposure, it works well.



Adjust Color Curves

We mentioned the Adjust Color Curves option in our introduction, and while it's not as good as Levels for exposure and contrast, it is great for improving colour tone across your image. Pick from the available presets and then fine-tune with the sliders to achieve the effect you want.



Smart Fix

We haven't mentioned it yet, but Elements' Smart Fix is designed to improve your exposure, tone and colours in one click, which is a great place to start! Simply select the option from the Quick edit mode menu and pick a thumbnail or hit Auto to process your snap.

Adjustments

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Meet the Curves adjustment tool

The Curves tool is a powerful feature that when properly applied can transform contrast, colour and tonal range

The Curves tool in Photoshop is deceptive. To the Photoshop beginner its graph-like appearance can be intimidating, bringing back memories of early maths lessons. However, it's a powerful tool that can be used to adjust tonal ranges, change colour levels, alter exposure, boost contrast and even create some less conventional photo effects.

Although the Curves tool is not as intuitive as some of the other features in Photoshop, the basic functions are simple, and dramatic results can be easily achieved. We have had a look at it in the Colour & tone section, but this tool really comes into its own when applied as an adjustment layer. In the Layers palette, hit Create New Fill Or Adjustment Layer and select Curves. Adjustment layers let you make changes without degrading the original. It also means you can continue to edit a Curves adjustments by double-clicking the adjustment layer. If the changes aren't wanted, you can revert to the original by deleting the layer.

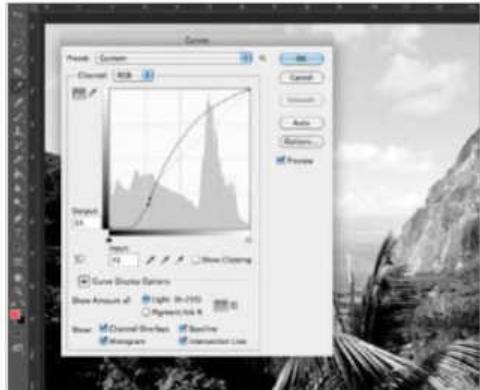
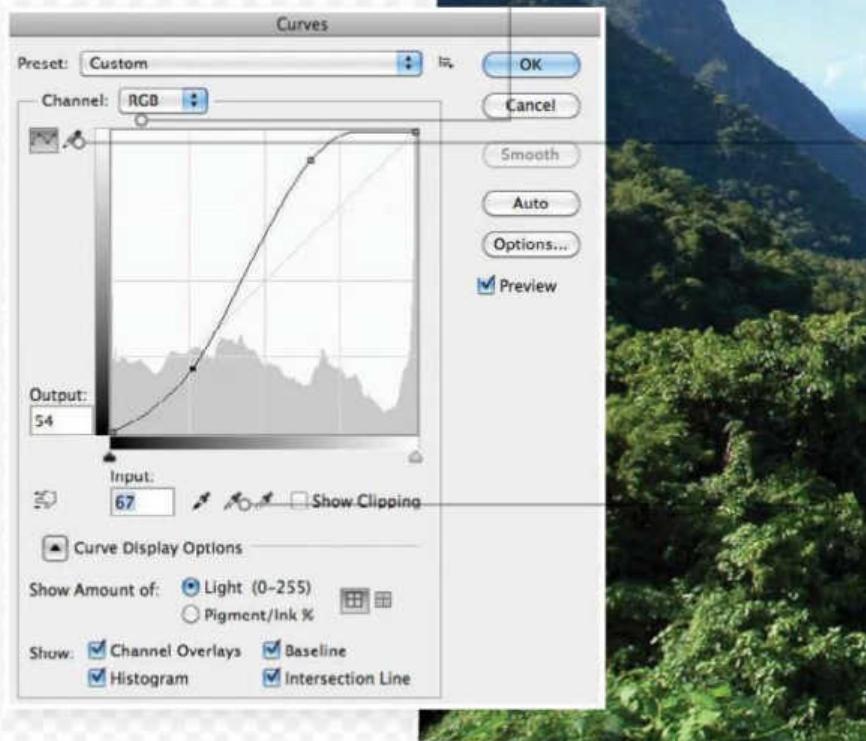
In this tutorial we will demystify the Curves graph, and in doing so show how you can make practical improvements to your images. We'll look at understanding the graph and at exactly what happens as the line changes shape. We'll reveal tips and tricks to make editing your image quick and easy. We will also look at editing the colour channels to recover and boost lost colour. The Curves tool has many more facets than might at first be obvious, and we'll introduce you to as many as we can on these pages.

"The Curves tool has many more facets than might at first be obvious"

QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

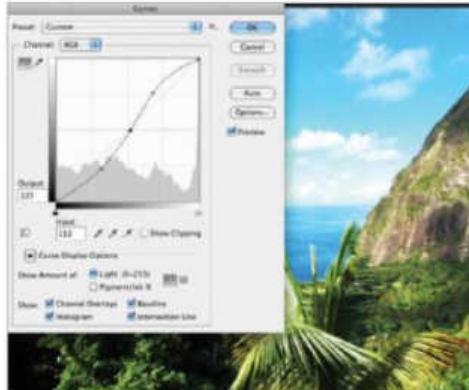
Curves window

This is where the action happens. This window graphically represents the pixel information in your image. The curve runs from the bottom left, which is where the dark pixels occur in the image, through the midtones up to the top right, which represents the highlights, the light pixels. Moving the curve upwards makes the image lighter, moving it downwards makes it darker.



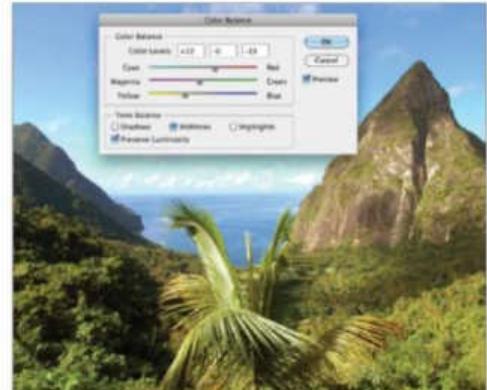
01 Try in mono

Try using Curves on black-and-white images, as the final image corresponds to the info that Curves use: shadows (black), midtones (grey) and highlights (white).



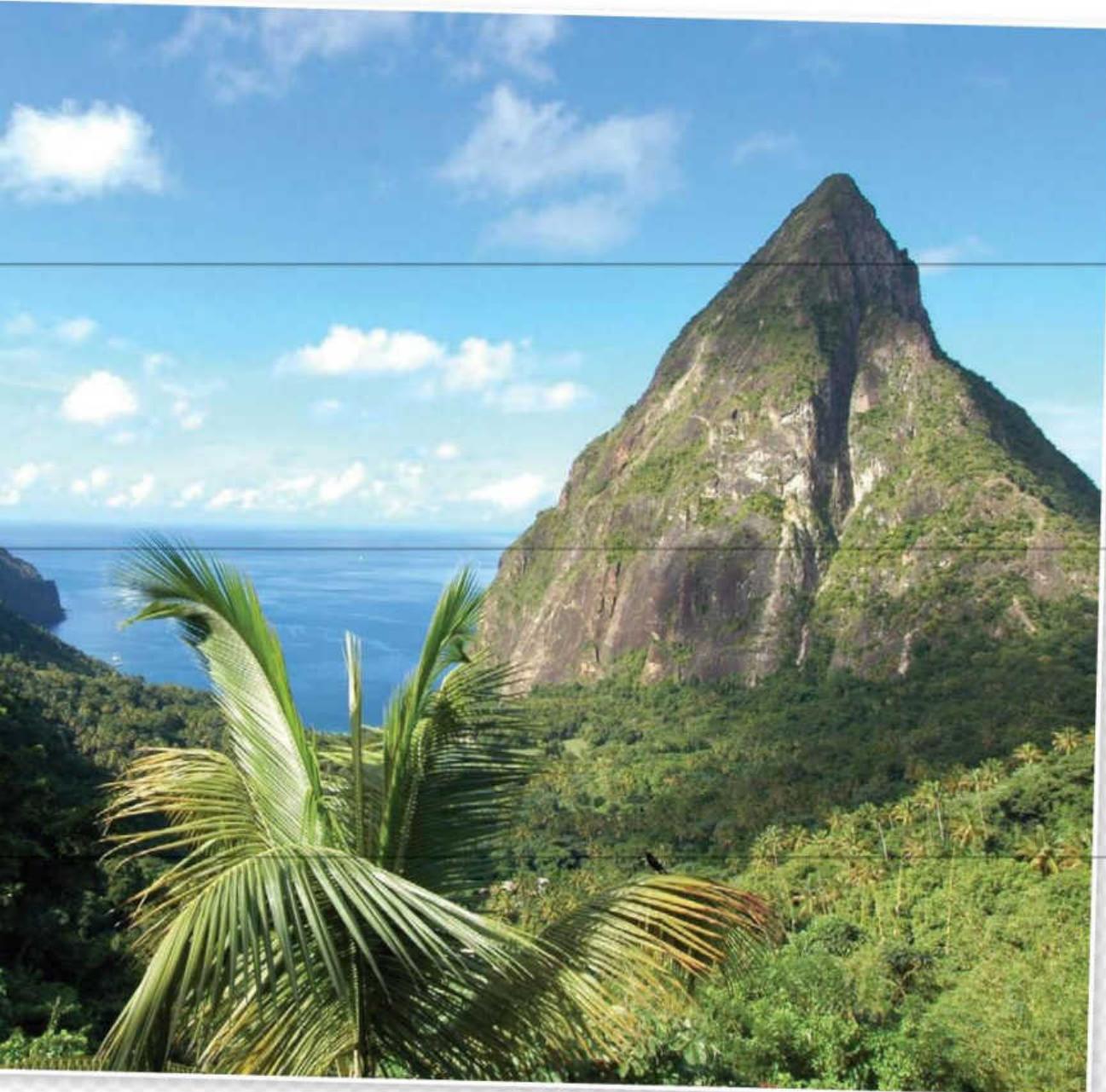
02 Colour channels

Curves allows you to edit separate channels. When a channel is selected, the curve affects the density of the colour, eg red and its opposite, cyan.



03 Using channels

Moving the curve upwards increases the red in the image; moving it down increases the cyan. The Color Balance tool uses the same principle too.



Channel

This drop-down menu allows you to select which channels to edit. You can edit the master (labelled RGB or CMYK etc) or individual colour channels.

When editing individual colours, the curve affects the selected colour and its opposite colour.

Bezier/Pencil tool

There are two ways of changing the path of the curve. The common way is to use anchor points to create a smooth Bezier curve; this makes it easy to get consistent realistic results. The Pencil tool allows you to be more creative and get some interesting effects, but the results are hard to reproduce accurately.

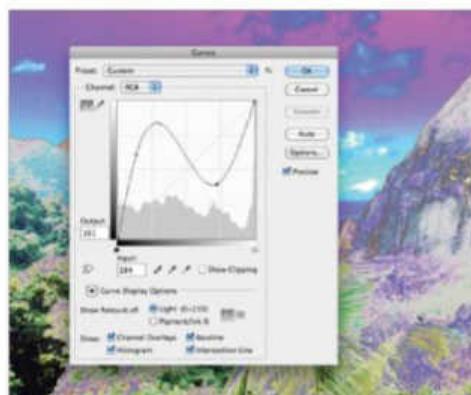
Eyedropper tool

Use the left-hand Eyedropper tool to set the dark pixel limit, and the far right Eyedropper tool to set the highlight limit. The middle Eyedropper tool can be used to alter the colour balance. Experiment with these to find your optimal settings. The beginner however, may wish to leave these and adjust the curve manually.



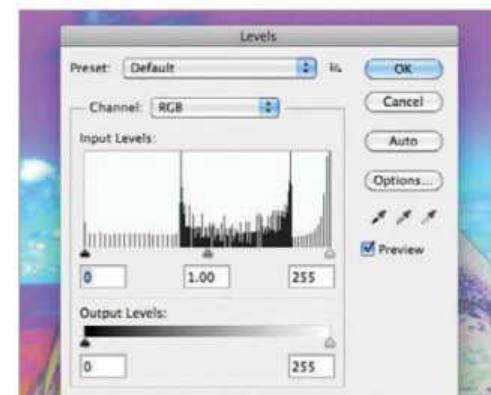
04 Crazy results

To avoid the crazy effects make sure there are no flat spots. These occur when the curve follows a horizontal line across the graph.



05 Rule number two

The second way to keep images natural, is to make sure that the curve doesn't go beyond the horizontal to create a downward curve.



06 Quick reset

Hold Opt/Alt and the Cancel button will change to Reset. Hit this and the curve reverts to its original settings. This works in most PS dialog boxes.

Adjustments

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Use Black & White

Get creative with your colour photos by adding a little monochrome magic – we show you how!

Black-and-white photography has always been popular. Perhaps this is due to the fact that it works with almost any kind of image. Portraits, landscapes and abstracts in particular, take on a whole new feeling when they are turned into a monochrome representation.

Of course, there are always exceptions. Images need to have a good contrast between the light and dark tones, as you would otherwise have a great expanse of grey that's just not overly appealing.

Using the Black & White adjustment as an adjustment layer gives you endless control over the conversion of your photos. As well as a whole host of Presets that give you instant results, you can target each channel that makes up the image independently. It takes a bit of getting used to when you're playing with the Reds in a black-and-white image, but each colour looks different in mono, so it is worth playing with your images to see how they can be adapted.

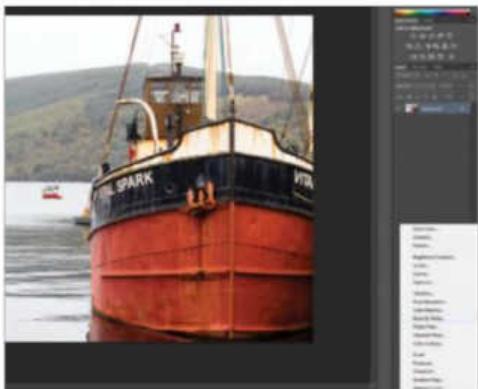
As well as using the sliders, there is a little hand icon with a double-ended arrow underneath. Click on this icon, then click and hold on an area in your image that you want to adjust. Photoshop will determine which channel is most prominent in that specific area and as you slide your mouse back and forth, the relevant slider will go up and down too. A really convenient and easy way to ensure that the tonal range of your black-and-white images is as close to perfect as possible.

“Images need to have a good contrast between the light and dark tones”

QUICK MONOTONE TIPS

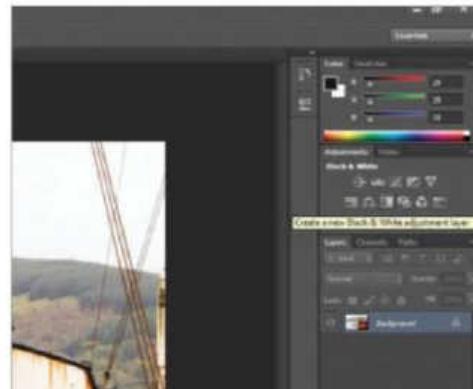
Using Presets

There is a list of Presets for every adjustment layer available. You can simply click on any of these to instantly apply them to your photos. You can also see the Presets as a drop-down menu at the top of each adjustment's individual dialog boxes.



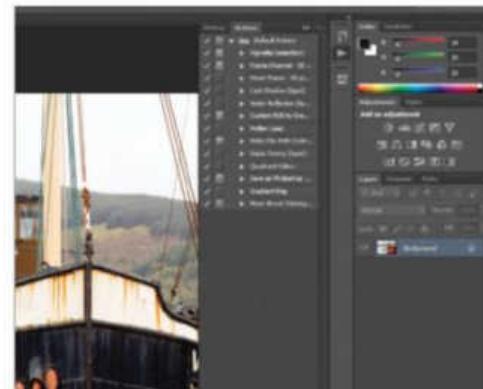
01 Option one

You can click on the black and white circle icon in the Layers palette to quickly apply the Black & White adjustment layer.



02 Option two

If you have CS4, CS5, CS6, or CC then you can use the Adjustments palette instead. The Black & White adjustment is the half-black, half-white square.



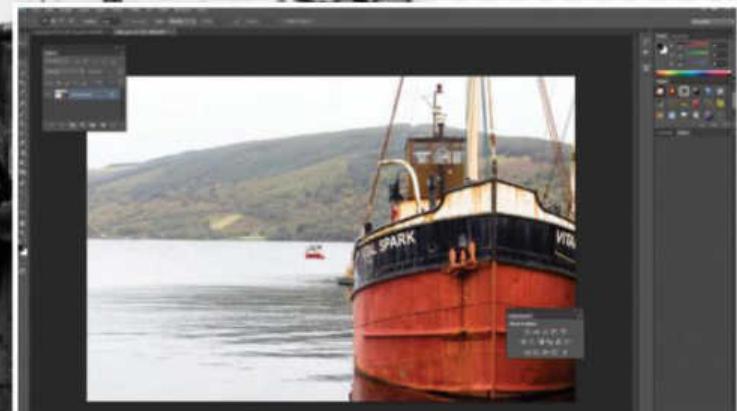
03 Presets

The Presets are a good place to start, so go through all of them and then find the one that best suits your image.



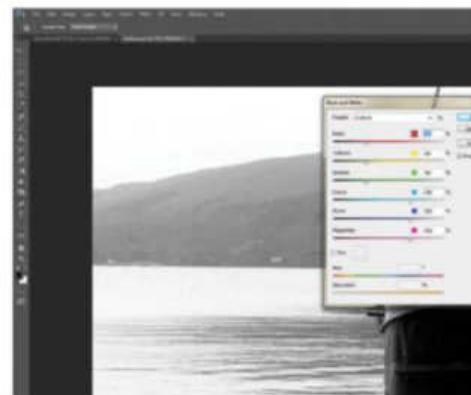
Perfect mono

There are so many methods that you can use to turn an image from colour to mono. But for the best results, this adjustment layer gives really good control.



The right kind of image

Not all images will look good in black and white and that is why it is so good when using adjustment layers. You can see in a second whether or not the adjustment looks right, then you can tweak or delete as you need, without harming the original colour photograph.



04 Customise

Now you can start tweaking the sliders to get the right balance of 'colours' in your image. Trial and error works best here.

05 Precise control

There is a little hand icon here, which you can use to click on a part of the image you want to edit and then slide along your image to adjust.

06 Check the edit

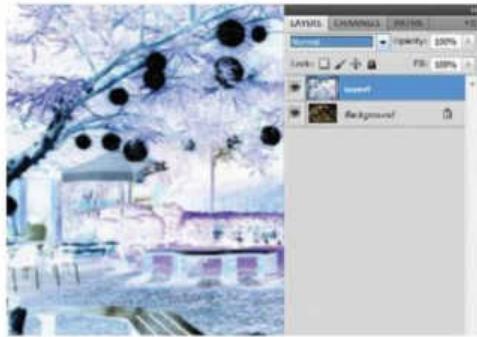
Using the little icon shown in the screenshot, you can click to see the image before its conversion to compare the result with the original.

Use the Channel Mixer

Bring colour to your night photos for instantly dramatic effects

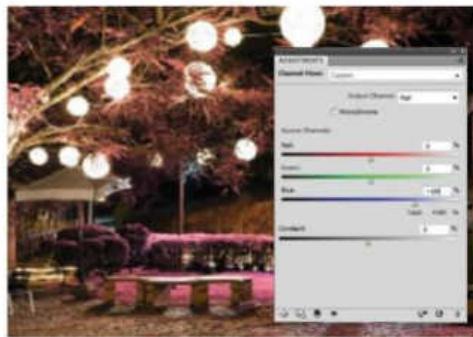
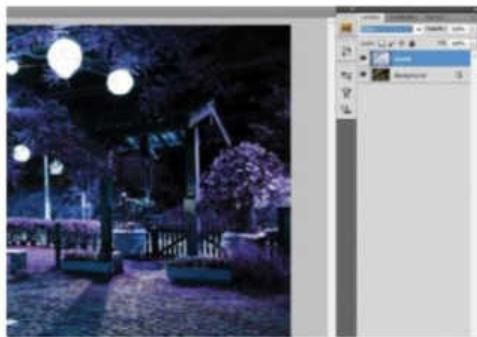
A shot taken at night is often problematic when printed. However, as long as there's some sort of light source in the original scene, you can dramatically improve the photo by using a few creative editing techniques. By re-creating the look of infrared photography, we'll use filters and colour channels to turn an everyday image into something eye-catching.

We'll be using adjustment layers for non-destructive edits, specifically the Channel Mixer, to adjust how much impact each individual tone has on the image. We'll also be including a few different layer blend modes to experiment with interesting effects. However, the results you'll get with this effect depend a lot on which type of photo you're using.



01 Duplicate and invert colours

We provide the above image for you to download and practise on, or you can select a personal image to experiment with. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate the main image.



02 Apply blend modes

Invert the colours of the duplicate layer by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+I and set the blend mode to Color. You can preview the complete effect of this inversion by activating and deactivating the eye icon.

03 Move to the Channel Mixer

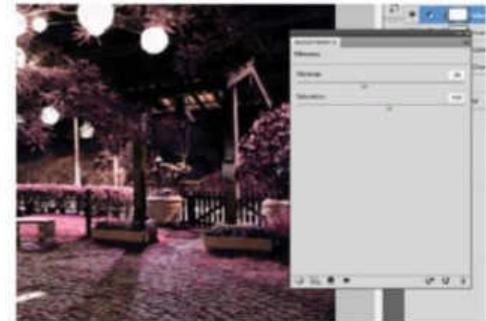
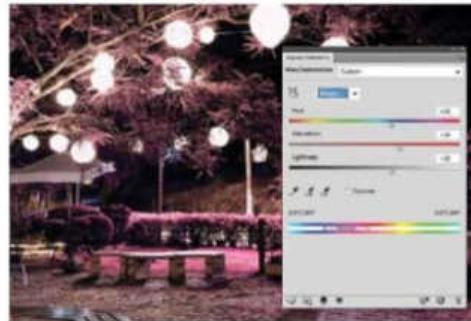
Create a New Adjustment Layer and choose the Channel Mixer. In the dialog box, configure the Red Output Channel to: Blue: +100; the Blue Channel to Red: +100 and the Green Channel to Green: +90.

04 Balance the colours

Apply Color Balance (Cmd/Ctrl+B) and for Shadows use Red: -10, Blue: +10 and Green: 0. For Highlights set Red: -10, Green: +10 and Blue: +10. For Midtones set Red: +10, Green: -10 and Blue: +10.



"As long as there's a light source in the original scene, you can dramatically improve the photo by using creative editing techniques"



05 Apply Hue/Saturation

Insert a Hue/Saturation layer (Cmd/Ctrl+U). Under the Red channel set Hue: +0, Saturation: +14 and Lightness: +40. Under Magenta, set Hue: +20, Saturation: +30 and Lightness: +20.



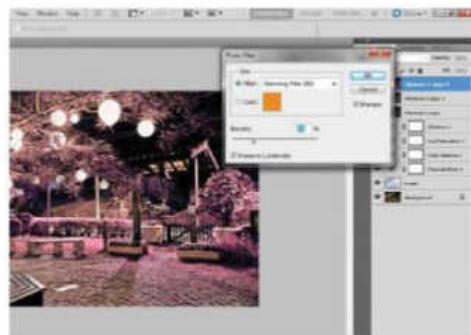
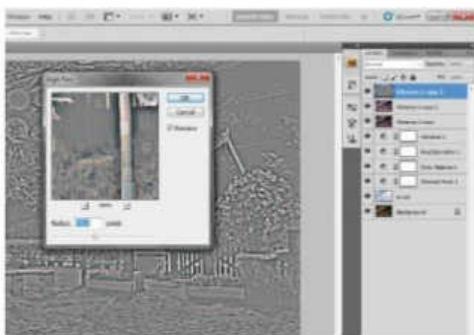
06 Boost the vibrancy

Now in order to boost the vibrancy, you need to add a Vibrance layer to the image, adjusting the Vibrance slider to -20 and the Saturation slider below it to +10.



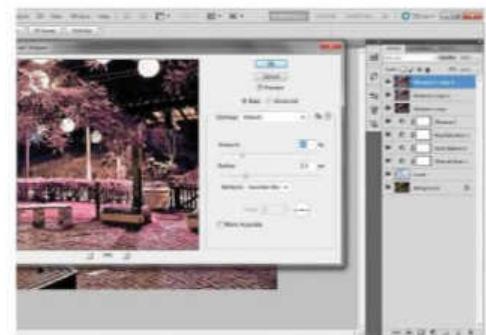
07 Duplicate and merge layers

Select all your adjustment layers, as well as the inverted colour layers, and duplicate them. Now select all these duplicated layers and merge them (Cmd/Ctrl+E).



08 Tweak shadows and highlights

For Shadows set Amount: 30%, Tonal Width: 60%, Radius: 80px. For Highlights set Amount: 20%, Tonal Width: 30%, Radius: 30px. For Adjustments, adjust Color Correction: +20 and Midtone Contrast: -10.



09 Add some drama

Duplicate the merged layer, but lock the original layer. Apply a High Pass filter with a 10-pixel Radius, then change the layer to Overlay blend mode with 100% Opacity. Now merge these two layers.

10 Use the Photo Filter

Go to Adjustment>Photo Filter, then in the dialog select Warming Filter (85) and keep the Density by default at 25%. Select Preserve Luminosity and click OK.

11 Vector shapes

Now select the Custom Shape tool. With white and #57b711, create various shapes using the presets Circle Frame, Circle Thin Frame and Boom 1 & 2. Feel free to add other shapes as you see fit.

Adjustments

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Edit photos with Hue/Saturation

Do more with this dialog box by using it as an adjustment layer when editing image colours

Photoshop offers many different ways to control colour and tone in your images, but one of the absolute best is the Hue/Saturation command. Found under the Image>Adjustments menu or applied as an adjustment layer, the Hue/Saturation command allows you to alter the hue, saturation and brightness.

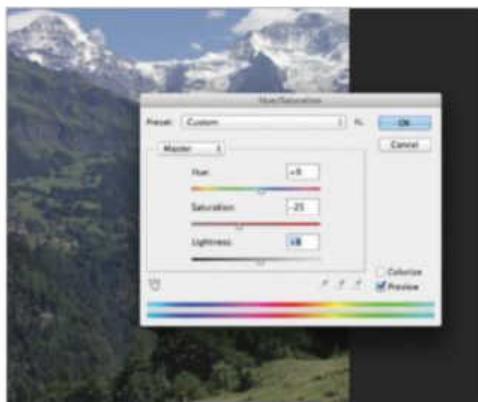
You can apply the changes over an entire image or target specific colours. It is this level of control that makes the command so powerful – if you have an image that's basically okay but one shade is letting it down, you can target the colour and improve it.

You control the edits by either moving sliders or entering numbers. There are three bars that control the hue, saturation or lightness, and these are in place whether you alter an entire image or just specific colours. You can also use the command to create monochrome and duotone effects, opening up

the creative possibilities even more. We're going to look at all the controls in these pages and show you how they can be used to create perfectly coloured images.

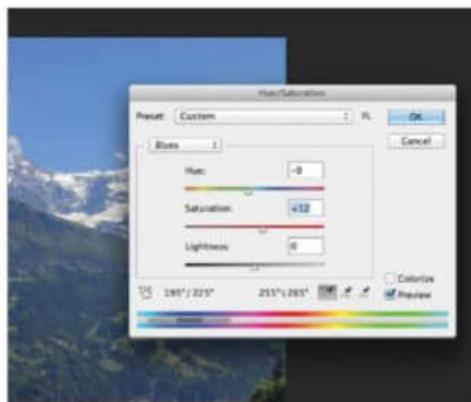
As we're looking at adjustment layers, make sure that you use this method to apply your Hue/Saturation command, as you can make as many changes as you like without harming the original photo at all. You can try this out with any image to get used to the controls.

"You can apply the changes over an entire image or target specific colours"



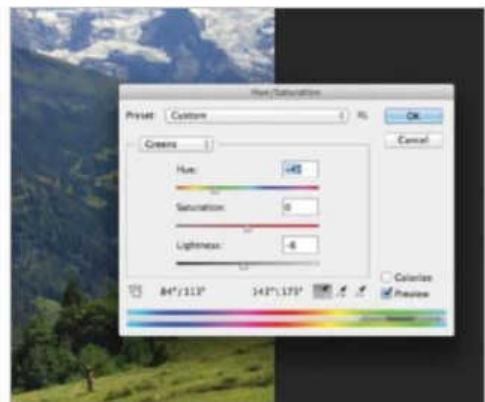
01 Assess the problem

Have a look at the image and work out what needs doing. It might be that using the sliders on the Master setting will work.



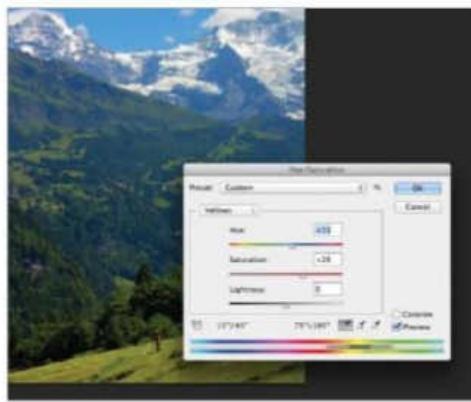
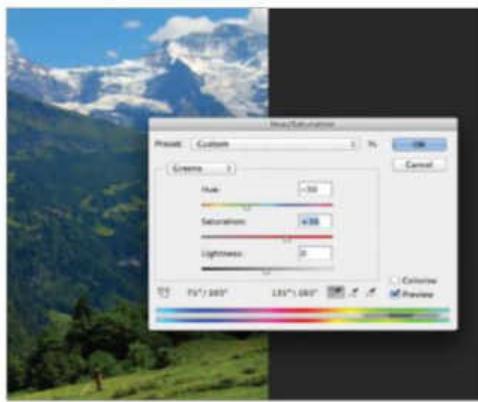
02 Blue sky

By selecting Blues and moving the Hue slider, you can improve the colour of the sky. Moving the Saturation slider right also brightens things up.



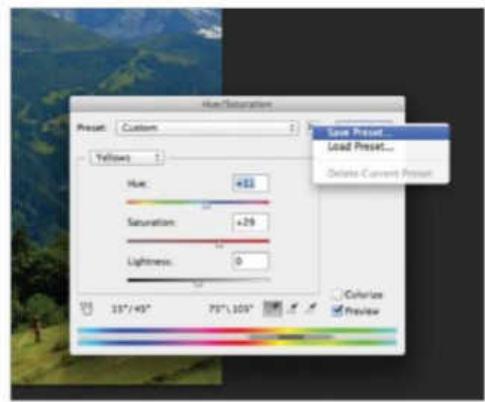
03 Not so mellow yellow

We want striking yellow flowers. This calls for Yellows to be set as the colour range. Moving the Hue slider left brightens things considerably.



04 Boost some more

It's time to boost the effect even more. This involves moving the Saturation slider to the right. We also moved the Lightness slider to the right.



05 The final touch

The other colour that needs attention is green. It just needs the Hue and Saturation sliders to be moved to the right for the effect to improve.

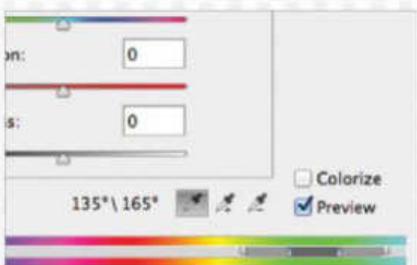
06 Save for a rainy day

If you have a collection of similar-coloured images, it's worth saving your settings. Click Save, name your settings and then save. Use Load to retrieve.

QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

Preserve the original

It's a good idea to use a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer because then you know the original is safe and you can go back and edit it at any time.

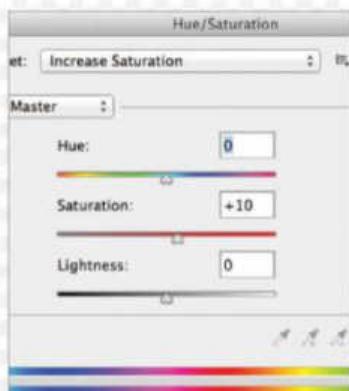


ORIGINAL



Control the parameters

When you target a specific colour, you are given the option to set how far you can tweak it. By moving these parameters, you can incorporate more hues than set by default.



Slide edits

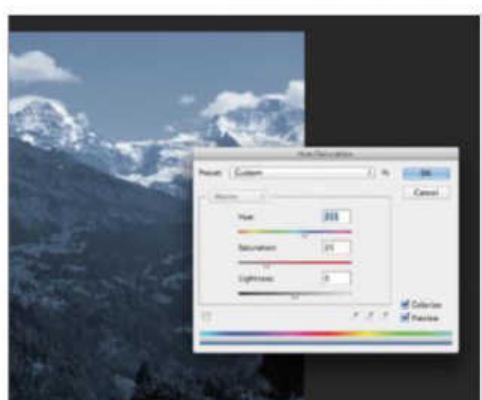
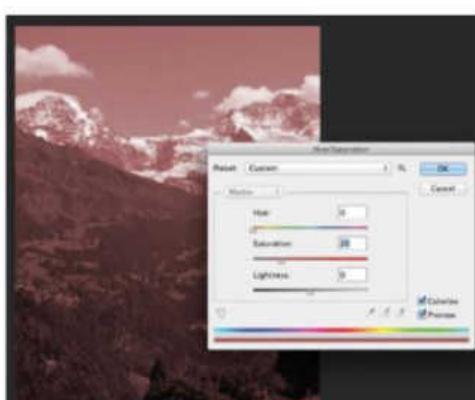
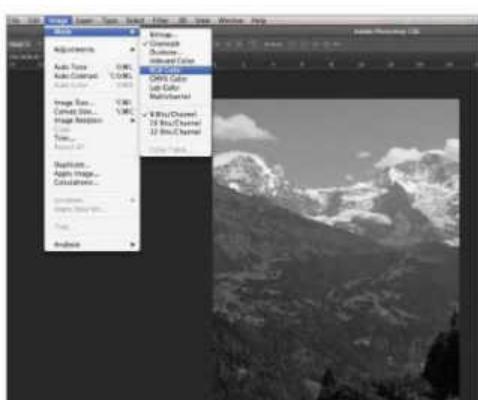
Control how the Hue/Saturation dialog works by using these three fields.

You can enter values to make edits, but the best way is to move the sliders.



Preset tones

In addition to editing the entire image, you can select preset tones from this menu and concentrate just on one colour. This makes image editing far easier.



01 Colour grayscale

If you have a grayscale image, begin by going to Image>Mode and pick RGB. Open up the Hue/Saturation dialog box and tick the Colorize box.

02 Colour images

If your foreground and background colours are black and white, the image will tint red. If not, it'll have the hue of your foreground colour.

03 Colorize

With a colour image open, hit Colorize. Your image will take on a duotone look, which can be altered by moving the Hue slider.

Selections

- 114** Select with the Lasso tool
Learn the simplest of selection tools to draw around objects
- 116** Understand Quick Mask
Make selections with this versatile and time-saving tool
- 118** Wield the Magic Wand tool
Know when to use the simplest of tools, and select with ease
- 120** Master the Refine Edge tool
Leave your outlines smooth and realistic with this powerful feature
- 122** Get more from Smart Brushes
Tap into the power of Smart Brushes for a quick selection method

“Refine Edge is a spectacular feature which helps perfect selections around complex objects”



REFINE EDGE

Get smoother selections with a time-saving trick you won't ever be able to live without





Select with the Lasso tool

Use the simplest of selection tools to draw around objects

Selections are one of the most worthwhile things to master in Elements. If you can select an object neatly, you can convince someone looking at your composition that anything belongs anywhere: get it wrong however, and you'll create subjects with blurry and unconvincing edges. There's a fine line between the two, but there are Selection tools in Elements that can help you get it right. Perfect selections are absolutely key to creating realistic imagery and compositions, and selection skills are often the tell as to whether the creator is experienced or a complete beginner.

The Lasso tool is a perfect starting point if you're just learning how to select an object. It's rather like the Pencil tool, and it can be used to drag an outline

roughly around an object of your choice. It's particularly good if you're just looking to tidy up a messy selection by removing a chunk, and some people also use it for making really rough sketches in Elements before building upon them later.

It can be used in more sophisticated projects too though, and if you have a graphics tablet, the Lasso tool can prove to be even more useful and precise than you might have first thought. Accuracy is key after all.

Now let's check out how to make a basic selection with the tool: remember, the selection is just the beginning, and you can use the Lasso and Refine Edge to improve it even further.

Master freehand selections

Use the freedom of drawing to select your objects



01 Start drawing

To begin, all you need to do is start at the edge of your selection, then click and hold down the cursor until you've drawn around the entire edge of what you're selecting. Zoom in to get a closer look and hit the Spacebar, click and drag to move the canvas.



02 Subtract from selection

Once you've created some kind of selection, you might want to get a little closer and zoom in, just to tidy up any of the edges you may have missed. Hit the Subtract button in the bottom panel and draw around edges to take them out of the selection.



03 Add to selection

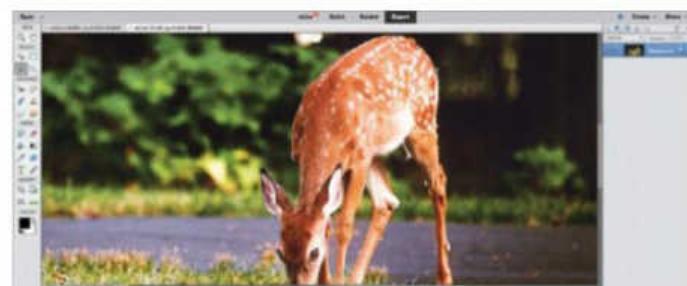
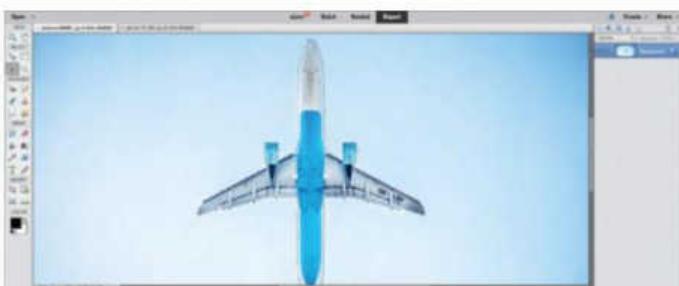
You can do the same thing to objects you want to add to your composition: simply use the Add icon in the same panel as the Subtract. Switch between the two at once too: Option/Alt+Click to subtract objects from the selection and Shift+Click to add them.

04 Refine Edge

Once you've finished with your selection, click on the Refine Edge box. Here, you can touch up the rougher edges of your selection by using the Edge Detection, along with the Adjust Edge sliders to get a softer, more natural edge to your composition.

The other Lassos

Learn how to select objects with even more precision



Polygonal Lasso

The Lasso can give you the freedom to draw, particularly if you use a graphics tablet, but it isn't good at creating straight lines. Luckily, the Polygonal Lasso is useful for this: click to lay a point and you can make blocky shapes around your objects. The closer you zoom in, the better you can negotiate curves.

Magnetic Lasso

The Magnetic Lasso takes the best things about the other two Lasso tools, as well as adding intuition to your selections. The Magnetic Lasso automatically snaps to your edges to create a smooth, curved edge, and you can undo the last point you created, or accidentally created, by hitting the Backspace key.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Understand Quick Mask

Discover this versatile tool which, as the name suggests, is great for making selections easily and quickly

The Quick Mask mode is one of the most versatile tools you are likely to find within Photoshop's expansive toolbox. Its primary use is for isolating areas that you want left untouched by any adjustments or tweaks, and it is easy to get to grips with.

Quick Mask mode has been around since Photoshop 6.0 and offers a fantastic alternative to the traditional Selection tools. If you find yourself more partial to using the Paintbrush rather than the fiddly Pen tool, then this could well become your ideal selection method.

The Quick Mask mode is activated by clicking on the square icon that contains a white circle. This is situated at the bottom of the Toolbar alongside the Standard mode (a white box with a white circle). For instant access, you can simply hit the letter 'Q' on your keyboard and Quick Mask mode activates or deactivates.

This is a fantastic feature to help in the creation of a whole host of effects. Use it to create quick and easy vignettes for your portraits, paint a Quick Mask on specific colours to achieve amazing selective colouring results, or simply use it to protect an area from an image adjustment you're about to perform.

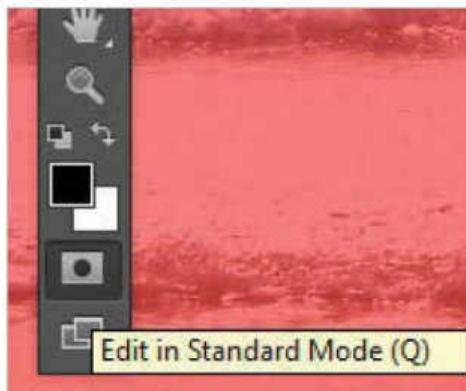
If you've never used this feature before, we're certain it will be in constant use from this day forward!

"Use it to create quick and easy vignettes for your portraits or achieve amazing selective colouring results"



01 Quick Mask

The Quick Mask mode is a fantastic way to select objects or people within a scene. It's not as fiddly as the Pen tool and is easily erased.



02 Activate

Open up an image in Photoshop and hit 'Q' to select the Quick Mask mode. You can also activate it by choosing the grey box with a circle.



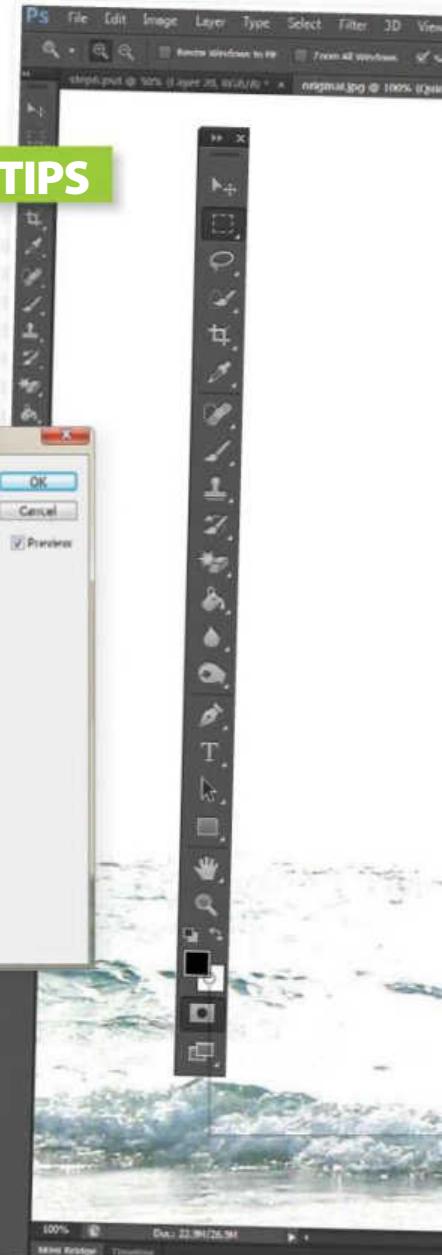
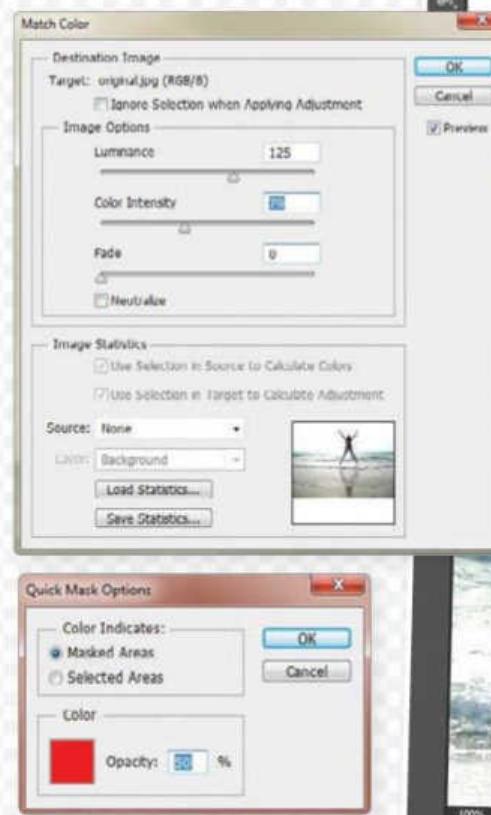
03 Brush it on

Select the Brush tool and choose a suitable size. Paint over everything you don't need, using the Eraser if you make any mistakes.

QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

Dialog

Hit Match Color and this box appears. Use the drop-down Source menu to select your source image. Ensure Preview is checked to see the change, and use the Luminance, Color Intensity and Fade sliders to adjust.





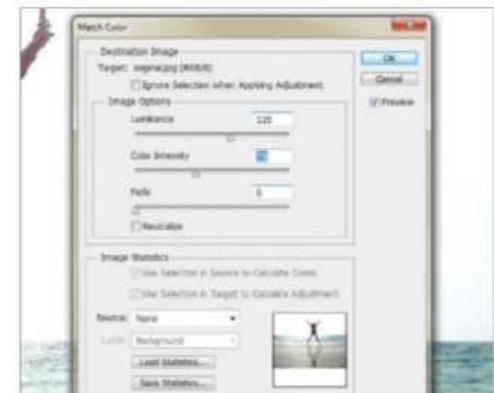
04 Enjoy

Deactivate the Quick Mask by hitting 'Q'. You'll have an isolated selection highlighted by marching ants. You are now free to do anything you like with this!



05 Colour change

The colour of the mask can often be hard to see. Double-click on the Quick Mask icon and a dialog box will appear. Choose a mask colour here.



06 Match Color

The Match Color tool is found in Image>Adjustments>Match Color. Ensure that both your images are open in Photoshop first.

Selections



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Go for blocks

Use the Magic Wand to pick out blocks of colour and your selections will be quick and effortless.



Wield the Magic Wand tool

Know when to use the simplest of tools, and select with ease

On the surface, the Magic Wand is one of the most intuitive tools that Photoshop or Elements can offer; the clue is in the name. We expect it to just know exactly what we want selected.

The reality is that many find the Magic Wand doesn't offer much flexibility. Most people prefer the Quick Selection or a Lasso, and the Wand gets ignored. Is it too simple for complex selecting jobs?

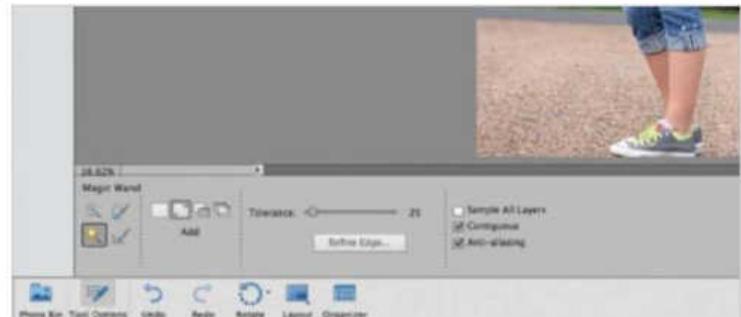
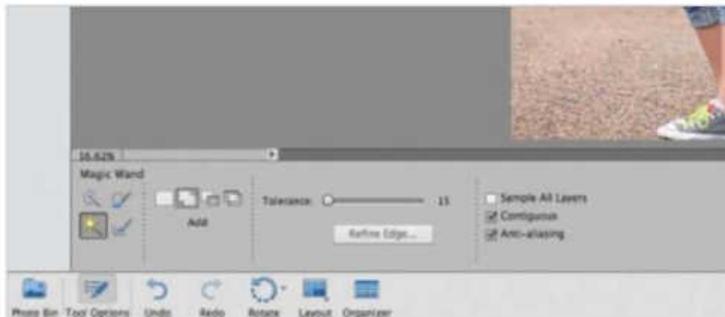
The trick is to match the tool to the right situation. What the Magic Wand does perfectly is select a block of colour. It's even quicker than a

Quick Selection if you want to locate a certain shade in a picture, and by understanding how to set the Tolerance, you can learn to select even more or less than ever before. You'll be surprised at how accurate such a speedy tool can be.

The Magic Wand is often just the beginning of an editing process. It's the starting point for a big subject selection, or it's a marker to search for similar colours in a picture. Let's look at the basics of the tool, and find out exactly what the Magic Wand can conjure up.

Select by magic

Make or prime the perfect selection with the Magic Wand



01 Select the tool

Select the Magic Wand tool from the icon on the left-hand side of Elements, or Photoshop if you're using it. Make sure you tick Contiguous and Anti-alias before you start selecting. Decide on what you want to select; the Magic Wand works best on block colours.



03 Point and click

Simply click on the object you wish to select in the picture: it really is that easy! The Magic Wand works best when there's a specific colour that you wish to select, as opposed to the Quick Selection tool that selects whole objects, but neither tool is perfect.

02 Set the Tolerance

Tolerance refers to how your selection reacts to the colours around it. If the Tolerance is low, the Magic Wand will select specific shades of colour; if the Tolerance is high, it will select similar colours around the selection. Set a low Tolerance for accuracy.

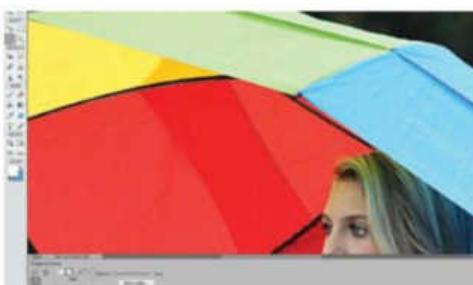


04 Add and subtract

Use the Add and Subtract icons found at the bottom of the screen to perfect the selection you have made. They are useful for selecting similar shades so that you can get the shape of an object rather than just the main colour of it.

Work with the Wand

Which other selection tools can I use with the Magic Wand?



Lassos

Use the Magic Wand for the bulk of the selecting, but there are more accurate tools that can finish a job. Navigating the Lassos, for example, all the way around a shape can be arduous, but by using the Wand first, you need only touch the edges!

Selection Brush

The Selection Brush is just as good at covering the corners that the Magic Wand missed out. Simply select the width that you'd like, and use it as you would any other brush to either add or subtract to the selection.

Quick Selection

The Quick Selection tool might be imprecise when you're in a hurry, but that doesn't mean it isn't great to improve a selection you've made with the Magic Wand. Use it the same way; just drag to add or subtract more to the selection.

Selections

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Finish off with adjustments

Merge your layers and add adjustments such as Photo Filters and Gradient Maps in order to unify the colours.



Master the Refine Edge tool

Leave your outlines smooth and realistic with this powerful feature

When people think of Photoshop, they often think of bad compositing edits where the subjects don't look as if they're in the place they're shown to be. This is often because it's hard to get perfect hair and blurring between your subject and the background.

The Refine Edge tool is perfect for making a realistic selection; situated in the Selection tools of Elements towards the bottom of your screen. It's a vital tool in so many tutorials, as it makes it easy to soften and smooth an outline. But with different sliders, icons and viewing modes, it's sometimes hard working out where to begin with what's supposed to be a simple feature.

Refine Edge can actually be a simple step in your compositing process. It's one that doesn't have a specific set of rules – you may want to experiment with the sliders, depending on the picture – but by playing with the sliders and using the Brush and Eraser tools to bring control to your selections, you might find it to be an invaluable feature when it comes to cutting subjects out. Check out our quick guide on how to use the Refine Edge tool, and discover how you can use it in your projects. Remember, once you've placed a subject onto its new background, adjustments, filters and Hue/Saturation control (Cmd/Ctrl+U) can all work to help bring extra realism to your composition.



Eliminate hard outlines

Soften subjects and bring a realistic edge to selections



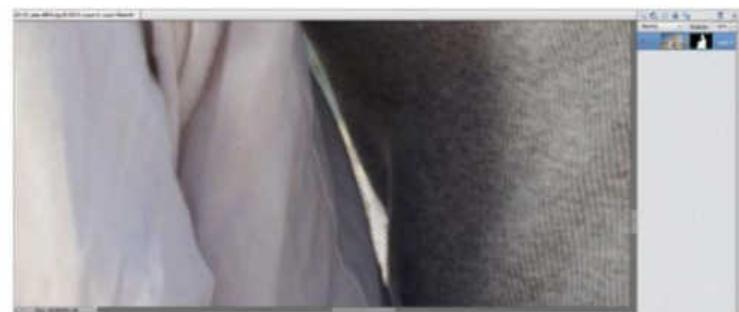
01 Make a selection

Start off by grabbing the Quick Selection tool, and drag the cursor over your subject to create a rough selection. Keep the size of the Quick Selection small so that you can reach the smaller areas, and don't worry about being 100 per cent accurate.



02 Adjust the sliders

Next, use the sliders to touch-up the edge of your selection. Up the Radius to increase the edge outline, and then experiment with the sliders until you get a realistic outline for your subject. Change the View mode to see how things are progressing.



03 Brush and erase

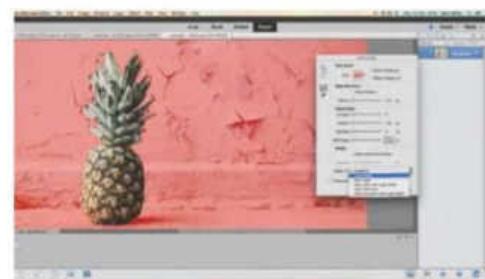
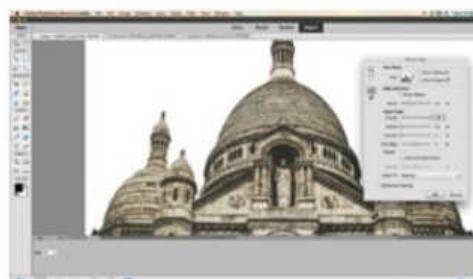
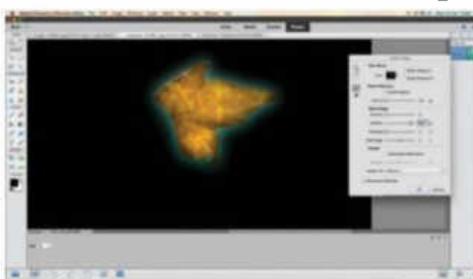
Use the Brush and Erase icons on the left-hand side of the panel in order to add and remove from the selection. This part of the Refine Edge tool is perfect for hair, and it can help touch-up the sides that didn't look quite right in the original selection.

04 Touch up the mask

Once you have hit OK, the best way to edit is to use a mask, as this will enable you to edit non-destructively. With a small, soft, white brush of around 20% Opacity, follow up your edit by touching-up any edges that you think need further editing.

Three essential options

Get the most from this tool using the options



Feather

The Feather slider determines how much of a soft edge around your selection you'd like there to be. It's good for softer edges and enables you to blur the outline somewhat for a more realistic subject. The Feather option should be used subtly and usually at a low value for best results; always use it to soften before you begin using the brush.

Smoothing

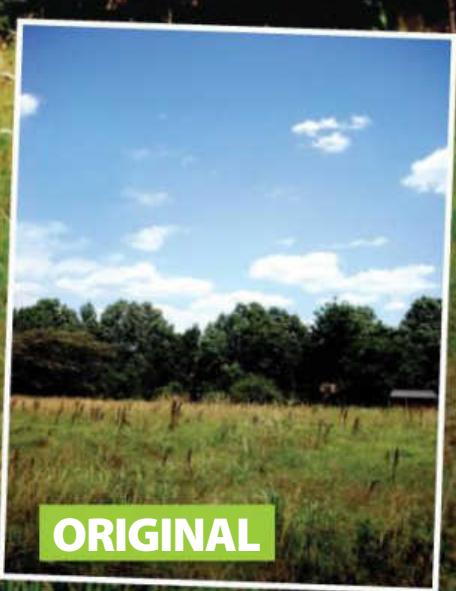
Try the Smoothing option in conjunction with the Feather option. While Feathering softens the edges of your selection, the Smoothing works with it to follow the Radius of the edge to give a lifelike outline to your subject. Use these two sliders together predominantly when you use the Refine Edge tool, and the other sliders sparingly.

Output to...

Once you've refined the edge of whatever you're cutting out, you can choose to export the output to either a Layer Mask, a new layer, a New Layer With Layer Mask, a New Document or just to the selection you've made for further editing. This means that you can mask even quicker and edit your subject non-destructively.

Selections

ENHANCED



ORIGINAL

Get more from Smart Brushes

Afraid of image editing? Get a stress-free jumpstart by tapping into the power of Smart Brushes, a unique and easy-to-use fusion of selections, adjustments, and masks

Selections and adjustments form a core workflow of Photoshop editing. You select what's going to be edited, and after doing so, you specify what adjustments will be made to the selected areas. Sounds straightforward, but with so many ways to make selections and a large assortment of adjustments to choose from, it can be hard for newcomers to know where to begin.

Enter the Smart Brushes, an ingenious set of tools in Photoshop Elements that combines several crucial concepts into one beginner-friendly feature. Selections and adjustments are made at the same time, shortening the learning curve and also boosting productivity.

It's very easy to start using Smart Brushes. Select one of the two brushes, then select from the ample library of effects. Elements 13 includes many presets, including a satin effect and a flowery pattern.

The Smart Brush tool automatically applies adjustments to similar areas around where you click. It acts like a combination of the Quick Selection tool

and Adjustment Layers. Also on offer is the Detail Smart Brush tool, which allows you to simply 'paint on' adjustments. There is no automatic selection with this option, so you are free to apply your adjustments wherever and whenever you want.

The adjustments applied are non-destructive, meaning no pixels are permanently altered. Feel free to modify adjustments by double-clicking on the adjustment's icon in the Layers palette. The masks can also be refined until perfected. Paint on them with black to conceal and white to reveal. Practise with the example image, then have fun with your own photos!

"The adjustments applied are non-destructive, meaning no pixels are permanently altered"



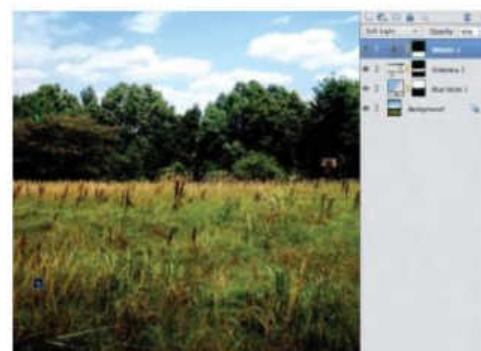
01 Blue Skies

Select the Smart Brush and use the Blue Skies preset in the upper area. Use the 'Add to' and 'Subtract from' selection icons to help perfect the selection. Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect.



02 Greenery

Use the Greenery preset on the middle line of trees. Again, use the Add and Subtract icons to help with the selection, and adjust brush size as needed, then deselect.



03 Details

Use the Details preset on the grassy lower portion. This will increase contrast in that area. By now you should be getting the hang of fine-tuning selection areas.



04 Going Green

Use the Going Green preset on the brown tree on the left. Lower the adjustment's opacity to 40% in the top of the Layers palette, then deselect.



05 Brighter

Let's brighten the whole image. Use the Brighten preset and cover the image with the adjustment. The adjustment's mask should be solid white.



06 Edit mask

Set the foreground colour to black, select the Brush tool and use a soft, round brush at 60% opacity. Paint the lower clouds to restore detail.

Selections



Smart Brush tool

The Smart Brush tool lives up to its name. Selectively apply special effects or adjustments to a section of your image. Effects are automatically applied to an adjustment layer so any edit can be instantly removed.

Detail Brush tool

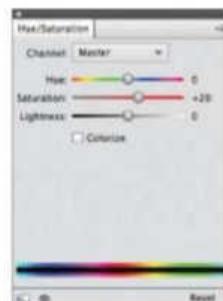
Use this clever tool to simply "paint on" adjustments without the automatic selection function the Smart Brush tool comes with, leaving you to brush where you want to.

Refine Edge

Use the Refine Edge setting to get a smoother outline to your Smart Brush selection. This is particularly handy when it comes to more intricate outlines like pet fur, grass or hair.

07 Vignette

Select the Detail Smart Brush tool, ensure New Selection is pressed, and choose Reverse - Night. Continually paint back and forth in the central area to get darkened edges.



08 Hue/ Saturation

To finalise, click the Adjustment Layer icon at the top of the Layers palette and choose Hue/Saturation. Increase Saturation to +20 to make the colour more vivid.



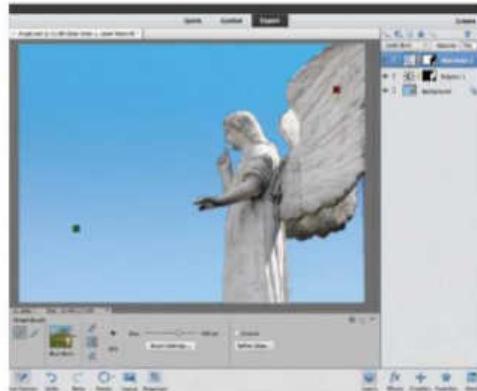
No clouds? No problem

Fill up the empty blue with interesting backgrounds



01 Brighten subject

Use the Smart Brush with the Brighter preset on the statue. Use the 'Add to' and 'Subtract from' selection icons to aid you in perfecting the selection.



02 Improve sky

Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect so we can apply a new adjustment. Again use the Smart Brush, this time with the Blue Skies preset on the dull blue. Deselect again.



03 Add clouds

You can then go ahead and use the Smart Brush with the Clouds preset to fill in the blue. Now feel free to edit any of the adjustments you've made by double-clicking on the icon.

Other enhancement options

Swap out those clouds with other effects



Brick Wall



Flowery



Honeycomb



Random



Satin



Wallpaper

Brushes

128 Grasp the Brush tool
An essential overview of the vital brush options in Photoshop

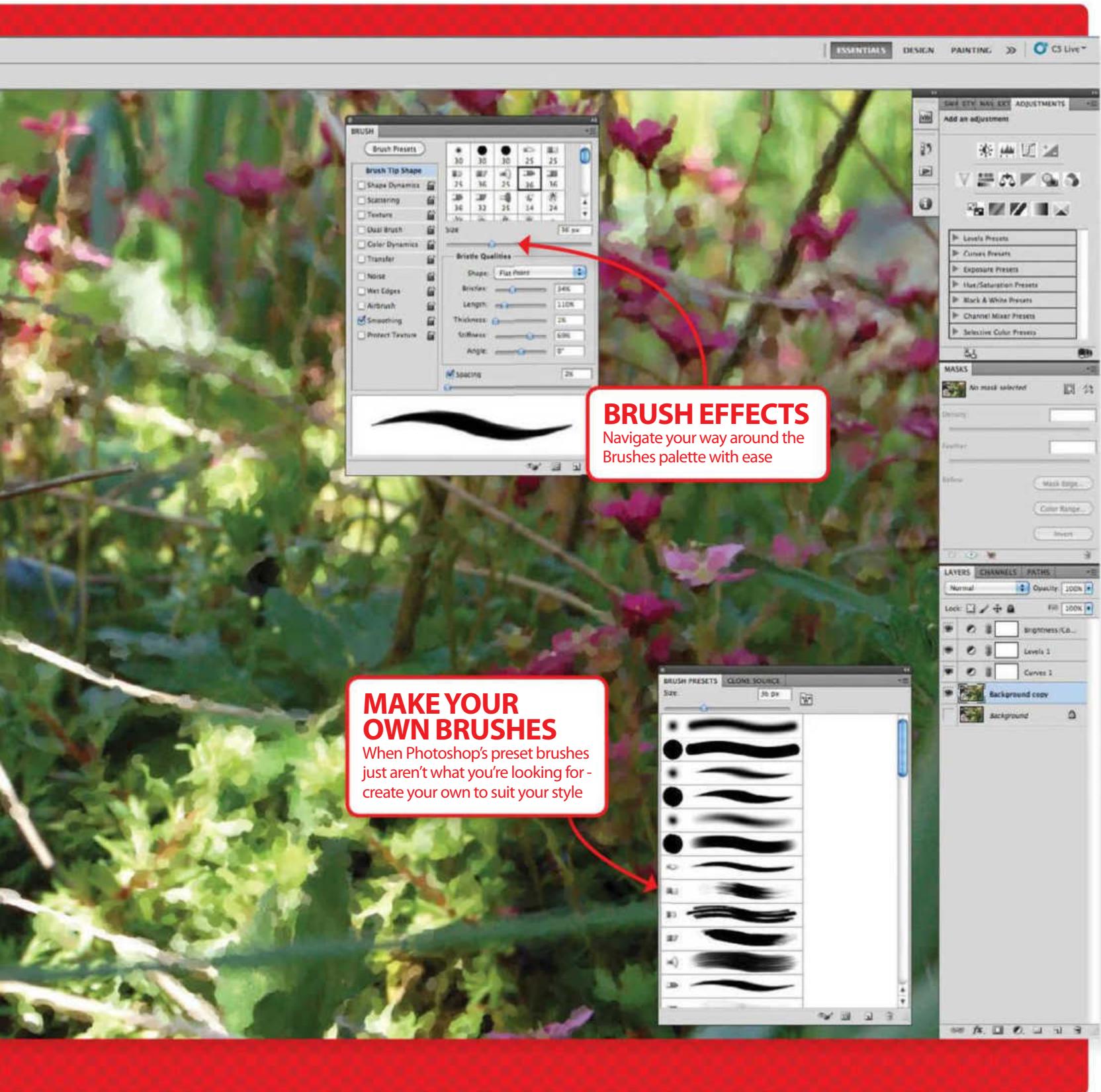
132 Use tools with brushes
Find out which popular Photoshop tools use brushes

134 Use the History tools
Go back in time and restore parts of photos to earlier, pre-edited versions

136 Learn to paint from photos
Turn an ordinary portrait into a colourful Pointillist image using only the paint brush

“The Brush tool lets you apply digital paint strokes, just as if you were using the real thing”





Brushes



Choose from a variety

There are lots of different categories of brushes to choose from, such as Calligraphic, Dry Media and Natural.

Additional settings

Some special brushes in Photoshop CS5, CS6 and CC will have additional settings in the main Options bar to play with.

Grasp the Brush tool

Add brushstrokes to your artworks with this handy tool

Photoshop and Photoshop Elements boast the Brush tool, which lets you apply digital paint strokes, just as if you were using the real thing.

You can do just about everything with your Brush tool that you can with a real paint brush. Choose from a range of different brush types, change the size of the brush tip and decide how thick you want your paint to be (think of the Opacity as being how watered down your paint is so that you can see more or less through the paint to the canvas underneath).

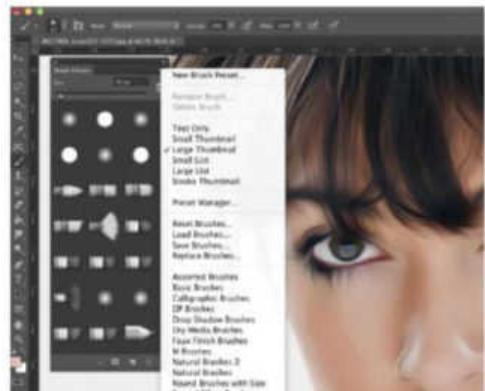
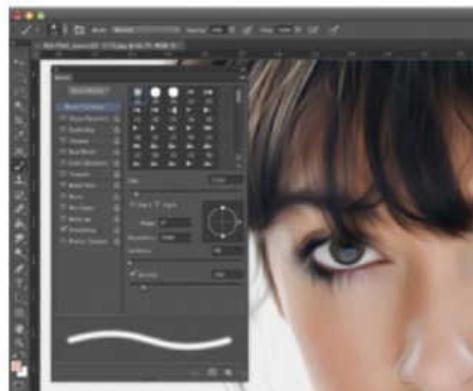
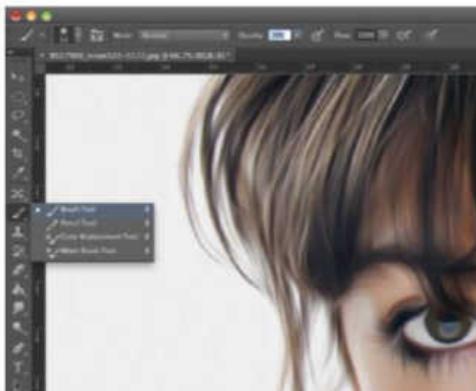
While there are lots of different settings and you can get quite technical, it is easy to pick the Brush tool, set a colour and simply start painting. We'll

be running through the key options that you need to know on these pages. While most Photoshop beginners will use a mouse, once you get a bit more comfortable with digital painting, you may want to try out a tablet!

"You can do just about everything with your Brush tool that you can with a real paint brush"

THE BRUSH TOOL OPTIONS

Find your way around the palettes



01 The Brush tool

The Brush tool can be chosen from the main Toolbar in both Photoshop and Elements. There are settings along the top of the interface.

02 The Brush Presets

The Brush Presets palette shows you all available tips to select and use (in versions CS2 and below these presets are within one Brushes palette).

03 The Brush palette

The Brush palette is where you can alter and customise the look of brushes. Have a play with the sliders and see how they affect your strokes.

SET UP A BRUSH IN ELEMENTS

Pick the right brush for your work



01 Select the Brush tool

Choosing the Brush tool (B) will open up the Brush panel at the bottom of the interface ready for you to tweak the many options.

02 Choose a brush

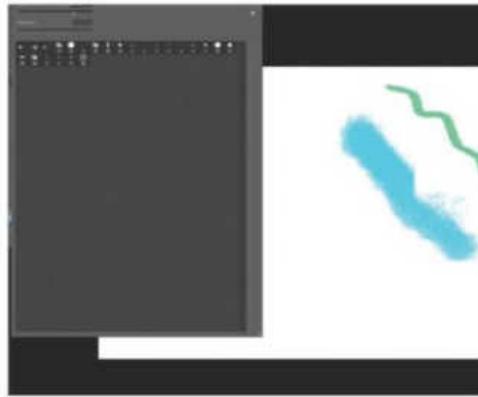
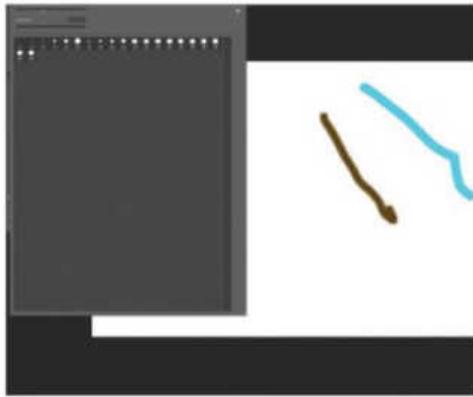
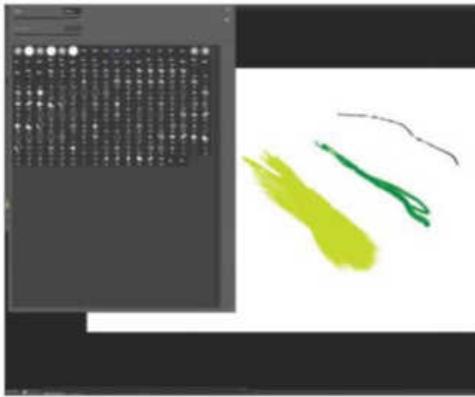
Select the Brush drop-down menu to view a list of brushes. You can choose different brush categories from the drop-down menu to suit your needs.

03 Size matters

Alter the size of your brush by dragging the Size slider. Alter the opacity of the brushstrokes using the Opacity slider too.

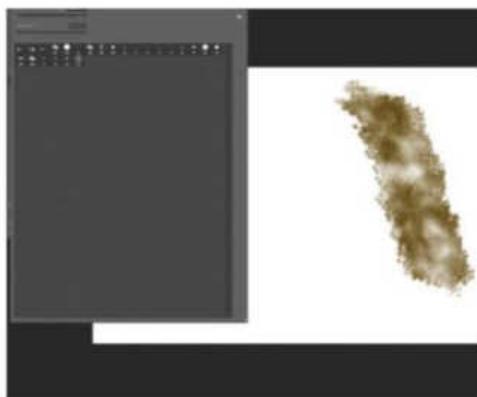
Brushes

Best brushes Get the most out of Photoshop's brushes



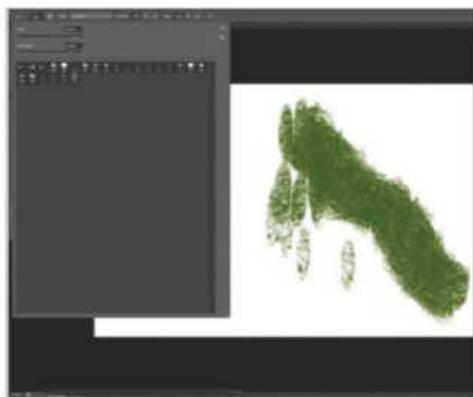
Calligraphic Brushes

The Calligraphic Brushes set contains a number of brushes tailored to emulate calligraphic nib shapes. Set the Angle Jitter to 'Tilt' for maximum effect.



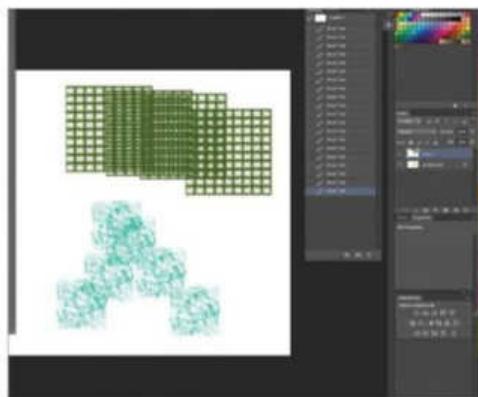
Drop Shadow Brushes

Drop Shadow Brushes provide brushes of both round and square varieties with feathered edges to render shadows with a soft edge to them.



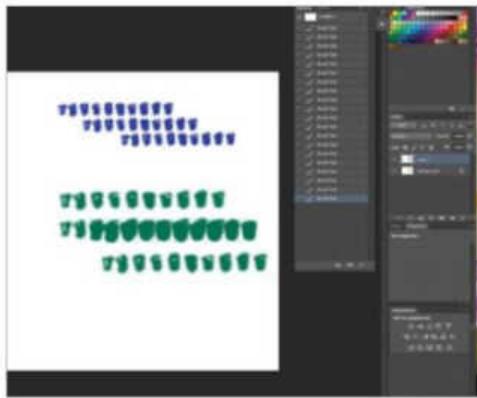
Dry Media Brushes

A great set of brushes that emulate traditional media such as pastels and charcoals. A great place to start if you want to create custom brushes.



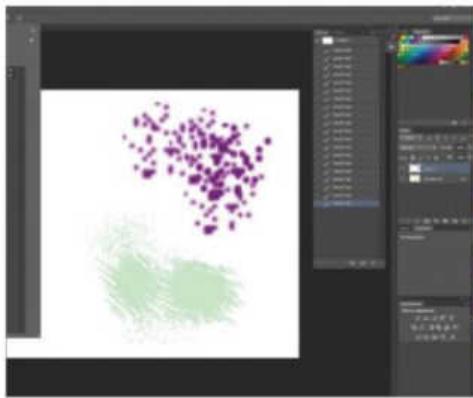
Dry Media Brushes

Most of the brushes here make use of many of the attributes you can alter in the Brushes Palette, such as adding Texture and Dual Brush functionality.



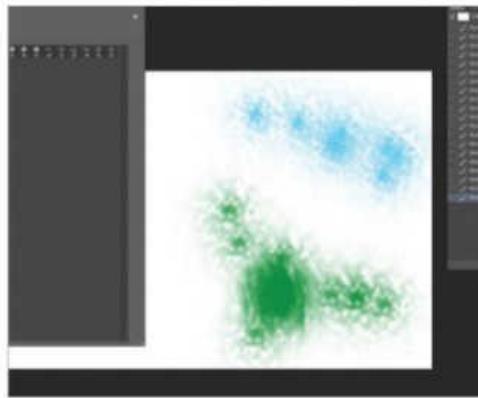
Dry Media Brushes 2

By looking through the Brushes Palette settings you'll get an idea of why these brushes behave the way they do, which will help you make your own.



Faux Finish Brushes

With brushes like Plastic Wrap and Sea Sponge this set appears quite limited, but playing around with the settings makes them a lot more versatile.



Faux Finish Brushes 2

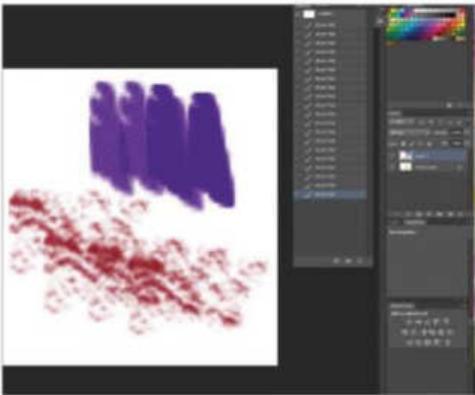
Toy with the settings of the Texture Comb brushes; with a little experimentation you can create some very expressive brushwork.

Natural Brushes

Natural Brushes includes Stipple and Spray brushes. The Stipple brush works well with Angle Jitter set to Pen Tilt and Opacity set to Pen Pressure.

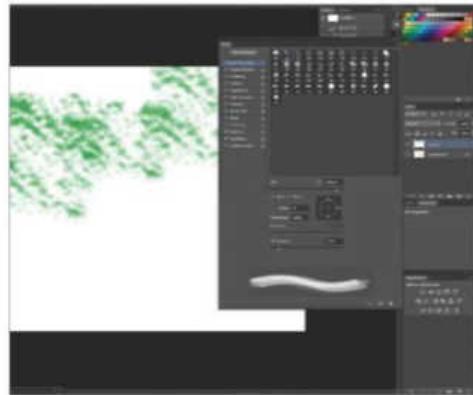
Natural Brushes

The Spray brush works like the Airbrush but has a faint stippling effect so the result is more textured. Set the Opacity to Pen Pressure for best results.



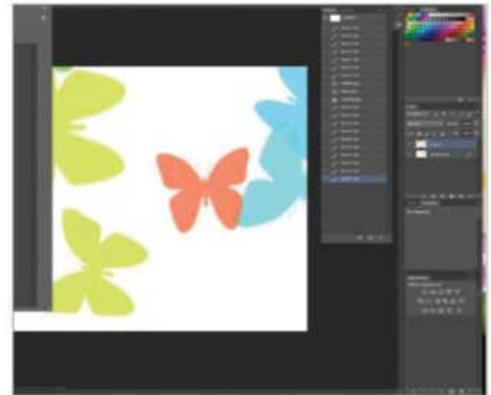
Natural Brushes 2

Natural Brushes 2 collects brushes that have textures built into them. Chalk and Pastel effect brushes are well represented here.



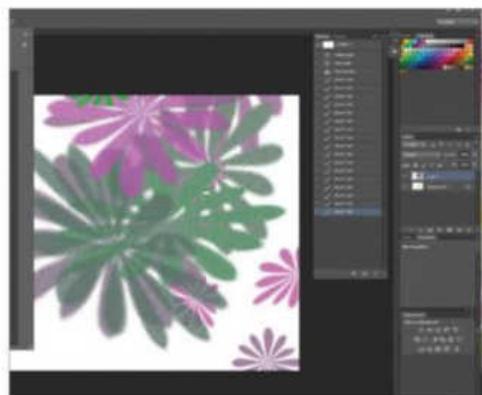
Natural Brushes 2

To get a natural build-up effect set Opacity and Flow to Pen Pressure. Set the Blending Mode to Multiply in the Toolbar to enhance it even further.



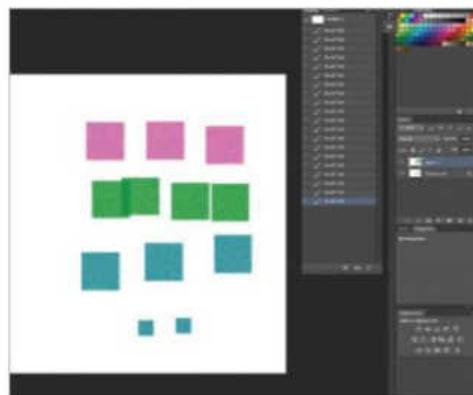
Special Effect Brushes

Other than Drippy Watercolor, which has some painting application, the brushes here are fun but slightly gimmicky.



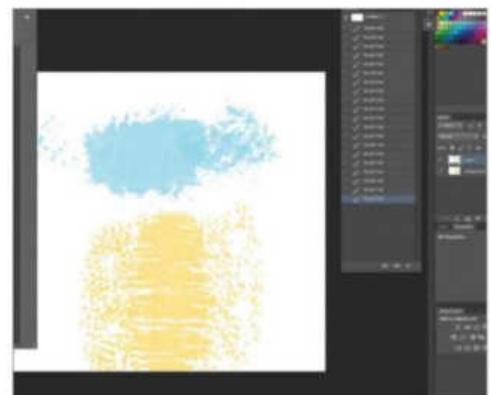
Special Effect Brushes

The Azalea brush switches Foreground/Background colours, while the Butterfly brush's high Hue Jitter randomises them.



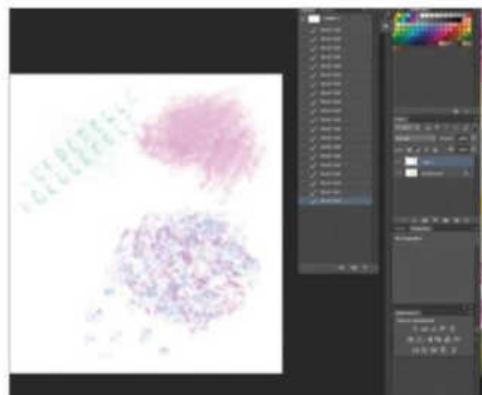
Square Brushes

Square Brushes is misleading; there is really just one brush here supplied at a number of different sizes. Its brush work is surprisingly pleasing, though.



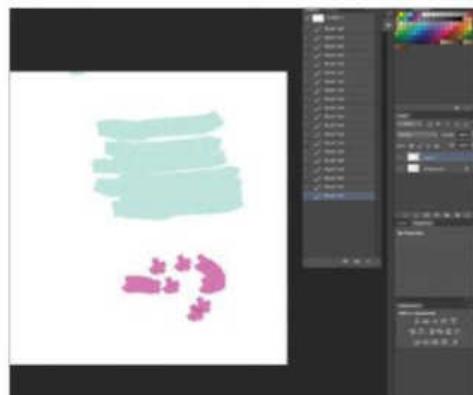
Thick Heavy Brushes

The Thick Heavy Brushes set features five bristle effect brushes that will add a little texture to your brush work.



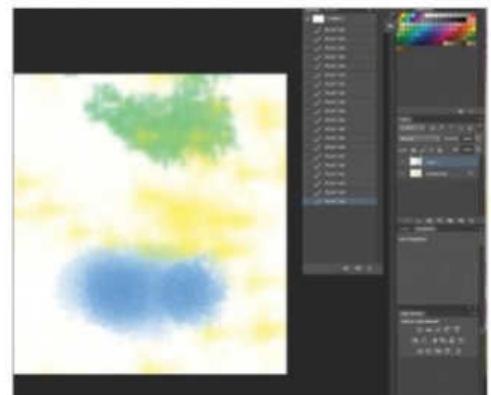
Wet Media Brushes

Wet Media Brushes includes a superb selection of assorted brushes. As well as watercolour brushes there are also ink, oil and dry brushes.



Wet Media Brushes

There are a number of Brush Tip Shapes employed in the Wet Media Brushes section, which makes the effects of each one noticeably different to the last.



Wet Media Brushes

The variety of styles in this category is impressive; most use Textures and at least one other feature. The watercolour brushes use the Wet Edges option.

Use tools with brushes

A lot of the tools in Photoshop use brushes. Here's our quick guide to the most popular ones

Understanding how Photoshop's brushes work isn't just important to people that want to paint digitally, the knowledge will help you in photo editing and pretty much any Photoshop-related task. All of the tools we look at here can be used with any Brush Tip Shape you have in your Brush Library because they all work with Photoshop's Brush Engine.

No matter which of the Brush Engine-based tools you use, whether it's the Clone Stamp, History Brush or Smudge Tool, you'll be able to alter the options in two specific areas in your Workspace: the Toolbar and the Brushes Palette. The Brushes Palette can be opened by pressing F5 and contains the same brush-editing options regardless of which tool you are currently using.

The Toolbar is positioned directly below the Main Navigation Bar in Photoshop. Unlike the Brushes Palette, the settings available here are tool

specific, you'll get a different selection of settings when the Eraser is selected than you would if using the Blur Tool.

Common elements in the Toolbar that each tool shares are the display of the Brush Tip shape and size and the brush's Blending Mode. There will also be an icon to enable your graphics tablet to override controls set in the Brushes panel.

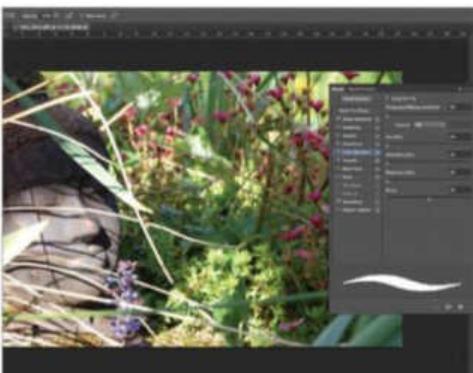
Opacity and Flow are common settings to see in the Toolbar when using a brush-based tool and are helpful for controlling the strength of a brush's impact if you're using a mouse instead of a pressure-sensitive tablet.

"Opacity and Flow are helpful for controlling a brush's impact"



Popular brushes

The various brushes and what they do



Hard Mix

The Pencil and Brush are almost identical but the Pencil creates hard-edged Aliased strokes and the Brush makes smoother Anti-Aliased brush strokes.



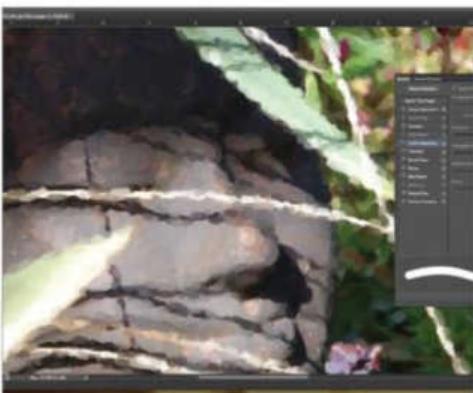
The Clone Stamp

Hit Alt to select an area that will be duplicated when you use the brush elsewhere on the image. Clone from All Layers or just the current Layer.



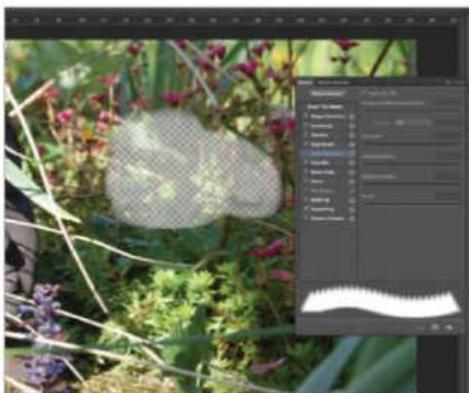
History Brush

The History Brush lets you fix mistakes and apply Filters; any area you paint on reverts to a previously defined state by using info from the history palette.



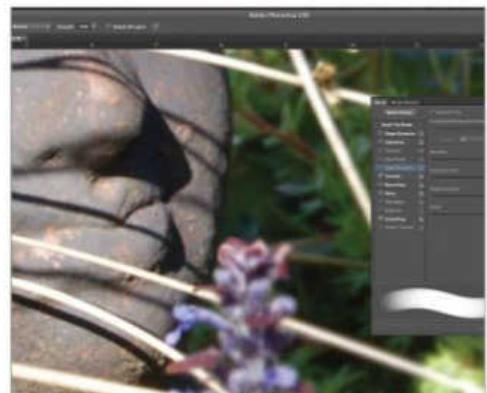
Art History Brush

A customisable special effects brush that gives you a pseudo-painterly effect superior to that of using a Filter by dragging your cursor over a photo.



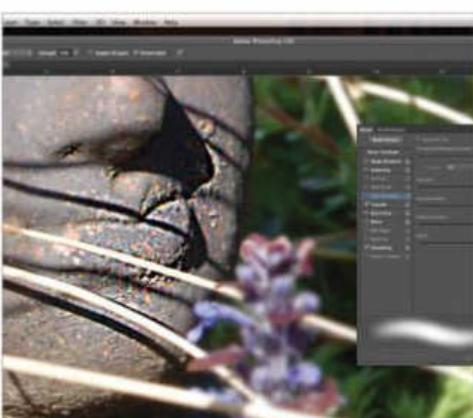
Erasers

Used for both corrections and special effects, changing your brush type and Opacity will give you a range of appearances to remove solid pixels.



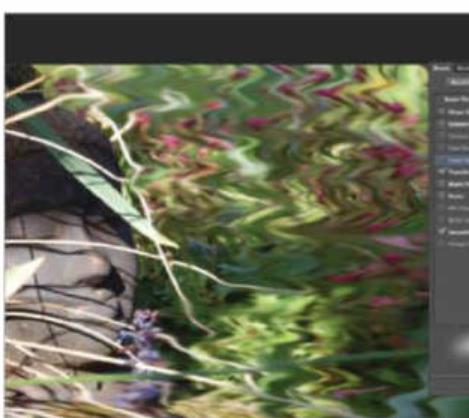
Blur

The Blur tool allows you to blur small areas such as wrinkles or spots. Use with restraint to avoid an obviously over-blurred image.



Sharpen

The Sharpen Tool increases the Contrast of any pixels you paint over it with to make the images appear crisper.



Smudge

The Smudge tool smears your paint across the canvas. The higher the Pressure level, the more of the paint will be removed from the canvas.



Dodge and Burn

Dodge and Burn lighten or darken any area you move the brush over. You can change their Range to affect Highlights, Midtones or Shadows.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Use the History tools in Photoshop

Want to change history? Meet Photoshop's answer to Doc Brown's DeLorean: the History Brush tool! While not quite as flashy as a time-travelling car, it's a lot more reliable and doesn't require you to have a working flux capacitor!

The History Brush tool is one of the most useful and overlooked image-editing features in Photoshop. It reverts any part of an image back to a previous state without affecting the rest of the image. You can edit your photo as a whole and then use the History Brush to restore your chosen areas back to their original appearance. It has many applications, not only the aforementioned selective image editing. If you've ever had one of those annoying "Uh-oh, I hadn't noticed I'd changed that!" moments, the History Brush tool can be used to correct unintentional changes you may have made

Move parts of your image through time and correct mistakes you hadn't noticed

to areas of an image. All you have to do is locate the last point the section was correct in the History palette and set the source by clicking in the small column on the left of the History palette, then 'turn back time' and fix your mistakes by painting the image back to how it used to look with the History Brush tool.

You can brighten or darken with the History Brush by selecting the current state as the source then setting the History brush's Blending mode (in the toolbar) to Screen (to lighten) or Multiply (to darken). The tool will then use the existing information to re-draw a brighter or darker version.

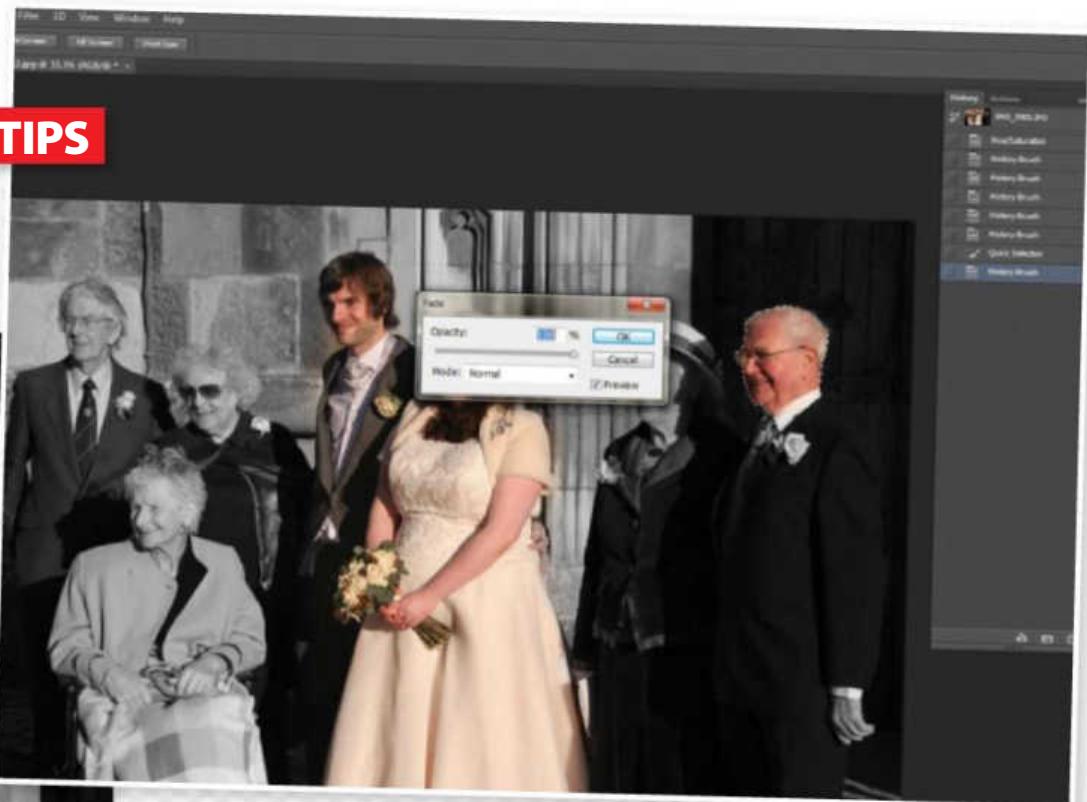
"It's a lot more reliable and doesn't require a working flux capacitor!"



QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

Bring things back quickly

Sometimes it's quicker to mask off the area that you want changes to remain intact and use a large brush to revert the remainder of the image.



Paint from an alternate future!

Ticking 'Allow Non Linear History' in the History palette menu lets you make changes from based upon a state that you have since undone!

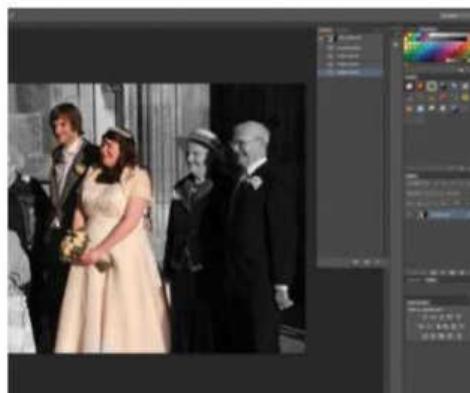
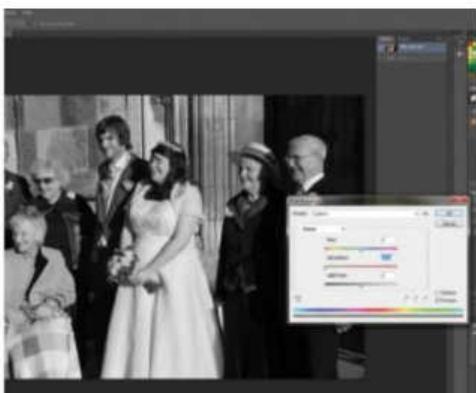


Fading through time

You can change the opacity of the strokes you have just applied by going to Edit>Fade immediately after using the History Brush tool.

Use on filters

Useful filters like Dust & Scratches blur an entire image. If you only need a small section changed, use the History Brush to undo the filter on the relevant areas.



01 Apply to a whole image

Open your image and go to Image>Adjustments>Hue Saturation. In the box move the Saturation Slider to the left to desaturate the image.

02 Quickly bring back the subject

Press 'Y' to select the History brush and select a large Airbrush with its Opacity set to Pen Pressure in the Brushes tab to bring back most of the subject.

03 Tidy up the edges

Switch to a smaller hard-edged brush to bring back the edges of the subject so the background is still desaturated and the subject is in colour again.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

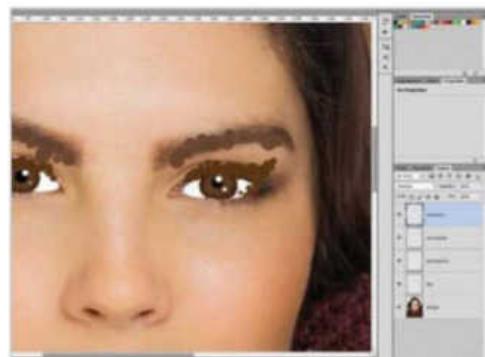
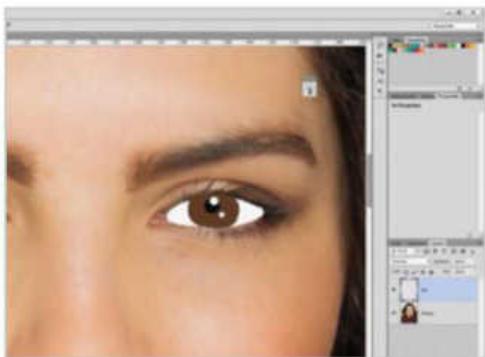
ORIGINAL

Learn to paint from photos

Turn an ordinary portrait into a colourful and abstract Pointillist image using only the paint brush

There are a lot of ways to cheat in Photoshop, and one of our favourites is using the Brush tool options. These are found by clicking the icon that looks like a pot of brushes, or going to Window>Brush. This palette will allow you to manipulate the Brush in all sorts of fun ways, but this tutorial will concentrate on Spacing, Shape Dynamics, Scattering and Color Dynamics. Using these together allows for a random appearance of brush strokes, without the need to draw each circle individually. Using this technique will help capture the Pointillist style of a portrait drawn using dots of varying size and colour.

Throughout the tutorial, you'll be adjusting the strength of each adjustment depending on which area you're working on, so it's recommended to keep the Brush window open on your interface to allow for quick access. Remember that this portrait is going to be abstract, so details don't have to be perfect and don't be worried when the Scattering adds an erroneous circle a bit too far away. It will take a few attempts to get each section perfect, but there's always the Eraser if you want to get rid of something! Follow on and we'll show you how to create this fun look using brushes.



01 Begin to paint

Open up 'pointillist-portrait.jpg' and create a new layer with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N. Select the Brush (B), Hardness: 100%. Use the Eye Dropper (I) to grab brown from her eyes, and on the new layer, draw in new irises, then add pupils and shines.

02 Set up the Brush

To give the rest of the portrait a random feel, we're going to use Brush Dynamics. With the Brush selected, open the Brush palette. Select the Shape Dynamics, Scattering and Color Dynamics options. Look at the Expert tip for more info.

03 Add eye details

Create a new layer, and using a brush with light Scattering and slight Hue Jitter, draw a line for eyebrows in brown. Repeat on the other side. Now select a slightly darker brown colour, unselect Color Dynamics and draw in eyelashes.



ENHANCED

Brushes

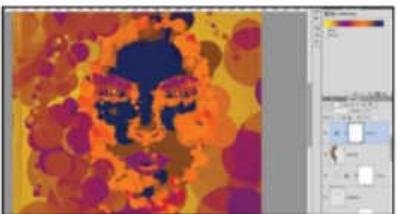
EXPERT EDIT

Gradient Mapping



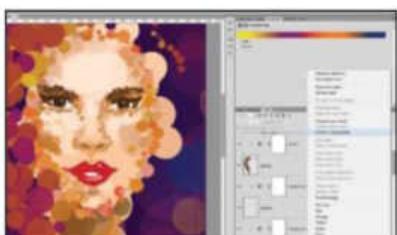
01 Create the layer

Create the layer you want to affect, for example the hair in this tutorial. Make sure you add some colour variance for the effect to work.



02 Add the gradient

Add a gradient map from Layers>Adjustment Layers>Gradient Map. Choose a preset or create your own colour scheme. It will affect any layers underneath.



03 Control the map

Keep your gradient selective by simply placing the Map layer above the layer you want to affect. Right-click and select Create Clipping Mask. Clip to multiple layers by grouping them.



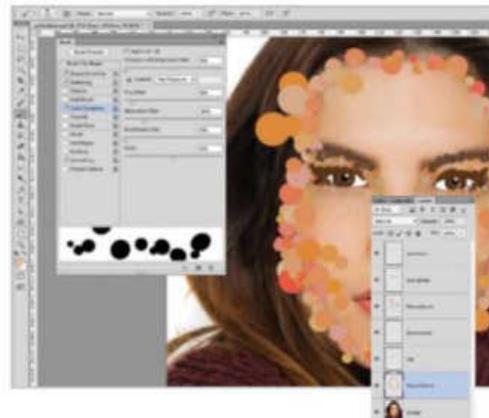
04 Adjust your colours

By using an adjustment layer, you can change the colours at any time by double-clicking the gradient map and making tweaks or applying a completely new gradient!



04 Add in features

Adjust the settings to add back a stronger Hue Jitter, and decrease the brush size. Create a new layer and begin to paint with browns around the eyes, and down the edges of the nose. Keep lines simple, adding breaks to create the suggestion of shapes.



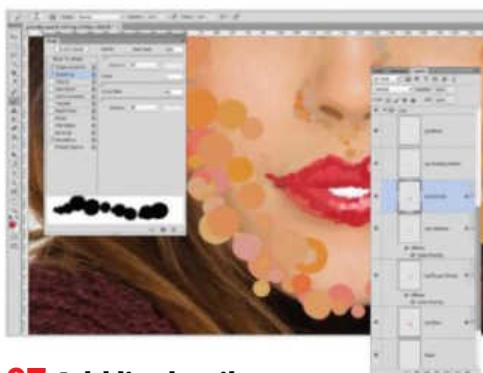
05 Outline the face

Increase your brush size and add a larger outline to her whole face, using the Size Jitter, Spacing and Hue to create a random effect. Draw in cheekbones with one or two circles, and create the shape of her chin.



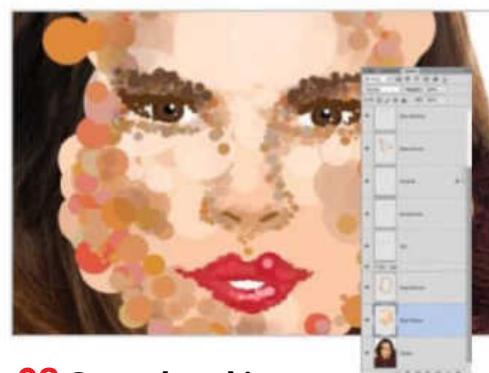
06 Draw the lips

Create a new layer. Use a red paint brush, no dynamics selected, to draw lips. On a layer above, use a darker brush with light Scattering to gently add an outline. On another new layer, add some lighter details to give the impression of a shine.



07 Add lip details

Now add a layer just above the base red, so it's underneath the lighter and darker layers. Use different shades of pink/red, and add circles one at a time around the lips for more depth in the shading. This may take a few attempts in order to get things looking right.



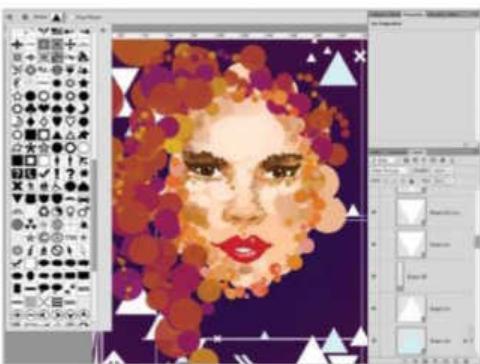
08 Create her skin

Create a new layer underneath all your painted layers so far. Make your brush large with a low Hue Jitter and moderate Scattering and Size Jitter. Use the Eyedropper (I) to choose a skin colour and begin to draw in skin. Add lighter tones to the forehead and cheekbones.



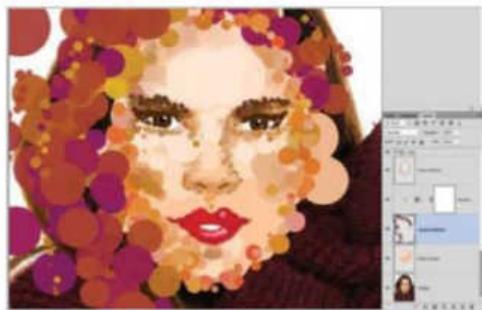
09 Stylise the hair

Select a dark brown with a Hue Jitter of around 10%. Draw a sweeping curve of hair around her face. Use large circles at first, and then add some smaller details more sparingly. Add a Gradient Map adjustment layer for more interesting colours. See the Expert Edit for more details.



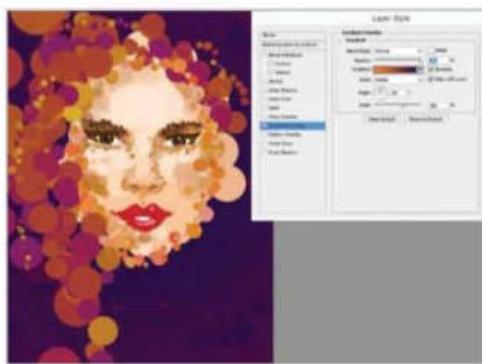
12 Add background shape

In your new group, begin using the Custom Shapes tool (U) to add a selection of lines, triangles and crosses to the background. Vary the size and angle of the shapes using Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and for now, keep the shapes white.



10 Add more volume

Create a new layer and add in some larger circles for more hair. Keep these circles looser around the hair shape of the original image, and again add a Gradient Map adjustment layer. On a separate layer, use larger, low-opacity circles to draw in an abstract neck and other circles.



13 Group Blending Options

Right-click the group containing your shapes, and click Blending Options. Add a Gradient Overlay. Add the same purple and orange gradient as before, set the style to Radial, but leave the Scale at 100%. Set the group's Opacity to 50%.



11 Create a background

Create a new gradient layer from Layer>New Fill Layer>Gradient. Drag it to be the very bottom layer of your image. Select the Dark Purple to Orange preset gradient, and set the style to Radial, Scale: 604%. Hit OK. Create a group called Background Shapes.



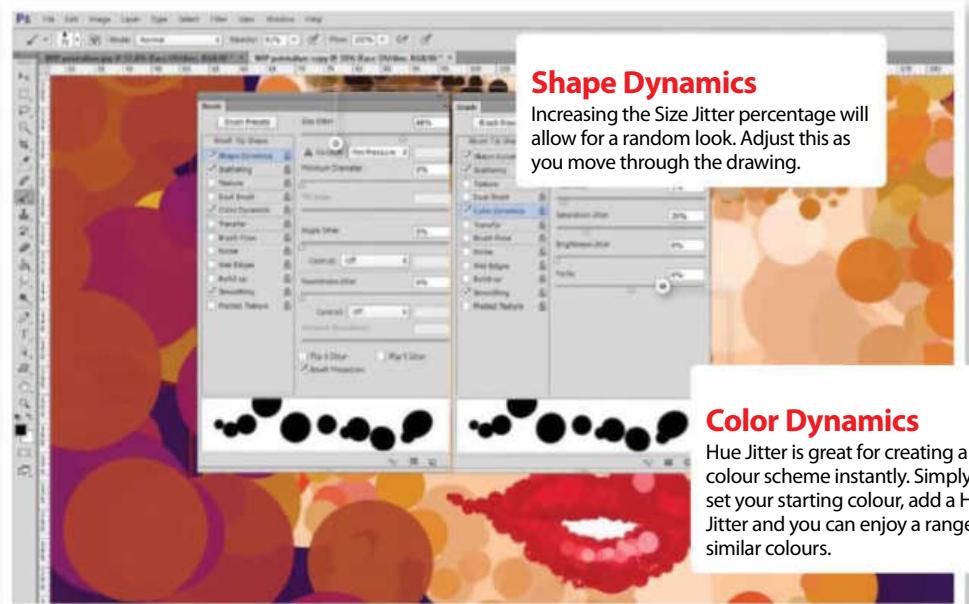
14 Add some final shapes

Grab the Brush tool again and on a new layer underneath the Background Shapes group, draw in some low opacity (10-15%) large circles. Use contrasting colour such as blue, and then some really low opacity (5%) circles in a lighter skin tone to finish off the background.

EXPERT TIP

Brush Dynamics

This tutorial makes use of three main settings in the Brush palette: Shape Dynamics, Scattering and Color Dynamics, as well as adding a 115% increase to the Spacing option from Brush Tip Shape. Inside Shape Dynamics, you'll tick Size Jitter, generally not going above 55% to avoid too much variance. Scattering will depend on which area of the image you're working on. For facial features, stick to a low value of 5-25%, but for large areas such as hair and the background, increase to around 100-150%. In Color Dynamics, increase Hue Jitter and Saturation Jitter. Again, lower the value in order to achieve a subtle effect.



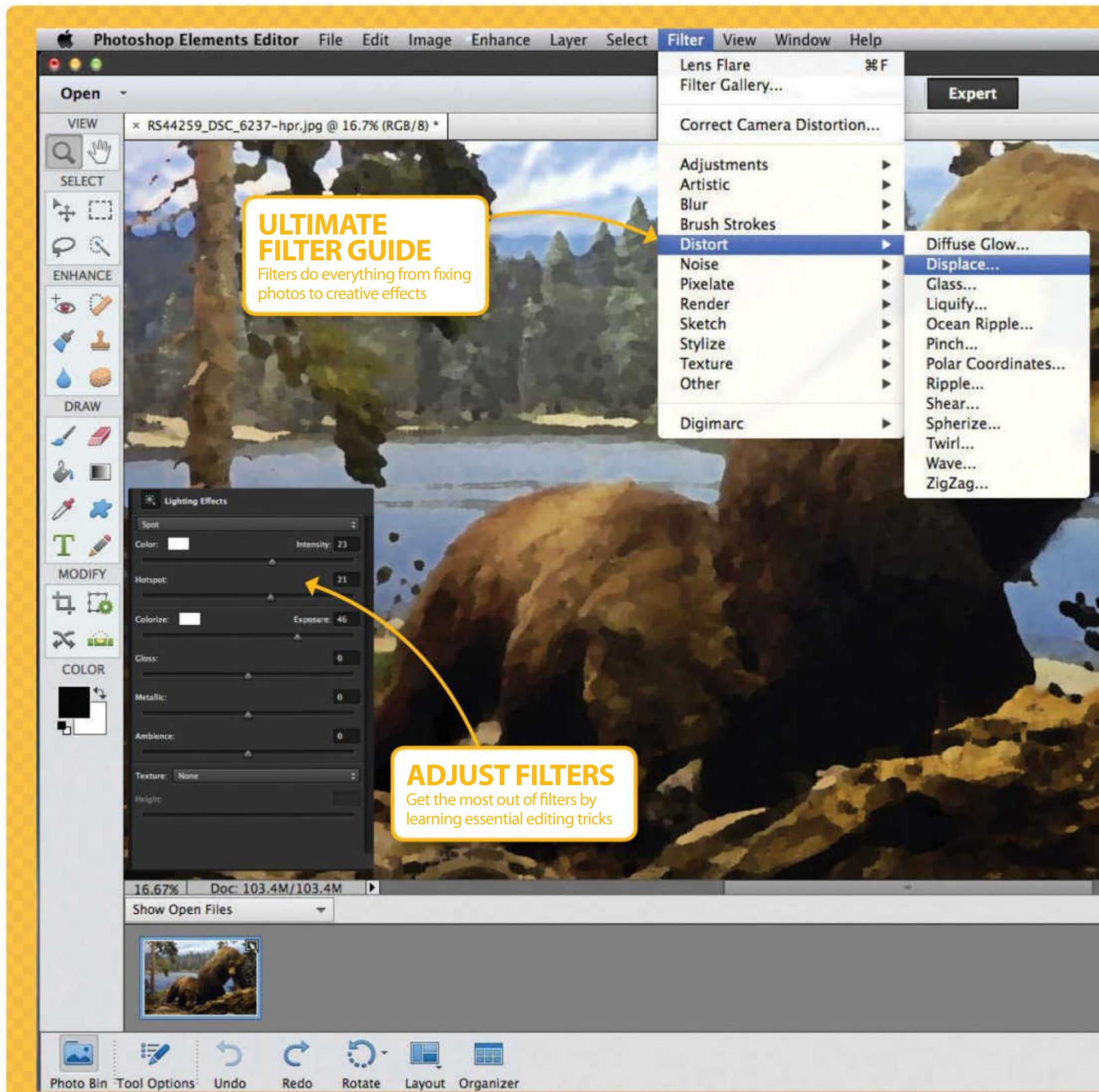
Shape Dynamics

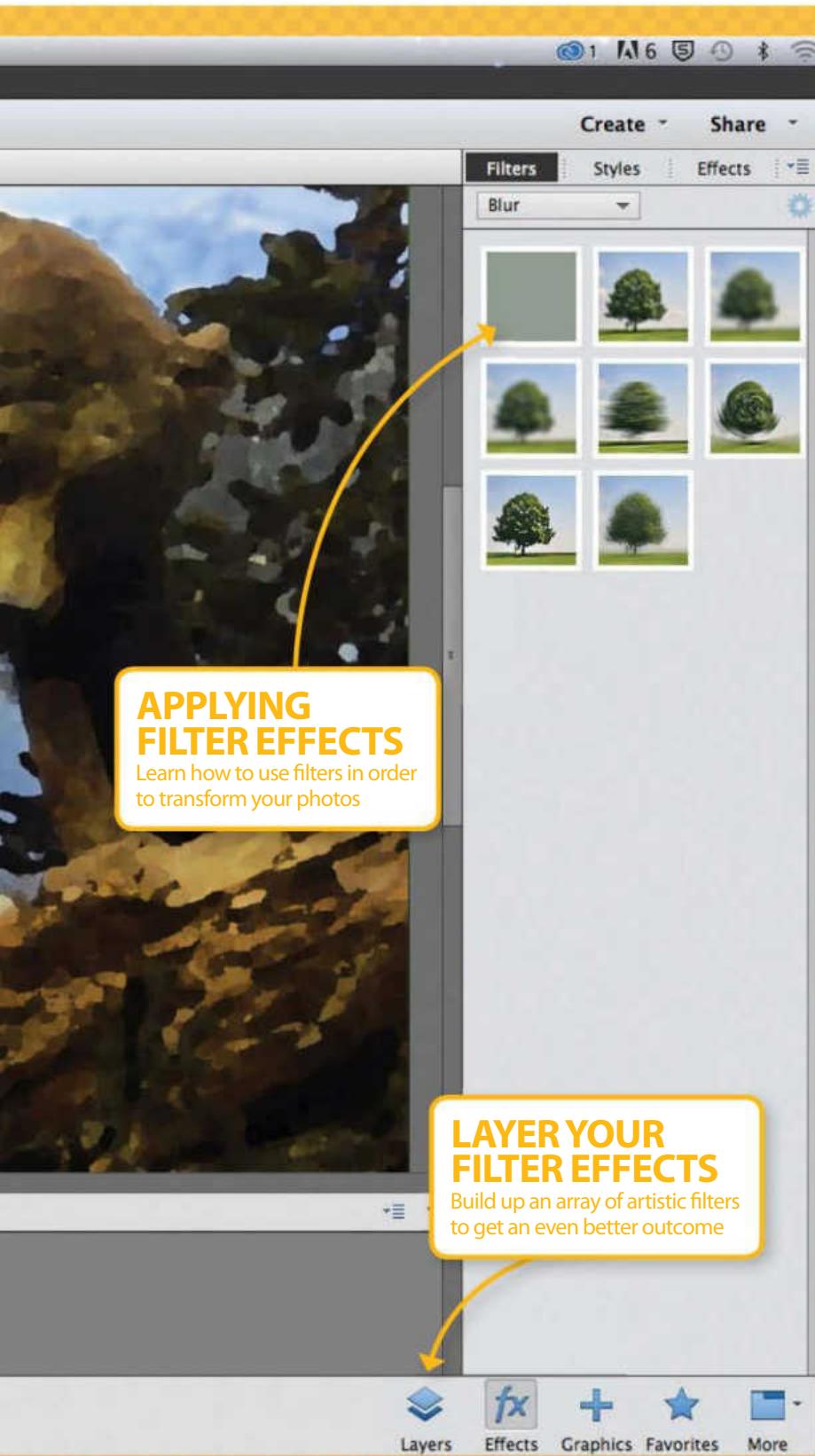
Increasing the Size Jitter percentage will allow for a random look. Adjust this as you move through the drawing.

Color Dynamics

Hue Jitter is great for creating a full colour scheme instantly. Simply set your starting colour, add a Hue Jitter and you can enjoy a range of similar colours.

Filters





142

What are filters?

Learn all about this creative toolset, used to apply effects

144

Discover the Blur filters

Use the Elements filters to add effective blur to your images

146

Master the Blur Gallery filters

Check out how to use CC's new grain filter with the Blur Gallery filters

148

Lighting Effects filter

Improve the lighting in your images with a few quick filter techniques

150

Fix with the Reduce Noise filter

Eliminate noise in your pictures and smooth things out with this filter

152

Use the Cutout filter creatively

Discover this simple command for great illustrative effects in no time

“You can use filters to apply special effects, clean up or retouch your images in next to no time”

What are filters?

Learn what the filters are and how to use the Filter Gallery dialog box to preview, control and apply effects quickly and efficiently

Filters are built-in actions that you can apply to an image to create different effects. You can use filters to apply special effects, clean up or retouch your photos in next to no time.

There are a huge number of instances where you can use the Filters, ranging from basic image sharpening or fixing a blurry background to complex filter combinations to create the most intricate effects.

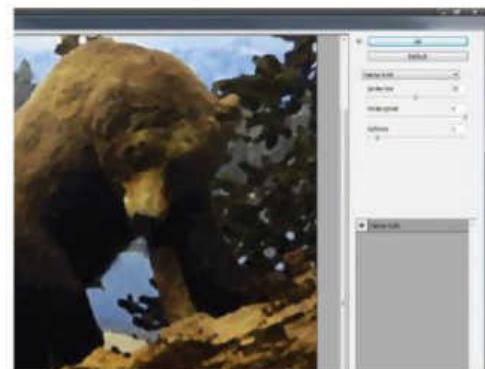
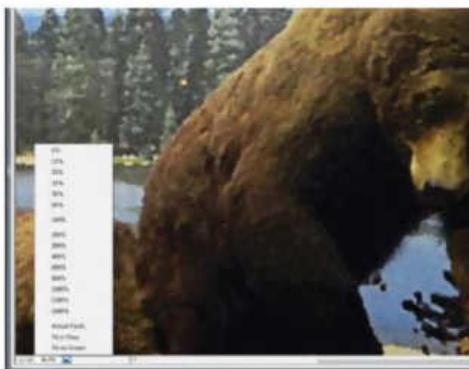
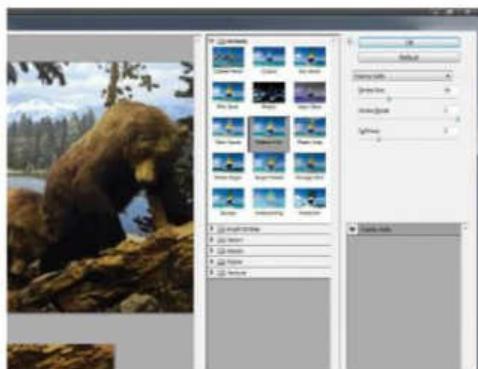
You can find the Filters under the Filter menu in Photoshop. Click on Filter Gallery and a new window will pop up revealing all the filters that are available in your Photoshop version. The Filters are grouped into categories such as Artistic, Distort, Sketch and so forth. Each effect has a specific function, for example under the Distort category you will find the Filters that will create distortions in your image such as waves, ripples and a zigzag.

The Filter Gallery is divided into three panels. On the left you will find the preview window with a magnify tool available to help you preview a filter and

see the details of the effect. The centre panel displays all the filters divided by categories and a very helpful thumbnail preview where you can choose the desired effect.

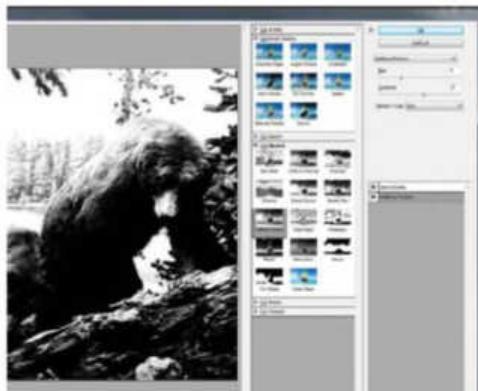
The third panel provides all the controls over the filters, where you can change the settings to control the effect however you wish and view the changes in real-time on the preview window. By clicking on the Add Layer icon allows you to add two or more filters at the same time to create subtle and impressive effects.

"The huge range of Filters are grouped into categories such as Artistic, Distort, Sketch and so on"



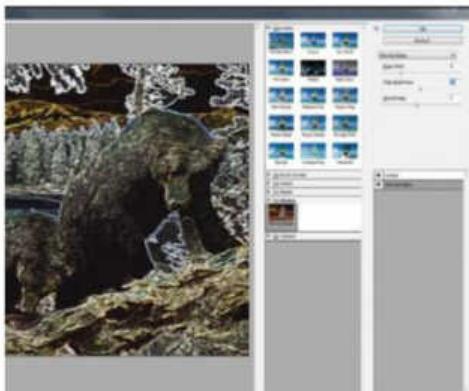
01 Filter thumbnails

Open the Artistic filters and select the Palette Knife filter. This will have its thumbnail highlighted and the result is displayed on the Preview window.



02 Magnify tool

On the bottom-left corner you will find the magnify tool, which is a very handy tool to preview a filter and see the details of the effect.

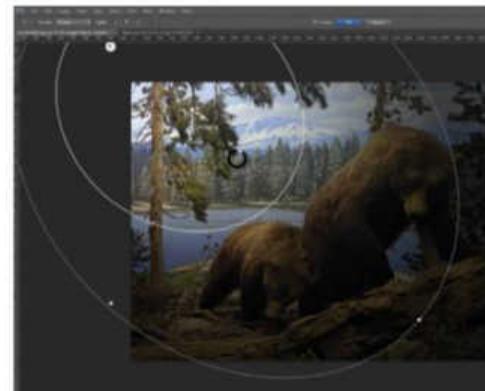


04 Layers

Click on the Add Layer icon to add a new effect layer. This allows you to add two or more filters at the same time.

03 Controls

Each filter has a different sets of controls, you can change the parameters to control the filter and preview the results in the preview window.



05 Change filter

To change a filter on a layer just select the layer and choose another filter. You can also delete a layer by clicking on the Delete Effect Layer icon.

06 Filter menu

Under the Filter menu you will find very powerful filters such as the Lighting Effect filter to create a dramatic scene or set the ambiance for an image.

Filters at a glance

There are over 100 filters in Photoshop, each sectioned into groups. From Artistic filters, where you can achieve pastel or pencil effects to Distort filters, where the filter geometrically distorts an image. Here's a great selection of our favourite filter effects to give you some artistic inspiration.

ARTISTIC



Colored Pencil



Dry Brush



Poster Edges



Rough Pastels



Smudge Stick

BRUSH STROKES



Angled Stroke



Ink Outlines



Spatter



Sprayed strokes



Sumi-e

DISTORT



Diffuse Glow



Glass



Spherize



Twirl



ZigZag

PIXELATE



Color Halftone



Crystallize



Mezzotint



Mosaic



Pointillize

SKETCH



Charcoal



Halftone



Photocopy



Reticulation



Stamp

TEXTURE



Craquelure



Grain



Mosaic tiles



Stain glass



Texturizer

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE



GAUSSIAN BLUR

You can apply a simple soft focus to any image and decide on how powerful it should be by altering the radius.

Discover the Blur filters

Use the Elements filters to add blur to your images

When people think of the Blur filters in Photoshop and Elements, they think of smoothing, adding haziness and distorting your picture. However, the Blur filters should be used as a tool to add focus, rather than remove it, because if you can converge your blur to a specific area of your picture, you can bring out the detail in another area.

The key to the Blur filters is to add them around subjects that need focus. By duplicating layers and masking out the excess, you can pinpoint your blur to a specific area. Most of the time in Photoshop, you

might only use one or two of the Blur options in the Filter menu, but there are others that transform your images in imaginative or subtle ways.

Blurs can be used in all kinds of projects too, as it's not just photo editing that requires a shift of focus; you might need to apply a blur to a digital painting or add a depth of field to a composition. Blurs can even be used for illustrations – try the Average Blur for filling with colour – or for retouching the skin in portraits. Check out our guide to each of the Blur filters, what they do and where they can be used in your pictures.



Add a bit of a blur

Set a radius and amount to apply a blur



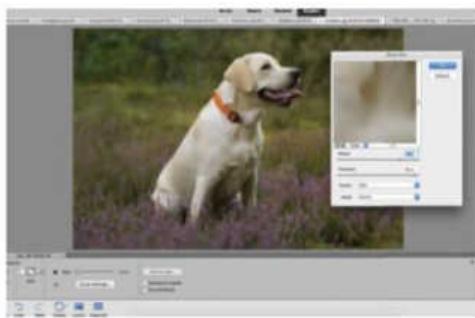
Average

The Average Blur will pick out the average colour of the area you've selected and fills it with that particular shade. This is good for smooth spaces of colour, and you can use it creatively to paint pictures, rather like a Fill-type tool.



Gaussian Blur

The Gaussian Blur option applies haze to your pictures, but you can choose the radius of blur you wish to add. This option is perfect for adding a soft focus; simply duplicate your layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J), set to Screen and add a Gaussian Blur to apply.



Radial Blur

The Radial Blur and the Motion Blur are both extremely similar. Where the Motion Blur applies the effect in a straight line though, the Radial Blur either applies a blur in a circle or a zoom. Both can be great to add to starry skies, or just to pictures as novelty effects.

Smart Blur

The Smart Blur gets us even deeper into the process of blurring, and enables you to find more or less pixels to add to the blur. You can set a mode for the entire selection (Normal) or for the edges of colour transitions (Edge Only and Overlay Edge). This is great for smoothing.

Blur

Blur

Blur adds a simple haziness to the selected space. It works by reducing noise and it is perfect for subtly blurring the background of your picture – select the subject, then Ctrl/right-click and Select Inverse – so that you can bring out focus in a foreground.

Blur More

Blur More is the same as the original blur, only it applies a more intense blurring effect. This is a particularly good option for pictures with a backdrop much further away, if you apply the same principles of blurring the background.

Motion Blur

Motion Blur applies a haze in a specific direction, which you can tweak according to direction and angle. This is great to add to moving objects; duplicate a layer, apply to your object and mask out everything apart from that object to apply.

Filters



Path and Spin Blurs

You'll find that Path Blurs and Spin Blurs are perfect for long-exposure effects, such as starry nights, water or even light trails.



Master the Blur Gallery filters

Check out how to use CC's new grain filter with the Blur Gallery filters

Blur and grain seem to be polar opposites: one's intended to give roughness to your picture, and the other's intended to give smoothness. But they can actually be used in unison for stunning results.

With the 2015 updates to Creative Cloud, Adobe has made it possible for you to match the grain in a picture with the blur that you're creating in the Blur Gallery. This may not sound like a significant update, but it's the tiny details that can really make a picture. At the moment you can add a one-click basic grain to your blurs to complete a retro composition, but there are so many other uses for grain.

The new Blur Gallery grain options make it easy to mix the rough with the smooth in your projects. But how and when might you use these new options? Check out our guide to each of the five Blur Gallery filters, and an example of when you might need grain.



Field Blur

The Field Blur is similar to a Gaussian Blur, but it can be used to create bokeh effects, such as in this example, by dialling up the colour and light dials. Here, grain can be used to add more texture and in this case, it's great for making text visible on the background.



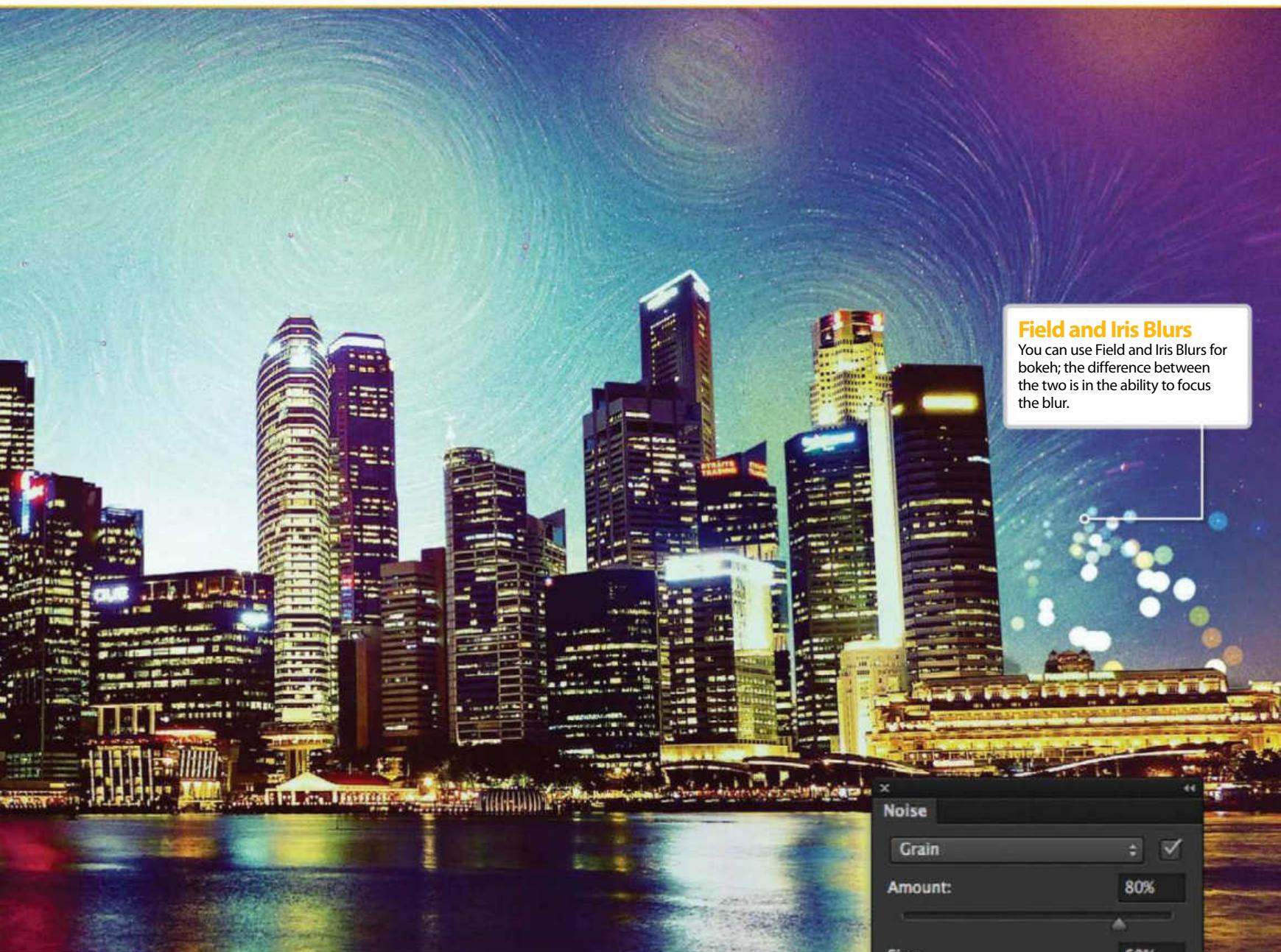
Iris Blur

Iris Blur is extremely similar to the Field Blur in that it can create a simple, sparkly bokeh effect, but it can also focus its attention on one particular area, such as a subject, using a ring that can be resized and set to control the blur on your composition.



Tilt Shift

Adding a Tilt Shift to a cityscape like the one above can give this cool toy-town effect; all you have to do is align the guides so that the centre falls within the focused area of the buildings. Then you can use a large grain to create a smoggy effect in the sky.



Field and Iris Blurs

You can use Field and Iris Blurs for bokeh; the difference between the two is in the ability to focus the blur.



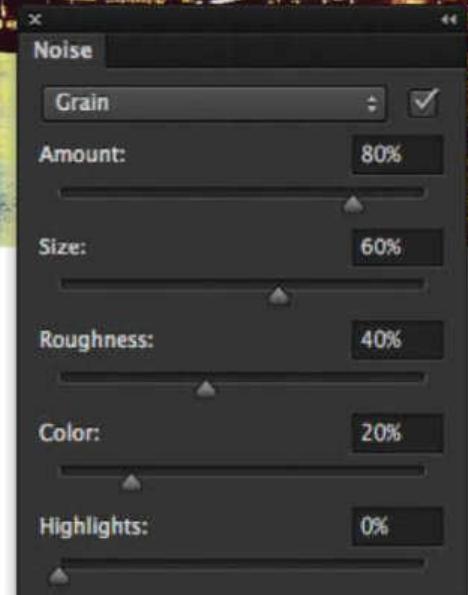
Path Blur

You can use the Motion Blur to suggest speed in your pictures, but the Path Blur allows you to create speed and alter the direction to a curved path. In this particular example, we've used grain to give this composition a classic and iconic, comic-book-esque effect.



Spin Blur

Spin Blurs react quite similarly to circular Radial Blurs, only you can focus them in a specific place in your picture. This is particularly great for wheels (such as in the picture above), however the roughness of grain can add a little detail back into your shot.



Using grain

If you look at the bottom tabs on the Blur Gallery options, you'll see controls for Effects, Motion Effects and Noise. The Noise options are where you add grain to your image, and everything can be tightly controlled, from the colour of the grain to the highlights.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Lighting Effects filter

In the dark about this filter's capabilities? Allow us to light the way for you with this handy guide

In Photoshop CS6, the Lighting Effects filter saw some major improvements compared to previous versions. Its interface saw the biggest change, with a larger and friendlier preview screen. This makes applying lights much easier than before, giving you more control in the style of the effect you need.

In fact, the functionality and power of the Lighting Effects filter, when applied constructively, can provide tremendous results. Couple these with digital photography, and users are presented with a wonderland of creative opportunities. Once you've accessed the dialog box, the Presets drop menu instantly provides you with 17 separate options, counting Default. These include Soft Omni, Flashlight, Flood Light and 2 O'clock Spotlight.

Application is effortless and a live preview is ever-present in the Preview window to monitor treatment. Utilising the control nodes, users can alter the lighting direction and location. This filter also includes a highly efficient set of property options that allow users to measure and edit the intensity of common light effects such as exposure, ambience and the amount of surface reflection. All of these can be deployed to enhance and pinpoint selected image areas.

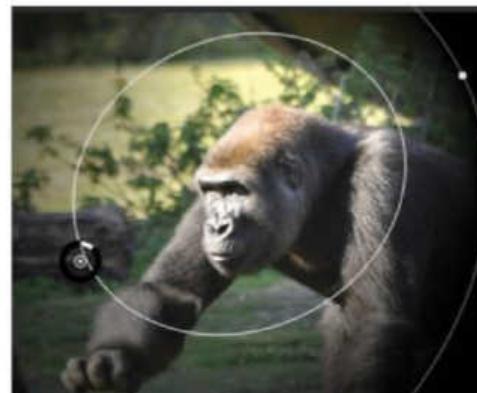
The key with this filter is in keeping it subtle. A gentle spotlight can really lift your image, but go crazy with too many lights and harsh settings, and you will cheapen your image. Still, a lot of this filter is down to trial and error, and personal preference.

"The Lighting Effects filter has seen some major improvements compared to previous versions"



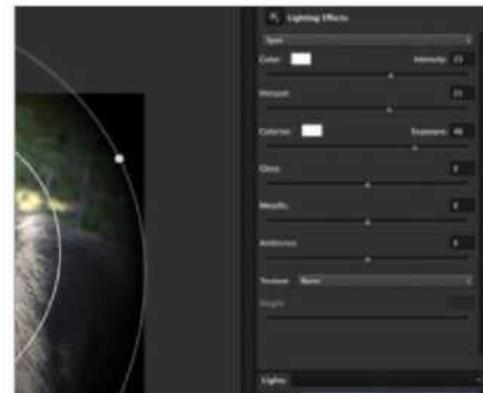
01 Locate filter

The Lighting Effects filter is grouped with Photoshop's Render options. Go into the Filter menu and open this up to begin.



02 Position the light

Use the four dots to change how much area the light source covers. Click and drag outside this area to rotate the angle of the light.



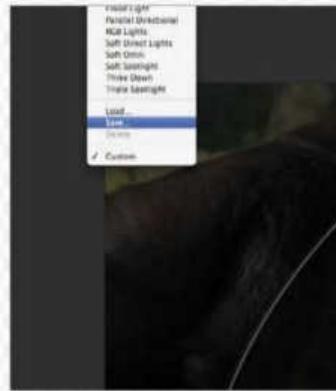
03 Alter Intensity

The Intensity controls how bright the Lighting Effect will be. Use the Color and Hotspot sliders to change the light's overall strength.

QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

Save your effects

It's not always easy to remember the exact settings used if you need to repeat an effect. Use the Save option under Presets at the top of the filter to store your personalised effects for a later date.



Add to what's there

You can use Lighting effects with other applications to enhance and create image effects such as moonlight, sunrise and sunset. Try opening a sunny image then duplicating the image. Select the Lighting Effect filter, applying a Spotlight in the appropriate 'o'clock' position. Set this to a yellow tone, set an Orange Properties tone and apply the desired settings. Clicking OK, apply a Soft Light blend mode. Create a new layer and apply an Orange Foreground to Transparent gradient, top to bottom, applying a Linear Burn, Lower Opacity to get the desired effect.





Get exposed

Understanding the functions of the properties is essential. Exposure works by increasing (positive values) or decreasing (negative values) light across the image. A value of 0 has no effect.

Matte or shiny

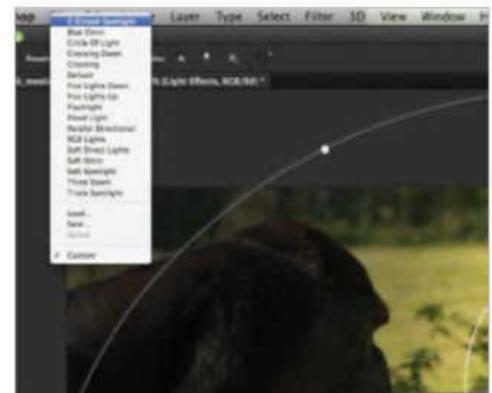
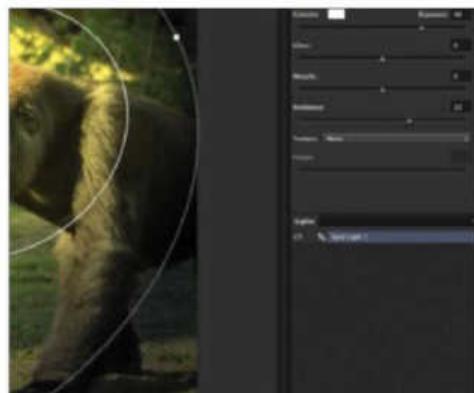
Gloss determines how much the surface of the image reflects light, from a matte effect (low reflectance) to a shiny effect (high reflectance), much like it does on actual paper surfaces.

Reflect on it

The Metallic slider determines which is more reflective: the light itself or the object on which it's cast.

Ambience

Ambience acts as a light diffuser in your image. It combines with the lighting, so the more negative the value the more it removes, and the more positive the more it uses only the light source.



04 Add colour

To add a splash of colour to tint the light, click on the swatch next to Color. This can match the mood of your image to the subjects involved.

05 Infinite lighting

An Infinite Light adjusts the entire lighting in an image as well as brightness and positioning. Add this using the options under Lights along the top.

06 Presets

The top left of the filter has preset effects, including omni and directional lighting for more creative styles that can be adapted using the sliders.



SOURCE FILES AVAILABLE

Work with the Reduce Noise filter

Don't fall foul to low-light maladies; eliminate noise in your pictures and smooth things out with this filter

Even the best photographer has images stashed away that suffer from a severe bout of noise. The dreaded grainy effect can be unavoidable in some situations, primarily low-light or night shots, and it can taint an otherwise perfect picture.

Fortunately though, you don't have to put up with noise in your photos, because Elements offers a tool that can remove it. The Reduce Noise filter is designed for smoothing over the unsightly, overly-sharp fragments of colour that can appear at the edges of overexposed or low-resolution images. It's a

quick fix, but a powerful one, and an edit you can apply to a whole host of photos just to give them a slight patch-up.

But for optimum results, the Reduce Noise filter works best if you combine it with a slight blurring. It's a useful filter on its own, but like so many features in Photoshop and Elements, there's no end to the potential of the Reduce Noise filter if you know how to harness it well. By editing non-destructively and sharpening the picture again with the original layer, you have the perfect noise removal system. Read on to find out how it's done.



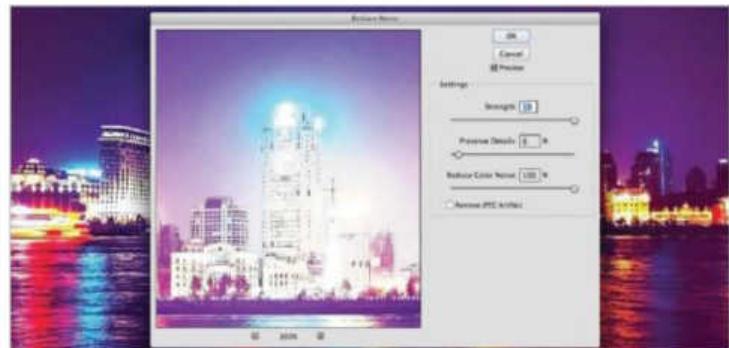
Banish the noise

Combine this filter with a blur and a mask



01 Duplicate your layer

To edit non-destructively, it's always a good idea to duplicate your original layer. In this case though, we're going to make some drastic changes to the picture, so we definitely need to save the original layer to bring details back into the edited layer.



02 Find Reduce Noise

On your duplicate layer, go to Filter>Noise>Reduce Noise. We have gone for the highest possible Strength and Reduce Color Noise settings. Don't worry too much about preserving details at this stage, as we're going to do that with the original layer.



03 Blur leftover noise

The Reduce Noise filter is great at reducing the vast majority of noise in a picture. Just to finish off your edit though, head to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and add a blur of 1.5px, just to smooth over any remaining noise in the picture.

04 Mask back detail

Add a mask to this now blurry, indistinct layer. With a soft, black brush, start masking the details of the picture that you want to show through. Lights can be somewhat blurrier, but the buildings in the picture should be clearer now.

Creative noise fixes

How else can you overcome noise in your pictures?



Apply soft focus

Blurring a picture is a really great way to hide the grain, as we did in the tutorial, and soft focuses can soften the whole picture and add a nice glow. Simply duplicate your layer, add a Gaussian Blur and set to Screen.



Lighten the layer

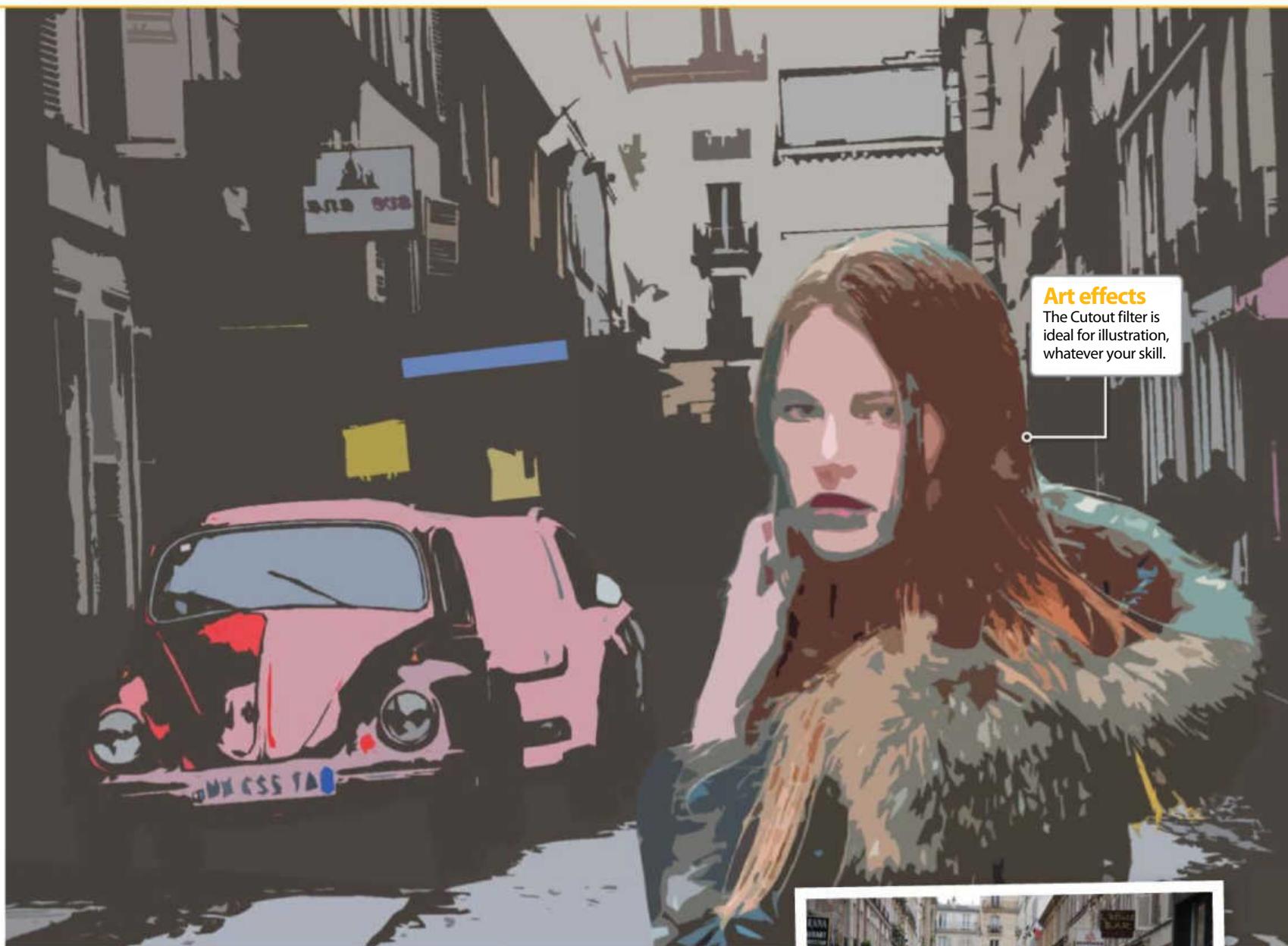
Noise often appears in dark areas. By creating a new layer with a dark colour, and setting it to Lighten, you can get rid of the noise in the picture and create this cool effect; the picture looks as if it were taken by a retro camera.



Embrace the noise

If you can't get rid of noise, why not embrace it? Go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise and create a classic, grainy photo that looks like it's stood the test of time. It's a nice effect and one that can make use of your natural noise.

Filters



Art effects

The Cutout filter is ideal for illustration, whatever your skill.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Use the Cutout filter creatively

It's a simple command, but great for illustrative effects

So many of the filters that you find in the Filter Gallery are, on first glance at least, one-dimensional. Turning photos into sketches or swapping reality for paint daubs might seem like tricks that you'll never use, but the Filter Gallery options can be used imaginatively.

Take the Cutout filter, for example. It may look like a simple feature to create low-poly art, but it's a tool that you can use to create really cool posters. While most advanced users of Photoshop rely on the Pen tool to make pin-point

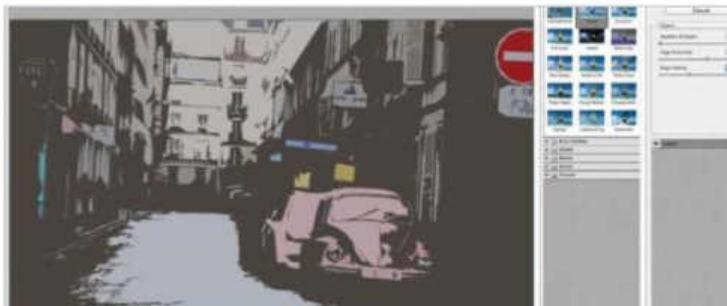
drawings and convert their pictures to cartoons, the Cutout tool can do it in a single click. You can make detailed pictures or blocked cartoons; there's a lot of scope to be creative. But how can you get the most out of this simple filter? By making compositions, of course, consisting of different layers with different levels of the Cutout filter applied. Worried that it sounds complicated? It's easier than you think! Check out our short tutorial on how to create this classy poster – you'll never see the Filter Gallery in the same light again.

ORIGINAL



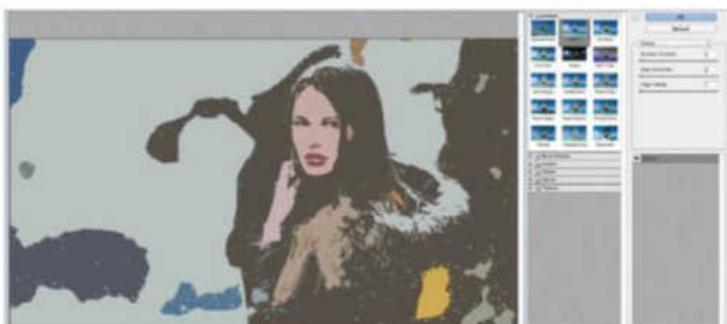
Composite and Cutout

Use the Cutout on two pictures, and combine the best of both



01 Set the background

First, deal with the background. Head to Filter>Filter Gallery>Artistic, and go to the Cutout option. We want the background to be low in detail, to draw the attention to the subject, so use Levels: 2, Simplicity: 6 and Fidelity: 2.



02 Select the subject

Open the subject as a new file if it makes it easier. Select the subject using a Quick Selection. Ctrl/right-click and then choose the Refine Edge option to iron out any edges – don't worry too much about this, though.



03 Mask and Cutout

Click the Mask icon, and go to Filter>Filter Gallery. Choose Cutout again and use Levels: 2, Simplicity: 0 and Fidelity: 2 for more detail than before. With the mask in place, only the subject will be cut out, and the background will be invisible.

04 Combine them

Duplicate your layer of the original document by Ctrl/right-clicking. Position your subject and go to Enhance>Adjust Color to change the colour if you want. You can adjust everything as a whole on a layer with Hue/Saturation and individual shades with Replace Color.

Additional uses

Cutouts can be used in all kinds of projects...



Create thresholds

Use the Cutout on pictures with the lowest simplicity possible, and you'll most likely be left with two colours, possibly three. These two or three-colour pictures look classy, and can make great posters on their own.



Give HDR toning

If you want to apply dark and light shades over the top of your picture, but don't want to manually brush them, duplicate your image and use a Cutout. Lower the opacity and change the blend mode to Soft Light for an HDR effect.

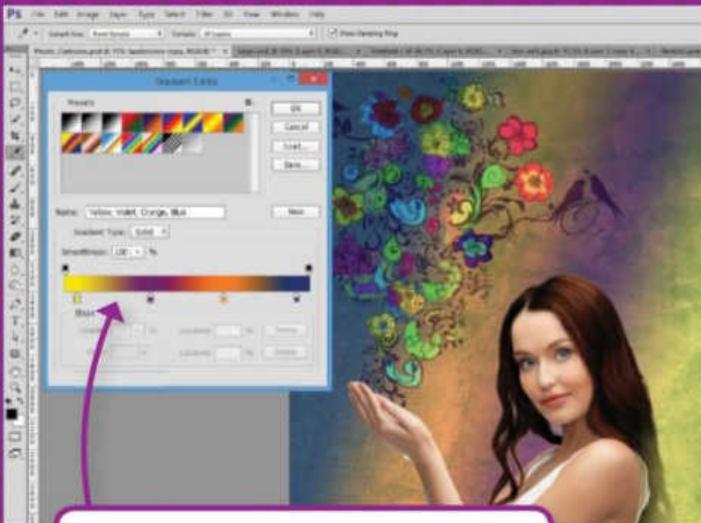


Mix cartoon

Create intriguing compositions by selecting your subject, duplicating to a new layer and applying Cutout to the background. This blurs cartoons and reality; or why not blur Cutouts with traditional cartoons or line drawings?

Creative projects

- 156** Create a panosphere
Turn a skyline into a planet!
- 160** Combine photos and illustrations
Create a unique piece of digital art
- 164** Design your own craft materials
Make your own craft elements and then print them to use in your projects
- 168** Use the Pen tool for gradient art
Produce a vibrant illustration
- 172** Make a kaleidoscope
Create a cyclical, psychedelic pattern

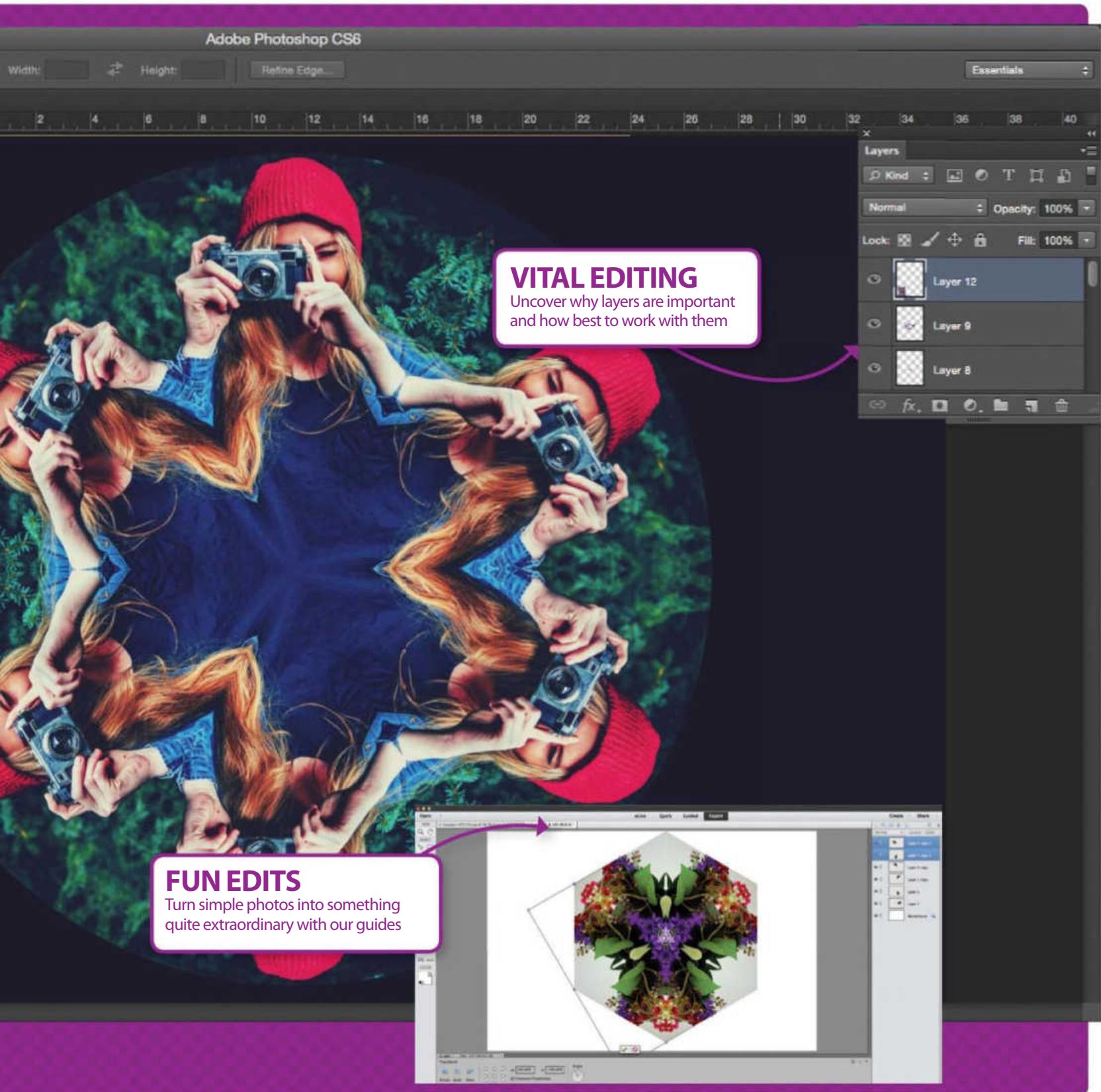


COLOUR EFFECTS

Use a gradient overlay to boost the visual impact of your artwork

“Use Photoshop to transform your ordinary images”





FUN EDITS

Turn simple photos into something quite extraordinary with our guides

VITAL EDITING

Uncover why layers are important and how best to work with them

Creative projects



SOURCE FILES AVAILABLE

Create a panosphere

Composite a skyline, turn it into a planet, and discover new worlds of possibility in Photoshop

It's all very well creating your own city in Photoshop, but what about creating an entire planet? Well, funny enough, you can go from one to the other in not very long at all if you know how.

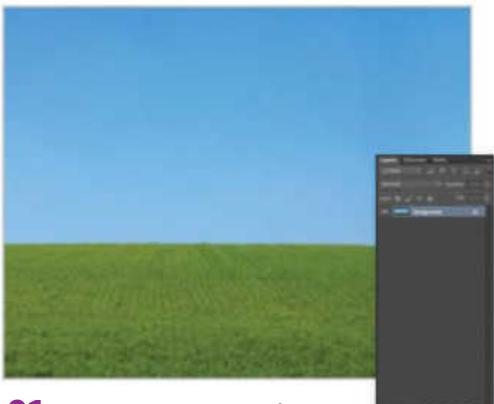
Panoramic planets, or panospheres, look inventive and exciting. They're a simple, creative way to showcase a panoramic picture in a limited square space, and often they can look far more sophisticated than the editing process actually is. Usually, they're created with just a single panorama, stretched around so the edges of the picture meet up to create a sphere. But what if you could choose your own elements for this sphere?



ORIGINALS

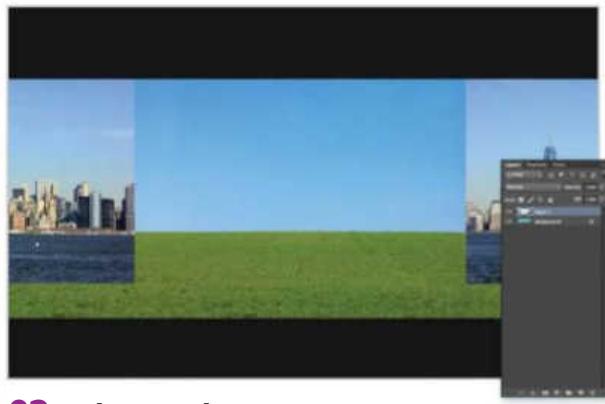


The act of compositing buildings and adding quirks to your city can be an incredibly enjoyable, wildly creative Photoshop activity. You can choose any set of buildings and landmarks to blend together, and create your own fantasy planet, as long as you know how to keep the edges seamless and flowing. Head to the FileSilo and check out the free stock photos we've provided to see if anything there will work in your image or maybe you have some of your own snaps you want to use. Now, let's delve into the world of panospheres and create the perfect landscape, before turning the whole thing into a little world of its own.



01 Open your start image

Open the start image, which is going to be the guideline for you to build your skyline onto. We need a cloudless sky for this picture so the clouds won't be distorted, and the green space will just help visually when placing icons and landmarks.



02 Halve Manhattan

Our first landmark is going to be a picture of Manhattan. Place it onto your picture and rasterise the layer. Now select half of it and Ctrl/right-click; choose Layer Via Cut. Move the right-hand side of the city to the far-left of the picture, and the left side over to the right.



03 Mask out the sky

Now we've halved the city, use Select>Colour Range to locate the blue (use the Magic Wand in Elements, contiguous unchecked), and use a Lasso to tidy up, before clicking the Mask button.



04 Insert the Eiffel Tower

The Eiffel Tower is such a striking, world-famous landmark that it's a great addition to our picture and adds a nice bit of height. Using an iconic building can be a great idea, so we're going to place it right of the centre where the action's going to be happening. Mask out the sky.



05 Add a coast

Let's focus on the opposite side now and blend the river into the town. We're going to add the beach slightly below the horizon and mask out the sky, as we did with the other pictures. We're not aiming for a realistic skyline, but you can create one if you want.



06 Bring in more beach

Add the picture of the deck chairs next to the beach and then again mask out the sky. Don't worry about the green space below this composition yet; just try and position the beach nicely onto the picture for now.



07 Start blending the beach

Use a soft brush on the masks of these two layers to blend the beach into the picture. Clone the sand texture from the deck chair picture onto the palm tree picture's layer, and make it look a bit cleaner.

EXPERT TIP

Eventually, we'll join our composition's edges up together to create a really striking panosphere. However, these edges need to match up cleanly for the image to work. After-edit cloning could take care of this particular problem, but there's also a shortcut you can use for this too. When you're compositing it together, split an image in half, and place these halves either side of the composition, as we have in the tutorial here. When the final sphere meets up in the middle, it will meet up with a side it naturally fits with.

Creative projects

EXPERT EDIT

Final adjustments



Gently clone

You may have mastered a seamless edge on your panosphere, but nothing's ever perfect, right? Use gentle cloning to fully hide the seam along the right-hand side.



Vignette the edges

You can clone along the stretched edges too, but instead, select the round edge of the sky, Ctrl/right-click>Layer Via Copy and blur at 200px for a natural vignette-style fix.



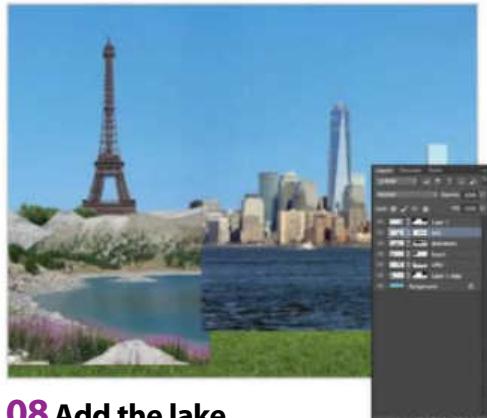
Adjustment layers

Bump up the colour with some simple Hue/Saturation, Vibrance and Curves adjustment layers. Bring out the colour in the picture, and even add a Photo filter to tone it if you like.



Enhance the lighting

Finally, add a lens flare if you like (Filter>Render>Lens Flare), and to add a subtle glow, get a soft white brush in a corner on a Soft Light layer.



08 Add the lake

Now add the lake in front of the Eiffel Tower to prepare for the next steps. Tidy your layers now; you might want to place one half of Manhattan above the lake, and the other half below the lake, for example. Split layers with Layer Via Cut.



09 Place a waterfall

Place the waterfall over the edge of the river so that it falls into the lake. If you align it as we have, the lake should level with the beach. Try to get the width of the waterfall covering the width of the river, ready to blend in a minute.



10 Blend water

Again, use masking to merge your last layer with the picture. Add the other waterfall picture into the lake and mask so that the stream flows cleanly. Even add a new layer, and with a soft, white brush, paint around the base of the waterfall for spray.



11 Blend the lake and beach

Now we're going to blend the lake in with the beach. Use soft brushes on the mask layer to show more of the beach over the rocky edges of the lake, and harder brushes to reveal more or less of the rocks situated behind.



12 Add mountains

Add the mountain images. These are good for the background, as they fill the composition and give added depth. While you're at it, add another layer, set to Color and gently brush over the river in blue to keep the various layers the same colour.



13 Bring in the valleys

Let's deal with that green block at the bottom. Paste the valley picture over the image, halve it and place it over the corners, as with Manhattan. Paste it again and go to Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal. Mask the edges, and you'll have a seamless panorama like this.



14 Blend in again

Merge the valley layers together and blend them into the picture as you have done with everything else, using masking and maybe the Clone tool. Soften harsh edges between the grass and the pasted images for a more natural look.



15 Duplicate, crop and resize

Press Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E to create a screenshot, Ctrl/right-click and duplicate to a new layer. Crop the image to get rid of excess grass and sky, then press the Constrain Aspect Ratio symbol and resize so the width is the same as the height.



16 Distort

Here comes the magical part: rotate the image 180 degrees from Edit>Transform and head to Filter>Distort>Polar Coordinates. Check Rectangular to Polar and click OK. This will join up the edges of your skyline into a sphere. Rotate again to keep the waterfall and Eiffel Tower at the top of the image.



17 Touch up and finish

Now add your finishing touches. Clone over the seam of the image – which shouldn't take much effort, thanks to your earlier editing – and add the clouds and plane. Duplicate the plane layer, set to 50% Opacity and add a Path Blur (Motion Blur in Elements) for some added effect.

What can go wrong

Keep track of masks

When crafting compositions, as much of the process is about blending as it is placing pictures into position. We've used masking extensively throughout this process, but sometimes masks can overlap, or in some cases, underlap.

In step 7, we blended the two beach images. Beforehand, we'd masked out everything we didn't need, but when we then try to clone the sand from one image to the next, it won't show up. This is because we've chosen this option; when we try and clone into some places, we might find that these destinations are masked. Make sure you unmask by brushing over masks in black wherever you want to use the Clone tool, or clone to a new layer. The great thing about masking is that it's completely editable.

RIGHT



Creative projects

ORIGINALS

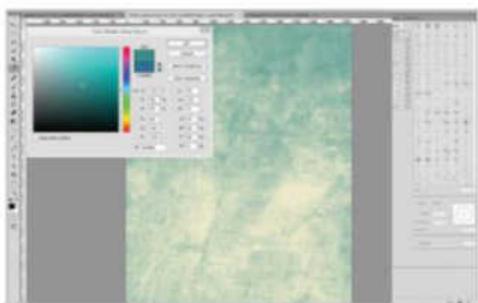


Combine photos and illustrations

Combine photos and illustrations using blending modes to create a unique piece of digital art

Combining real-life photographs with a cartoon drawing or vector image is a great way to polish your Photoshop skills. In this tutorial, we're mixing some swirly, decorative illustrations with a photo of a beautiful woman. We'll start by using basic tools such as the Quick Selection tool to create masks, and the Gradient tool to add a pleasing colour effect. We'll then get down to the business of superimposing the images with the help of blending modes, and use adjustment layers to make colour corrections and create interesting effects.

You'll practise using your own creativity to colour the image and add your own finishing touches. If you're using only a mouse to paint, don't forget to adjust the Opacity and Flow; this will give you more control over the strokes. Check the Expert Tip for more advice on this. The Expert Edit shows how to create your own flourishing design using the Pen tool. We've provided the illustrations, background image and start photo on the FileSilo, so you just need to download them and follow these easy steps to learn new techniques to apply in your own projects.



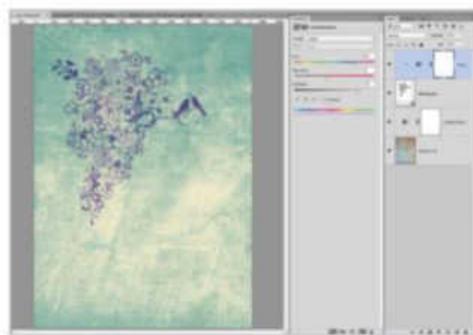
01 Quick adjustment

Open up 'Background.jpg' from the supplied resources. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Gradient Map and click OK. Click to edit the gradient. Set the first colour to #3c8d8a, Location: 20%, the second colour to #f3eccc, Location: 80% and hit OK.



02 Place the floral art

Go to File>Place 'Flourish_art.png'. On the Tool Option bar, set the Horizontal/Vertical scale to 80%. Drag the image to the top-left corner and hit Return/Enter. Now change the blending mode for the layer to Multiply.



03 Replace the colour

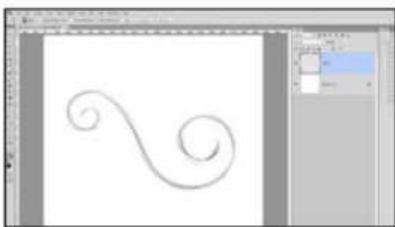
Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Now check the Colorize box and set Hue to 265, Saturation to 40 and Lightness to 55.



Creative projects

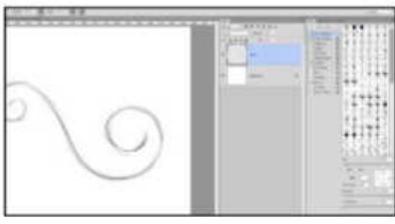
EXPERT EDIT

Create flourishes



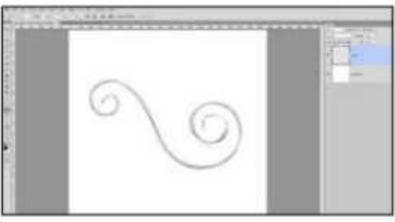
01 Draw a sketch

Create a new document (Cmd/Ctrl+N). Then grab the Brush tool (B). Choose a hard-tip brush and draw a rough sketch of your flourish art to mark the path.



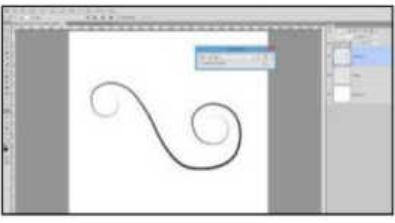
02 Set the brush

Hit F5 to open the Brush Tip Shape panel. Set the brush Size to 20px and Spacing: 1%. Now hit D on your keyboard to set the default Foreground/Background colours.



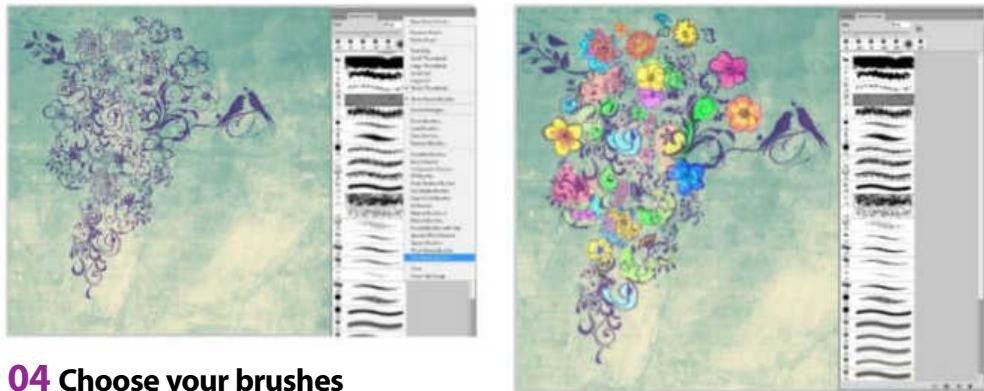
03 Use the Pen tool

Now go and grab the Pen tool (P), then click and drag outwards to set the anchor points. Use the Option/Alt or the Cmd/Ctrl keys to adjust the direction of the lines.



04 Create the stroke

Place your cursor over an anchor point and Ctrl/right-click. Choose Stroke Path, check Simulate Pressure and hit OK. Ctrl/right-click again and choose Delete Path.



04 Choose your brushes

Go first to Layer>New>Layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Colour and then drag it underneath the Flourish_art layer. Now grab the Brush tool (B). Hit F5 and click Brush Presets. Click onto the top-right corner arrow to open the drop-down menu. Select Wet Media Brushes, then you can click Append.

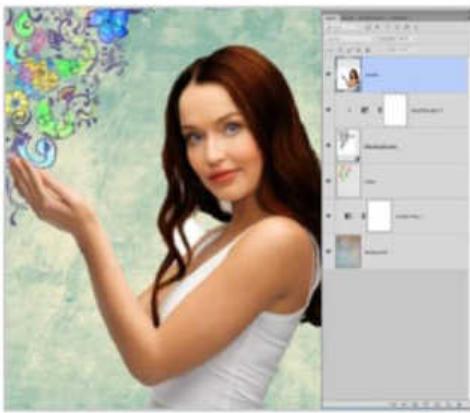
05 Select a colour

Go to Window>Swatches. On the Brush Presets palette choose the Watercolor Light Opacity brush 42. Use the Swatches and pick a vivid colour. Start painting the flowers and when you're happy, change the blend mode to Overlay.



06 Place a new image

Go to File>Place 'Woman.jpg' and hit Return/Enter. Drag the layer and place on top of the layer stack. Grab the Quick Selection tool (W). On the Tool Option bar, choose a hard-tip brush, size 70, check Auto-Enhance and then brush to select the woman.



07 Select Refine Edge

Now click Refine Edge. On the Refine Edge panel, set Smooth to 10, Shift Edge: -35%. Check Decontaminate Colors, Amount: 100% and choose Output to: New Layer with Layer Mask and click OK.

08 Soften the edges

First let's get rid of the hard edges on the bottom of the image. Hit D on your keyboard to set the default Background/Foreground colour. Then click over the layer mask and grab a soft-tip brush (B), size 250. Gently paint over the T-shirt and hair to soften the edges.



09 Correct the colour

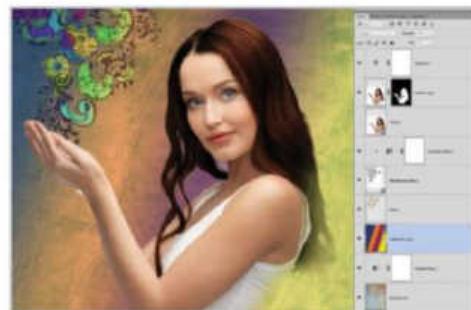
Now we need to make a quick colour correction. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Vibrance. Check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and hit OK. Set the Vibrance to +30 and the Saturation to -20.



10 Create a gradient

10 Create a gradient

Create a new layer underneath the colour layer and name it Watercolour. Grab the Gradient tool (G). Next, open the Gradient Editor and choose the Yellow, Violet, Orange, Blue preset. Select Linear Gradient and drag from the top left to the bottom right. Change the blend mode to Multiply and set Opacity to 70%.



11 Use a layer mask

Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All. You should set the Foreground colour to white. Grab the Brush tool (B) and then hit F5. Choose the Spatter 24 brush and resize it to 300px. On the Tool Option bar set the Opacity to 35%. Start painting diagonally around the woman to create the watercolour effect.

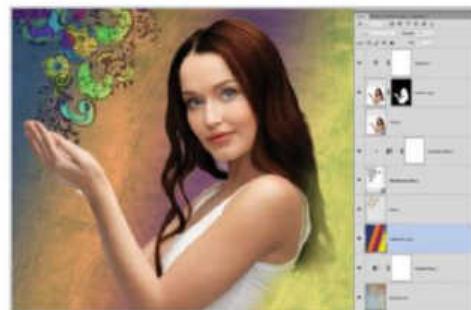


12 Add images to the hands

Go to File>Place 'Flourish3.jpg'. Change the blend mode to Multiply. Now drag the layer and place on top of the layer stack. Go to Layer>Rasterize>Smart Object. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+U, check Colorize and set Hue: 260, Saturation: 46, Lightness: 35 and click OK.

13 Create a layer mask

Place 'Flourish1.jpg' and 'Flourish2.jpg' and repeat step 12. Now create a mask for each layer and hide some areas to make the image appear as though it's slipping through her fingers.



14 Add final touches

Place 'Flourish_Art2.jpg' underneath the colour layer. Change the blend mode to Multiply and set Fill to 70%. Resize, rotate and duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+T), positioning behind the woman. Place the 'hummingbirds.png' images and 'Flower.png', and change the blend mode to Luminosity.

EXPERT TIP

Paint with the mouse

If you are using only a mouse to paint your digital art, the best way to control the strokes is to adjust the Opacity and Flow of your brush. Start with a low Opacity around 40% and set the Flow to 15%. Place the cursor over the image, click and hold as you drag to start painting, release the button and paint again to add an extra cover. Hold down Option/Alt, then Ctrl/right-click and drag left or right to decrease or increase the brush size. Move up or down to control the Hardness. Ctrl/right-click to access the contextual menu.

A screenshot of the Photoshop interface illustrating several painting techniques. A large, colorful floral sprout is on the canvas. A callout box labeled 'Contextual menu' points to a brush stroke on the canvas, explaining how to open the brush contextual menu via Ctrl/right-click. Another callout box labeled 'Use your keyboard' points to the keyboard input area, explaining how to change opacity and flow using keyboard shortcuts like 1-9 for opacity and 0-9 for flow.

Creative projects

Today's *moments*
are tomorrow's
memories



Design your own craft materials

Blend digital and traditional by making your own craft elements, and then print them to use in your projects

Crafting is a popular pastime. Card making, scrapbooking, sewing and much more mean there is something for everyone to sink their teeth into. There are plenty of online and high-street sources from which you can buy the materials that you need; things like background papers, labels, buttons, stamps and so on. Using traditional materials to create amazing designs by hand might seem the exact opposite to what Photoshop does, but our favourite image editor can actually play a large role in crafting.

All you need is a little technical know-how, a decent printer that can handle thick papers and card, and some basic cutting tools. In this tutorial, we will

show you how to create three popular crafting elements: custom papers, individual labels and also some personalised stamps.

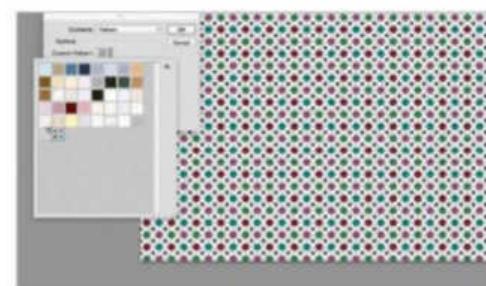
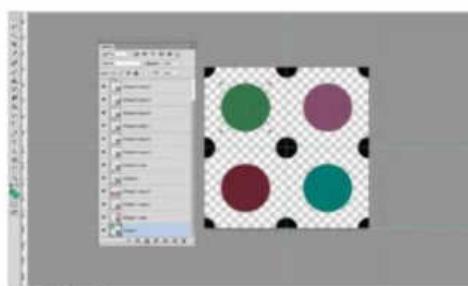
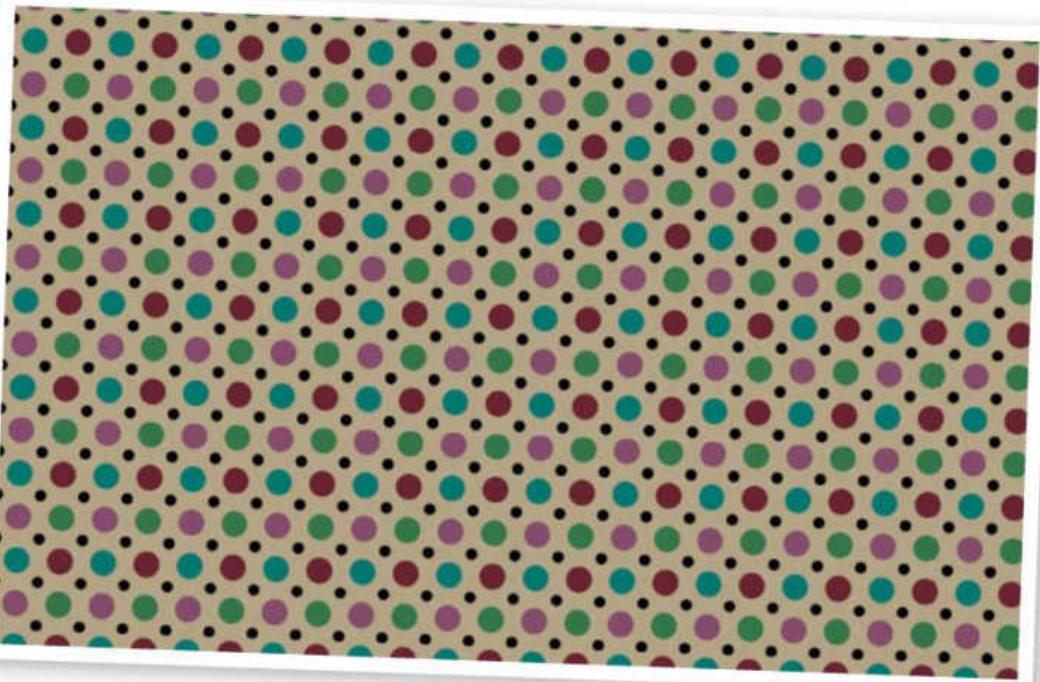
We rely on the same tools over and over again for each of these techniques, so once you have got the hang of it, you can experiment to your heart's content. We make heavy use of the Shape tools and in particular custom shapes. This is because they can be easily scaled, and the colours changed as many times as you like. We will also explore rotating patterns and a sneaky trick with the Eraser tool to create a perforated effect. Follow on and you'll soon have personalised craft materials to be proud of!

TECHNIQUE 1

Design craft papers

Use repeating patterns to make your own vivid designs for craft projects

When it comes to crafting, one of the most basic assets that you can have to hand is an array of papers with different colours and patterns. These are useful for card making or scrapbooking, for example. We'll show you how you can easily make your own in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements. Print them onto heavyweight paper to get the most use out of them.



01 Set up your tile

Start a new document. Set it to 240 x 240 pixels, 300ppi and with a Transparent background. Next, we need guides to line up our patterns, so go to View>New Guide. Type in 50% for both a horizontal guide and a vertical one.

The canvas

When you are setting up your canvas file size, you want to work in pixels and a square – our example here is 240 x 240 pixels.

02 Build your pattern

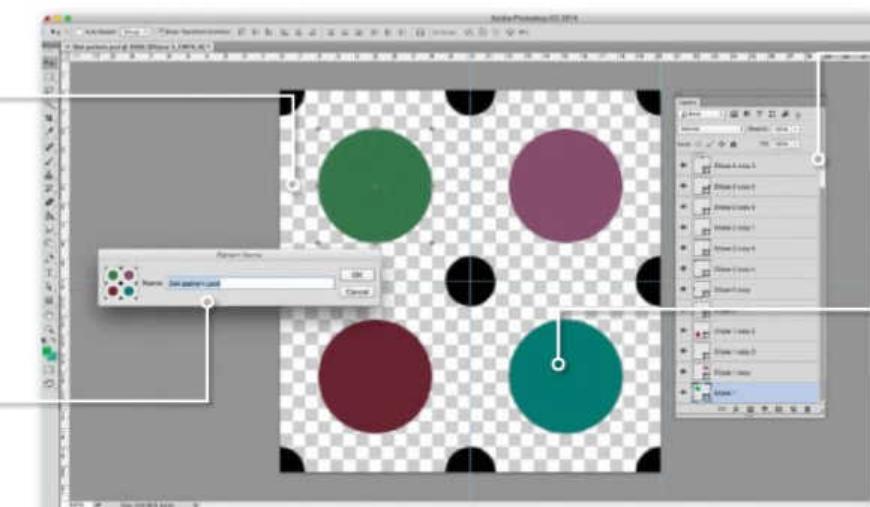
Keep your pattern symmetrical. We chose four circles, spaced in each quarter of the canvas. We then added smaller circles, bleeding off the edges so they join when the pattern is applied. Go to Edit>Define Pattern and name it.

03 Use the pattern

Open a new document, the size you want your background paper to be. Go to Edit>Fill and from the dialog box, choose Pattern and select your new pattern. As a final step, you can add a background colour to your paper as we have done.

Define pattern

When you are happy with your final design, you can then save it. Simply go to Edit>Define Pattern in order to save it to your pattern swatches.



Layer it up

Keep each shape on a separate layer in case you notice a mistake when you use the pattern and you can correct it.

Pattern design

See how we have our smaller circles going outside the pattern area; this is so that they will connect together when the pattern is repeated.

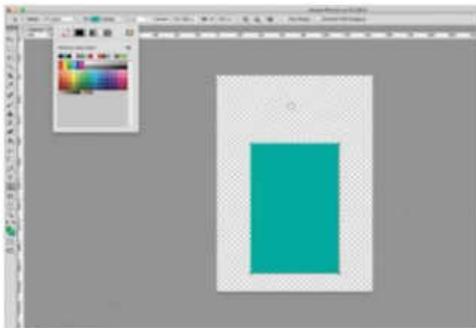
Creative projects

TECHNIQUE 2

Make lovely labels

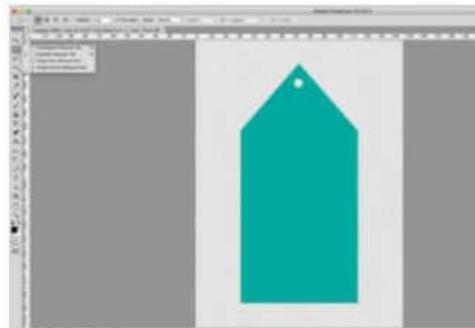
Learn to create your own simple labels and customise them again and again

There are some elements that lend themselves to almost any craft project and labels are exceptionally flexible in their use. A simple luggage label with a design on it can be very effective, or you can have arrows, quotes or space to write your own text by hand. Print them on thin card in order to give a genuine finish. You will need to cut them out carefully with a crafting blade for precise edges and use a hole punch for the hole at the top (on luggage tags).



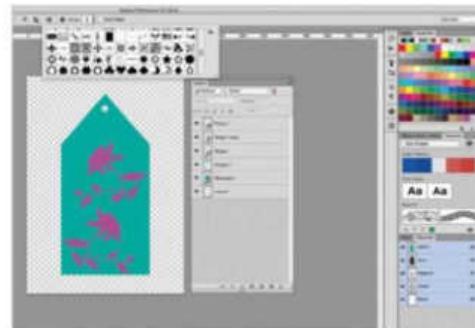
01 Build your label

We're going to start with a basic luggage label using the Shape tools. Select the Rectangle tool and draw out a shape as shown here. Fill it with your chosen colour using the options in the top toolbar. Make sure that there is no Stroke.



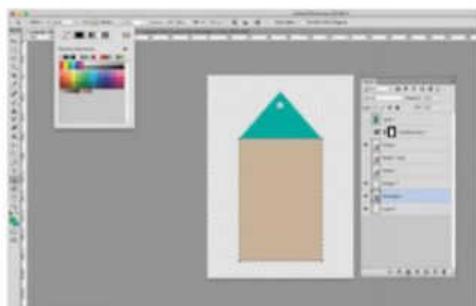
02 Top the label

Select the Polygon tool and pick '3' as the number of sides. Draw a triangle to fit the rectangle and fill with the same colour. Cmd/right-click the Polygon layer and choose Rasterize Layer. Use the Elliptical Marquee to add a hole and hit Backspace.



03 Add some flowers

Go to the Custom Shape tool and use the drop-down menu in the top toolbar to scroll through the shapes. We chose flowers, but pick anything you like and fill with complementary colours to suit your design. Save your layered document.



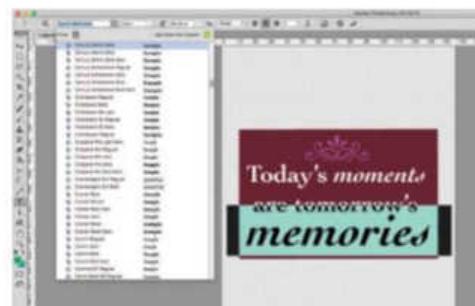
04 Reuse and customise

Now you have a basic label, you can use it to create many more designs. Open your layered label and save it under a new name. Turn off all the layers except for the basic label shape, and then fill it with a new colour.



05 Insert text

Let's add some text. Use the Text tool and choose a suitable font. Type your text and then hover over the corners of the text box until you see a curved arrow – you can now drag to rotate the text. We used the Line tool to add two lines on either side.



06 Another iteration

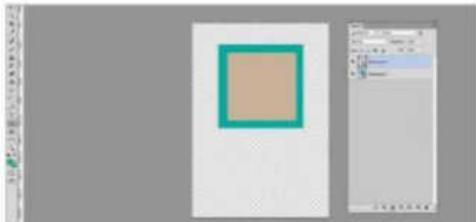
Again, save this new design, reopen and rename it. This time we are just keeping the first rectangle, rotating it and recolouring it. Using the Text tool, add in a nice quote with a small embellishment courtesy of the Custom Shape tool.

TECHNIQUE 3

Create stamps

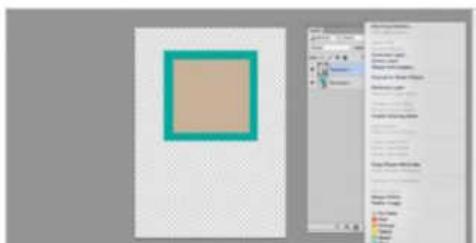
Make your own stamps for your craft projects

Stamps are great fun to design and can be a quirky addition to projects. Designing them is relatively easy, but getting the look right when printed is a bit more complex. We will design these with a perforated edge effect, but when printed you need a perforated rotary blade to cut around the stamp and give it the right look.



01 Build some boxes

Open a new document and select the Rectangle tool. Draw a box to form the stamp size. Fill with your chosen colour. Next draw a smaller box to fit inside it and fill with a complementary colour. These shapes must be right before continuing.



02 Rasterise and smudge

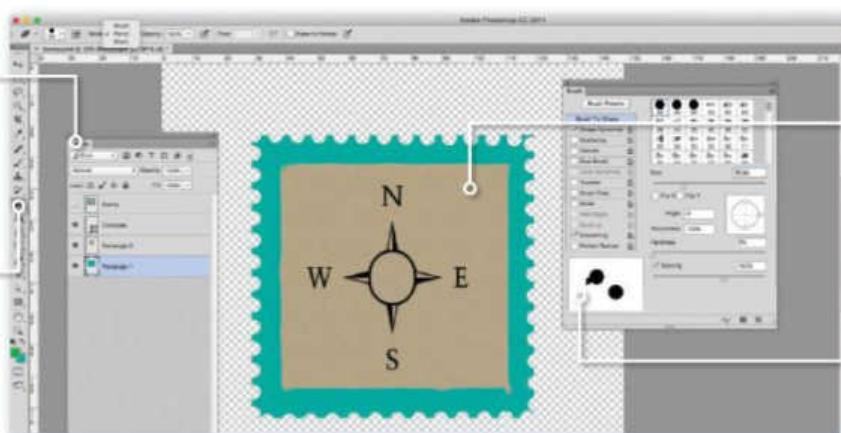
You will need to Ctrl/right-click on each layer and choose Rasterize Layer, so they can be edited. First, select the Smudge tool and make sure that the smaller rectangle is selected. Gently smudge the outer edges to break the clean lines.

Maintain layers

We keep all our layers in case we make a mistake and need to go back and change something.

Eraser tool

The Eraser tool is an easy way to create the perforated effect. Pencil is the preferred tool here, so select it from the Options bar.



03 Set to erase

Select the large square. Pick the Eraser tool. Set it to Pencil in the top Options bar. Open the Brush palette (the little folder icon with brushes on in the same top Options bar) and then set Spacing in the bottom-right to 150%.

04 Perforated effect

Draw with the Eraser tool along the edges of your stamp – use Shift for straight lines. This will cut out small, evenly spaced circles that look like perforations. To finish, we added a custom shape, this time a compass, but you could add anything.

Custom shapes

Custom shapes are brilliant for adding designs. You can download hundreds for free if there is a particular look you want.

Brush Tip Shape

In the Brush panel, with Brush Tip Shape selected you can alter the spacing between brush strokes – we have made them wide.

Creative projects



Use the Pen tool for gradient art

Become the master of the Pen tool and create a vibrant illustration

Have you ever sketched a drawing by hand and wondered what it would look like digitally? The best way to achieve this in Photoshop is to trace it using the Pen tool.

There are three options to choose from when using the Pen tool: Vector, Path or Pixel. Using the Options bar, there is a set of three icons on the left. The first icon is the Shape Layer option and this is for drawing vector shapes.

A vector is made up of mathematical points connected by either a straight line or a curve. Don't worry too much about the mathematical aspect of a vector though; just focus on drawing the shape. Another great thing about vectors is that each time you make a change to the shape, either by resizing or reshaping it, you won't lose the image quality or resolution. Follow this guide and see for yourself. The sketch is provided on the FileSilo.



01 Begin the process

Start by drawing out your illustration or open up 'Gradient_StartImage.jpg' from the FileSilo. We will be using the illustration as a guide. As you begin to draw all of the elements into Photoshop, you may want to free-hand new additional aspects of the illustration.

02 Select New Group

Keeping your Layers palettes organised will become useful as you progress. Within your Layers palette, you will have an option called New Group; select it and call your folder Foreground. Within that folder make a new one called Mushroom and then another called Mushroom roof.

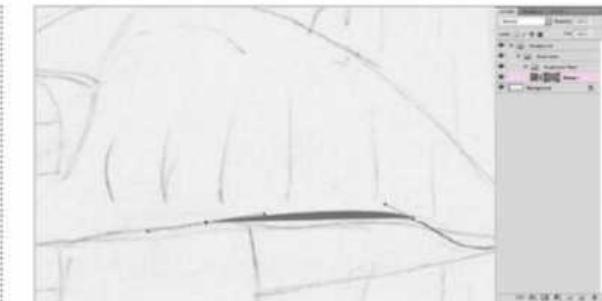
03 Choose Shape layers

Select the Pen tool (P). Use this tool to trace over your original drawing. Make sure you select the Shape layer on the top-left of the Pen tool toolbar. This will allow you to create vector shapes. Plus, every time you close a path, a new layer will automatically be added to your Layers palette.

Creative projects

EXPERT TIP

With this type of illustration you will be using a lot of different colours. For easy and accurate colour selection, the Swatches palette provides hundreds of the most used colours. However, if you want to use your own specific colour scheme you can customise the swatch palette to display your choice of colour. To do this set the foreground colour to the colour you wish to save as a swatch. Then, from the swatch palette drop down menu click New Swatch.



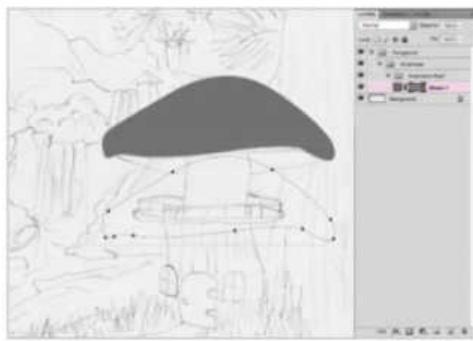
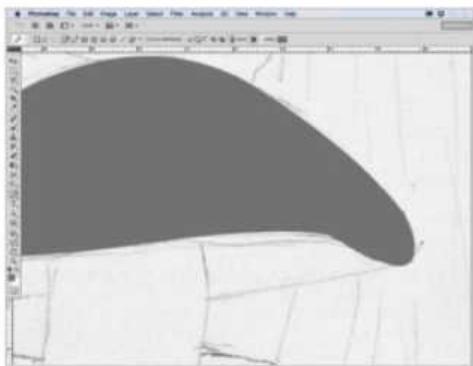
04 Create anchor points

To create your first anchor point, click on the canvas at the point you want to start. Create a second anchor by clicking a few millimetres away from the first. To create a curve, position the Pen tool where you want the curve to begin, hold down the mouse button and then drag.



05 Change direction

You will soon get to a point where you will want to alter the direction of your curve. After you have clicked and dragged to create the curve, you can directly press Option/Alt+click and move the tangent point into the correct position; then continue onwards.



07 Move vector shapes

Once you have closed the path to your first shape you will notice that the tangents have disappeared. Select the Path Selection tool (A) and click on your shape to select and/or move the existing vector shape and to visualise where your tangents are for editing them if necessary.



08 Select Gradient Overlay

To add a gradient to your shape, click the layer's shape to bring the Layer Style. Select the Gradient Overlay, click on the Gradient bar to bring up the Gradient editor. Make the first colour stop a light red and the second a darker red, then hit OK.

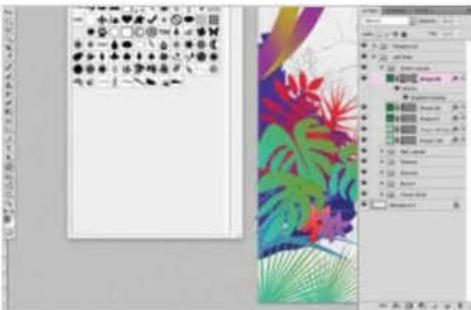


09 Continue drawing

Finish drawing the rest of the mushroom using the techniques from steps 2 to 8. Now, draw the base of the grass and the pathway (make sure the layers are below the rest of the mushroom). Give the grass a green gradient and make the path a solid light brown.

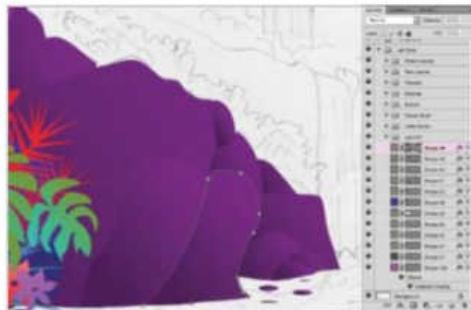
10 Duplicate shapes

To create some grass strands head to the Custom Shape tool and select the 'Grass 2' shape. Click, drag and release to create the shape and then give it the same green gradient as the grass base. To duplicate, click Cmd/Ctrl+J on the layer's shape and use Path Selection tool to move to place. Repeat to create all the strands.



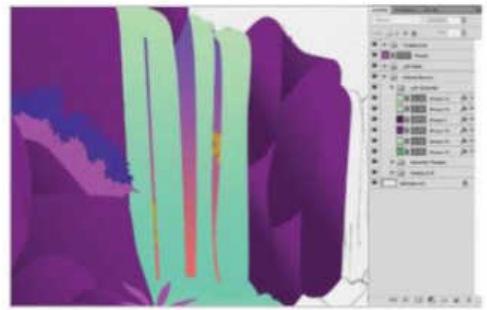
11 Add landscape shapes

Open 'Landscape Shapes', from your source, by double-clicking the file to open the shapes into your Custom Shapes. Select the Custom Shapes tool and notice the new shapes. Create the bush using the shapes and give them vibrant gradients using the same technique as step 8.



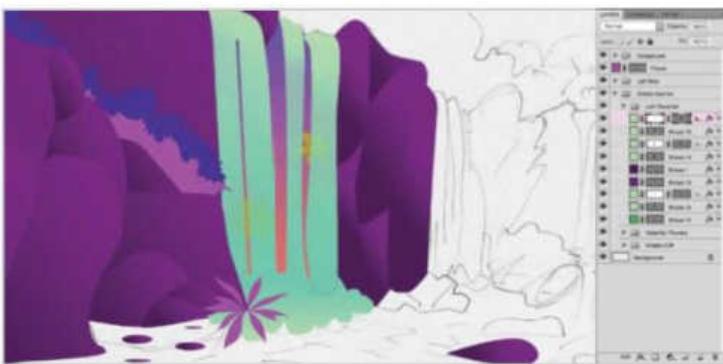
12 Add gradient rocks

When drawing the rocks to produce the cliff shape, draw each rock into a separate shape layer; give them the same purple gradient. Even though each rock has the same gradient, they haven't blended in together; instead the gradient has helped you make a more realistic cliff.



13 Insert the waterfall

Start by drawing the cliff around the waterfall and add a purple and pink gradient as the water behind the waterfall, then add two yellow flowers. Next, draw the waterfall giving it an aqua gradient. Make sure the waterfall folder with its shape layers is above all the other layer folders.



14 Adjust water transparency

Notice after you drew the waterfall you lost the visibility of the flowers. To bring them back, duplicate the waterfall layers. Give the original layers a 60% Opacity and add a mask to the duplicated layers. Grab the Brush tool, with a soft 40% Opacity brush and simply brush away the areas over the flowers.

15 Finish off

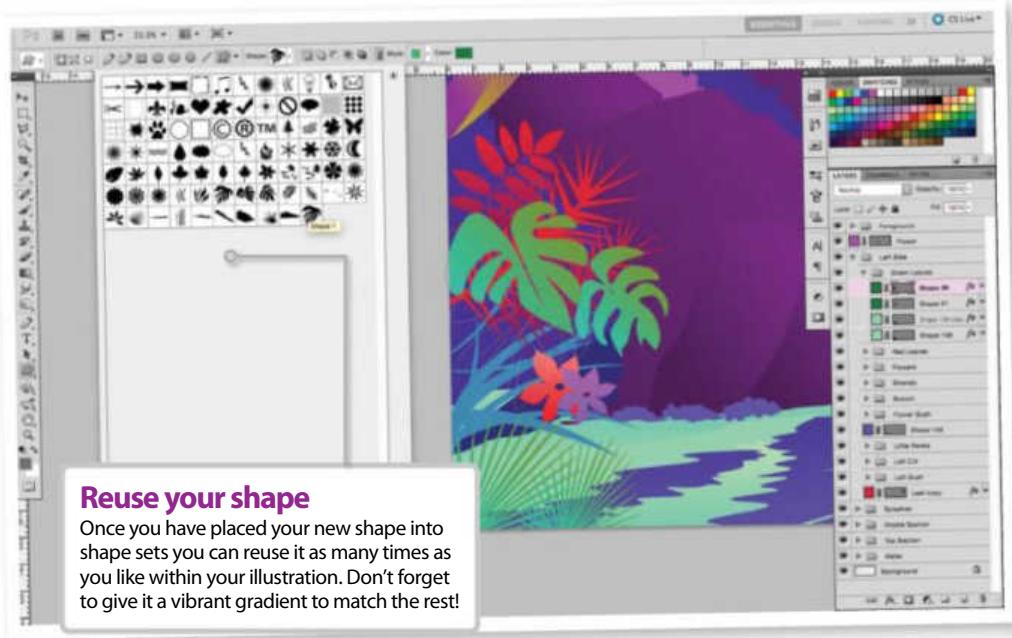
Carry on drawing the rest of your illustration, using as many as the custom shapes to build up the illustration and using lots of vibrant gradients. Using all the same techniques from the previous steps. You don't have to stick to the sketch, try to be as creative as possible.

EXPERT TIP

Create your own shapes

Within this tutorial the landscape greenery was provided for you, however, why don't you take a crack at making your own shapes that you can reuse as many times as you like.

To create your own custom shapes, draw your object (a leaf, for example) as usual, using the Pen tool; making sure Shape Layers is selected. Once you have drawn your shape, select it using the Path Selection tool and then go to Edit>Define Custom Shape... Then name your new shape and hit OK. Next, head over to the Custom Shape tool and your new shape will be ready and waiting.



Reuse your shape

Once you have placed your new shape into shape sets you can reuse it as many times as you like within your illustration. Don't forget to give it a vibrant gradient to match the rest!

Creative projects



ORIGINAL



Create a kaleidoscope

With the help of the Shape tool in Photoshop Elements, make a cyclical, psychedelic-inspired pattern

There are all kinds of wacky, colourful and abstract effects you can create in Photoshop and Elements, using your existing pictures as a start point. Some of them are simply a slight adjustment of reality; maybe an unusual colour combination or distortion of objects. However, there are others available that look positively psychedelic and surreal, while still managing to retain the original identity of your picture, almost as if you're twisting the reality of your own photos.

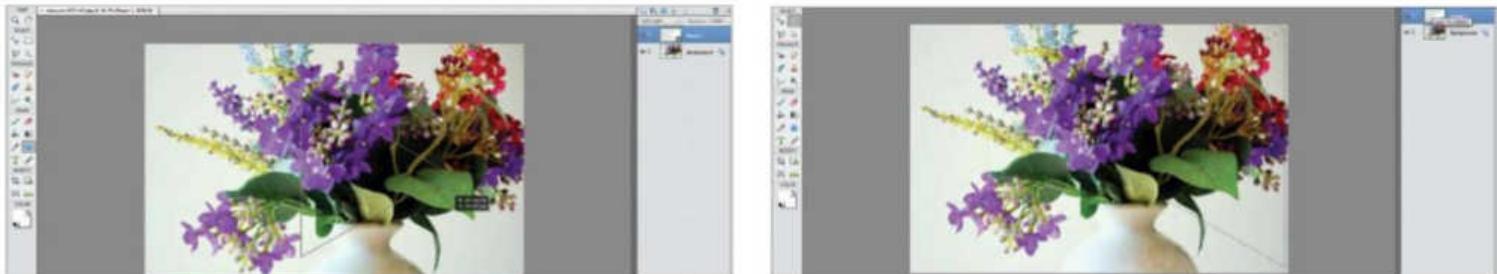
A kaleidoscope effect is a perfect example of exactly that. It's a fun novelty effect that you might want to apply to your profile picture for social media, or

it's a technique that you can use for creating seamless textures or cool images for compositions. Either way, there are a lot of skills that can be learnt in this tutorial that can help you out in other projects.

Transforming, flipping, mirroring and selecting all come in useful whether you're making drastic photo edits, as in this example, or just the most basic of compositions. Ultimately though, kaleidoscopes are intended to be simple, fun effects, and they can change the way you see the original image. Check out our guide on how to create them, and then apply what you have learnt to your pictures. Maybe then print them out for some eye-catching wall art.

Produce the pattern

Turn any picture into a magical design



01 Make the shape

Start off by heading to the Shape tool on the left-hand panel of Photoshop Elements. Click on the Polygonal option and choose three sides of your picture. Drag over your picture and hold the Shift key in order to keep the aspect ratio of the triangle. Place at the section that you'd like to be duplicated in your kaleidoscope.



03 Start duplicating

Now you have your triangle in a new document, duplicate this triangle and rotate it to form your kaleidoscope. Alt/Opt-drag the marker in the centre to the corner to rotate your shapes around that specific corner and hold Shift to lock into place. Ctrl/right-click to flip your shapes vertically and create the mirrored effect.



02 Select the shape

Once you've decided exactly which section of your picture you want to turn into a kaleidoscope, hide the triangle layer. Click on your Background layer and Cmd/Ctrl+click the shape layer's thumbnail to select that specific area on your Background layer. Ctrl/right-click to Layer Via Copy and then Ctrl/right-click to duplicate to a new document.



04 Finish the hexagon

Continue duplicating, rotating and flipping your selection until you have a hexagon such as this one above. You might want to stop here, as this is a realistic kaleidoscope effect that you might see down the end of a tube, but if you like, go ahead and continue duplicating until the whole canvas is covered with your pattern.

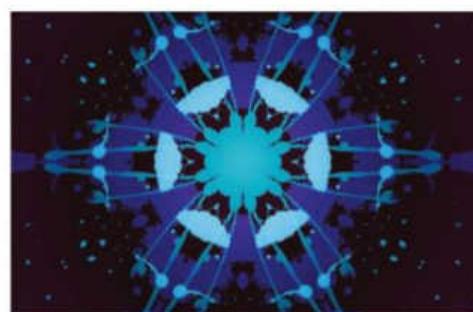
Variations of the effect

Other types of kaleidoscopes you can create



Circular

This effect looks great with a portrait. Simply create the hexagon of triangles as we did before, and then use the Elliptical Marquee to select a circle from the centre before you hit the mask icon to erase any unwanted areas.



Abstract

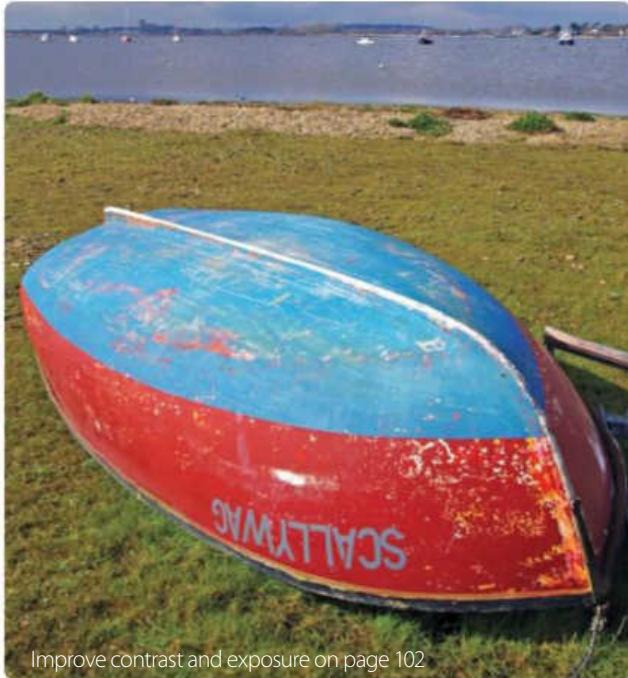
Sometimes, the best kaleidoscopes are ones where you can't make out the shapes and objects. Create shapes with some splatter brushes, halve the starting triangle and flip half of the brushwork for a mirrored effect.



Square

Crop a perfect square at a 45-degree angle, before doubling your canvas size, flipping and mirroring your square to create an effect such as this one above. It's a good kaleidoscope for an easily-recognisable image.

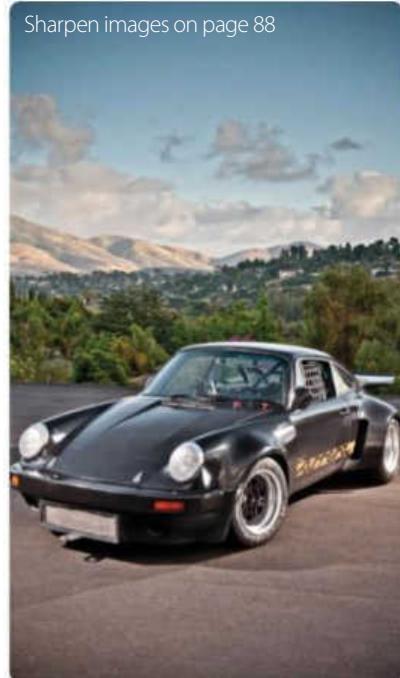
Glossary of key terms



Improve contrast and exposure on page 102



Work with Brush Presets on page 128



Sharpen images on page 88

Adjustment layers

These are non-destructive layers that enable you to make changes to your image, without affecting your original. You can also go back to adjustment layers and change the settings at a later date.

Artifact

We use this term when images are saved as JPEGs or shot in low light with noise. Artifacts are unwanted elements that appear when heavy compression or editing has occurred.

Background layer

This is the original layer that you open in Photoshop. By default this layer is locked to protect it from changes, double-click on the layer to turn it into a regular, editable layer.

Blending mode

The blending mode options in the Layers palette determine how the pixels in the layer interact with the pixels in the layers below it.

Brush Preset

Photoshop comes with Presets for brushes meaning that different combinations of size and thickness, have been stored for you to use. Create your own if you find a brush setup that works for you. (Fig 2).

Camera Raw

This is Photoshop's built-in RAW-processing plug-in, which enables you to open photographs that have been shot in the RAW format, rather than JPEG.

Clipboard

This is where file elements are stored if you cut or copy from one image to another. If the Clipboard gets too full, then you might find that it starts to slow processing.

Clone

The technique of taking a clean area from a photograph and applying it over a flawed area of an image. This is done with the Clone Stamp tool. Click on the clean area while pressing Opt/Alt to 'source' the sample, then paint over the flaw.

CMYK

This stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black, which is a common Image Mode for printing. Photoshop Elements does not support CMYK images. Most printers will convert RGB images into CMYK for printing, but if you have Photoshop you may want to work in CMYK so you can see how the final image will look more accurately. Some filters and adjustments only work in RGB.

Colour cast

When an unwanted colour is 'cast' over your photograph. The Color Balance command can fix this.

Contrast

The difference between light and dark areas in any given image, can be altered using Levels and Curves, as well as the Brightness/Contrast command.

Crop

This is the act of trimming an image, discarding unwanted pixels from the final composition. (Fig 1).

DPI

This stands for Dots Per Inch and it is a measure of printer resolution. Use higher DPI settings for better prints. We recommend working at 300dpi where possible.

Duotone

This is the term for a grayscale image that uses two colour inks to tint photos. Not available in Elements.

Exposure

The amount of light in which a photograph is taken. Fix both underexposure (too dark) and overexposure (too light) in Photoshop.



Feathering

When you make selections, the Feather command softens the edge so that it blends more naturally into the background.

Filters

Preset controls that give special effects to your photos. There are loads built into Photoshop and Photoshop Elements.

Flatten

Flatten individual layers into one, keeping file sizes down. Bear in mind that you will lose all separate layers so you won't be able to go back and change things later on.

Gaussian Blur

One of the Blur filters in Photoshop. This is one of the most common blurs and it softens through a 'bell-shaped' distribution of colour and tone.

Gradient

A smooth transition effect from one colour to another.

Grayscale

This removes all colour from an image, using just black, white and grey on one channel. There are several ways to transform an image to black and white.

Highlights

This refers to the brightest elements of any given image.

Histogram

A graph that shows how the pixels are distributed in an image. The horizontal axis shows the 'levels' from the darkest to

brightest pixels (0-255), whereas the vertical axis shows how many pixels are at each level. Aim for an even distribution of tones.

History

Your commands are saved as History States, so that you can use the History palette to backtrack if something goes wrong.

Image Mode

This is the name given to image modes, such as RGB, CMYK, etc. This can be changed by going to Image>Mode.

JPEG

This is the most common file format used by digital cameras and it does compress image information to keep file sizes down.

Layer

Overlay different images or elements over one another. (Fig 4).

Layer group

Collect layers into groups when working with multiple layers to stay organised. Group all layers that relate to the same thing.

Layer masks

Layer masks let you control how much of one layer shows through to the one below it. You paint directly on to the mask in white or black in order to reveal or hide.

Levels

This is a feature that helps you control the colour and tone in your images.

Midtone

This is the term for the area of tones that fall between the brightest and darkest pixels.

Noise

This is an artifact that shows up as grain on your photos. Most common when images have been compressed, or shot in low light. It can be removed easily.

Opacity

This is the control used in the Layers palette or in the top options bar for most tools, which determines how 'visible' or 'transparent' an effect is.

Pixel

These are the tiny, rectangular points of colour that a digital image is composed of.

PPI

This stands for Pixels Per Inch, which is a measure of image resolution used by cameras and computers.

PSD

This is Photoshop's very own file format and it can be used to save multiple layers.

Quick Mask

This – as the name suggests – is an extremely quick way of masking areas in an image in order to form a selection.

Red-eye

This is a very common flaw found in digital portrait photographs, which is caused by the use of camera flash.

Resolution

This is a measure of clarity and sharpness in an image. The higher the resolution, the better-quality the image, and print size.

RGB

This is the Red, Green, Blue image makeup that is used by computer screens.

Saturation

This is the strength of a colour and it can be altered in the Hue/ Saturation options.

Selection

A Selection, as it suggests, is the name given when you isolate a certain part of any image.

Shadows

The darkest elements in an image.

Sharpening

This is the process of enhancing details in an image. Be very careful when sharpening, as too much of it can lead to noise. (Fig 3).

Swatches

This is a selection of preset colours that you are able to pick from within Photoshop. You are also able to create or download more if you need to.

TIFF

This is a file format that is often used for printing. It is compressed in such a manner that it does not affect the image quality, be aware that it can lead to bigger file sizes.

Transform

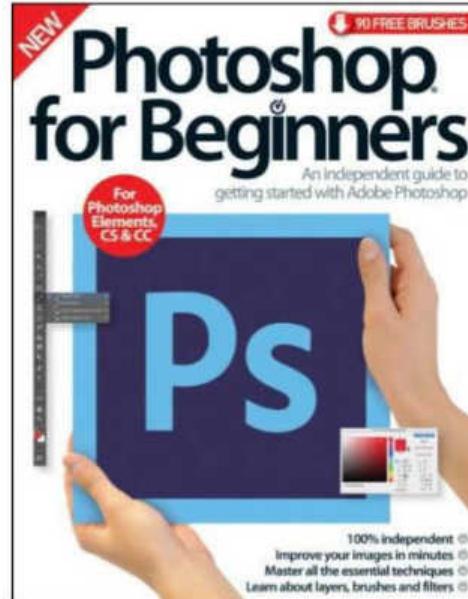
This is the set of controls that enables you to distort, skew, scale, and so on, an image, as you wish.

Unsharp Mask

A popular filter in Photoshop that is used for sharpening, because it increases the detail in images.

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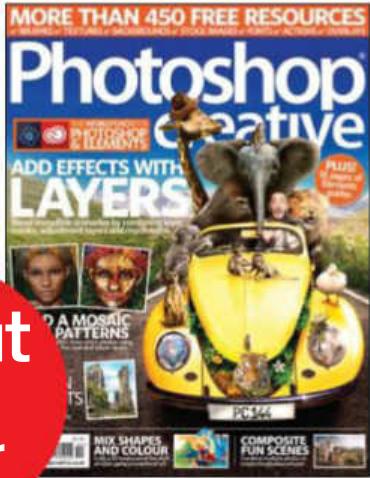
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