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Photoshop® for Beginners

An independent guide to getting started with Adobe Photoshop

For Photoshop Elements, CS & CC



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

PS



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Digital Edition

FUTURE FIFTEENTH EDITION

- ⌚ Improve your images in minutes
- ⌚ Master all the essential techniques
- ⌚ Learn about layers, brushes and filters

Welcome to **Photoshop®** for **Beginners**

Photoshop is undoubtedly the industry standard in photo and graphics editing, as more and more people are utilising its image-transforming capabilities with each new version. Whether you use Photoshop CC, Photoshop CS or Photoshop Elements, the array of buttons and icons on the interface might be daunting if you're not familiar with the software, but – like most things – it's simple once you've mastered the basics. From straightforward photo-editing skills to colour corrections, filters and selections, this new edition of Photoshop for Beginners will guide you through all the techniques you need. 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

Future PLC Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill,
Bournemouth, Dorset, BH2 6EZ

Editorial

Editor **Sarah Banks**
Designer **Helen Harris**
Editorial Director **Jon White**
Senior Art Editor **Andy Downes**

Advertising

Media packs are available on request
Commercial Director **Clare Dove**
clare.dove@futurenet.com

International

International Licensing Director **Matt Ellis**
matt.ellis@futurenet.com

Circulation

Head of Newstrade **Tim Mathers**

Production

Head of Production **Mark Constance**
Production Project Manager **Clare Scott**
Advertising Production Manager **Joanne Crosby**
Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**
Production Managers **Keely Miller, Nola Cokely,**
Vivienne Calvert, Fran Twentyman

Management

Chief Operations Officer **Aaron Asadi**
Commercial Finance Director **Dan Jotcham**
Head of Art & Design **Greg Whitaker**

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Chief executive **Zillah Byng-Thorne**
Chairman **Richard Huntingford**
Chief financial officer **Penny Ladkin-Brand**

Tel +44 (0)1225 442 244

Part of the

Photoshop
creative
bookazine series

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first steps in
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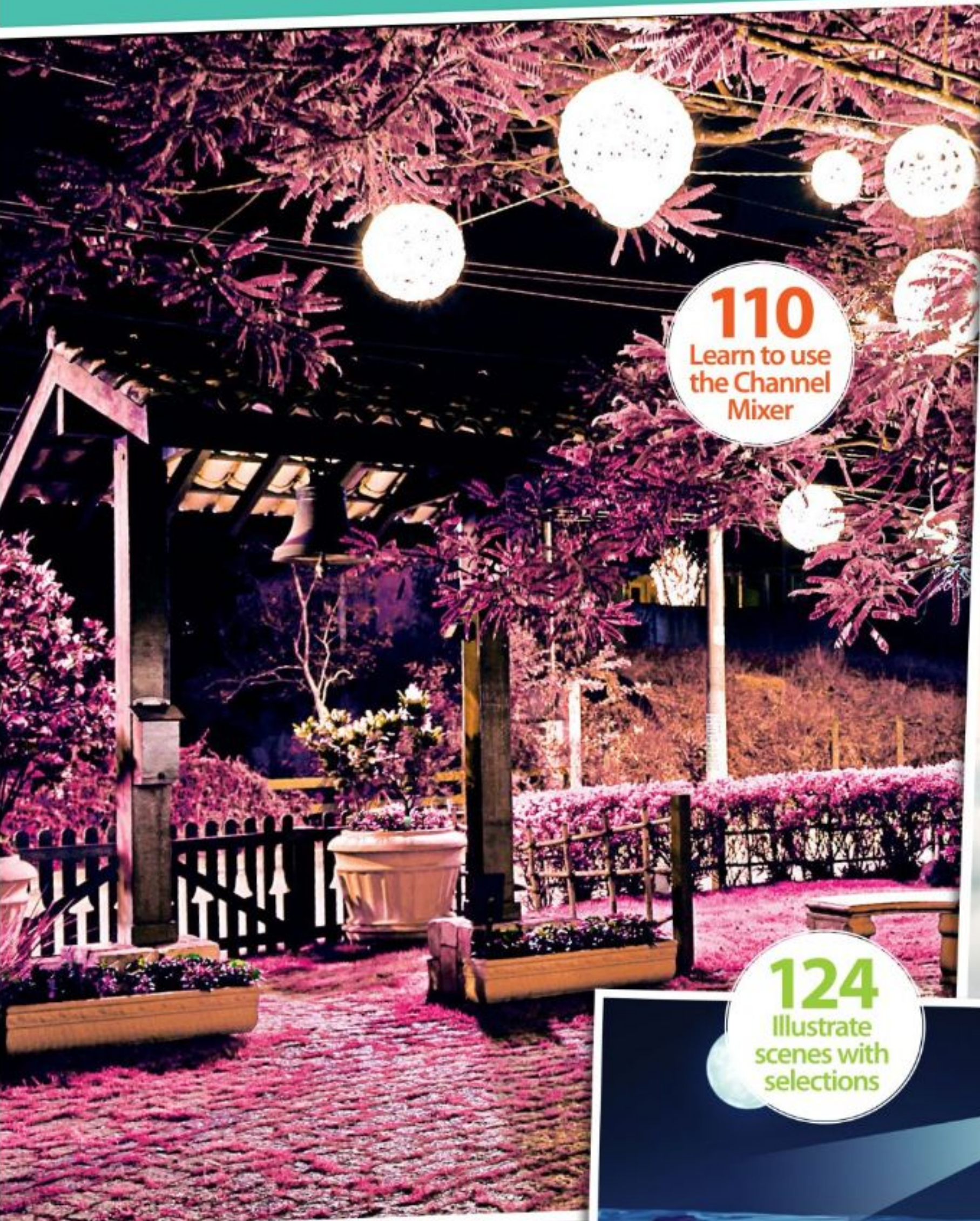
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Ultimate guide



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.

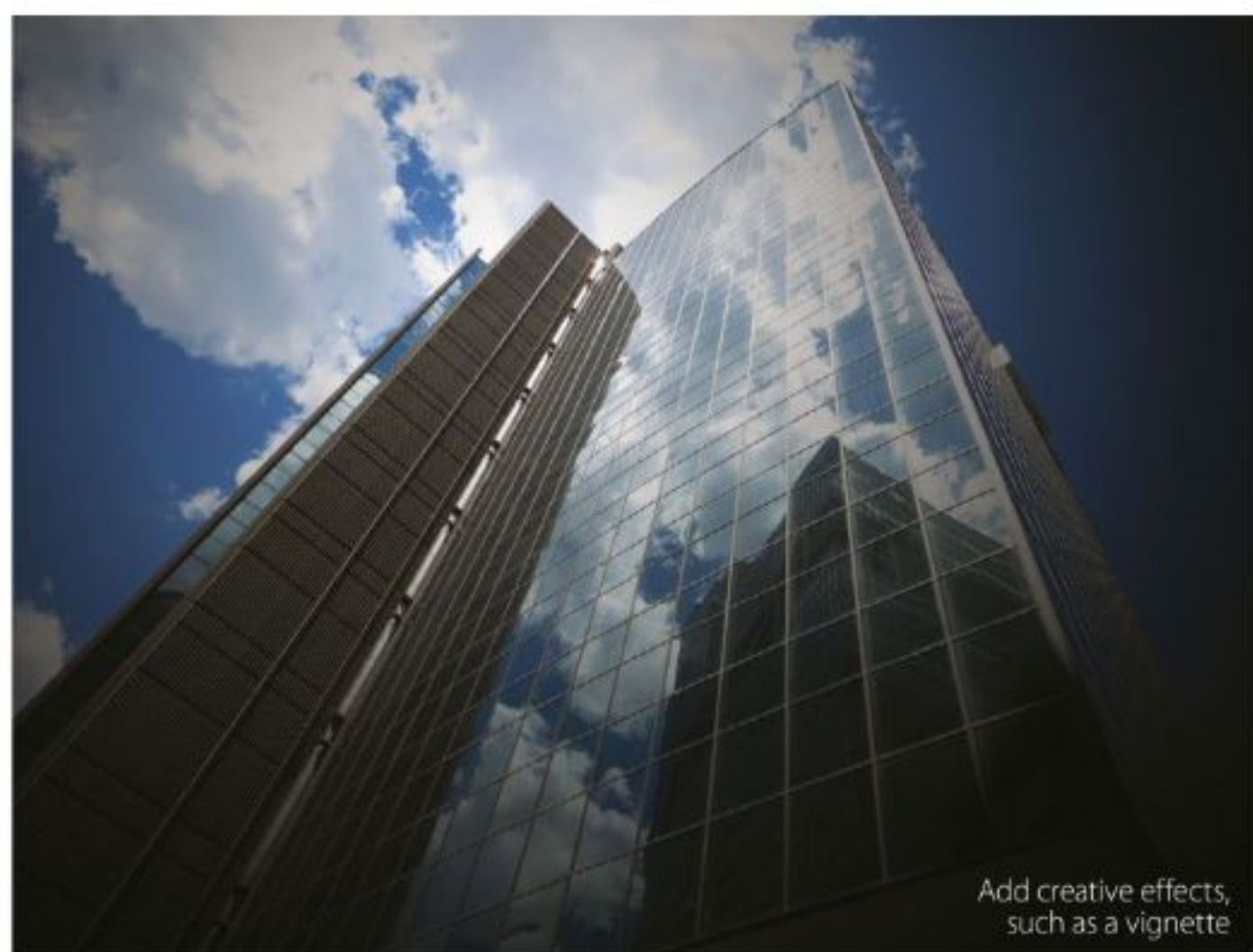
You can employ Masks to help smooth the skin, while keeping the eyes and lips perfectly sharp. You can also get creative with your image editing by altering the colour of eyes and hair to give your friends an entirely different look. These skills are easily achievable with a little practice.

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

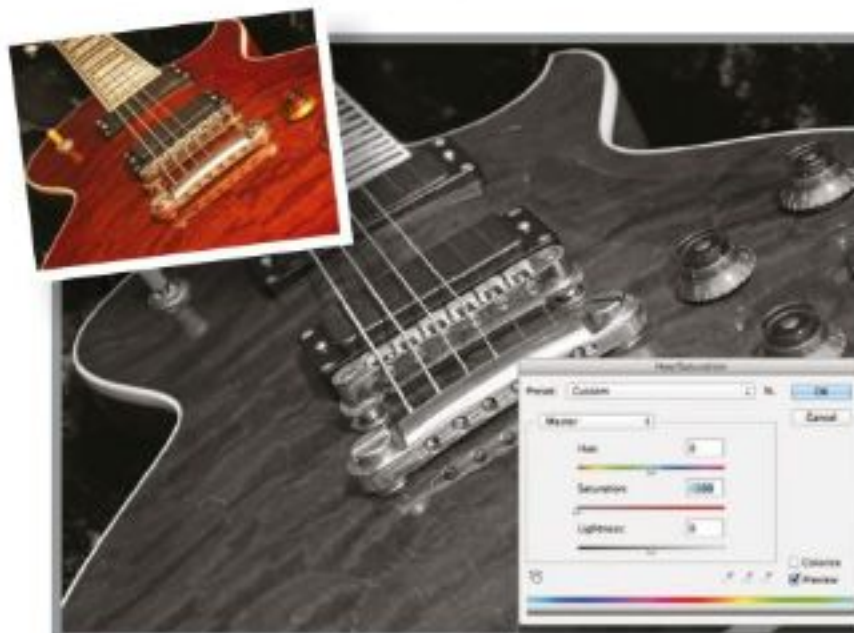


01 Fix the exposure

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.

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.

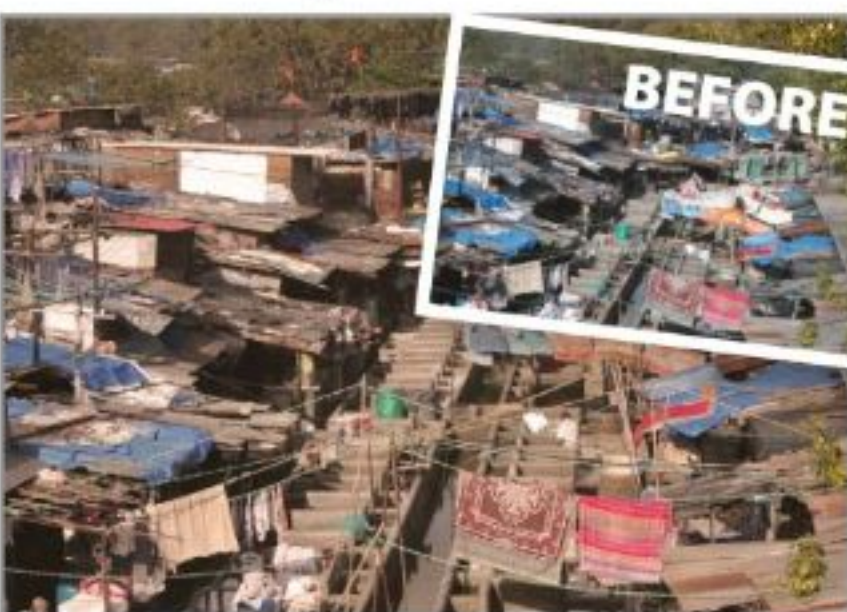


03 Convert to black and white

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.

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.



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.





Manipulating photos

Transform your shots into something new

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.

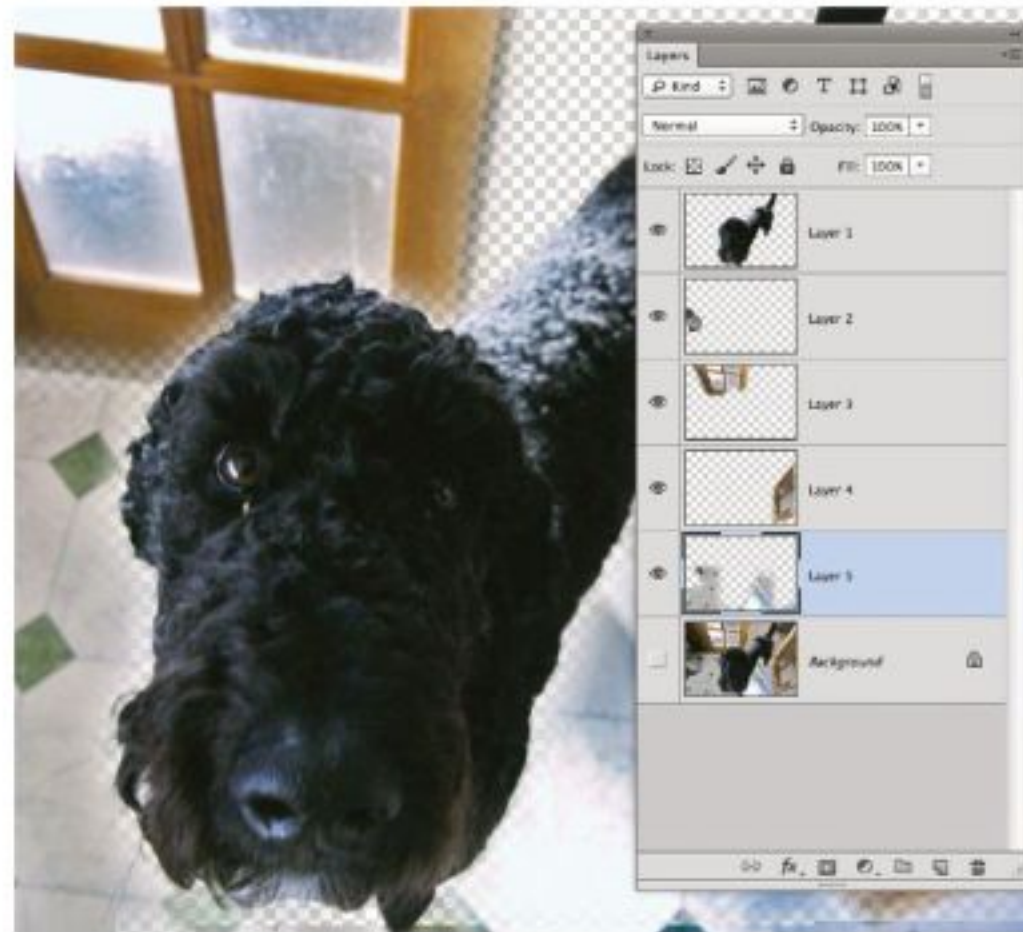
Another great photo manipulation technique is to create wonderful tricks for the eye. You can call upon the Liquify tool to bend and shape your photographs into Dali-esque creations that drip across the screen, which was massively improved in Photoshop CS6 to make it faster and easier to use. Alternatively, 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.



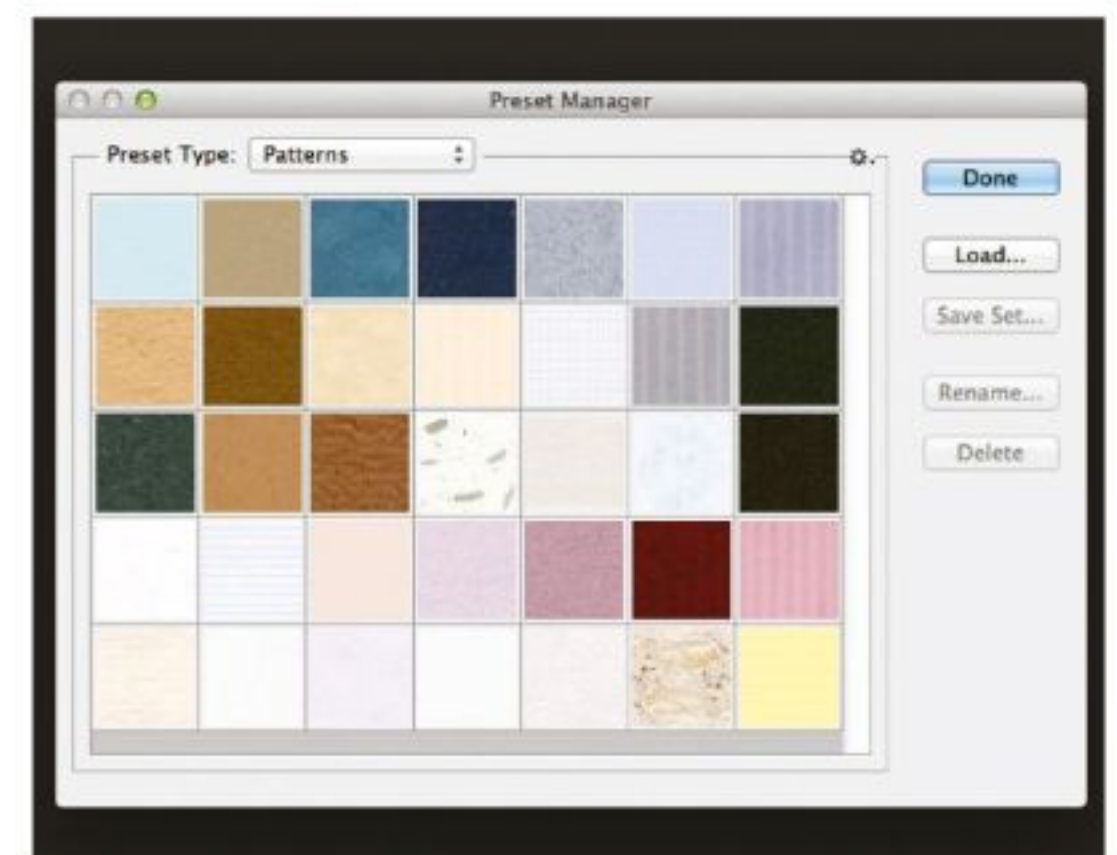
02 Change the weather

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.

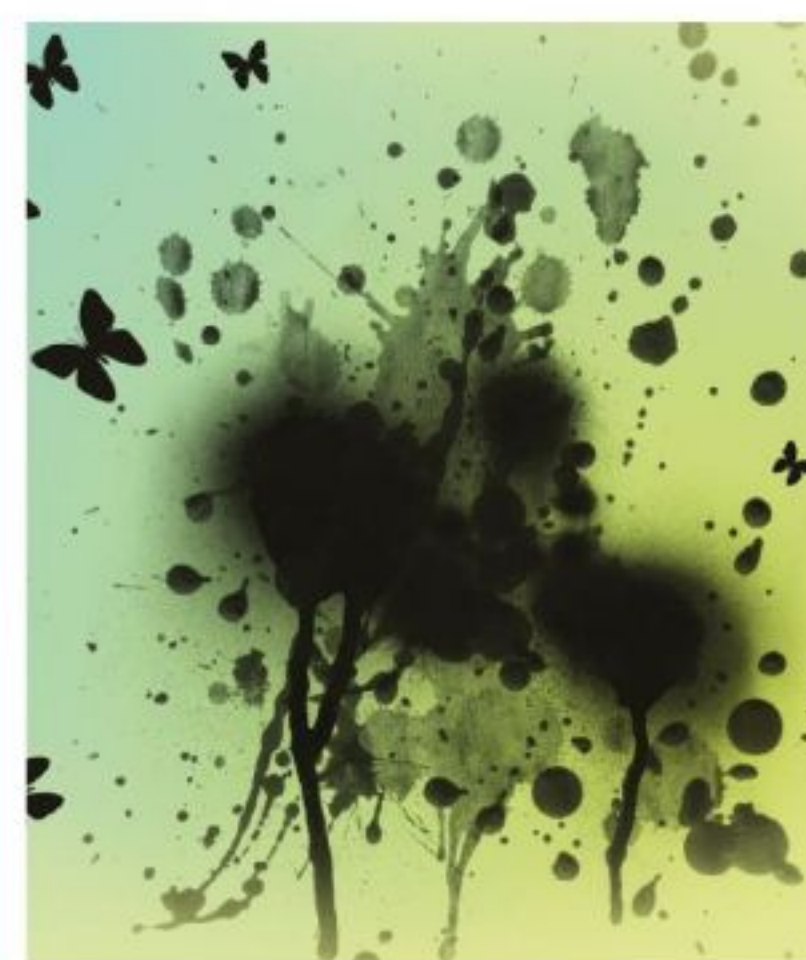
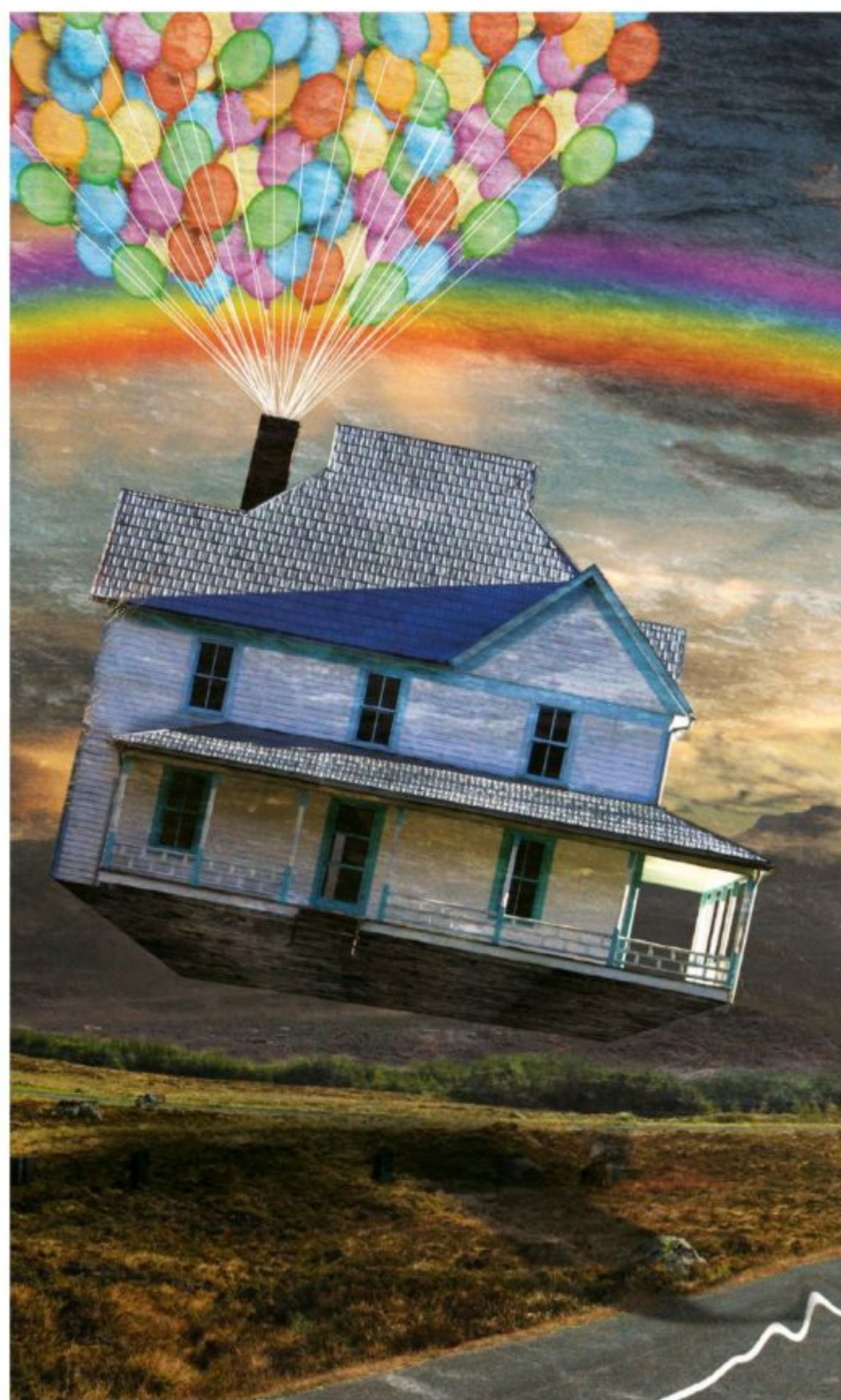
On the drawing side of things, you will discover there are far more options than a simple pencil sketch. Open your eyes to the world of chalk and charcoal drawing, sketching in watercolour, and pen and ink effects. By carefully selecting the right type of brush and combining it with the right kind of 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

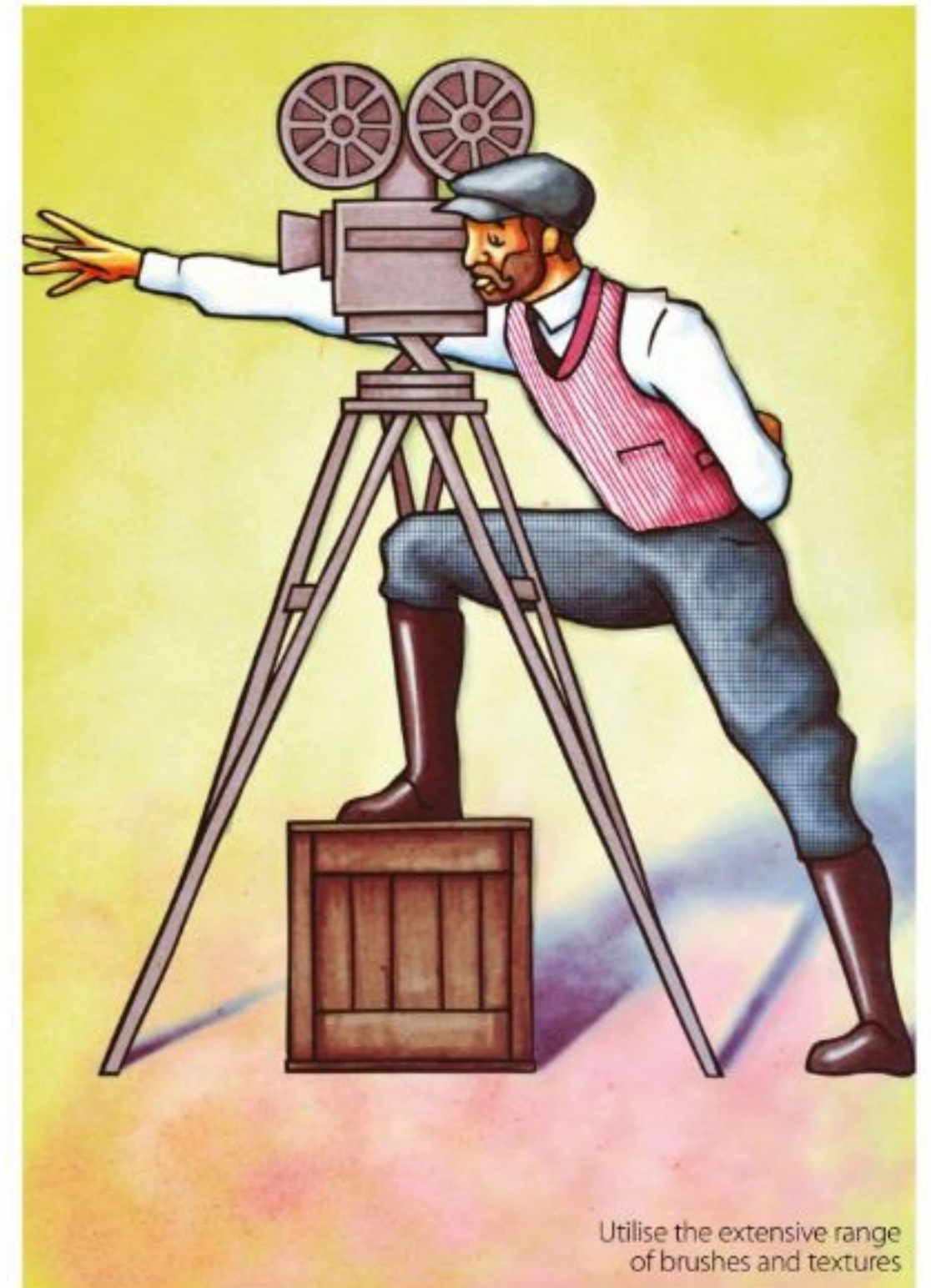
01 Vector art

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 parties 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.



02 Print effects

Any real-world artistic effect can be reproduced in Photoshop. The Shape tools can create colourful characters. You can then call upon Blending modes to experiment with the intensity of your colours and the way each layer interacts with one another. There are many Blending modes to choose from, so discover which works best in each creative situation.



Utilise the extensive range of brushes and textures

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.



Use your own photographs to create awe-inspiring results

Getting started

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Get to know the Photoshop family and find out the differences between CS6 Elements and Creative Cloud. You'll also discover which one will suit you best.

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First steps in Photoshop
Make it as easy as possible to get started with an introduction to opening files, saving and resetting.

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Save, export and share
YOU'VE EDITED
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Discover the new tools in Photoshop 2018
Find out what's new in the latest version of Photoshop Elements.

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Photo shop shortcuts
Learn key shortcuts to make your work easier and faster in Photoshop.

"While daunting at first, Photoshop is surprisingly easy to get to grips with."



IMPORTANT TOOLS
Discover the tools Photoshop comes armed with and learn how to make them work for you

QUICK EDITS
Uncover easy shortcuts for improving efficiency



INTERFACE EXPLAINED
Find your way around the Photoshop interface before you get started

Getting started



Get to know 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 many digital artists still have the Standard or Extended version.



◀ ELEMENTS

Perfect for the beginner, Photoshop Elements 2018 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 Anthropic offers a complete workshop for retouching and shaping the faces in your images.

Getting started



Elements

◀ Cost: £86.56/\$69.99US

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.



EXPERT TIP

Star ratings in Elements are a way to filter images while arranging them in Organizer. This helps bring the best ones to the top, so you can spend less time searching for a photo to take in the Editor.

Key features in Organizer

Elements Organizer helps keep images tagged and stacked

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.

Categorise and organise

The Organizer can launch as a standalone program, separate to Elements 2018, and is used to categorise your pictures before you take them into Elements ready to edit.

Photo fixes

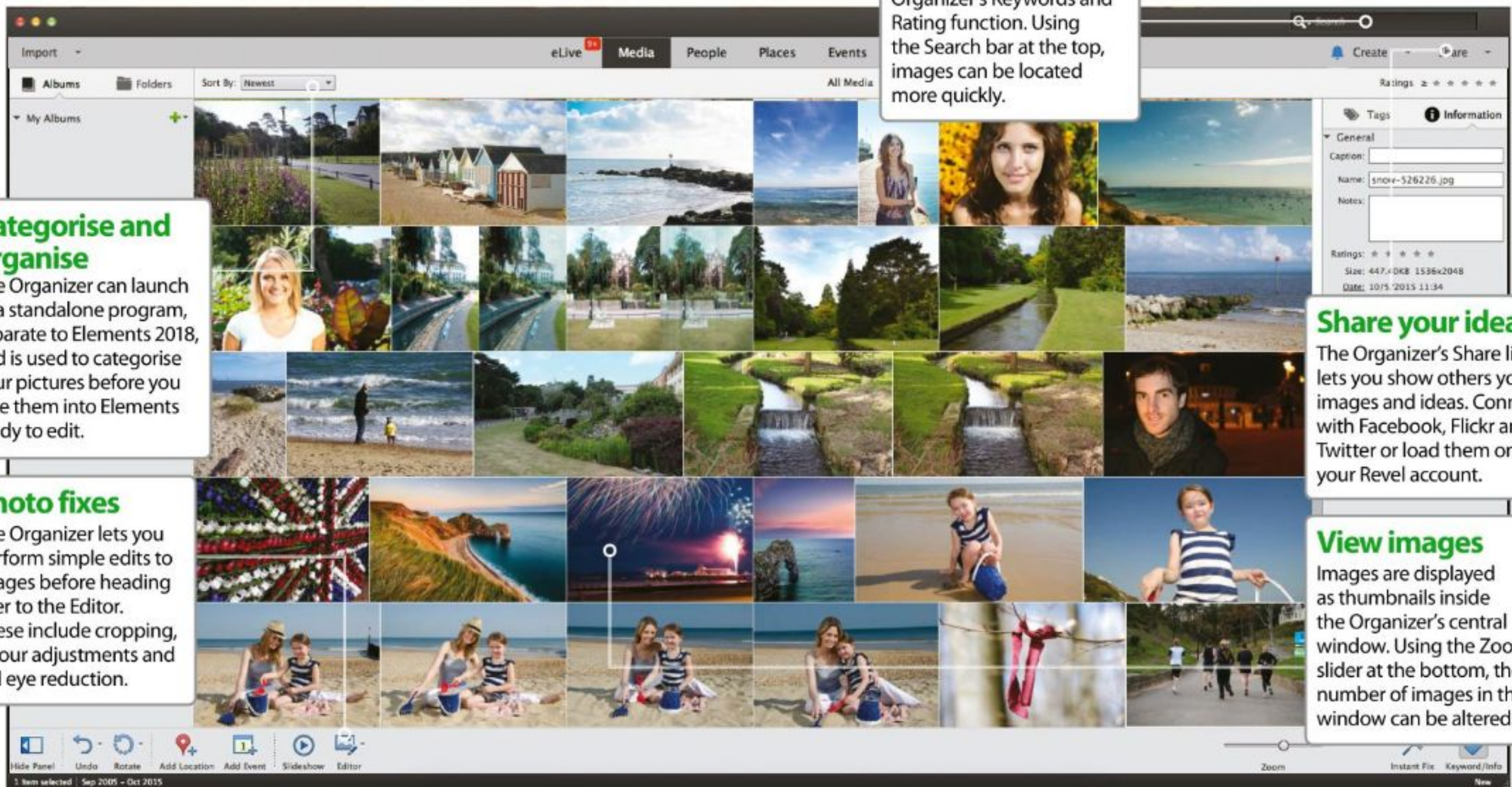
The Organizer lets you perform simple edits to images before heading over to the Editor. These include cropping, colour adjustments and red eye reduction.

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 2018 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 recognised 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 2018.

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

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.

Simple yet effective
Though there may be fewer options, layers styles and adjustments compared to Photoshop, Elements provides much of the same in a more compact and simpler way.

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.

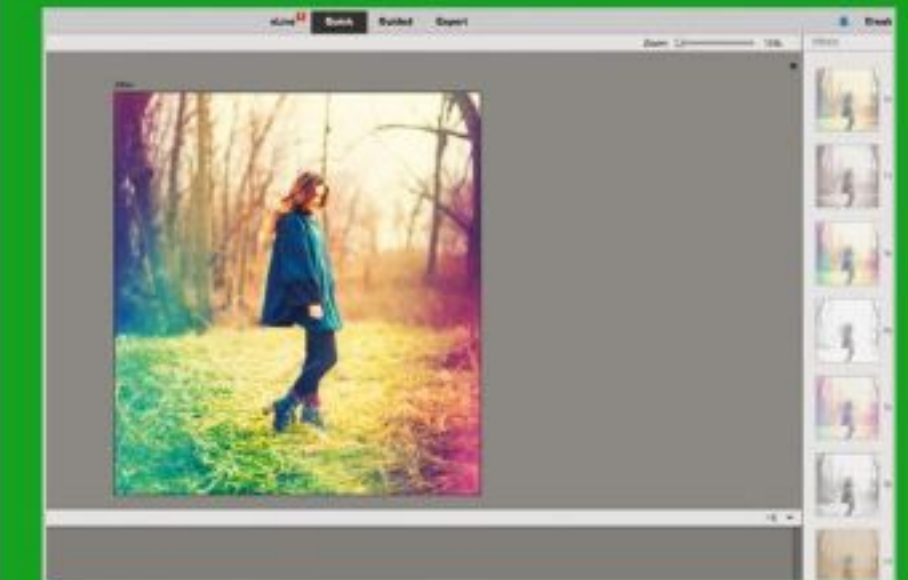


QUICK EDITS
Fix images in the Quick mode with simple tools

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 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:** £19.97/\$19.99US per month (single app)
£49.94/\$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.



Behance
Browse through the community of artists for inspiration, or to make a contact.



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 £19.97/\$19.99US per month for an annual subscription, compared to the full Creative Cloud price for new customers which is £49.94/\$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 £9.98/\$9.99US.

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

3D objects
Photoshop CC includes the 3D features only previously available in Extended versions. Using the dedicated 3D palette, extrusions and meshes can be adapted in and around your layers.

Photo editing
For photographers, the Camera Raw Filter can now be used on any layer – perfect for RAW processing inside Photoshop with this software’s powerful features.

Better filters
Filters have been much improved in CC. Smart Objects can be used with Liquify so we can make non-destructive edits, and the Shake Reduction filter helps to reduce blurriness.

Sync your presets
Using the Sync options in Photoshop CC, you can share your favourite tool settings with other artists, and access them on any PC.

Desktop app
Head to <https://creativecommons.com> to log in to your account and download the Creative Cloud app for your desktop. This is where up-to-date apps are downloaded.

REASONS TO GET CREATIVE

Multiple programs and constant updates are two main distinguishing features of



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.



Useful apps

There are a variety of useful apps available, such as Adobe Color which lets you sample and import colours.

EXPERT TIP

Inside the Image Size menu, use the Preserve Details (Enlargement) option when resizing images. This resampling method produces great results when enlarging a photo, and keeps the distortion very low.

First steps in Photoshop

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

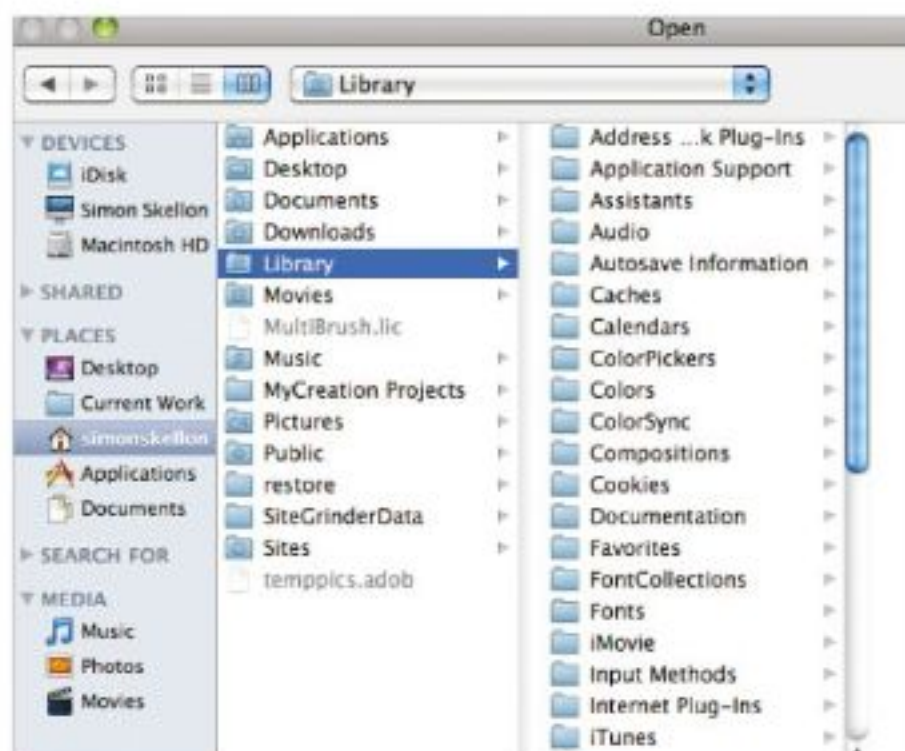
The first time you open Photoshop it can seem a bewildering mess of icons, menus and palettes. We have already introduced you to the flavours of Photoshop: Photoshop CS, Photoshop CC and Photoshop Elements. It is generally thought that Photoshop is for professionals and that Elements is purely for beginners. 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.

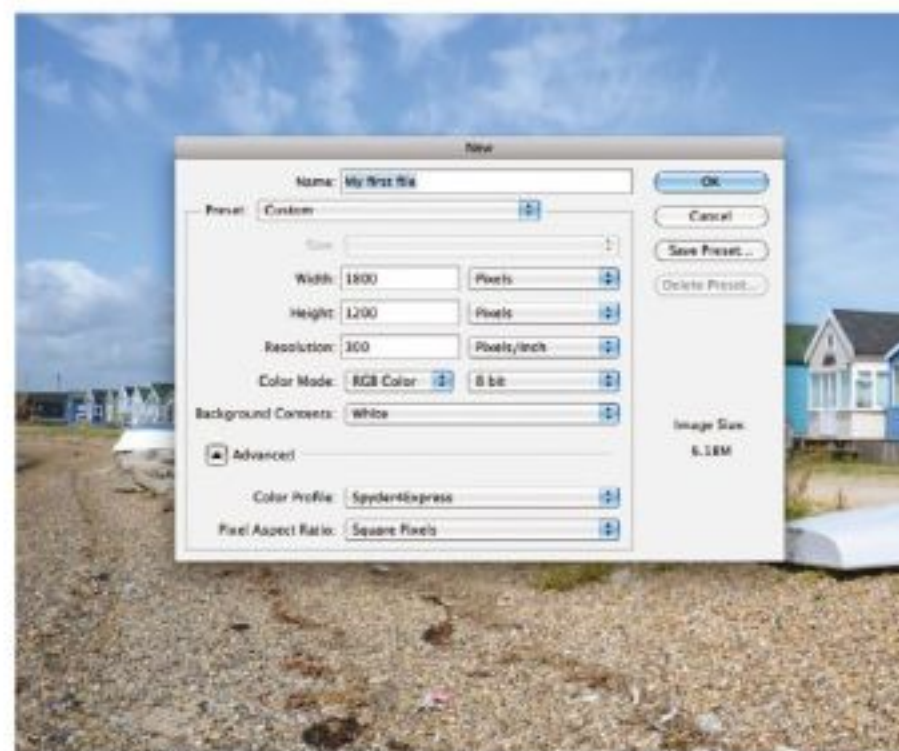
The other essential ability that you need is to get access to all of the tools. If you think the Photoshop interface is confusing as it is, it would cause your brain to explode if all of the tools were on display at once! To avoid this, a lot of tools are grouped together and hidden behind a major tool.

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.



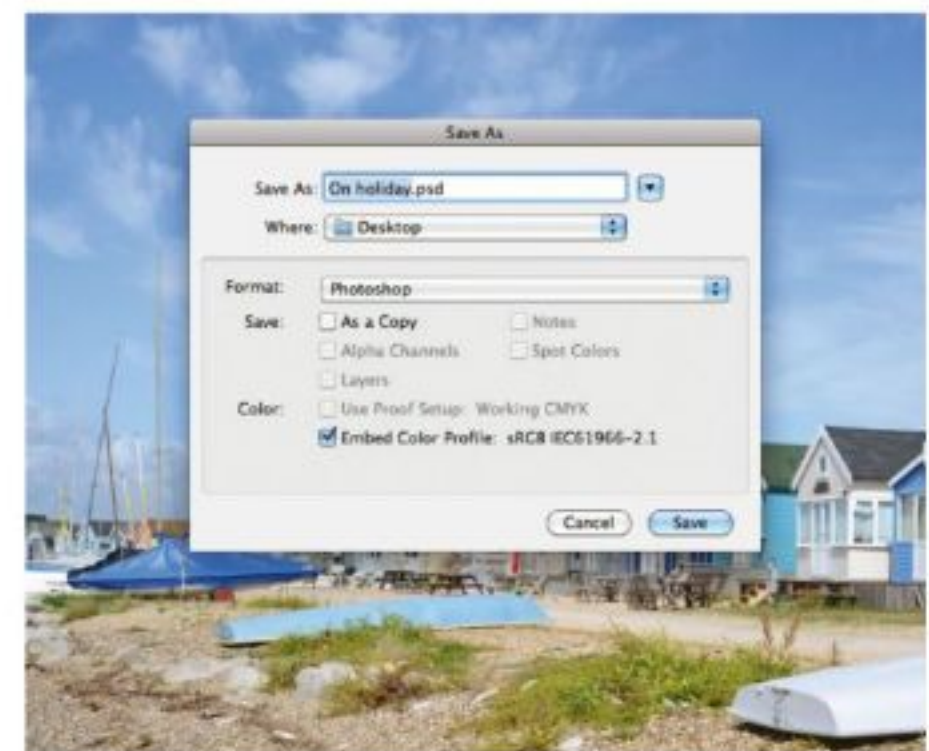
01 Open a file

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.



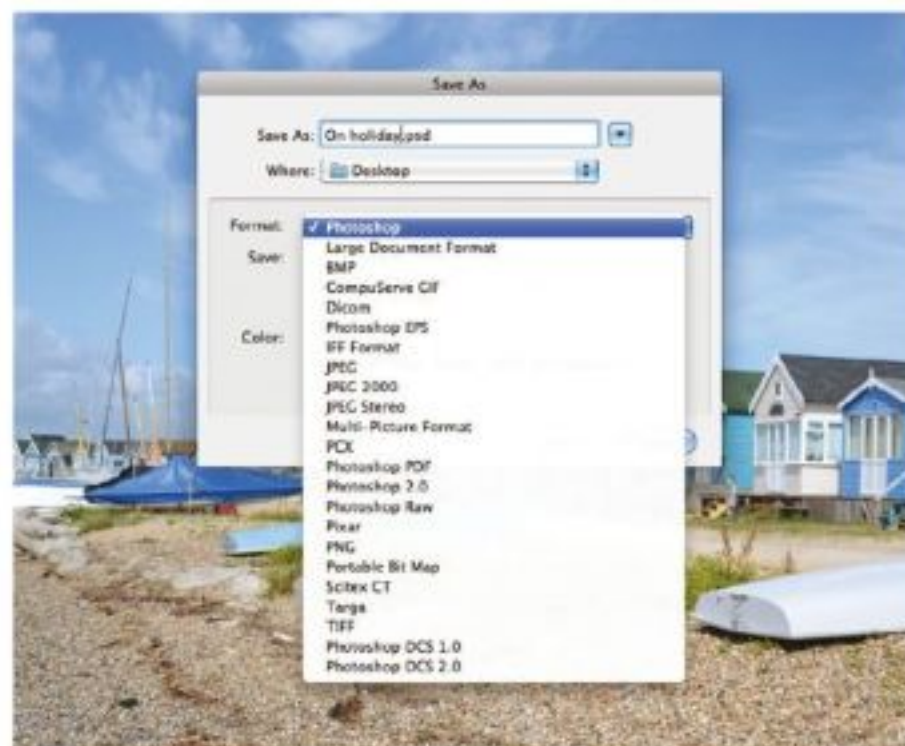
02 Create a file

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.



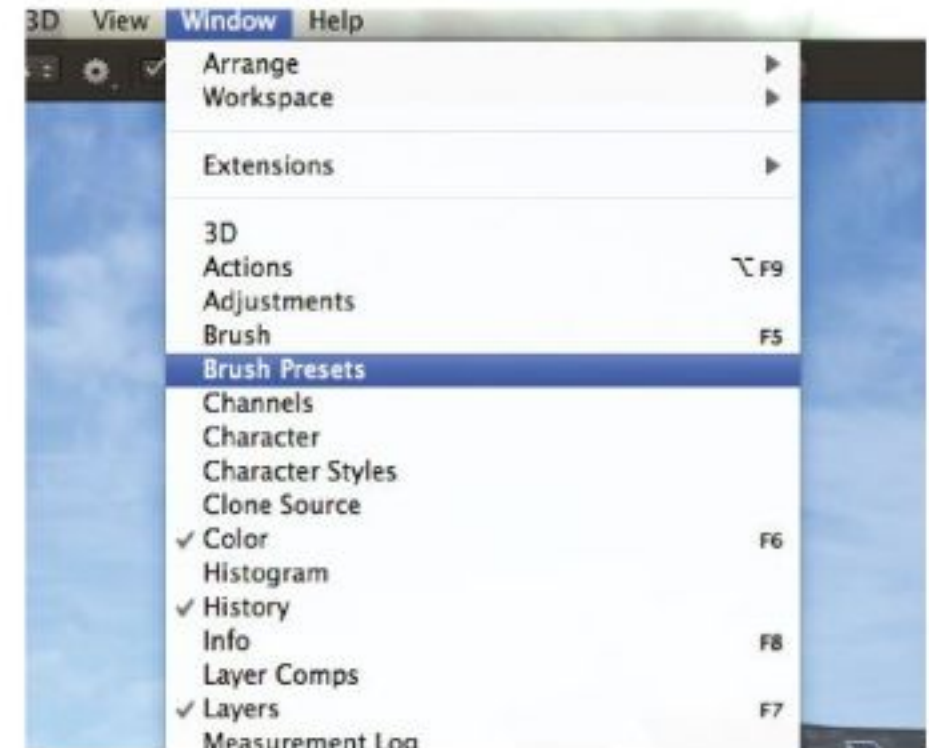
04 File formats

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.



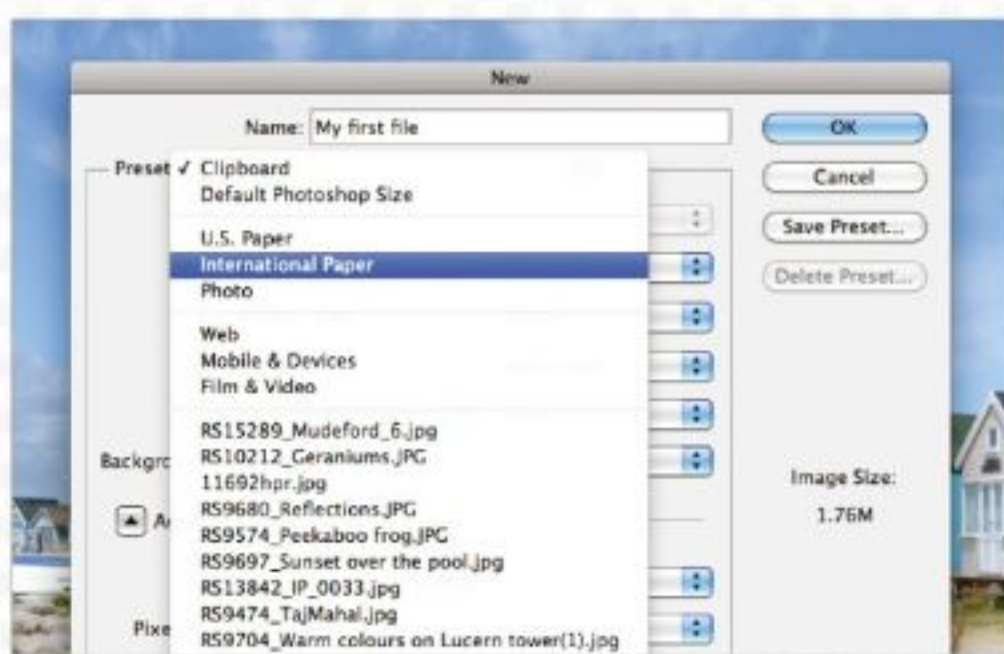
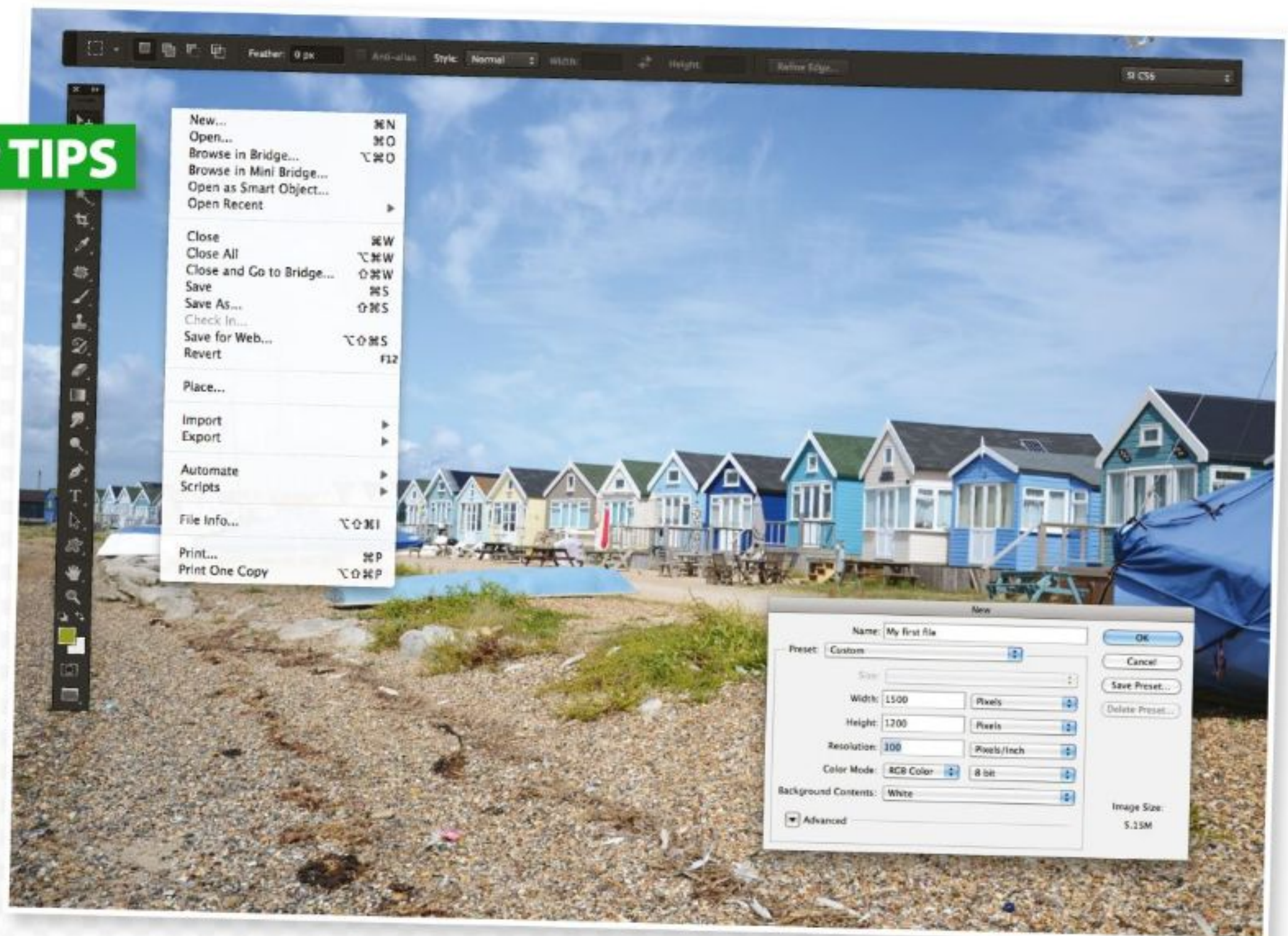
06 Options

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

QUICK PHOTOSHOP TIPS

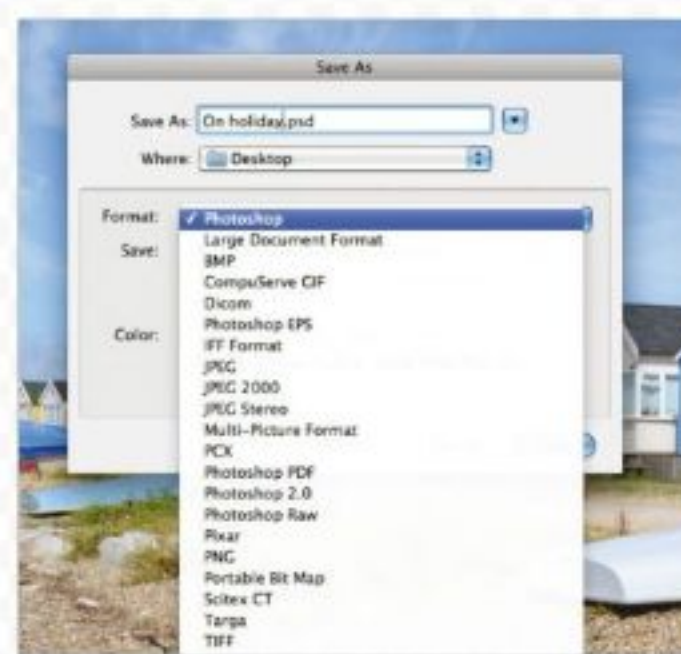
Quick save

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.

Resize your images

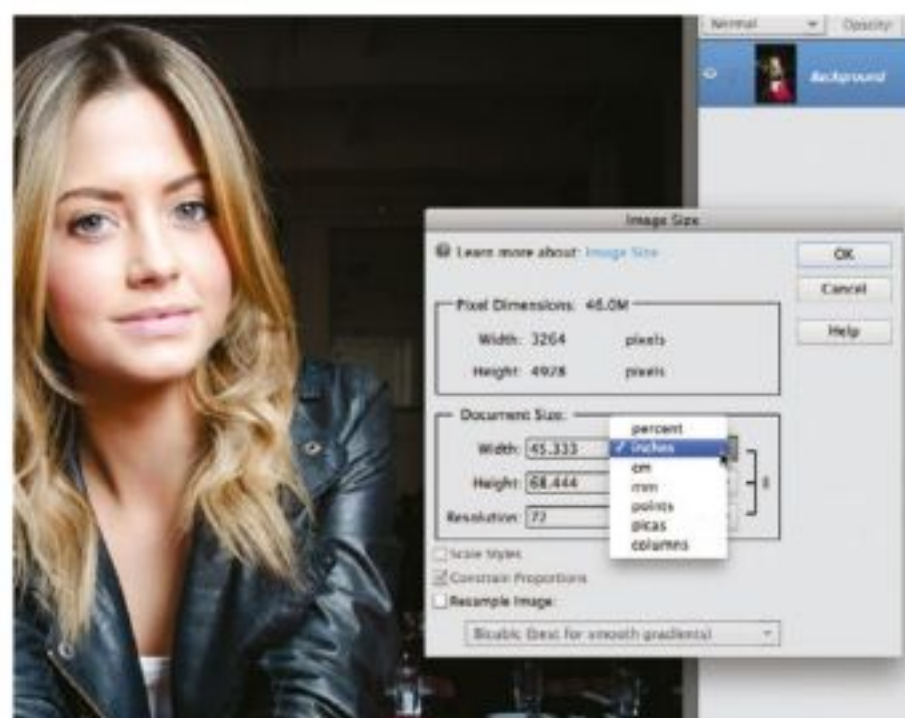
Discover the tools and tricks that enable you to control the size of your shots

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.

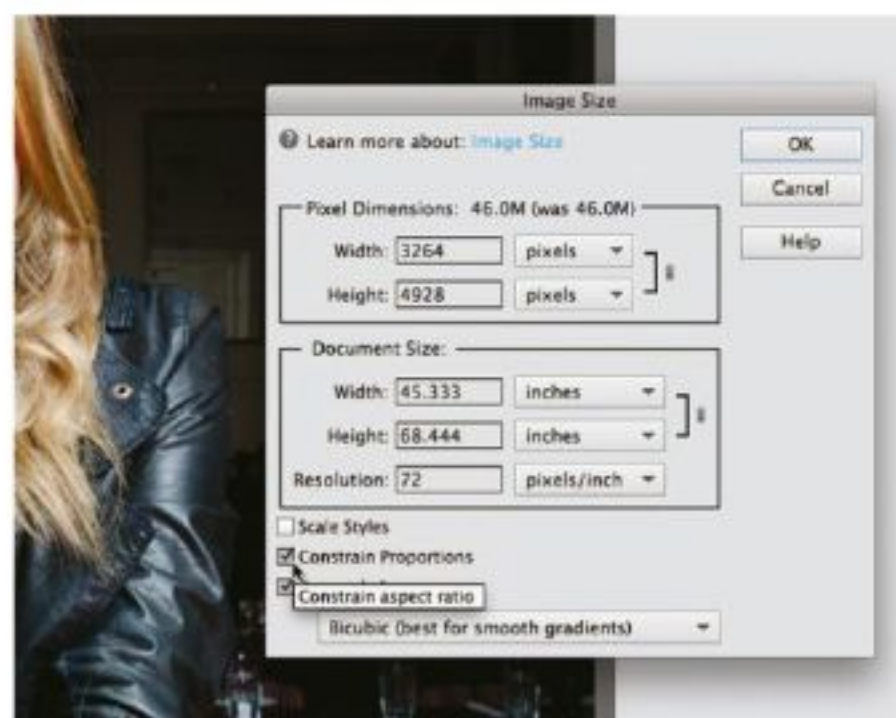
Most resizing is done within the Image Size dialog. From here you can alter an image's physical size as well as its resolution. However, the Save For Web function is a useful tool for trimming images down. Here we're going to look at both of these, explaining how they work, in addition to showing a good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



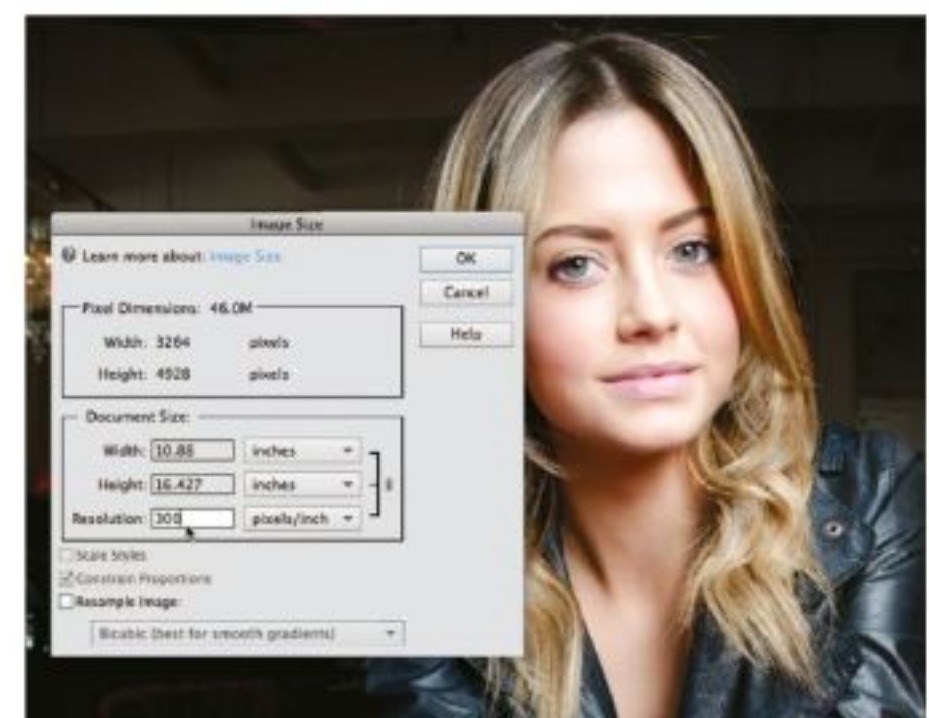
Physical size

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.

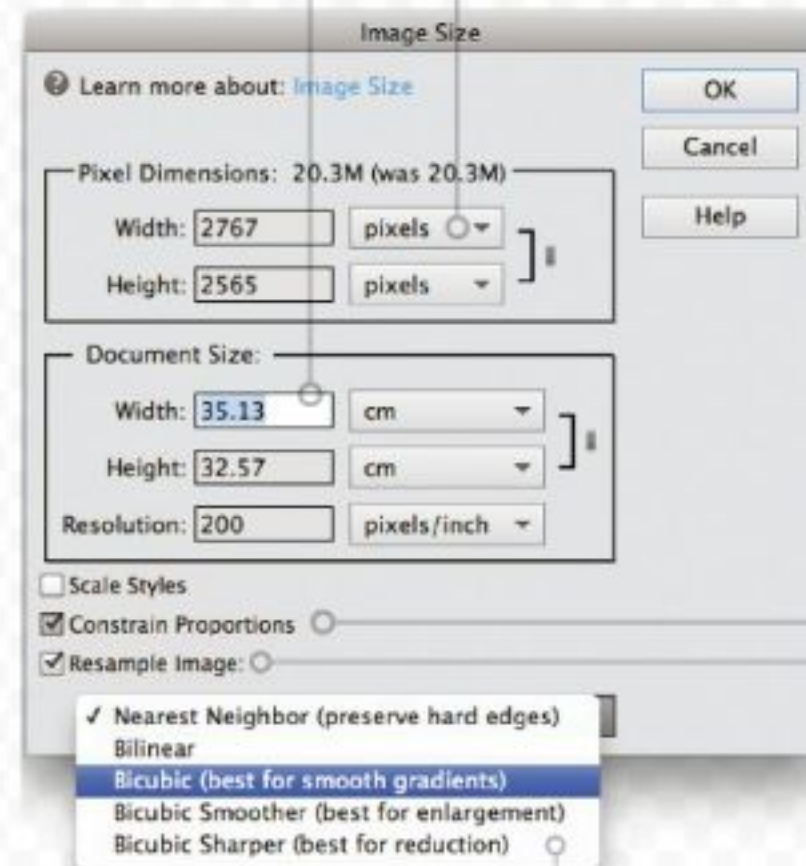
Once open, you can check the size of your image and then move to editing the resolution and/or dimensions. There are various dropdown menus that can make things seem confusing, but we'll explain what they all do below.

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.

Pixel Dimensions

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



Constrain Proportions

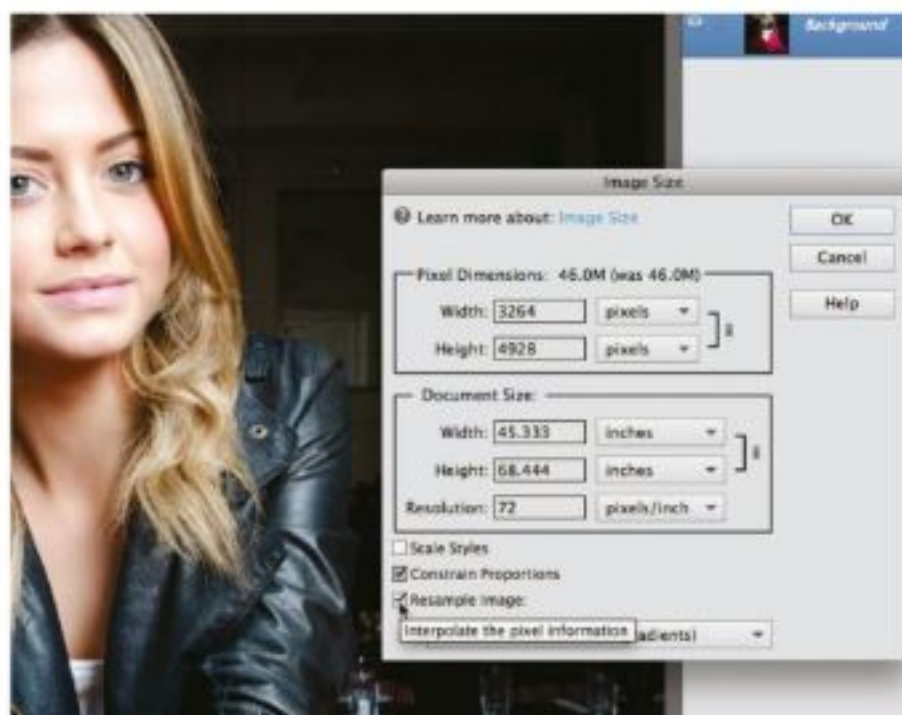
Enable this option to keep the proportions of your image. If you edit the width, for example, the height will follow suit.

Resample options

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

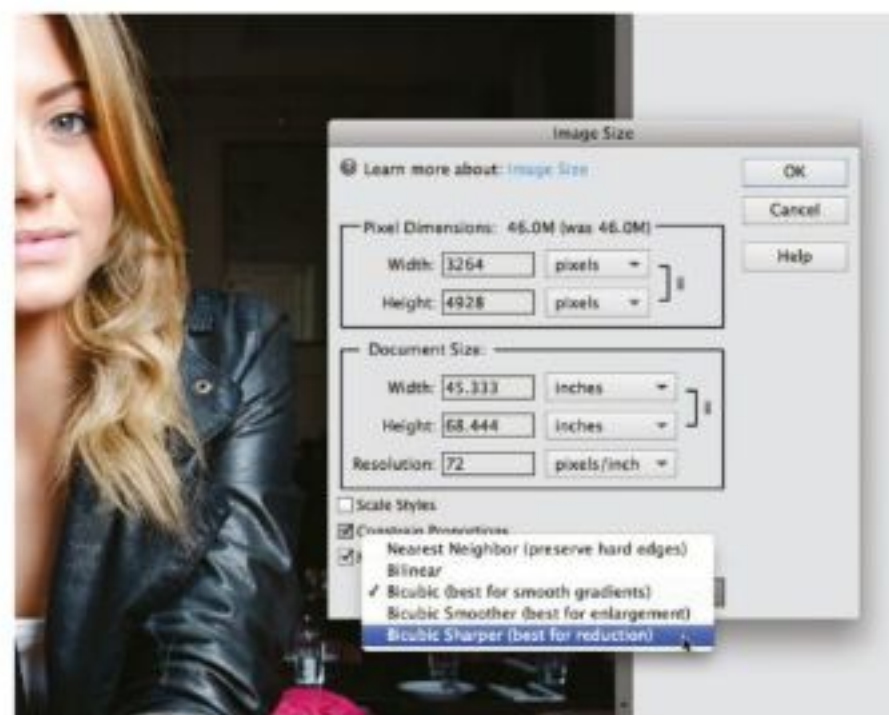
Resample Image

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



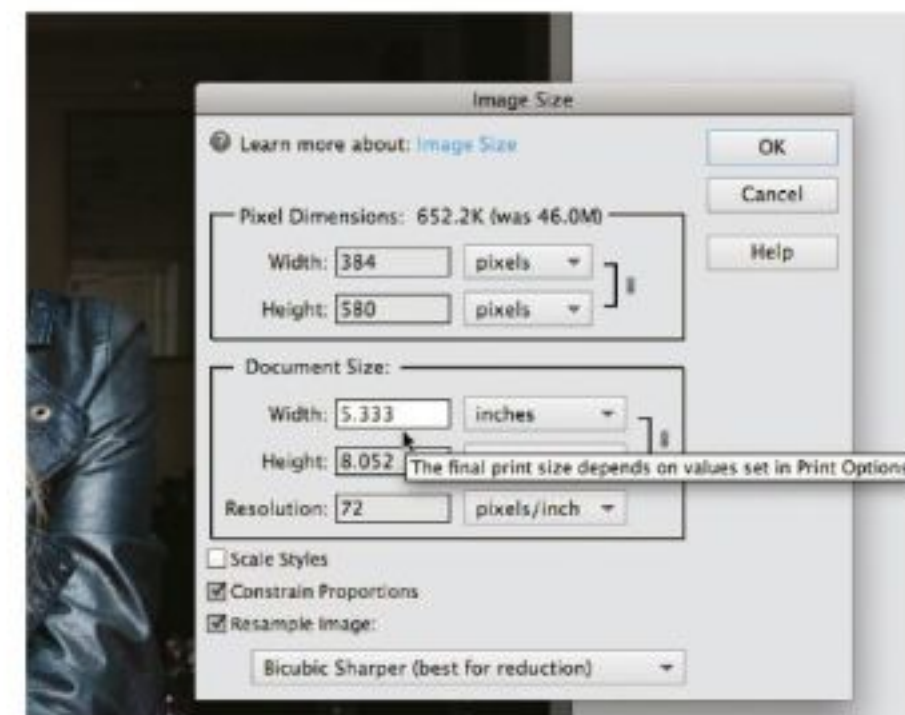
Resample images

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 dialogue 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

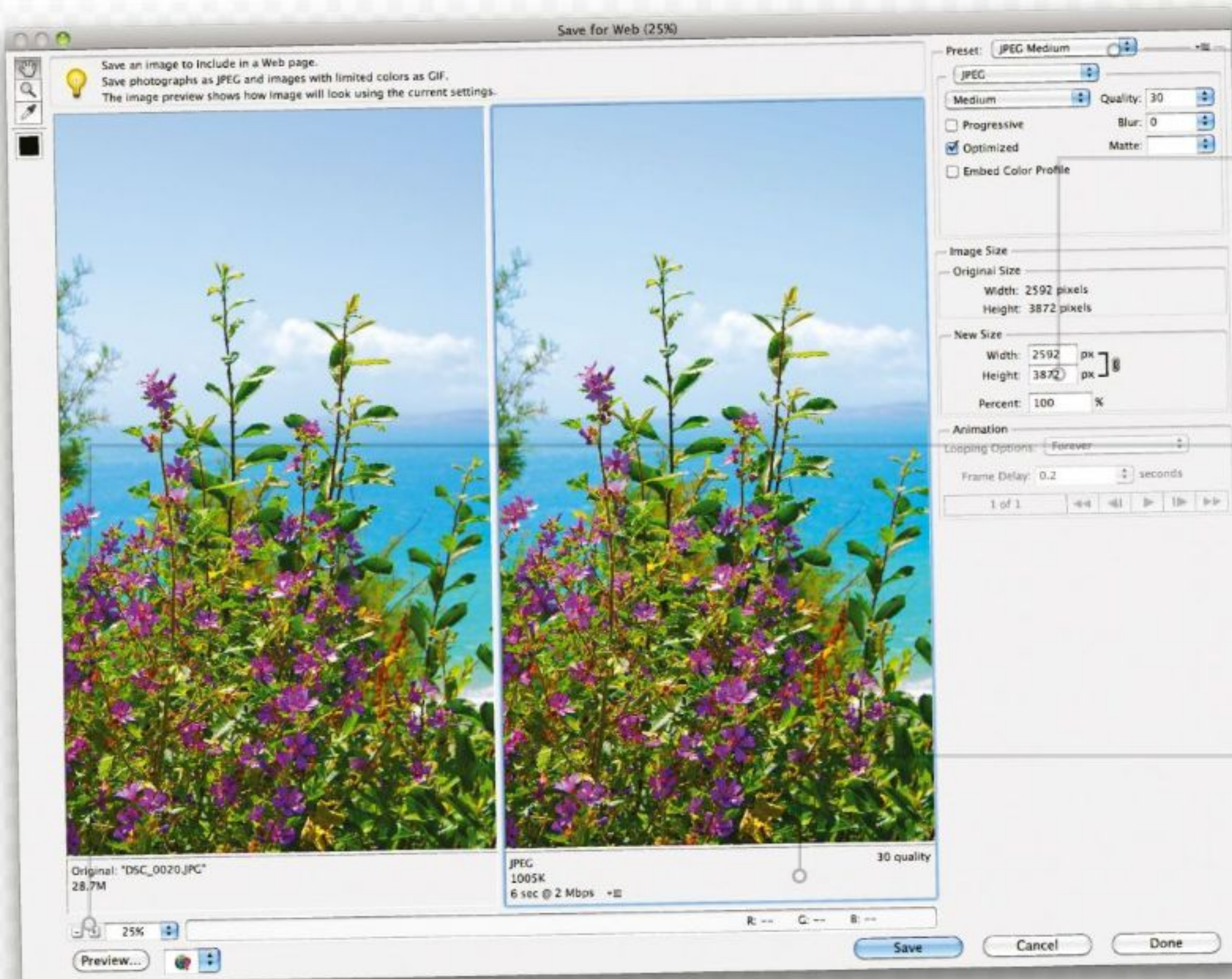
If you want to alter the number of pixels along the width or height of an image, enter a value here.

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.

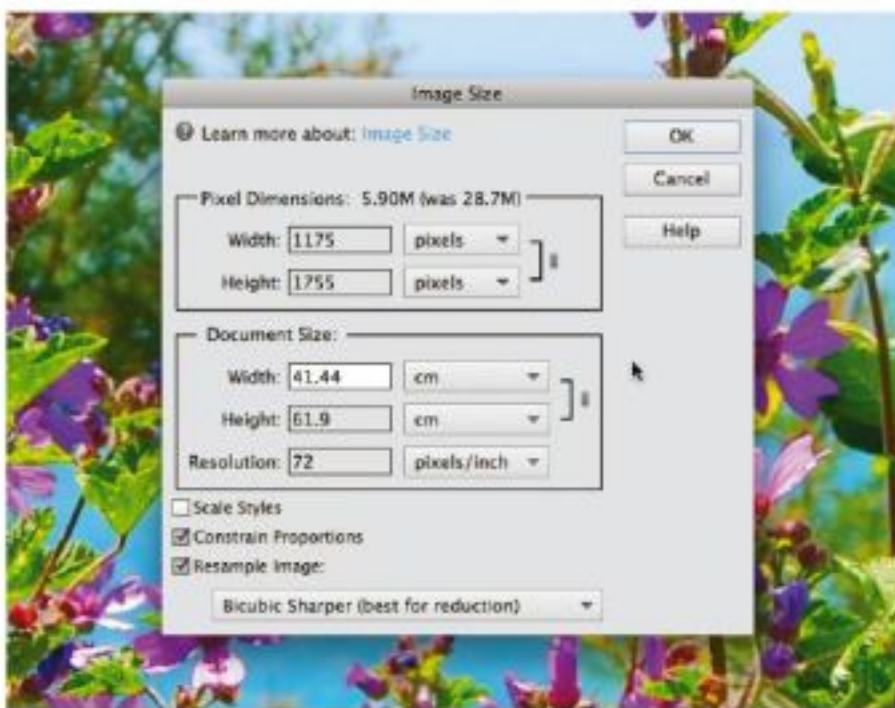
Before and after

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.



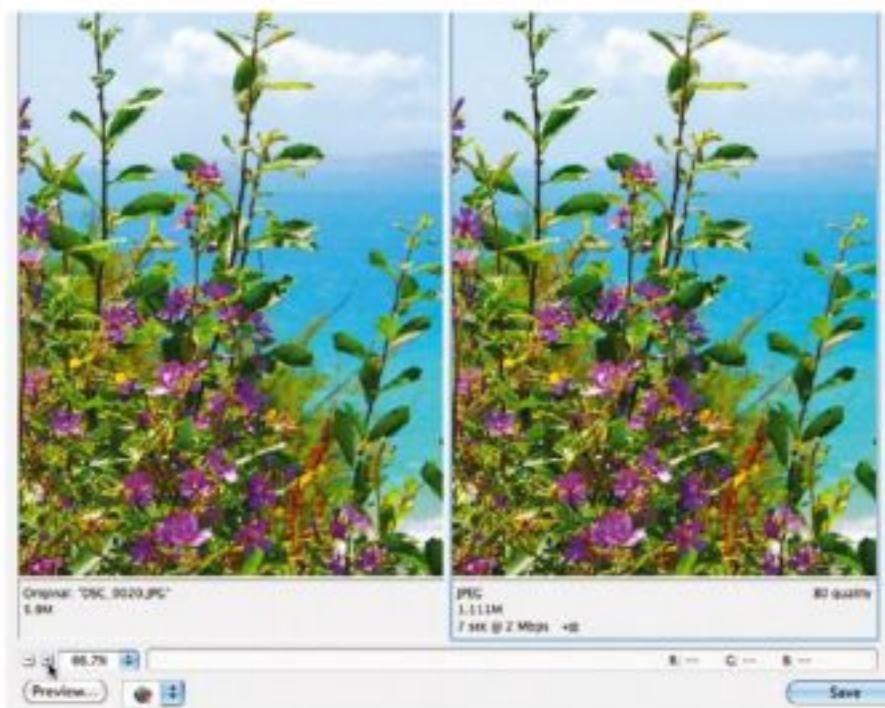
Reduce the file size of an image

Make a photo that's lean, mean and ready for the web



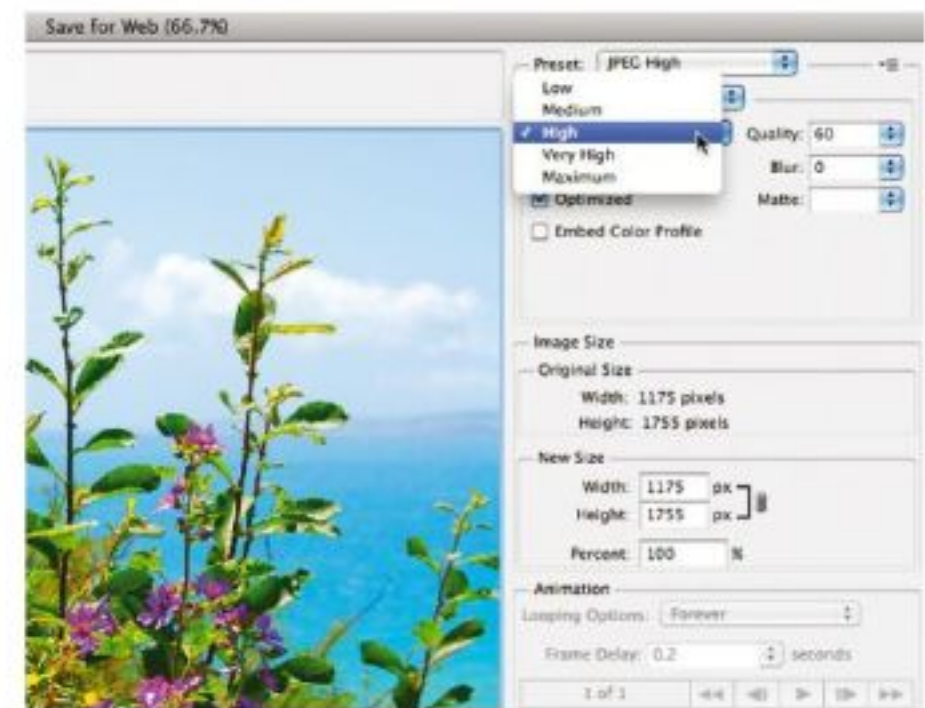
01 Prepare your work

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.



03 Smooth problems

A downside of forcing an image to be a higher resolution is that areas can become blocky. The Bicubic Smoother option helps this, but you can go to Filter> Noise>Despeckle to smooth edges.



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
Hit File>Save, or use the shortcut Cmd/Ctrl+S, to save your work as you go. Photoshop CS6 and CC automatically saves recovery information in case you lose your edits.

Create PDF
To make a PDF, go to File at the top menu bar and select Print. Instead of selecting a printer, choose Adobe PDF and hit print.

Name and Save
From the dialog box choose Save As PDF, click the print button, and then name your file and choose Save.

Print Settings
Print directly from Photoshop by choosing your printer from the Print Settings menu. Your image will print in its original size, but check out the preview to see how big the image will appear on the page.

Save As
Use File>Save As to give your image a name for the first time, or to create a new type of file from the one that you're working on.

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.

Image Size

Image size tells you how big your image is in pixels. The larger these values are, the more time it will take to load up once it's 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

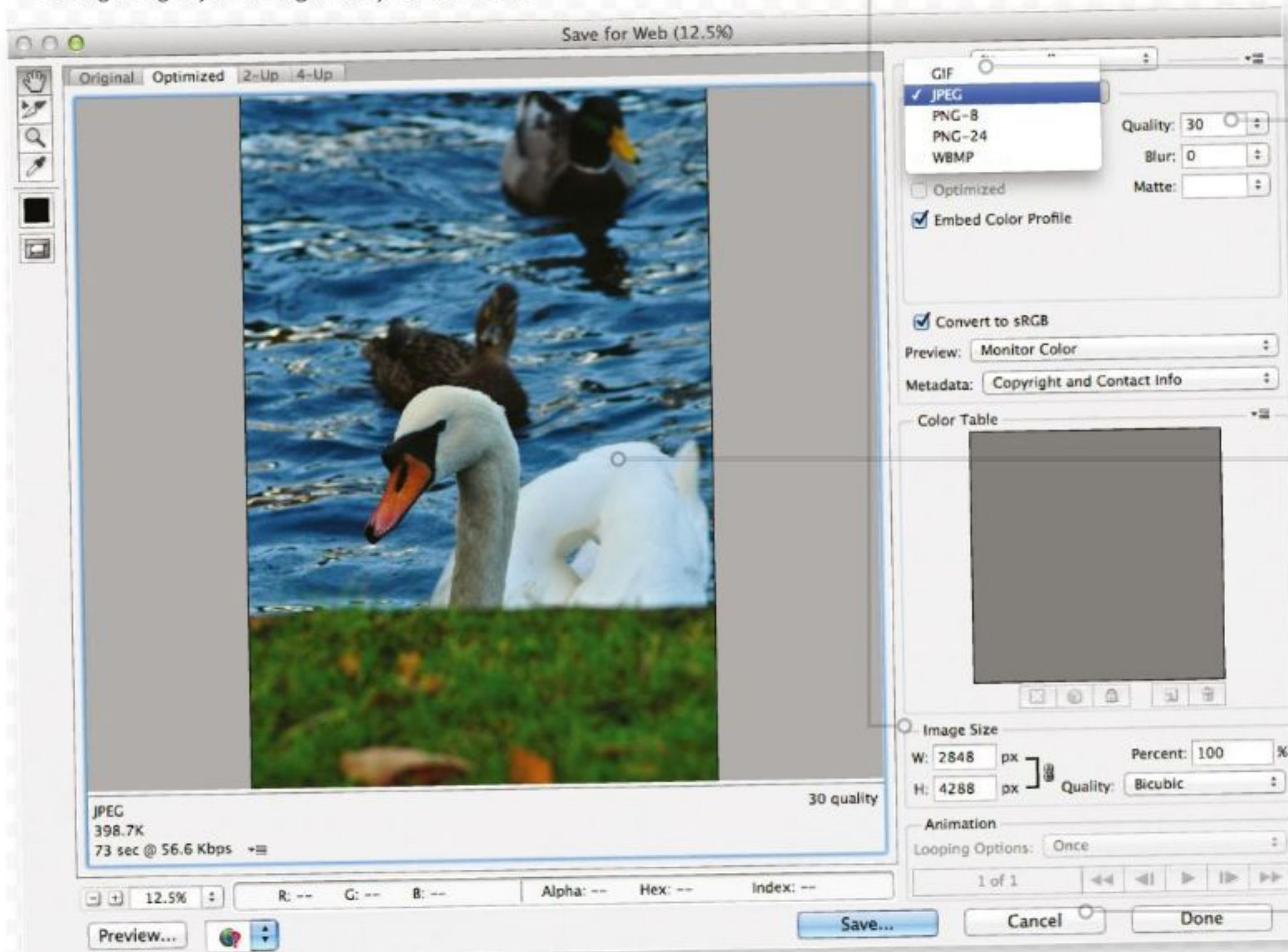
Lowering the quality of your image means getting rid of unnecessary information. The file size will become much smaller too and will load up quicker.

Preview

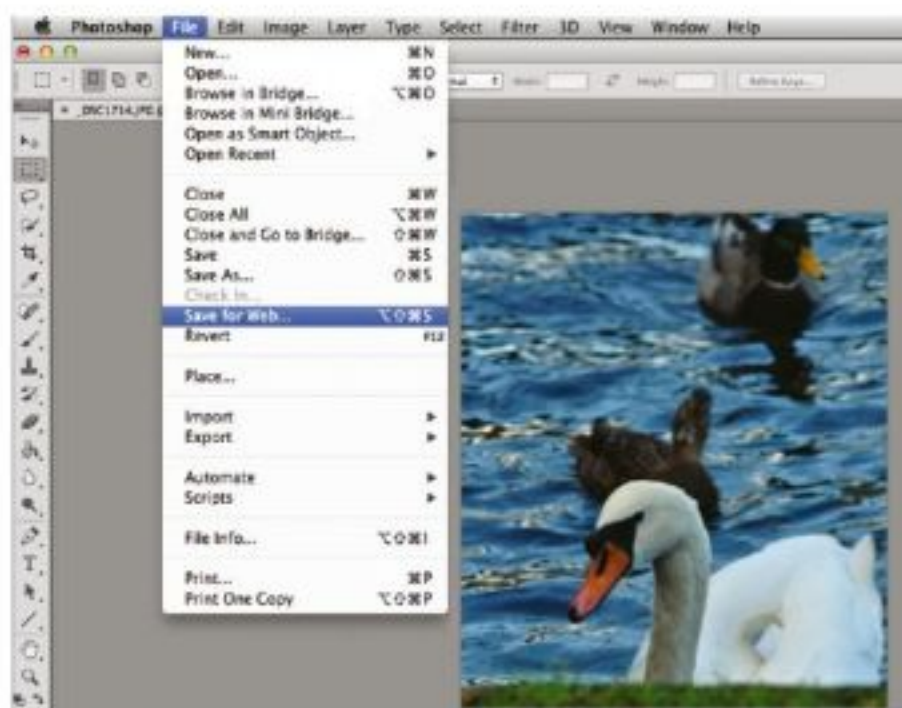
The preview screen shows what your image will look like after saving it. Use the plus and minus buttons to zoom in and out and check the final image quality.

Back out

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

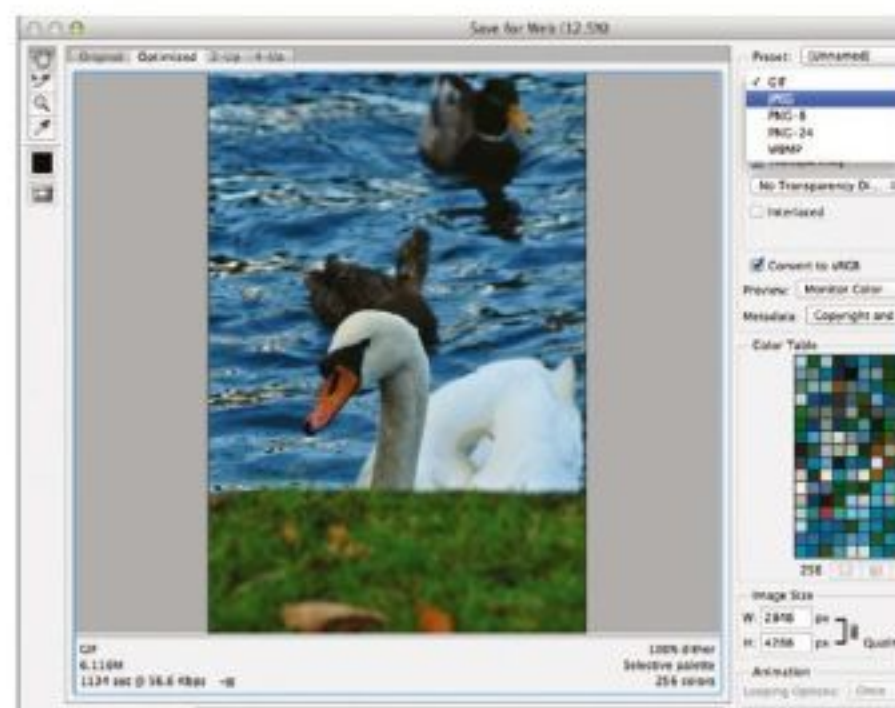


Save for web Prepare your images with Photoshop's Save for Web feature



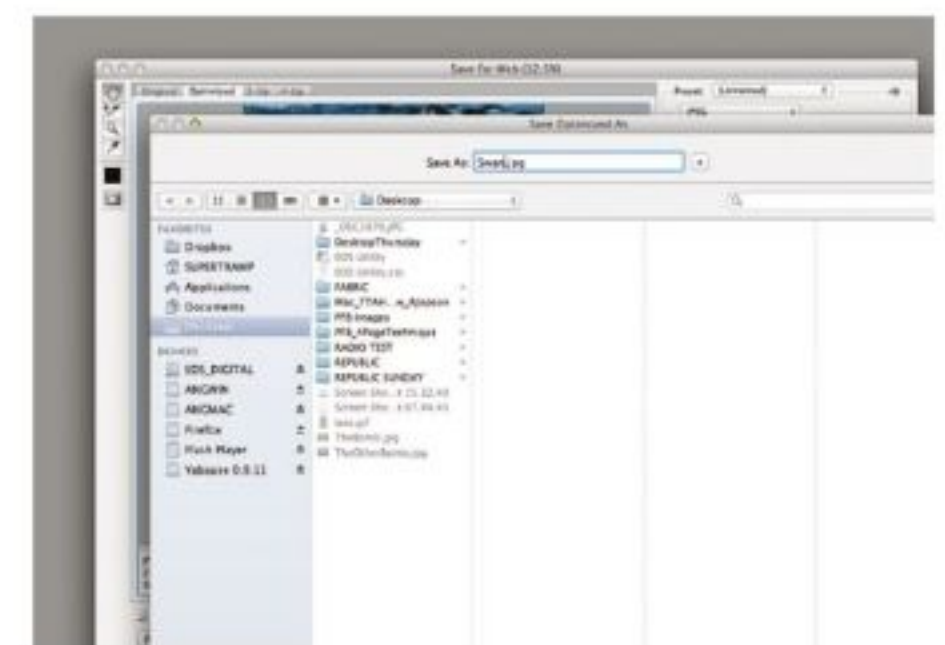
01 Load up menu

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.

Getting started



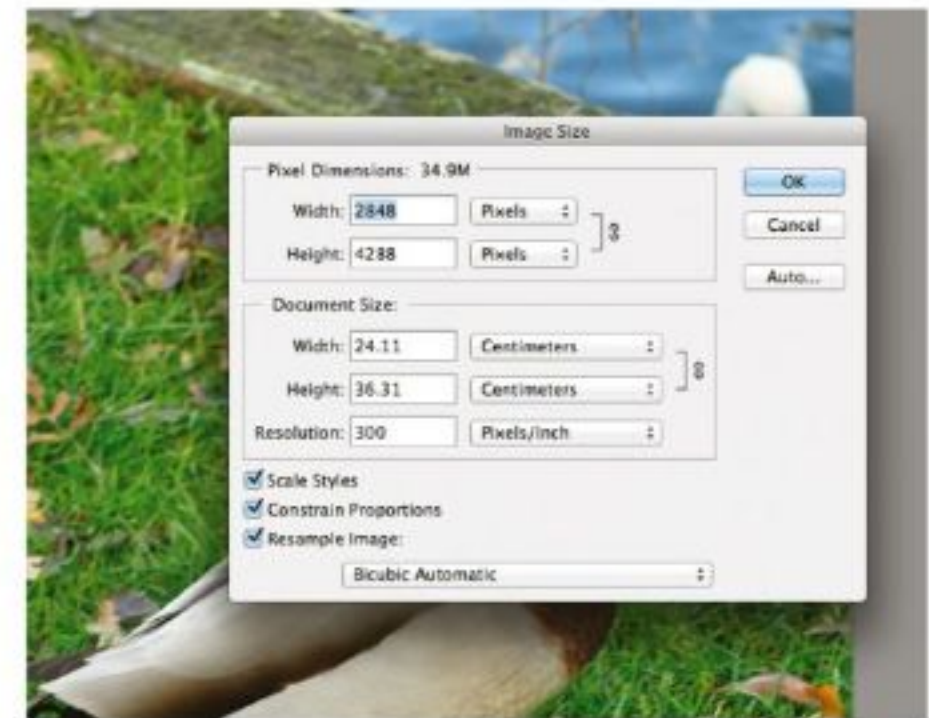
Printing artwork

Prepare your image for print

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

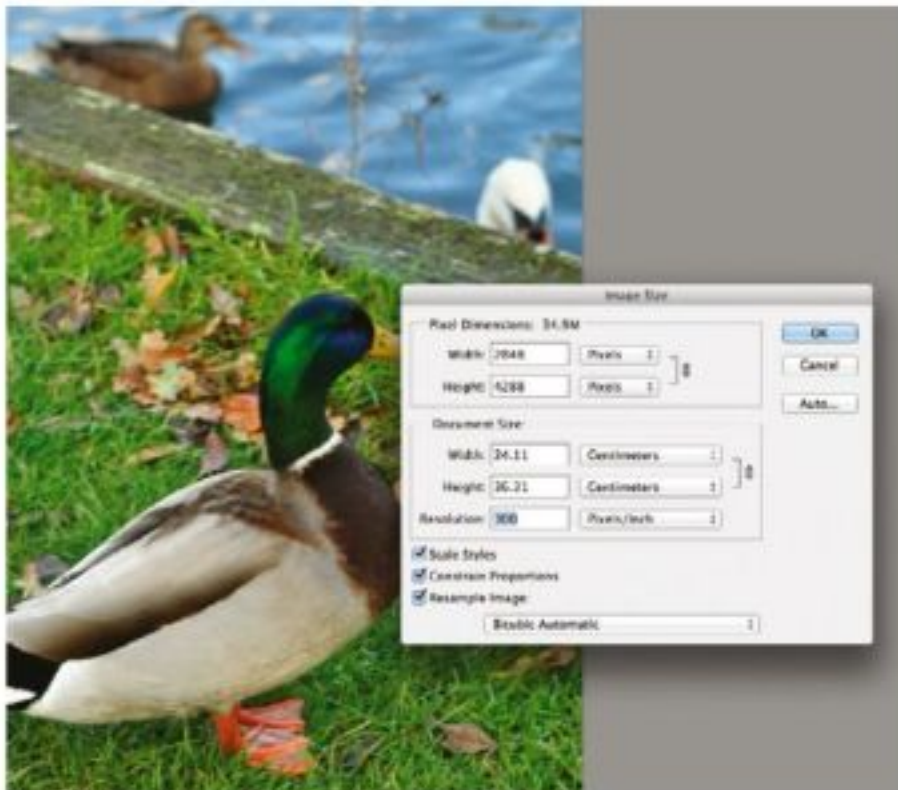
Printers look at individual pixels in an image, which means that with more detail and a higher number of pixels, the printout will look better.

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.



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.



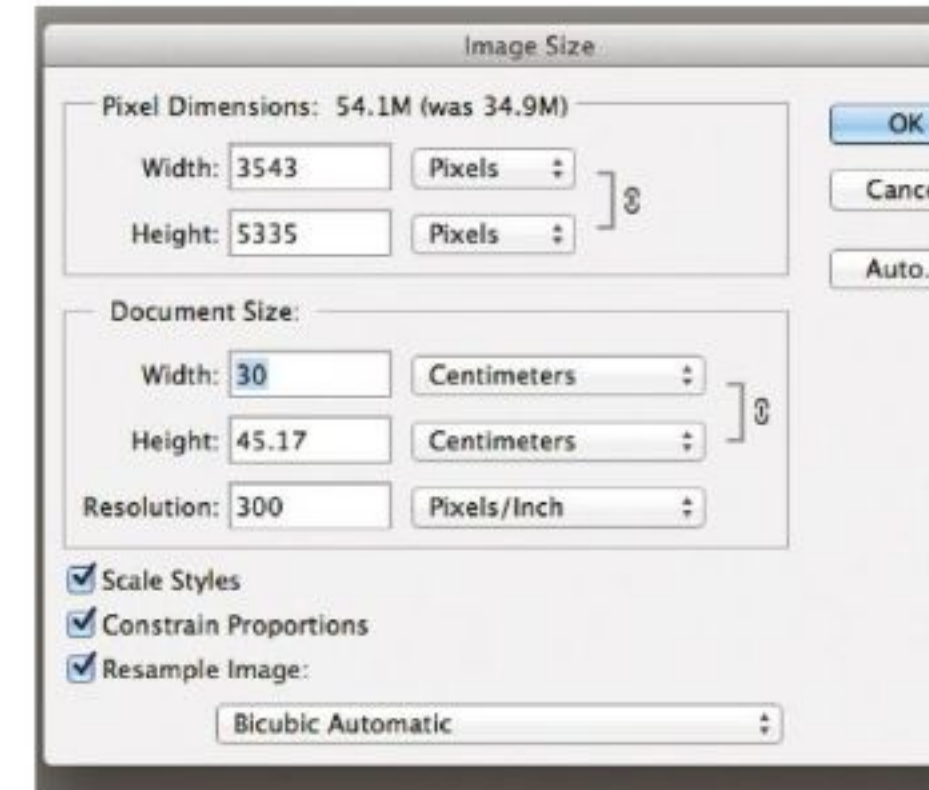
02 Check DPI

Check that your image has a Pixels/Inch setting of 300 in the Resolution Document Size box. 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.



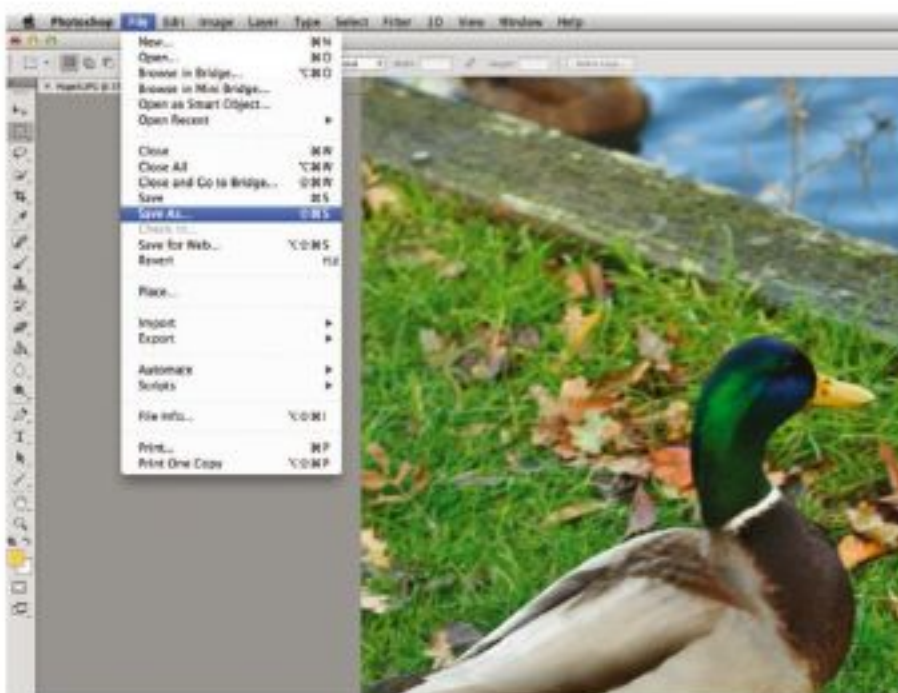
03 Stick to original size

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.



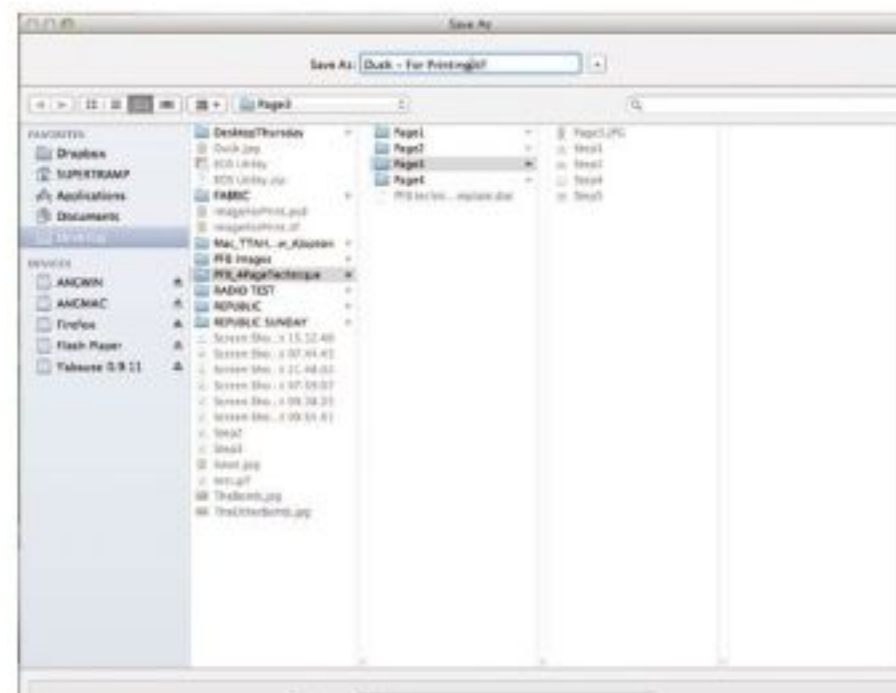
04 Printing bigger

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.



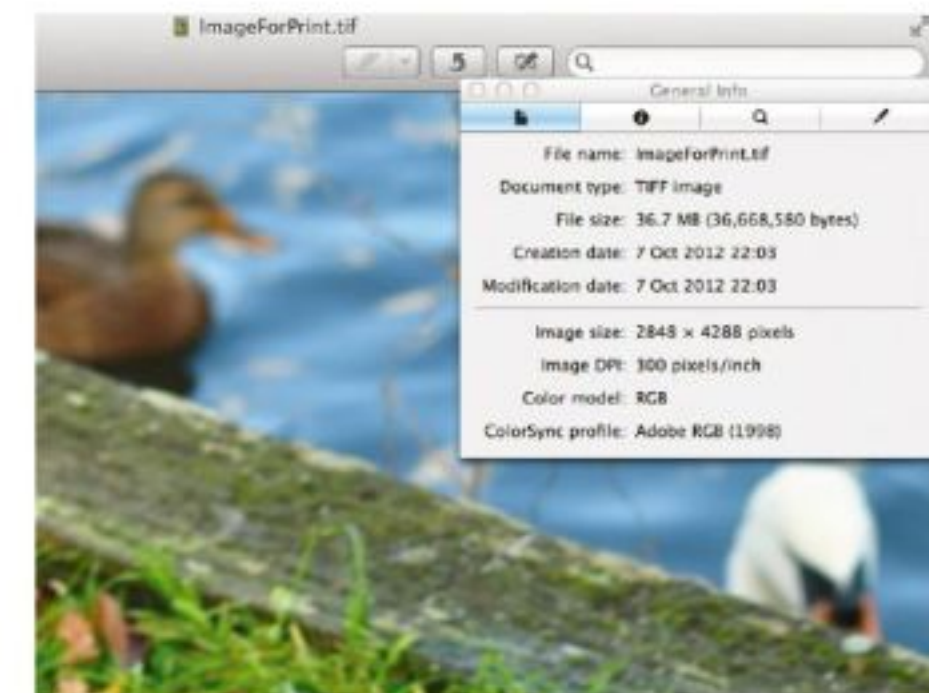
05 Choose TIFF

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.



06 Name your file

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



07 Working with the file

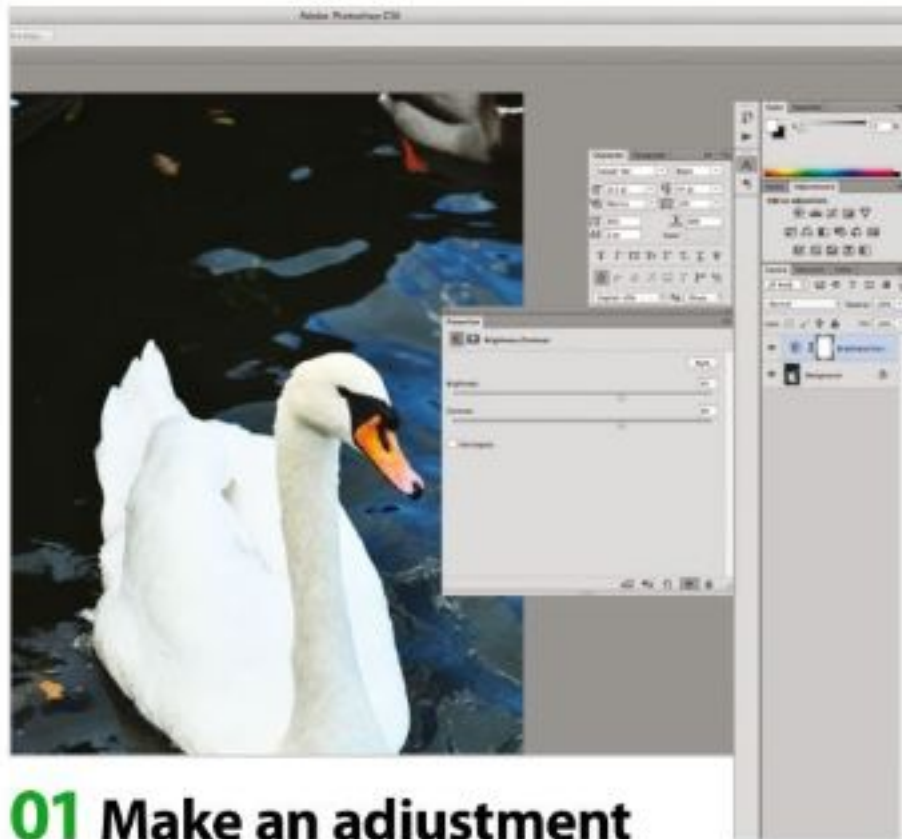
Your photo can now be printed and, as it's high resolution and uncompressed, it is very large in size. If you're moving the file to another computer then use a device such as a memory stick, because it's not ideal to email an image at this size.

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.

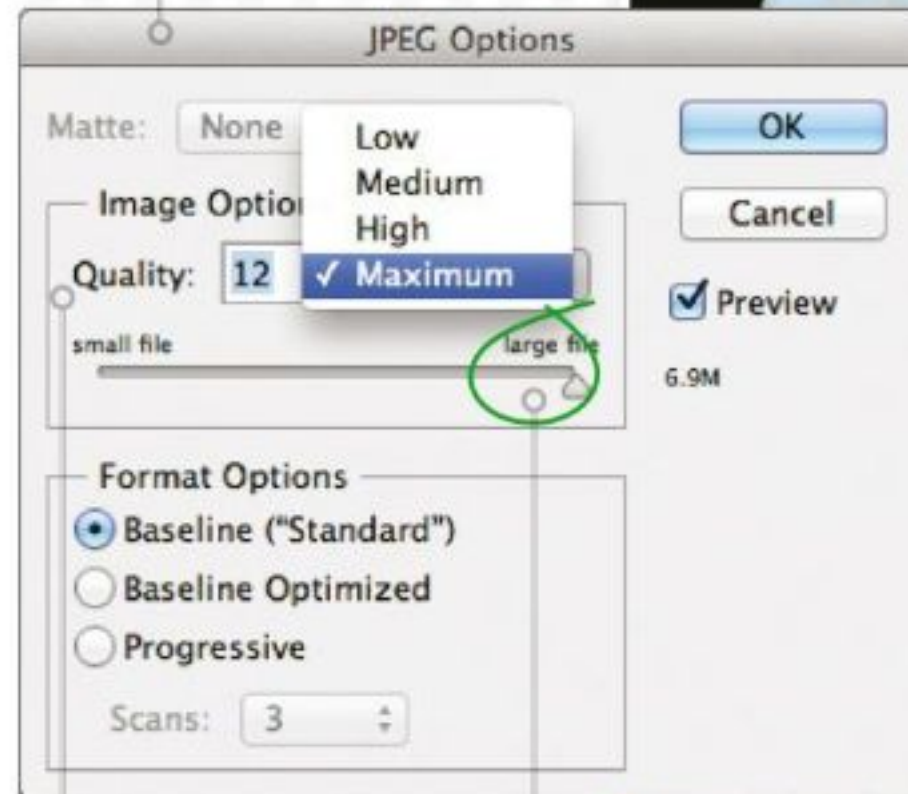


01 Make an adjustment

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.

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

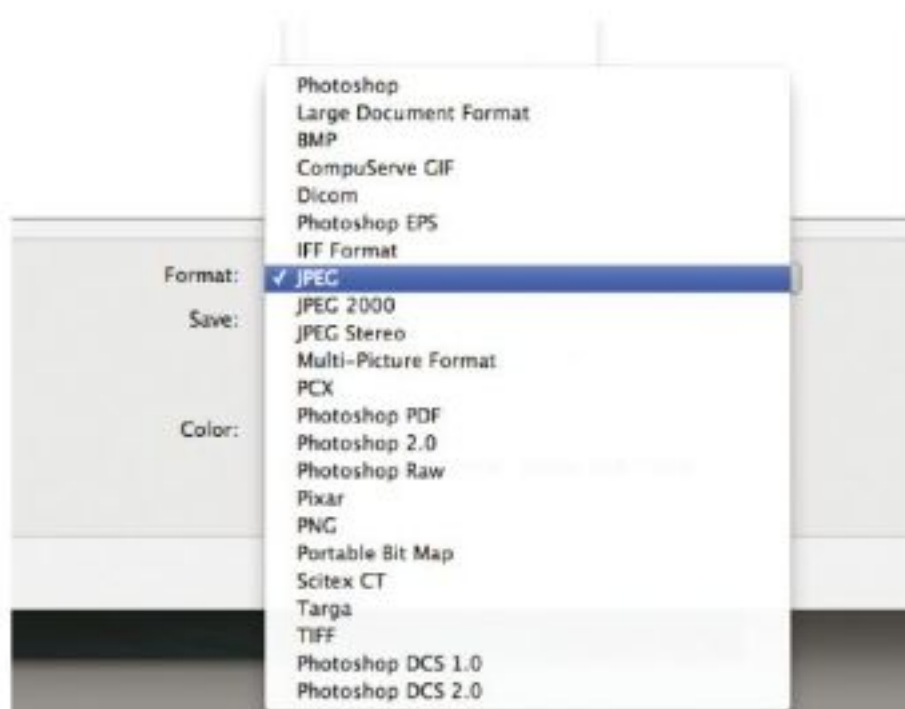
JPEG files can be compressed selectively, which means that you can choose the final file size of your flattened image.

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.



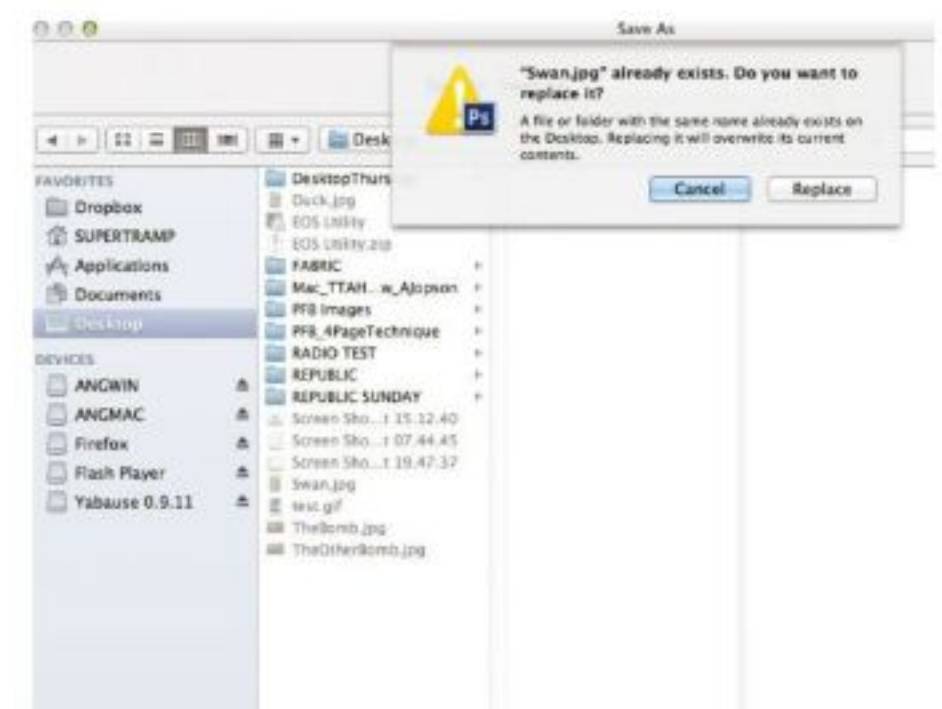
02 Save flattened file

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.



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.

Learn to copy and paste

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

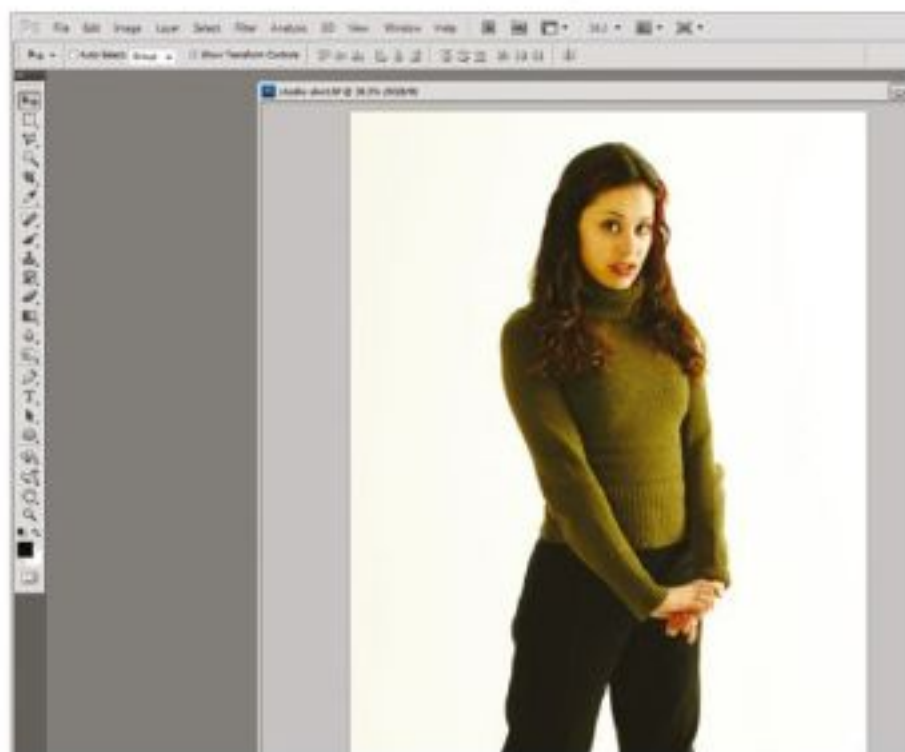
The words cut and paste describe two very simple actions. You cut out (or copy) an object in one photo into an internal memory buffer called the clipboard and then paste it again into a different position or photo. However, it's the processes that leads up to the cut and what you do after the paste where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

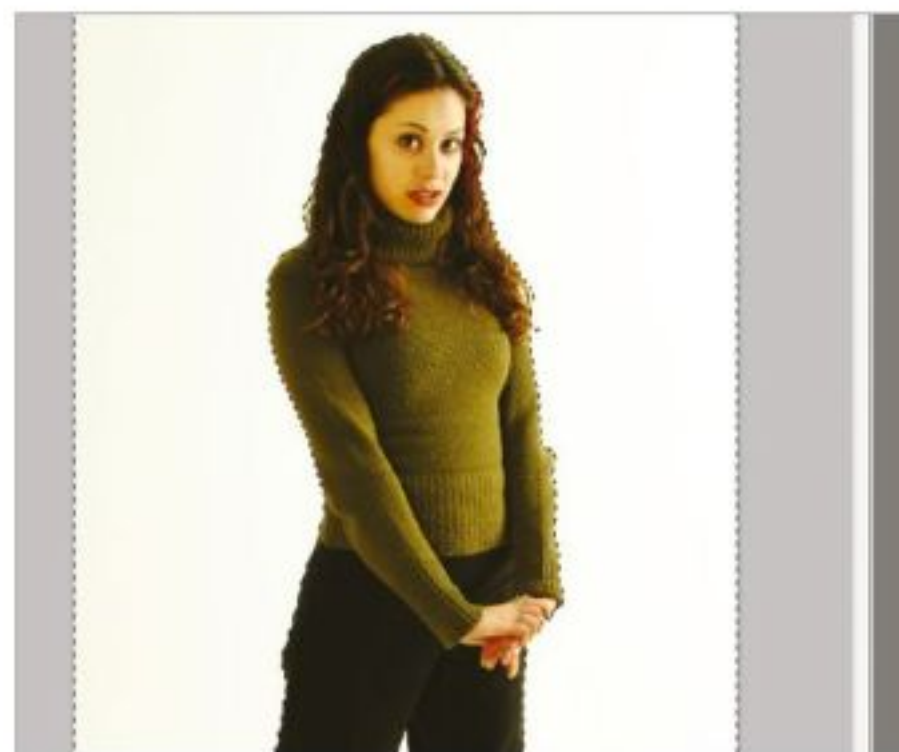


How to copy Select one area to move to another



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



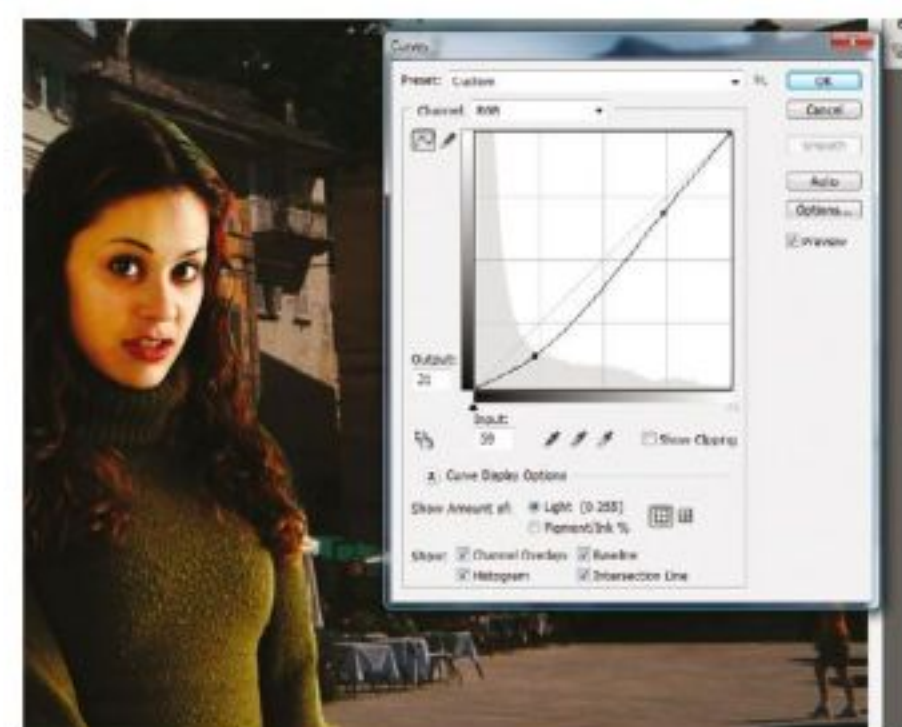
01 Refine the edges

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



New features
Discover all the new features of Adobe Elements 18 in full, as well as the purchasing options, at <http://www.adobe.com/uk/products/photoshop-elements/>

What does it mean?
PREMIERE ELEMENTS – Elements comes in three different strands: Organizer, Photoshop Elements and Premiere Elements. Premiere Elements takes the best features of the Premiere brand, which is used to edit video content. Premiere Elements is available with Photoshop Elements for £130.36/\$99.99US.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Discover Photoshop Elements 2018

What's new in the 2018 update to the program?

Adobe first released Photoshop Elements for beginners and users in a hurry or on a budget; it contained many of Photoshop's best features, but at a fraction of the price.

Since those early days of Elements, the software has become more powerful than some early versions of Photoshop, but still retains its core principles of being simple to use, fun for all kinds of users and a budget alternative to Photoshop. Elements 2018 is no different: it's packed with all the features and tools that make it great, and it includes an array of new ones to make it easier and more intuitive than ever.

The Guided Edit mode within the program has become particularly popular in recent years, offering step-by-step walkthroughs for all kinds of projects, and 2018 sees a fair few new ones. You can now create watercolour digital paintings, incredible double exposures, and even replace backgrounds with ease and speed. Elsewhere, use the Auto Selection option for an even smarter workflow.

Elements is a brilliant option for creatives, and there's plenty in the new version for us to get our teeth stuck into. Let's look at what's new, and how you can use it in your work.

Check out the updates Take a look at the latest tools and features added to Elements



01 Auto Selection

A brand-new selection tool, Auto Selection is even quicker and more intuitive than anything Elements has ever had. To use it, simply make a selection somewhere in your image and the program will automatically judge the edges that you're creating.



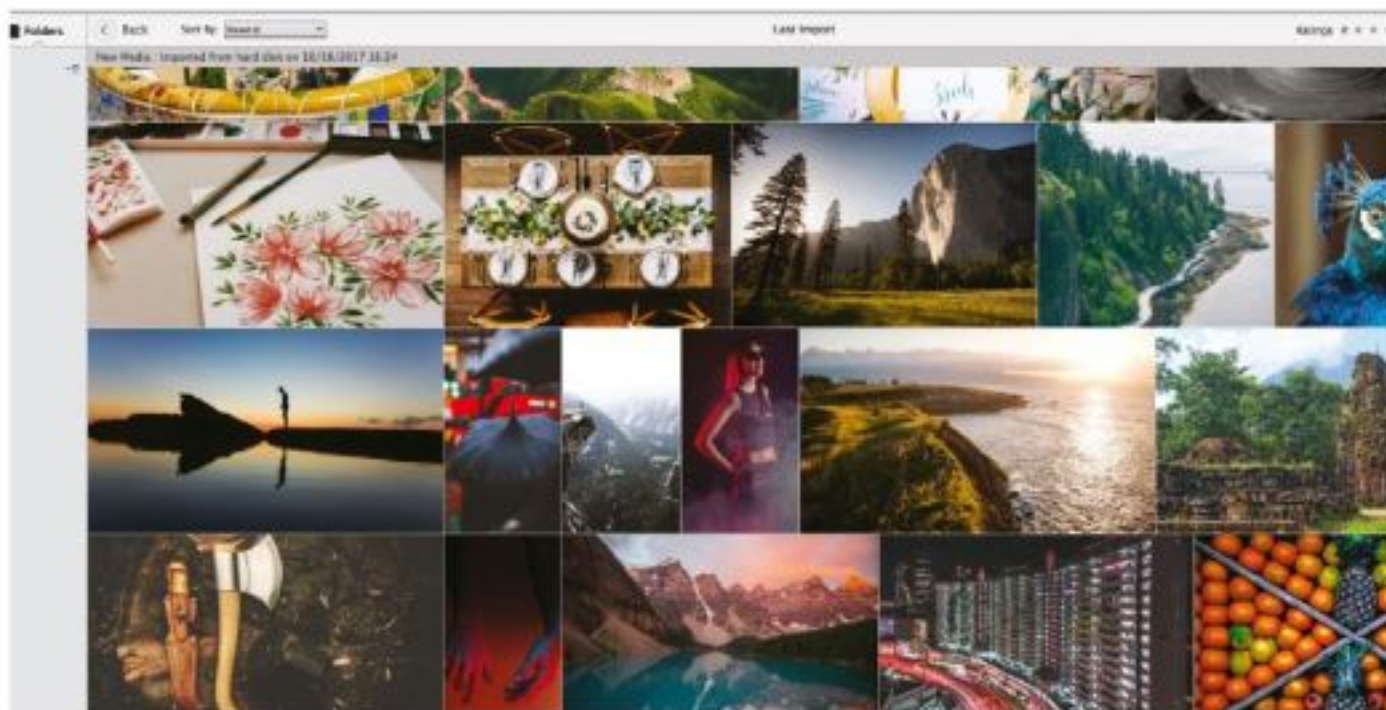
02 Double Exposure

With a wealth of new Guided Edits, Elements has added even more editing possibilities for users in a hurry. The Double Exposure option is of genuine quality as well as being quick to apply, and even offers you stock options to add over your images.



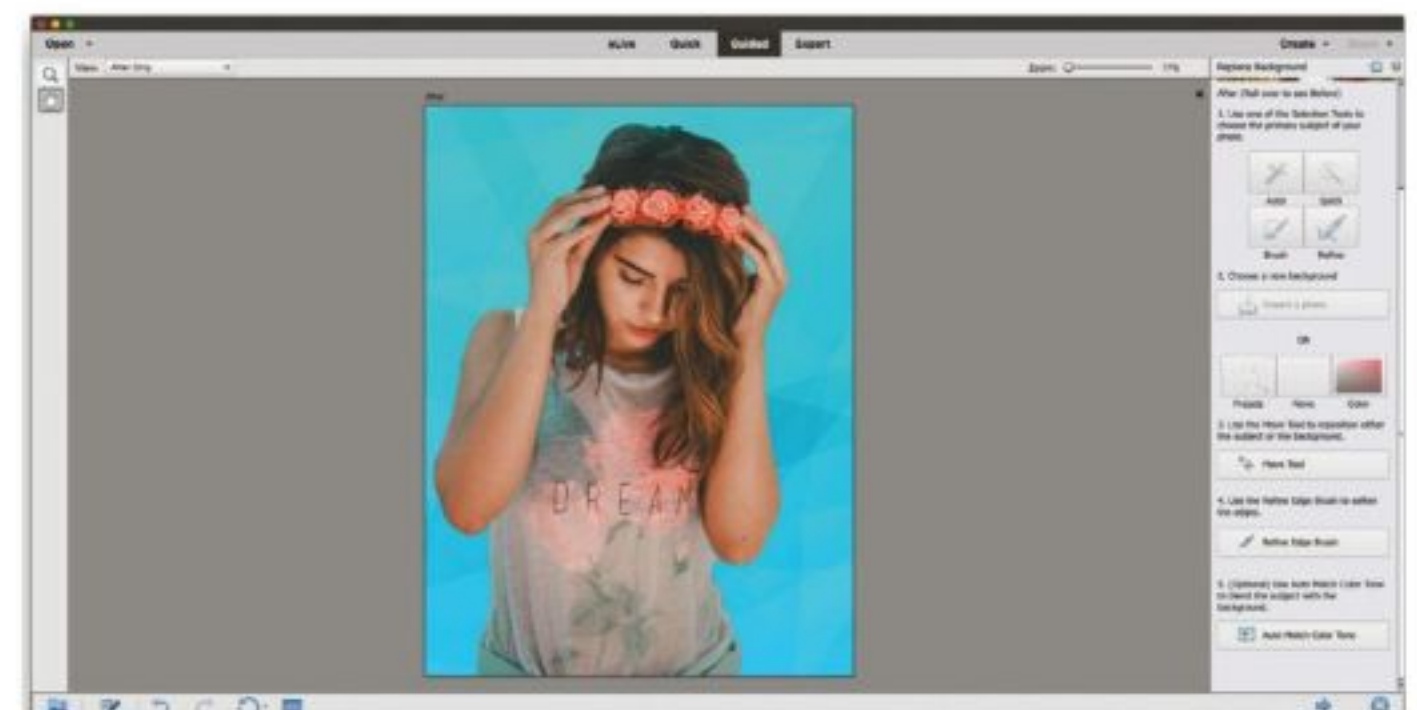
03 Open Closed Eyes

It's likely there will be elements of some photos you don't want to keep. The new Open Closed Eyes feature enables you to take the eyes of one image and substitute it over another, meaning that you needn't settle for an imperfect image again.



04 Organizer

The Organizer section of Elements has also seen tweaks in this edition. Photos are now organised automatically, there's an Auto Curate feature added, and slideshows have seen a significant update, in that they select the best images themselves now.



05 Replace Background

While replacing backgrounds is one of the most time-consuming and picky things you can do in Elements, the new Replace Background edit can significantly cut time. Simply use the selection tools and import an image, or choose a preset background.



06 Shape Overlay

The Shape Overlay option is another Guided Edit that boasts quality as well as efficiency. It places a specific shape overlay over an image and you get to decide on the effect inside and outside the shape.



07 Watercolour

Creating cool digital art from default options within tool settings can be tricky. However, the Watercolour feature in Elements 2018 creates beautiful effects from your images and can make art from even the most ordinary of pictures.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crop Tool Perspective Crop Tool Slice Tool Slice Select Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crop Tool: C Perspective Crop Tool: C Slice Tool: C Slice Select Tool: C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyedropper Tool 3D Material Eyedropper Tool Color Sampler Tool Ruler Tool Note Tool Count Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eyedropper Tool: I 3D Material Eyedropper Tool: I Color Sampler Tool: I Ruler Tool: I Note Tool: I Count Tool: I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eraser Tool Background Eraser Tool Magic Eraser Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eraser Tool: E Background Eraser Tool: E Magic Eraser Tool: E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rectangle Tool Rounded Rectangle Tool Ellipse Tool Polygon Tool Line Tool Custom Shape Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rectangle Tool: U Rounded Rectangle Tool: U Ellipse Tool: U Polygon Tool: U Line Tool: U Custom Shape Tool: U
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand Tool Rotate View Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand Tool: H Rotate View Tool: R

Zoom Tool: Z

Select and Selection tools

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rectangular Marquee Tool Elliptical Marquee Tool Single Row Marquee Tool Single Column Marquee Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rectangular Marquee Tool: M Elliptical Marquee Tool: M Single Row Marquee Tool: M Single Column Marquee Tool: M
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lasso Tool Polygonal Lasso Tool Magnetic Lasso Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lasso Tool: L Polygonal Lasso Tool: L Magnetic Lasso Tool: L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quick Selection Tool Magic Wand Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brush Tool Pencil Tool Color Replacement Tool Mixer Brush Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History Brush Tool Art History Brush Tool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> History Brush Tool: Y Art History Brush Tool: Y
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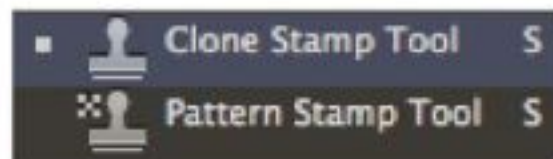
History Brush Tool: Y
 Art History Brush Tool: B
 Tool Opacity 10%-100%: 1-0
 Flow/Airbrush Opacity 10%-100%: Shift+ 1-0

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

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



Type tools

Horizontal Type Tool: T
 Vertical Type Tool: T
 Horizontal Type Mask Tool: T
 Vertical Type Mask Tool: T

Quick Selection Tool: W
 Magic Wand Tool: W

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

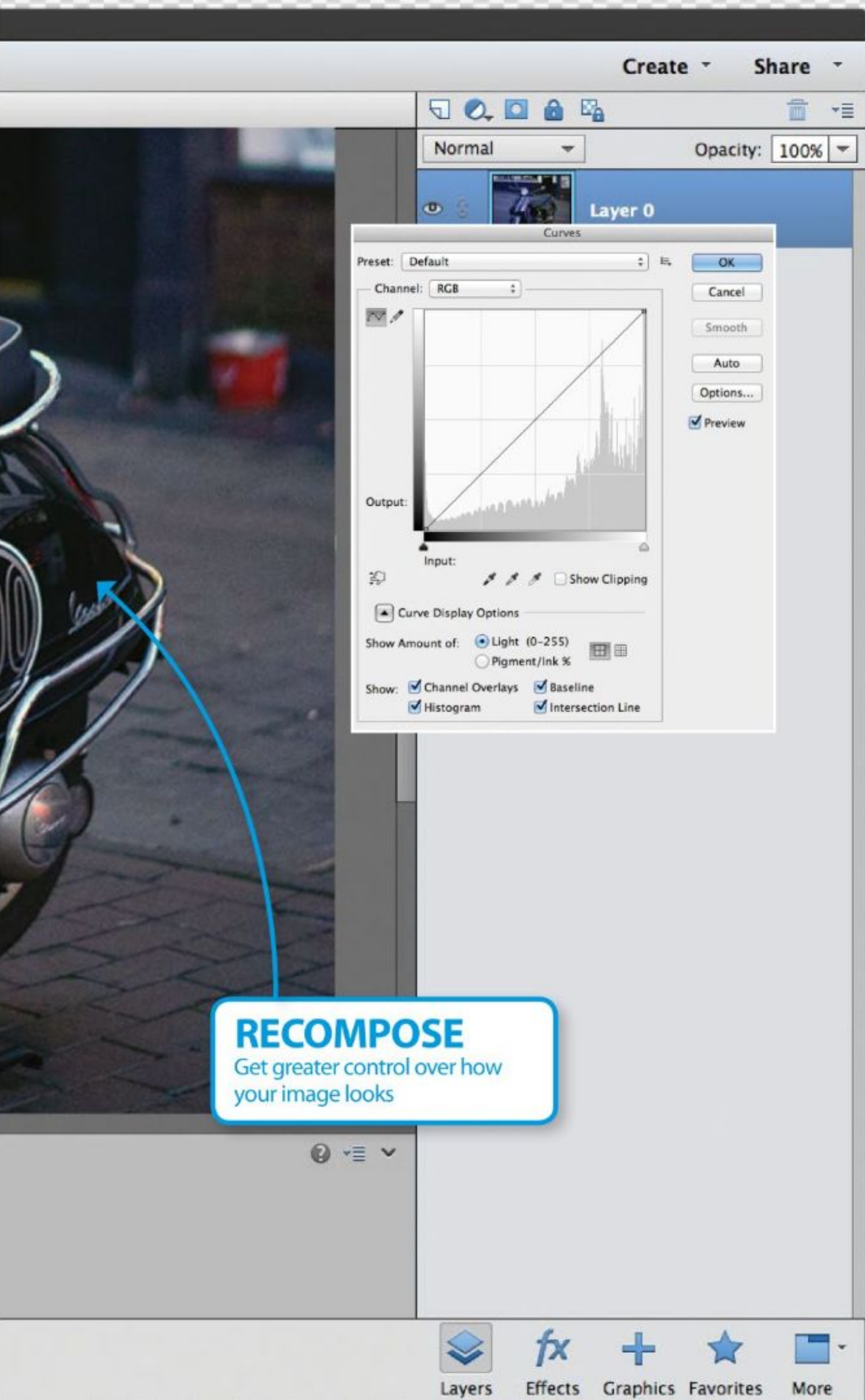
Bring Forward: Cmd/Ctrl+]
 Bring to Front: Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+]
 Create/Release Clipping Mask (toggle): Cmd+Opt+G/
 Ctrl+Alt+G
 Group Layers: Cmd/Ctrl+G
 Layer Opacity 10%-100%: 1-0
 Layer Via Copy: Cmd+Opt+J/Ctrl+Alt+J
 Layer Via Copy (with dialog): Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I
 Merge Layers: Cmd/Ctrl+E Merge Visible: 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+.

Basic corrections

The screenshot displays the Adobe Photoshop interface with a motorcycle image. The 'Levels' adjustment panel is open, showing the 'Channel' set to 'RGB'. The 'Input Levels' histogram has black, white, and gray sliders. The 'Output Levels' section shows a range from 0 to 255. A blue callout box points to the 'Auto' button in the Levels panel, containing the text: **AUTO LEVELS**
You can improve your shots using a selection of auto commands.

At the bottom of the interface, the 'Recompose' tool is active, showing a crop overlay on the motorcycle image. The crop dimensions are W: 19.35 cm and H: 16.68 cm. A blue callout box points to the crop overlay, containing the text: **CROP YOUR WAY TO BETTER PHOTOGRAPHS**
Trim away the excess on your images for greater impact.

The Photoshop interface includes a top menu bar with 'Open', 'Quick', 'Guided', and 'Expert' options. The left sidebar contains tool groups: VIEW, SELECT, ENHANCE, DRAW, MODIFY, and COLOR. The bottom status bar shows '50%' zoom, 'Doc: 12.9M/15.3M', and various tool icons like Photo Bin, Tool Options, Undo, Redo, Rotate, Layout, and Organizer.



RECOMPOSE
Get greater control over how your image looks

- 44. Get the most out of the Auto Color command. For editing your very first edits in a job, Photoshop's Auto Color is a great tool to have in your arsenal.
 - 46. Quicken the editing process. Make your life a lot easier by using the Smart Object and Quick Mask modes.
 - 48. Improve composition and crop. Fix the very basics of your photos with the Crop tool.
 - 52. Master the "to" and "from" modes. Use the Crop tool to crop images with the "to" and "from" modes.
 - 54. Use the Refine Edge tool. Refine the edges of your objects with the Refine Edge tool.
 - 58. Use the Gradient tool. Adjust the color and opacity of your gradients for a smooth transition.
 - 58. Use the Gradient tool. Adjust the color and opacity of your gradients for a smooth transition.
 - 60. Use the Bucket tool. Fill an object with a solid color or pattern with the Bucket tool.
- "Do a lot 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.



04 Auto Levels

This one deals with lighting and makes midtones, highlights and shadows more lively. Using these quick fixes will go a long way to reducing the amount of time spent in editing.

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.

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 15 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.

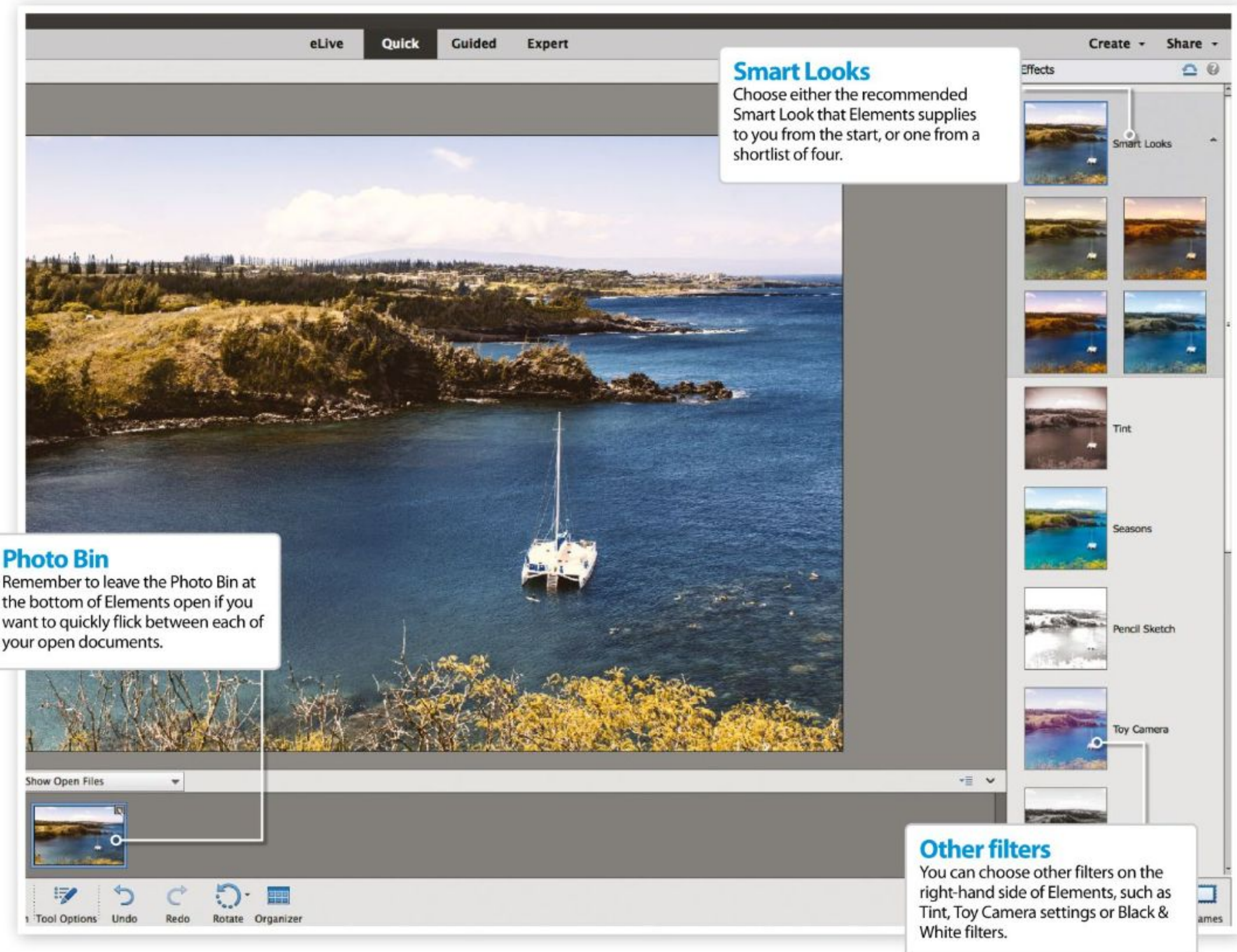


Photo Bin

Remember to leave the Photo Bin at the bottom of Elements open if you want to quickly flick between each of your open documents.

Smart Looks

Choose either the recommended Smart Look that Elements supplies to you from the start, or one from a shortlist of four.

Other filters

You can choose other filters on the right-hand side of Elements, such as Tint, Toy Camera settings or Black & White filters.

Use Smart Looks filters

Choose from five pre-picked, perfect filters

When Elements 14 came on to the scene, it became easier than ever 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.

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 to select the best view.

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.

ORIGINAL

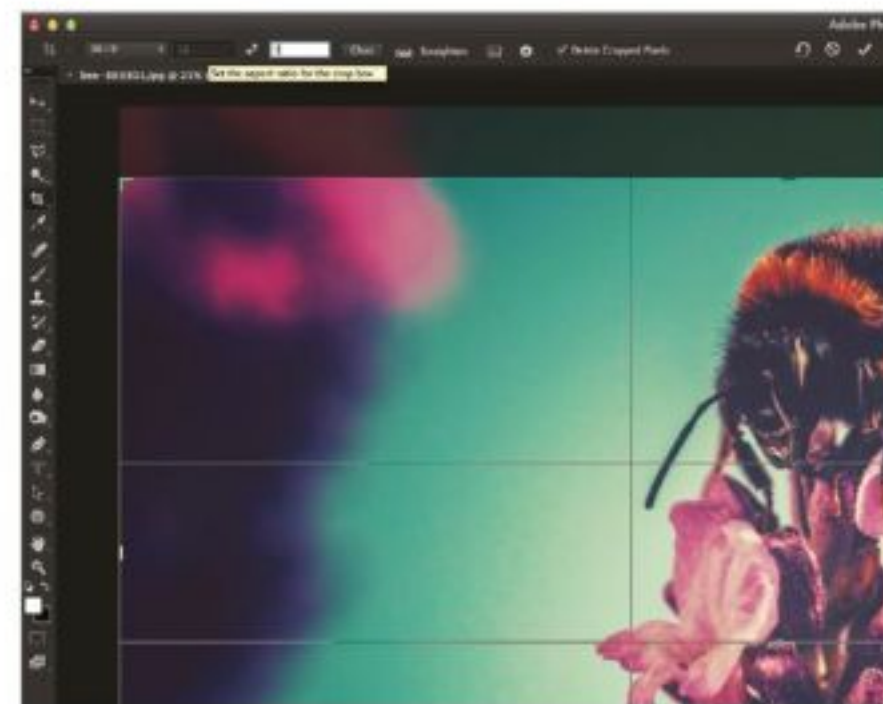


TECHNIQUE 1

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.



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.

Off-centre

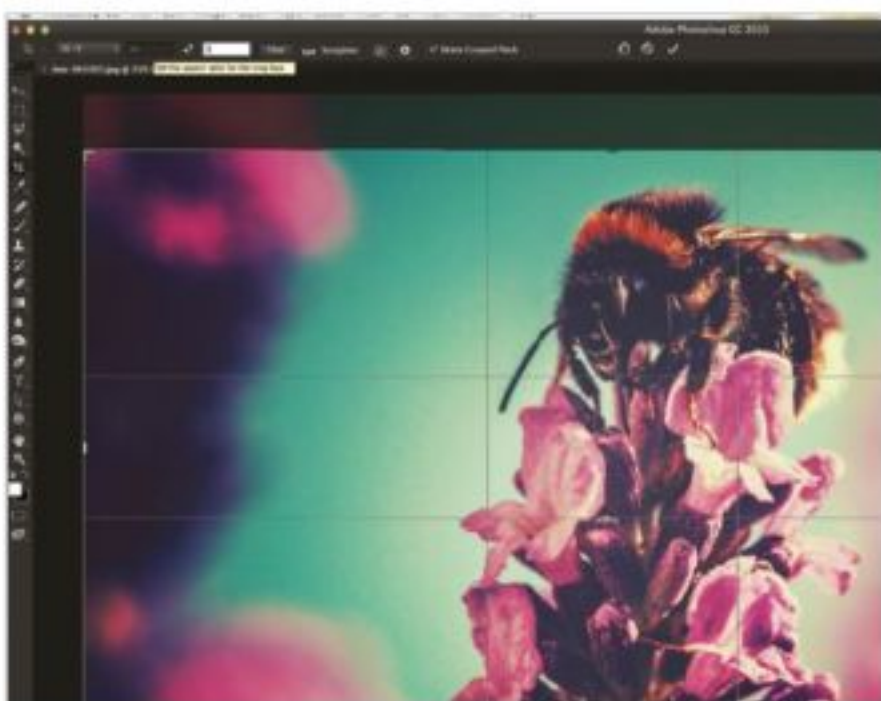
Don't automatically place subjects in the middle of the frame – an off-centre arrangement works well.

Rule of thirds

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

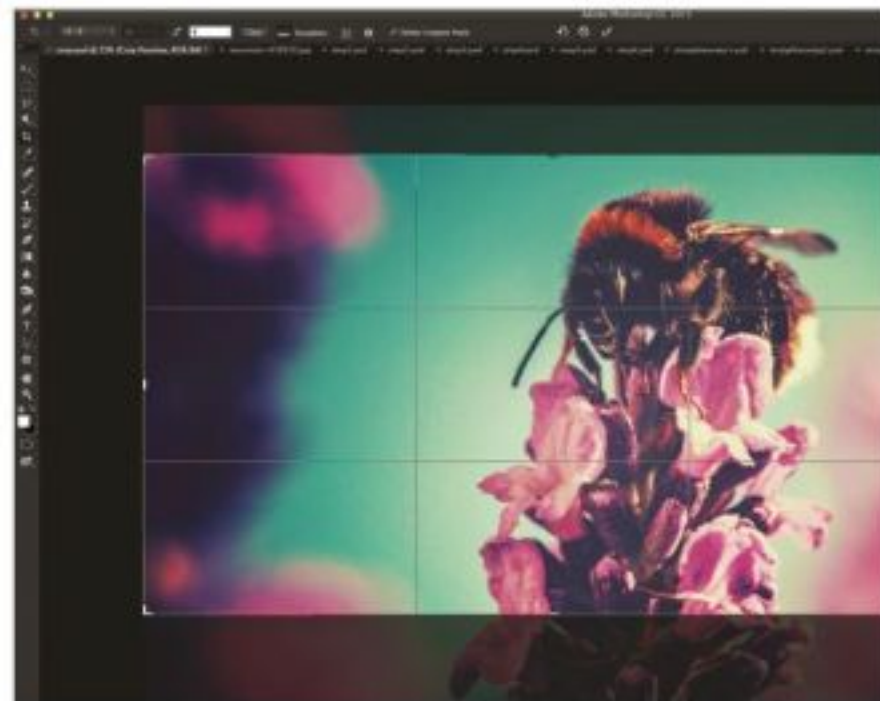
Grid

The Grid option splits your picture into multiple squares. The Grid is particularly useful when it comes to busier pictures of cities or crowds.



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

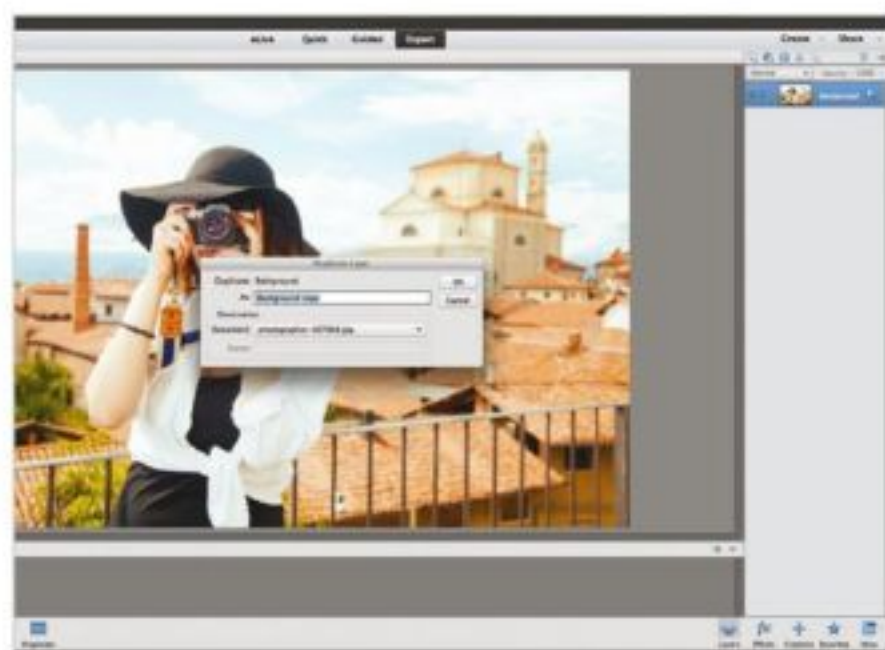
TECHNIQUE 2

How to add a vignette

Use simple layer techniques in Elements to create darkened edges

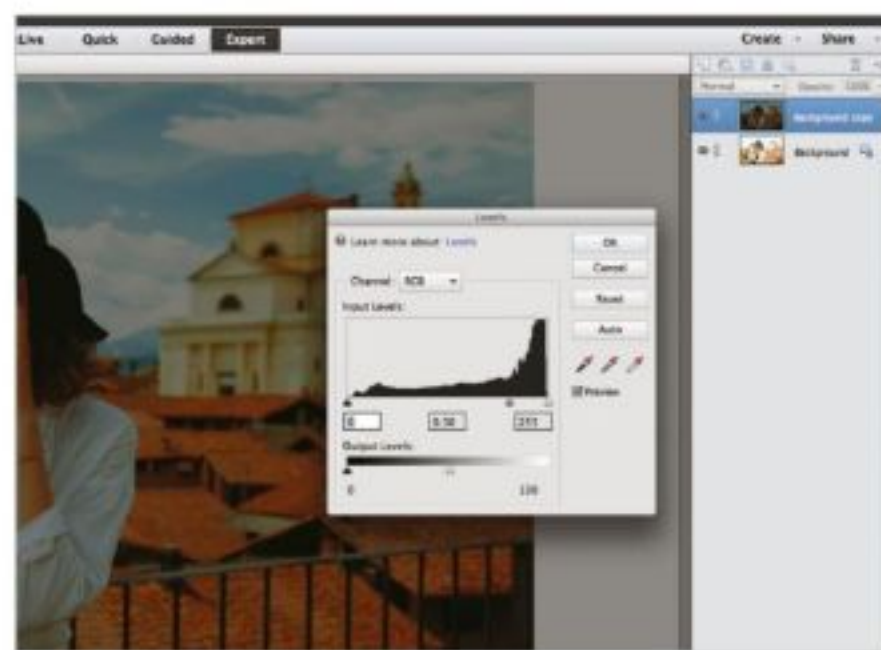
A vignette is often seen as a creative technique. It's an effect that can add drama or style to your pictures, and it's possible to create in the Camera Raw section of Photoshop.

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

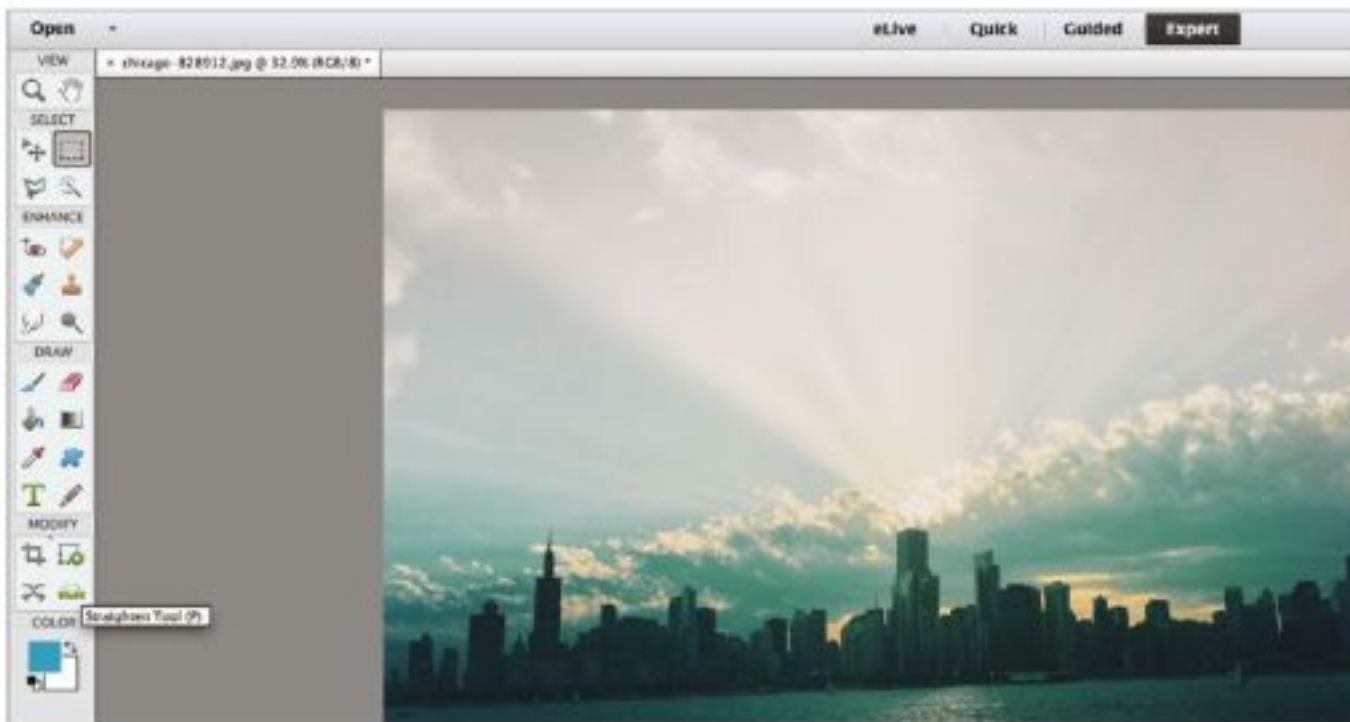
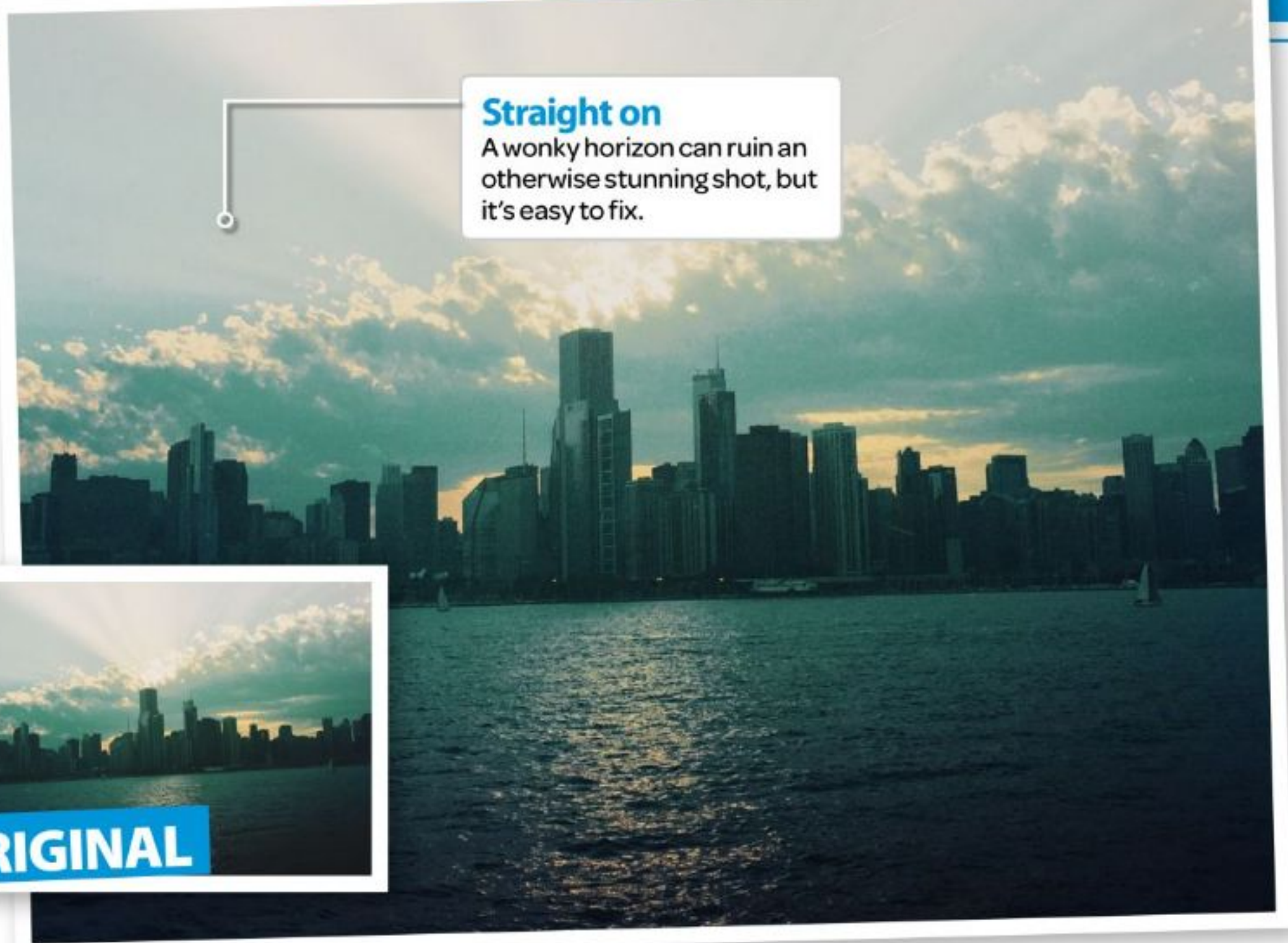
It can often be hard to tell if a picture is straight or not, whether it's a framed painting on a wall, or just a photograph you're editing in Photoshop or Elements.

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.



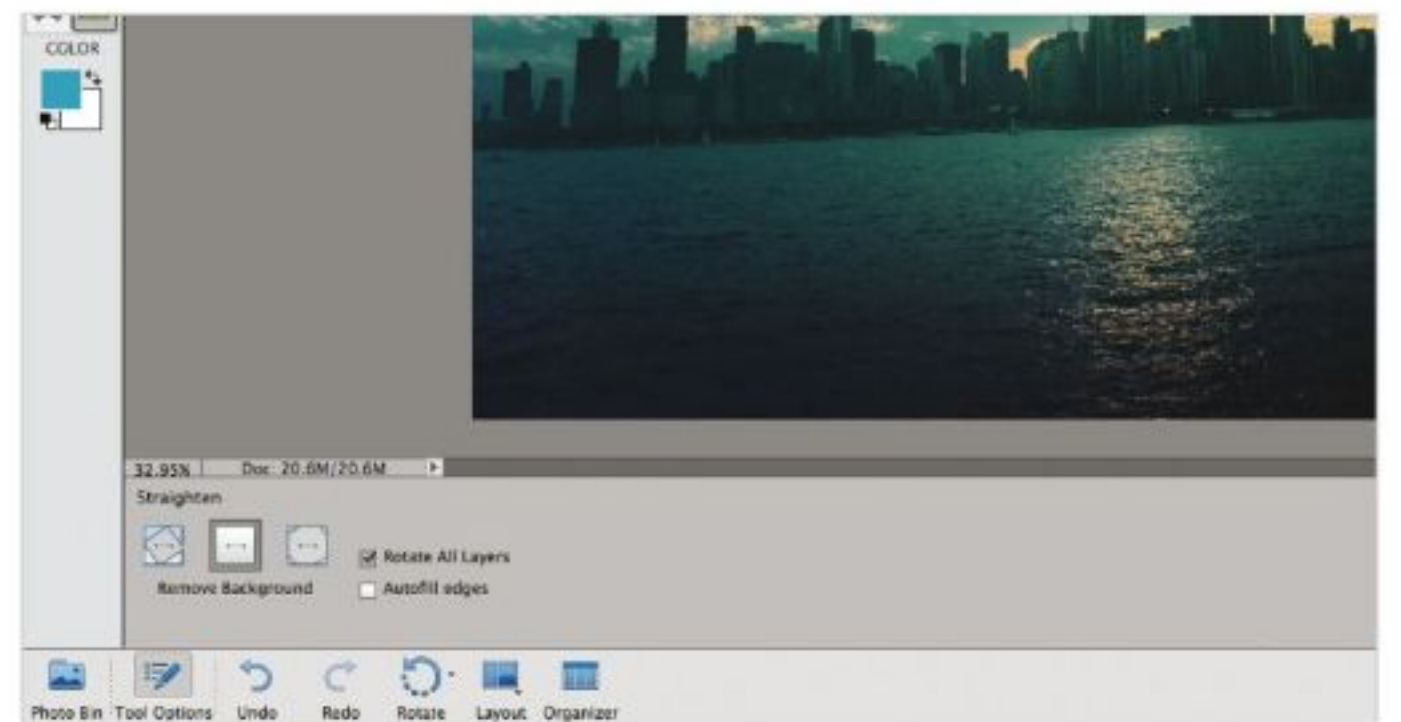
Straight on

A wonky horizon can ruin an otherwise stunning shot, but it's easy to fix.



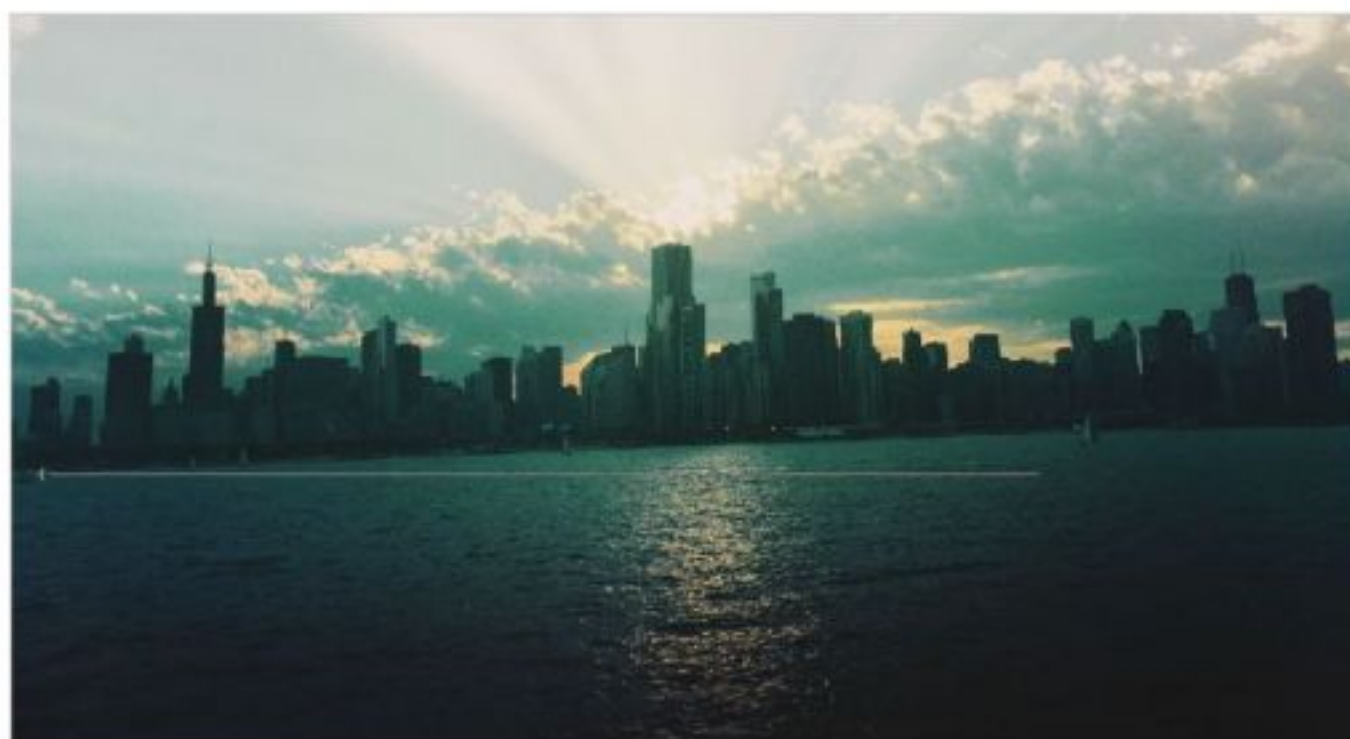
01 Select the Straighten tool

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.



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.



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.



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

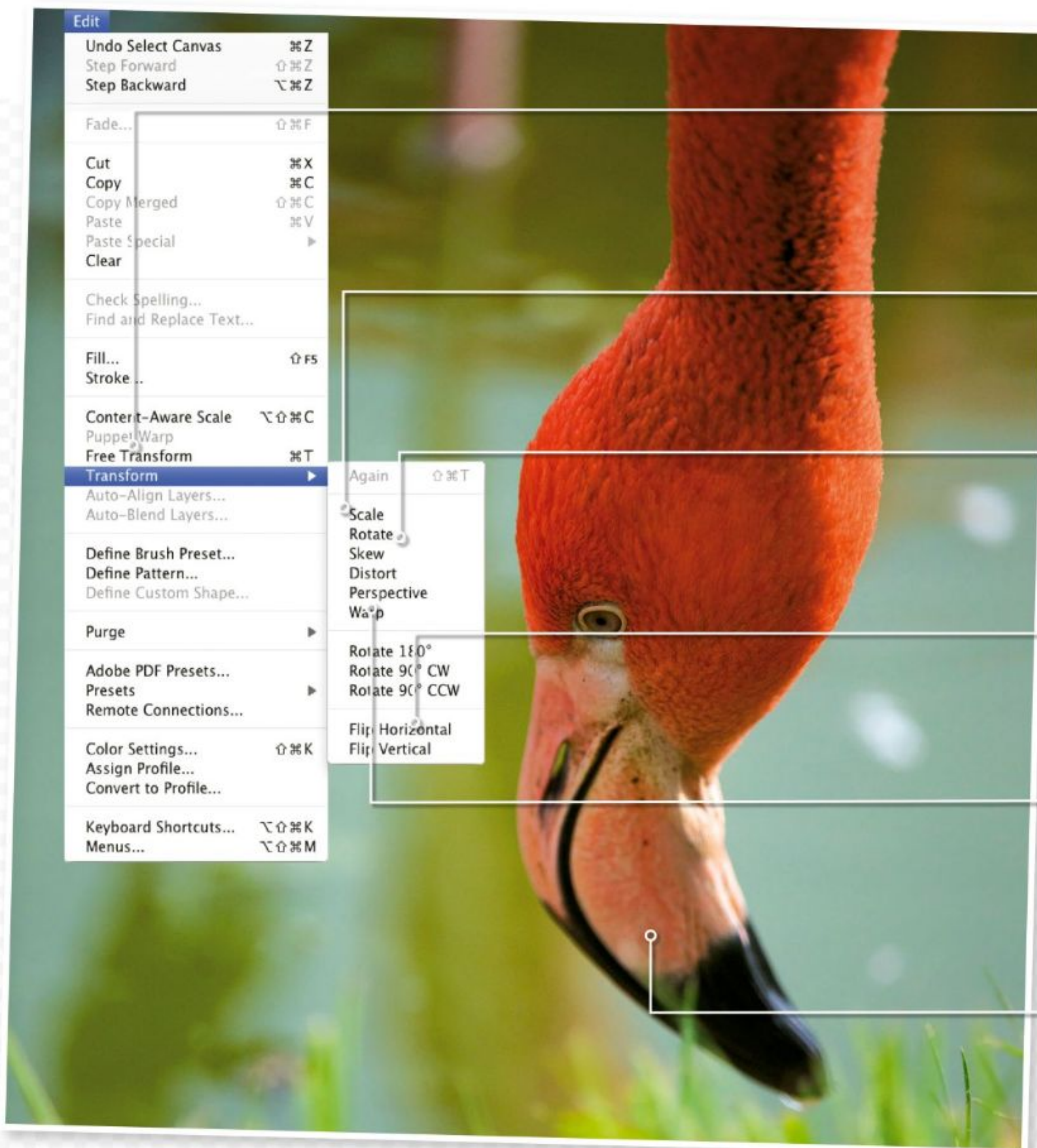
To add perspective, hold down Cmd/Ctrl+Alt+Shift or Cmd/Ctrl+Option+Shift and drag the top left corner downwards. The bottom left corner will lift up, creating a vanishing point. Then hit Enter.



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.



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 15, 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 image can be resized to fit a new frame. 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

ENHANCED



ORIGINAL

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”

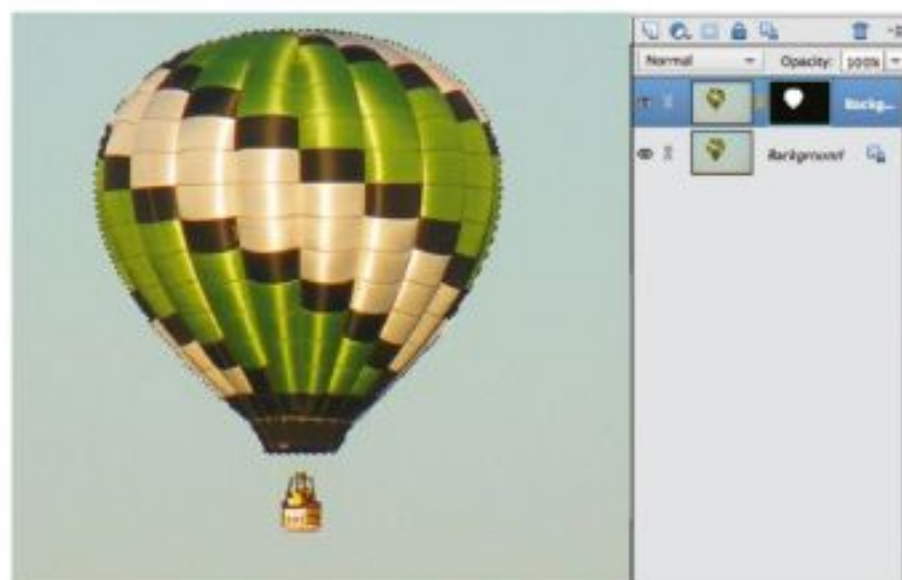
MORE WITH GRADIENTS

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.

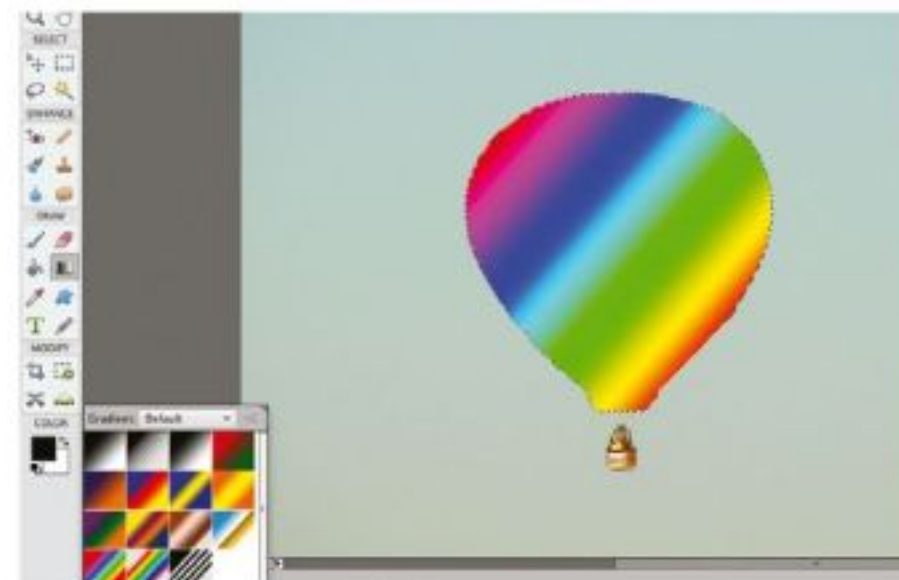
Enhance

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.



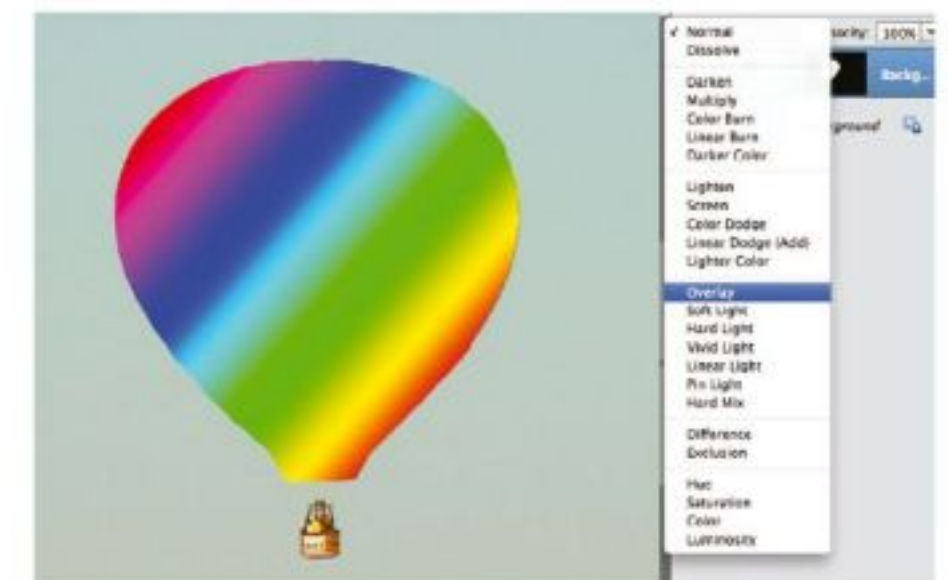
01 Select the balloon

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.



ORIGINAL

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.



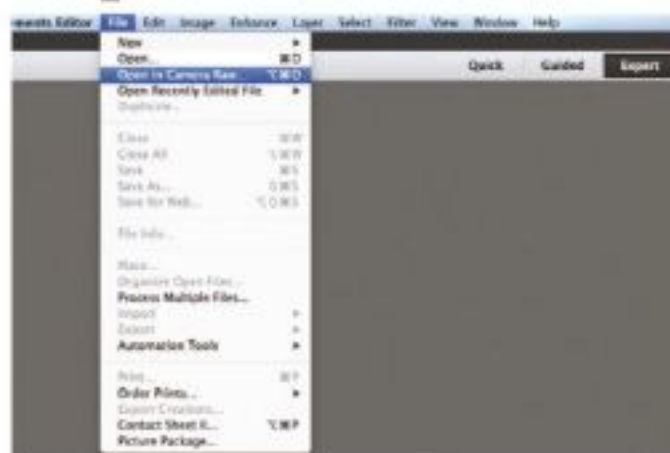
Light distribution

This histogram shows you which colours fall into the brightest regions of your image and the spread of light across the visible spectrum.

Instant results

When you make a change to your image, updates are seen instantly. Use the Preview box to switch changes on or off.

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.

Basic corrections

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

TOUCH UP WITH A BRUSH

The Paint Bucket isn't going to cover every pixel, so touch up any odd spots with the Brush tool.

Edit with the Paint Bucket tool

Learn how to fill with a solid colour or pattern, using this simple tool

Photoshop Elements is more than just a photo-editing program. There are all kinds of artistic style options, and the Paint Bucket is just one tool that can help apply paint to your artwork as a solid colour or pattern.

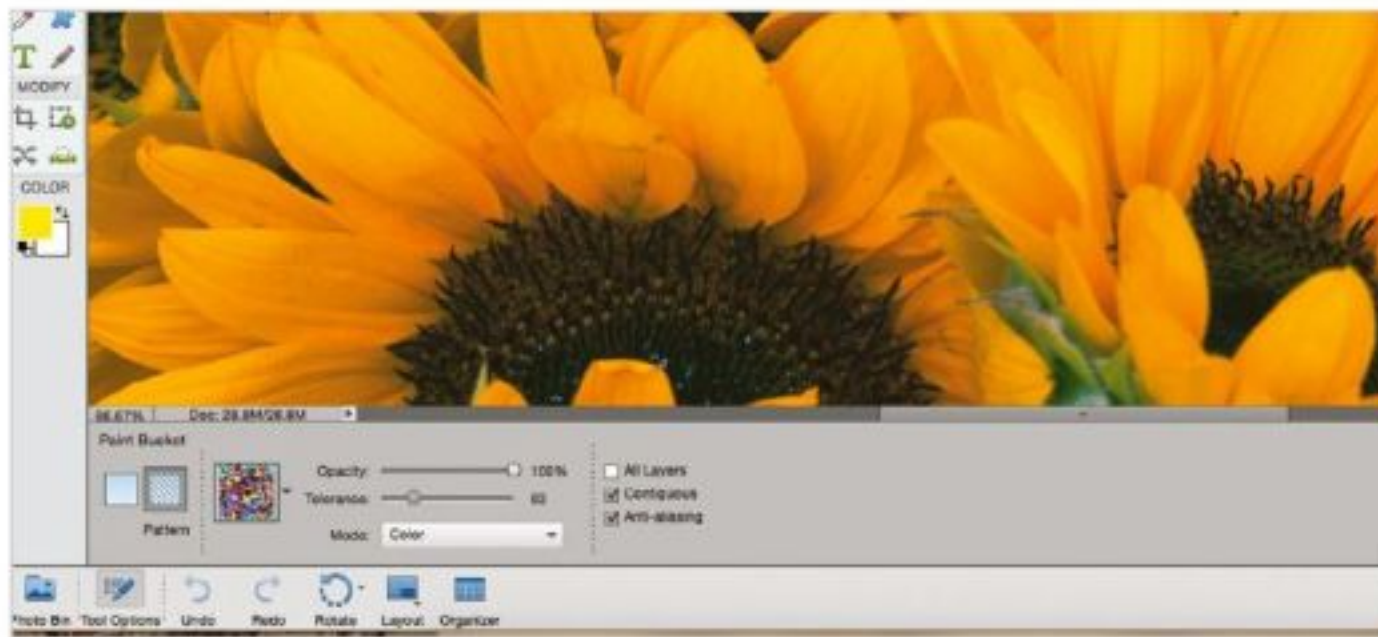
The Paint Bucket relies on the simple premise of covering any pixel or group of pixels with a colour, but it can be used for much more sophisticated projects than just painting spaces. Changing the blend mode or Tolerance, or using the Contiguous checkbox can enable you to create all kinds of incredible effects in your pictures; and though it's primarily a tool for digital art, the Paint Bucket can become a handy companion for when you're editing images.

It's important to remember a few things while using the Paint Bucket, though. First, if you insert a new layer and check the All Layers checkbox, you can apply your paint over your picture non-destructively, meaning that you can edit this colour or even delete it altogether if you like. There's the option to apply your paint with a different blend mode, and you can even add new patterns to Elements too; this tool may be one of the most simple that Elements provides, but that doesn't mean it's not a powerful option.

To discover what the tool has to offer, check out our quick guide of how to use the Paint Bucket, and our suggestions of where to use it in your projects.



Click the bucket Apply a painted effect to specific pixels in your pictures



01 Set colour or pattern

The great thing about the Paint Bucket is that you can choose to either colour in a solid colour or a specific pattern; there are plenty of patterns already in Elements to experiment with, too. Choose your option and set the Tolerance; a lower number paints pixels of a more similar colour.

02 Try more advanced options

The options don't end with Tolerance though; set the blend mode that you want to paint with and check the Contiguous box to paint over any pixel of that colour, regardless of where it happens to be in the picture.



03 Fill your colour

Simply click on a pixel in the space that you want to fill with colour. Zoom in by hitting Cmd/Ctrl and the '+' key to get even closer to your image. Create a new layer first if you wish to experiment with the blend mode.

04 Paint into selected areas

You can choose to use selection tools to get more accurate before you paint. The Quick Selection tool is the easiest to use, and it is sufficient enough to grab a few pixels before you fill in with your selected colour or pattern.

Uses for the Paint Bucket What kind of photo editing can you do with this tool?



Edit your photos

The Paint Bucket tool enables you to alter the colour of any hue in your picture, which is especially useful for editing your photos with brighter hues. Alt/Opt+click on a shade, tweak it in the swatches, set blend mode to Color and uncheck the Contiguous box to paint it over all of those particular shades in the picture; get a little more precise with the Selection Brush.



Create Cutout effects

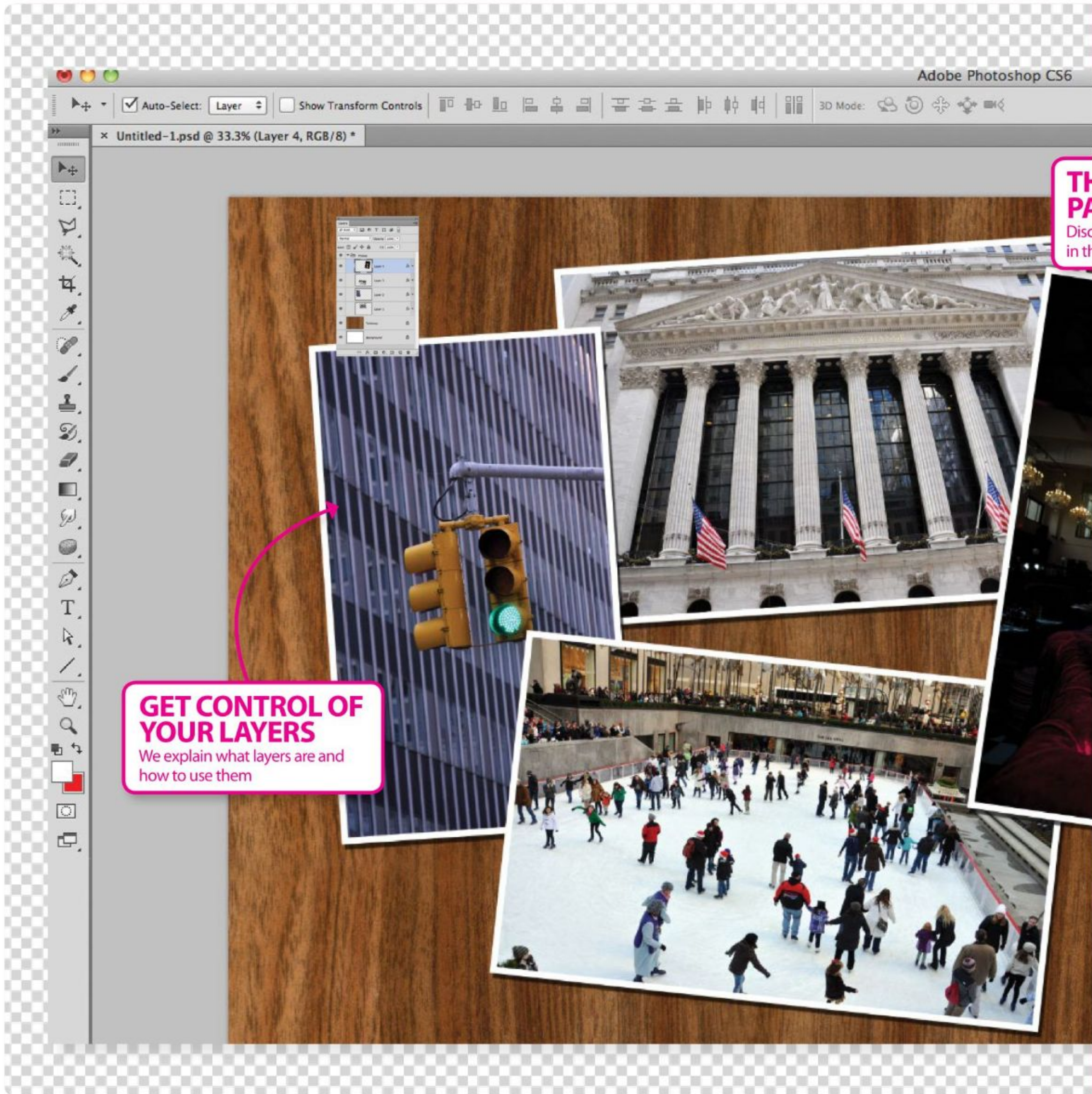
The Cutout filter is perfect for creating basic low-poly or minimal edits, but the Paint Bucket can create more detailed pictures of just a few colours. Find an image with an object that you wish to turn just one colour, and on a new layer, use the Paint Bucket to fill over the shape. Then, do the same with the background on a layer below your object to create the cutout effect.



Recolour elements

Combining both the Paint Bucket's ability to change colours in pictures, and the precision it can have over objects to make them stand out against their backgrounds, why not highlight objects in your pictures with the Paint Bucket? Simply set the blend mode to Color, create a new layer and choose a bright or vibrant shade in your image. Check Contiguous.

Layers

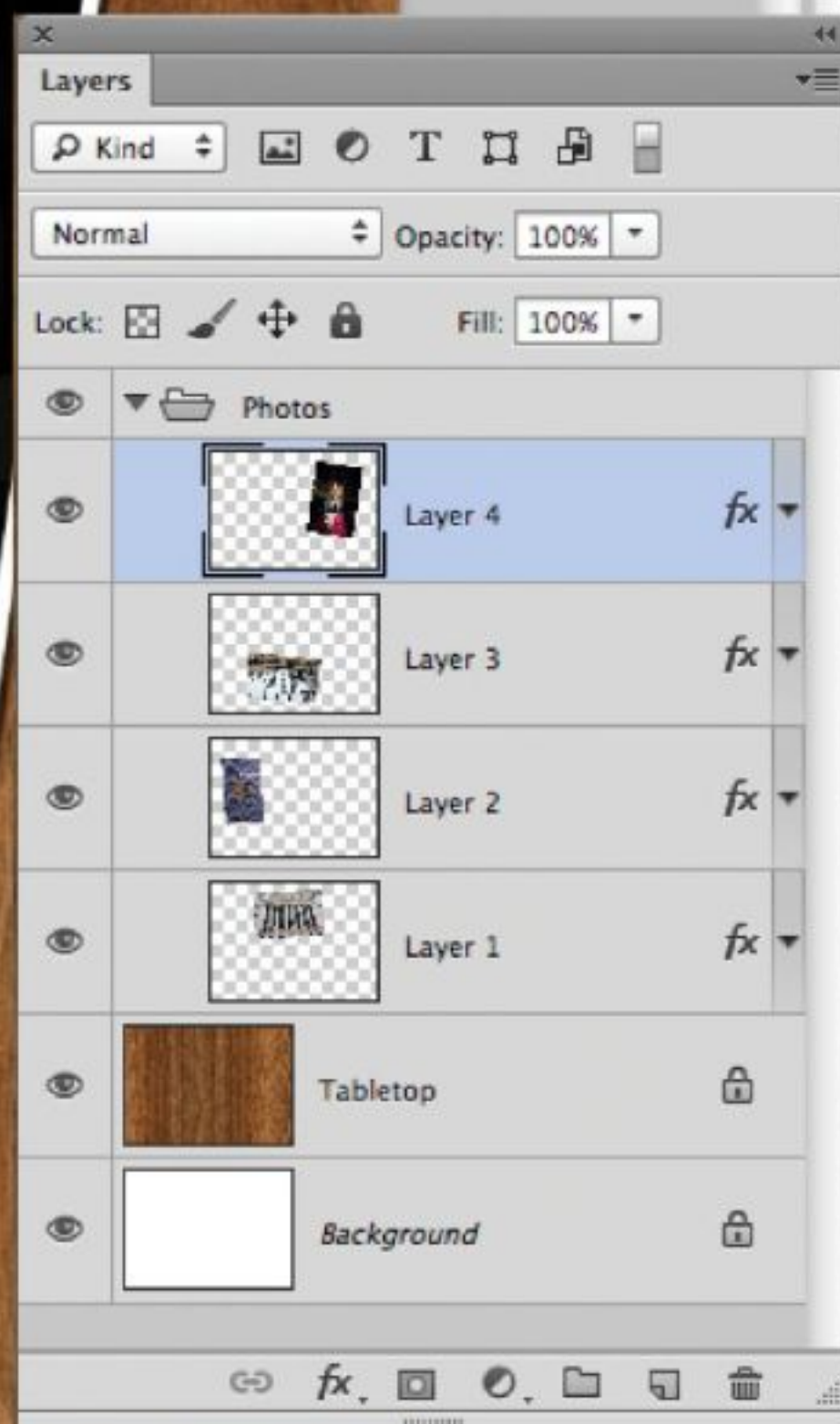
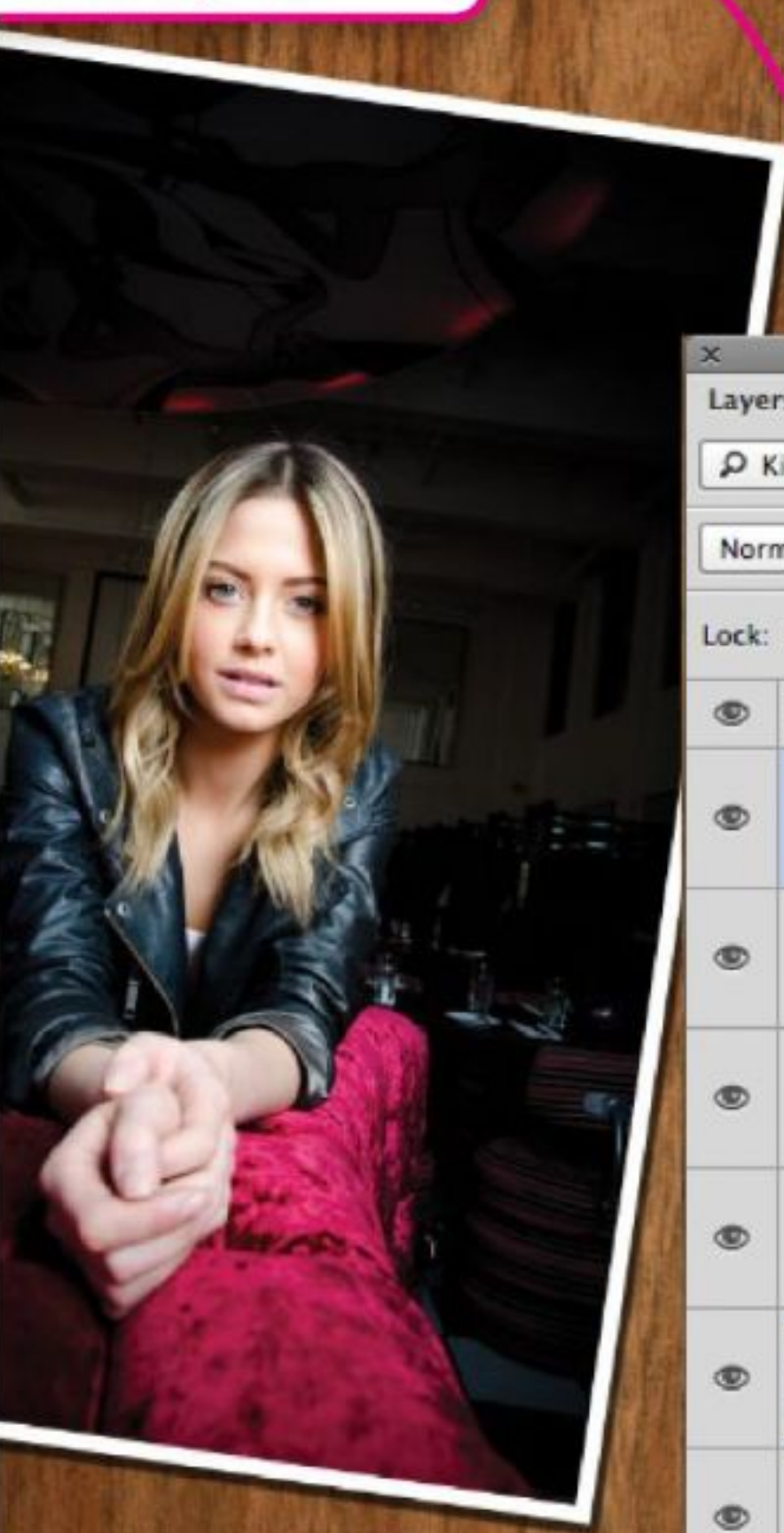


GET CONTROL OF YOUR LAYERS
We explain what layers are and how to use them

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THE LAYERS PALETTE

Discover what everything does and why it's essential palette



64

Understand the Layers palette and learn what everything does in the palette and what ways to arrange

66

Organize Layers
Control the elements of every layer and the way is align or vectored in this

68

Navigate in the layers palette
Learn how to move in the palette and how to control the elements

70

Learn to control layer opacity
Control layer transparency and color fill and fill color

72

Perfect background
Find out how to use the background layer and how to use the background layer

"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.

The image shows a Photoshop interface with the Layers palette open. The palette is divided into two sections: 'ORIGINAL' on the left and 'ENHANCED' on the right. The 'ORIGINAL' section contains the following options: New, Duplicate Group..., Delete, Group Properties..., Layer Style, Smart Filter, New Fill Layer, New Adjustment Layer, Layer Content Options..., Layer Mask, Vector Mask, Create Clipping Mask (⌘⇧G), Smart Objects, Type, Rasterize, New Layer Based Slice, Group Layers (⇧G), Ungroup Layers (⇧⇧G), Hide Layers, Arrange, Align Layers To Selection, Distribute, Lock All Layers in Group..., Link Layers, Select Linked Layers, Merge Group (⇧E), Merge Visible (⇧⇧E), Flatten Image, and Matting. The 'ENHANCED' section contains: Merge Down, and New layers. A text box explains that the Merge Down option turns two layers into one with a shortcut of Cmd/Ctrl+E. Another text box explains that new layers can be added either with the second-to-last icon in the palette or by clicking the New Layer option in the fly-out menu. A Layers palette window is also shown, displaying a stack of layers including Brightness/Contrast 1, Photo Filter 1, Frame shape, Lightened, Effects (Bevel & Emboss), and Background.

Enlarge your view
The palette can be enlarged by dragging the bottom-right corner if you've built up a stack of layers.

Merge Down
The Merge Down option turns two layers into one, with a shortcut of Cmd/Ctrl+E. This can help keep your palette tidy.

ENHANCED

New layers
New layers can be added either with the second-to-last icon in the palette or by clicking the New Layer option in the fly-out menu.

ORIGINAL

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.

Shape layers

Sometimes layers have small symbols over the thumbnail, indicating that they're a different type. For example, a shape layer has a small square icon to show this.

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

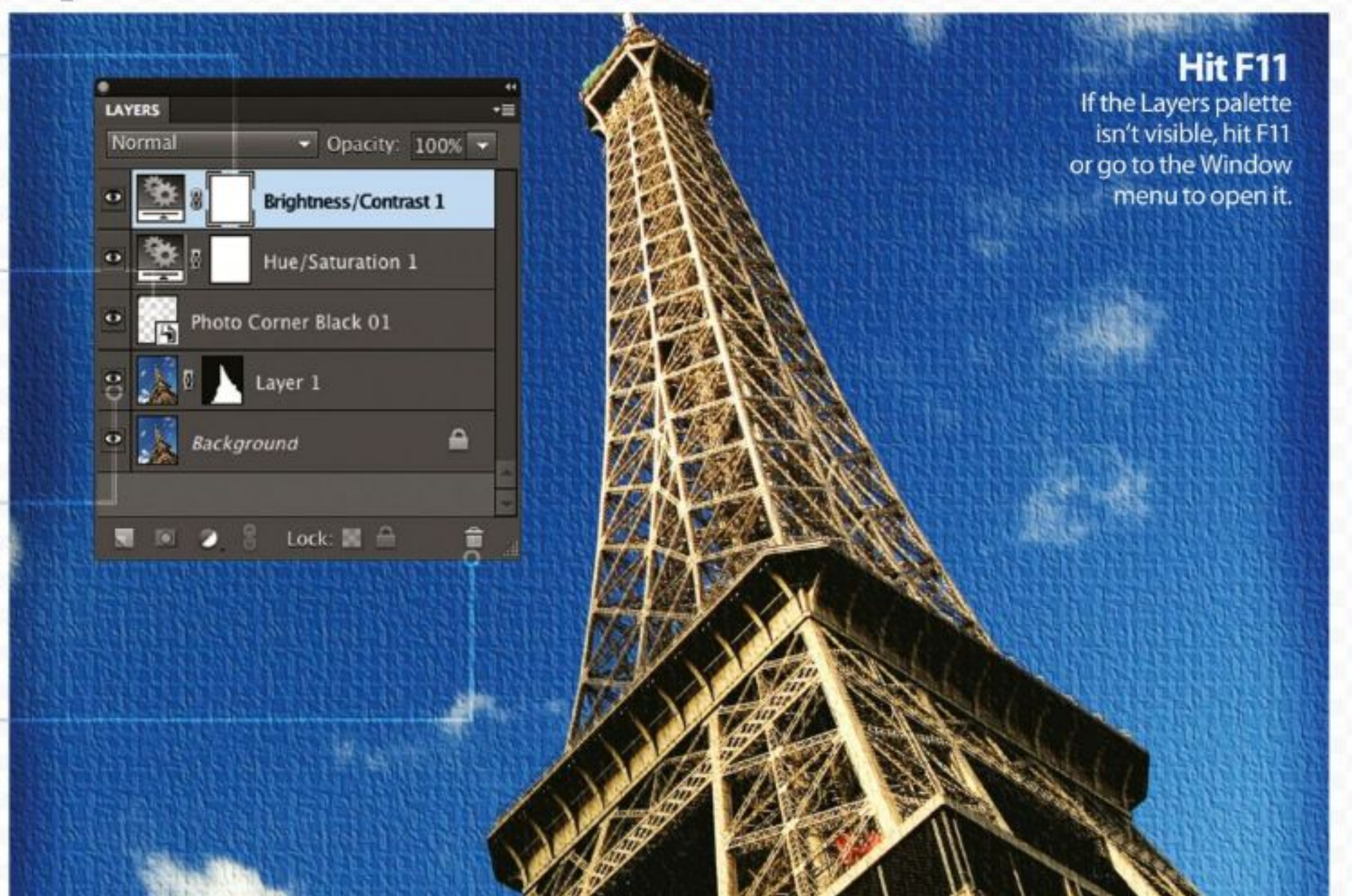
Layers showing the chequer board pattern are mostly empty layers. There may be a small object on it somewhere, such as a photo corner. Cmd/Ctrl-click over this thumbnail to convert it to a selection to reveal its location.

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.



Hit F11

If the Layers palette isn't visible, hit F11 or go to the Window menu to open it.

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.

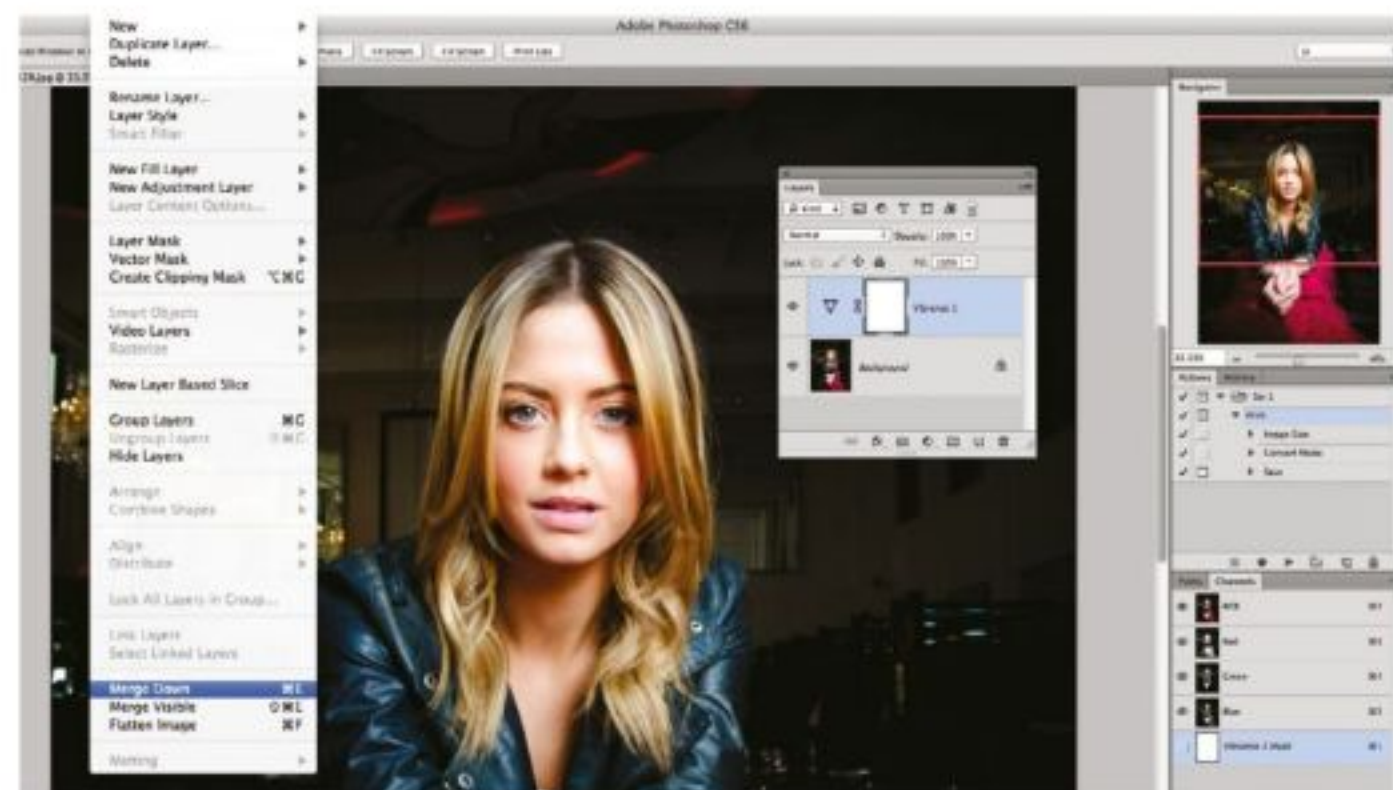
These techniques should help you become a more efficient Photoshop artist. Understanding the basics of using layers, and ordering them in the palette, is essential before jumping straight in the deep end. Try creating your own photo collage by following the steps opposite.

“Layers form the basis for all editing”



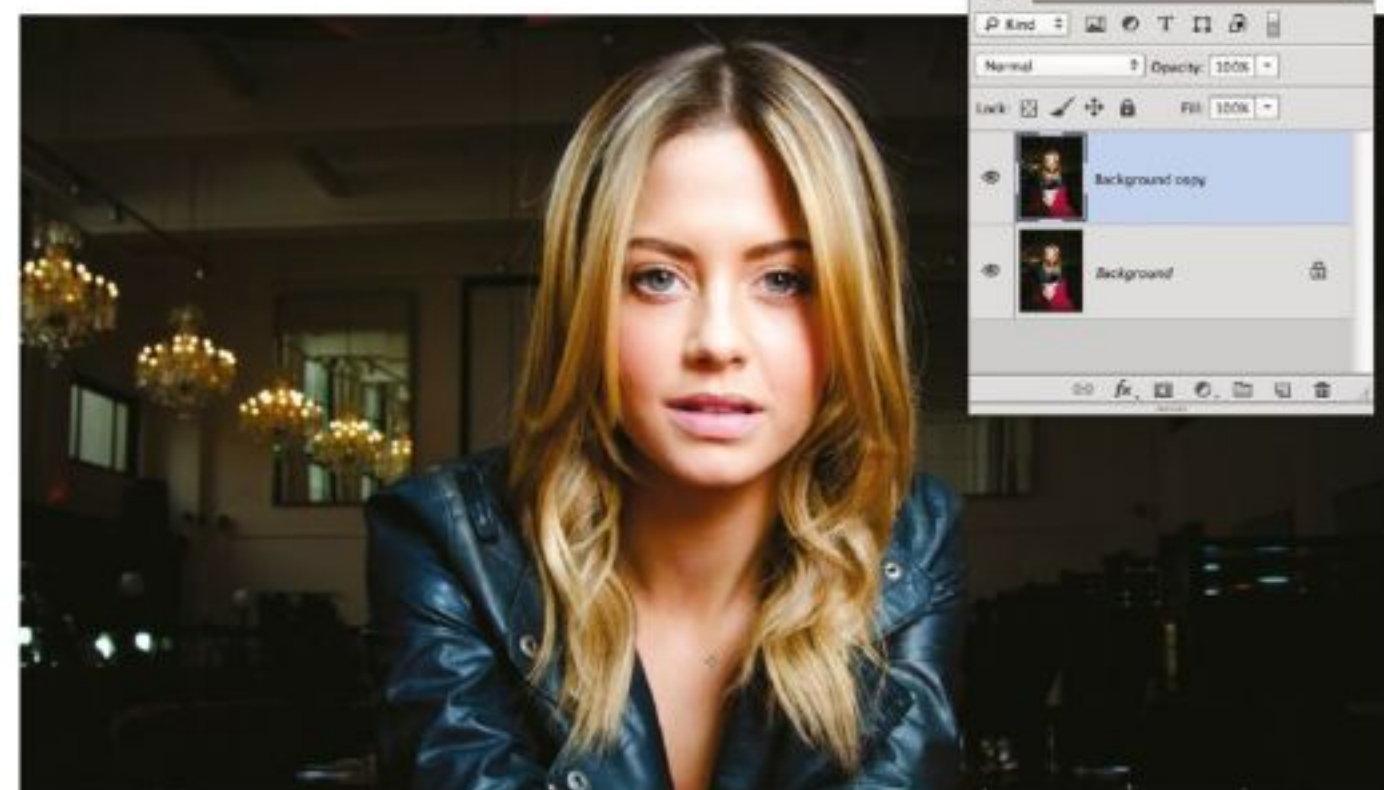
Controlling layers

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 and can go back if you need to.

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 [/\]). 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



QUICK TIP

Rasterize

Layers containing type or custom shapes are unrasterised, 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.

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?

WHAT'S IN ELEMENTS

How the Layer menu looks in Photoshop Elements

Duplicate and delete

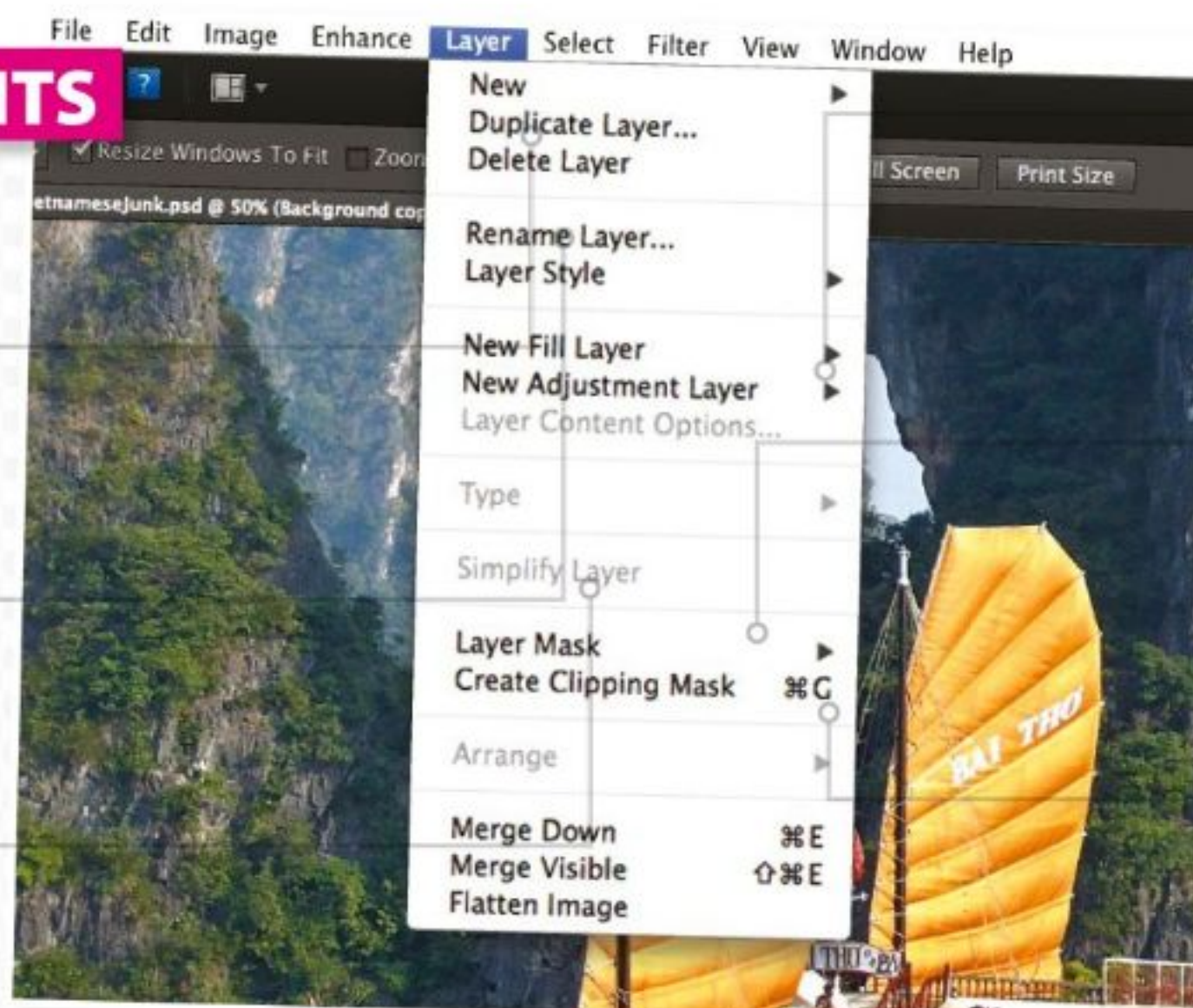
The Duplicate and Delete Layer commands are in Elements. These will remove the layers completely from the document or create a direct copy in the palette for you to use.

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.



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.

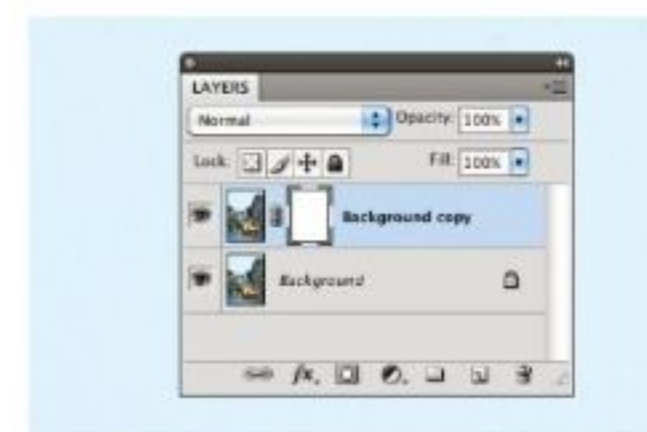
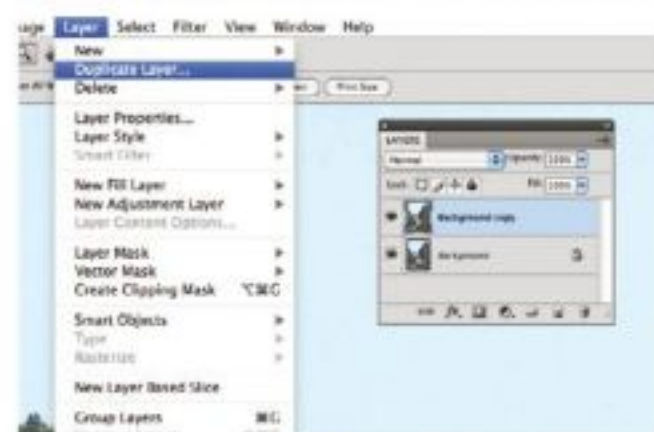
Layer Mask

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

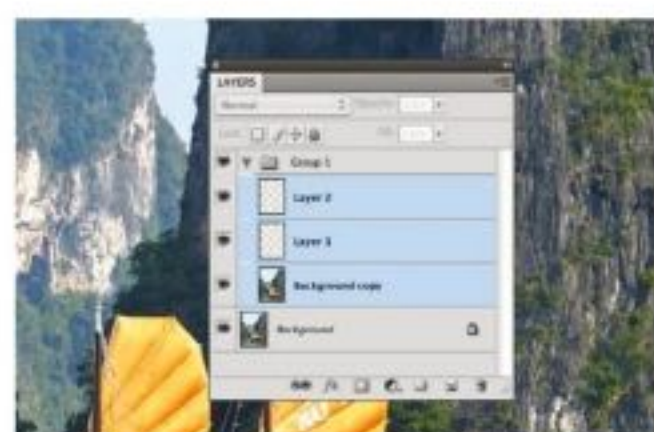
You can add a Clipping Mask through the Layer menu. This will place one layer into the contents of another, making it appear inside it. Clipping masks can be released just as quickly as they can be added.

Which options to look out for...



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 dialogue 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.

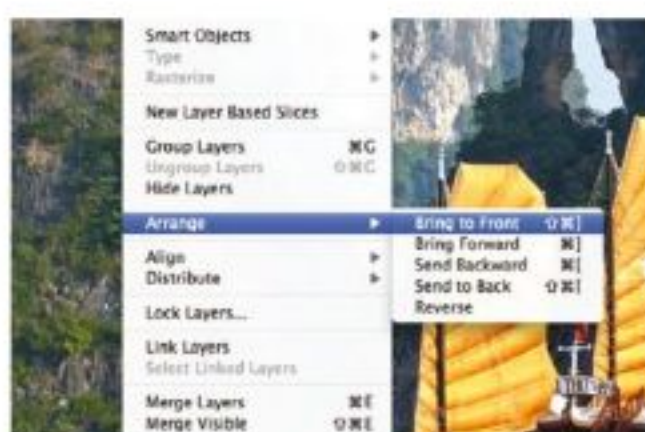


Group layers

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.

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.



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.

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.



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.

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.



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.

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

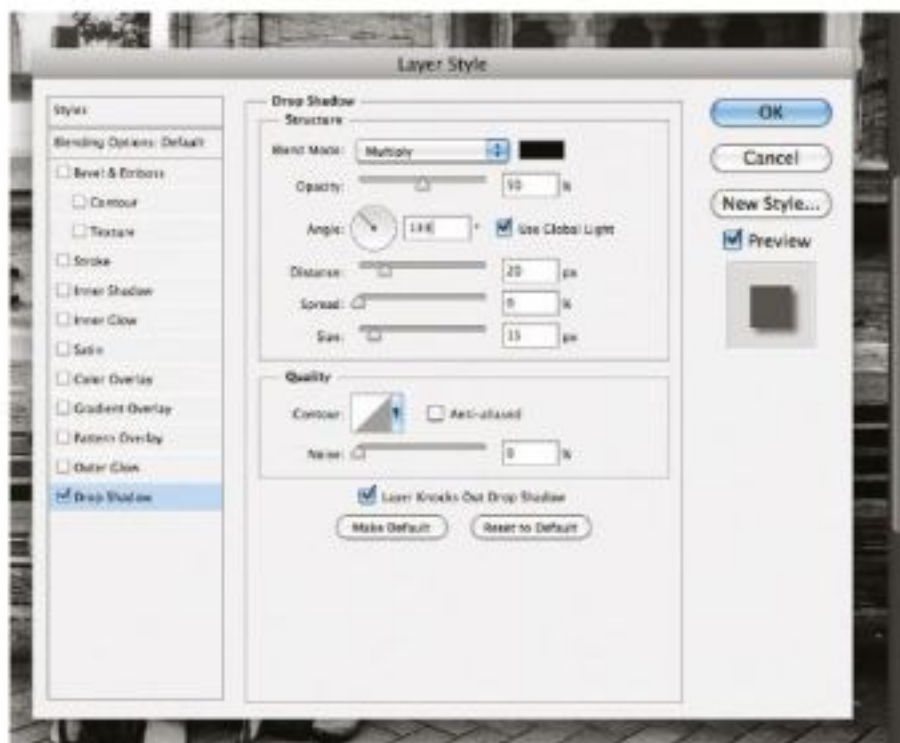
The Opacity slider adjusts the opacity of the whole layer, including any added layer styles, such as Drop Shadow in the case of our image.

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 dialogue, 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.



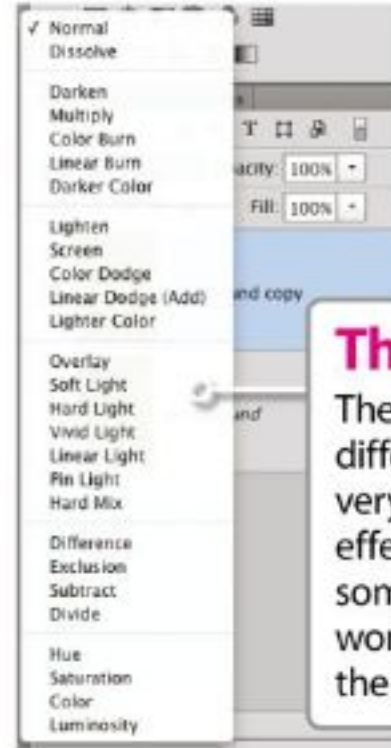
06 Fill slider

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!

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.

The Blend Mode menu
The Blend Mode menu contains 27 different blend modes, some with very dramatic effects, some with effects that are very subtle, and some producing effects that only work when some other aspect of the layer has been adjusted.

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.



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



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!

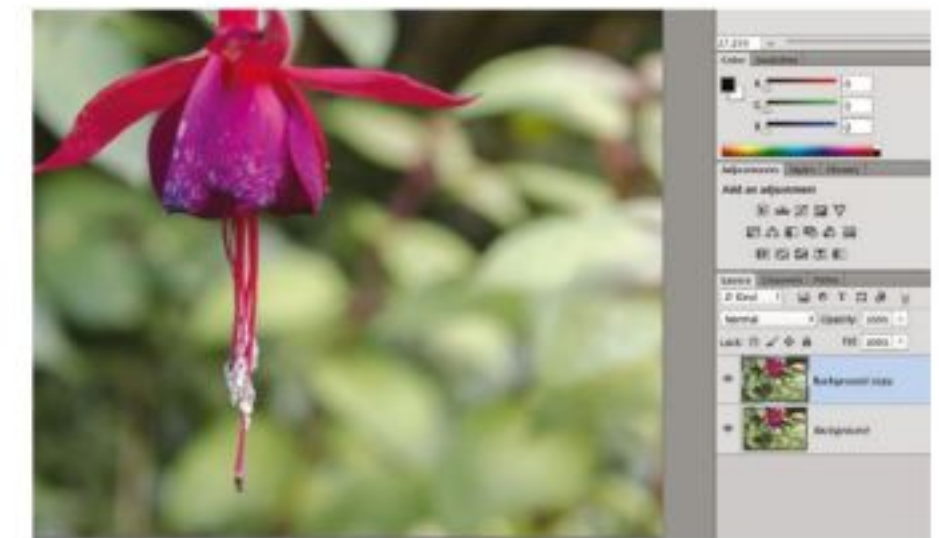
Layers



Use Multiply for a subtle vignette

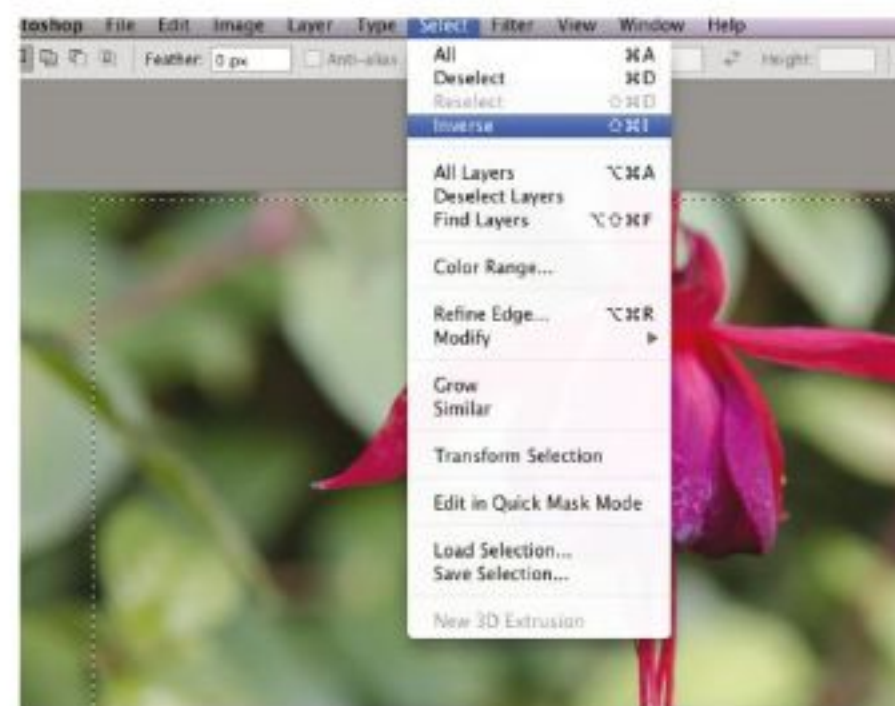
This mode can darken your images

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.

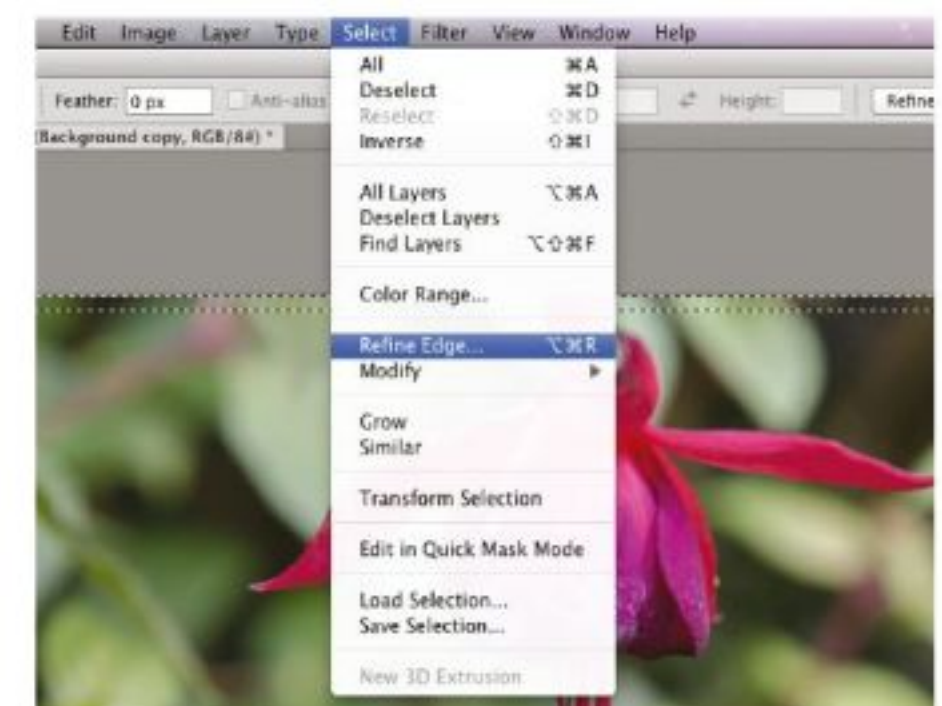


02 Create a selection

Now, using the Rectangular Marquee tool (M) located at the top of the Tool Panel, start to drag a selection somewhere around the perimeter of your chosen image.

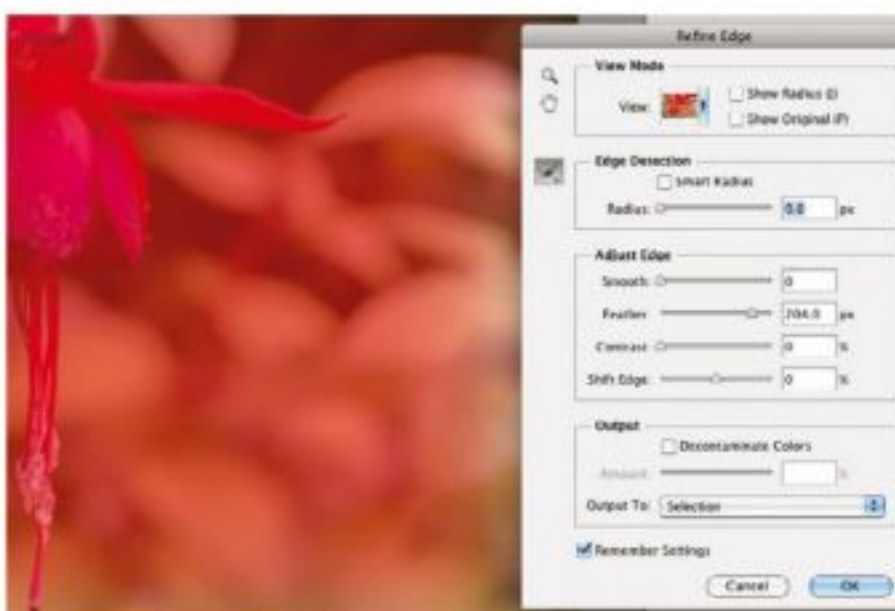
03 Invert the selection

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.



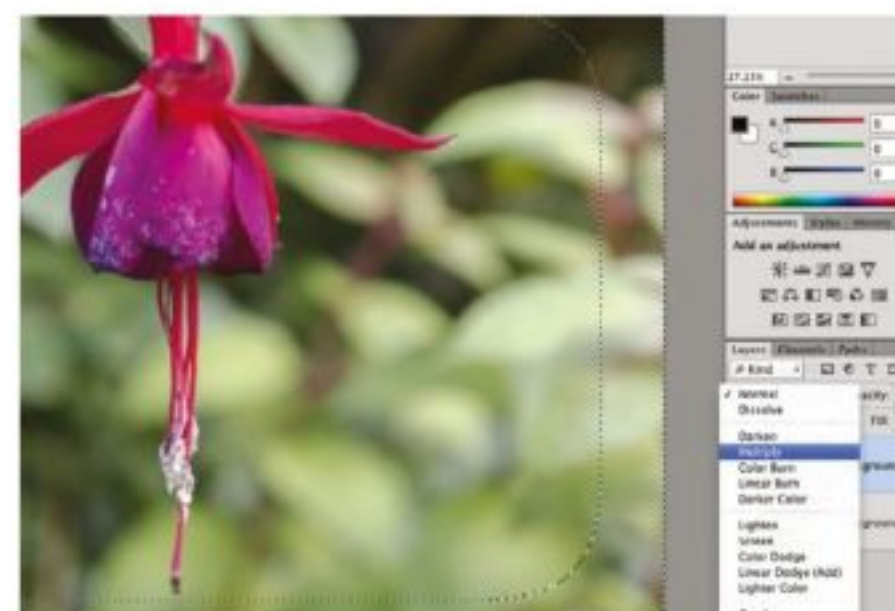
04 Refine the selection

Go to Select>Refine Edge. This will bring up a dialogue 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 drop-down on the Layers palette. This will darken the whole image at this stage, but don't worry.



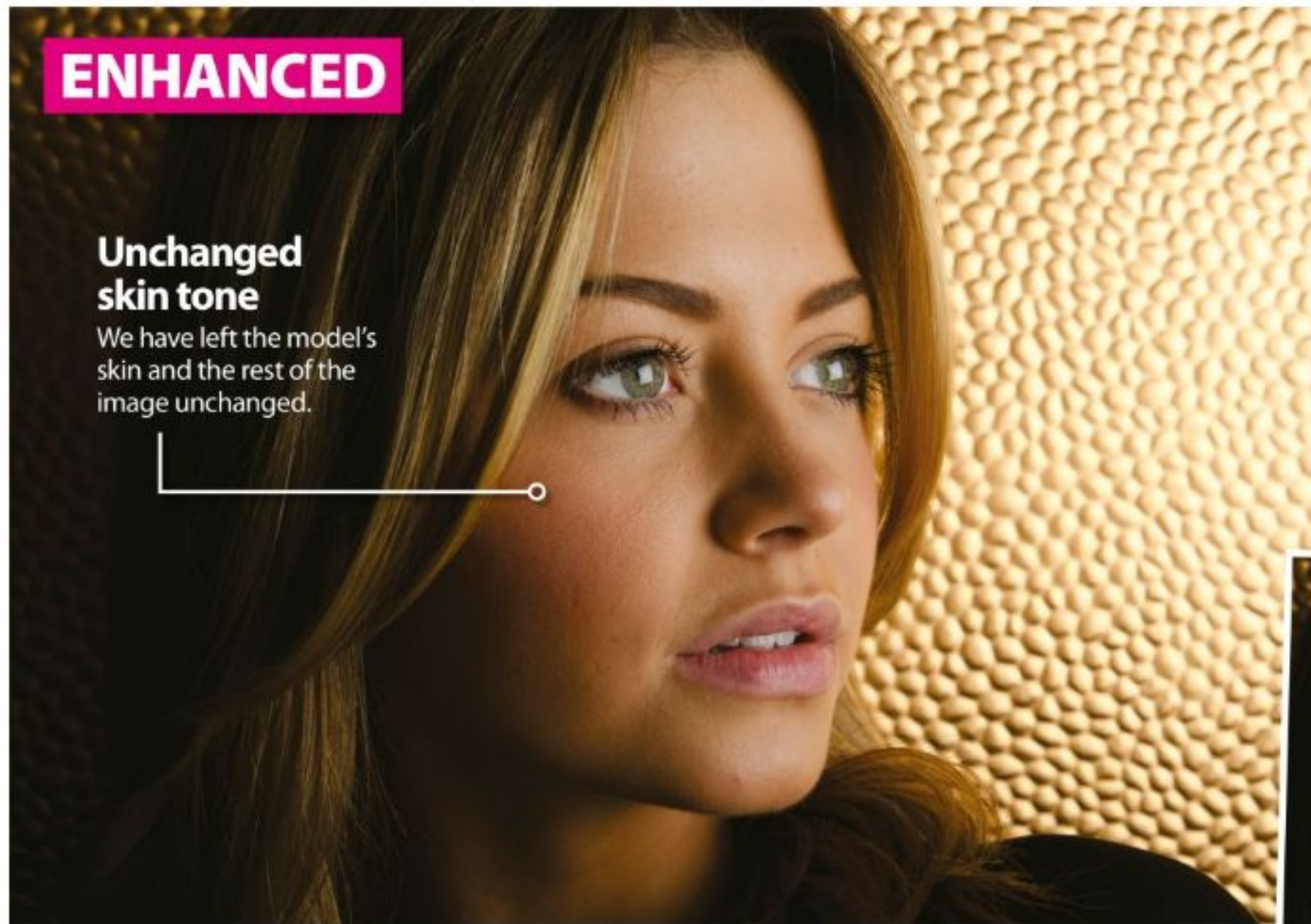
07 Add a layer mask

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

ENHANCED

Unchanged skin tone

We have left the model's skin and the rest of the image unchanged.



Use the Screen blend mode for a brighter view

Use this mode for beauty retouches

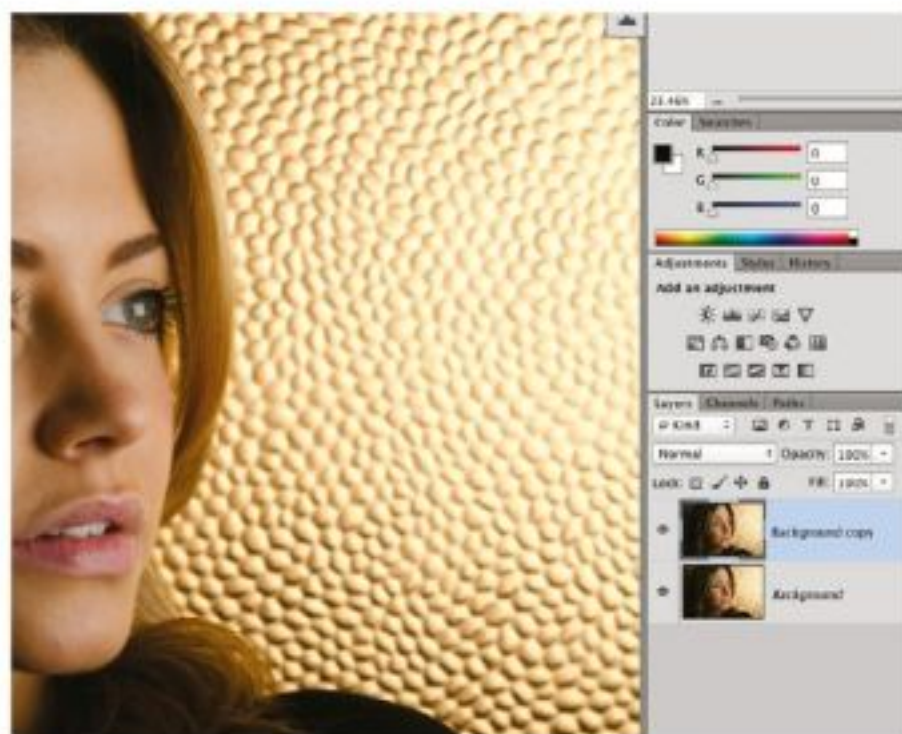
When you apply the Screen blend mode to a layer, the whole image gets much brighter. Much like the Multiply blend mode, this works far better when applied as a local adjustment rather than to the entire image. Once again, you can use layer masks to refine which areas of the image are adjusted.

ORIGINAL



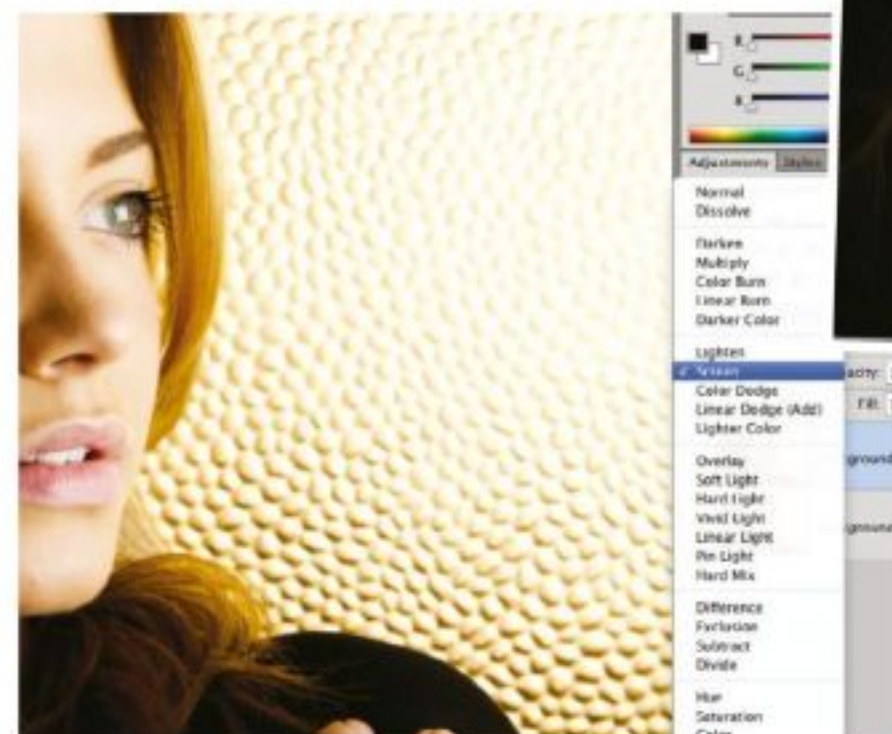
Bright eyes

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



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.



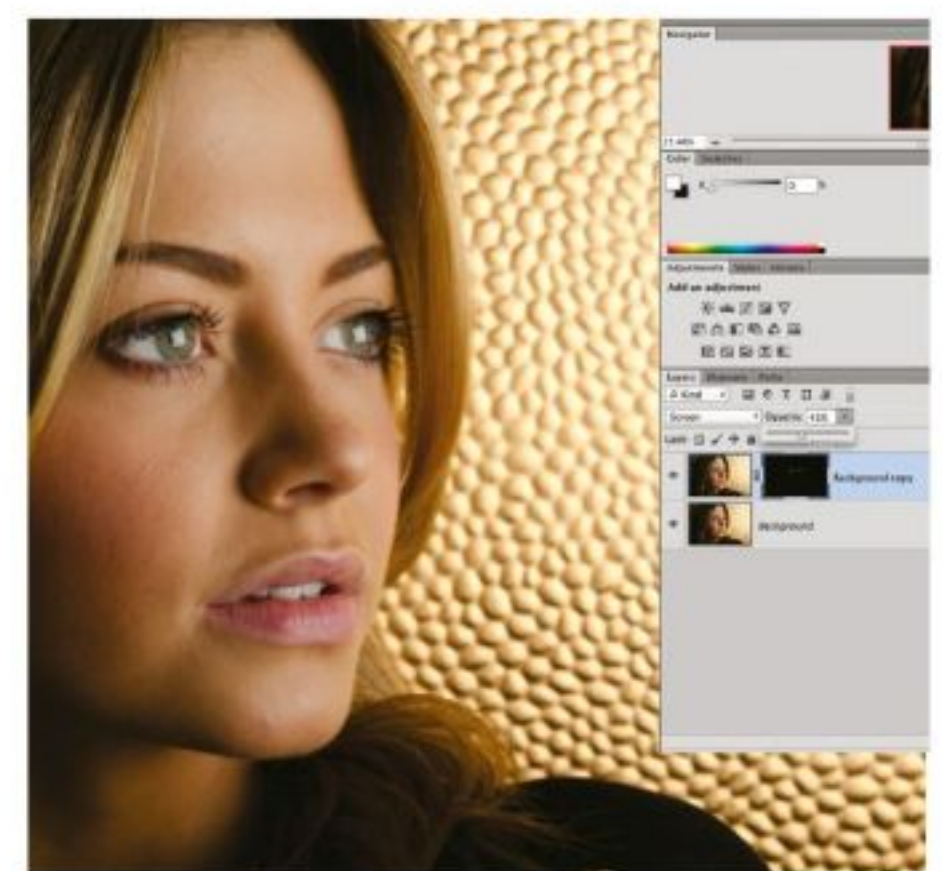
03 Behind the mask

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.



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

78 Colour in Photoshop
Enhance and correct all your images with
one click of a button

80 Use Levels to adjust tone & colour
to make your photos look like they were
taken in a different location

82 Learn how to use selective colour
to experiment with different colours in
your images and create your own look

84 Dodge and Burn your photos
to make them look like they were
taken in a different location

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

The screenshot shows the Adobe Photoshop interface. The main canvas displays a close-up of a person's face. The 'Properties' panel on the right is set to 'Adjustments' and shows the 'Levels' adjustment. The histogram shows a distribution of tones with input levels at 15 and 1.83, and output levels at 0 and 255. The 'Layers' panel shows a 'Levels 1' layer and a 'Background' layer. The 'Color Balance' dialog box is open, showing 'Color Levels' with Cyan, Magenta, and Yellow sliders, and 'Tone Balance' with 'Midtones' selected and 'Preserve Luminosity' checked. An orange callout box points to the dialog box with the text: 'IMPORTANCE OF COLOUR Get to grips with colour control for better imagery'. The Photoshop toolbar is visible on the left, and the status bar at the bottom shows '50%' zoom and '24.09 cm x 16 cm (300 ppi)'.



COLOR RANGE

Get complete control over colours and watch as your image transforms from boring to vibrant in seconds

BRIGHTNESS AND CONTRAST

Two important photographic edits and how to do them correctly

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”

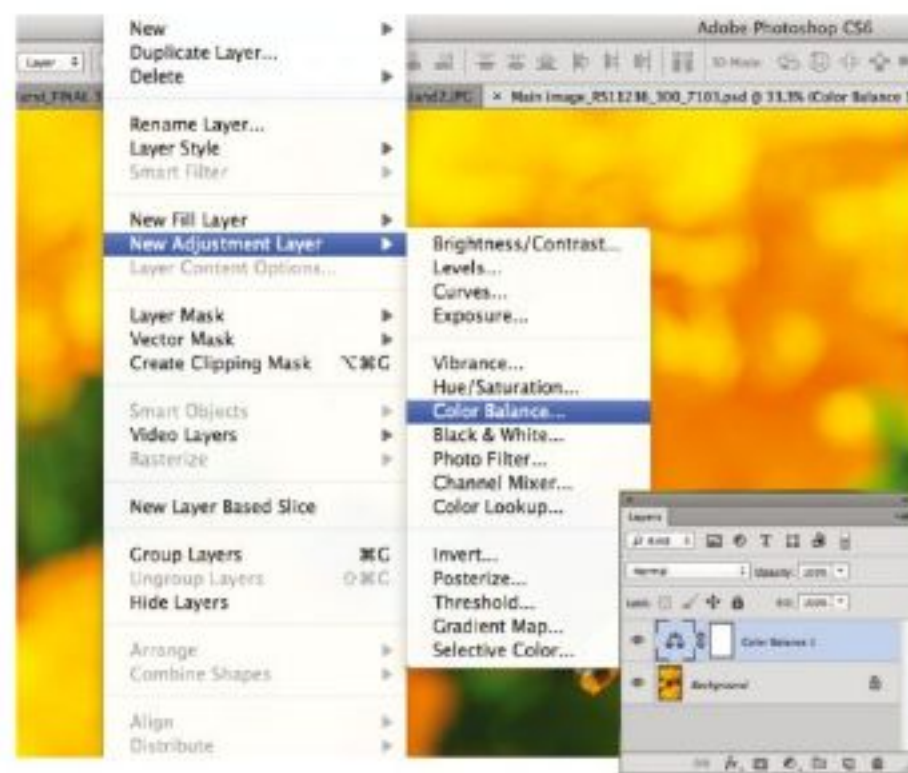
Adjust colour

Color Balance as an adjustment layer

ORIGINAL

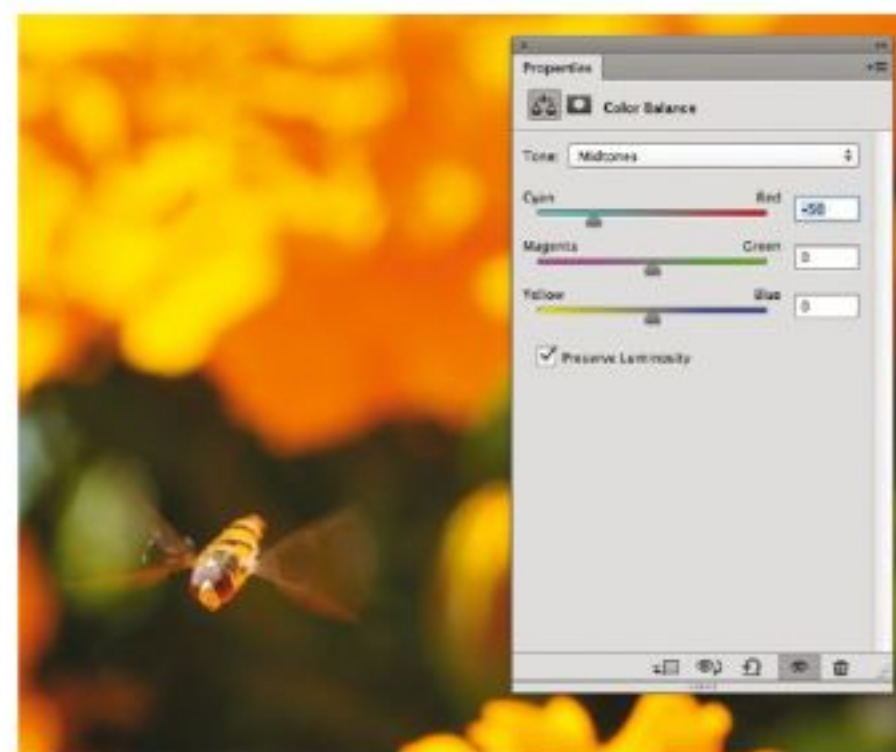


ENHANCED



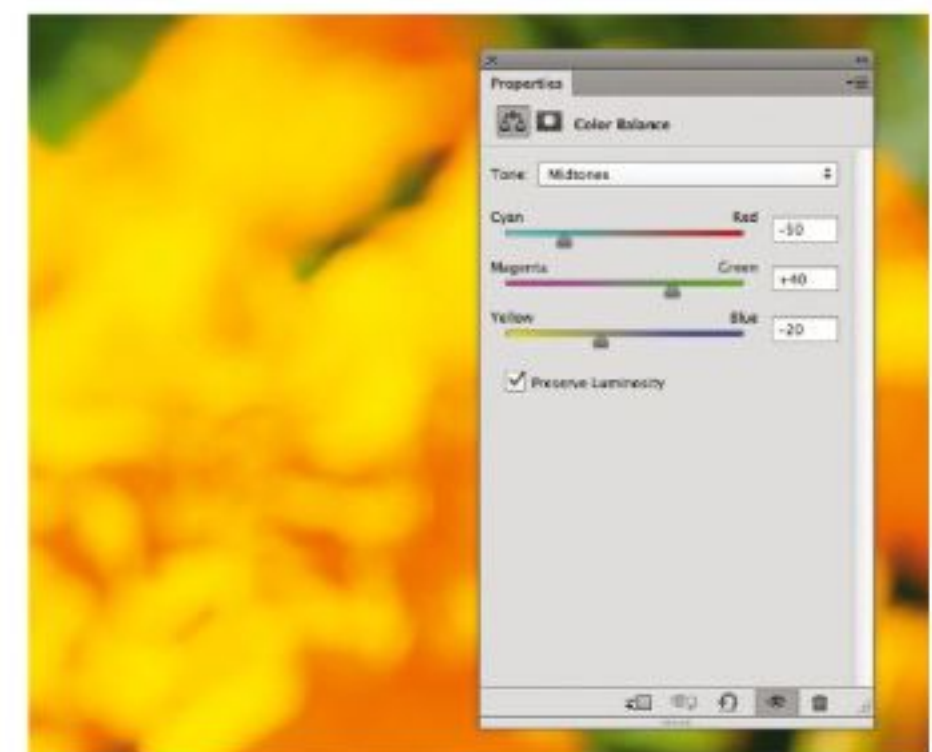
01 Load adjustment

To load the adjustment go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer and select Color Balance. In the name dialogue 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

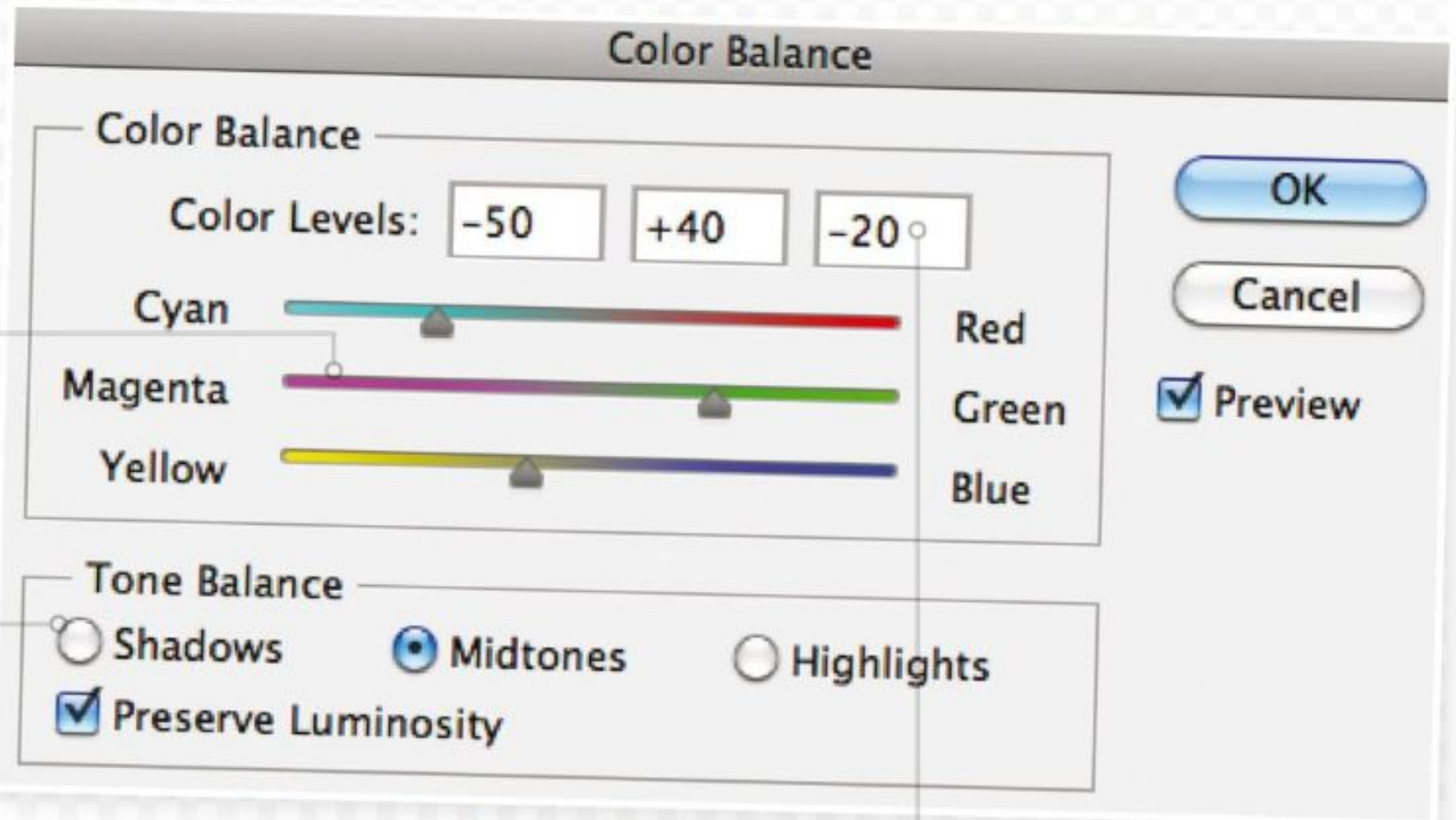
The Color Balance adjustment can be found inside Image>Adjustments, as well as Layer>New Adjustment Layer. The latter option comes with a mask on its own layer.

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

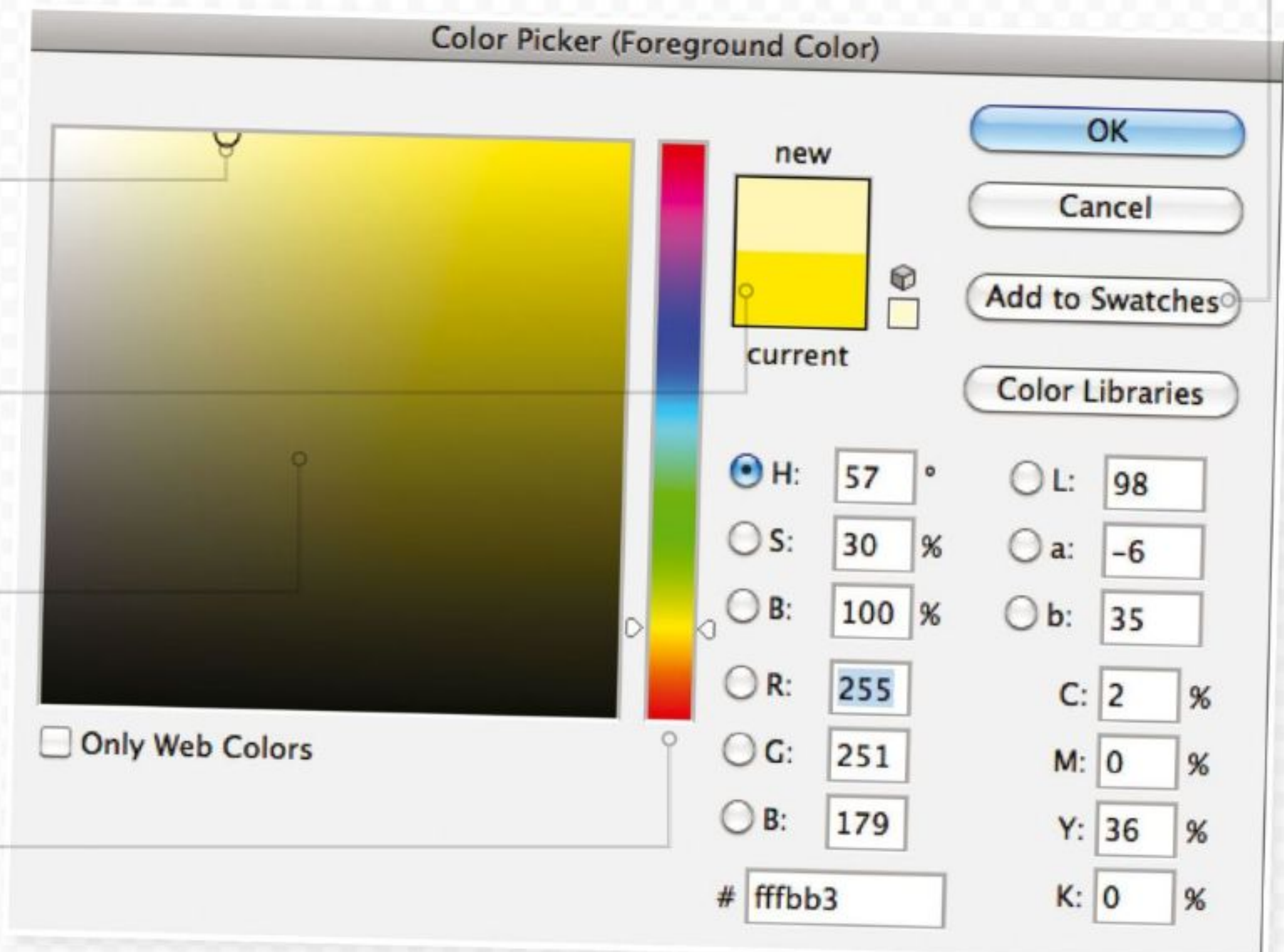
The current colour is shown just underneath the new colour being chosen, so you can see just how they differ.

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.



Colour & tone

What does it mean?

OUTPUT LEVELS – This slider appears below the other three stoppers in the Levels dialog box and controls the exposure of the image. By tweaking the stopper either side, you can adjust the lightness of the overall image, as opposed to the brightness. Experiment to discover the best effects.

SHARPEN THE PICTURE

Duplicate your layer, set to Overlay and go to Filter>Other>High Pass; choose 4px to sharpen a little.

HUE/SATURATION

Use the Hue/Saturation adjustment to increase the colour of the image a little and make it pop further.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Use Levels to alter colour and tone

Edit hue non-destructively with the Levels adjustment layer

Sometimes the difference between a good image and a great image is in the colour and tone of a picture. If the colour and contrast really pops, it can make your image stand out; if not, you might find your subjects disappearing into the background.

Thankfully, altering the tone and colour is a straightforward edit that takes a matter of minutes. Adjustment layers are the perfect place to make such changes to your pictures non-destructively, and they're really easy to apply. In Elements, by going to the Fill Layer icon – that little half-blue, half-white circle

in the Layers panel, just next to the Mask icon – you can find a whole array of adjustment options for injecting more colour and tone.

The advantages of editing non-destructively are numerous. By applying Levels straight to your layer, you can't edit the sliders later, should you wish to change anything. By using fill layers, you can not only tweak the stoppers in your edit, but duplicate the adjustment to other pictures should you need to.

Levels are a key tool for tweaking colour and lighting, but the best thing is that they require little work, but make a massive difference.



Adjust the Levels Tweak the tone and colour of your image by using the Levels



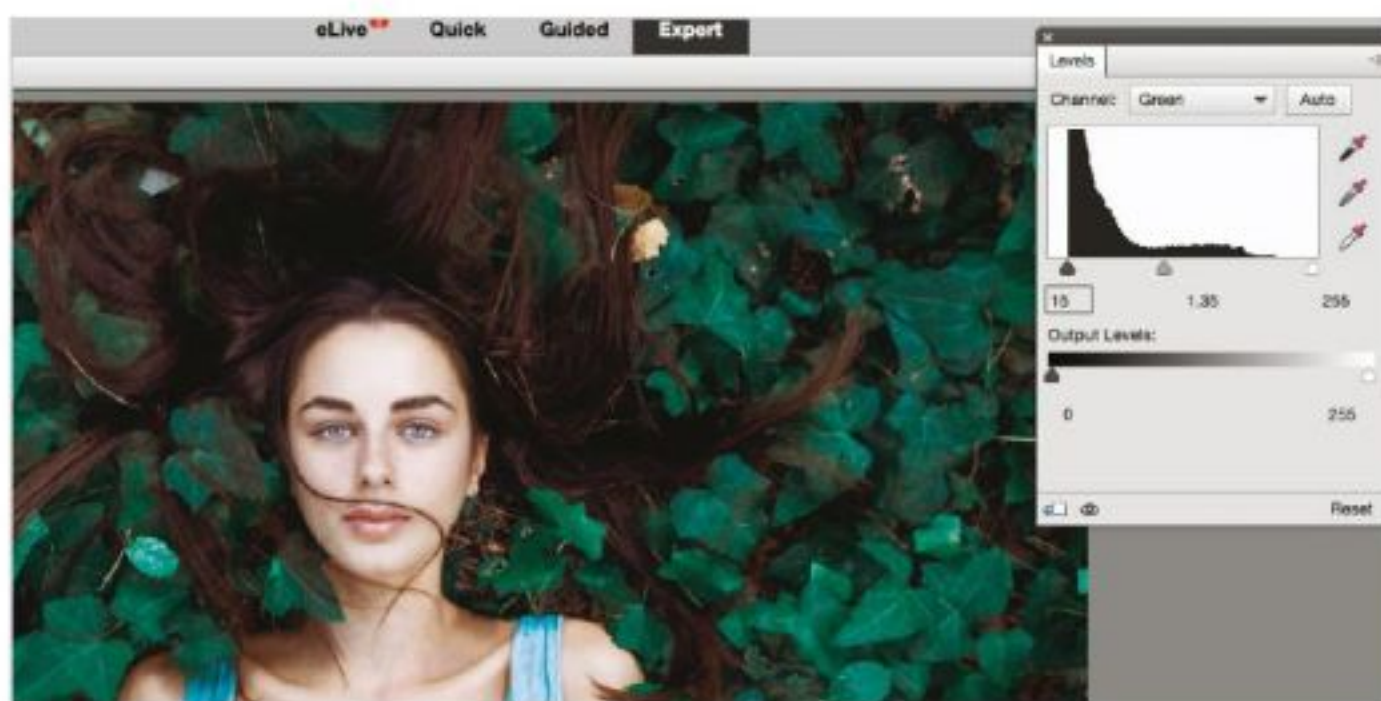
01 Alter the RGB values

Start off by going to the Fill Layer icon in the Layers panel. Choose Levels from the drop-down menu and the Levels adjustment will be made non-destructively, meaning that you can edit it without affecting the original picture. Slide the stoppers as shown in the screenshot above.



02 Tweak the Red channel

The Red channel is the most important one in the Levels palette as it controls the warmth of your picture. Choose Red from the Channel drop-down menu and adjust the stoppers along the histogram as seen in the screenshot.



03 Change the Green channel

The Green channel should be adjusted so that it takes the pink out of the edit, but doesn't wash the image in green; use the stoppers as we have above, sliding the middle one to the left, but about half as far as you did with the Red.



04 Finish with the Blue channel

Finally, tweak the stoppers on the Blue channel to complete the picture. Simply adjust the middle one to fix the tone and the colour of the overall look; you should be able to do this easily as the first two colour channels are the difficult ones to get right.

Take it further Alternate adjustments for editing tone and colour



Brightness/Contrast

This adjustment is one of the simplest tweaks you can apply. The Brightness slider is perfect for adjusting pictures that are too bright or too dark, and the Contrast slider can help create a stronger contrast between darks and lights.



Gradient Map

The Gradient Map is great for injecting a little colour into your work. Find it via the Fill Layer icon, and click on the gradient to edit the individual shades at different points along the gradient. Set to Soft Light to apply subtly.



Photo Filter

The Photo Filter adds nothing more than a quick overall tint to your picture. Though you can set it as any colour, it's best used for adding either warmth or coolness to your picture. Use the Density slider to control intensity.

Colour & tone

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

UP THE SATURATION

Increase the saturation of the yellow in your final picture by opening the Hue/Saturation palette (Cmd/Ctrl+U).

CREATE SOFT FOCUS

Duplicate your final layer, set to Screen and go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Select 4px for a subtle soft focus.



Experiment with selective colour

Leave just one colour in a picture using simple selecting tools

Selective colour is a deceptively simple but extremely powerful technique for you to use in your photos. Stripping your shots bare of everything but one shade sounds like an exercise to remove the fun from your pictures, but in some cases it only accentuates excitement and makes for a more interesting picture. It can be used to brilliant effect to draw focus on a particular part of any image.

You can use this technique for any kind of picture, but it works best with images that have a particularly iconic colour involved, such as these New York

taxis, or the pillar-box red of a famed English phone box. You might want to edit the shade even further, using Levels or Hue/Saturation too; leaving just one colour left in your photo means that brightness is often better.

There are plenty of techniques for mastering selective colour. It's a style that you might want to use for all the colours of a specific object, or maybe you'd like to use this particular tutorial to practise skills for similar edits of your own; this technique works on the same principle of simply highlighting certain colours or even just blurring the background.

Desaturate and colour Select, touch up and perfect the colours in pictures



01 Make a basic selection

Start by grabbing whichever Lasso tool you work best with, and make a rough outline around the outside of the object or objects you wish to isolate the colour of. We're going to leave nothing but yellow in this particular picture. Ctrl/right-click and hit Layer Via Copy.



02 Refine your selection

Grab the Magic Wand (W), set the Tolerance to 25 and uncheck the Contiguous option. Click on New along the bottom, and click over all the shades of yellow until you've selected all of the yellow in the picture. When done, hit the Mask icon.



03 Touch up the colour

Duplicate the background layer and desaturate the colour by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U. On the mask layer, select a brush and using black and white, touch up the edges of the colour in your picture to further refine the selection.



04 Adjust

Merge everything into one layer by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+ Shift+E. Bring up the Levels palette by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+L, and use the stoppers to increase the contrast of the picture for a more cinematic shot.

Alternative methods How else can you achieve selective colour in Elements?



Replace Color

The Replace Color tool does exactly what it says on the tin. You can use the eyedroppers to select specific pixels in your picture, and alter the hue, saturation and lightness of them with the bottom three sliders. Turn the saturation down to -100, and select all of the colour in the picture that isn't your main hue, in order to create selective colour.



Brushes

It's really easy to apply selective colour with brushes if you want to leave a few colours, as opposed to one particular hue. On a new layer, brush either black or white onto your picture, and change the blend mode to Color. Opt/Alt+ click the layer's visibility eye icon to see that layer alone, and touch up accordingly.



Smart Brush

If you're looking for the quickest possible fix, the Smart Brush is able to create selective-colour effects with just a few clicks. Select the tool and choose the Reverse>Black and White option. Simply select all of the colour that you wish to keep and Elements will turn the background of the image to monochrome.

Colour & tone

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

REDUCE OPACITY

If the effect that you're creating is a little intense, reduce the opacity of your layer.

BIGGER TOUCHES

With the Dodge/Burn Tool at 20% opacity, and with a big size, touch gently for a more overall lightening or darkening.

What does it mean?

NEUTRAL GREY LAYER – This is the midpoint between black and white. The Overlay layer will Screen its lighter pixels and Multiply its darker ones, so neutral grey appears invisible, until you start dodging and burning to darken and lighten the layer. This is non-destructive dodging and burning.

Dodge and burn your photos

Add lightness and darkness to your images using this pair of tools

Contrast is key to good photography. The lights and darks in a picture don't just add interest to it; they can make your picture look deeper and more dynamic. Contrast enhances shape and contour and without it, your photo is often left limp and lifeless.

But while there are plenty of automated ways to add contrast to your work, one of the most reliable ways to do it is manually. Sure, there are ways to do it with brushes, but that's why the Dodge and Burn tools were invented.

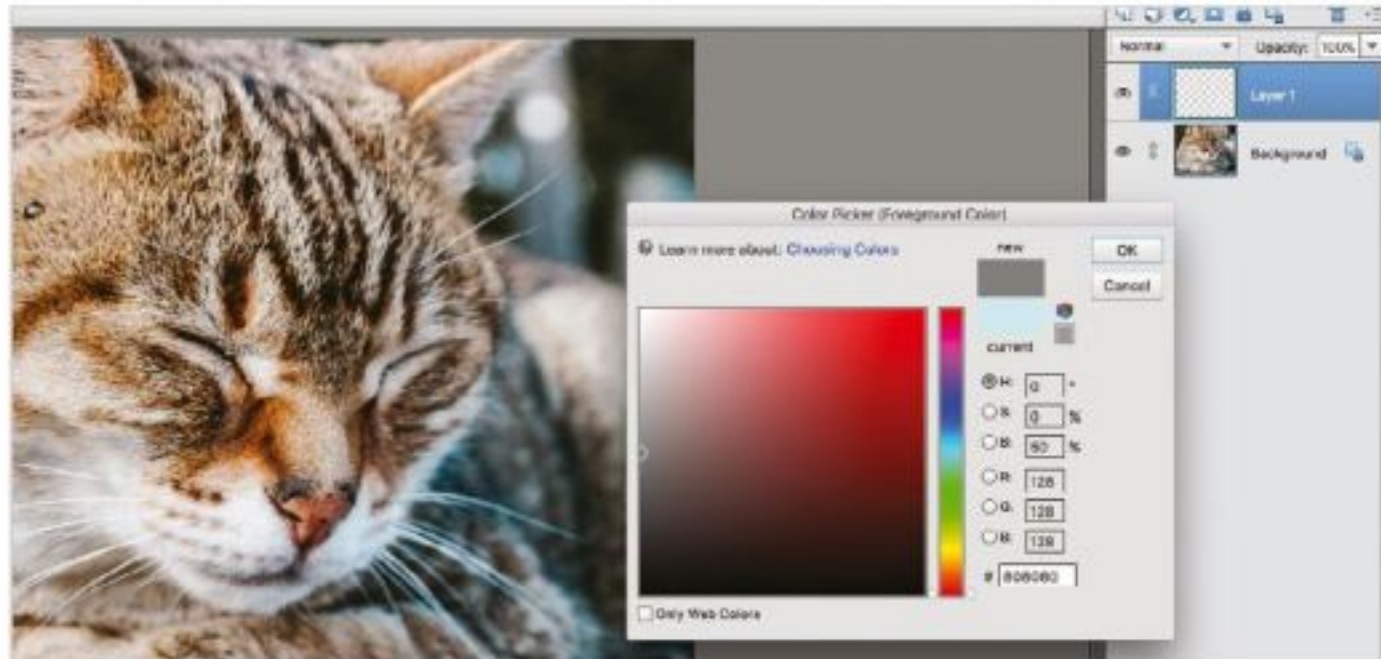
Dodge and Burn are a pair of tools that are rarely separated, yet exist on their own. The former is used to lighten the exposure of your shots, while the

latter does the opposite. They're two tools that together can control the contrast of your work, and even add a little more saturation to it; they're staples of photo editing, and something that every Elements user should be aware of.

Let's dive into how to use Dodge and Burn to control the contrast in a photo. While they're simple enough tools to get the hang of, there are certainly tricks that need to be remembered when it comes to using them in order to get optimum results. Contrast is vitally important in your pictures after all, so it's equally important to become an expert on how to apply it.



Dodge and burn Creatively add contrast to your photos with brush-style tools



01 Create a neutral grey layer

Dodge and Burn can be applied straight to your layer, but we're going to add it to a new layer to edit non-destructively. Create a new layer and fill it with #808080 – neutral grey – and set to Overlay. This should make the layer pretty much invisible in your project.



03 Dodge the image

With the darkness added, use the Dodge Tool to touch over the lighter patches of the picture, such as the brighter stripes on the cat, the areas that are hit by the light and the nose. Use a small brush to get all of the areas that need more precision.



02 Use Burn

Select the Burn Tool and on the neutral grey layer, brush over the darker areas of the image; in this particular photo, we're touching over the darker stripes on the cat, as well as the shaded areas and around the eyes.



04 Erase parts

The easiest way to undo parts of your dodging and burning, still non-destructively, is to create a new layer and Alt/Opt-click to clip to the dodge and burn layer. With a neutral grey brush, lightly brush over any part you wish to revert to the original image.

Adding contrast Other ways to give brightness and darkness to your image



Gradient Map

Perhaps the easiest way to add contrast to an image, a Gradient Map adjustment can add black and white to whichever parts of your image you wish, simply by sliding the colours along the stoppers. Set the adjustment to Soft Light or Overlay to apply the effect.



Levels

One of the most obvious ways to change the contrast is to tweak the stoppers on the Levels adjustment to improve the light and dark in the image. By using the Channel drop-down menu, you can use the same stoppers to alter the red, green and blue channels.



Overlay

If you're looking for a quick cinematic finish, there's a really simple trick you can use. Duplicate your background image (Cmd/Ctrl+J), Desaturate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U) and set to Overlay. Duplicate this Overlay layer a number of times for a more intense effect.

Retouching

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Conquer the close stamp tool
to help you fill in a hole in an image
with its surrounding pixels.

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Smoothen your photos
and correct imperfections using the
healing brush tool.

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Improve the glow and highlights
in a photo's shadows using the Dodge
and Burn tools.

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Adjust facial features
and retouch a subject's hair using the
new sliders for skin retouching.

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Master Perspective Crop
to retouch your photos with the Perspective
Crop tool to match your view of a
subject.

98

Master the Content-Aware Fill
Move tool
to use the power of content-aware fill
to fill the blanks in your images.

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

**DODGE AND
BURN EXPLAINED**
Use the Dodge and Burn tools to
improve shadows and highlights

- Dodge Tool
- Burn Tool
- Sponge Tool

**TWEAK YOUR
IMAGE-TUNING**
Learn how to get the most out of
Photoshop's settings

Properties
Brightness/Contrast
Auto
Brightness: 30
Contrast: 40
Use Legacy
Layers
Kind: Image Layer
Normal Opacity: 100%
Lock: Fill: 100%
Brightness/Contr...
Background



Cloned out
Remove any unwanted areas easily by using just the basic settings.

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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



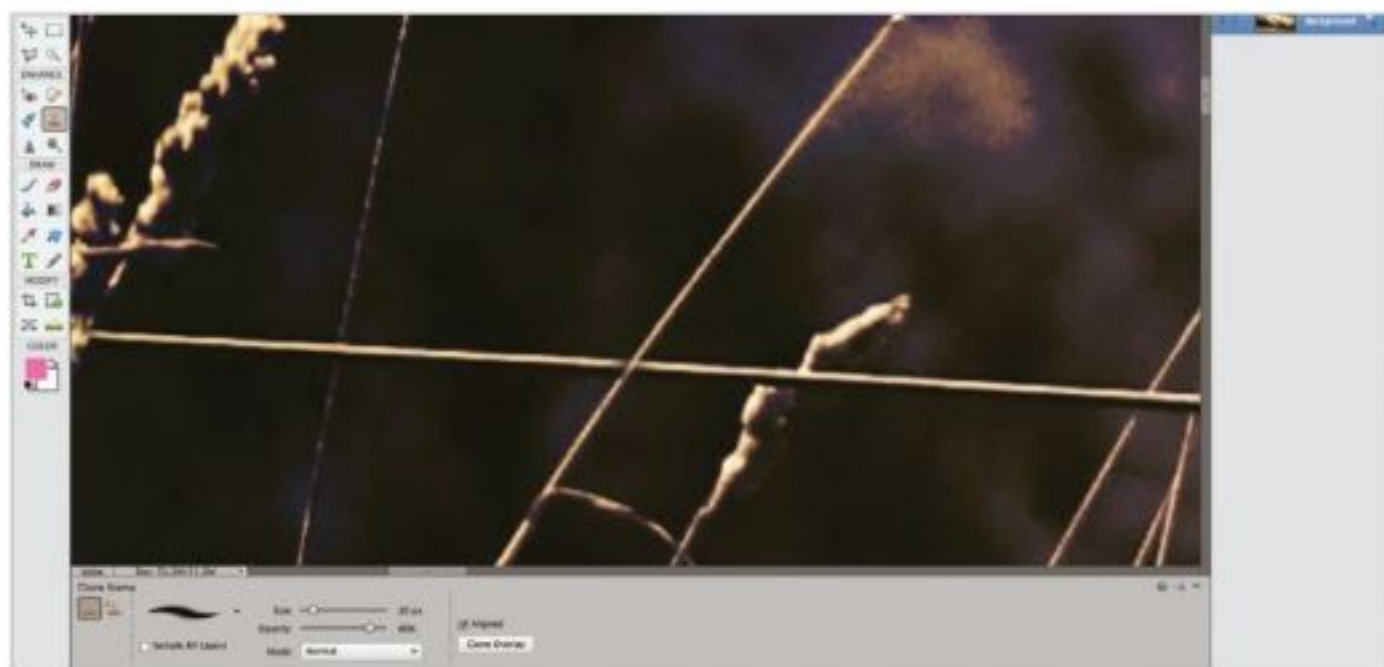
01 Familiarise yourself with settings

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.

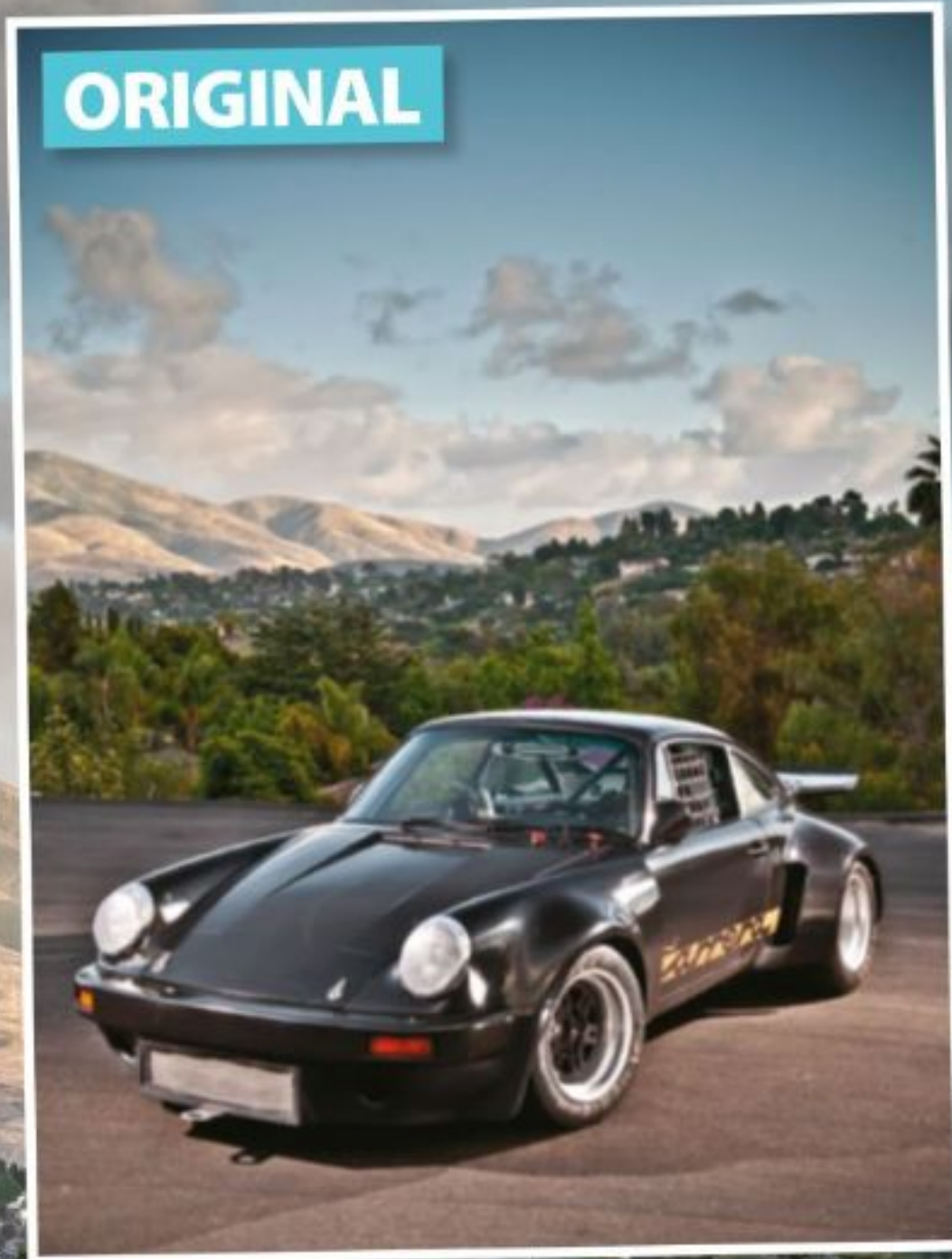


Novelty effects

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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SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Sharpen your photos

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

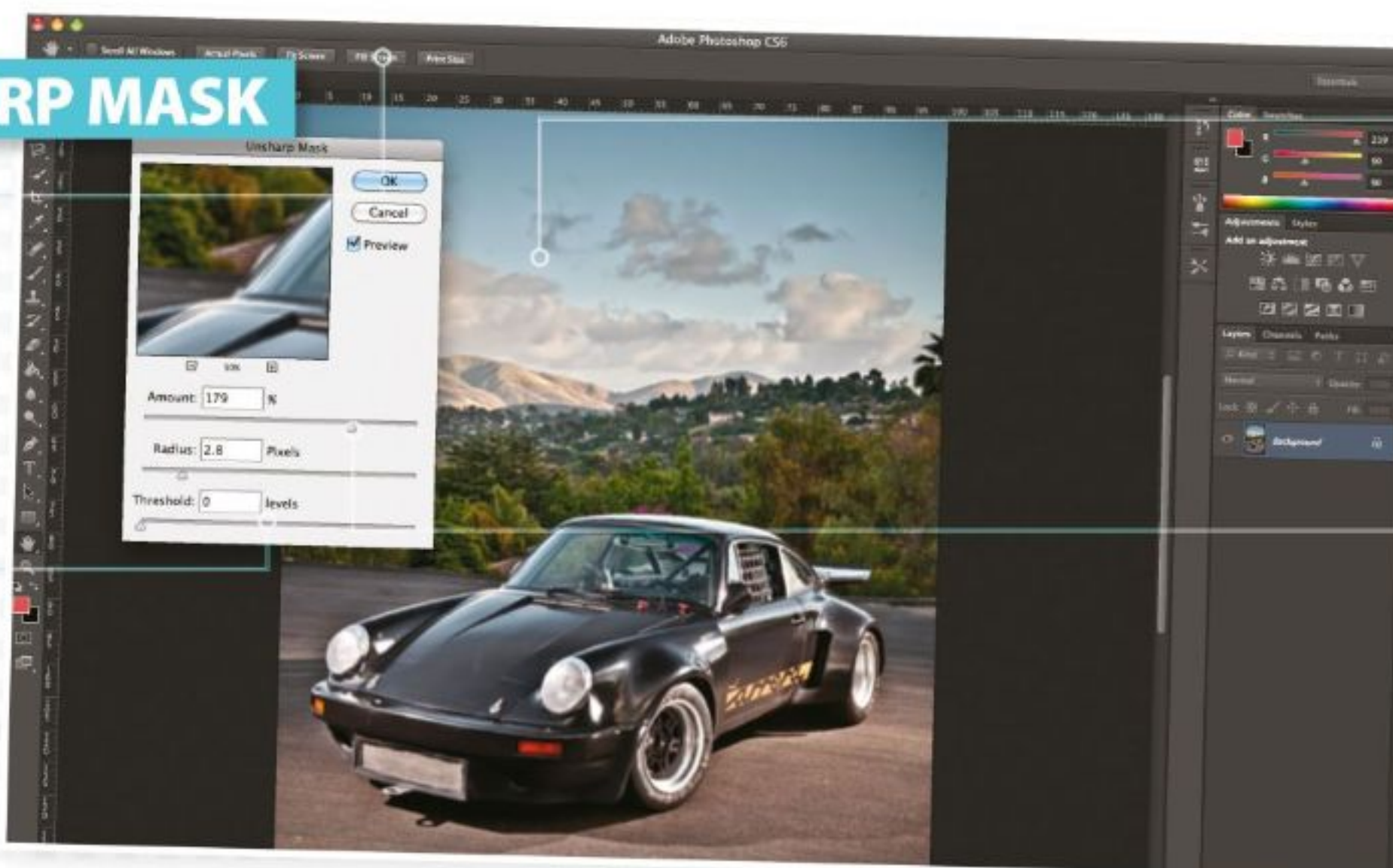
Camera blur is an extremely common problem, and if you are like us, you will have your fair share of images that aren't as sharp as you'd like. Luckily, Photoshop and Photoshop Elements have a whole host of tools to help you to correct this flaw. You can use the Sharpen filters (see the Filters section 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 dialogue 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.

Dialogue 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 dialogue box lets you zoom in closer to see what's happening.

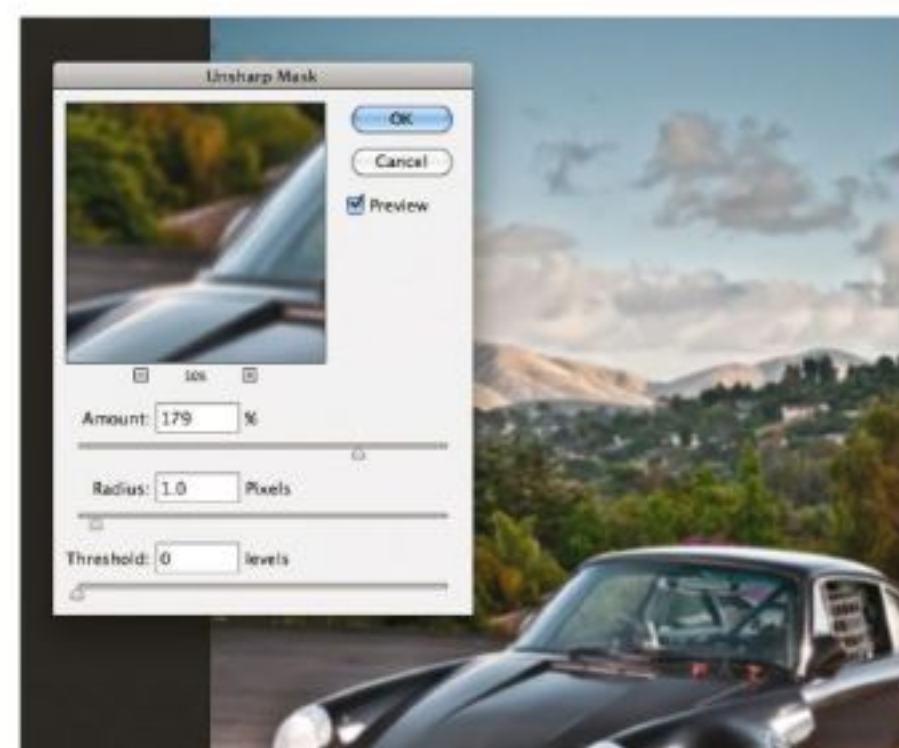
Amount

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

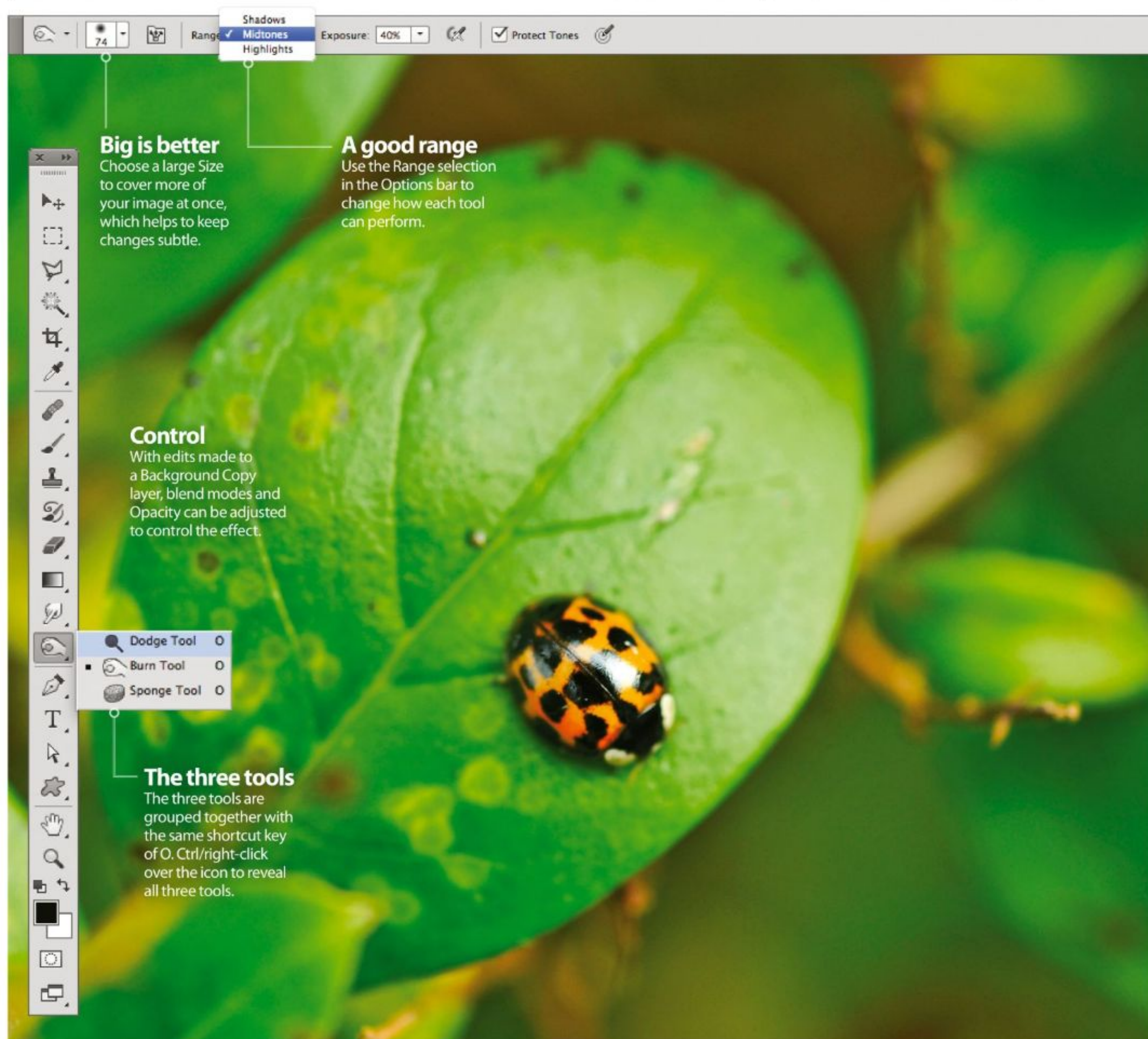
The higher the setting, the more extreme the effect. We used 2.8. Threshold calms the edit down but a setting of 0 was all that was needed here.

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

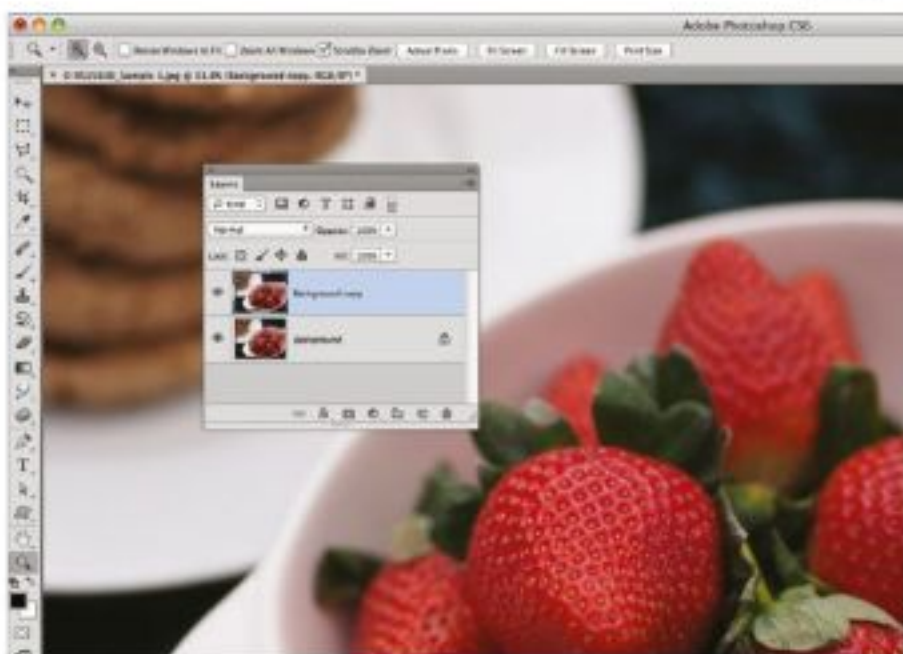
Grab the Dodge tool, which is used to brighten up subjects. In the Options bar, set Range to Midtones and set Exposure to 40%. Paint over foreground parts of your image to brighten them up.



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

Adjust facial features

Retouch a subject's face using Elements' new slider-based feature

Retouching is something that everyone, from photographers to digital artists, has to consider. It is almost an art in itself, as transforming a subject's face with realism and subtlety isn't as easy as it looks. 'Photoshop fails' are common on the internet, as retouchers often don't spot the background warping along with their subject. The Liquify tool is an advanced one, and that's what makes the Adjust Facial Features tool more convenient. It consists simply of sliders, pinpointed at key areas of the face, which when tweaked, can alter the height, width and size of the eyes, lips and nose. It's easy to use, you can see your edits

happening in real-time, and it's almost impossible to create one of those infamous 'Photoshop fails' with this feature.

Retouching is useful for all kinds of projects, but the best thing about the Adjust Facial Features tool is that it delivers quick, realistic results, no matter what you want to achieve. If you want to increase your subject's smile, it can help, just as if you want to renovate a face. Experiment with the sliders to see how they interact, and if you're feeling confident, use the Liquify tool to take your retouching further. Adjust Facial Features doesn't just create realistic edits; it can help you to discover the art of retouching.



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Recolour the eyes
On a new Color layer, brush 50% opaque colour onto the irises of your subject to brighten up the eyes.

What does it mean?

LIQUIFY – The Liquify tool is a well-known distortion tool. It enables you to warp pixels; the benefits of using it are that it can simultaneously resize elements in your image while filling in the blank spaces with other pixels. Find it under Filter>Distort.

Reshape and retouch Use sliders to alter the look of your subject



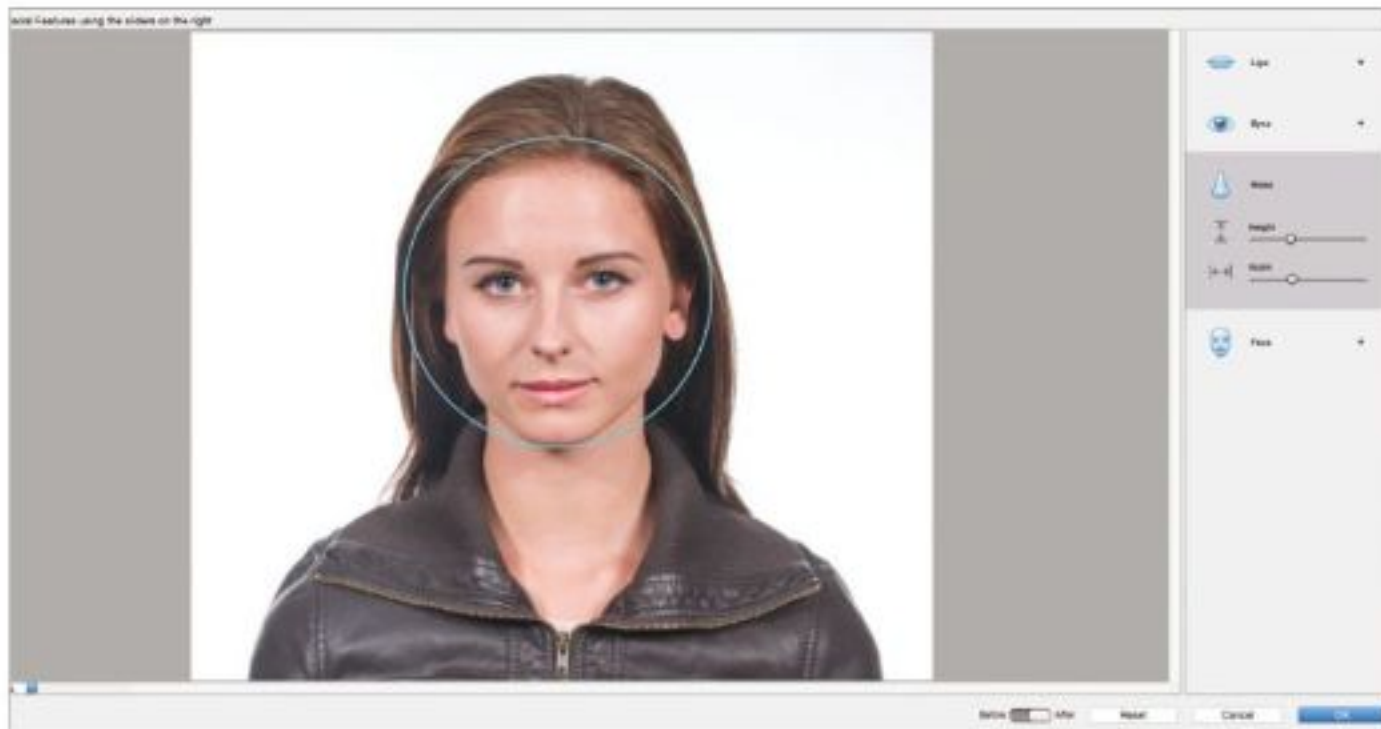
01 Reshape the lips

Open your start image and go to Enhance>Adjust Facial Features. Here, you can master the height and width of the lips, you can edit the lips individually with the sliders, and you can improve the curve of the subject's actual smile.



02 Edit the eyes

Next, down the right-hand side of the window, click on the Eyes subheading. Using similar sliders, you can tweak the height, width and general size of the eyes; you can also change the distance between the eyes and tilt them.



03 Retouch the nose

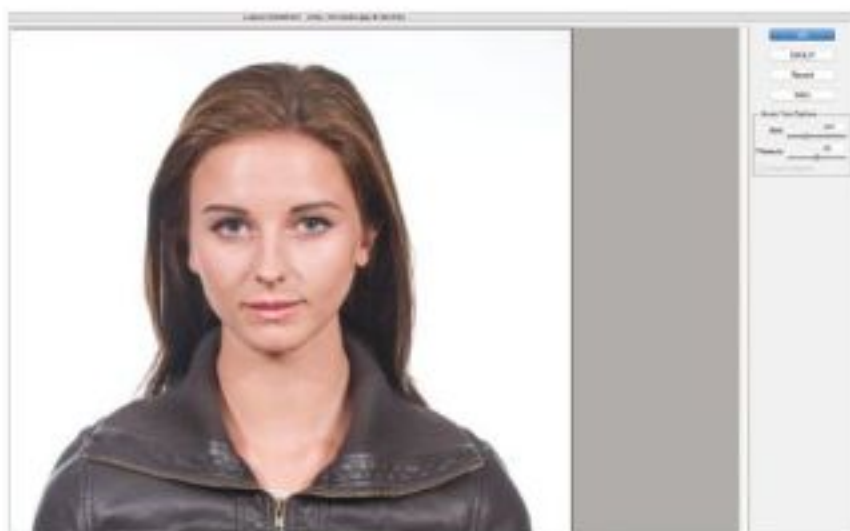
Further down the menu, the Nose options include sliders to alter the height and width. Use these two sliders to subtly tweak the nose; the shape of the nose will rely on the rest of the face, so feel free to retouch it again at the end.



04 Finish with face shaping

Click on the Face subheading. Here, you will find options to tweak the width of the face along with the forehead height, jawbone and chin height. These edits should come easily based on the work you've made with the rest of the face.

Other retouching options Go a little further to improve subjects' faces



Liquify

The Liquify tool can help to reshape parts of your subject by dragging pixels across the image. We've used it to touch up the ear here. Watch out for warping in the voids of where you've just edited.



Resize features

Select, Ctrl/right-click and choose Free Transform. To resize an eye, hold Shift to keep the aspect ratio of the selection; resize, grab the Spot Healing brush (J) and brush over the edges of your selection.



Resize forehead

Resizing the forehead relies on the same principle as resizing facial features, except you don't need to retouch the edges of your selection. Keep resizing restrained, as big edits will look too obvious.

Retouching

Crop anyway

When you've finished using the Perspective Crop, use the ordinary Crop tool to actually reset the focus of the image.

What does it mean?

STRAIGHTEN – The Straighten tool has one use: by dragging it across your image you can realign the horizontal sides. There are options though; the three icons in the bottom panel can either grow/shrink your image, keep it the same size, or auto crop it.



SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Master Perspective Crop

Tweak the viewpoint of where your photo was taken with this tool

Cropping a photo is seen as perhaps the most basic adjustment you can make. It's one that's often reserved for the end of the editing process, and it's something that can be carried out in a matter of seconds. But cropping can be creative too, believe it or not, and just because you're cutting the edges out of your picture, it doesn't mean that you're not realigning the focus of it at the same time. The Perspective Crop tool works on much the same principle, only it's a little more creative than your average crop. By creating a four-sided shape in the photo, you can reset the sides of your image. Elements will then create a perfectly

straight rectangle from the uneven shape that you create, and distort the image to fit across the new size. It takes some experimentation to understand how it works, but by using the tool's grid lines, it's actually fairly easy to tweak. If you've taken a picture of a building from lower down than is ideal – perhaps you were too close to it – then the Perspective Crop is perfect. It can also realign the central focus or simply distort the buildings on a horizon for a fantasy look. Remember that the Perspective Crop tool is just one modification that can transform your image, and that by using Crop and Straighten, you can achieve the perfect balance to your photo.

Realign your photos Create the grid, edit it and apply the edit



01 Make your first line

Start off the process by selecting the Crop tool (C), and find the Perspective Crop tool, which is in the bottom panel of Elements. Select this and make your first line with the tool. This will be the starting point for creating a four-sided shape.



02 Create the other lines

Once you've created your first line, repeat this three times to create a four-sided shape that forms the new sides of the picture. The point of the Perspective Crop is that it doesn't have to be straight; follow the horizon horizontally, and any landmarks vertically to make them straighter in the final image.



03 Edit your shape

It can be hard to get the right perspective for your image first time. Luckily you can edit the four points of perspective as much as you like, simply by dragging them elsewhere in the image. Zoom in to get closer and make sure that you follow the perspective of everything in the image before applying.



04 Straighten up

Once you've applied the four sides of perspective to the image, you may wish to edit the final image a little further. Click on the Straighten icon at the left-hand side of Elements, and by dragging it across the image's horizon, realign the picture.

Additional uses What else can the Perspective Crop be used for?



Centralise vertical distortion

Often it's difficult to take the perfect picture of a building without getting too far away. It's natural that your shots will be looking up at it somewhat, but the Perspective Crop tool can fix that. When you're creating your four sides, be sure to keep the horizontal sides straight, and simply tilt the vertical ones to follow the sides of the building.



Create surreal caricatures

The Perspective Crop tool is useful because the finished results look subtle and natural. But by taking the tool to its extremes, you can change how natural your final image looks; simply experiment with where you place the four points of the tool, and you can create surreal images that don't follow the laws of physics.



View front-on

Just as you can correct vertical distortion, the Perspective Crop tool can also do a good job horizontally. This is particularly useful for any scenes that you've taken from an angle, particularly if you've taken a photo of a painting that you'd like to view from the angle it was painted at. Keep the vertical sides straight and alter the horizontal sides.

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 Transform On Drop checkbox from the CC 2015 update, so let's explore how to make a quick but ambitious photo fix with it.

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



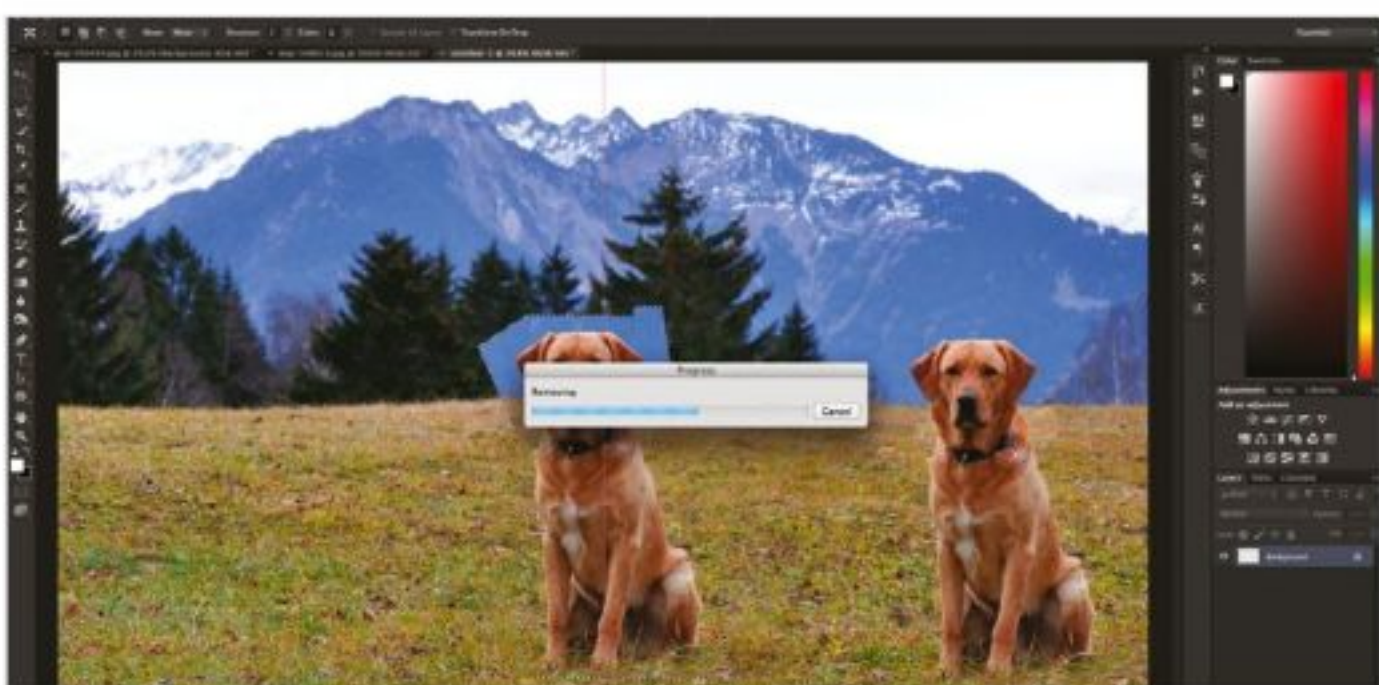
01 Make a selection

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

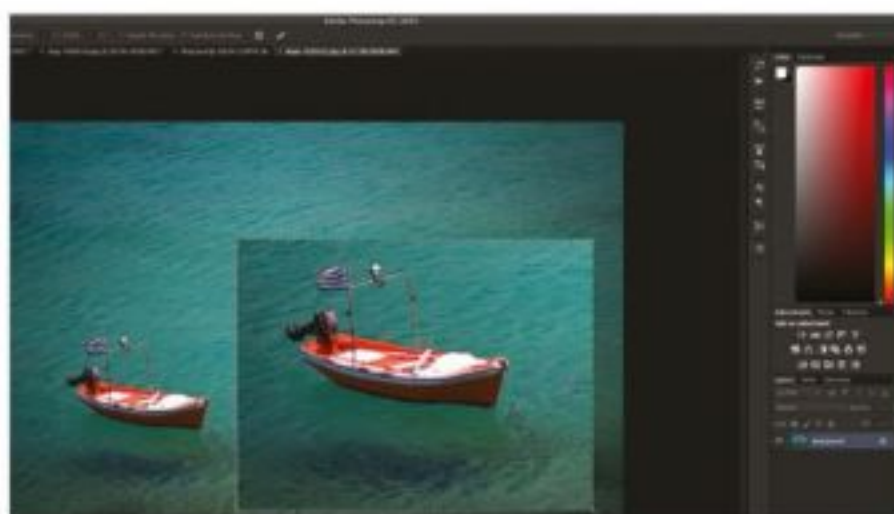
It's rare that you won't be able to notice a moved subject; you can often tell at its edges, so it's important to tidy everything up. Select the Clone Stamp with an Opacity of 50%, a soft tip and just gently touch up to remove any inconsistency in the image.

Transform on Drop Use CC 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

The screenshot displays the Photoshop Elements Editor interface. The 'Layer' menu is open, showing options such as 'New', 'Duplicate Layer...', 'Delete Layer', 'Rename Layer...', 'Layer Style', 'New Fill Layer', 'New Adjustment Layer', 'Layer Content Options...', 'Type', 'Simplify Layer', 'Layer Mask', 'Create Clipping Mask', 'Arrange', 'Merge Down', 'Merge Visible', and 'Flatten Image'. A sub-menu is also visible, listing 'Levels...', 'Brightness/Contrast...', 'Hue/Saturation...', 'Gradient Map...', 'Photo Filter...', 'Invert...', 'Threshold...', and 'Posterize...'. The 'Hue/Saturation' panel is open, showing 'Hue: +20', 'Saturation: +30', and 'Lightness: +20'. The background image is a close-up of a pink and yellow flower.

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

ed **Expert**

THE POWER OF LAYERS

Learn why you need adjustment layers for non-destructive edits



Curves

Preset: Custom

Channel: RGB

Output: 54

Input: 67

Curve Display Options

Show Amount of: Light (0-255) Pigment/Ink %

Show: Channel Overlays Baseline Histogram Intersection Line

Buttons: OK, Cancel, Smooth, Auto, Options..., Preview (checked)

- 102 Get to know how to adjust layers. What are the key ways of using them and how to use them?
- 104 Improve exposure and contrast. No curves, no problem. Here's how to use the curves tool to fix it.
- 106 Use the curves adjustment tool. A simple guide to how to use the curves tool to fix it.
- 108 Use the curves tool. Use the curves tool to fix it.
- 110 Use the curves tool. Use the curves tool to fix it.
- 112 Fix photos with low saturation. Use the curves tool to fix it.

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

Adjustments

SOURCE FILES AVAILABLE

Multiple adjustments

Stack multiple adjustments as a finishing touch for your compositions to focus on anything that needs fixing.

What does it mean?

FILL LAYER – If adjustment layers are what we use to adjust our work, fill layers are used to fill colours, gradients and patterns on new layers to overlay our work. They're also found under the Fill Layer icon, and can be used for applying more colour effects on your pictures.

Get to know the adjustment layers

Master the quick tweaks of Elements and improve your images

Sometimes photos don't need a full-scale edit, they just need a little adjustment. And that's the thinking behind the adjustments in Photoshop Elements: they are there as a final step to tie your compositions together, but they're also useful for quick tweaks that you might want to make to your photos, such as a little more brightness, tone control or a slight recolouring.

Located under the Fill Layer icon – the little half-blue, half-white icon you see next to the mask icon – there are eight big adjustments listed alongside three fill layer options. The fill layer options are Gradient Fill, Color Fill and Pattern Fill,

and the adjustments are Brightness/Contrast, Gradient Map, Hue/Saturation, Invert, Levels, Photo Filter, Posterize and Threshold. Each of them focus on different aspects of photo editing, but they can all be combined to get the perfect finish for your image.

As you become more confident in Elements and the projects that you take on become more ambitious, you'll find that the adjustment layers are still some of the most-used tools in your workflow. So let's take a look at them all one by one, exploring exactly what it is they're capable of doing, and when you might find them useful in your work.



Get adjusting

Check out the eight adjustments that can enhance your images



01 Brightness/Contrast

Brightness and contrast are key factors for altering either bright or dark photos. The adjustment consists of two sliders; Brightness affects overall exposure, and Contrast makes a bigger difference between the lights and darks in an image.



02 Gradient Map

The Gradient Map adjustment makes a map of the lights and darks across an image. Select colours, align them along the map, and they will replace the lights and darks. This is a great adjustment for recolouring, or just altering tone.



03 Hue/Saturation

The Hue/Saturation adjustment deals with hue (the specific shade of colour), saturation (how vibrant the colour is) and lightness (how bright or dark the colour is). Use it either to edit the whole image, or alter specific shades within your images.



04 Invert

Invert flips the colour of the pixels in your image to the complete opposite of what it looks like; anything white will become black, for example. This isn't one of the most useful adjustments, but it's a cool novelty effect nonetheless.



05 Levels

The Levels adjustment deals with tone, by displaying a histogram of your image and stoppers to adjust the tone. You can either focus on overall tone or use the drop-down menu to alter the Red, Blue and Green channels of your image.



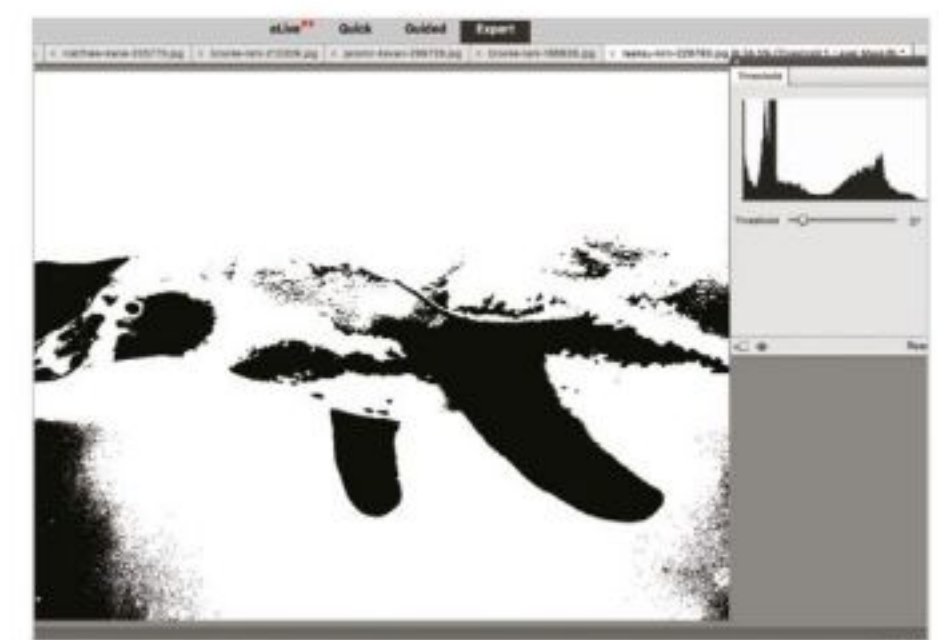
06 Photo Filter

One of the more basic adjustments on offer, Photo Filter simply adds a touch of warmth, coolness or just about any tint of colour to your image. It consists of the one Density slider and a drop-down menu to choose your shade.



07 Posterize

What looks like a Filter Gallery option, the Posterize adjustment reduces the number of colours in your image; it's another adjustment of one slider where you can define how many levels it has, for a more cartoony look to your work.



08 Threshold

The Threshold adjustment is similar to Posterize, only it reduces your image to black and white. Use the slider to toggle the balance of black and white, and use it either for a novelty effect or as a way to select the dark or light tones in an image.

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.

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.

Full tonal range

The sky was all midtone in the original, which made it look dull. Highlights help make it more interesting.



More detail

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

ORIGINAL



Use Elements' quick fixes If your image needs a boost, let Elements do the hard work



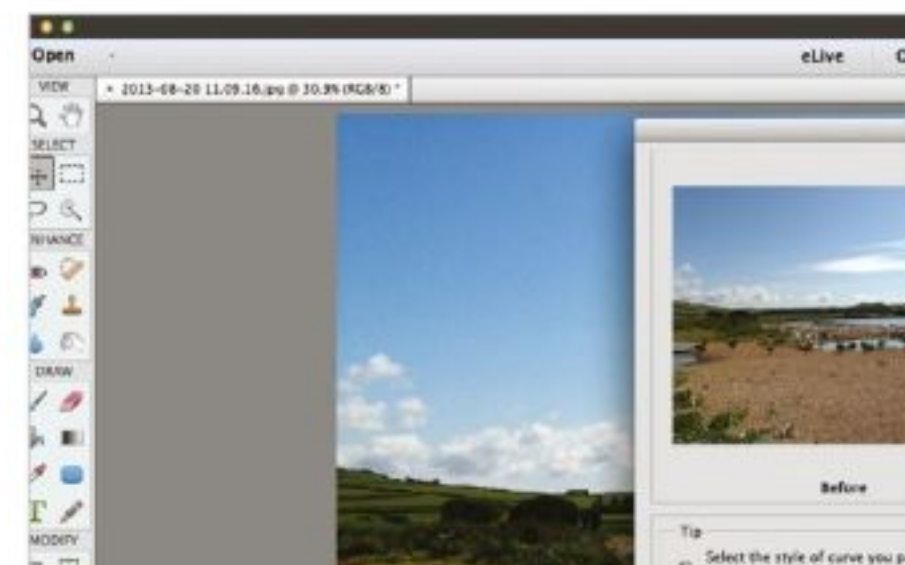
01 Control Exposure

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

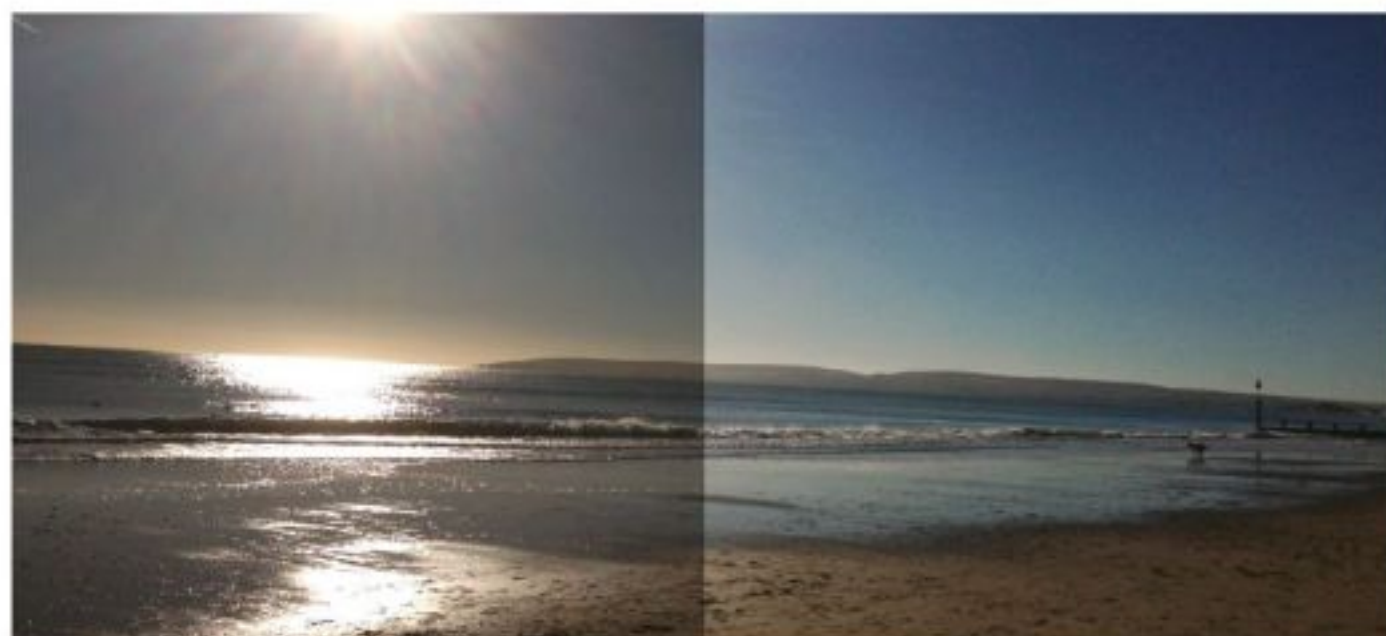
The Lighting option is a great way to play with the tones of your image without having to use the Levels dialogue box. You can again pick from the thumbnails, but you can target the Shadows, Midtones or Highlights separately.



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.

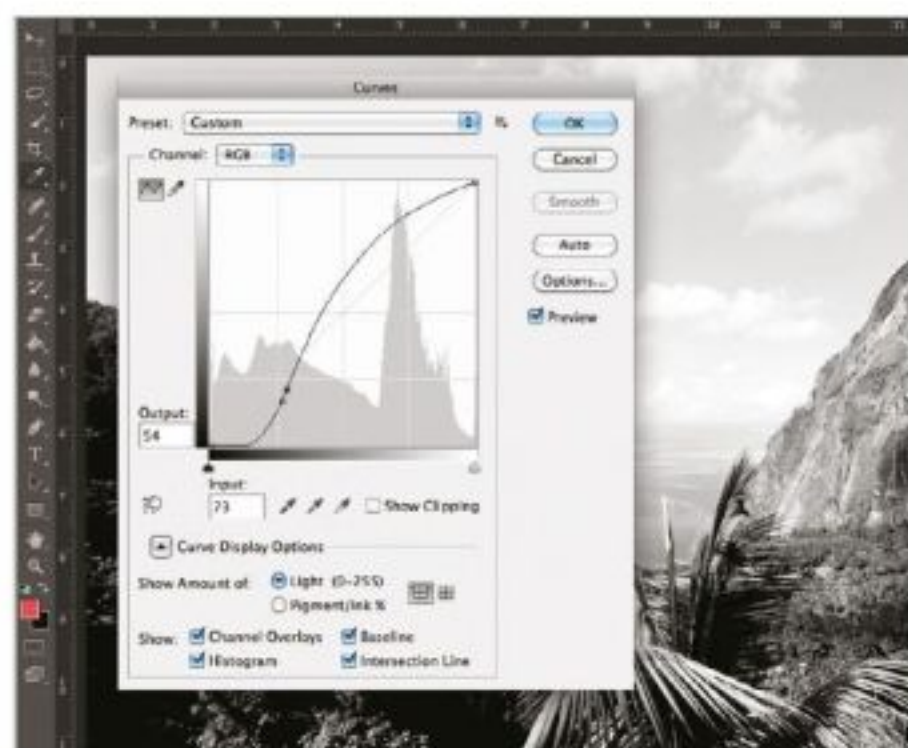
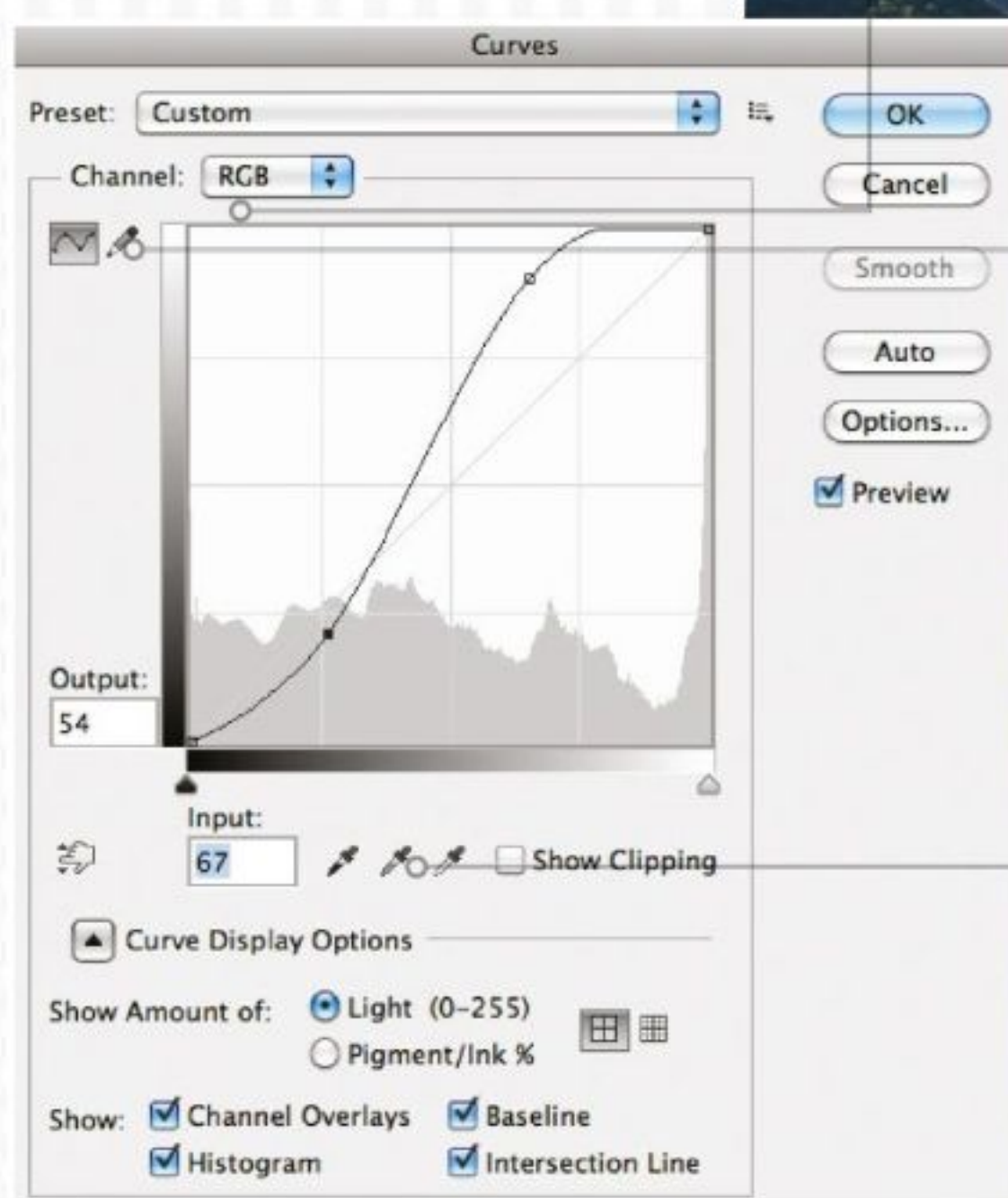
In this tutorial we will demystify the Curves graph, and in doing so show how you can make practical improvements to your images. We'll look at understanding the graph and at exactly what happens as the line changes shape. We'll reveal tips and tricks to make editing your image quick and easy. We will 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

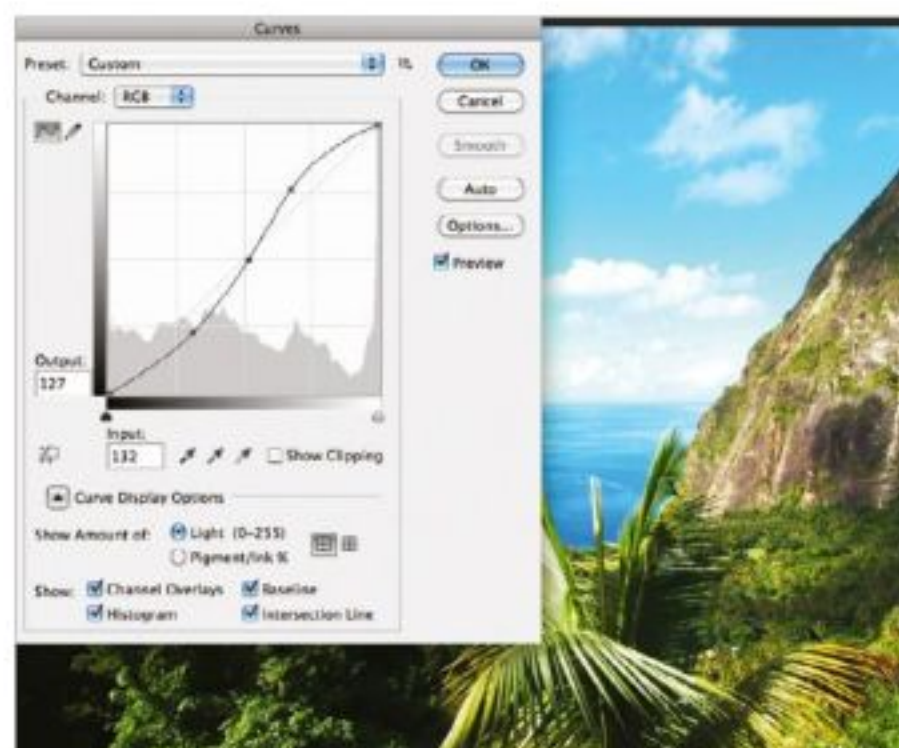
Curves window

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.

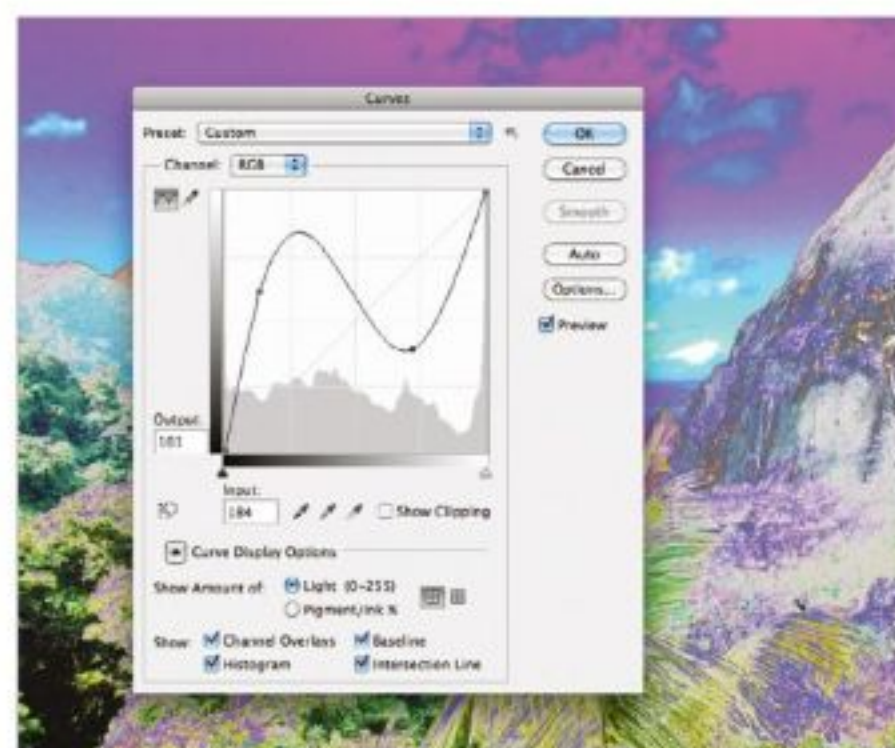
Eyedropper tool

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.



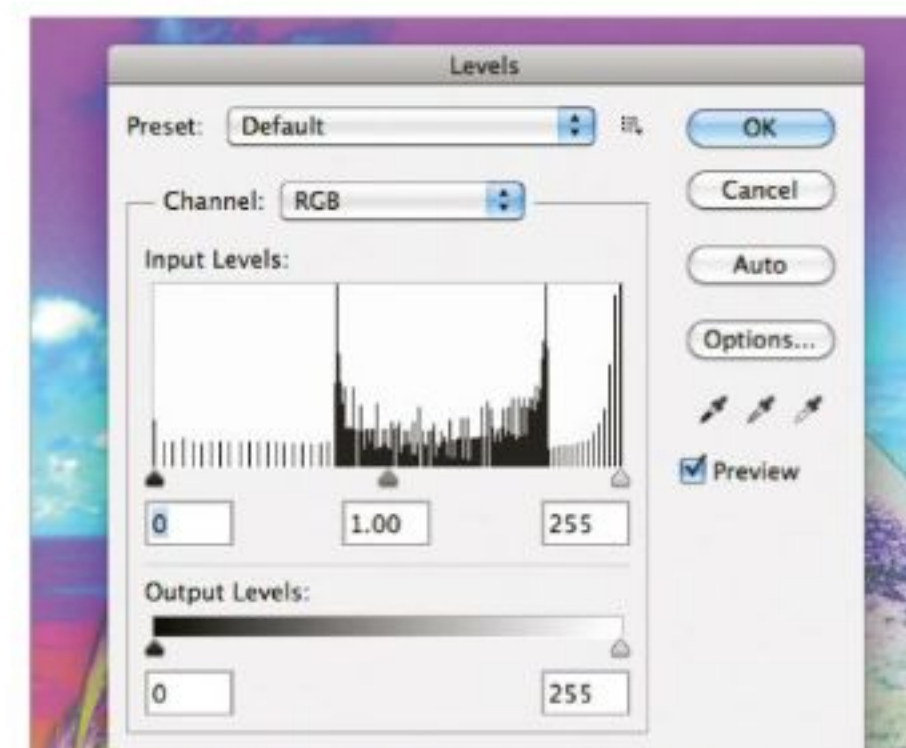
04 Crazy results

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 dialogue 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

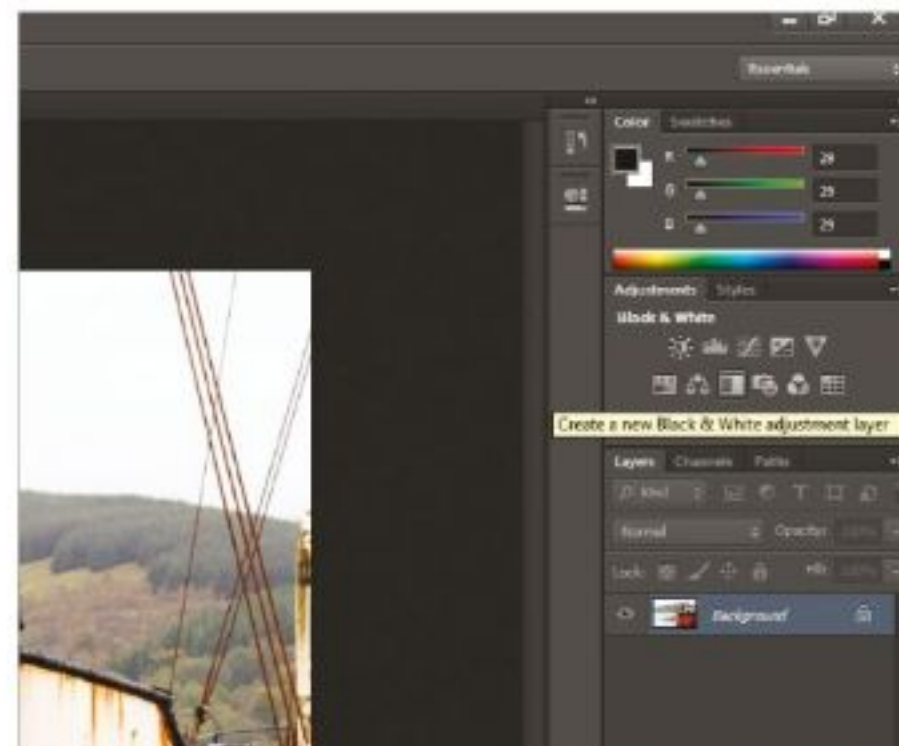
Using Presets

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 dialogue 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.



ENHANCED

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.



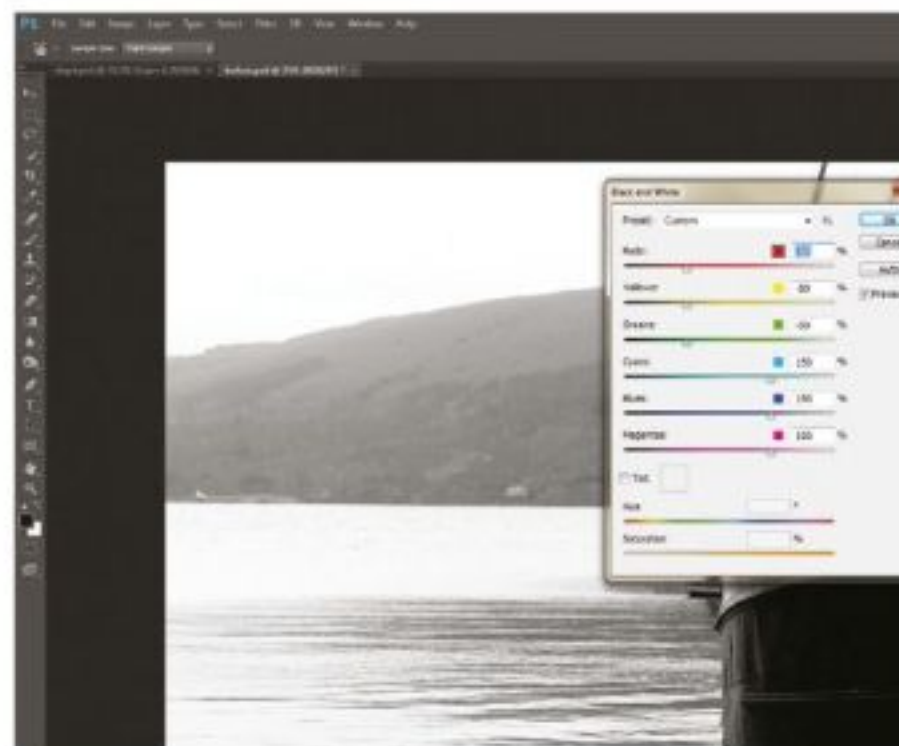
The right kind of image

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

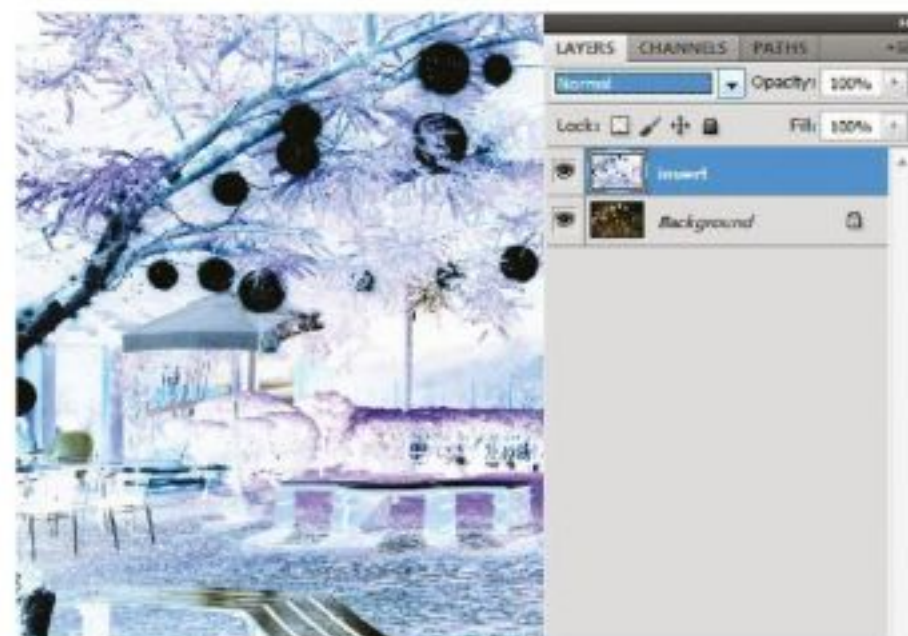
Using the little icon shown in the screenshot, you can click to see the image before its conversion to compare the result with the original.

Use the Channel Mixer

Bring colour to your night photos for instantly dramatic effects

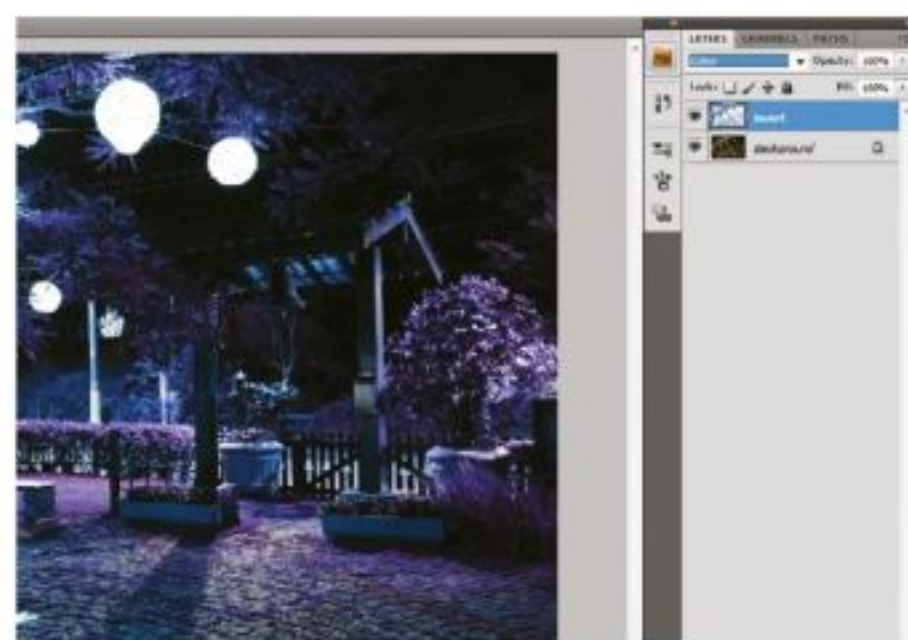
A shot taken at night is often problematic when printed. However, as long as there's some sort of light source in the original scene, you can dramatically improve the photo by using a few creative editing techniques. By re-creating the look of infrared photography, we'll use filters and colour channels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



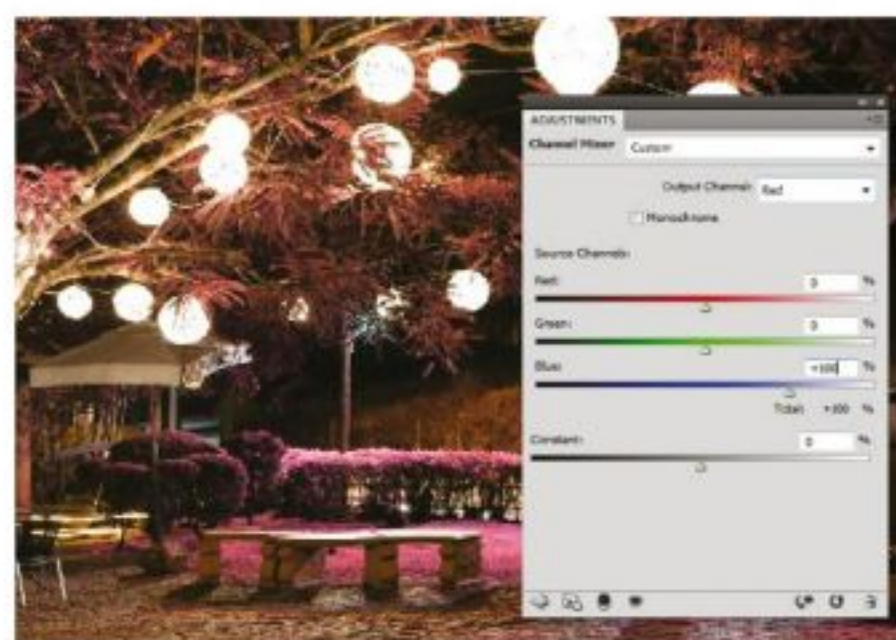
01 Duplicate and invert colours

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. Hit **Cmd/Ctrl+I** 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 select the Channel Mixer. In the box, change 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.

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“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.



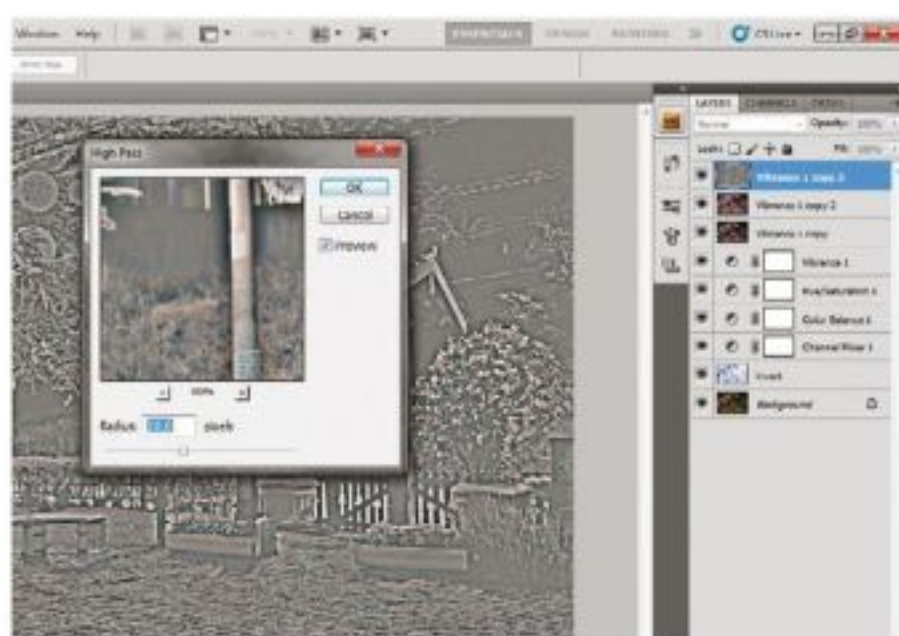
07 Duplicate and merge layers

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).



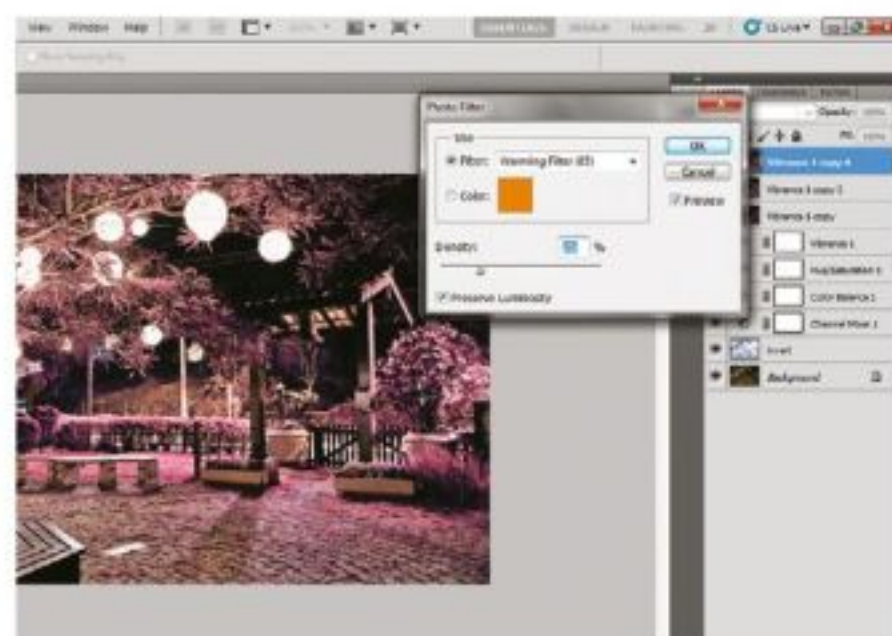
08 Tweak shadows and highlights

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.



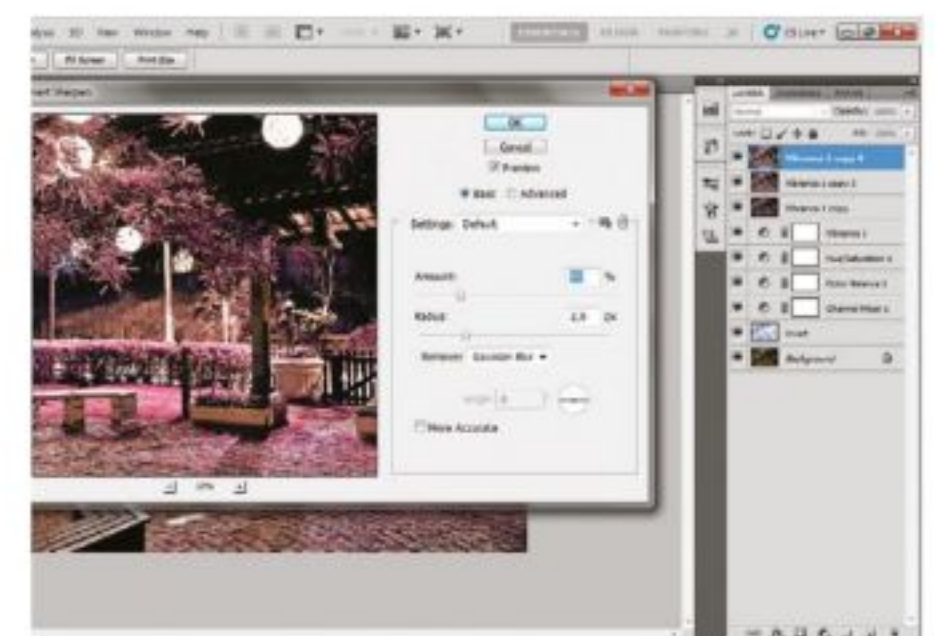
09 Add some drama

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.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Edit photos with Hue/Saturation

Do more with this dialogue 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.

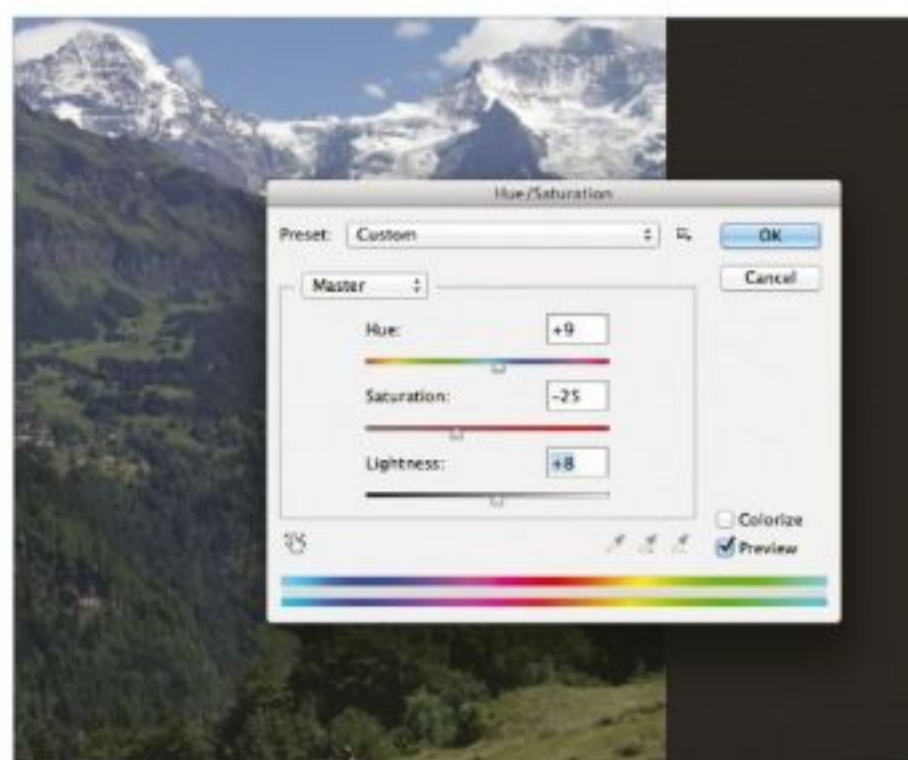
You can apply the changes over an entire image or target specific colours. It is this level of control that makes the command so powerful – if you have an image that's basically okay but one shade is letting it down, you can target the colour and improve it.

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.

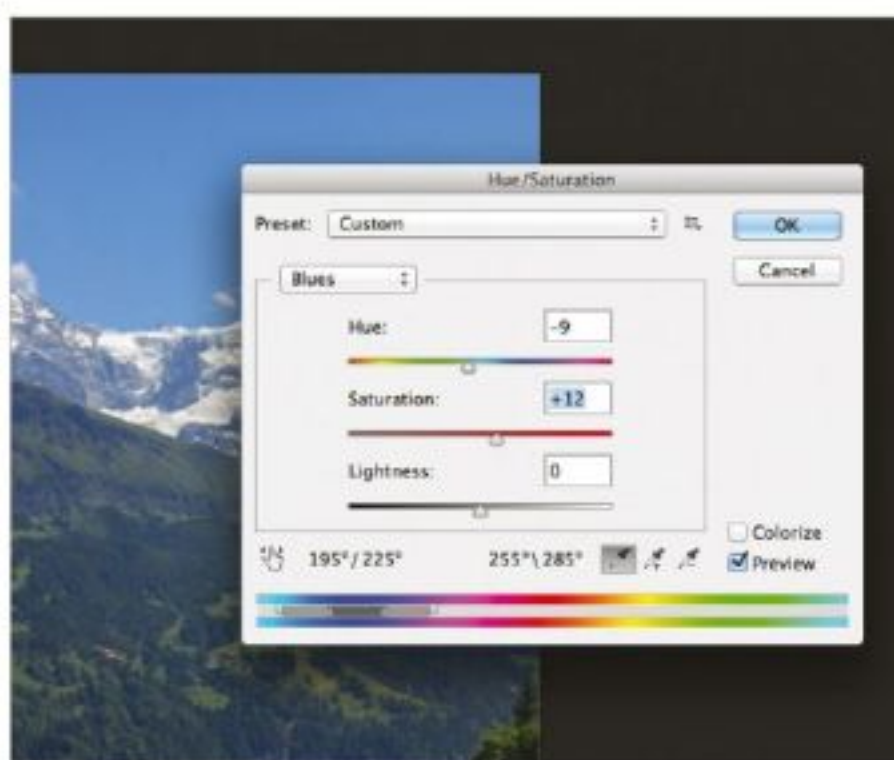
As we're looking at adjustment layers, make sure that you use this method to apply your Hue/Saturation command, as you can make as many changes as you like without harming the original photo at all. You can try this out with any image to get used to the controls.

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



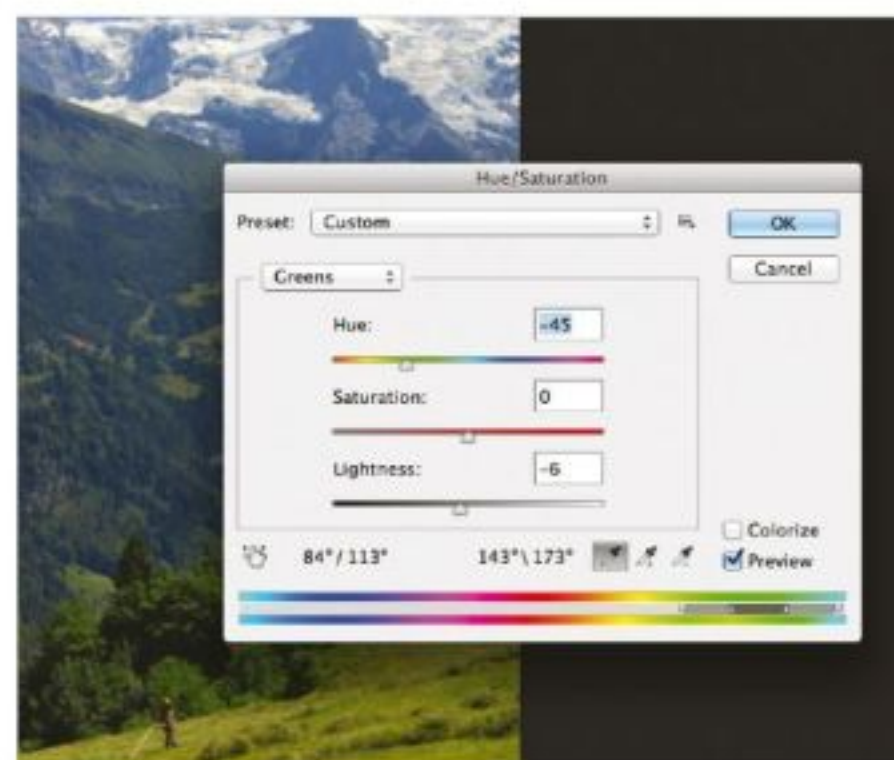
01 Assess the problem

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.



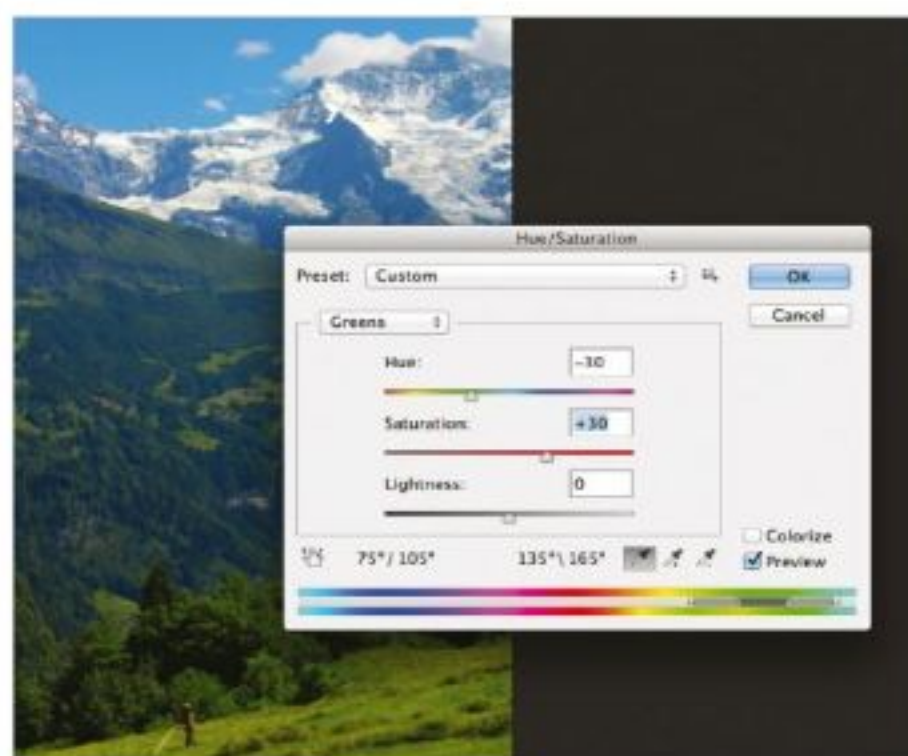
02 Blue sky

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.



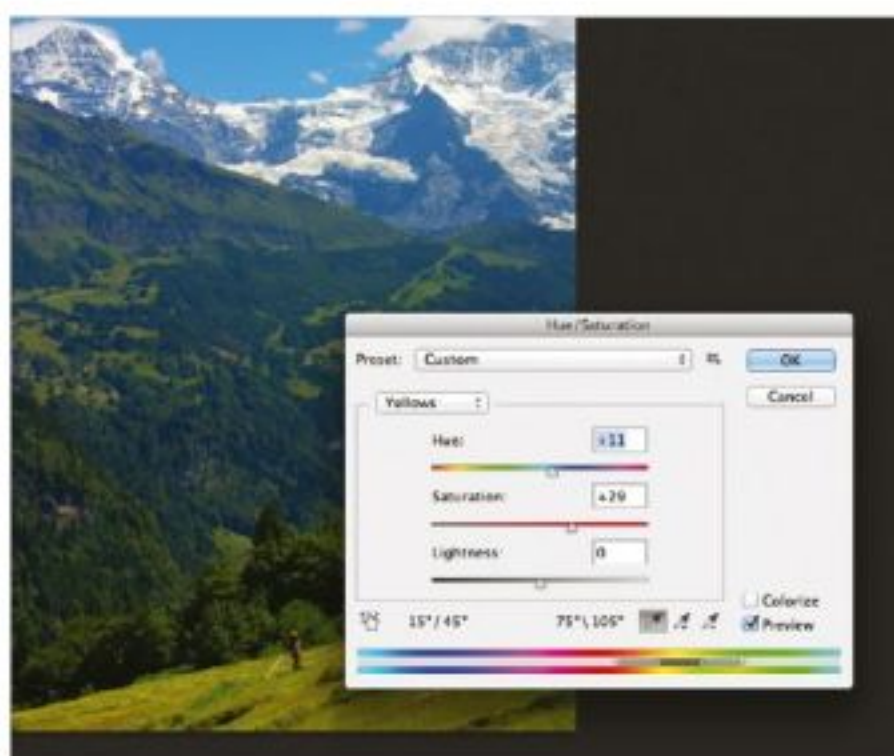
03 Not so mellow yellow

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



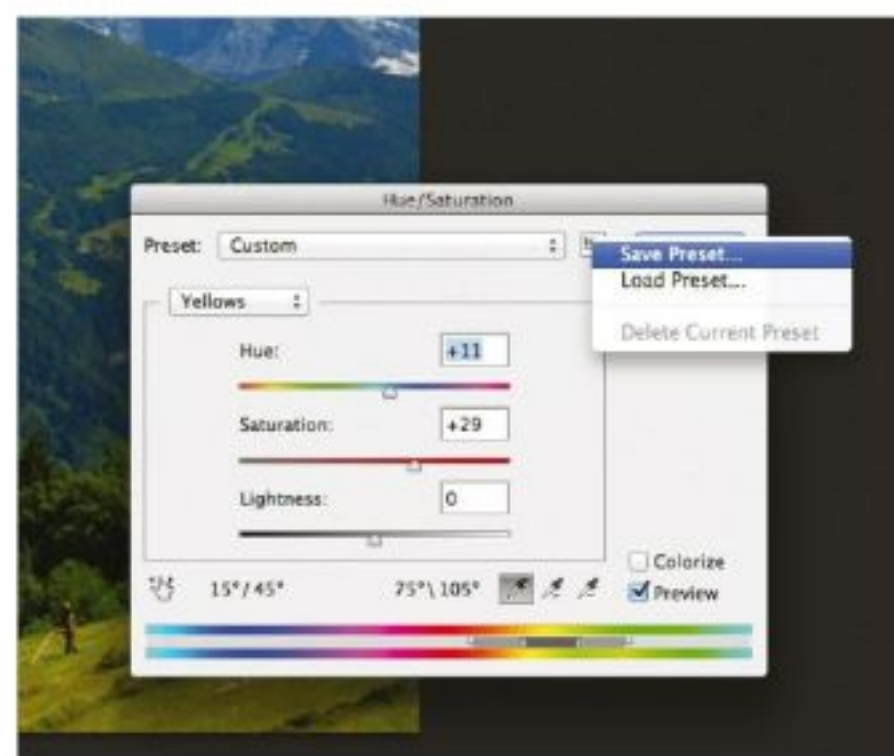
04 Boost some more

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.



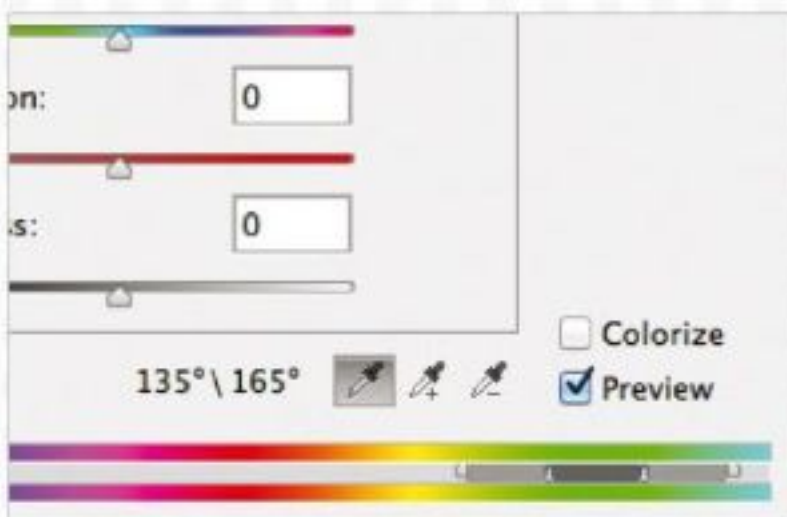
06 Save for a rainy day

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.



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.

Preset tones

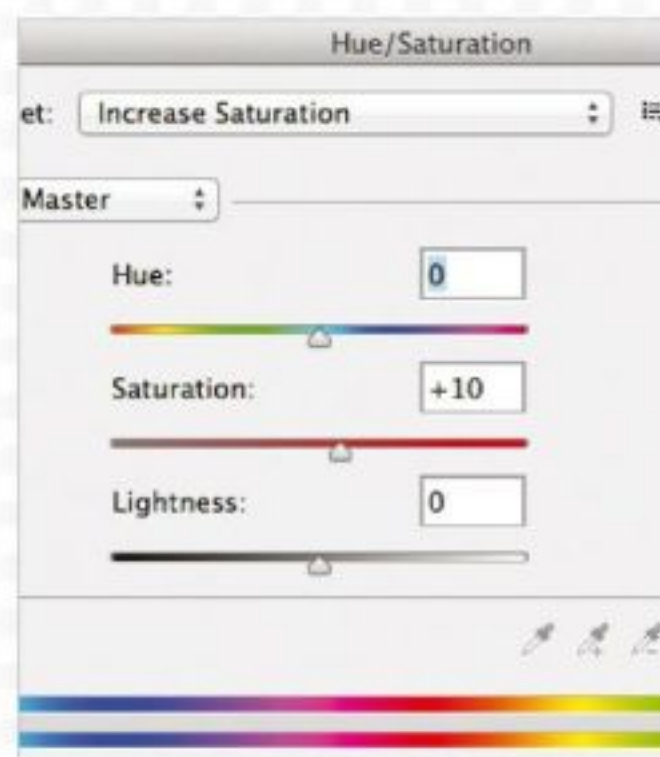
In addition to editing the entire image, you can select preset tones from this menu and concentrate just on one colour. This makes image editing far easier.

ORIGINAL

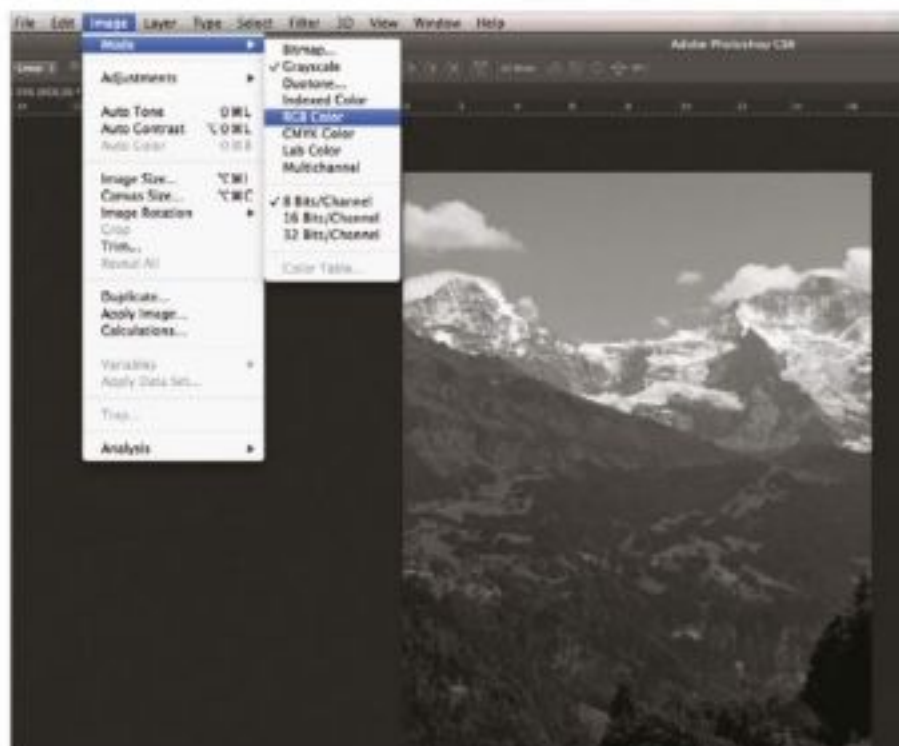
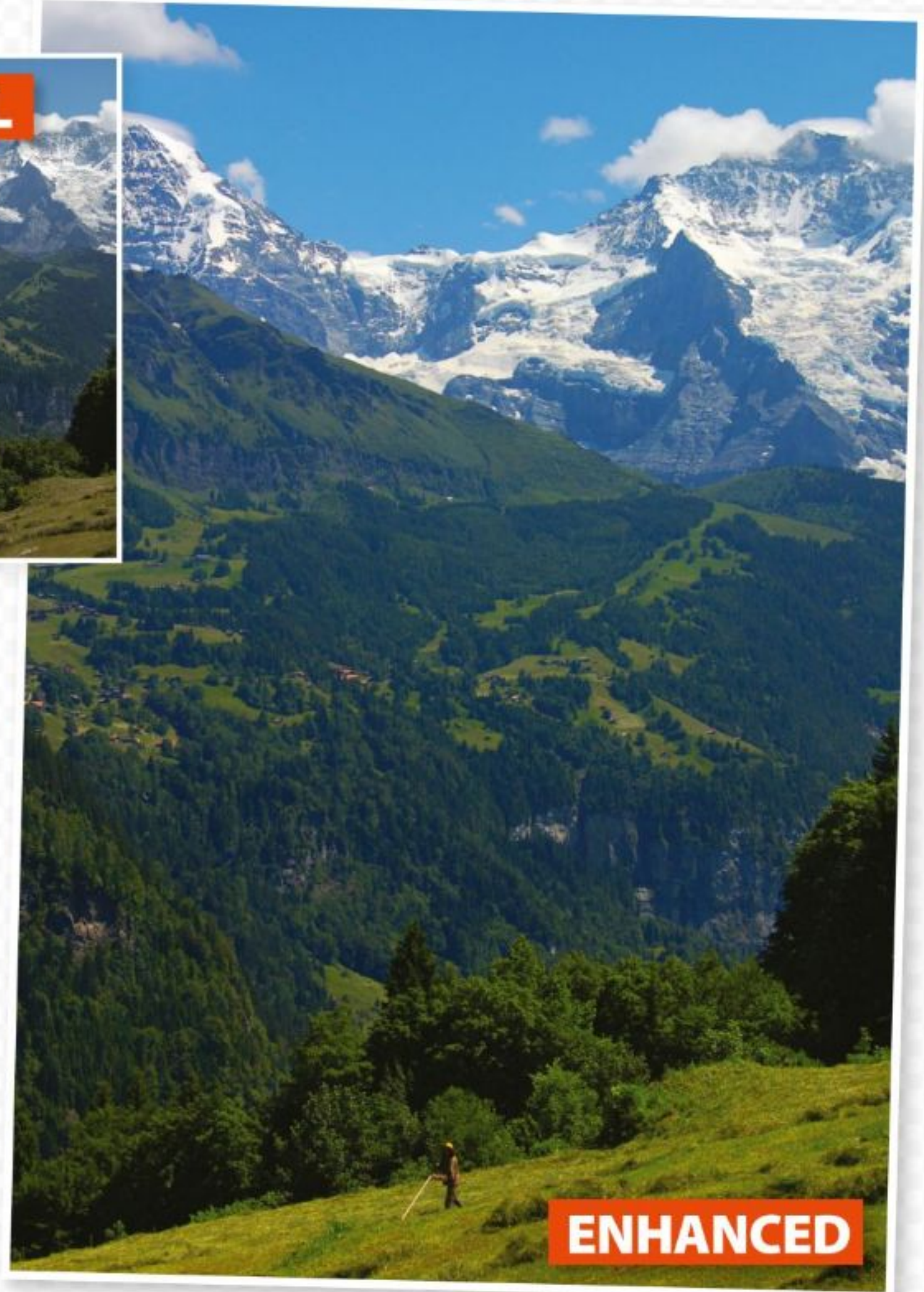


Slide edits

Control how the Hue/Saturation dialogue works by using these three fields. You can enter values to make edits, but the best way is to move the sliders.

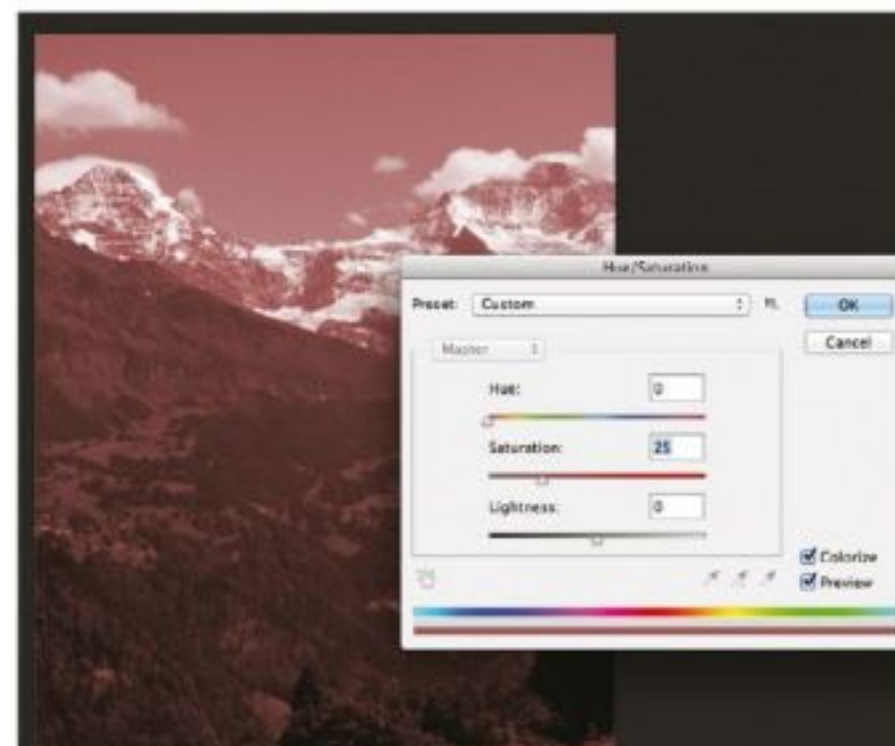


ENHANCED



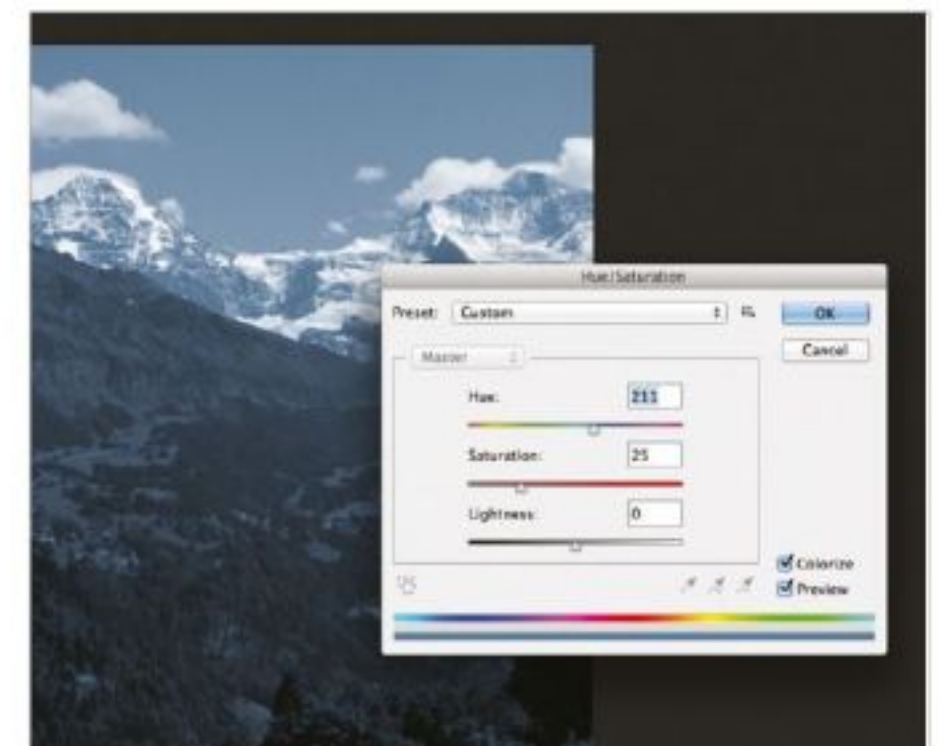
01 Colour grayscale

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

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Master Auto Selection
to have fast precision when you select
with the Marquee tool.

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Master the Quick Selection
to have fast precision when you select
with the Quick Selection tool.

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Master the Magic Wand tool
to know when to use the simplest of tools,
and select with ease.

122

Merge two photos
with selections.
Merge two photos to create the perfect
two-photo-with-the-selection-tool.

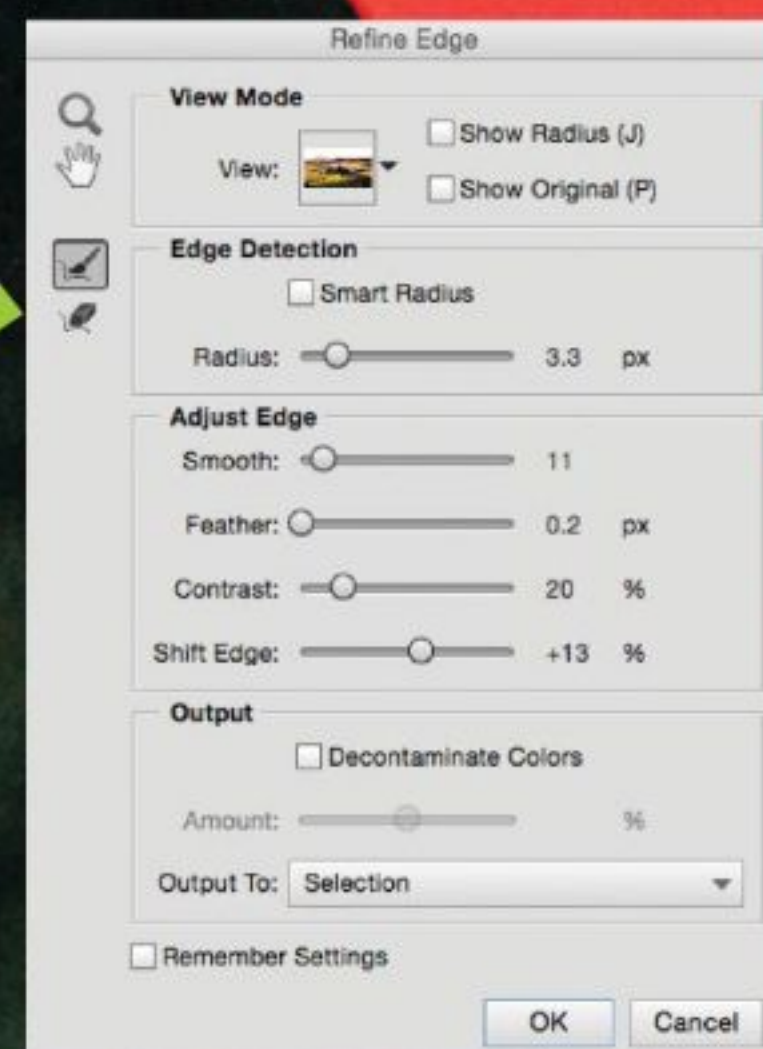
124

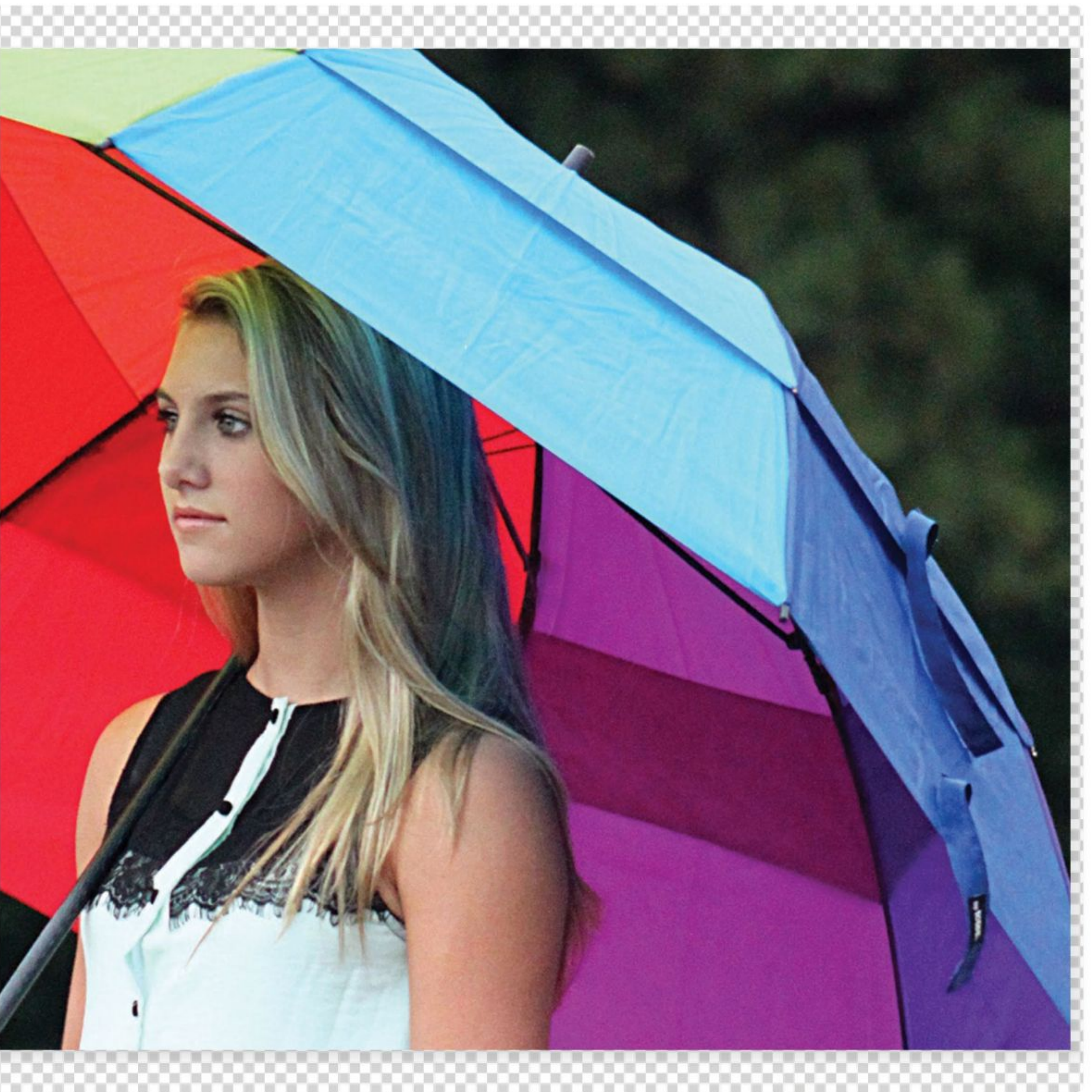
Illustrate a scene with selections
to create a scene for an illustration
graphics table.

"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







Mask to save

If you want to save a selection to use over again, create a new layer and hit Mask. Now, it's there to select again later if you need.

What does it mean?

CONSTRAIN SELECTION – This option is a checkbox in the bottom bar of Elements that you can check while you're using Auto Selection. If you check it, your selection will stay within the bounds of the selection you've made. If you uncheck, it will select other pixels further out from your selection.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Master Auto Selection

Achieve fast precision when you select with this vital tool

Making a selection is often the most time-consuming part of a project. If you're anything like us at Photoshop Creative, you spend hours meticulously tracing your edges over and over again to get the right cutout, before tweaking with Refine Edge, and even touching over the mask with a brush. It's a case of trial and error, working and re-working your selection to grab exactly the right pixels.

There are plenty of selection tools that can do the job, though, and with the latest version of Photoshop Elements, Adobe added another. The Auto Selection Tool is designed for speed and ease, with intelligent measuring of the edges just by loosely clicking around the outside your object. It's a good way to get a really thorough selection without having to spend as much effort tracing the edge, and it's really easy to use. What's even better is that you can

use any kind of selection tool with the Auto Selection; whether you're someone who uses marquees or lassos, this is a tool that can aid anyone.

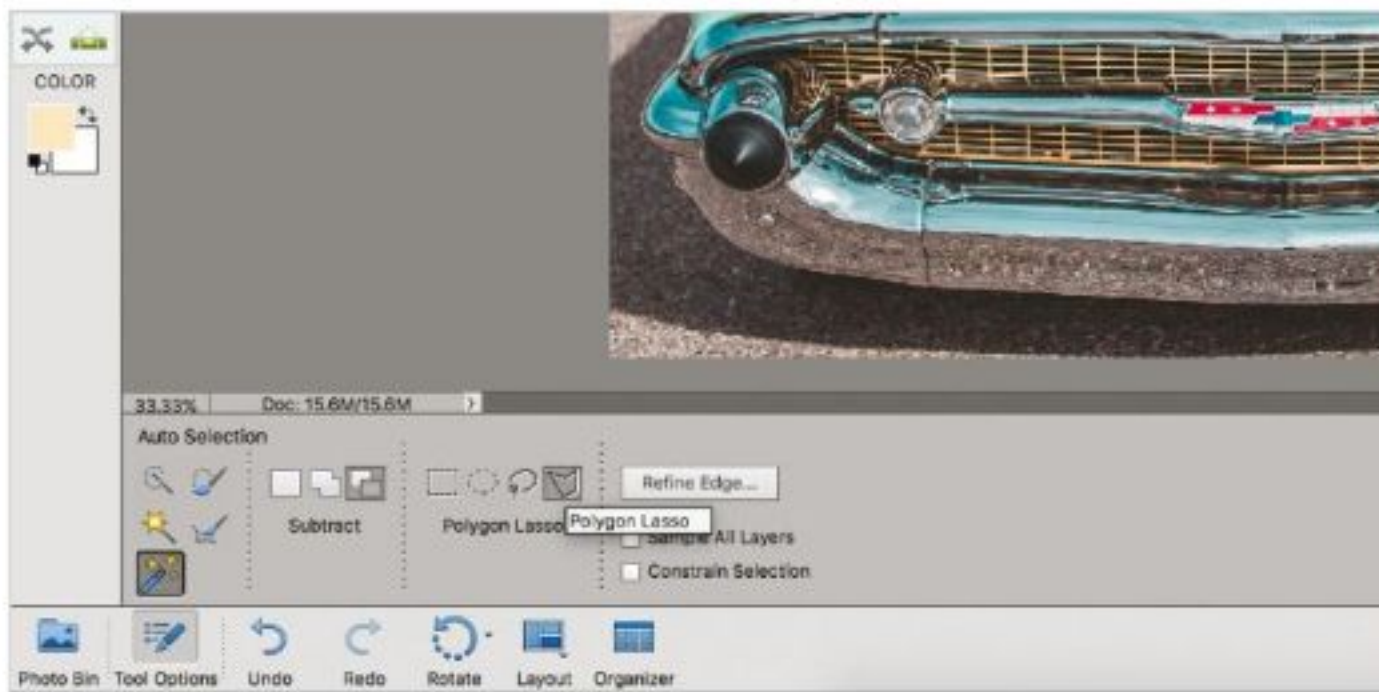
Selecting is something that pretty much everyone needs to learn at some point or another in Elements too; there's barely a project in which you don't need to isolate an object from a scene. You'll probably use the Auto Selection as an alternative to Quick Selection; it's still not the most thorough of options but it's more than capable of providing a decent result.

Let's dive into how to use this tool, and take the effort out of a key part of your Elements workflow.



ORIGINAL

Straightening up Grab pixels easily with a quick drag



01 Choose your tool

Click on the Auto Selection Tool on the left-hand side of Photoshop Elements. You'll see four options: Rectangular Marquee, Elliptical Marquee, Lasso and Polygonal Lasso. Choose one of these to make your selection with.

02 Make the selection

Use your chosen selection tool to make a rough outline around whatever you want to select in your image. We went for the Lasso and were sure not to trace right up to the edges of the car, as to allow for the Auto Selection to work.



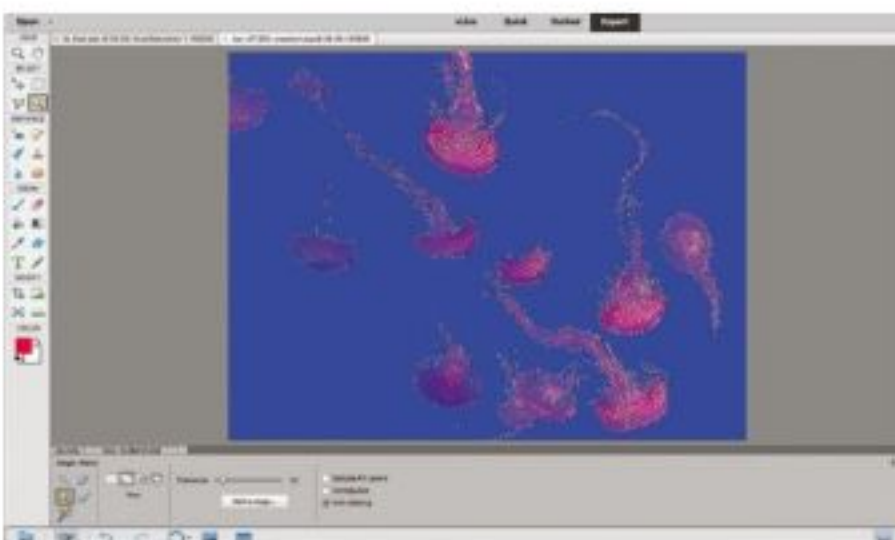
03 Perfect the selection

Auto Selection will then do its thing, and select other pixels of similar colours near to the selection you've just made. Of course, this isn't foolproof; select an ordinary Lasso and select more or less in the selection to get it just right.

04 Refine Edge

To improve a selection, use Refine Edge to smooth, feather and touch-up edges. This can help iron out some of the more jagged edges of your selection. The Refine Edge box is located in the bottom bar of Elements when the Auto Select tool is in use.

Other selection tools Which other features are best for picking pixels?



Magic Wand

The Magic Wand doesn't quite work on fairy dust, but is pretty adept at selecting pixels of a similar colour. The Tolerance slider can pull either more or less into its orbit. Check the Contiguous box to select colour across the whole image.



Quick Selection

This is a simple drag-to-grab feature. Its main advantage is its speed – as the name does suggest – and it's an efficient way to select whole objects in Elements before you perfect these selections. Alter the Size for more accuracy.



Selection Brush

This works in a similar way to an actual brush: you drag it over an area to select pixels, and it will not select anything that the brush doesn't touch. Alter the Size and Hardness to be more precise when you select.

What does it mean?

FEATHER – Feathering an image simply softens the outside of it. By choosing a bigger Radius setting, you'll have a softer image; the feather will apply itself to the whole of the image too, so you won't have to edit certain parts of the picture. The Feather is useful for out-of-focus selections.

Add a background

This technique is great for selecting subjects, ready to place onto new backgrounds.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Master the Quick Selection

Achieve fast precision when you select with this vital tool

If you're editing a photo, selections can determine how good the finished picture looks. The better your selection, the more realistic your photo appears, but of course selecting takes time and with so many more exciting things to be focssing on in your image, why bother with the boring part of cutting images out?

That's where the Quick Selection tool comes in. It can shave time off the task of selecting. It works a bit like a brush: use the values and sliders to tailor the tool and then drag it across the area you want to select.

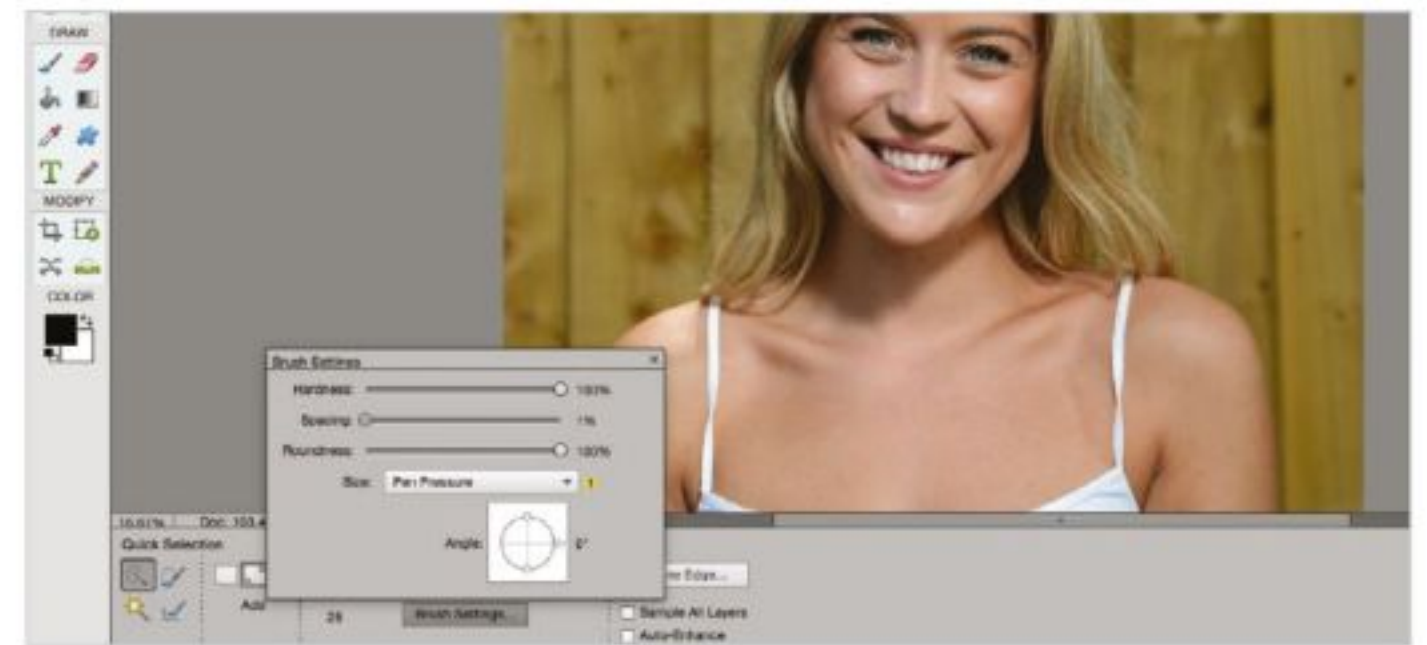
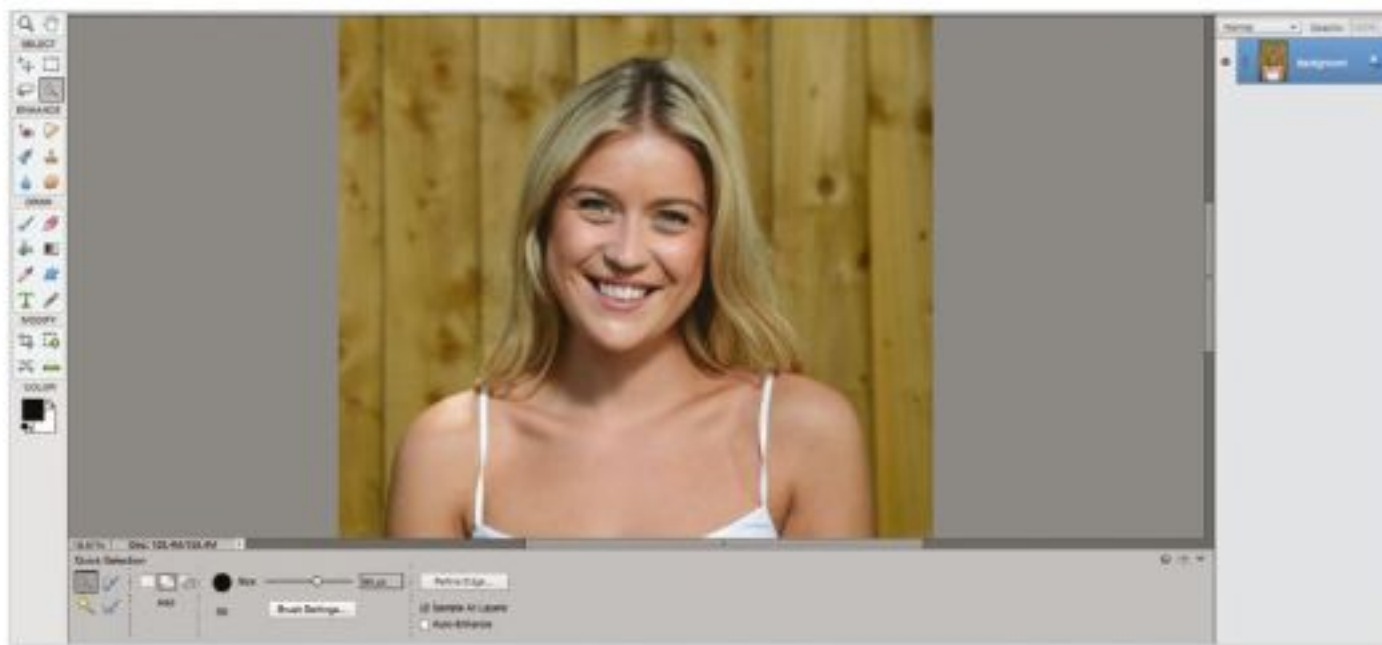
Although the Quick Selection tool is famously speedy at cutting out subjects in your photos, and though it does have a degree of precision when it

comes to selecting, it's a tool that relies on the others around it to get the best results. Using the Quick Selection alone isn't enough for the cutout. You'll need to employ the Refine Edge feature to smooth over your results, and the Lassos are perfect for adding and subtracting from your selections.

The Quick Selection tool is the simplest of the selection tools to use, however, it's not necessarily the easiest to master. Creating a good selection with it requires a lot more skill and patience than you might realise. Getting used to how it works is definitely worth it, though, because it saves you a lot of time in the long run. And after all: the better your selection, the better your final image.



Select with speed Drag over your image and refine your selection



01 Select the brush size

Choose the Quick Selection option from the left-hand toolbar, or hit A. Choose Quick Selection from the bottom-left icons and use the main slider to vary the brush size. A smaller brush can capture more detail, a bigger one is better for large selections.

02 Tweak the brush

Just as with the regular Brush tool, there are settings that can be altered when you're using Quick Selection. Hit the Brush Settings option to bring up the dialog; it will prompt you to edit Hardness, Spacing and Roundness, as well as Pen Pressure and Angle.



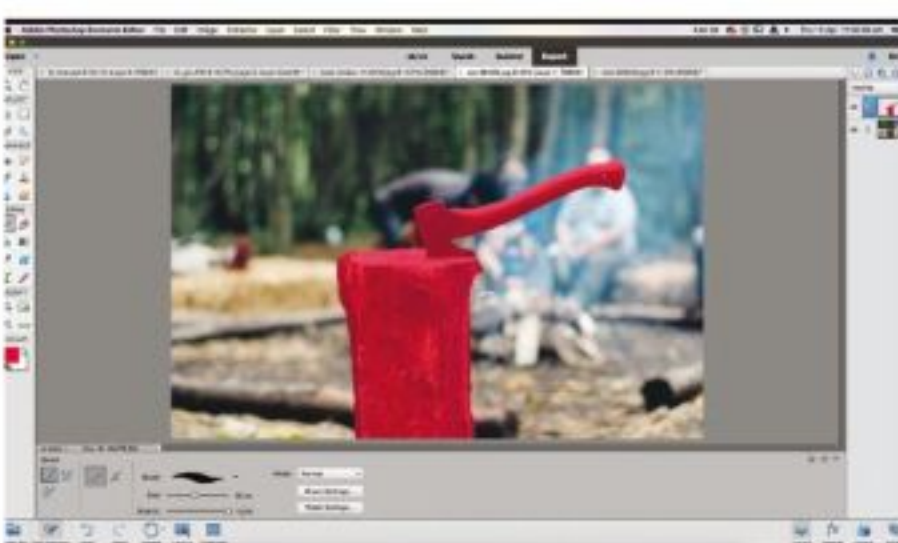
03 Add more to the selection

The Quick Selection tool is great for dragging over your subject and grabbing pixels, however, sometimes you might wish to add a little bit more to your selection. To do this, simply grab the Lasso (L) tool, and select extra pixels if need be.

04 Refine Edge

Click the Refine Edge option from the bottom bar of Elements. Here, you will be able to smooth your selection; use the sliders to do this depending on what your selection needs. Brush over the picture to add/remove pixels to your selection, too.

Alternative ways of selecting Use a host of other tools for selecting in photos



Brushes

Digital artists choose Brushes for precision and ease of use with a tablet, so why not use them as selection tools too? Create a new layer, reduce Opacity, then brush over the object in a bright colour. When you want to select it, Cmd/Ctrl+click the layer preview and select the background layer.



Magic Wand

The Magic Wand is one of the lesser-used selection tools. Though it's primarily used for quick one-click selections, you can use it to select over an image by holding the Shift button, and selecting everything you'd like in your picture. It's a quick option, and it's relatively accurate, too.



Multiple marquees

The Marquee tool is considered as just being able to make basic selections of simple shapes. It can be used, though, for selecting whole swathes of your image; click on the Add option in the bottom bar of Elements and you'll be able to add more to your selection.



Go for blocks

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

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

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?

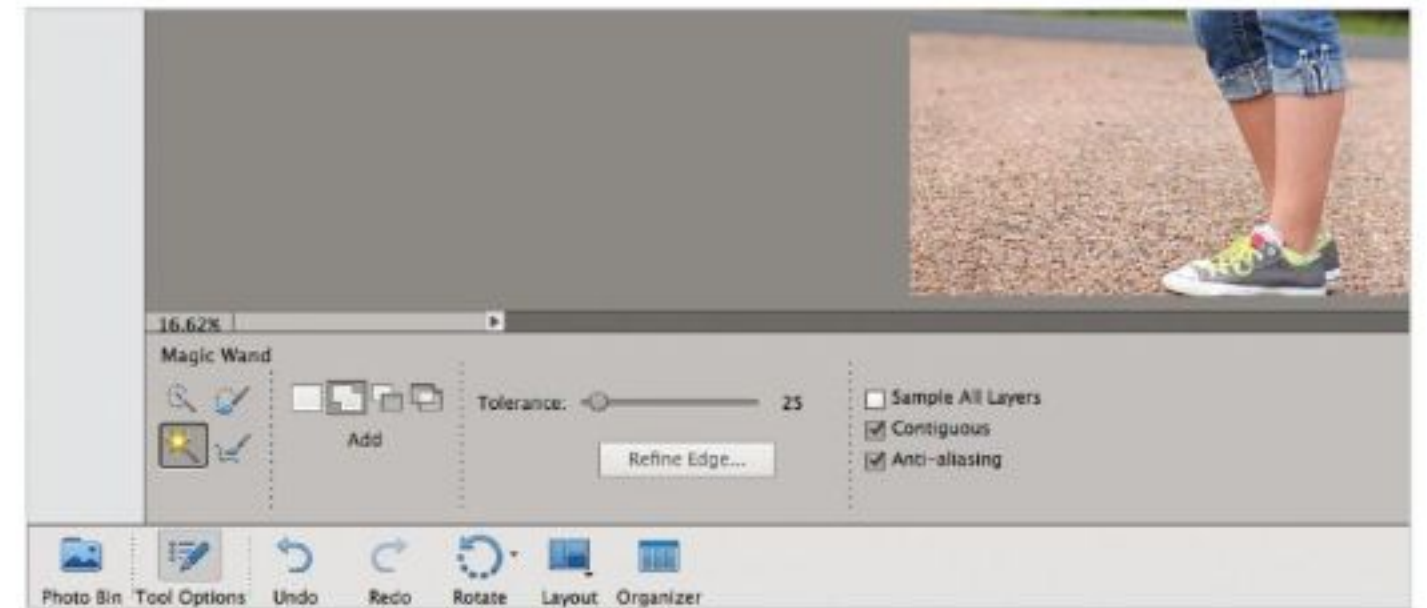
The trick is to match the tool to the right situation. What the Magic Wand does perfectly is select a block of colour. It's even quicker than a

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.

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.



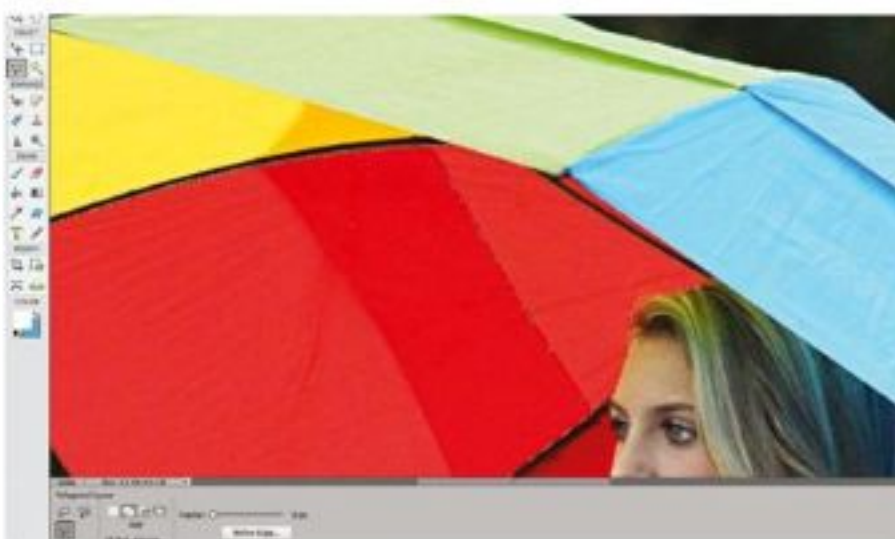
03 Point and click

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.

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.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Mask in cheeks

Make sure that you edit in the cheeks of your new photo as well as the mouth.

Watch mouth position

Don't position a smiling mouth too far away from the nose, as this will look obviously unnatural.

What does it mean?

PHOTO BIN – Although you will most likely flick through open documents using the tabs at the top of Elements to get from one document to another, the Photo Bin is one of Elements' most basic features and enables you to view a small thumbnail of your open images, which can be very useful.

Merge two photos with Selections

Combine the best of two shots using selection techniques

No photo is perfect: that is, after all, why we edit them. However, sometimes you might have certain aspects of some photos that you like and others that you don't. While just picking the one that looks the nicest overall is one answer, why not use Elements to take the best bits from all of them? Merging facial features can be somewhat of a tricky business, though. When you smile, it's not just your mouth that moves but also your cheeks and sometimes even your eyes, so while it might seem like a good idea to just composite the mouth into the picture, you don't want to create a face that doesn't look natural. It's just as important to

judge exactly which facial features will look good in other pictures as it is to learn the skills of how to place them.

Simply placing other facial features into the image sometimes isn't enough, either. The Photomerge tool can offer some rather quick edits for projects such as this, but you will have far more control if you use the Transform tool. This one enables you to reshape and resize your selections to fit the size of the face, rather than just being limited to having to use a photo that has been shot in a similar way. Follow the tutorial on the opposite page and experiment with your own photos.

ORIGINAL



Combine the best features Select and adjust separate photos



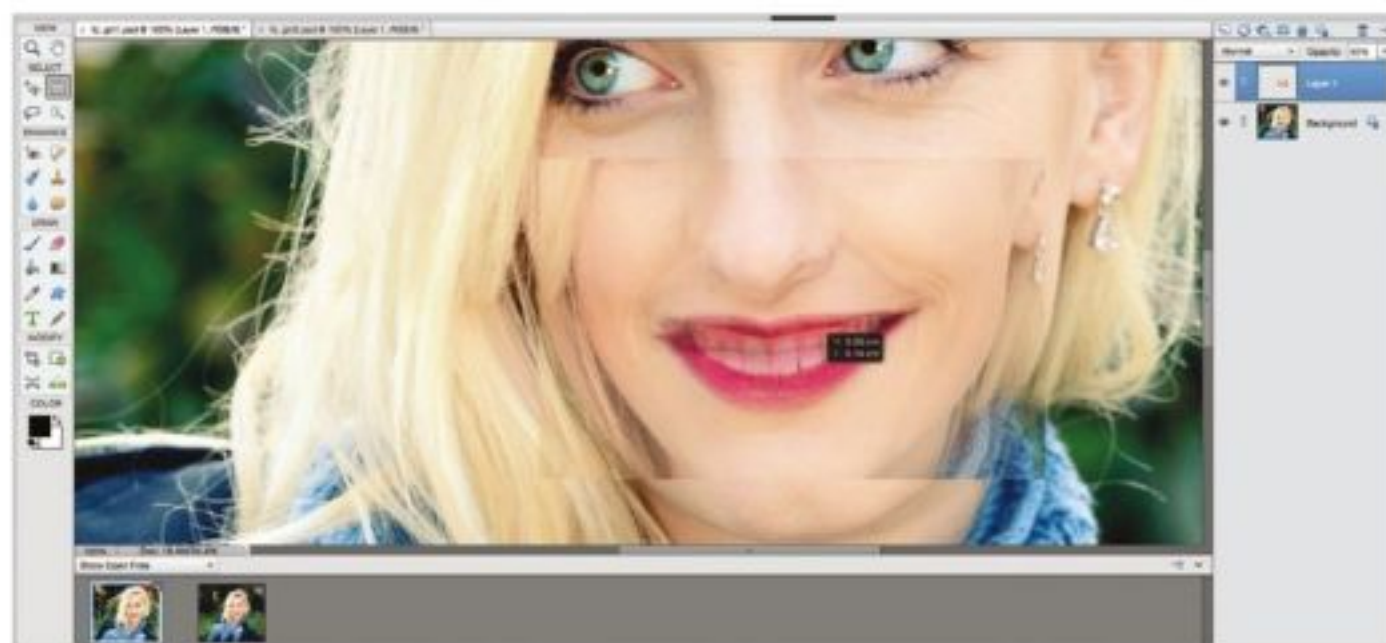
01 Use the Photo Bin

Start by importing your photos into Elements using File>Open. To the bottom-left corner you'll see the Photo Bin icon; click on that and the bottom panel will display all of your open photos. Pick a feature from one you'd like to impose over the other.



02 Make a broad selection

Grab the Marquee tool (M) and make a selection over the feature you'd like to place over the main photo: in this case, the smile. Make the selection big enough so that some of the face is included; it's better to have too much to edit out, than not enough.



03 Align the faces

Copy your selection (Cmd/Ctrl+C) and paste it (Cmd/Ctrl+V) over the other photo. Set to 50% Opacity, and align roughly so that the two faces match up. Use other facial features like the nose and cheeks to align the two mouths.



04 Mask and transform

Hit the Mask icon and brush around the mouth with a black, soft brush. Hit Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and Cmd/Ctrl+drag the corners of the selection to resize the mouth to fit the new face.

Use Photomerge Go to the Guided edit for automated results



Exposure

It's not just facial features that can be combined from photos; lighting can, too. Go to the Photomerge section of the Guided edits, pick Exposure. Now just draw over the parts of one image that you want to include in the other.



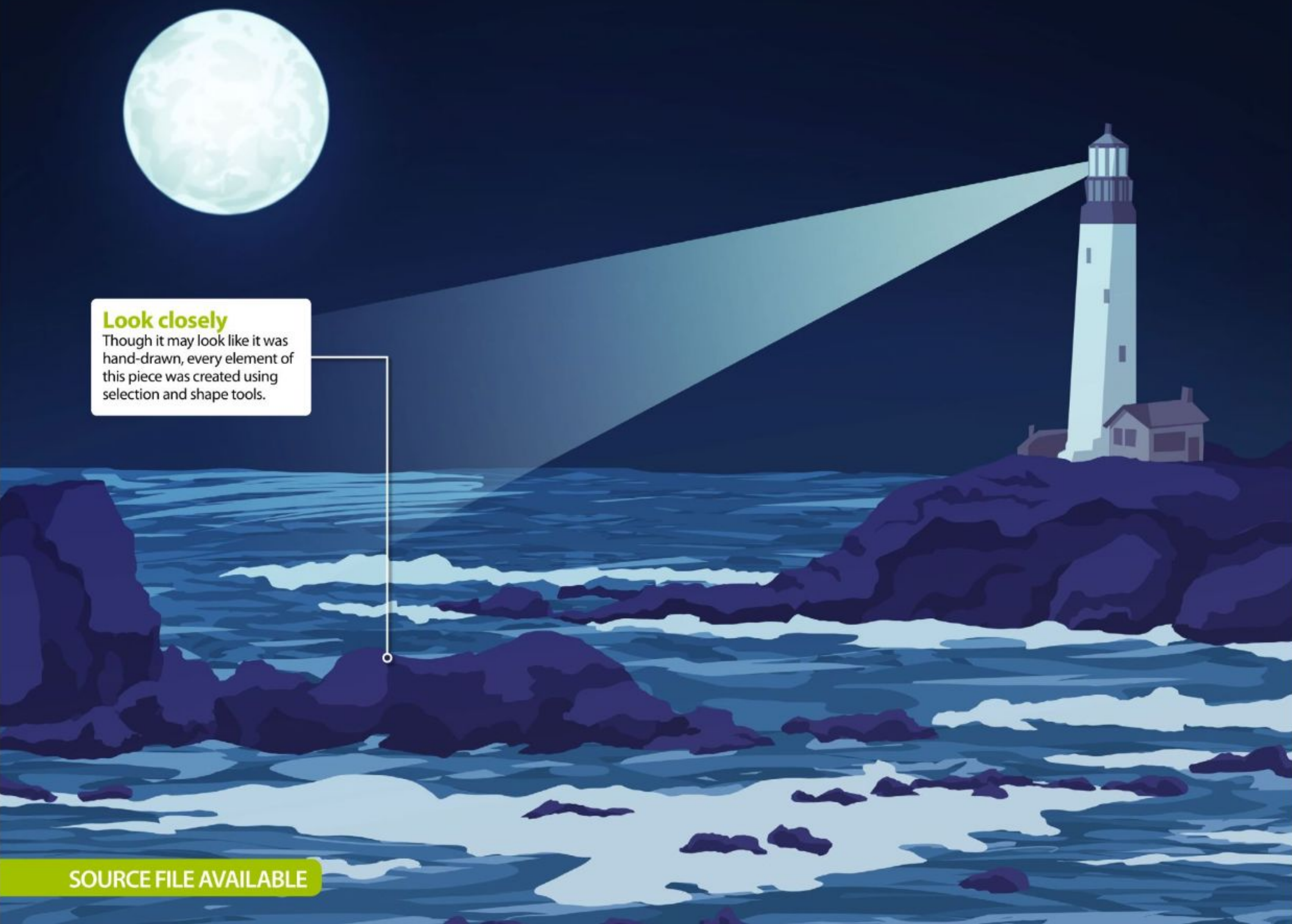
Faces

Should you wish to combine the best facial features of two photos automatically, Photomerge can assist. In a similar way to the Exposure feature, simply draw over the faces on the left that you want to replace on the right.



Panorama

Stitch photos together into one panoramic image using Photomerge. Set the style of panorama before selecting the images from the Photo Bin and clicking Create Panorama to make a final landscape based on them all.



Look closely

Though it may look like it was hand-drawn, every element of this piece was created using selection and shape tools.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Illustrate a scene using selections

Master the Lasso tool and draw without a graphics tablet

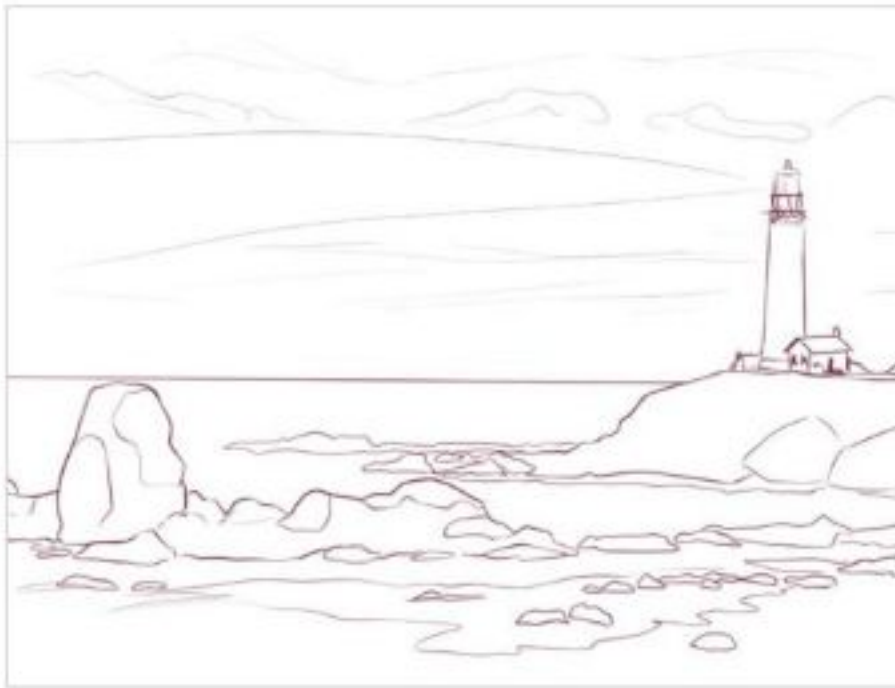
Digital art can be a rather expensive hobby. Once you've got your hands on the right software, you might consider purchasing accessories such as printers, scanners, graphics tablets and plug-ins. However, none of these extra purchases are entirely necessary for creating digital art. This tutorial will show you how to create a lovely illustrative piece using tools already available to you, and techniques that can be completed using your regular mouse.

We will be painting a nautical scene here, using Photoshop Elements. All of the tools that we will require in this tutorial are under the Expert tab – but don't let that put you off! All of the menus that we will be using are very

simple to navigate, and the tools are easy to apply. To make things even more straightforward, we would recommend first finding a picture of a lighthouse standing over the ocean to use as reference image for this tutorial. If you can copy and paste your chosen image into Elements, feel free to trace over it during step one.

The end result will be an attractive, illustrative image of a lighthouse at night – an excellent piece to use as a gift, or print off and frame in your own home. The techniques we will cover can be used for any of your future projects, and will hopefully improve your skills and confidence when drawing in Elements.

Default tools Create this nautical scene without the aid of a graphics tablet



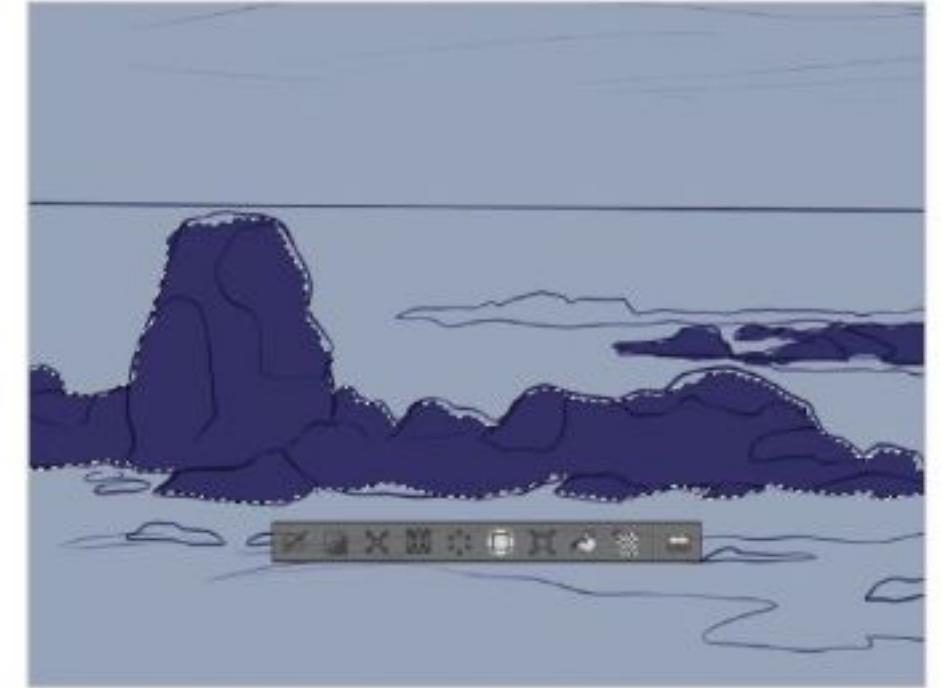
01 Sketch your scene

Under the Expert tab, create a new document and then a new layer. Select a small hard brush, 100% Opacity and 10px in size. Use the Colour Picker to choose a bright colour, like blue or red, and sketch the lighthouse scene. Trace an image if needed.



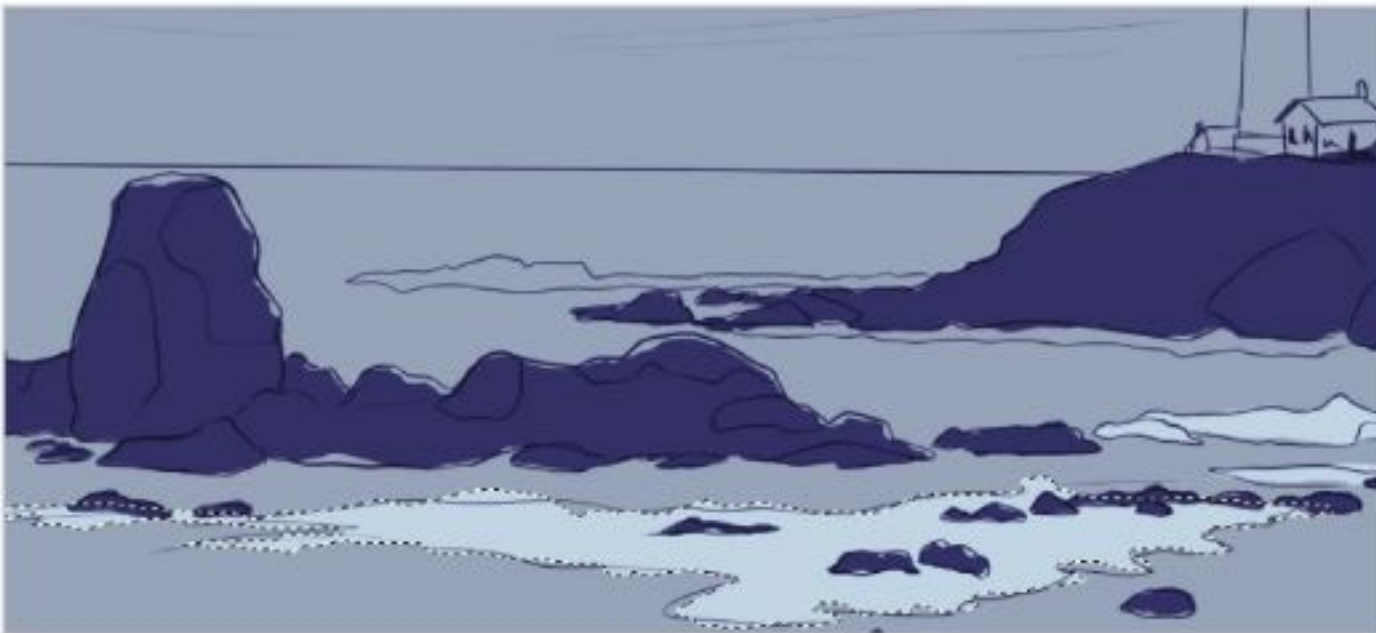
02 Prepare for colour

Once your sketch is done, set the blend mode to Multiply. Create another layer below that one, and fill it with a light-blue colour using the Bucket tool. You should notice that your sketch's lines are now darker; this will make them easier to see as you apply colour.



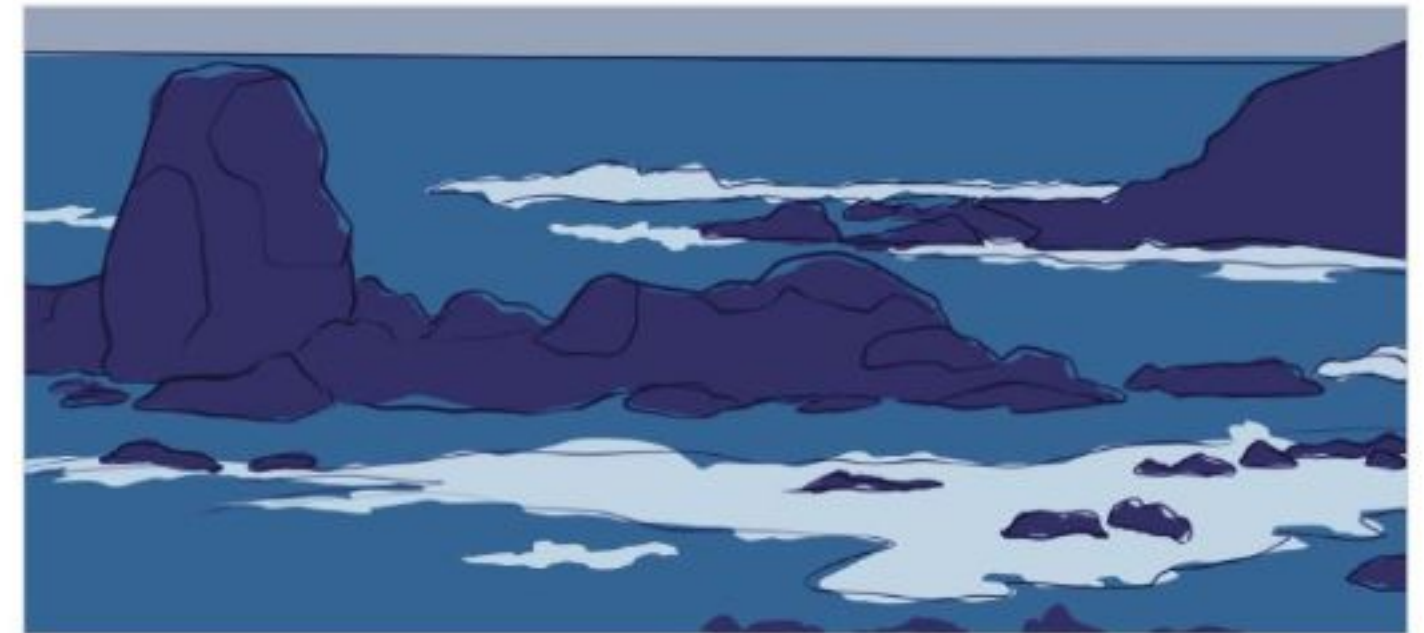
03 Use the Lasso

Create another new layer above the blue fill layer. Select the Lasso tool and use it to trace the outline of one of the rock formations. Use the Color Picker to choose a dark blue, and use the Bucket tool to fill the selected area. Repeat until all rocks are filled.



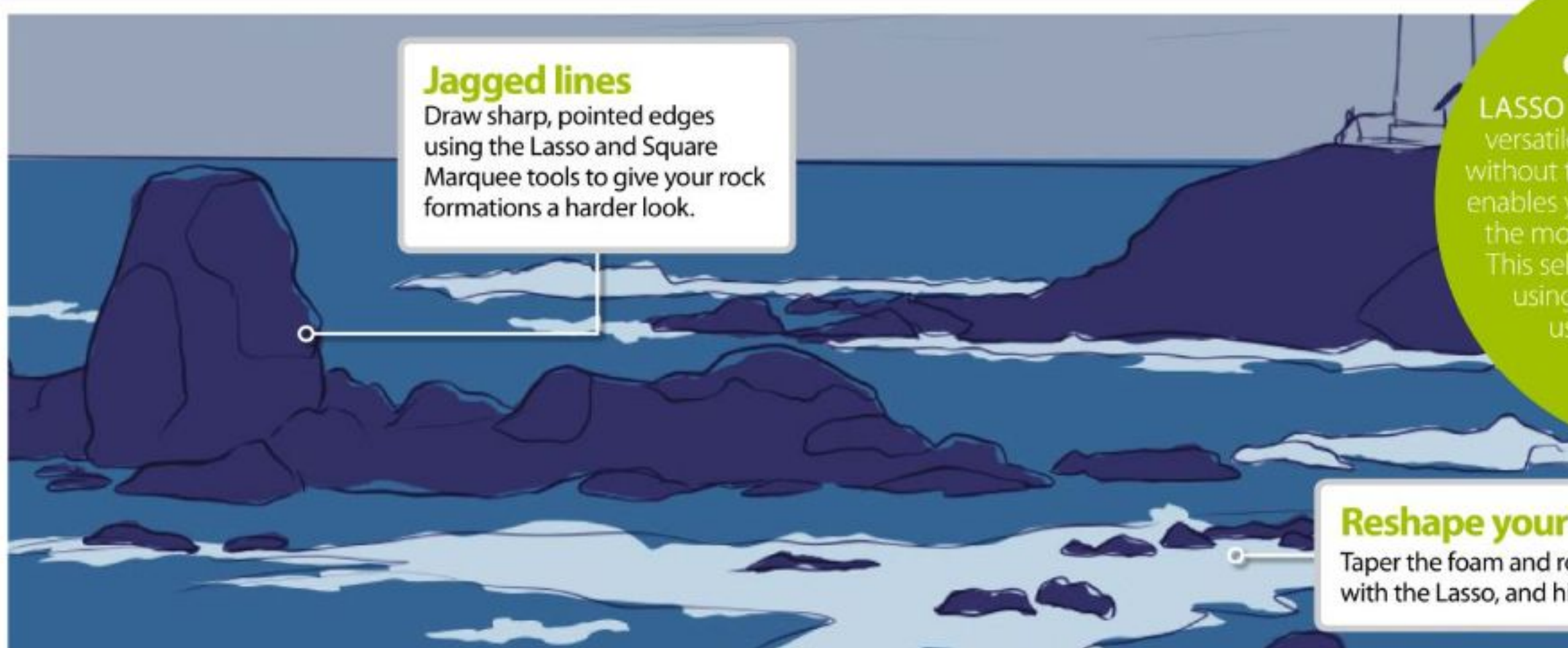
04 Draw the sea foam

You can complete the sea foam using the same technique as the rocks. Create a new layer beneath the rocks layer, use the Colour Picker to choose a light grey/blue, and trace over the sea foam areas. Try to make the shapes more rounded than the rocks.



05 Create the sea

Create another new layer, beneath the rocks and the foam. Select a deep blue and use the Rectangular Marquee tool to draw a rectangle across your canvas. This will be the basic colour for the sea, so make sure you keep the rectangle below the horizon line you drew in your sketch.



Jagged lines

Draw sharp, pointed edges using the Lasso and Square Marquee tools to give your rock formations a harder look.

What does it mean?

LASSO TOOL – This is a useful and versatile tool for drawing freeform without the aid of a graphics tablet. It enables you to draw any shape using the mouse, and create a selection. This selection area can be filled in using the Bucket tool, moved using the Move tool, or removed with the Delete key.

Reshape your colours

Taper the foam and rocks by drawing over them with the Lasso, and hitting the delete key.

Selections



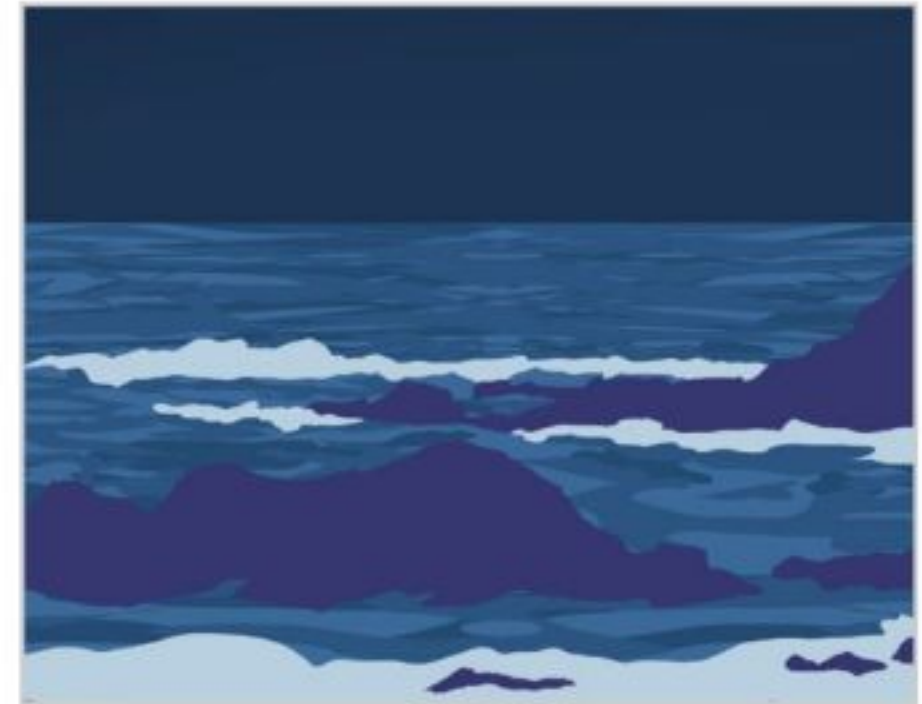
06 Darken the sky

Repeat the last step for the night sky, using a darker blue. Then select an even darker blue, and set your brush to a 200px+ Airbrush. Draw around the top corners of the canvas to create a shadow across the sky. You don't need a graphics tablet for this – the mouse will work fine!



07 Making waves

Go back to your sea layer. Select the blue using the Eyedropper tool, then make it slightly darker in the Colour Picker. Using the Lasso tool, draw several rough, snaking lines across the layer, and fill them using the Bucket tool to shade in some waves.



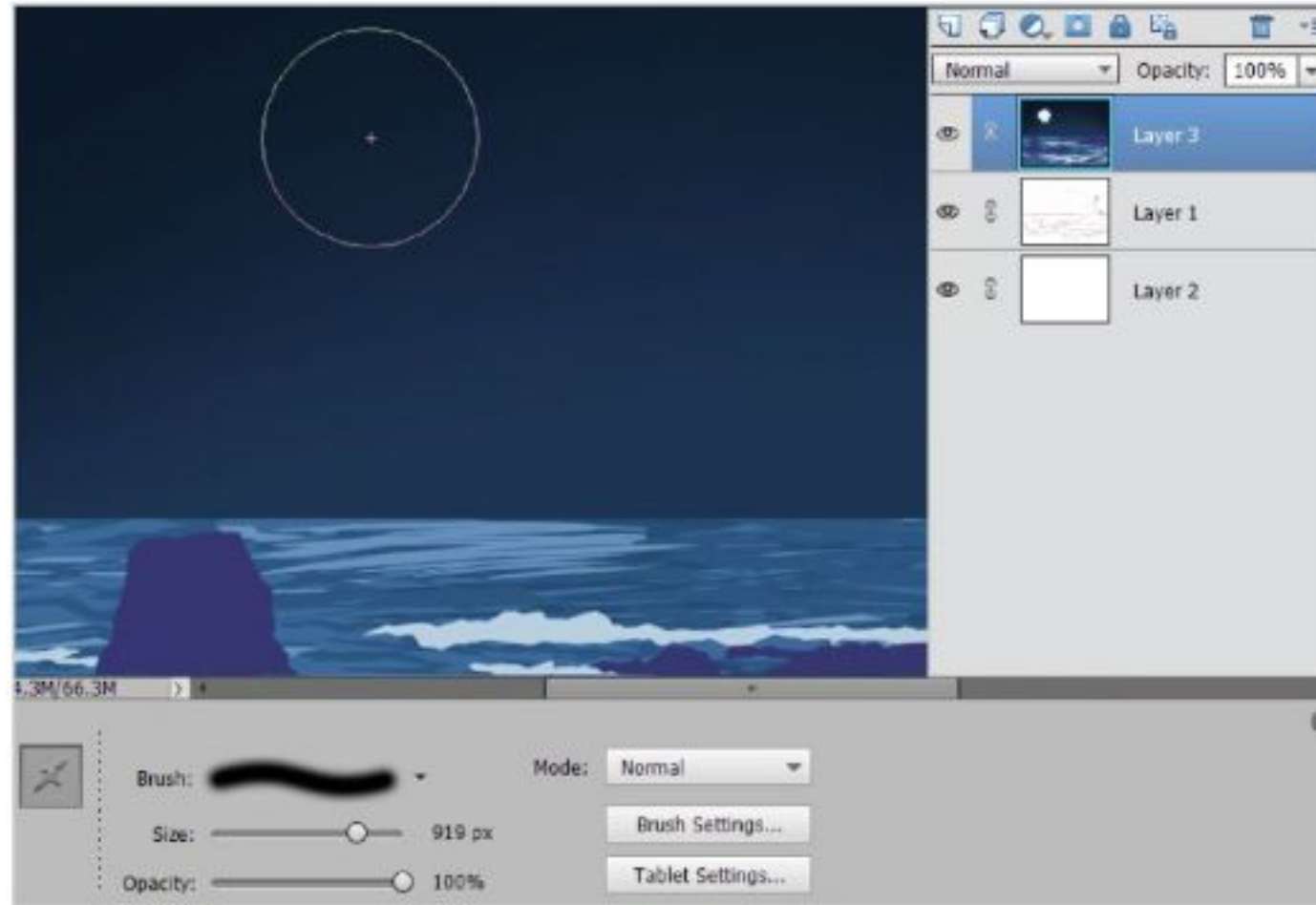
08 Choppy sea

Repeat the process using another slightly darker blue. Fill in the gaps between your first lot of waves. This will give your ocean a sense of depth. If you're ever unsatisfied with a shape you've drawn, draw back over it with the Lasso, and press delete to taper the shape.



09 Light in the dark

Use the aforementioned technique one more time, using a blue that is lighter than your ocean's base colour. Be much more sparing with your use of this colour. Keep your shapes small, aside from one area near the horizon. We'll be using this in the next few steps.



10 Moon over the water

Create a new layer above your night sky layer. Using the Circle Marquee tool, draw a perfect circle above the highlighted area of the sea below. Select a near-white blue in the Colour Picker, and fill your shape with the Bucket tool.

A perfect circle

To draw a complete circle, hold Shift as you draw outward with the Circle Marquee tool.

Colour contrast

Make sure each colour stands out. Use the Bucket tool to adjust them.

Striking colours

Using the Lasso tool like this creates sharp, striking artwork. It's great for creating illustrative work.

Graphics tablet

If you do have access to a graphics tablet, use it to draw in extra details, like small rocks.



11 Bright side of the moon

As you did with the waves, use the Lasso tool to draw details on the moon. Press the Opacity Lock button from the top of the Layers panel to prevent you from colouring outside the moon. Select two shades of dark greys, draw in your squiggly lines, and use the Bucket tool to fill them in.



12 Moonlight

Create a new layer above the moon, set it to Overlay. Using a near-white colour, select Brush tool, set to the airbrush you used earlier. Click around the moon; this will create perfect soft circles around it, which will make it look like it's glowing.



13 Lighthouse

Create a new layer above the rock layer, and use the Lasso tool to draw in the lighthouse. Use a light white to fill in the selection, then select a grey/purple to draw in the details. Use the Lasso and Square Marquee tools to draw straight and angular lines for the windows.



14 Shade the scene

Go back to your rock layer, and use a darker shade of purple and the Lasso tool to draw jagged shapes. Fill them in with the Bucket tool. Do this again with a darker shade, to give the rocks definition. Apply the same technique to the lighthouse; use Opacity Lock to keep the shading within the lighthouse shape.



15 A light in the darkness

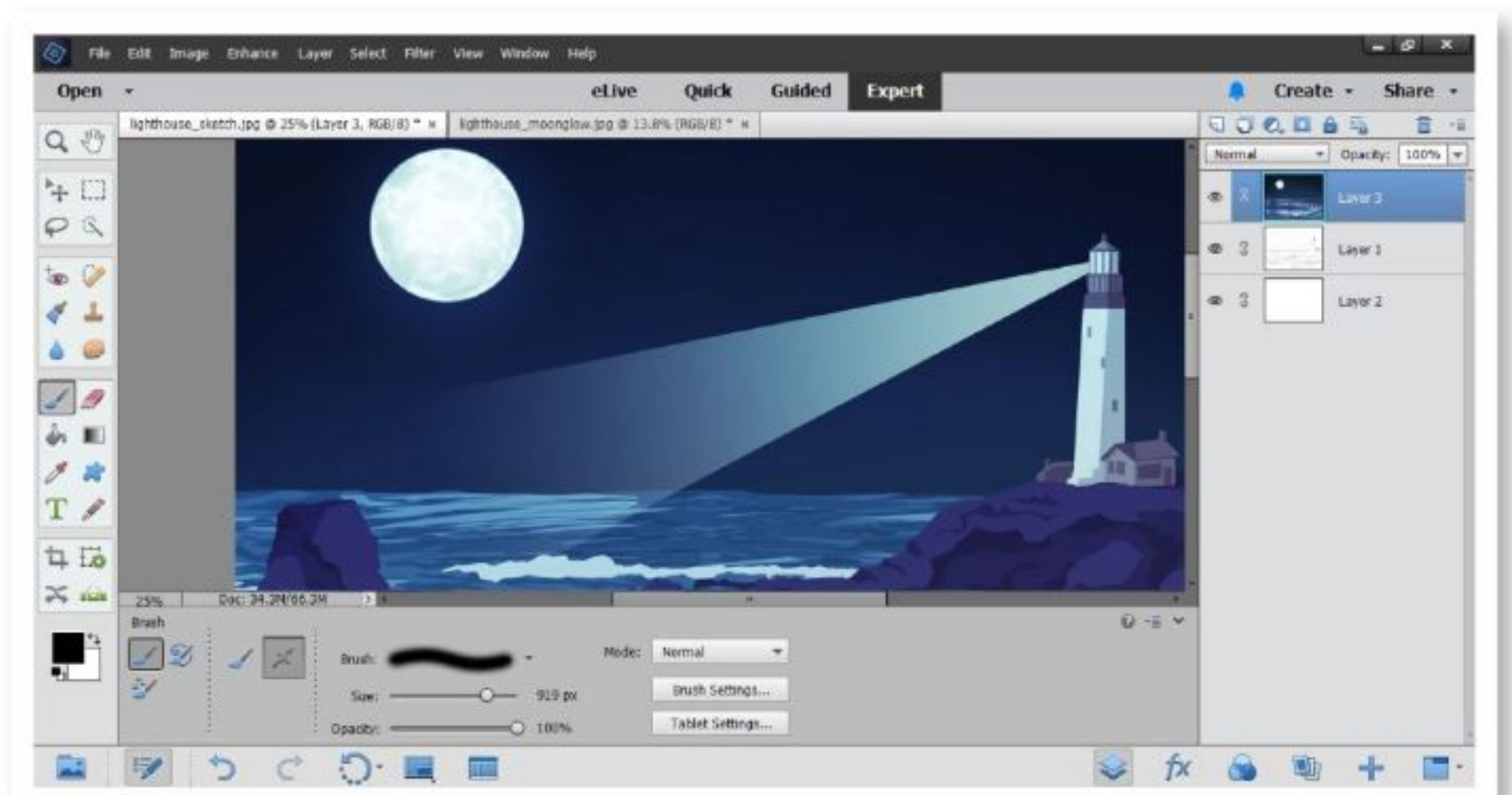
Create a new layer beneath the lighthouse layer, and use the Lasso to draw a straight line from the top of the lighthouse to the horizon line. Select the Gradient tool, and adjust the settings to Foreground to Transparent. Drag from the top of the lighthouse to the horizon line to create a fading light.

EXPERT TIP

Gradient maps

Gradient maps are great for adjusting the colour of a final piece. Set your Foreground swatch to a dark colour and Background swatch to a lighter colour. Create a gradient map by going to Layer > New Adjustment Layer > Gradient Map. This will create a new layer with the colour effects applied. The darker colours of your piece will be enhanced by the first colour you selected, and the lighter colours by the second.

Now experiment with blend modes. Overlay, Color Dodge and Soft Light are good options. Lower the Opacity to 70% or lower, so the gradient map doesn't overpower your piece.



Brushes

130

Crack the Brush tool

Access the contextual workflow brush options in Photoshop

134

Use tools with brushes

Expand your workflow with Photoshop tools and brushes

136

Learn the power of brushes

Unleash your creative side with a range of brushes and panels

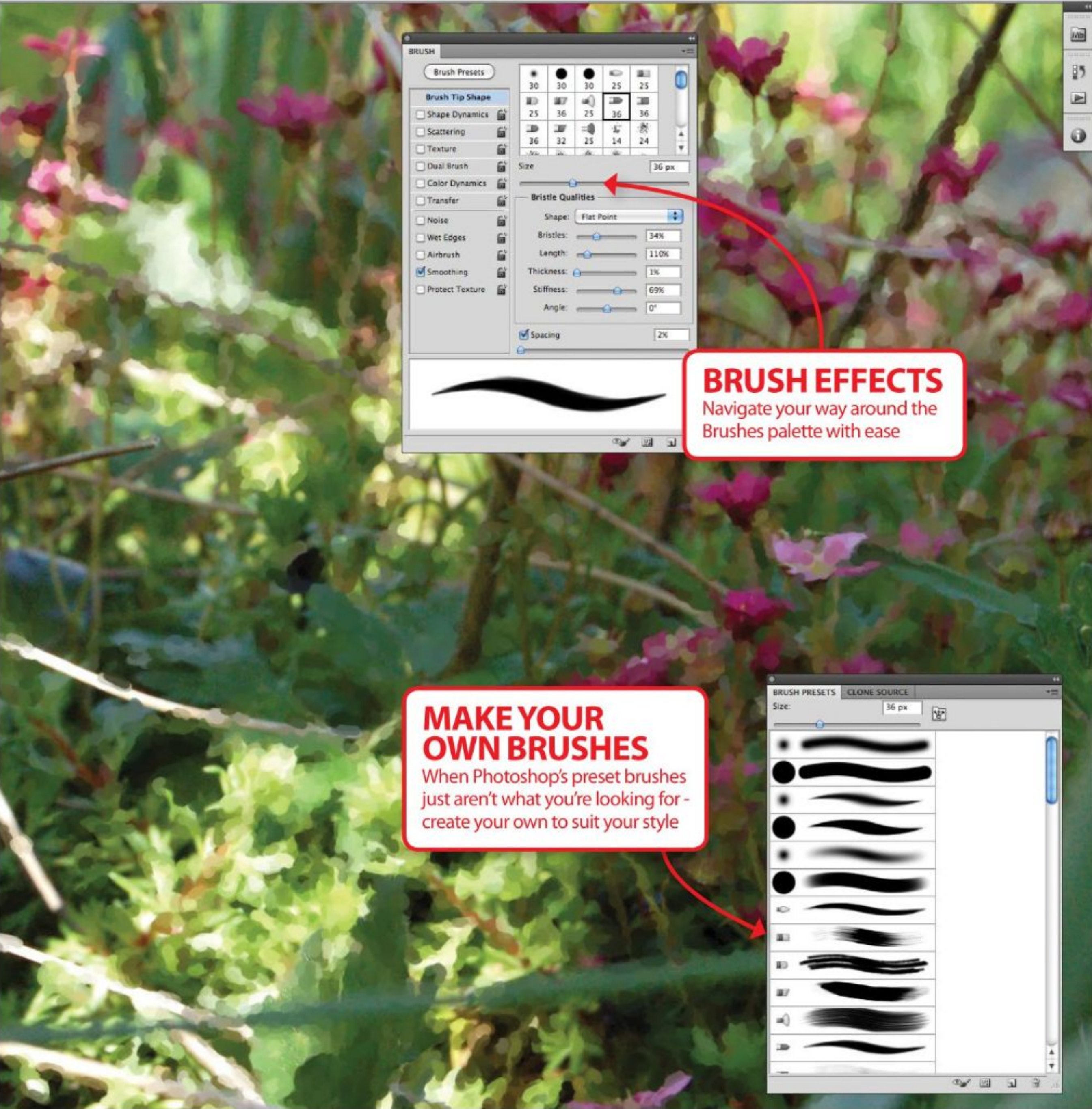
138

Create shapes with negative space

Use brushes to define a creative border using the negative space

"The Brush tool lets you apply digital paint strokes, just as if you were using the real thing!"





BRUSH

Brush Presets

30	30	30	25	25
25	36	25	36	36
36	32	25	14	24

Size: 36 px

Bristle Qualities

Shape: Flat Point

Bristles: 34%

Length: 110%

Thickness: 1%

Stiffness: 69%

Angle: 0°

Spacing: 2%

Brush Tip Shape

- Shape Dynamics
- Scattering
- Texture
- Dual Brush
- Color Dynamics
- Transfer
- Noise
- Wet Edges
- Airbrush
- Smoothing
- Protect Texture

Preview: A black brush stroke showing a soft, wavy edge.

BRUSH EFFECTS
Navigate your way around the Brushes palette with ease

MAKE YOUR OWN BRUSHES
When Photoshop's preset brushes just aren't what you're looking for - create your own to suit your style

BRUSH PRESETS CLONE SOURCE

Size: 36 px

ADJUSTMENTS

Add an adjustment

- Levels Presets
- Curves Presets
- Exposure Presets
- Hue/Saturation Presets
- Black & White Presets
- Channel Mixer Presets
- Selective Color Presets

MASKS

No mask selected

Density: [Slider]

Feather: [Slider]

Refine: Mask Edge... Color Range... Invert

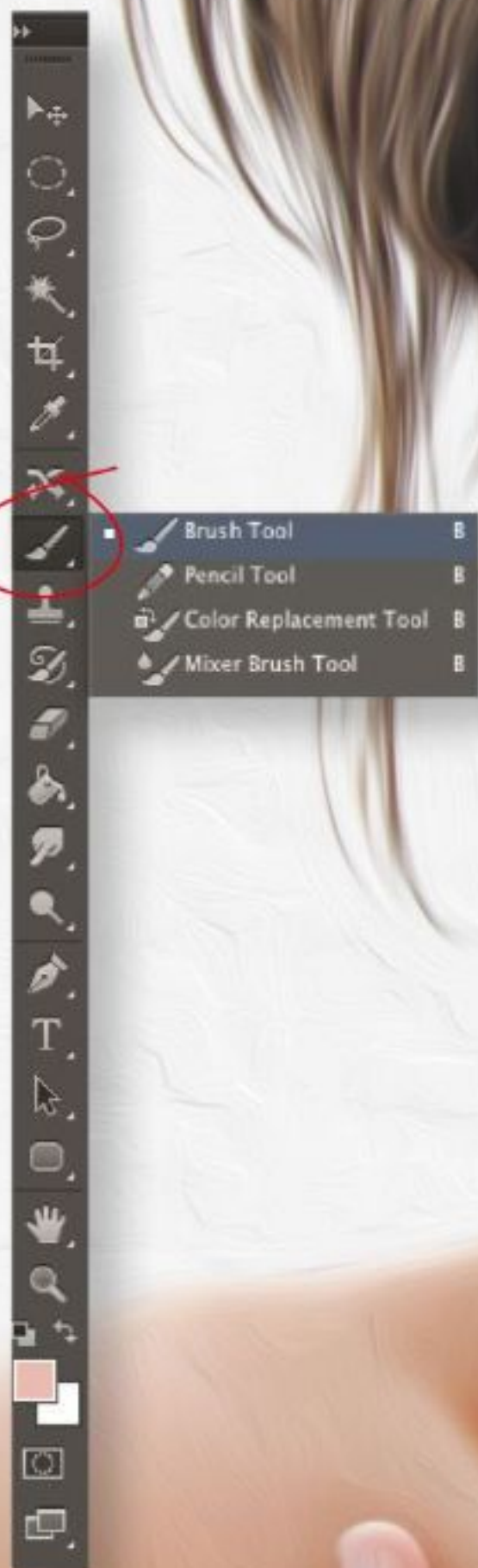
LAYERS CHANNELS PATHS

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: [Icons] Fill: 100%

- Brightness/Co...
- Levels 1
- Curves 1
- Background copy
- Background

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 brush strokes 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).

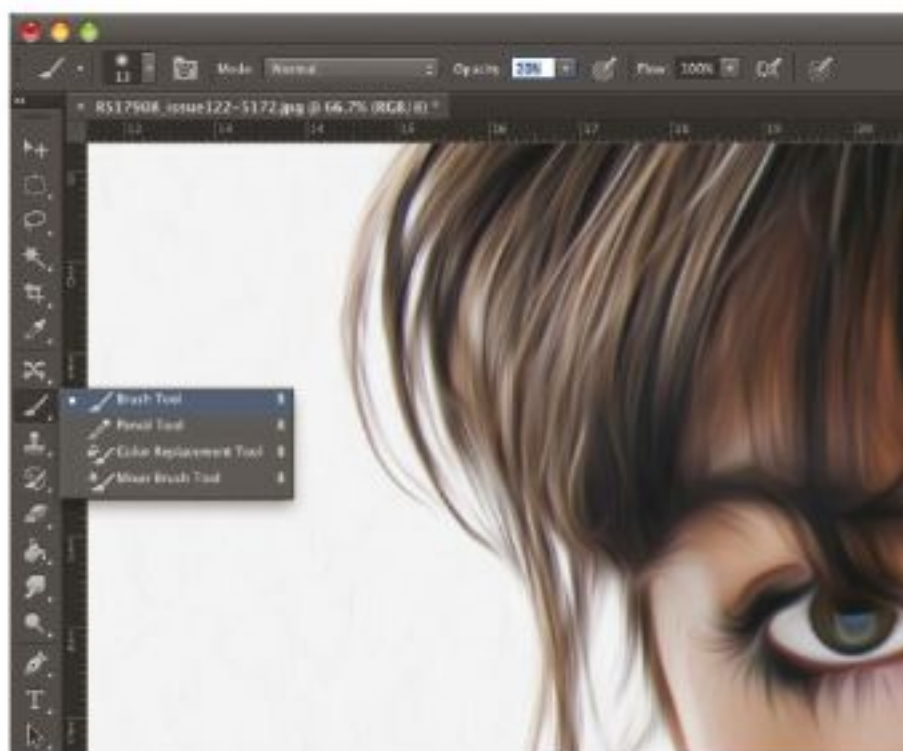
While there are lots of different settings and you can get quite technical, it is easy to pick the Brush tool, set a colour and simply start painting. We'll

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



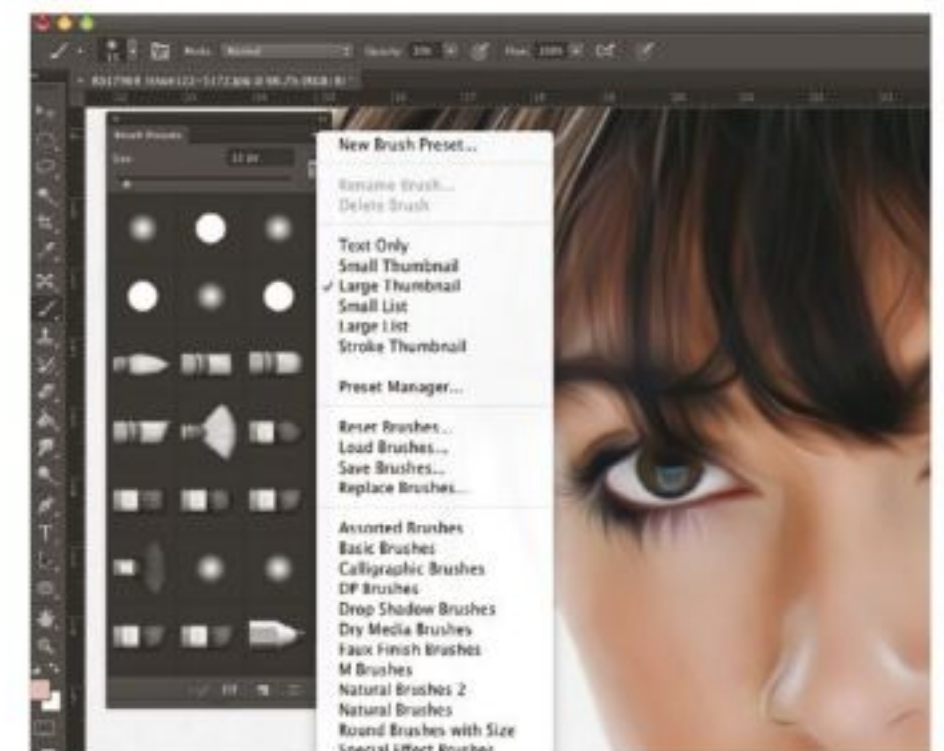
01 The Brush tool

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

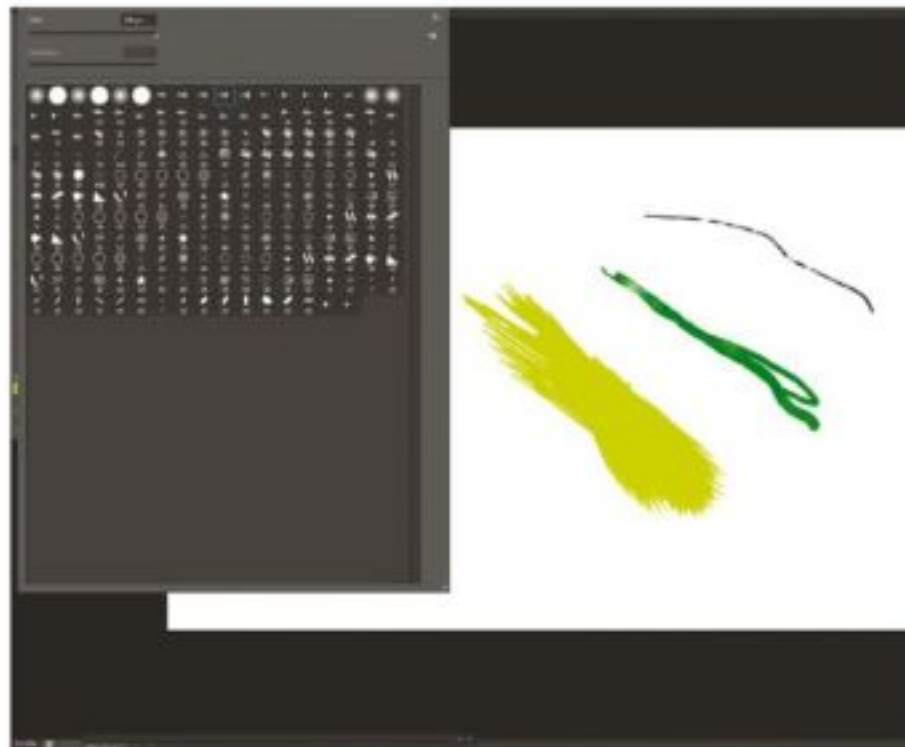
Select the Brush drop-down menu to view a list of brushes. You can choose different brush categories from the drop-down menu to suit your needs.



03 Size matters

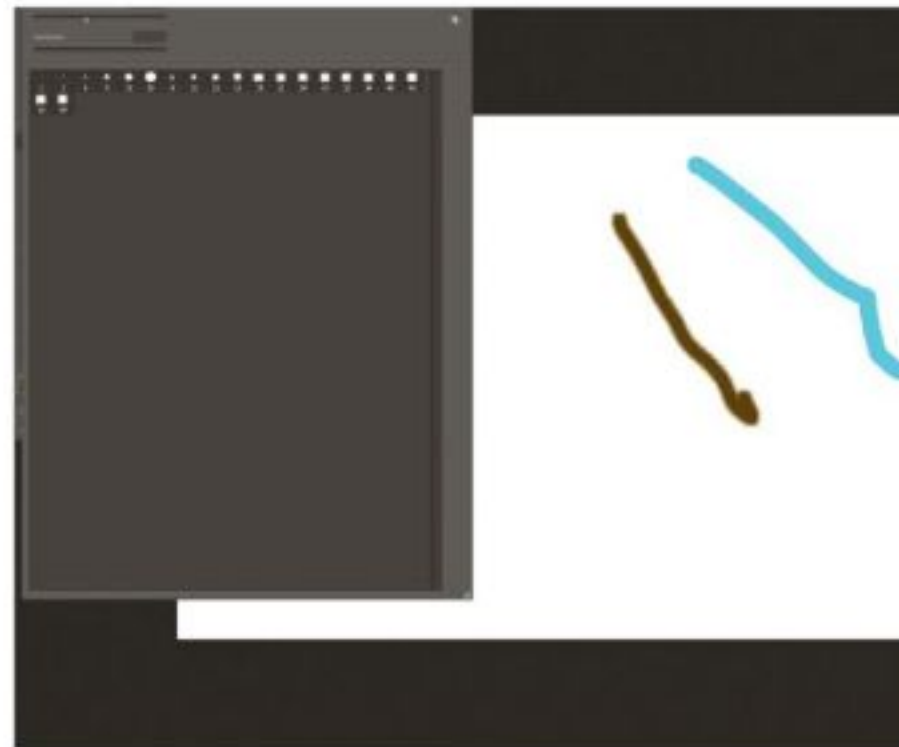
Alter the size of your brush by dragging the Size slider. Alter the opacity of the brush strokes using the Opacity slider too.

Best brushes Get the most out of Photoshop's brushes



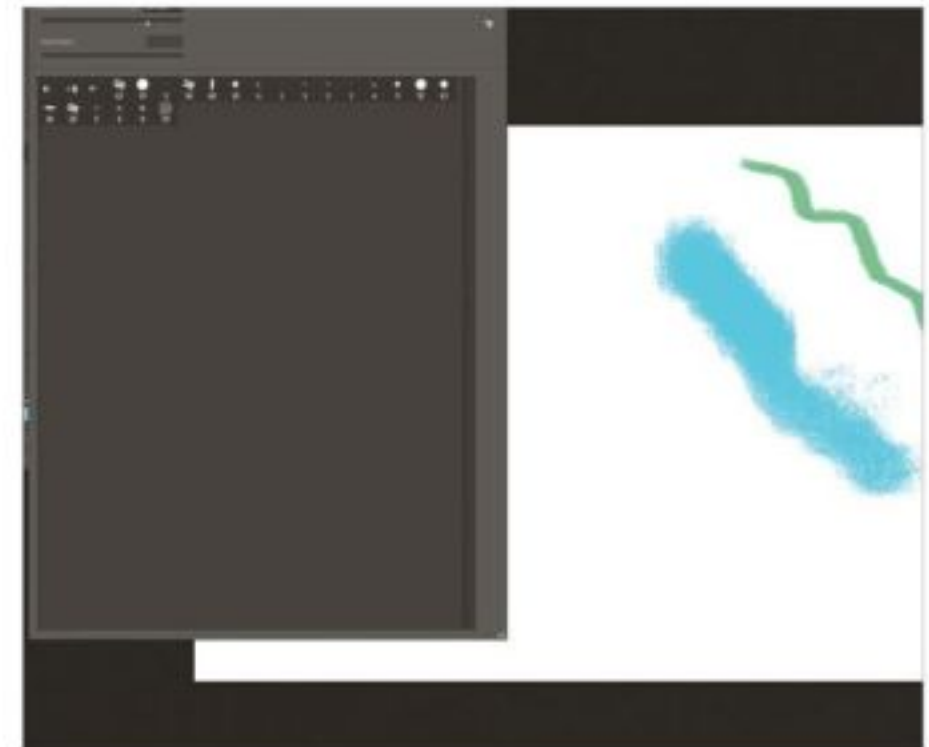
Calligraphic Brushes

The Calligraphic Brushes set contains a number of brushes tailored to emulate calligraphic nib shapes. Set the Angle Jitter to 'Tilt' for maximum effect.



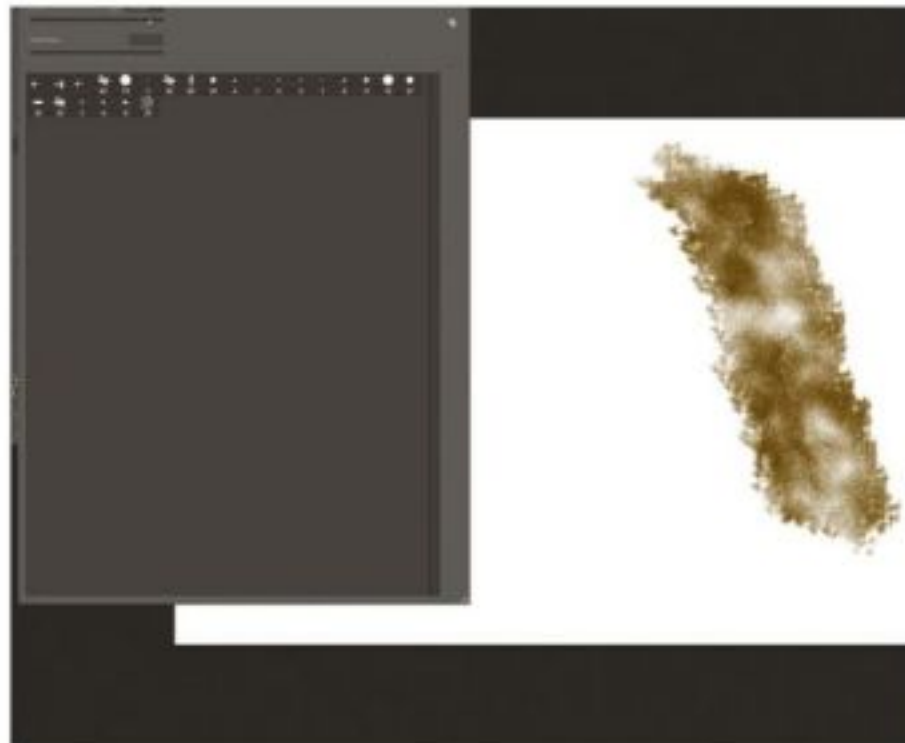
Drop Shadow Brushes

Drop Shadow Brushes provide brushes of both round and square varieties with feathered edges to render shadows with a soft edge to them.



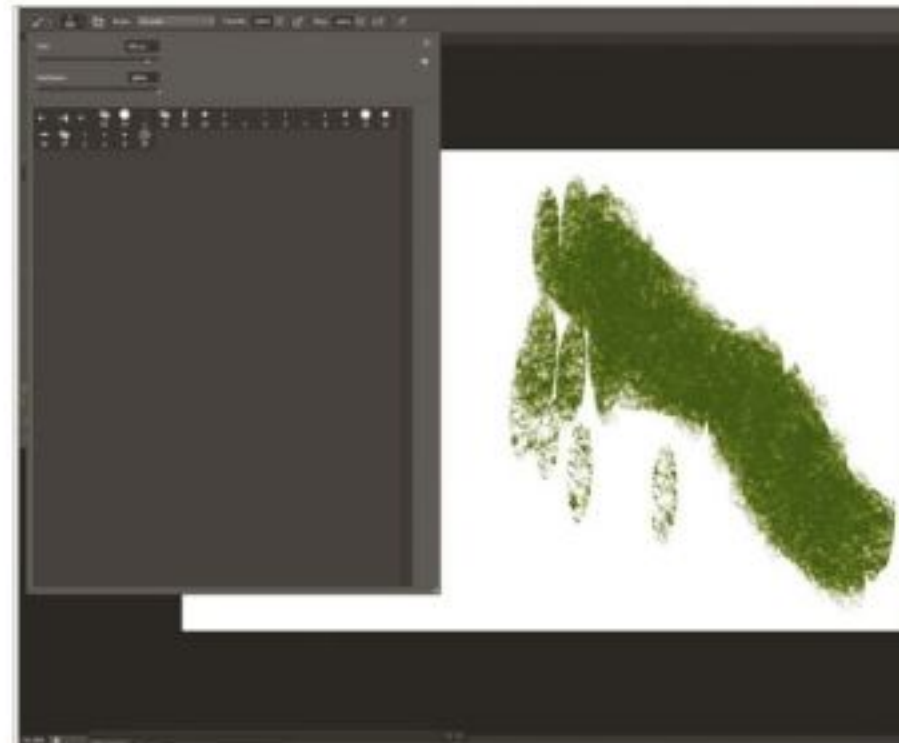
Dry Media Brushes

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.



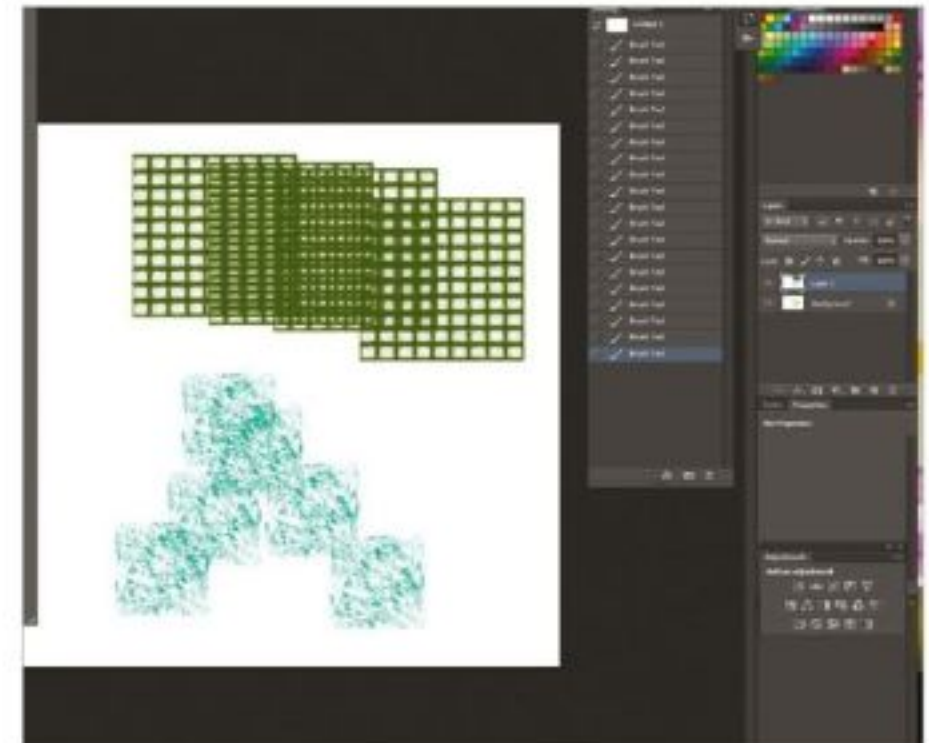
Dry Media Brushes

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.



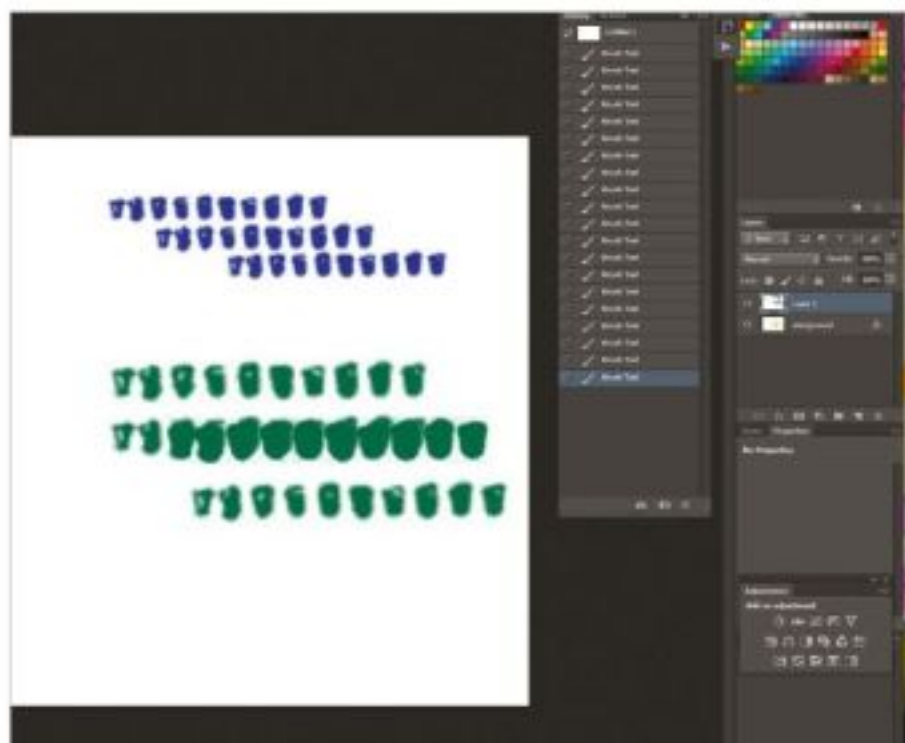
Dry Media Brushes 2

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.



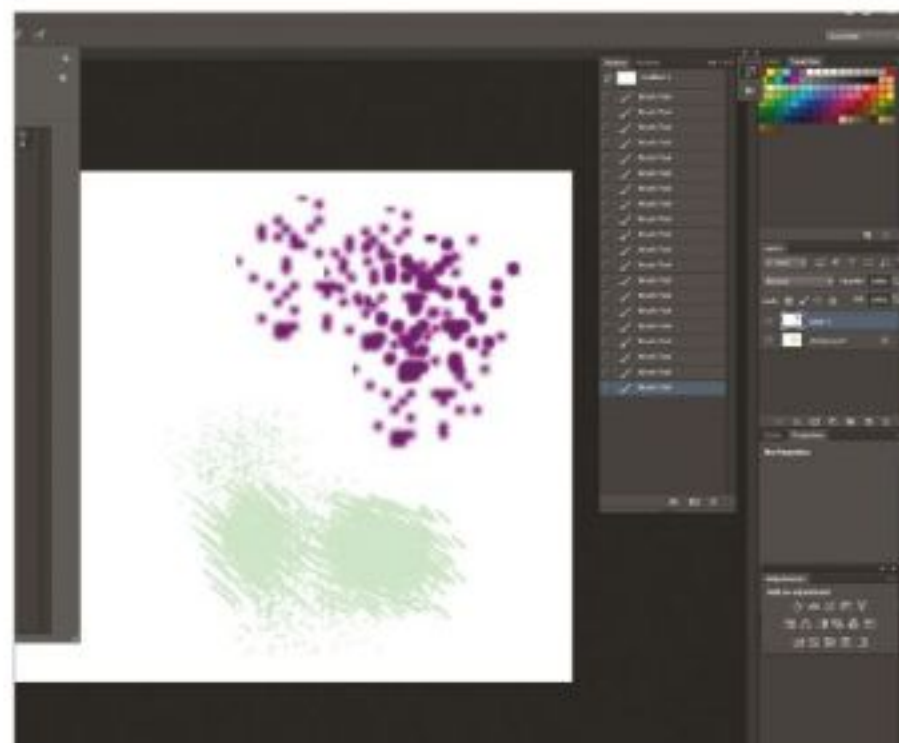
Faux Finish Brushes

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.



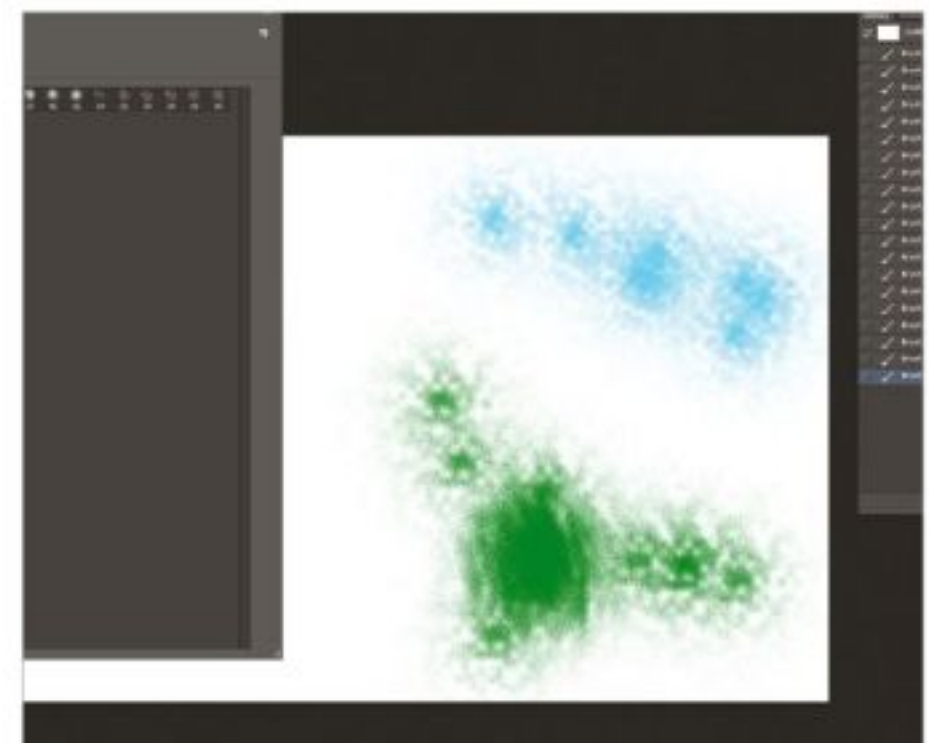
Faux Finish Brushes 2

Toy with the settings of the Texture Comb brushes; with a little experimentation you can create some very expressive brushwork.



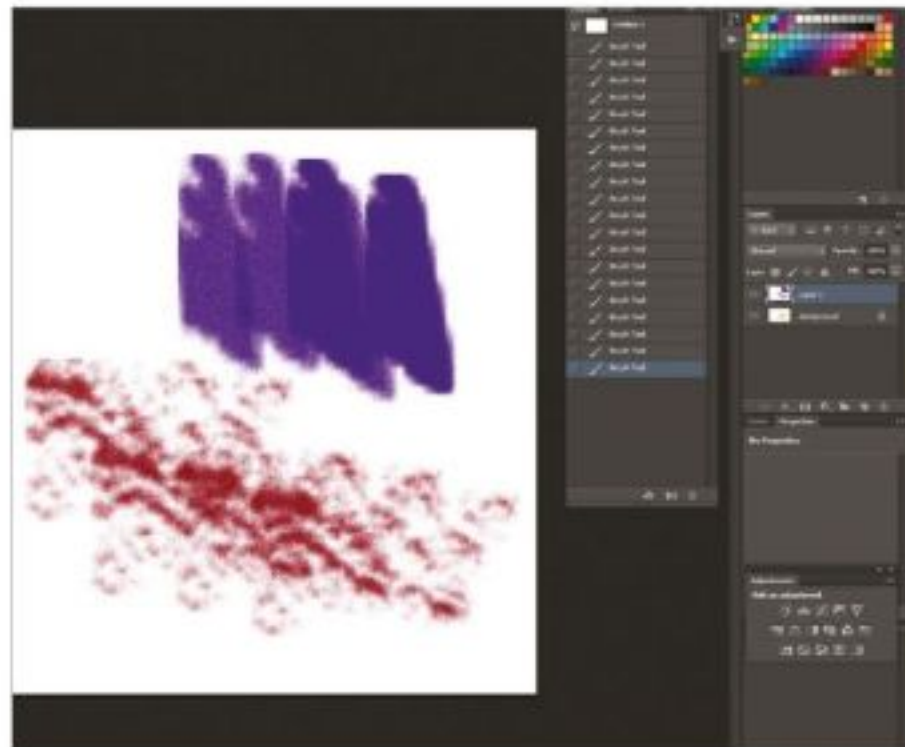
Natural Brushes

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.



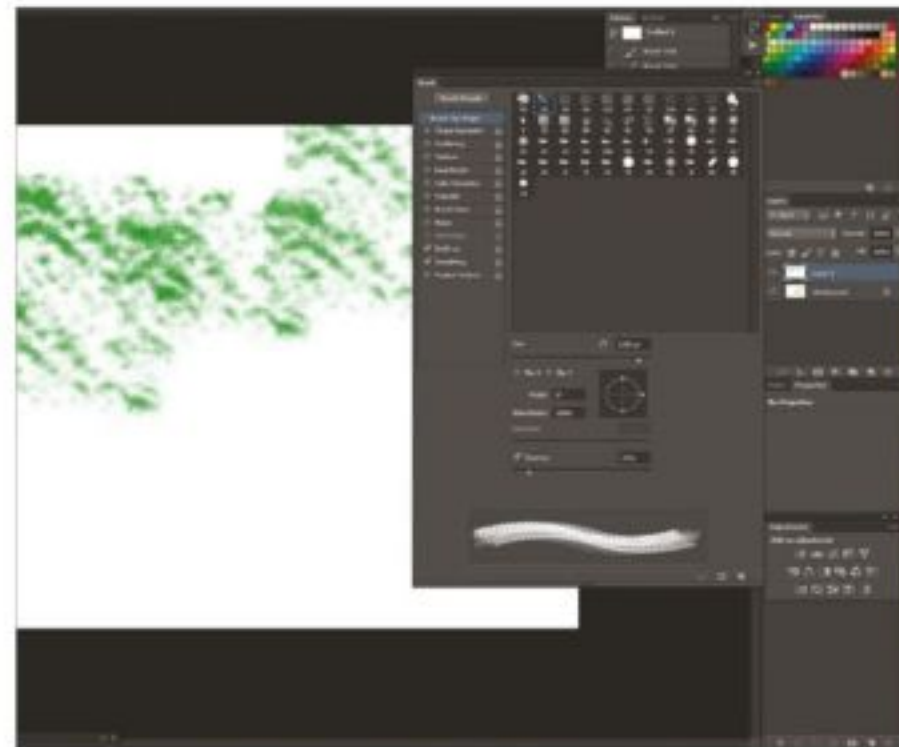
Natural Brushes

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.



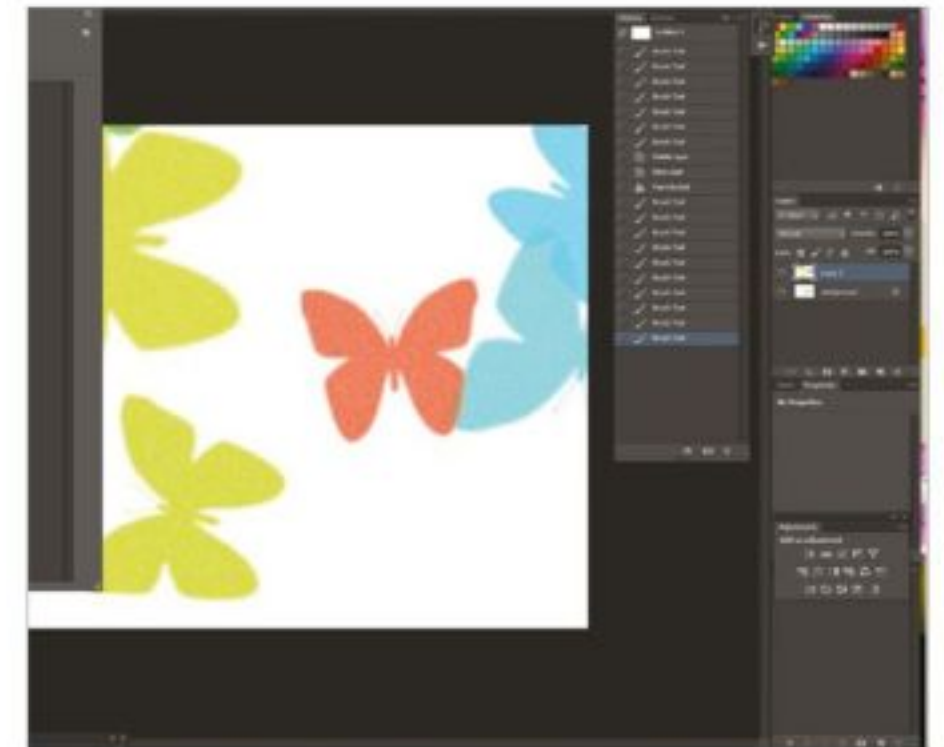
Natural Brushes 2

Natural Brushes 2 collects brushes that have textures built into them. Chalk and Pastel effect brushes are well represented here.



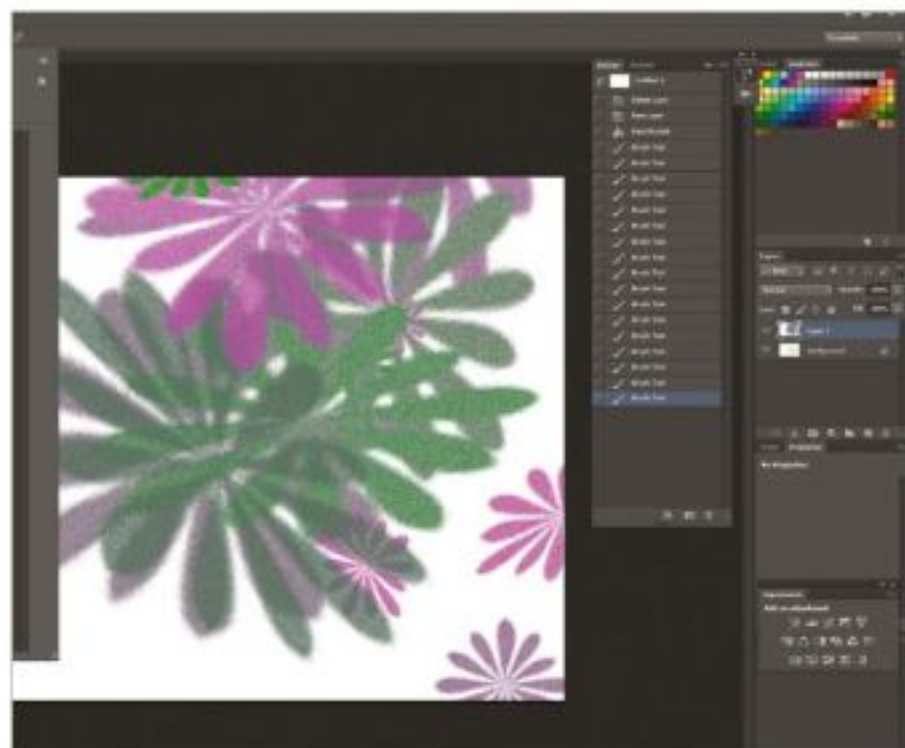
Natural Brushes 2

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.



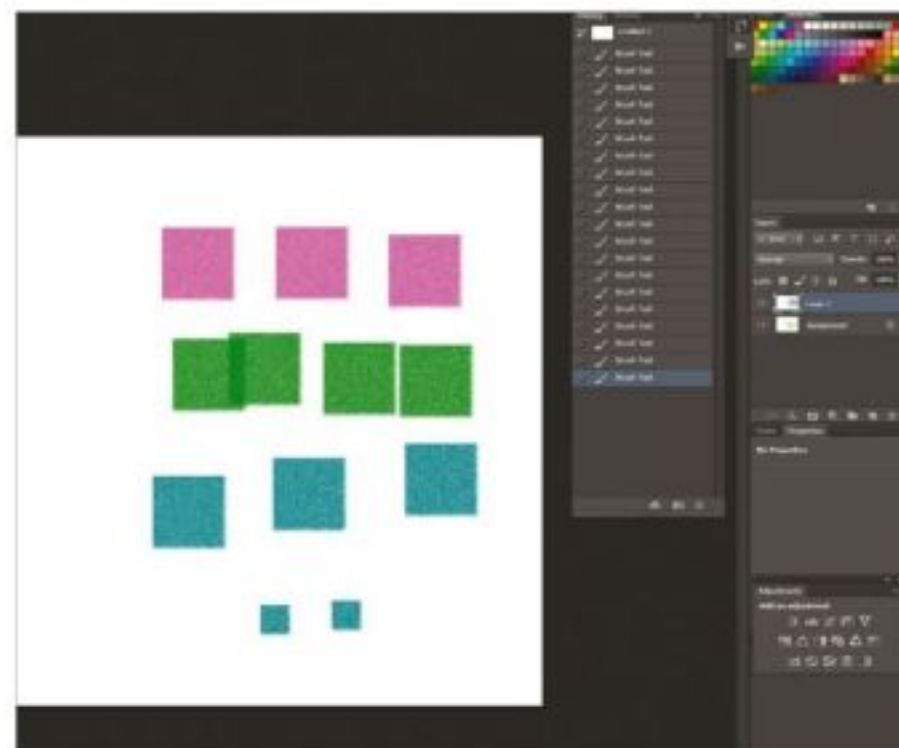
Special Effect Brushes

Other than Drippy Watercolor, which has some painting application, the brushes here are fun but slightly gimmicky.



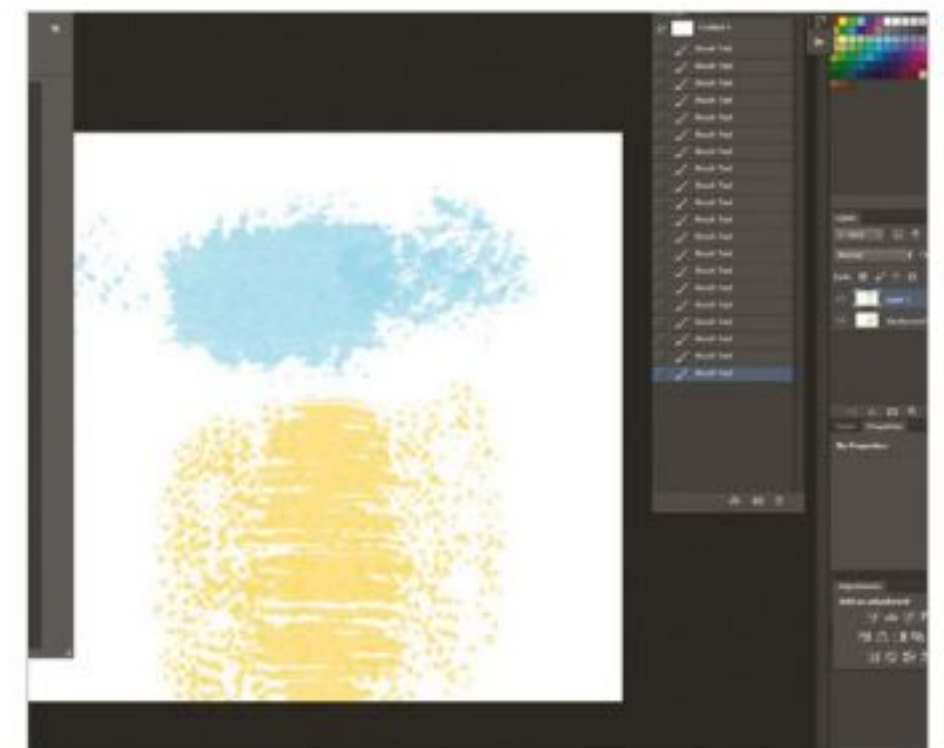
Special Effect Brushes

The Azalea brush switches Foreground/Background colours, while the Butterfly brush's high Hue Jitter randomises them.



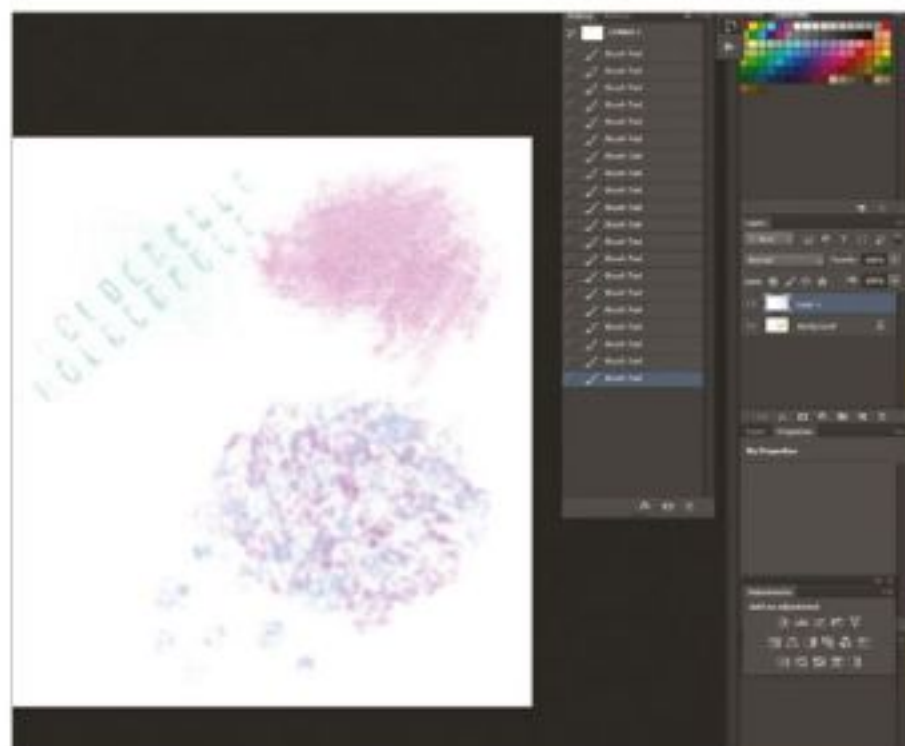
Square Brushes

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.



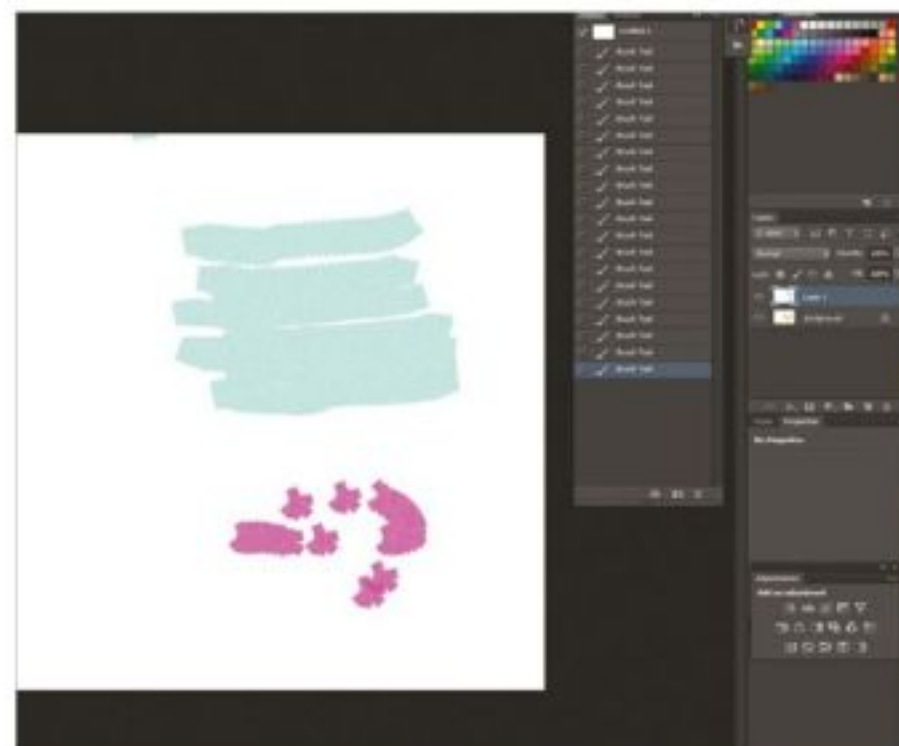
Thick Heavy Brushes

The Thick Heavy Brushes set features five bristle effect brushes that will add a little texture to your brush work.



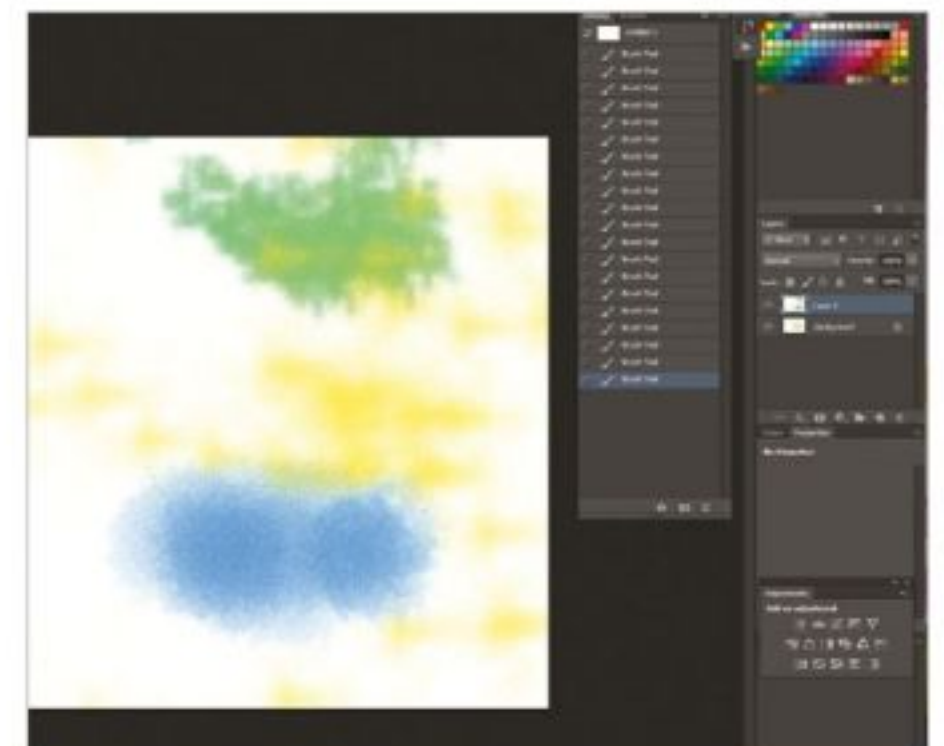
Wet Media Brushes

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.

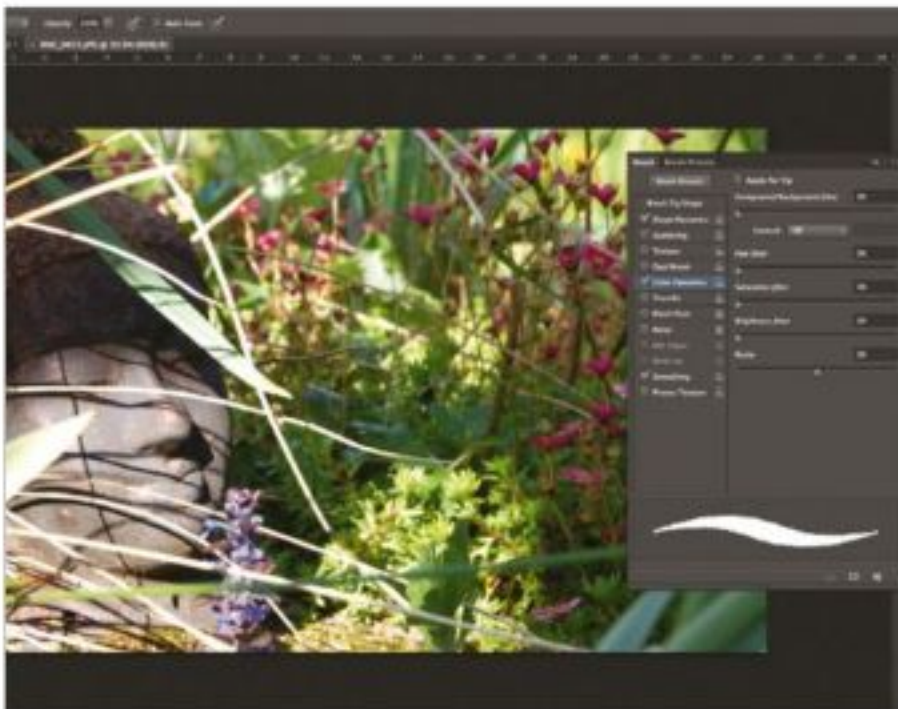
Common elements in the Toolbar that each tool shares are the display of the Brush Tip shape and size and the brush's Blending Mode. There will also be an icon to enable your graphics tablet to override controls set in the Brushes panel.

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



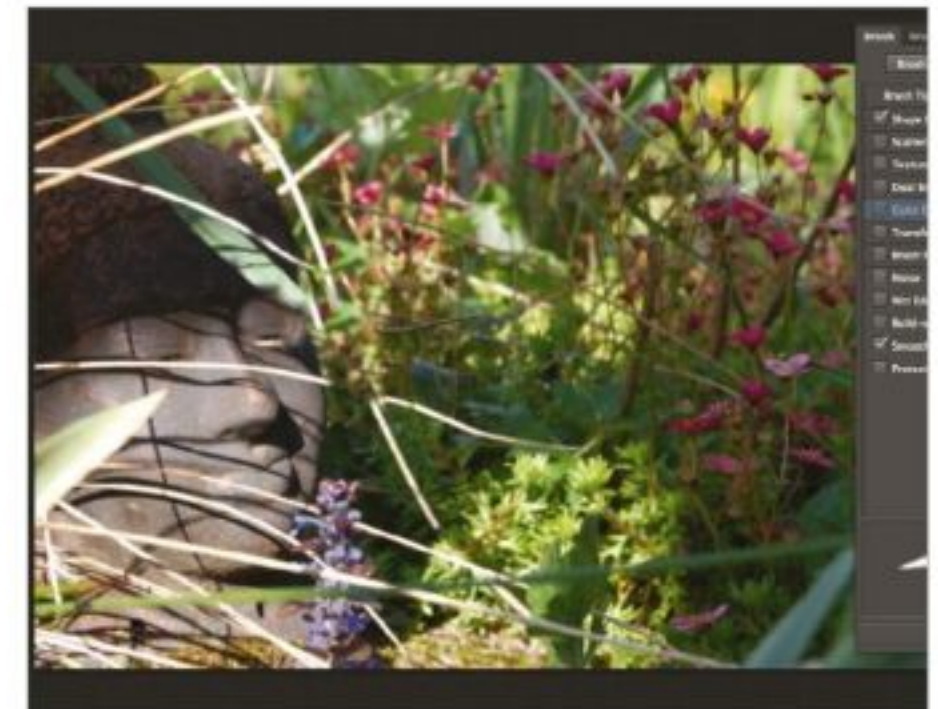
Hard Mix

The Pencil and Brush are almost identical but the Pencil creates hard-edged Aliased strokes and the Brush makes smoother Anti-Aliased brush strokes.



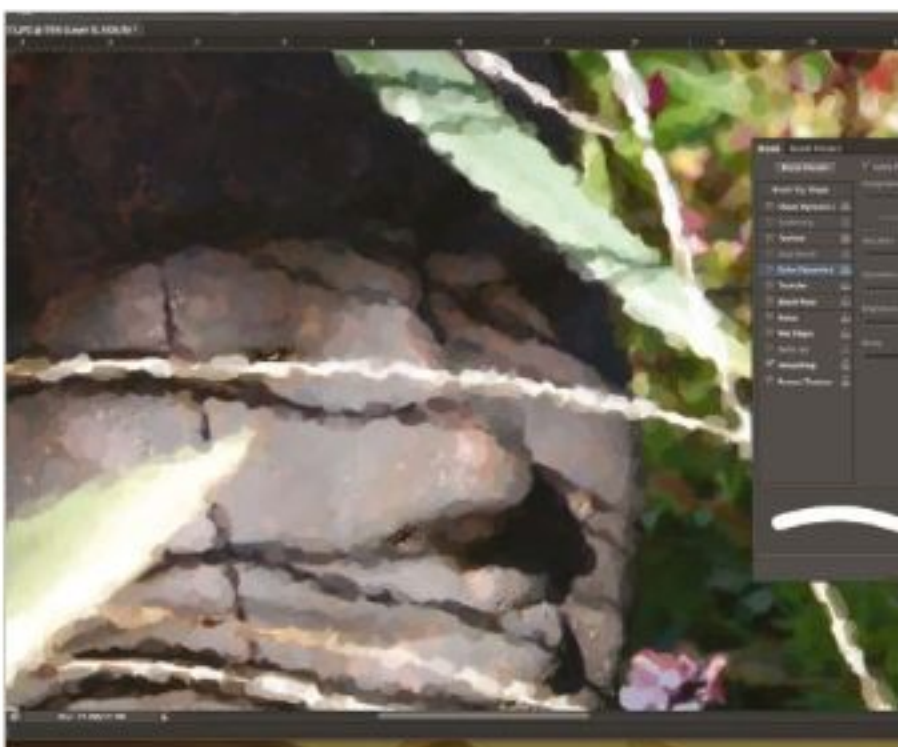
The Clone Stamp

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.



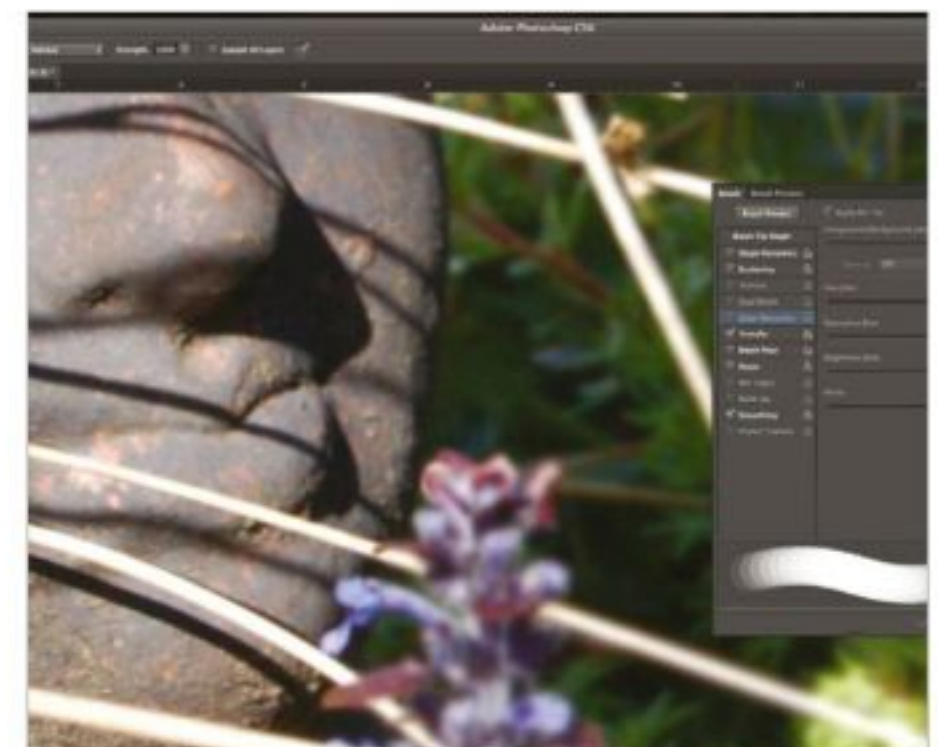
Art History Brush

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.



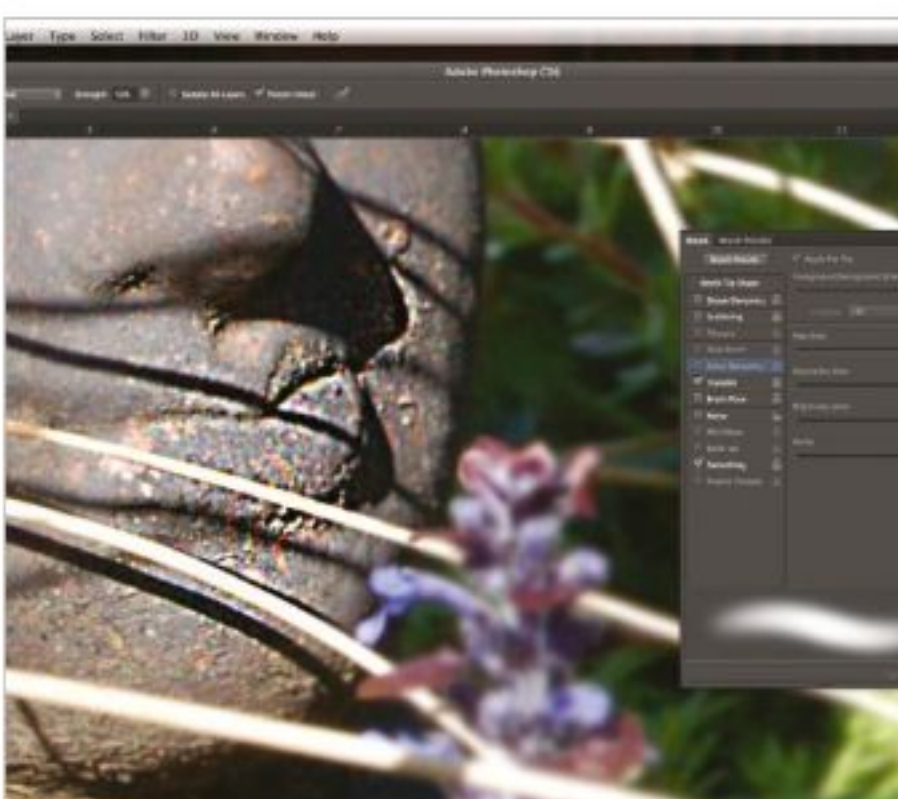
Erasers

Used for both corrections and special effects, changing your brush type and Opacity will give you a range of appearances to remove solid pixels.



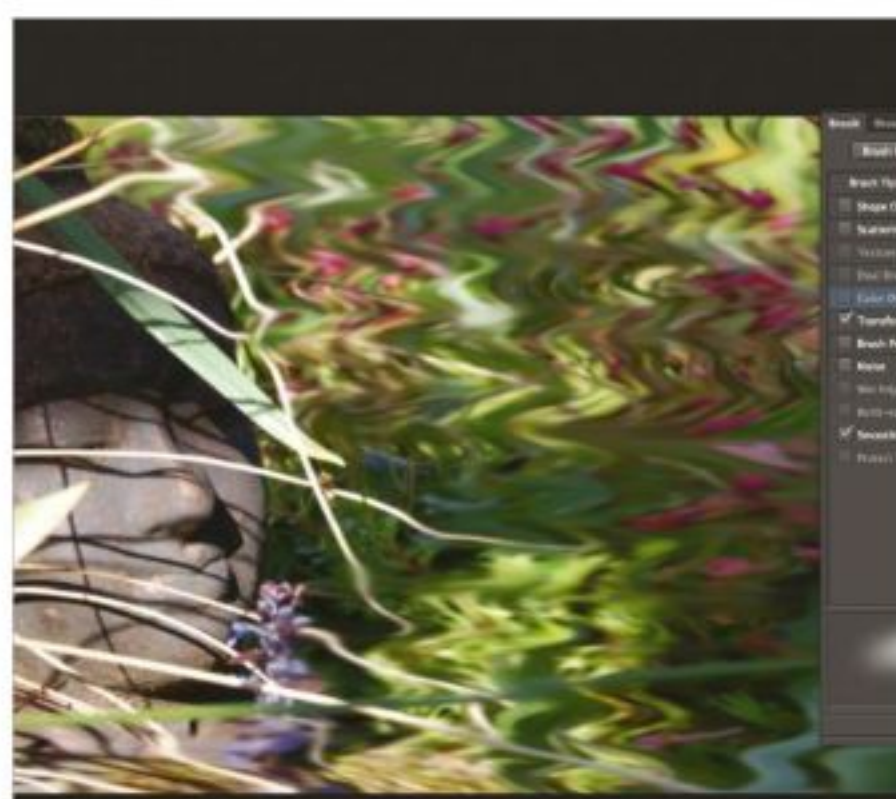
Blur

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 ADJUSTMENTS

Hit the Fill Layer icon and add adjustments such as Levels and Hue/Saturation to enhance colour and tone.



Discover the power of brushes

ORIGINAL



Unleash your artistic side with a range of brushes in Elements

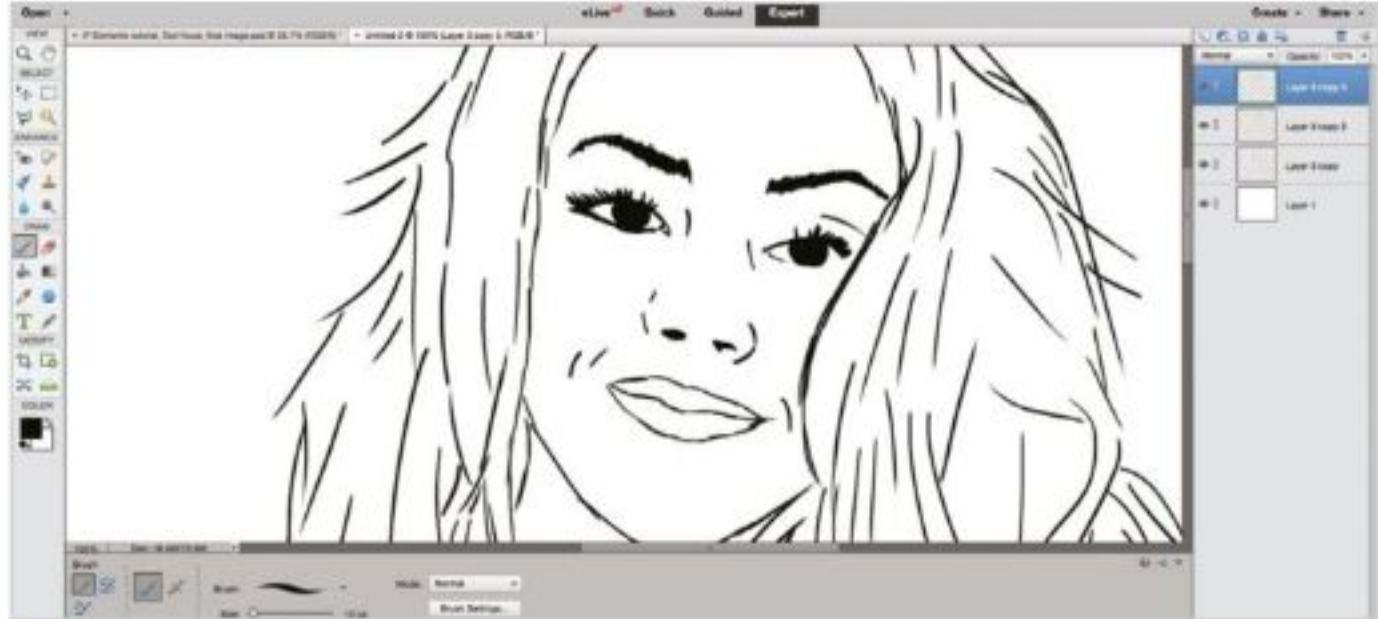
Brushes are incredibly adaptable, lending themselves to a wide range of different projects, from masking in photo manipulations to photo editing. Because they can be used in so many ways, it's important to understand how to get the most from them.

While it definitely helps to be a talented sketcher or artist, you don't have to be particularly artistically inclined to have fun with the different brushes in Elements; custom brushes especially only need you to click them once to apply a painted effect, and there really is nothing stopping you from inserting a photo into Elements on a lower layer and drawing over the top of it with one of your brushes.

One of the best things about brushes is how they can be customised. You can change almost anything about brushes, from the blend mode to the roundness of the stroke itself, meaning that there is so much potential for the style you want to create. It's easy to make watercolours with a softer, low-opacity brush, and it's possible to create a pencil effect if you find a thin brush that has a little fade added to it.

Digital paintings are one of the hardest things to become a master of in Elements, and learning the basics is useful when expanding upon what you can create in other projects. Check out our top tips for creating simple digital paintings, along with the settings you need to take full control of your pictures.

Create digital paintings Build on a blank canvas with different brushes



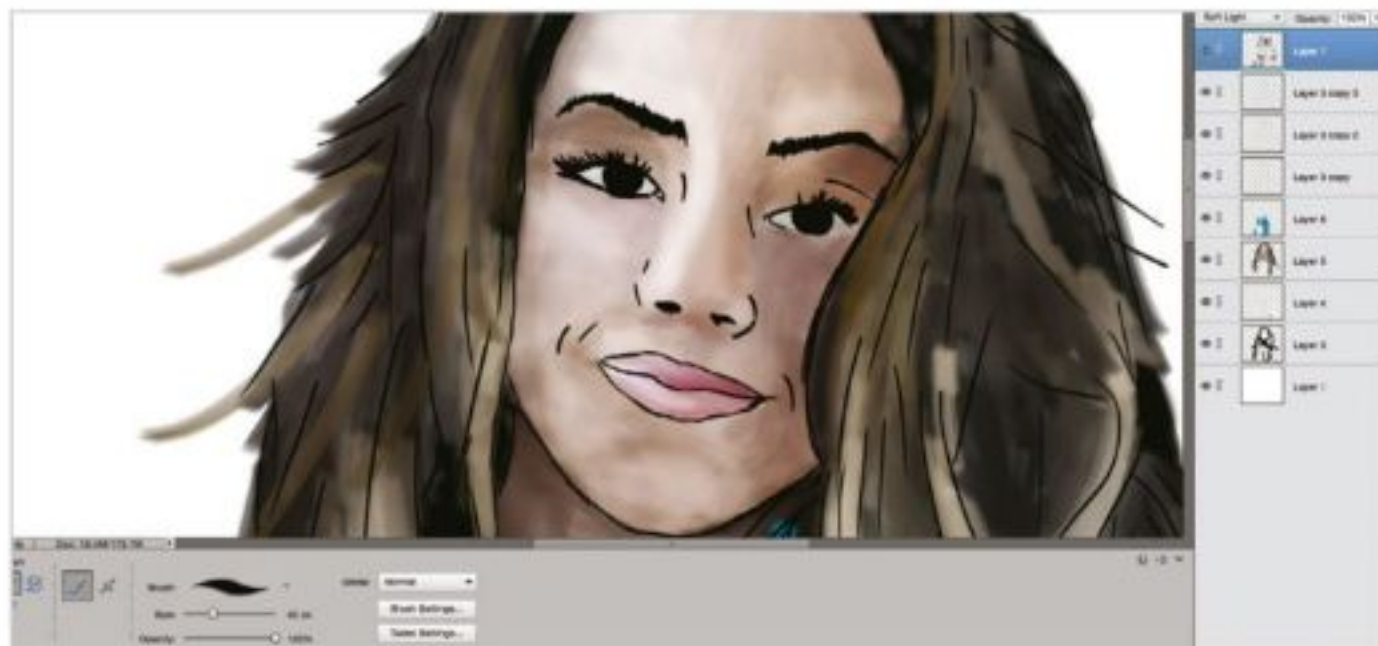
01 Start by outlining

Hit B to select a brush, then click on the example brush stroke icon. The most basic brushes are the small, hard ones found at the start of the Brush menu. These ones are fantastic for outlining and making details; these are the brushes you should create the basic sketch for your picture with.



02 Move to bigger brushes

Scroll through the brushes to find more on offer. Bigger brushes such as the Chalk brush are good for shading and colouring in your work. Using these brushes at a low opacity can be useful so that you can blend your work as you go. Use the swatches to choose a colour before applying.



03 Apply soft brushes

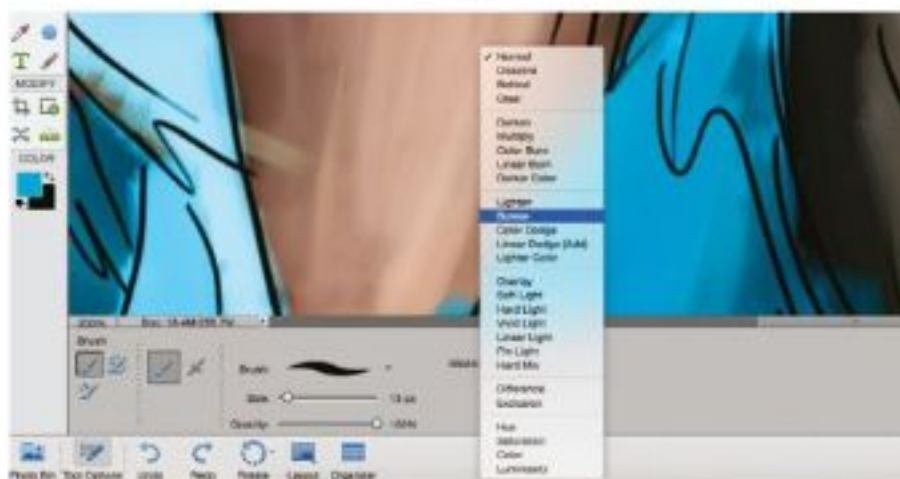
Alter the hardness via Brush Settings. Soft brushes are good for a whole range of projects. If you create a new, Soft Light layer above your other brush strokes though, brushing soft black and white onto your project can be a good way of adding highlights and shadows to your work.



04 Use custom brushes

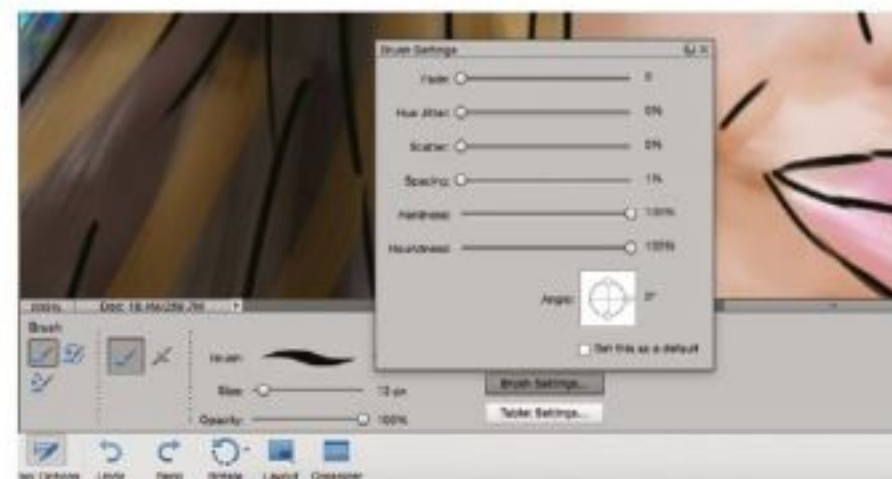
You can find custom .abr brush files online to use in your work. Splatter brushes are popular, and there's a selection on the FileSilo, as well as a pack included in the resources. They can help to brighten up your image; just drag a .abr file into Elements to add them.

Further tips How can you get more out of brushes from the settings?



Blend modes

Click on the blend mode drop-down menu to change the mode of your brush and how it reacts to your work when you start using it. Changing it can either lighten or darken your image as you stroke. Alternatively, brush onto different layers and then tweak them for more control over the entire block of colour that you're brushing.



Brush settings

The brush settings are where you can change anything about your brush from size to shape. There are options for Spacing, Roundness, and Fade, so it's worth considering these settings before trying to stroke onto images. Remember to get in the habit of double-checking the settings to make sure you're using the brush you want to.



Tablet settings

Using a graphics tablet can improve the way you use brushes. If you're a budding digital artist, it's a good idea to invest in one. Be sure to use the tablet settings, which are just below Brush Settings, to set controls before you begin drawing, because you can set the tablet to control aspects such as Size, Opacity, Scatter, Jitter and Roundness.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Definition from emptiness

Even though we've only painted in the tiger's stripes, a recognisable image has still been formed.

Create shape with negative space

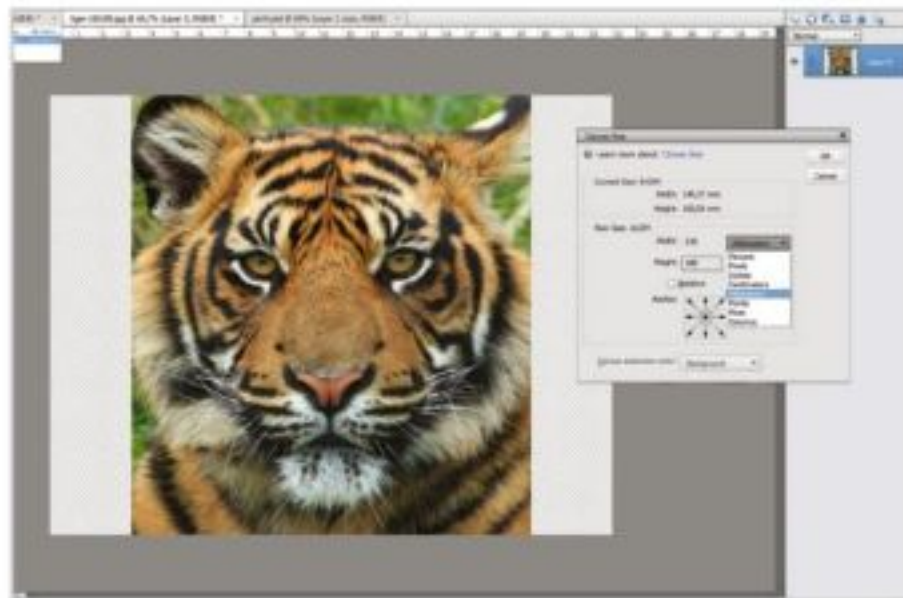
Use brushes creatively to produce a dramatic piece of art

Negative space is any area of your canvas that isn't a subject or an object. Creating art in this style takes the space around an object and uses that to define the shape, rather than the details or shading of the positive version. Negative-space artwork often takes the form of silhouette – simple or monotone colour schemes, which brings the main focus on the form. Here we are defining the entire tiger using only its stripes, letting your brain fill in the details that aren't there. This tutorial covers a lot of the tools and features found inside Elements to give your negative space even more drama. You'll use

the Brush tool to paint contrasting eye detail, filters to neaten your sketching, as well as clipping masks to overlay an ethereal space image. Another large focus is the use of custom brushes. You will download some free paint-style brushes and use them to create quick but dramatic effects. Finally, layers play a big part in this tutorial. They are crucial to keeping everything editable, and also mean you can change your base drawing whenever you like, so you can continue to get creative and try out this technique with anything else! You can also change the overlaid image to add a completely different effect to the same drawing.

Paint the space

Turn any photograph into a negative-space masterpiece with brushes



01 Set up your canvas

Enter Expert mode from the top toolbar. File>Open (Cmd/Ctrl+O) 'Tiger.jpg' from the FileSilo. Double-click the thumbnail on the right to turn it into a layer. Go to Image>Resize>Canvas Size and change the canvas to 230mm x 180mm.



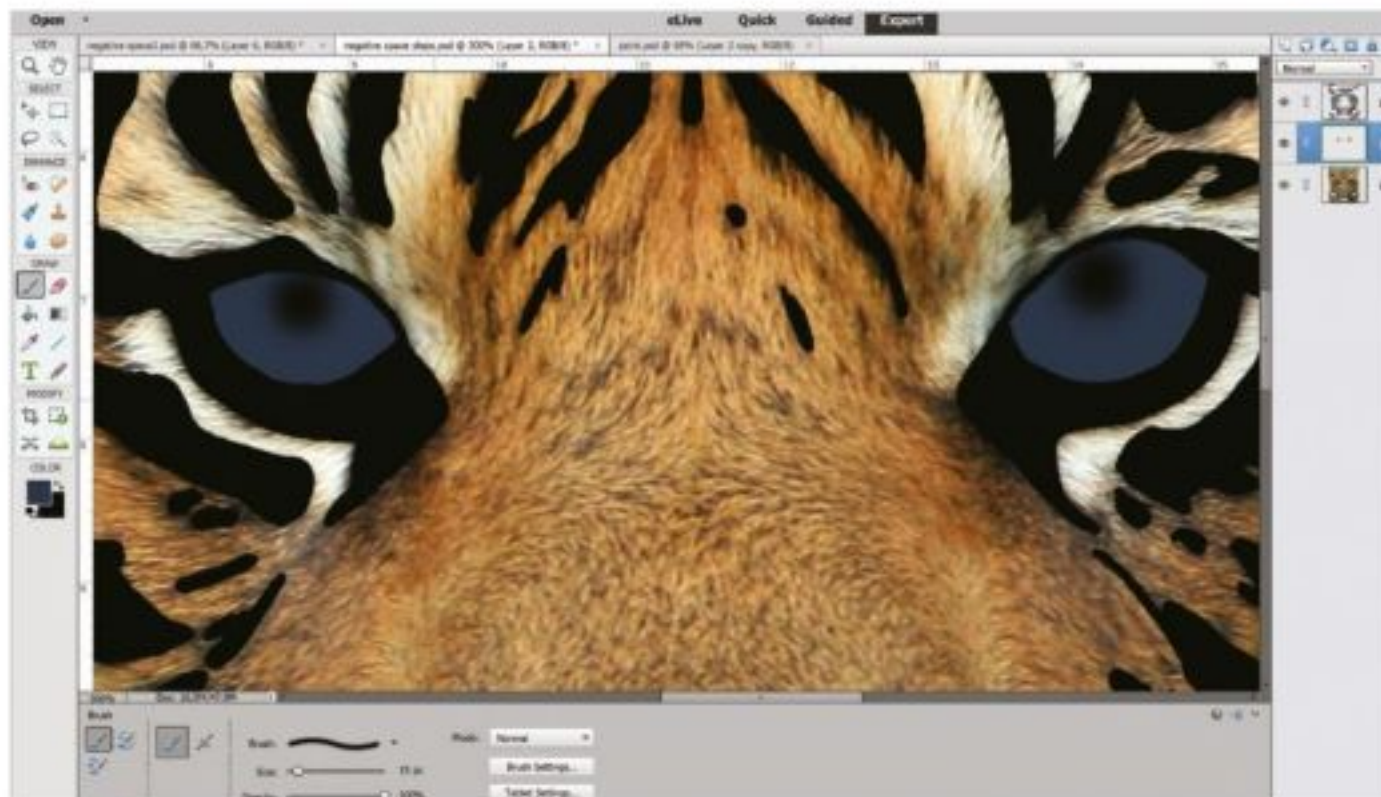
02 Start painting stripes

Create a new layer above the photo (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N). Select the paint brush (B). On the new layer, paint over the tiger's stripes. You don't have to be neat, but keep your shapes blocky and thick. Ensure your brush is set to 100% Hardness.



03 Finish the stripes

Continue until you have painted over all the stripes in black. Include some of the larger areas or dark fur around the face and ears as well. Keep small details to a minimum, and for now don't draw in the pupils.



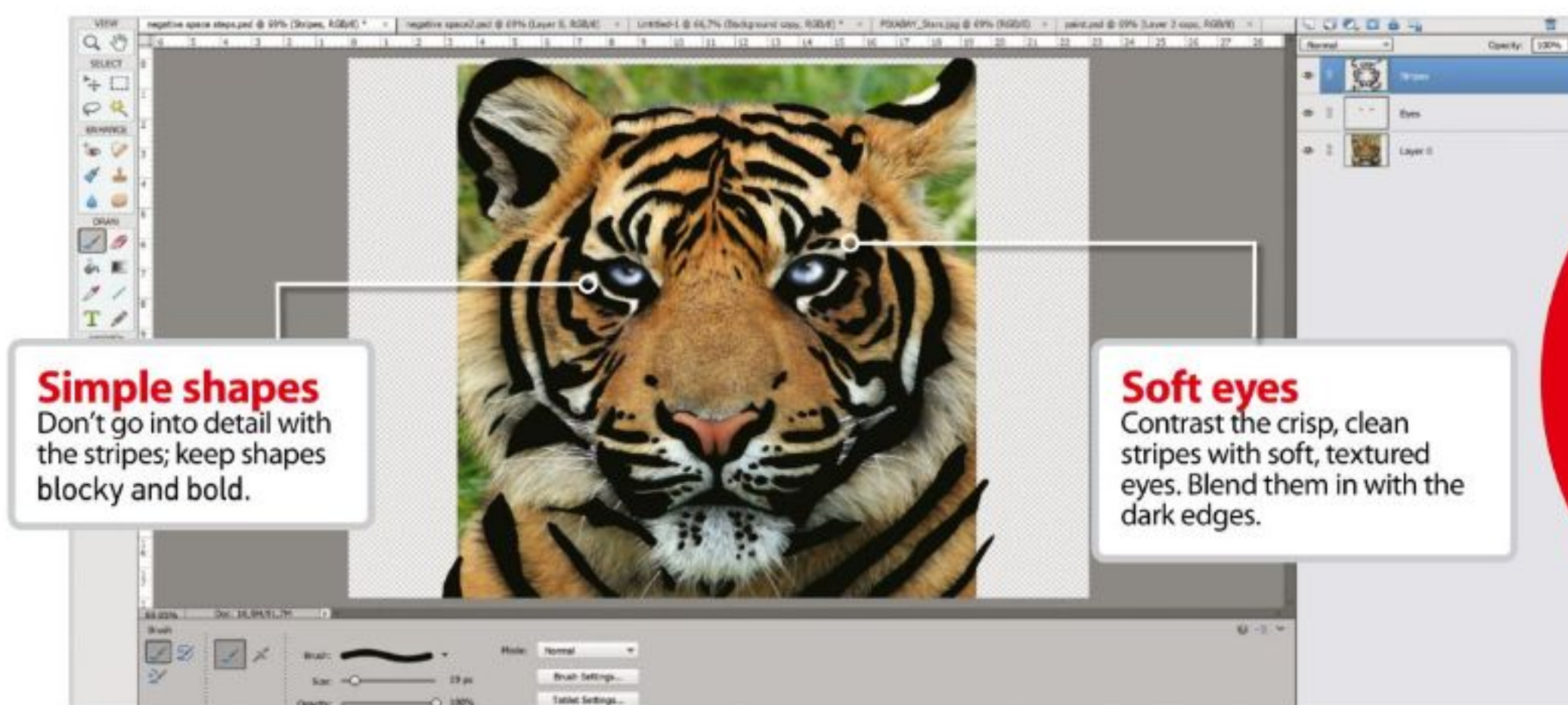
04 Paint the eyes

Create a new layer and drag it under the stripes layer. Select the Brush (B) and change Hardness to 0%. Select and change the Foreground colour to #2c3a51. Paint inside the eye. Change your brush to black and paint in a soft pupil.



05 Add eye detail

Make your Brush Size 2px, Opacity around 20%. Using a mix of black and white, add shading to the eyes. Be patient; build up the shading over many passes. Keep your strokes in a radial pattern to try to imitate the texture of an iris.



Simple shapes
Don't go into detail with the stripes; keep shapes blocky and bold.

Soft eyes
Contrast the crisp, clean stripes with soft, textured eyes. Blend them in with the dark edges.

What does it mean?

BRUSH HARDNESS – Inside Brush Settings is a slider for Hardness. This refers to how 'hard' or 'soft' the edges of a brush are; 100% is completely hard, with a crisp edge – perfect for the stripes here; 0% is completely soft – great for shading and blending while colouring the eyes in this image. Play with the values!

Brushes



06 Fill the background

Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N). Fill it white using the Paint Bucket (K) and drag underneath the stripes layer. Select them both by holding Cmd/Ctrl and right-clicking>Merge Layers. Use the Eraser to remove the white that covers the eyes. This gives us a crisp black/white edge.



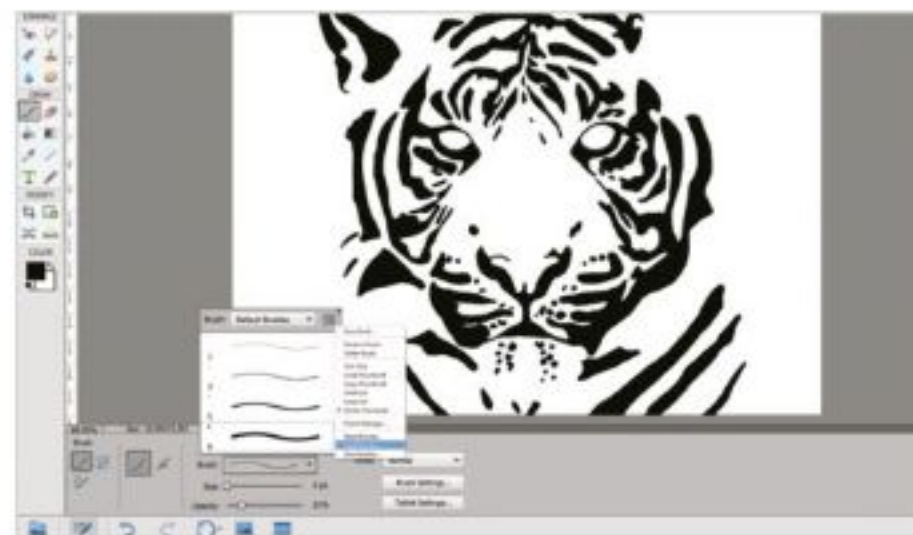
07 Smooth out the stripes

Make sure your colours are set to black for the foreground and white for the background. To give the hand-drawn stripes a smoother look, select the stripes layer and go to Filter>Filter Gallery. Select Cutout from the Artistic section and enter: Levels: 2, Edge Simplicity: 4 and Edge Fidelity: 2.



08 Add the Stamp filter

Click New Layer at the bottom of the filters window. Go to Stamp inside Sketch filters. Set Light/Dark balance 32 and Smoothness 7. Hit OK. If Foreground/Background colours aren't black and white, cancel, change, and redo steps 7 and 8.



09 Load custom brushes

Under Freebies at blog.spoongraphics.co.uk, search and download '12 Free High Res Dry Brush Stroke Photoshop Brushes'. In Elements, select the Brush (B) and click the arrow next to brush preview. Click the icon in the right-hand corner, select Load Brushes, then find the .abr file you downloaded.



10 Paint in brush strokes

Create a new layer above the stripes. Add some 'painted' texture to your illustration. Inside the Brush Settings menu you can rotate the brush to match up with the angles of the stripes. Click once rather than dragging, to keep all the custom brush detail.

Organising your brushes

Custom brushes are a great way to get cool effects fast, and there is no limit to the amount you can install. Access different brush sets via the drop-down at the top of the brush preview window. You can change how you view the brushes. You can also open the Preset Manager, which is a useful place to rename and organise brushes – invaluable if you have some favourites or want to create your own sets.

Subtle details

Use the custom brushes sparingly here, creating subtle additions to the larger blocks of paint.

Matching Angles

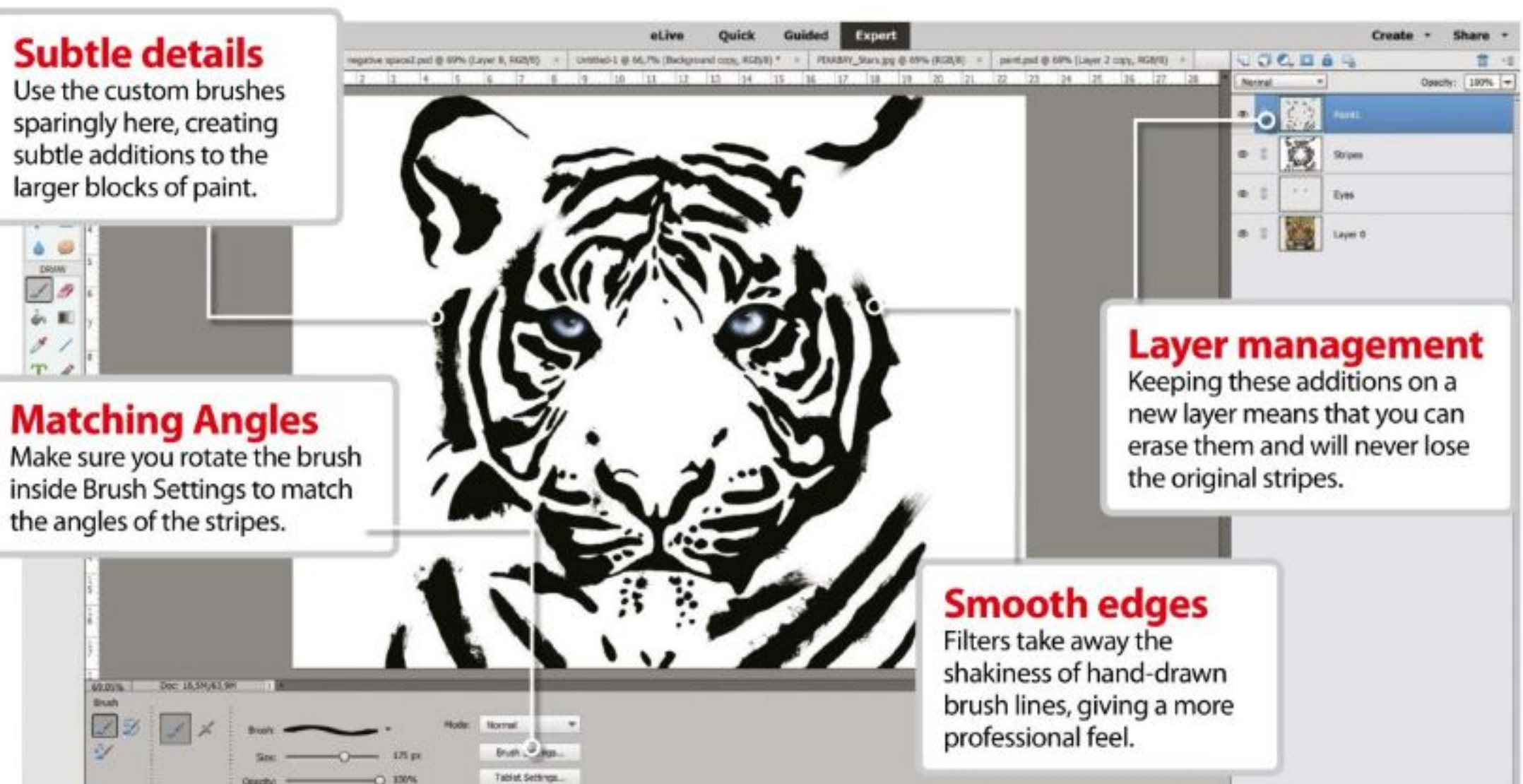
Make sure you rotate the brush inside Brush Settings to match the angles of the stripes.

Layer management

Keeping these additions on a new layer means that you can erase them and will never lose the original stripes.

Smooth edges

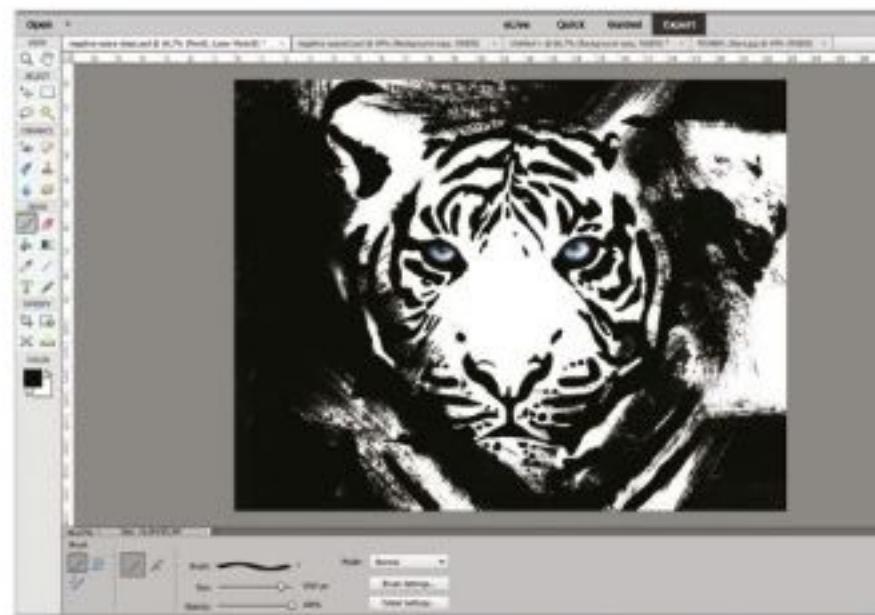
Filters take away the shakiness of hand-drawn brush lines, giving a more professional feel.





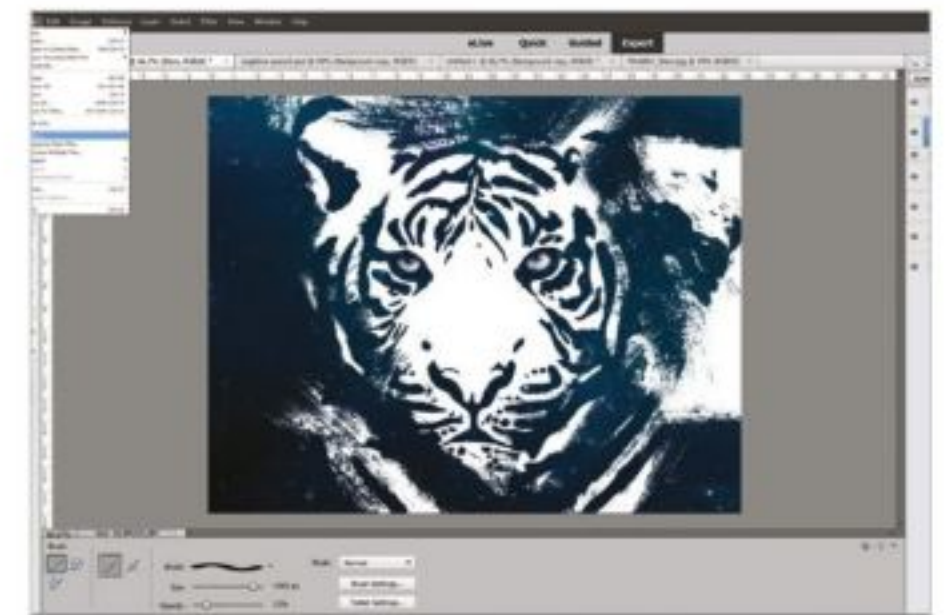
11 Fill with brush strokes

Create a new layer above the paint strokes. Now fill most of the canvas with big brush strokes. Click once to add each brush to keep its texture. Leave some gaps and rough edges for extra effect.



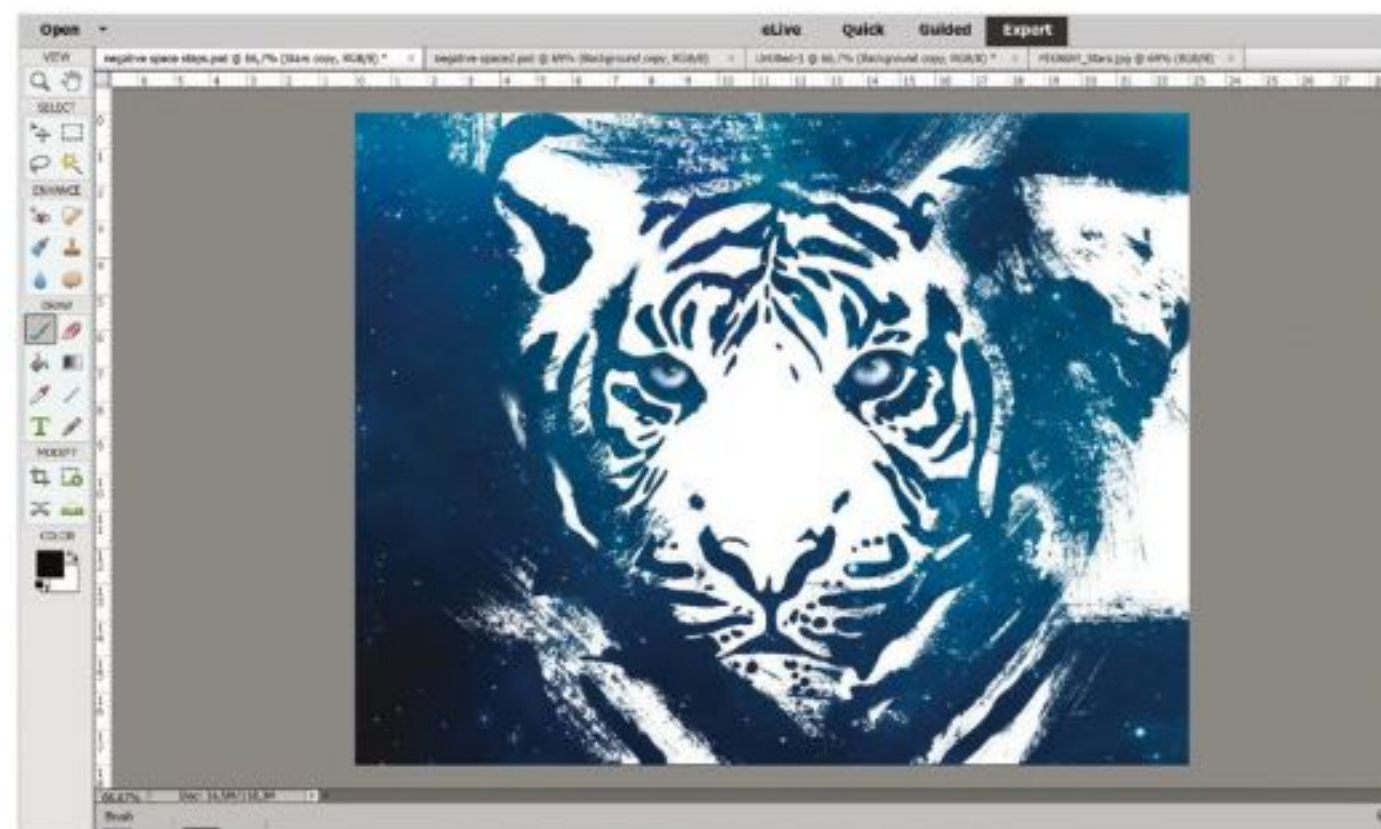
12 Add a layer mask

With your top paint layer selected, add a layer mask with the 'circle inside a rectangle' icon. Painting black on this mask will hide what's on the attached layer. Use the Dry Brush brushes to paint black on the mask to create interesting shapes.



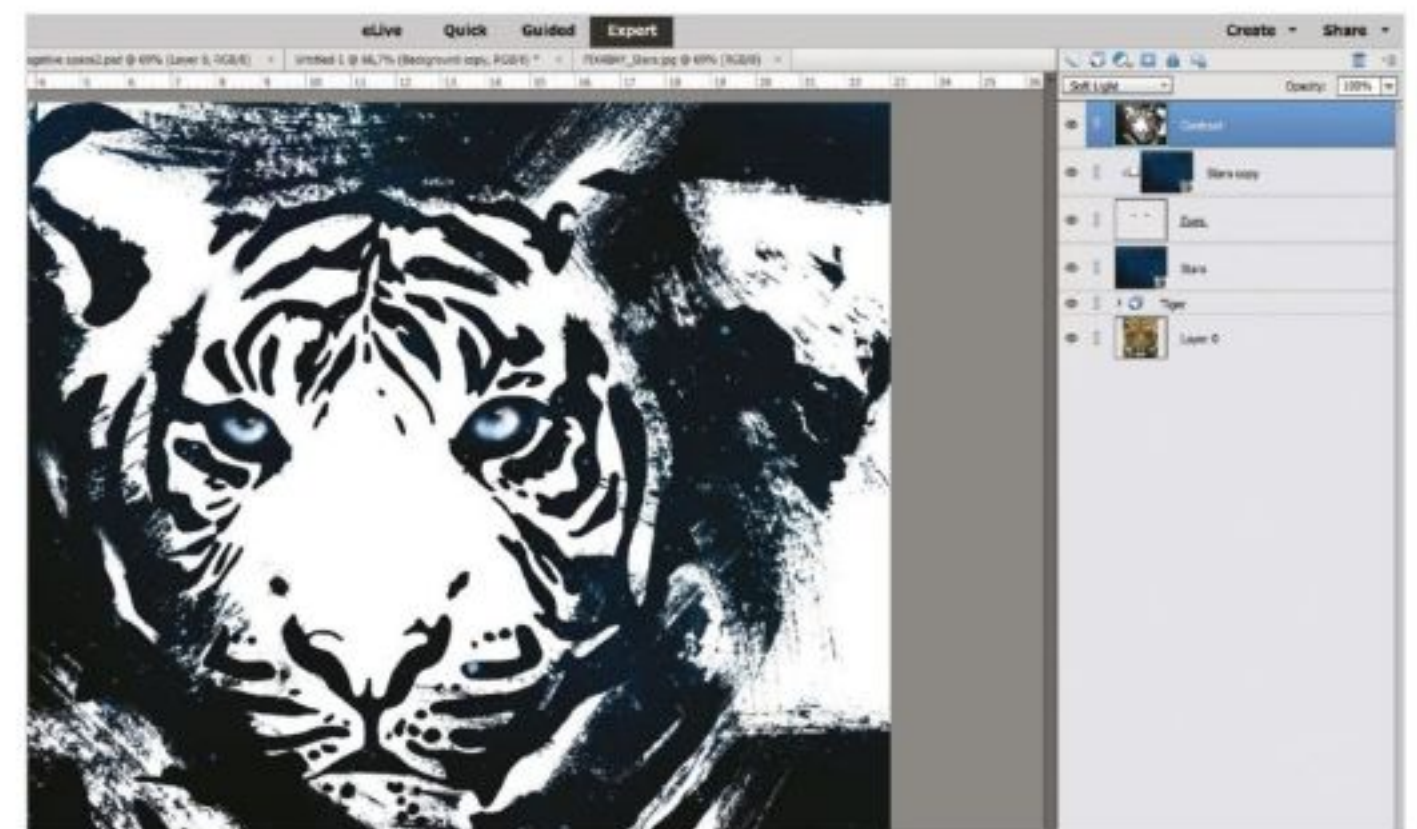
13 Overlay the stars

Select the painted stripe layers and hit Cmd/Ctrl+G to Group. Drag the eyes layer above the group. Go to File>Place and add in 'Stars.jpg' from FileSilo. Drag the Stars layer below the eyes. Set the blend mode from Normal to Screen, and Opacity to 80%.



14 Make starry eyes

Duplicate the stars layer with Cmd/Ctrl+J. Drag this new layer above the eyes. Right-click and select Create Clipping Mask. This ensures it only affects the eyes layer and not the Tiger group. Reduce the Opacity to 50%.



15 Add contrast

With the top layer selected, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+E to make a 'stamp' of all your layers. With the new layer selected, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U to desaturate it. Change the blend mode from Normal to Soft Light. Adjust the opacity to taste.

Layer masks

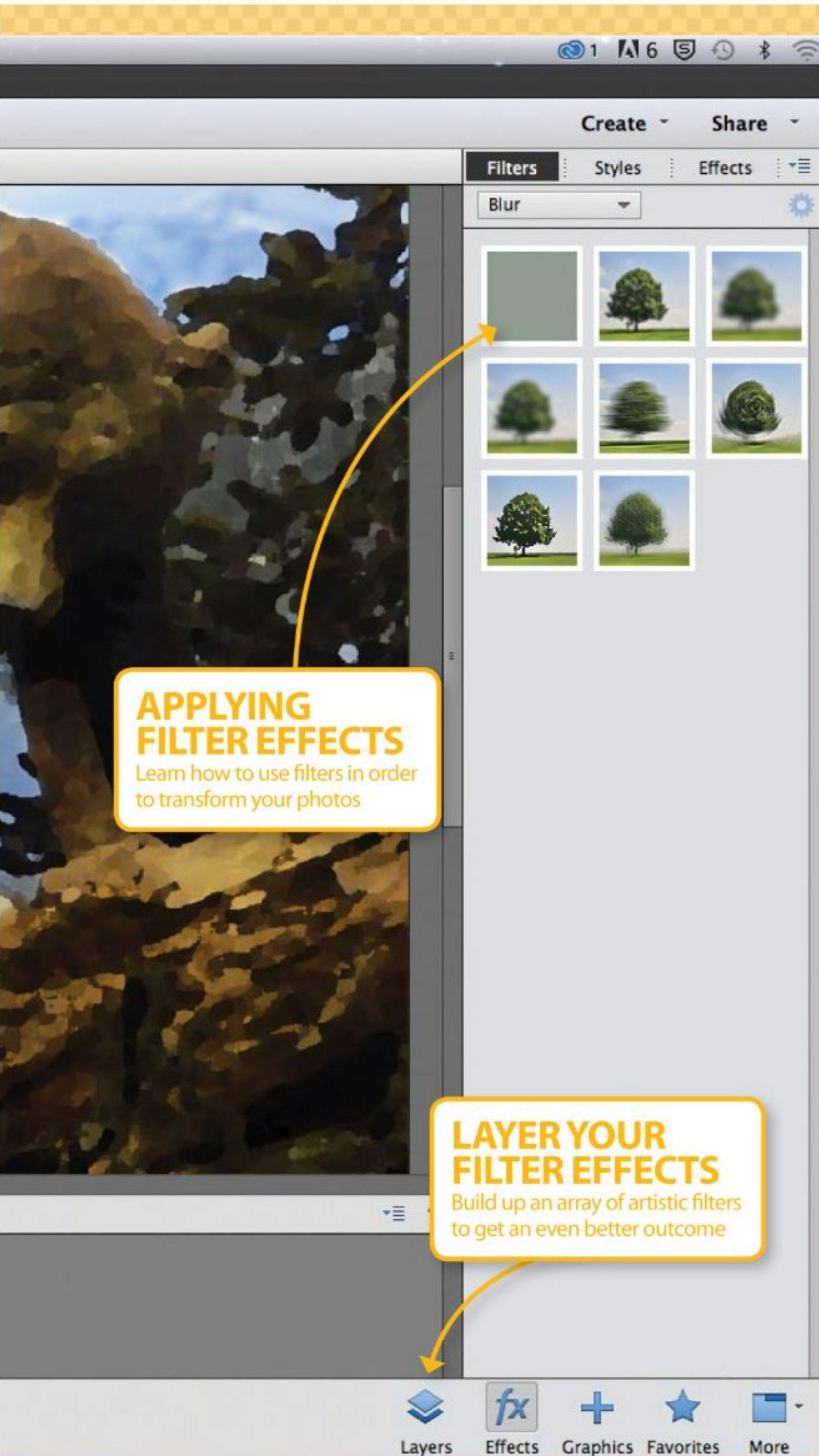
Get comfortable with non-destructive editing

Layer masks are simple to use, and extremely powerful. On a layer mask, black hides what is below and white shows what is below – by default, layer masks are set to white, so when you first add one, nothing will change. As you start painting in black, the layer it's attached to will start to disappear. Different shades of grey add different layers of opacity to the layer. The advantage is that you never permanently erase anything – any part of the layer that you hide can always be brought back by painting in white. This is called non-destructive editing, and prevents a lot of costly mistakes.



Filters





APPLYING FILTER EFFECTS

Learn how to use filters in order to transform your photos

LAYER YOUR FILTER EFFECTS

Build up an array of artistic filters to get an even better outcome

- 144** What are filters?
Learn all about this creative toolset, used to apply effects
- 146** Discover the Blur filters
Use the Elements filters to add effective blur to your images
- 148** Master the Blur Gallery filters
Check out how to use CC's new grain filter with the Blur Gallery filters
- 150** Lighting Effects filter
Improve the lighting in your images with a few quick filter techniques
- 152** Fix with the Reduce Noise filter
Eliminate noise in your pictures and smooth things out with this filter

“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 dialogue 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.

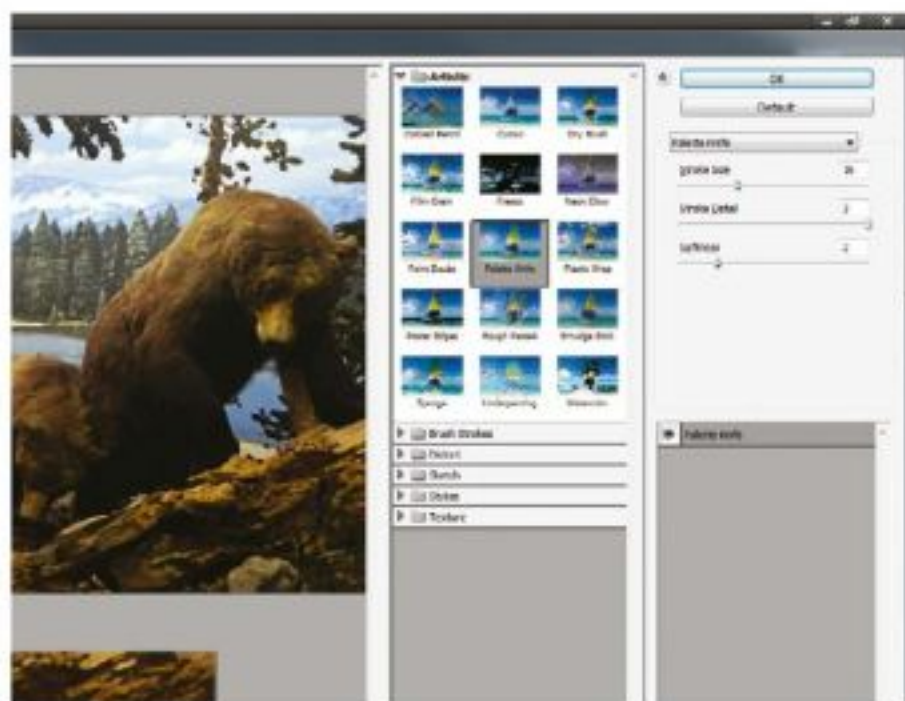
You can find the Filters under the Filter menu in Photoshop. Click on Filter Gallery and a new window will pop up revealing all the filters that are available in your Photoshop version. The Filters are grouped into categories such as Artistic, Distort, Sketch and so forth. Each effect has a specific 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.

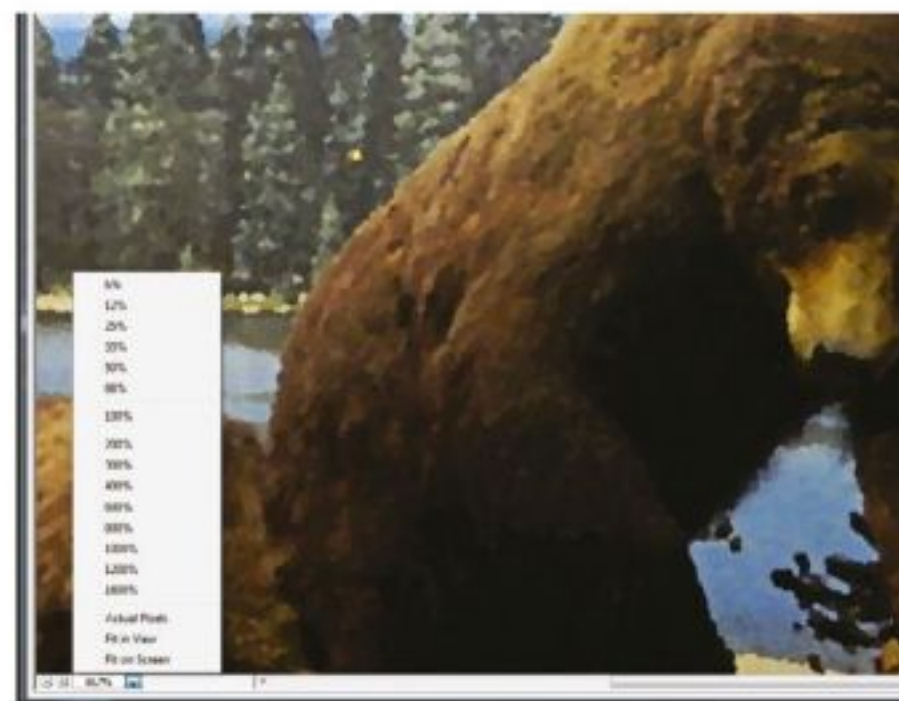
The third panel provides all the controls over the filters, where you can change the settings to control the effect however you wish and view the changes in real-time on the preview window. By clicking on the Add Layer icon allows you to add two or more filters at the same time to create subtle and impressive effects.

“The huge range of Filters are grouped into categories such as Artistic, Distort, Sketch and so on”



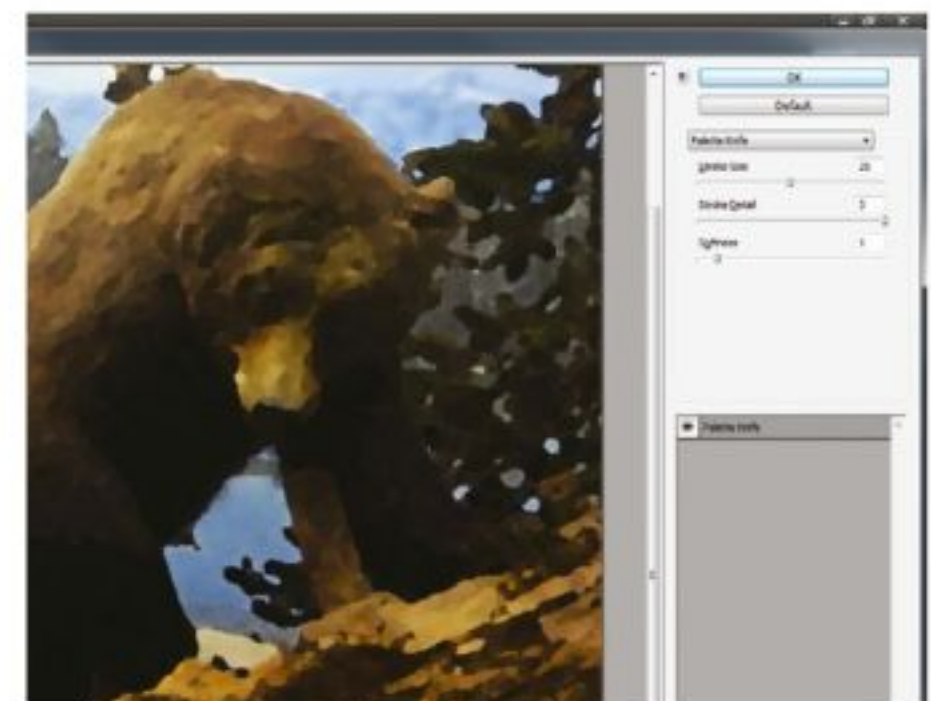
01 Filter thumbnails

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.



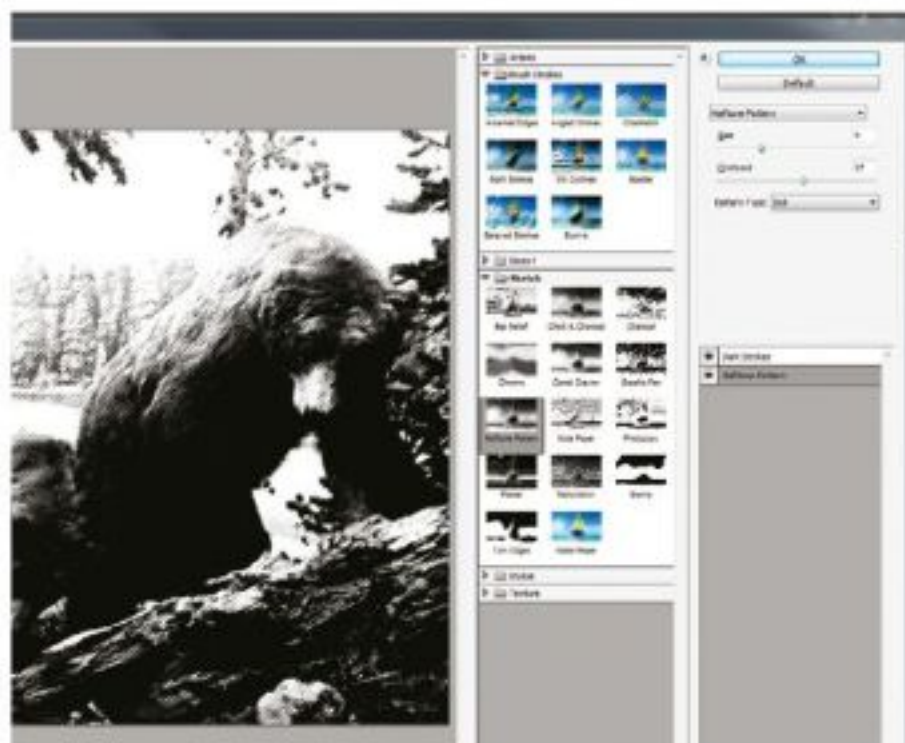
02 Magnify tool

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.



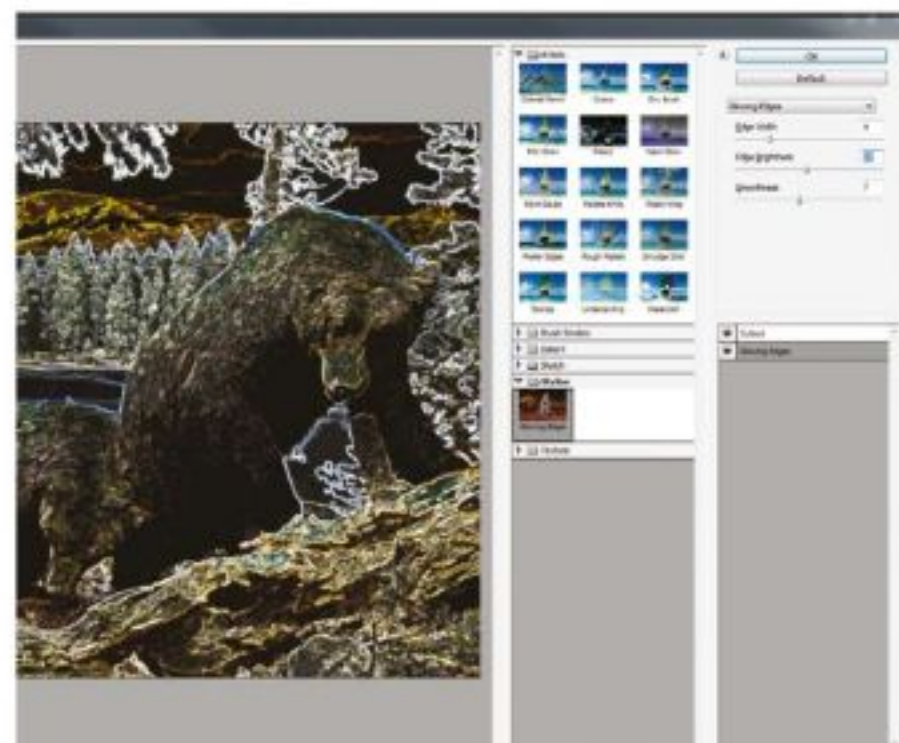
03 Controls

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.



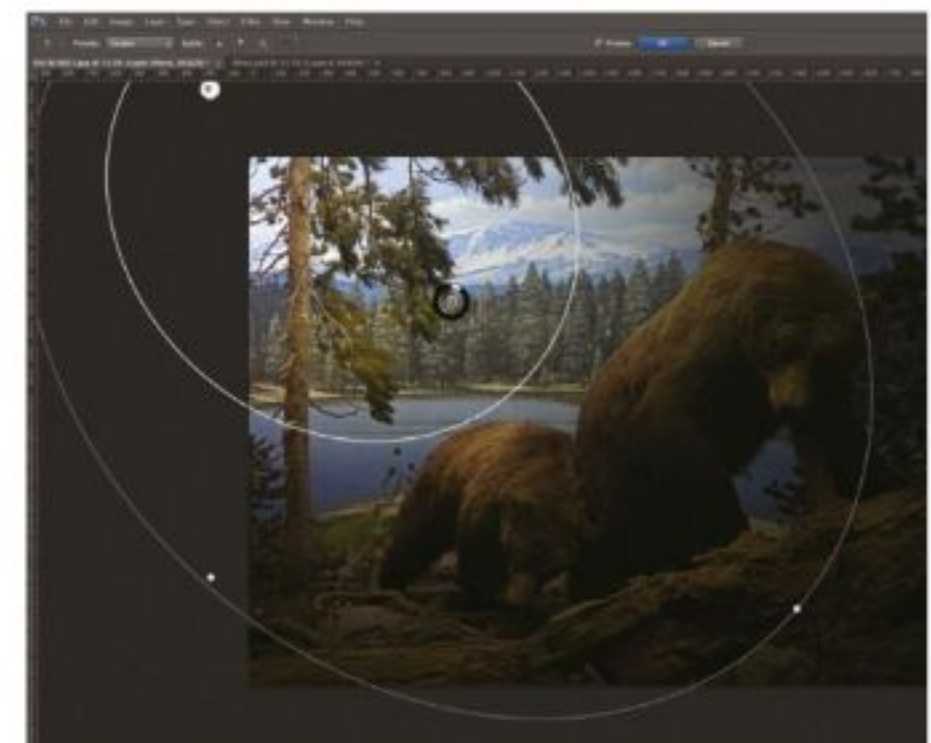
04 Layers

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.



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.



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.



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.



Lens Blur

The best option in the Filter menu for photographers, Lens Blur enables you to produce a more accurate blur even set to a specific shape. You can also add noise to your picture, adjust the distribution and even tweak the highlights.



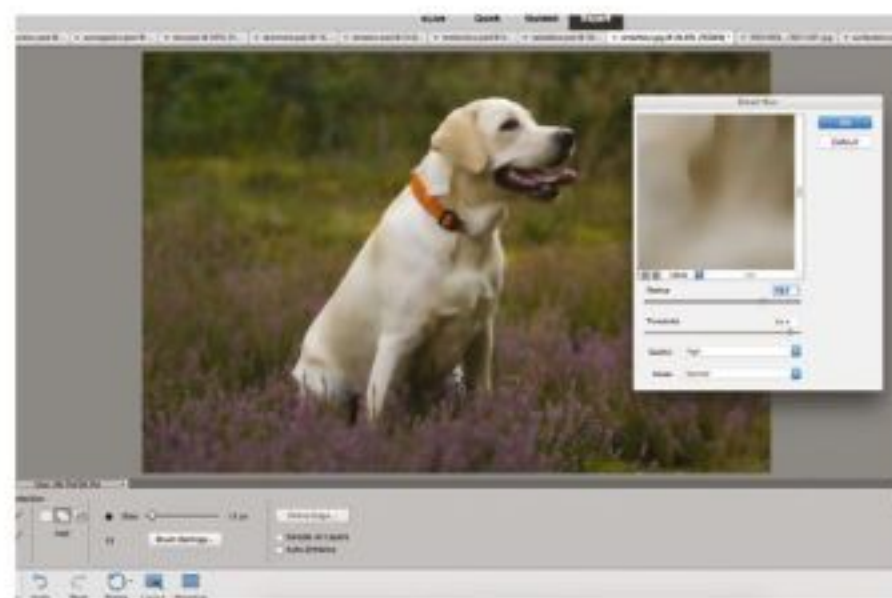
Motion Blur

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.



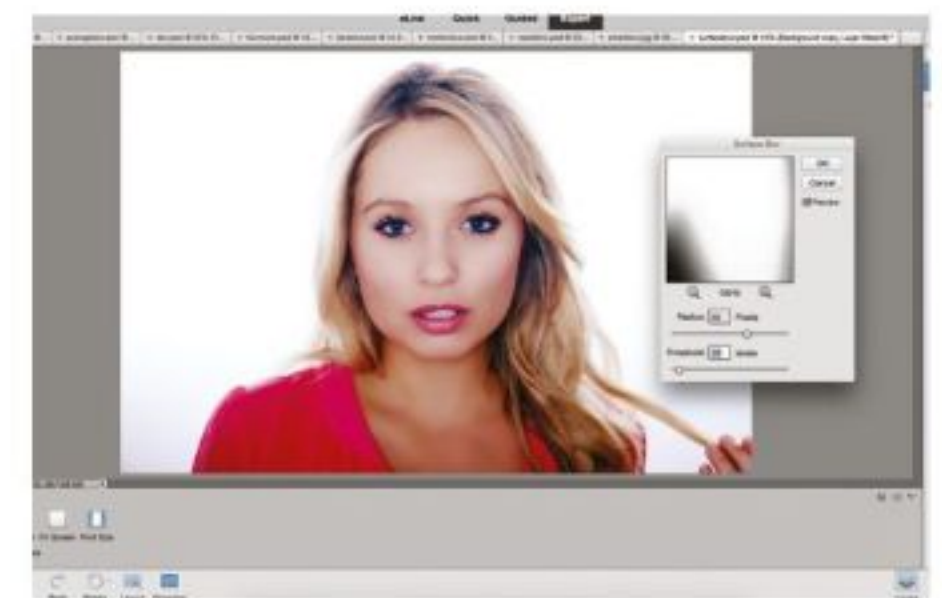
Radial Blur

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.



Surface Blur

The Surface Blur applies a similar blur to a picture, but it preserves the edges in the shot. For this reason, it's the perfect filter to use to smooth a subject's skin, as it doesn't overly haze the shot; duplicate your original layer and mask where you want the skin to be smoothed.



ORIGINAL

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.



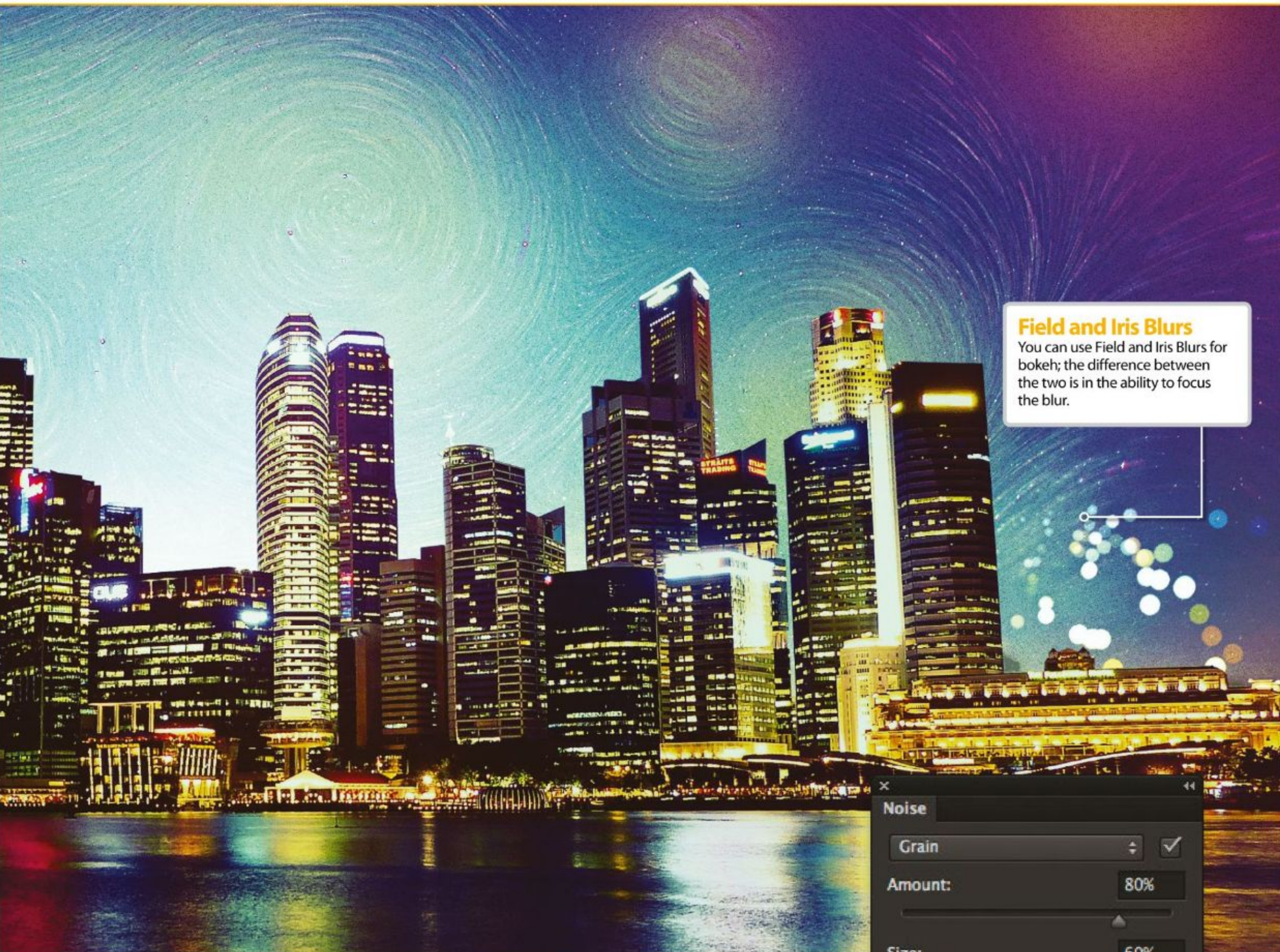
Iris Blur

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.

Noise

Grain

Amount: 80%

Size: 60%

Roughness: 40%

Color: 20%

Highlights: 0%



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”



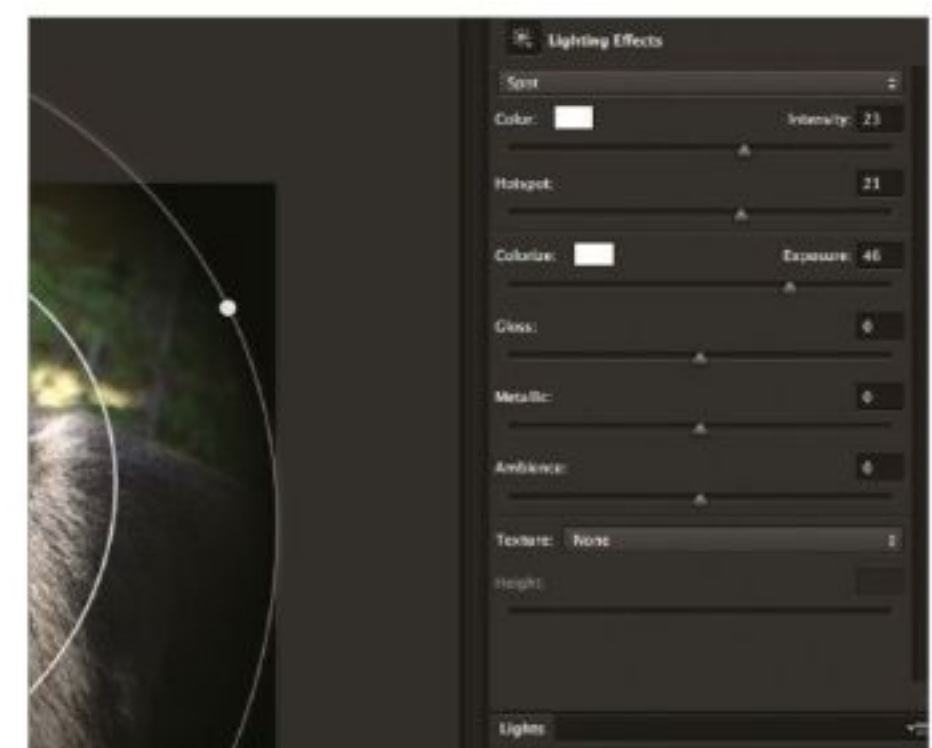
01 Locate filter

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.



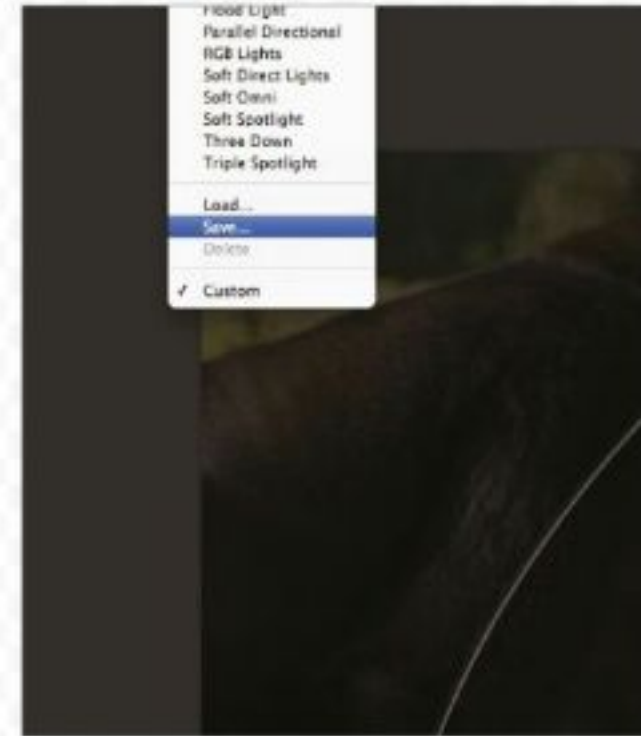
03 Alter Intensity

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.

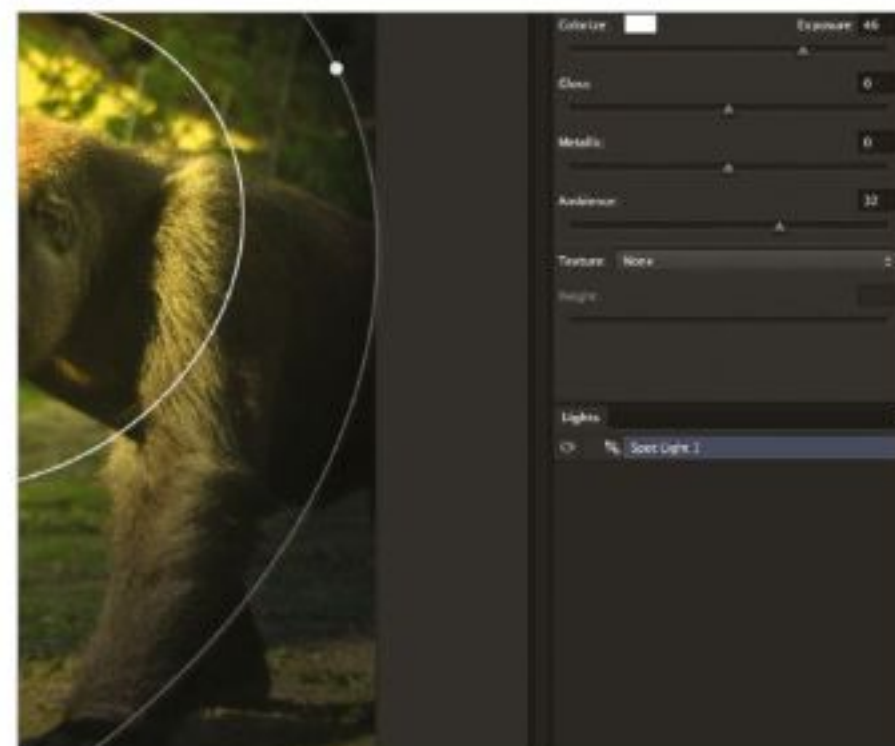
Ambience

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.



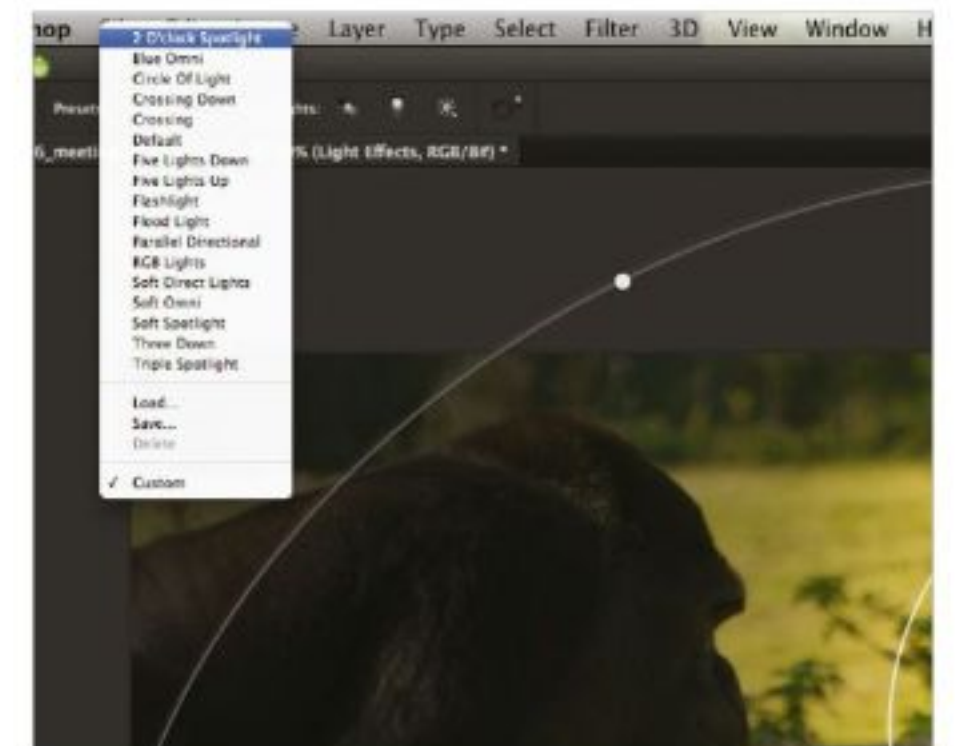
04 Add colour

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.

Creative projects

156 Create a fly in a landscape
Use a wispy sky file as a color for a fly
to create a fly in a landscape

160 Create a portrait of a person
Create a portrait of a person with a
background of a person's face

164 Create a portrait of a person
Create a portrait of a person with a
background of a person's face

168 Create a portrait of a person
Build a portrait of a person using
a background of a person's face

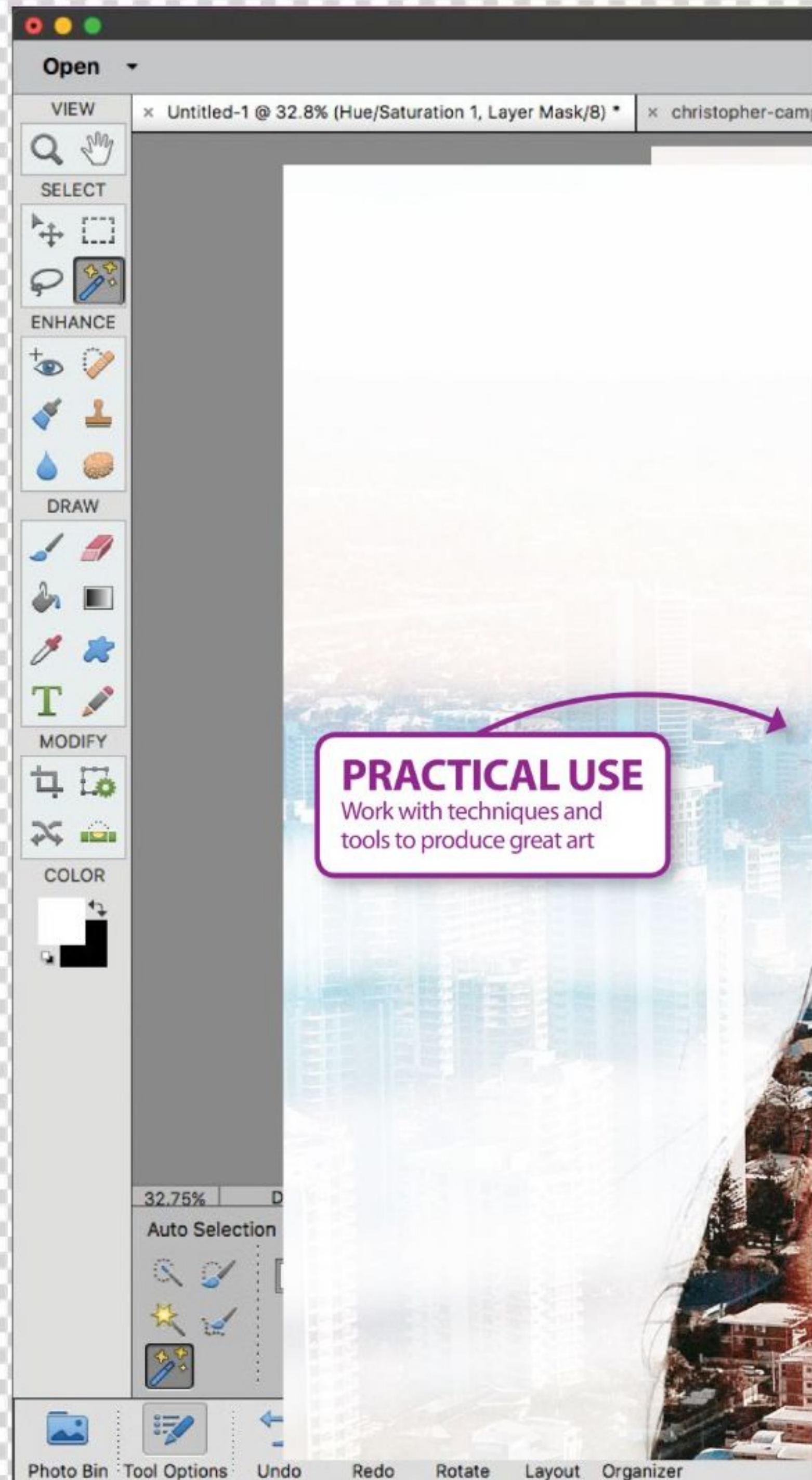
172 Create a portrait of a person
Build a portrait of a person using
a background of a person's face



LEVELS

Make final edits by adding Levels adjustment layers

“Use Photoshop to transform your ordinary images!”



PRACTICAL USE

Work with techniques and tools to produce great art



eLive Quick Guided Expert

Create Share

bell-179452.jpg @ 13.4% (RGB/8)

VITAL EDITING
Uncover why layers are important and how best to work with them

Normal Opacity: 100%

- Hue/...
- Brig...
- Leve...
- Background copy
- Background

FUN EDITS
Turn simple photos into something quite extraordinary with our guides

Open View other crop

fx Double Exposure

1. Choose a photo to superimpose on your primary subject.

2. Use the Move Tool to position the superimposed photo.

3. Choose an effect to finish your Double Exposure.

Layers Effects

Creative projects



What does it mean?

LIQUIFY – The Liquify filter is mostly associated with retouching. However, it's perfect for warping images or reshaping layers. Though there are a few options and settings for the Liquify filter, the one you'll use most often is probably the main Warp command.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Create a flying fantasy island

Use layers, masks, filters and brushes for a surreal adventure

Every project teaches you something, but there are some projects that every Photoshop Elements user just has to try. Whether you're a photo editor, a photomanipulator or a digital artist, creating a flying fantasy island is one of those projects that will teach you a ton about the Elements software, and it's great fun to do as well.

The possibilities with a project like this are endless. Whether you're going into science fiction-inspired territory, creating a Gorillaz-style windmill island, or just introducing animals to your island like we are in this tutorial, the tools remain the same. Layers to build the scene, masks to blend them together, brushes to add to the image, and filters to create some believability. This is a project

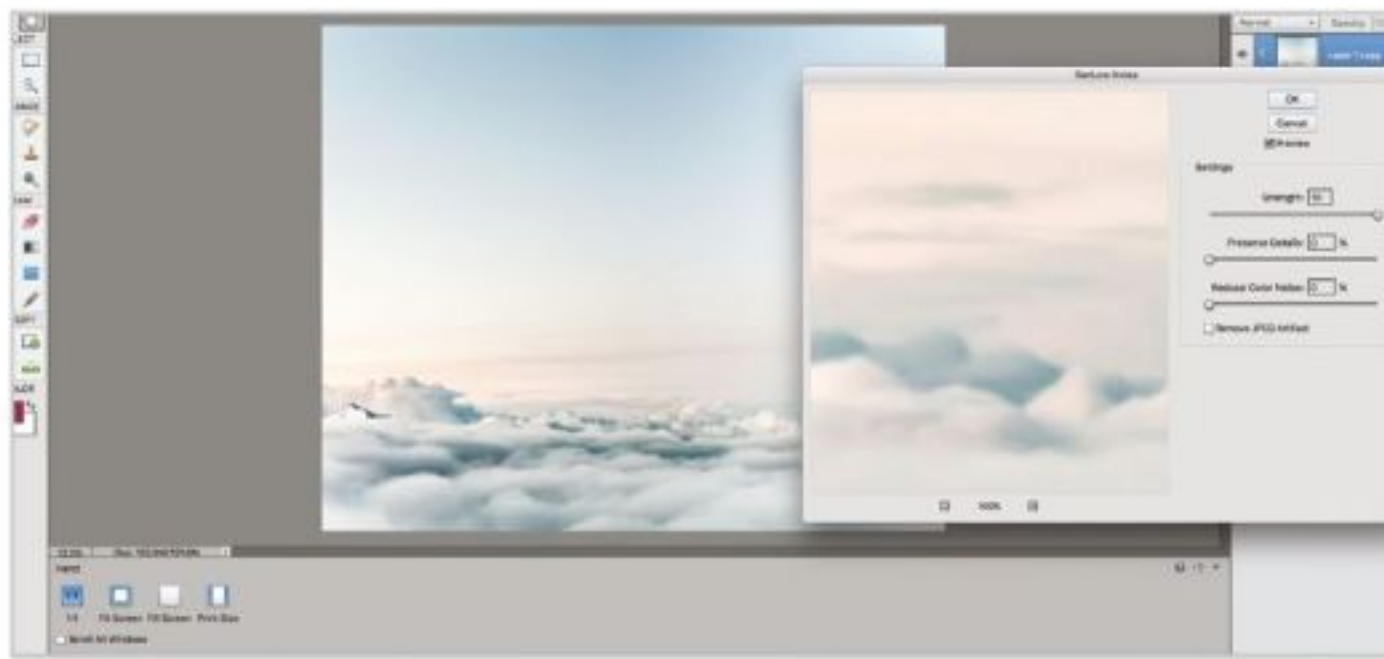
that uses all the big features of Elements, and that's why it's such a great project for you to try your hand at.

Of course, that doesn't mean it's not a challenging composition to put together. You just need to be prepared to spend a bit of time working on the intricacies of the piece: take cutting out the island, for example. You could do it fast with the Quick Selection, but it'll look so much better if you brush all around its outside.

This is a project that will require a lot of patience, but that doesn't mean the techniques behind it are too difficult.

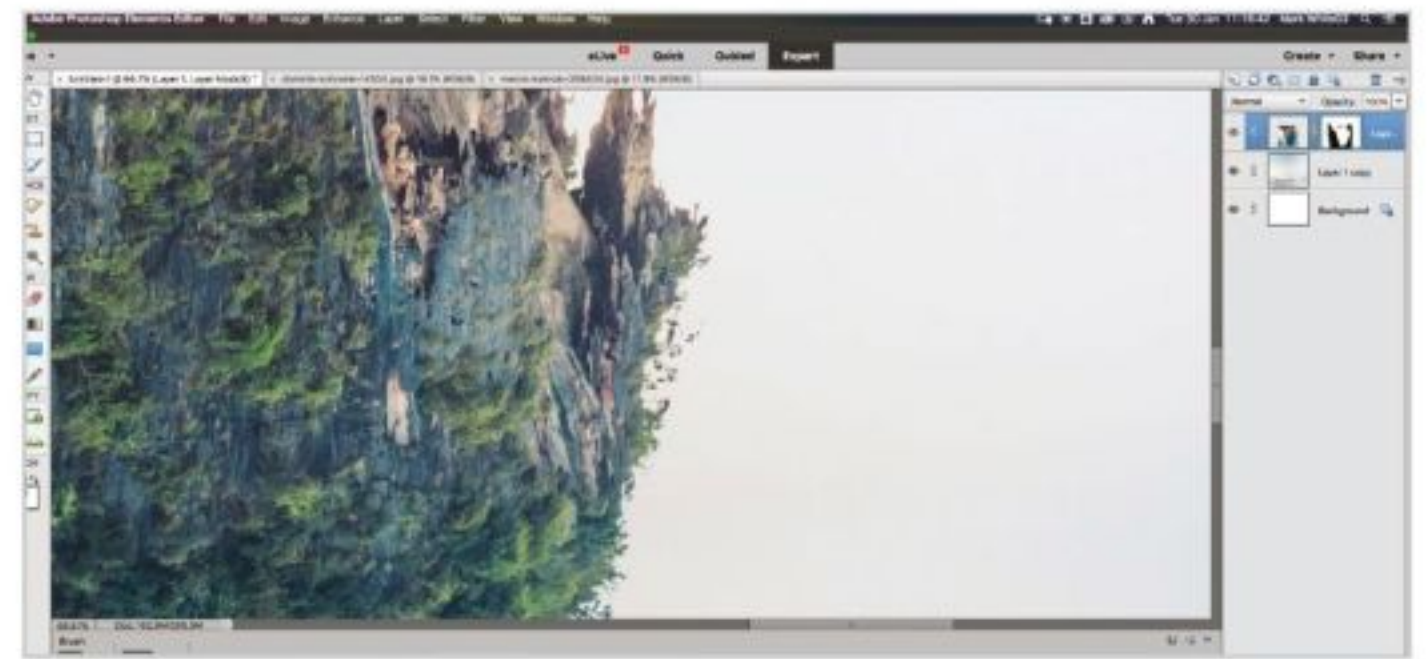


Construct the island Cut out your elements and blend them together



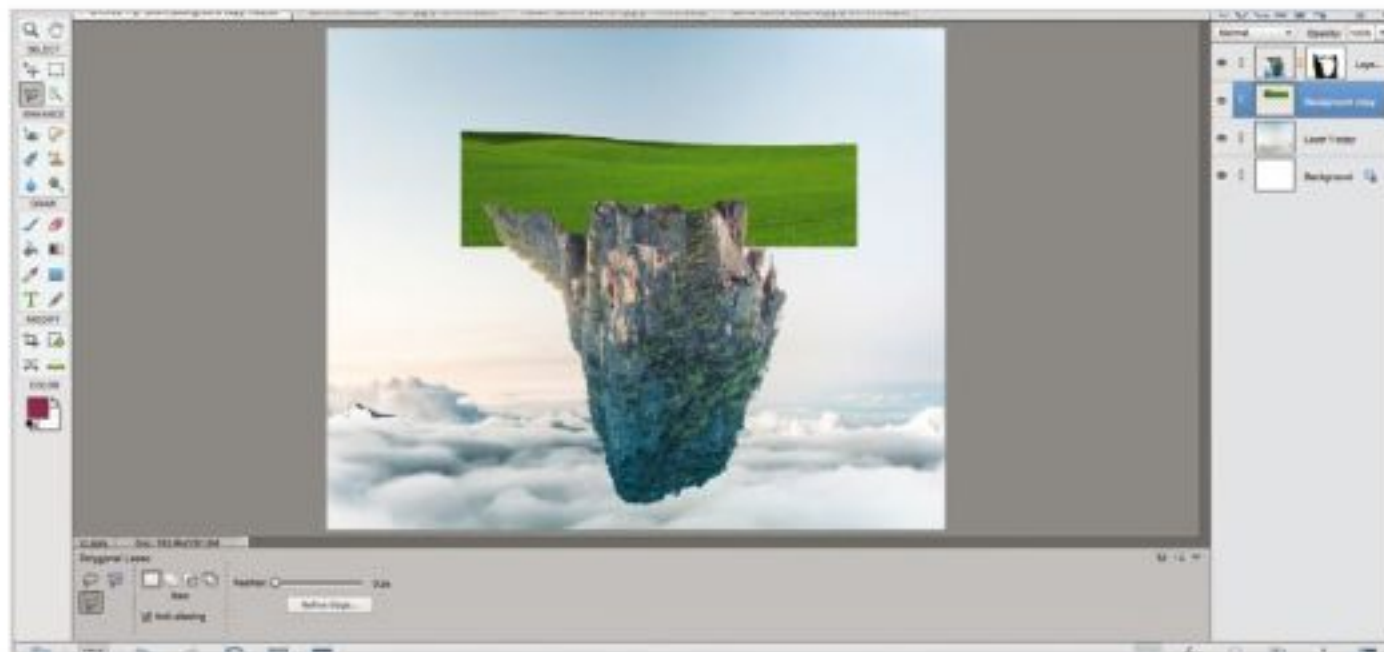
01 Blur the background

Begin by inserting the image of the clouds and go to Filter > Noise > Reduce Noise. Alter Strength to 10, and leave Preserve Details and Reduce Color Noise at 100%. This will lightly blur the background; click OK to apply.



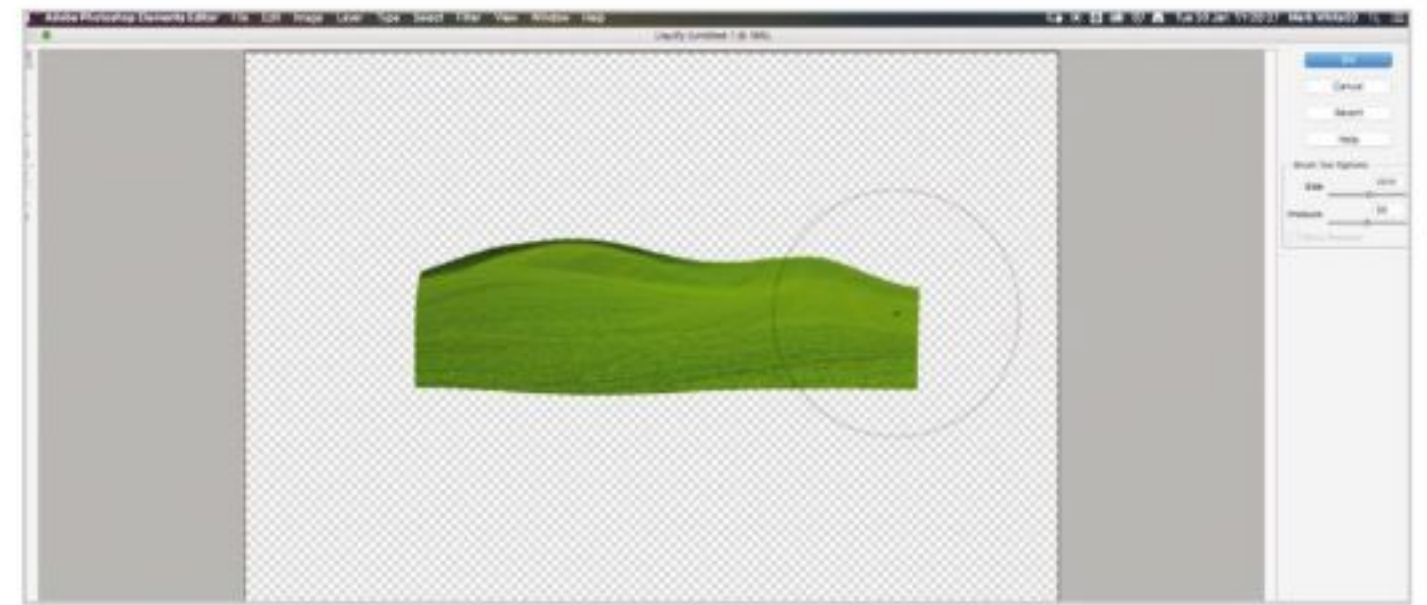
02 Cut out your island

Add the rock formation to the image and flip it upside down by using Transform. To select it as accurately as possible, we're going to hit Mask and use a small, soft, black brush around the outside of it to mask away the excess.



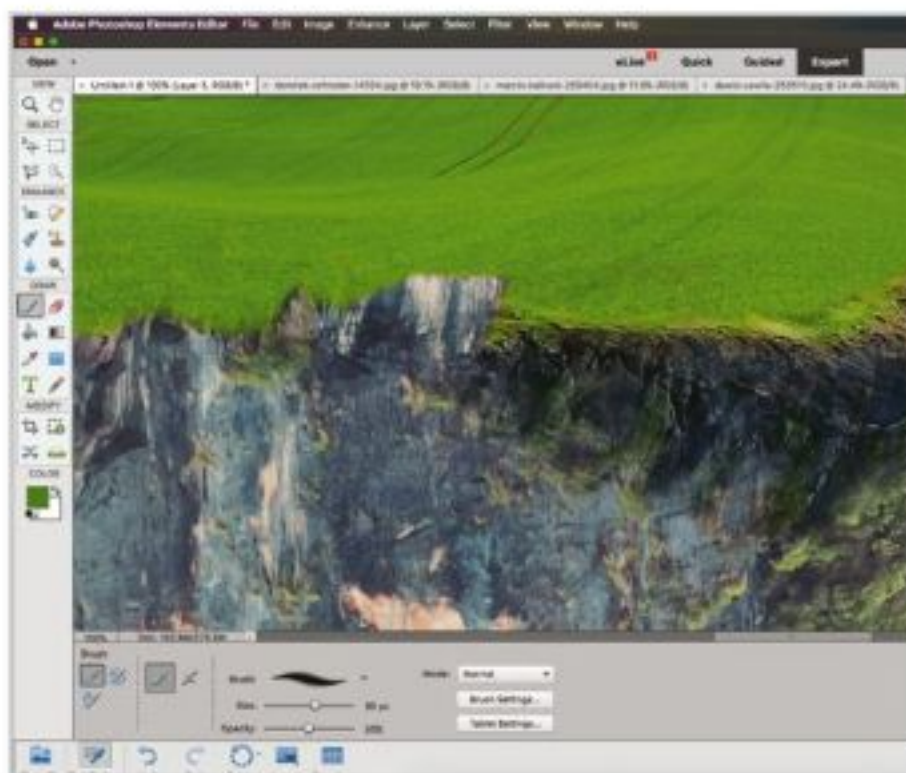
03 Laying the grass

With the main rock finished, the next step is to add the grass. We're going to select the grass with the Quick Selection and click Mask, before applying that mask. Move it behind the rock and place it ready to Liquify.



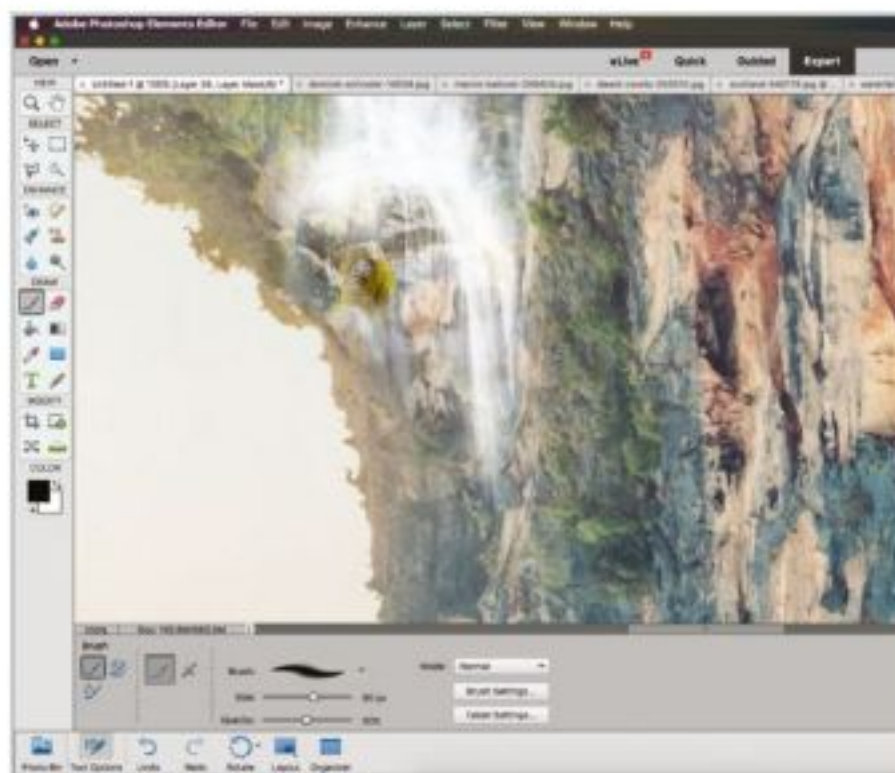
04 Warp the grass

Go to Filter > Distort > Liquify and warp the grass to create bigger bumps on either side of the image; lower each side of the grass so it fits nicely behind the rock formation. This is a technique you can use in Elements to get any image to fit perfectly into a composition.



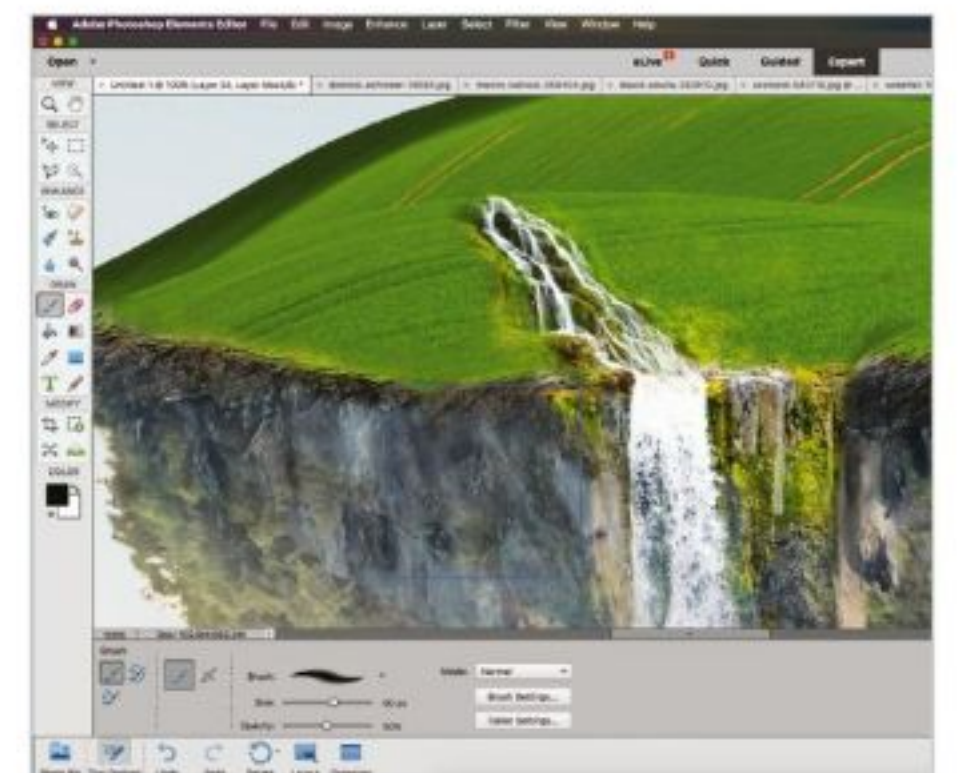
05 Blend the rock

On the FileSilo is an image of a cliff edge. Add this to your composition, hit Mask and blend it with the picture using a soft, black brush. Create new Screen and Color layers; select colours from the rock and apply them over the image to blend.



06 Add a waterfall

Place one of your waterfall images into the piece and set to Screen. Use the same blending technique to mask it into the image a little better, then duplicate the layer. Set this one to Normal, and again mask in the darker areas of the image.



07 Continue with the waterfall

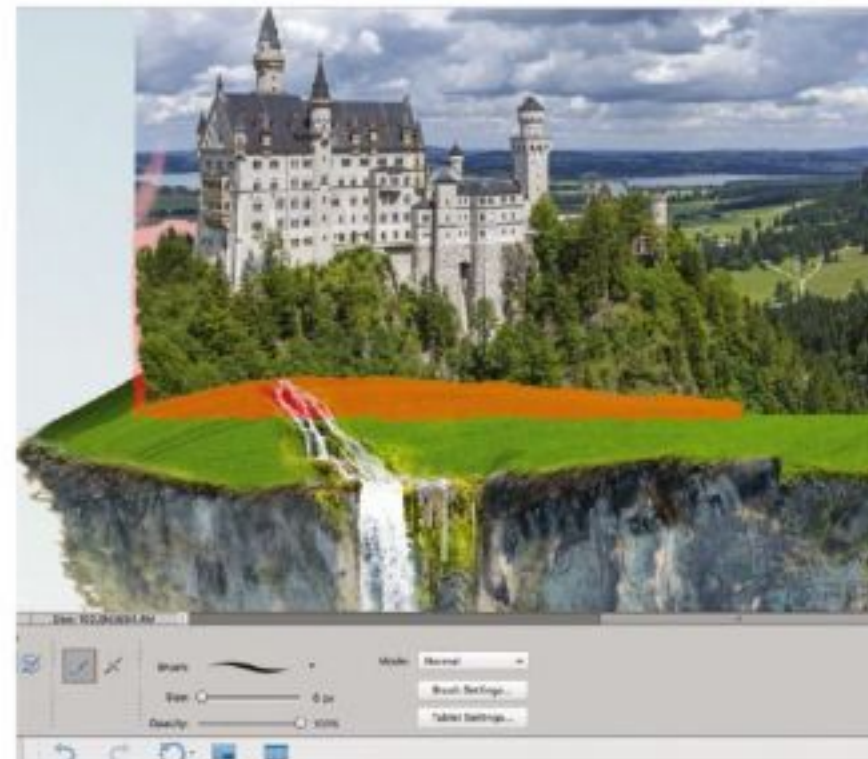
Add another of the waterfall images to the top of the grass, and again mask into the image with the same techniques. Mask in the darker pixels on the Normal layer and the lighter ones on the Screen layer for a more believable waterfall.

Creative projects

EXPERT TIP

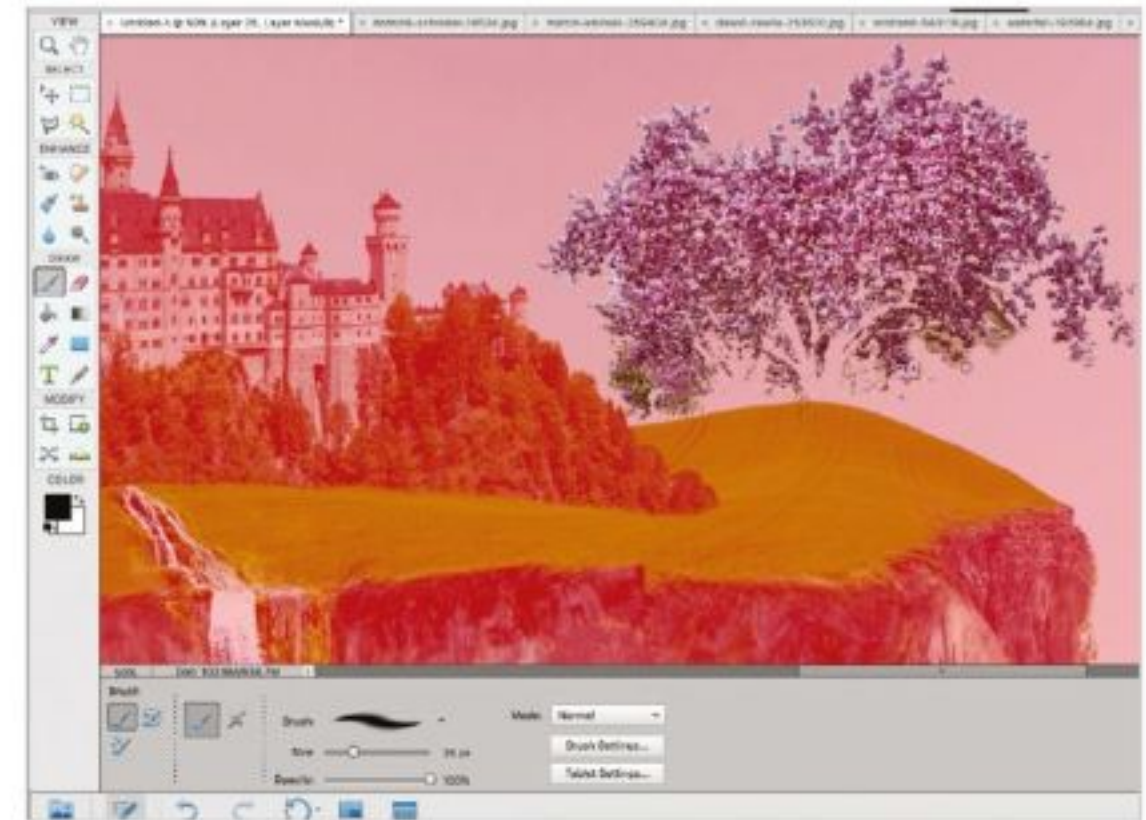
Fully adjusting the image

Levels is a useful adjustment in Elements, but it's by no means the only one you can apply to make this island pop. Hue/Saturation and Brightness/Contrast can help to improve the overall colour and vibrance of an image when added to a project. A gradient map can also help with this, but if you add a black-to-white gradient set to Soft Light, it can give a cinematic feel. Remember to add a High Pass layer of 5px set to Overlay to sharpen the piece when you've finished it.



08 Mask the castle in

Insert the castle, and hit Mask. Using the same soft brush mask technique, blend it into the image. Duplicate, flip horizontal and then mask some of the trees so that the left-hand side has some of the trees as well as the right.



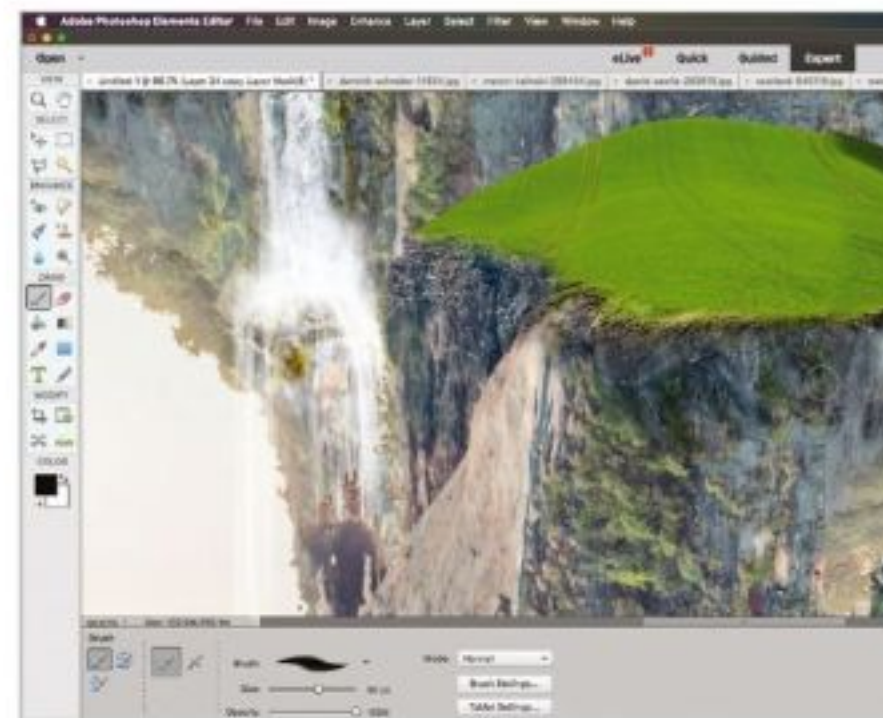
09 Plant a tree

Add the image of the cherry blossom tree. Use the Magic Wand – with the Contiguous box unchecked – and select all the pink colours from the image. Hit Mask, and with the Brush Tool, mask in some of the darker shades you missed out.



10 Place the animals

Now to add a few characters to the scene. Place a peacock or two, and the giraffes, and use masking techniques to blend them all into the picture. Add shadows to them as you see fit on layers below with soft, black brushes.



11 Make a ledge

Merge all the layers you've created so far for the island, minus animals, trees and castle. Duplicate and blend in some of the island to create a small ledge, like you can see in the screenshot.



12 Reflect the island

With your ledge in place, create a new layer and brush light blue (#c8e5eb) to make a small pond. Copy your island layer, flip vertically and then use Filter> Filter Gallery> Glass to create a distorted reflection. Set to Overlay and clip to the pond (Alt/Opt-click).



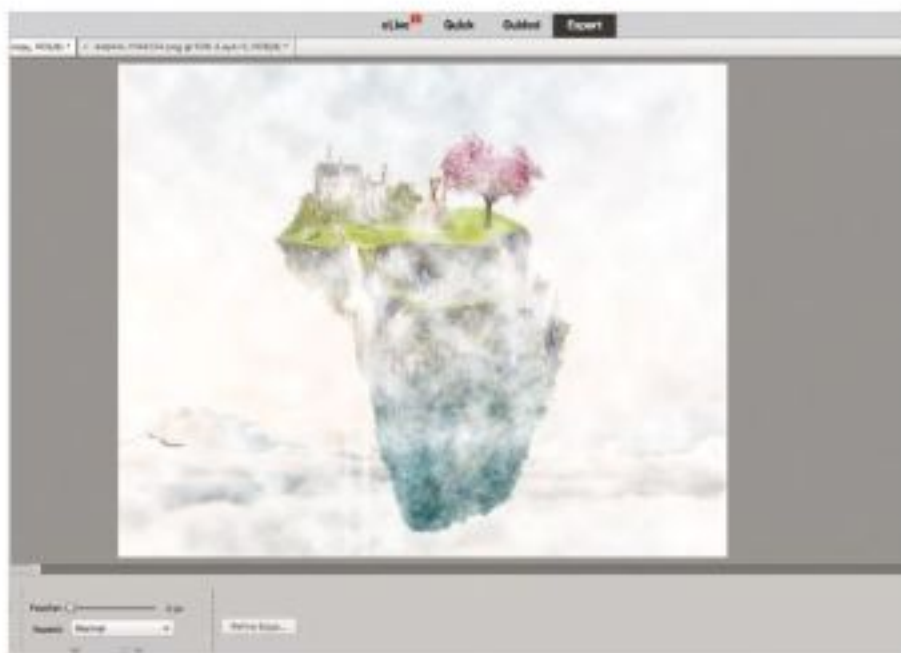
13 Bring in the dolphin

To add a touch more fun to this little water-filled ledge, blend in a waterfall as you did earlier in the project and insert the supplied dolphin from the resources. Mask into the image and then create a subtle reflection as you just did with the island.



14 Levels

Create a Levels adjustment using the Fill Layer icon. Tweak the stoppers below the histogram to increase the contrast, and with the drop-down menu, change the Red, Blue and Green channels slightly to give a warmer look to the image.



15 Clouds filter

Create a new layer and set your swatches as black and white. Go to Filter > Render > Clouds and set the layer to Screen. Hit Mask and Invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I). With a soft, white brush, fade the clouds in around the base of the island.



16 Liquify some more

Merge the island layers again. Go to Filter > Distort > Liquify and warp so that there's more of a platform to the top of the island, and to define the shape and contour of the island as a whole. This will help with the overall look of the piece.



17 Create a lens flare

Create a new layer and fill with black. Go to Filter > Render > Lens Flare and cast it across the image. Set to Screen and this will add a touch of brightness; add to it with some white Soft Light brushing in the bottom left of the island, if need be.



18 Highlighting and shading

Merge everything into one layer by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E, then Duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Set one layer to Screen, one to Multiply, hit Mask on both and Invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I). With a white brush, add in some highlights and shadows on both masks.



19 Finish with a rainbow

Finally, create a new 6000 x 6000px document. Create a new layer and a few pixels from the bottom, on a new layer, create a rainbow gradient (G). Go to Filter > Distort > Polar Coordinates and choose Rectangular to Polar. Copy to the island, set to Screen and mask in over the water.

Harmonising a composition Bring all the elements together

In a fairly sophisticated composition such as a flying island, it's natural that as much of your time is going to be spent blending images as it is adding them.

Remember to use soft brushes on masks wherever you can, as these are good for blending layers together. Create new layers with Soft Light, Color and Screen blend modes, and brush colours over them to keep the same tonal consistency across different layers.

Finally, create a merged layer by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E and go to Filter Blur > Gaussian Blur. Use a Radius setting of 20px, and then use Hue/Saturation to reduce Saturation to -20 and Lightness to +20. This will help blend the finished picture together.





SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Design a retro metal sign

Create distressed artwork with textures, blend modes and masks

When it comes to home décor, everyone has their particular tastes and preferences. But there is one thing that most people can agree on, and that is tea will solve almost any problem! Team this universal knowledge with the hugely popular style of the retro café sign, and you can't go wrong. This is the ideal type of image for uploading and selling online, on any of the many sites available to market your design. Once you've finished your creation, simply save a copy in a suitable format, such as .jpg or .png, ready to upload for printing or selling.

One of the most important parts of a design like this is achieving an authentic distressed appearance. It's all about layering textures and combining

blend modes; one texture alone just won't cut it. We've used five texture images in this tutorial with various blend modes so they interact with each other and build up the effect. Adding the simple art of the teapot and teacup gives it the retro feel, as well as the Lobster Two font used for the text. All these files can be found on the FileSilo, so you can open up Elements, load the Photo Editor with the Expert workspace and get started right away.

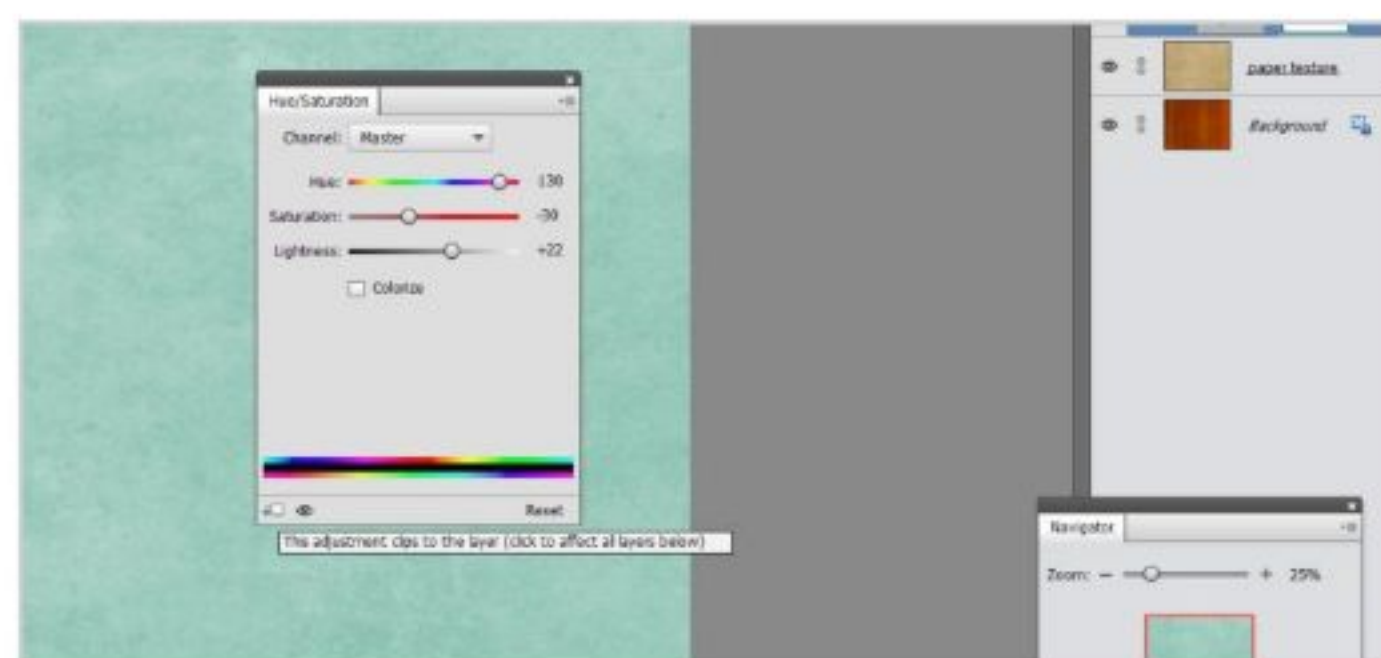
What does it mean?

PHOTO BIN – Accessed by clicking the far left icon in the bottom left tool bar, the Photo Bin displays thumbnails of all open files. Clicking a thumbnail takes you to that file. This is especially useful when creating artwork from textures and source images, enabling you to find and switch between them.

Build the background

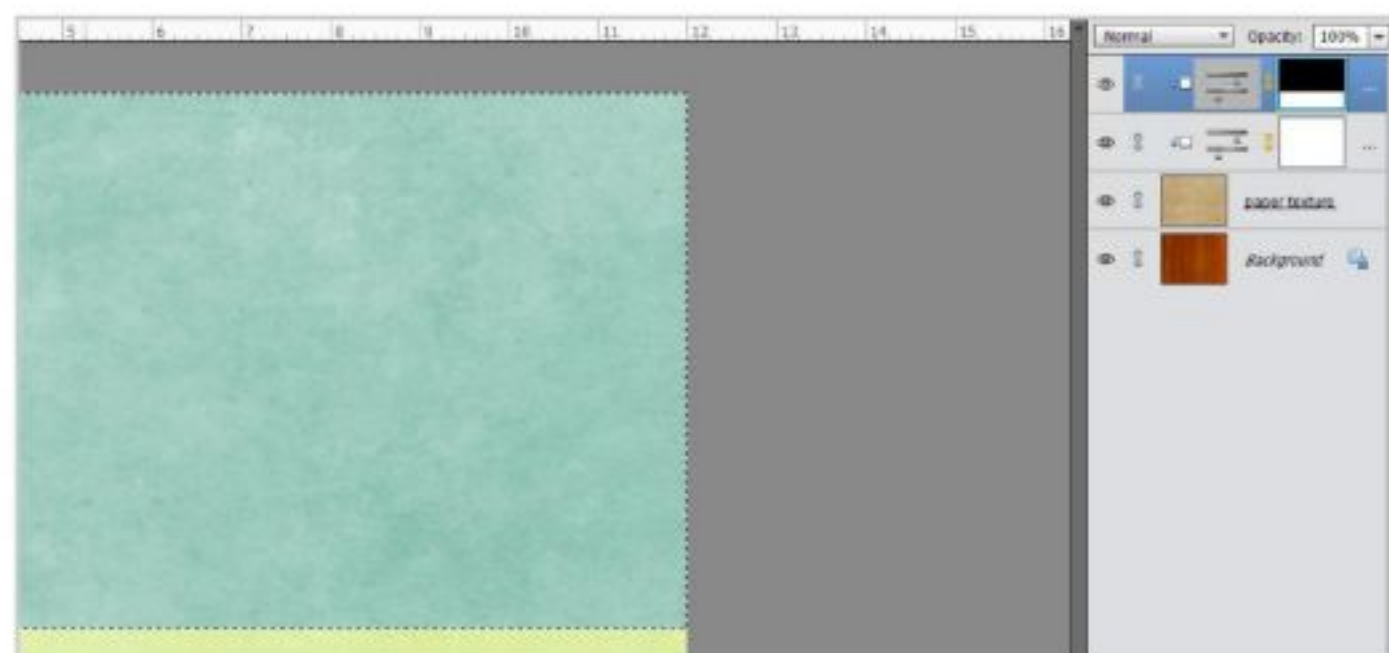
Begin by layering textures and adding masks to create the background

Before you get started, gather all the files needed for this tutorial (available from the FileSilo) and open them in Elements. By using the Photo Bin, you can easily navigate between them. The rust texture image is going to be the background for our artwork, and we will layer the other textures and images within this file. This sign will be 12x9 inches, as these are common proportions for printing purposes, while the high resolution of 300ppi gives you scope for making large-scale prints of your finished design.



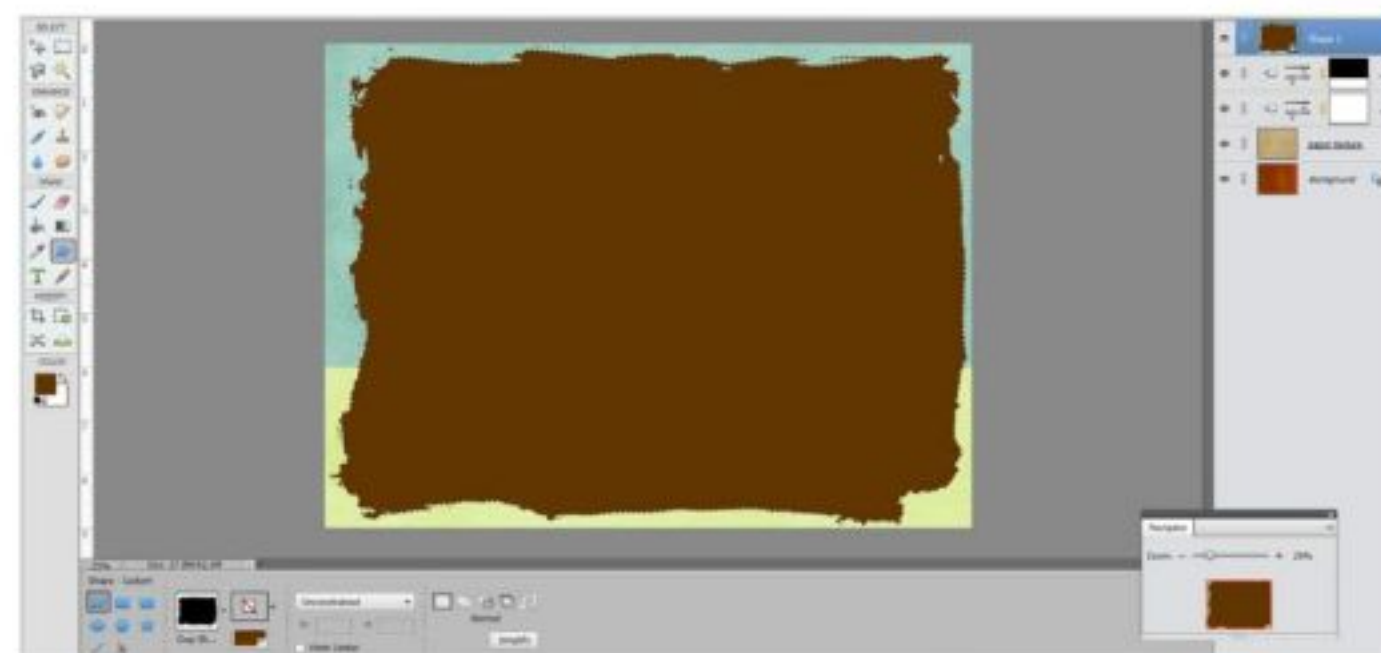
01 Add background textures

Copy (Cmd/Ctrl+A then Cmd/Ctrl+C) 'pix_1914901_paper.jpg' and paste (Cmd/Ctrl+V) it into 'pix_2706118_rust.jpg'. Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' icon at the top of the Layers palette and choose Hue/Saturation. Enter values of Hue: 130, Saturation: -30, Lightness: +22 and select Clip to Layer.



02 Hue/Saturation adjustment

Add another Hue/Saturation adjustment layer. Click the Clip to Layer icon, enter Hue: 102, Saturation: +52, Lightness: +22. Use the Rectangular Marquee Tool to select roughly the top two-thirds of the canvas. Fill with black to obscure it on the layer mask.



03 Mask with a shape

Select the Custom Shape Tool, choose the Crop Shape 11 shape. Click and drag to almost fill the canvas. Cmd/Ctrl+left-click the shape's thumbnail in the Layers palette to create a selection, then add a layer mask to the paper layer. Delete the shape layer.

Prepared border
By using the crop shape as a basis for our mask, we have an irregular distressed border to build upon.

Taking shape
Crop Shape 11 is in the Crop Shapes category, accessed via this menu in the Custom Shape Picker window.

Bin it
Once the shape layer is finished with, it is dragged onto the bin icon to delete it.

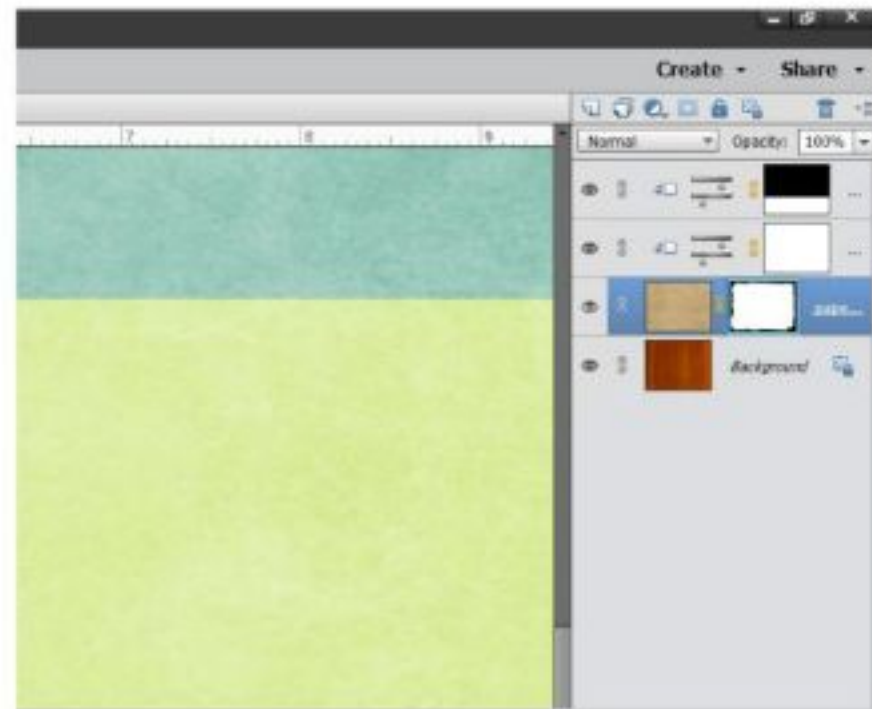
Masking adjustments
Adjustment layers can be masked in the same way as regular layers, so we can easily create this two-tone background.

Creative projects

Paste in the imagery

It's time for tea! Add the teapot and cup to the design

Before the teapot and teacup can be added, the layer mask created in stage 1 needs some improvement. With the basic shape of the border in place, a texture brush helps create a more realistic weathered appearance. Take your time on this step, making sure it looks random by varying the brush size (use [and] to make this easier) and switching between black and white (press X to quickly switch back and forth).



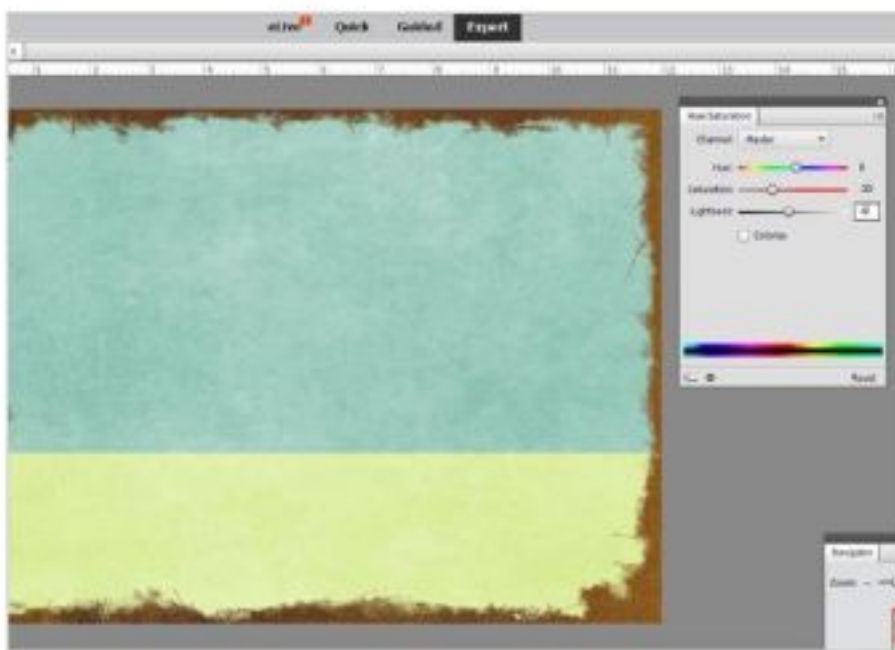
01 Edit the mask

Select the Brush Tool (press B) and choose the Texture1 brush (from the Assorted Brushes set). Click Brush Settings and increase Scatter to 10%. Use it on the paper layer mask to distress the edges of the mask with a combination of taps and strokes.



02 Add scratches

Use black to add more rust and white to obscure it, changing the brush size between 60px to 90px to create variation. Reduce the brush size to 8px and Scatter to 0%, then use it with black to add thin scratches coming inward from the edges.



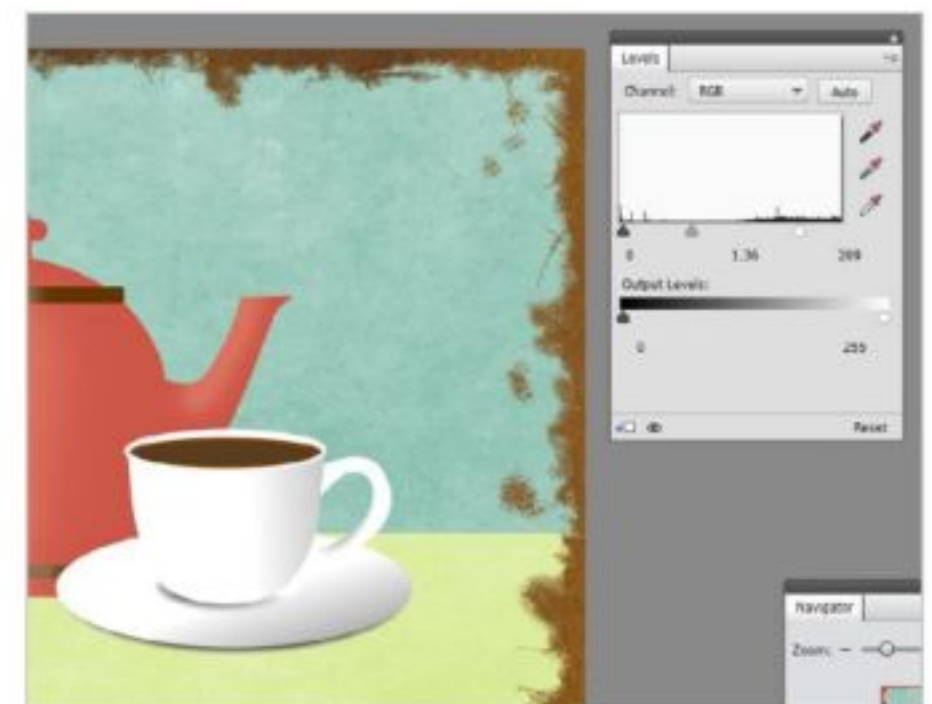
03 Adjust the rust colour

Once you have worked your way all the way round the edge of the mask, add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer directly above the rust background, and then enter values of Hue: +6, Saturation: -39, Lightness: -9.



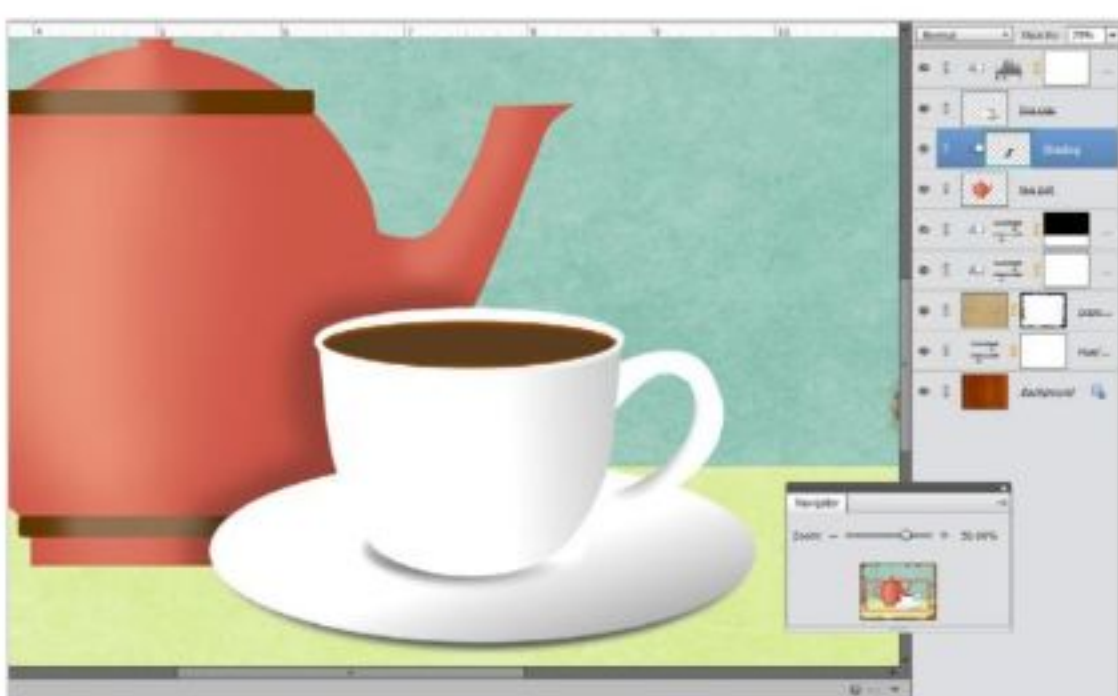
04 Teapot and cup

Copy and paste in the teapot and teacup at the top of the layer stack. Resize and position them so they fit in the middle of the canvas, with the cup overlapping the teapot.



05 Edit the cup

Add a Levels adjustment layer above the teacup, tick the Clip to Layer icon, and move the grey slider to 1.36 and white slider to 209 so that it matches the tone of the teapot more closely.



06 Some shading

Add a new layer between the teapot and teacup layers, tick 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask', set the Opacity to 25%. Use a Soft Round brush (in Default brushes) with black at 200px brush size to add shading on the pot beneath the tea cup.



Worn paint

Using the texture brush on the mask to add extra patches of rust creates a more worn and weathered appearance.

Complete the distressed effect

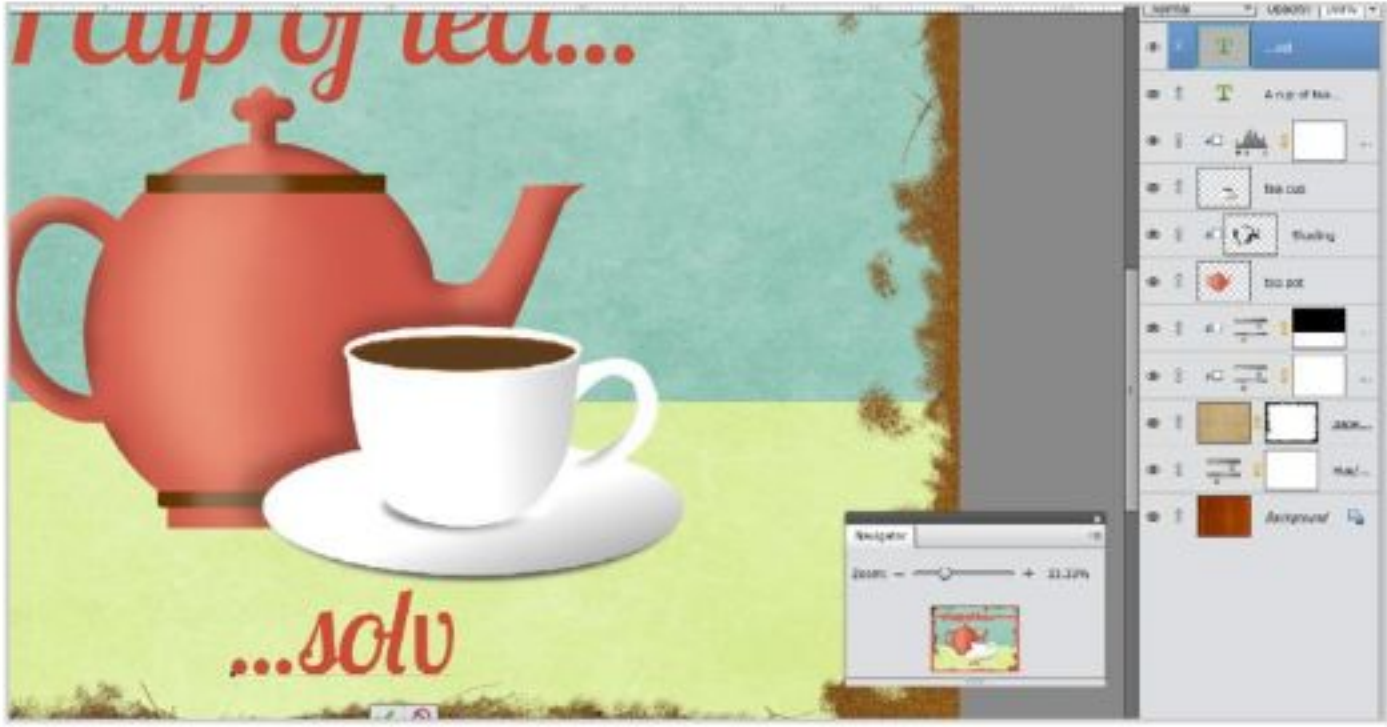
Add the text and paste in the final textures

This is where the distressed appearance really takes shape. As with many effects, layering the different textures is a case of trial and error. Try out some different combinations and blend modes, or adjust Hue/Saturation and Levels to get a tone and colour scheme you are happy with. An appropriately retro font, such as Lobster Two Italic which we have used here, plays a key role in setting the tone and theme of your artwork.

Sizing up
Click on the word Size and drag right or left to quickly increase or decrease the font size.

Different blends
There are plenty of blend modes to choose from; try out combinations with the texture layers to get different effects.

Font colour
The Type Tool will use whatever colour is currently loaded in your Foreground colour palette.



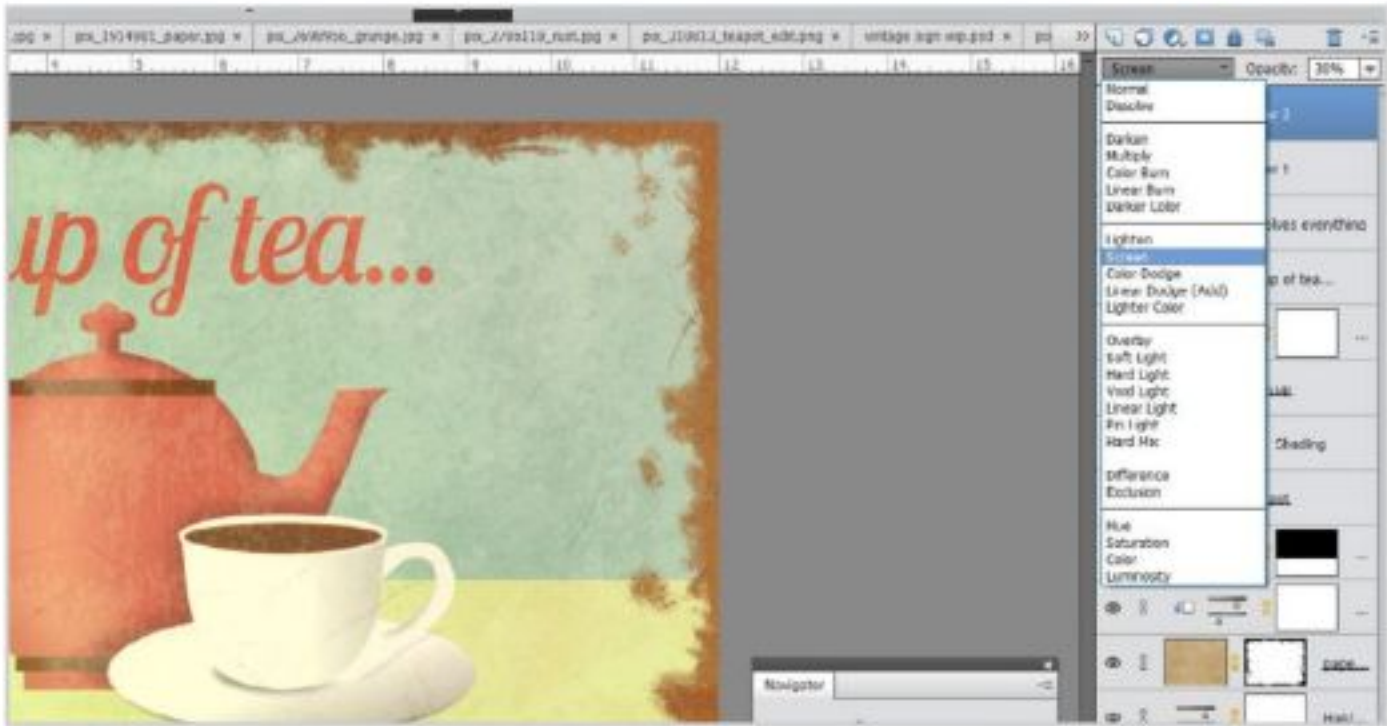
01 Add the text

Select the Type Tool (T) and choose the Lobster Two Italic font with a colour of R:200, G:89, B:71. Type out the text on two layers, the top line in 115pt and the lower in 90pt, and position them as needed to fit the layout.



02 Paste in texture

Copy and paste 'pix_2698956_grunge.jpg' into your artwork, at the top of the layer stack. Set the layer's blending mode to Hard Light and its Opacity to 20%, then resize to fill the canvas.



03 Textures and adjustments

Press Cmd/Ctrl+L and move the grey to slider to 1.18 and white to 140. Add the 'pix_1846847_scratches.jpg' texture, resize it to fit and set it to Screen and 30% Opacity.



04 Final texture and Levels edit

Paste in the final texture, 'pix_1659117_vintage.jpg', set its blending mode to Color Burn and Opacity to 30%. Add a Levels adjustment layer at the top of the layer stack and set the black to 46 and grey to 1.15.



Graphic Pen

Create a merged layer at the top of the stack, and use the Graphic Pen filter to add more texture to the image.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE



Sketch fur in Elements

Creating animal paintings is fun, but how can you create realistic fur?

One of the best things about drawing animals is that you can get detailed and really bring the creature to life through nothing more than your own brushstrokes. Whether you're drawing freehand or keenly following a reference photo, it doesn't matter all that much; you can sculpt the image with your own hand, and that's an amazing thing to experience.

When it comes to drawing animals, you'll no doubt find that you spend most of the time drawing fur. While it may seem intimidating, fur is an interesting texture to sketch; it has clear direction, it can vary in colour, often across the animal itself, and perhaps best of all, it's actually pretty easy to draw. All you

have to do is flick the brush to create a stroke; do this a few more times and you've created a whole patch of fur.

In this tutorial, we're going to be creating an expressive fox from tight brushstrokes across the page. Of course, if you have another start image you'd like to use – perhaps you want to draw your pet dog or a horse you snapped out on a walk, you're more than welcome to use that instead. And if you're a good enough artist that you don't even need a reference photo, even better!

Drawing animals is a fun pursuit, and can really help teach you a lot about using and controlling brushes in Elements, not to mention styles of artwork in general.

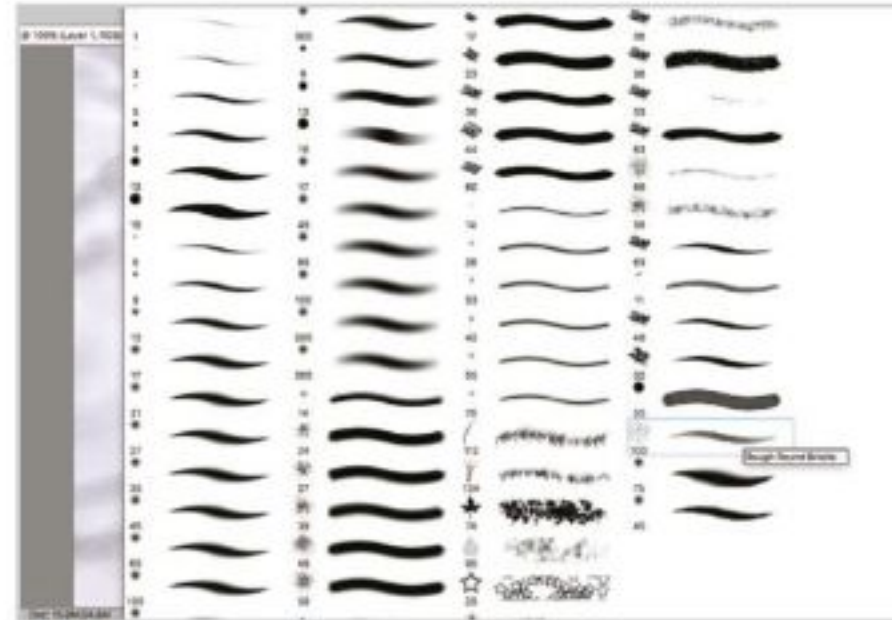
Get sketching

From the opening strokes right down to the finishing touches



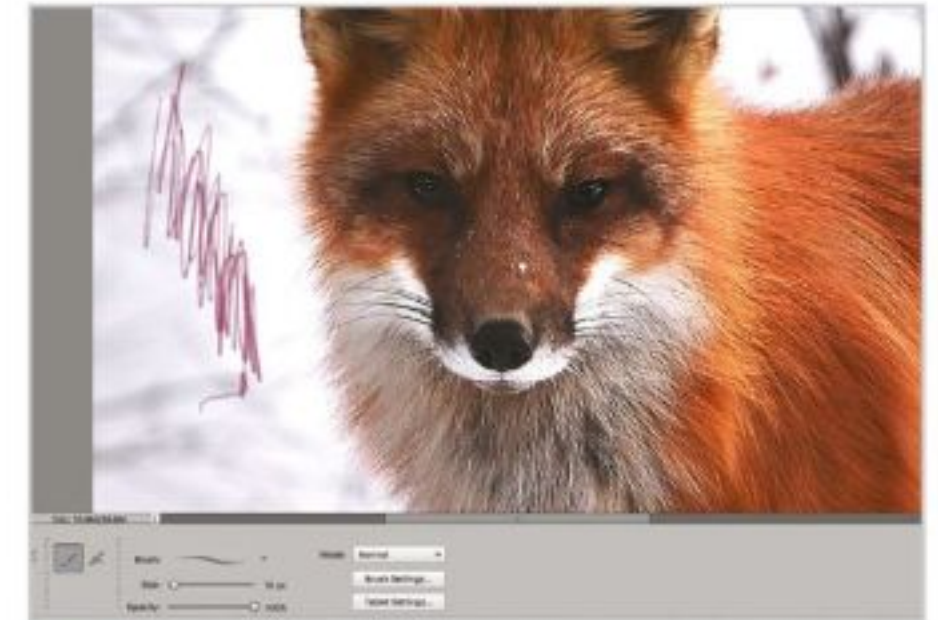
01 Introduce the fox

Start off by creating a new document and adding the supplied fox image to the document on a new layer. This is what we're going to trace to create our sketch, so make sure that you place it in the centre of the document.



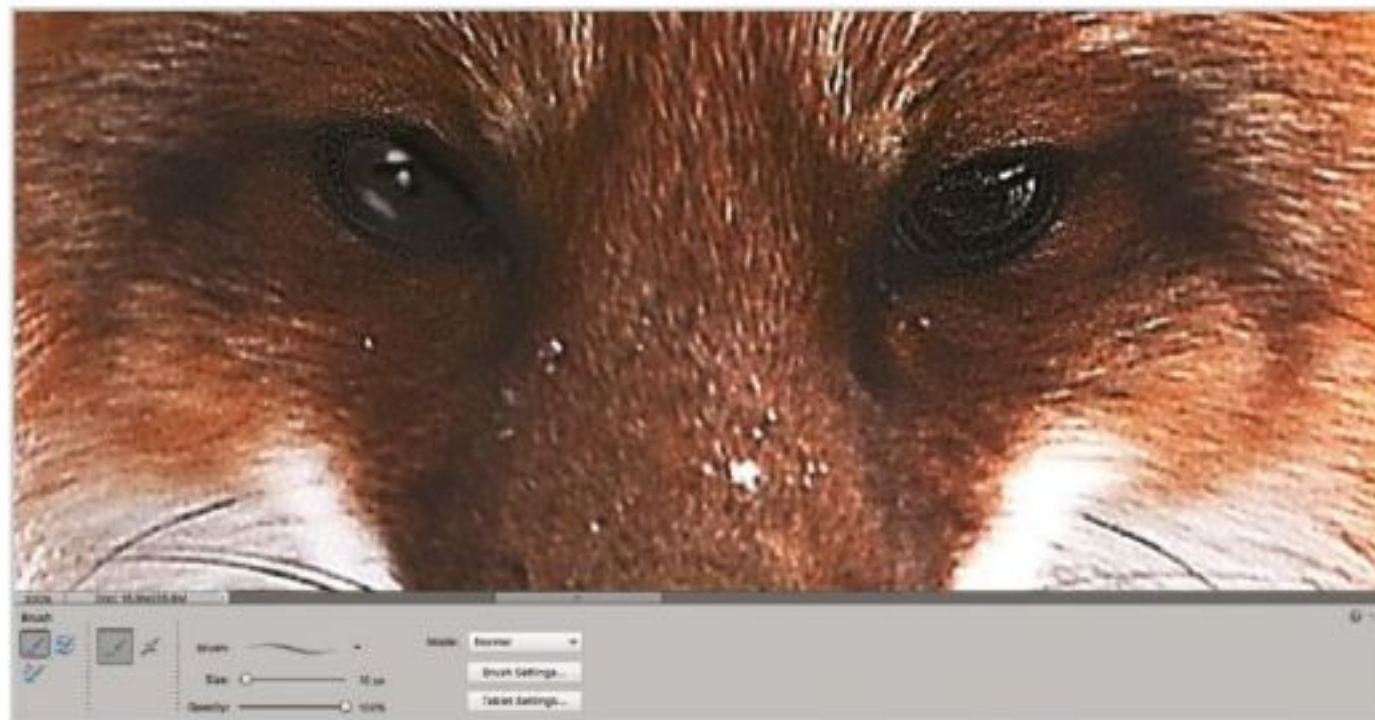
02 Pick your brush

Go to Brush (B) and select the Rough Round Bristle option from the palette. Reduce the size of the brush to 10px by hitting [and make sure the opacity is at 100%. This is the brush we're going to use to create the image.



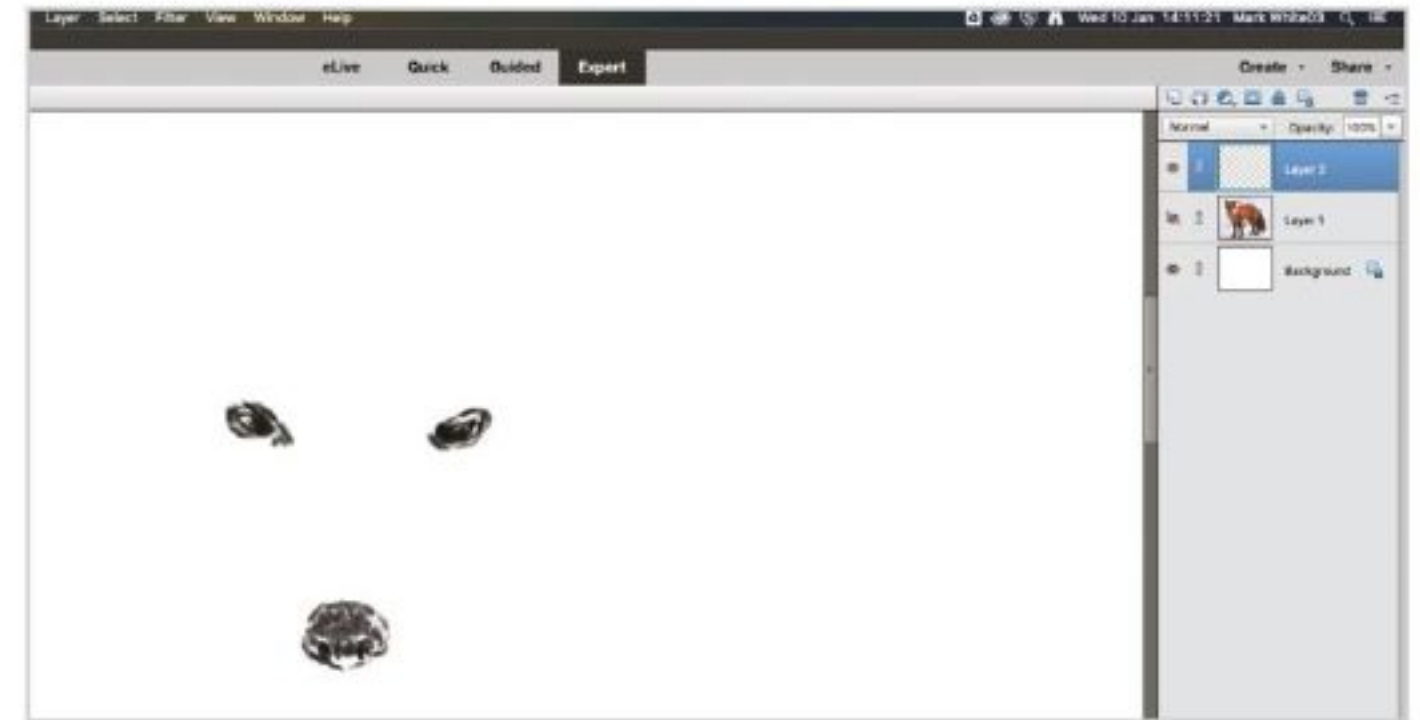
03 Have a play

Create a new layer and just sketch a little with the brush that you've created to test it out before you start sketching for real. It should look a little rough around the edges to give it more believability as a pencil.



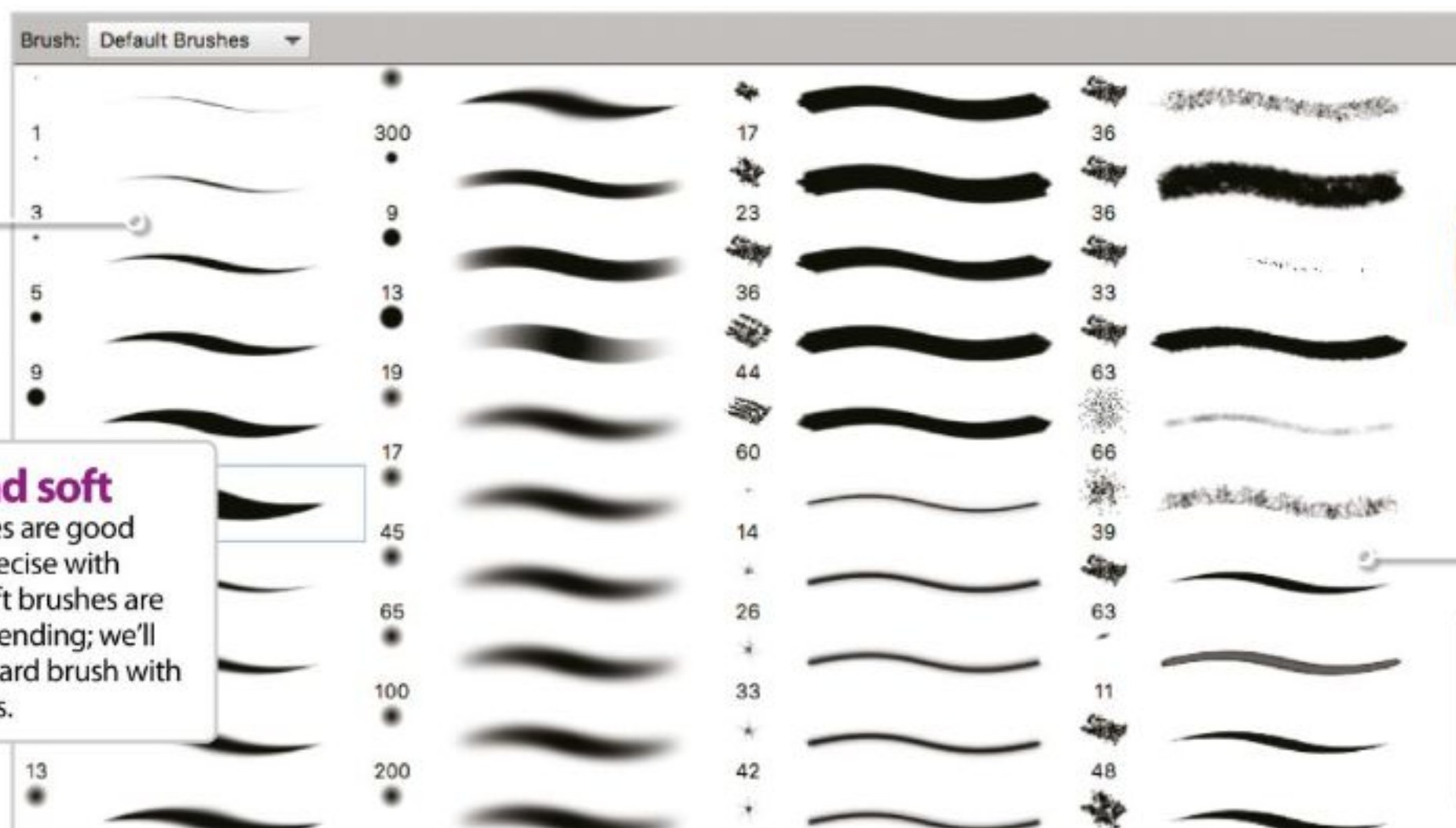
05 Begin with the eyes

Start sketching over the eyes of the fox. Alt/Opt-click to select a colour and then brush lightly over the eyes of the fox to fill in the colour. Make sure to draw in the white glint from the eyes over the black. Continue with the nose.



06 Hide layers to reveal

Continue sketching on this new layer. If you ever want to see how this picture is coming along, simply hide the guide layer, and you'll see your artwork on its own against the white background.



Hard and soft

Hard brushes are good for being precise with drawing, soft brushes are better for blending; we'll be using a hard brush with rough edges.

What does it mean?

DIGITAL SKETCHING – You might wonder when creating pencil-style images in Elements, why we are using the Brush tool when there's a Pencil tool. The reason is simple; the Brush is customisable in terms of style and size, while the Pencil isn't. The pencil is better for basic laying out of images.

Speed lines

As well as using default brushes for drawing, other brushes such as leaves and stars can be useful in certain projects.

Creative projects

EXPERT TIP

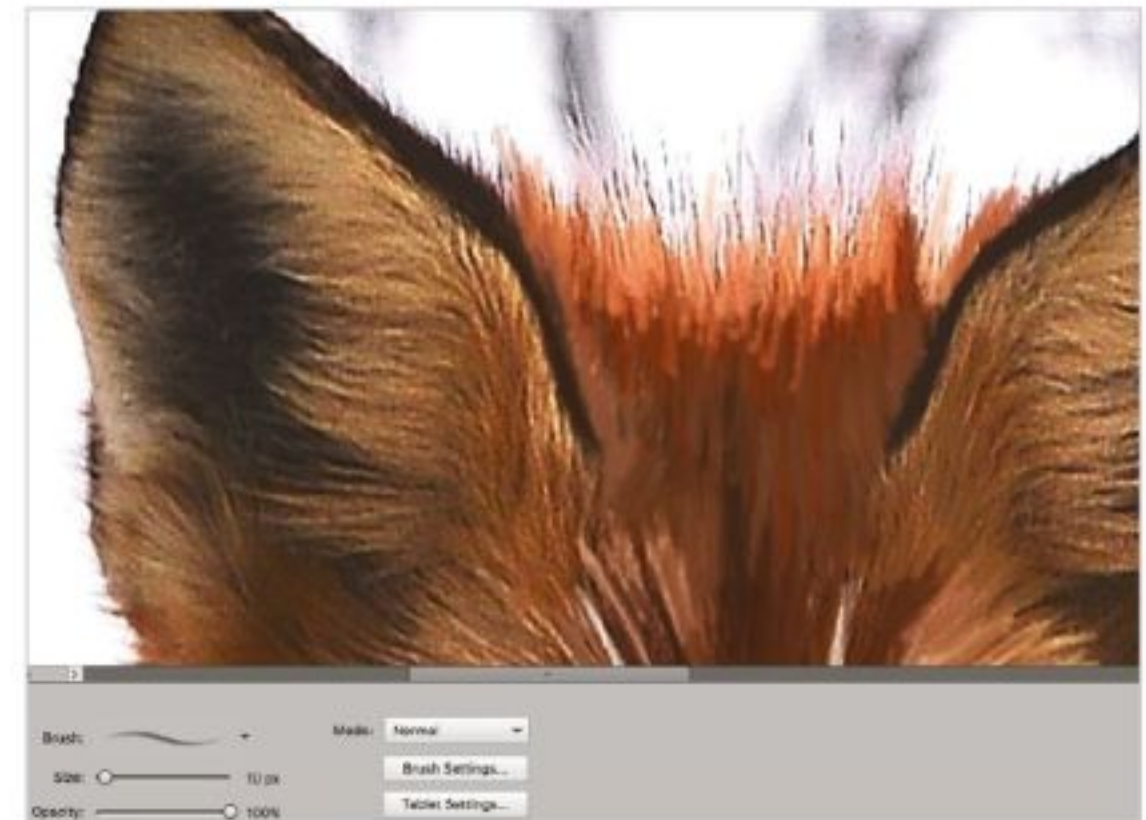
Using adjustments

Adjustments are used in many projects, but they're only to enhance what you've already created, rather than adding something else to the image. In this case, we use a Gradient Map adjustment to add new tones to the image, and Brightness/Contrast to give tone and shape to the original sketch. Restrain yourself here, as it is only done to add to the image, rather than transform it. Of course, all adjustments are relative and if you wish to add others, or not even use the ones suggested, that's completely up to you!



06 Continue with the fur

Alt/Opt-click on particular colours within the fox's fur to select them, then make short, sharp strokes with your brush to draw the fur over the fox. Get used to creating different length strokes for different lengths of fur, and just cover the fox's head with your brushstrokes.



07 Sketch to the edge

Sketching up to the edge of fur is easy because the edge of fur looks like the edge of a brushstroke. Flick the brush up to the edge of where you want the fur to end, but be sure not to then drag the brush back down, as this will look unrealistic.



08 Fill out the face

Keep on with what you're doing. Hide the guide layer to reveal what the sketch looks like every now and then, and keep patiently sketching the brushstrokes over the fox's face to fill out the image a little.

09 Build up the picture

As you continue creating strokes, you'll draw all over the fox. You'll find some strokes are long, some are short and some fur needs to be drawn in a different direction. Just persevere until the fox starts taking shape a little more.

10 Finish off sketching

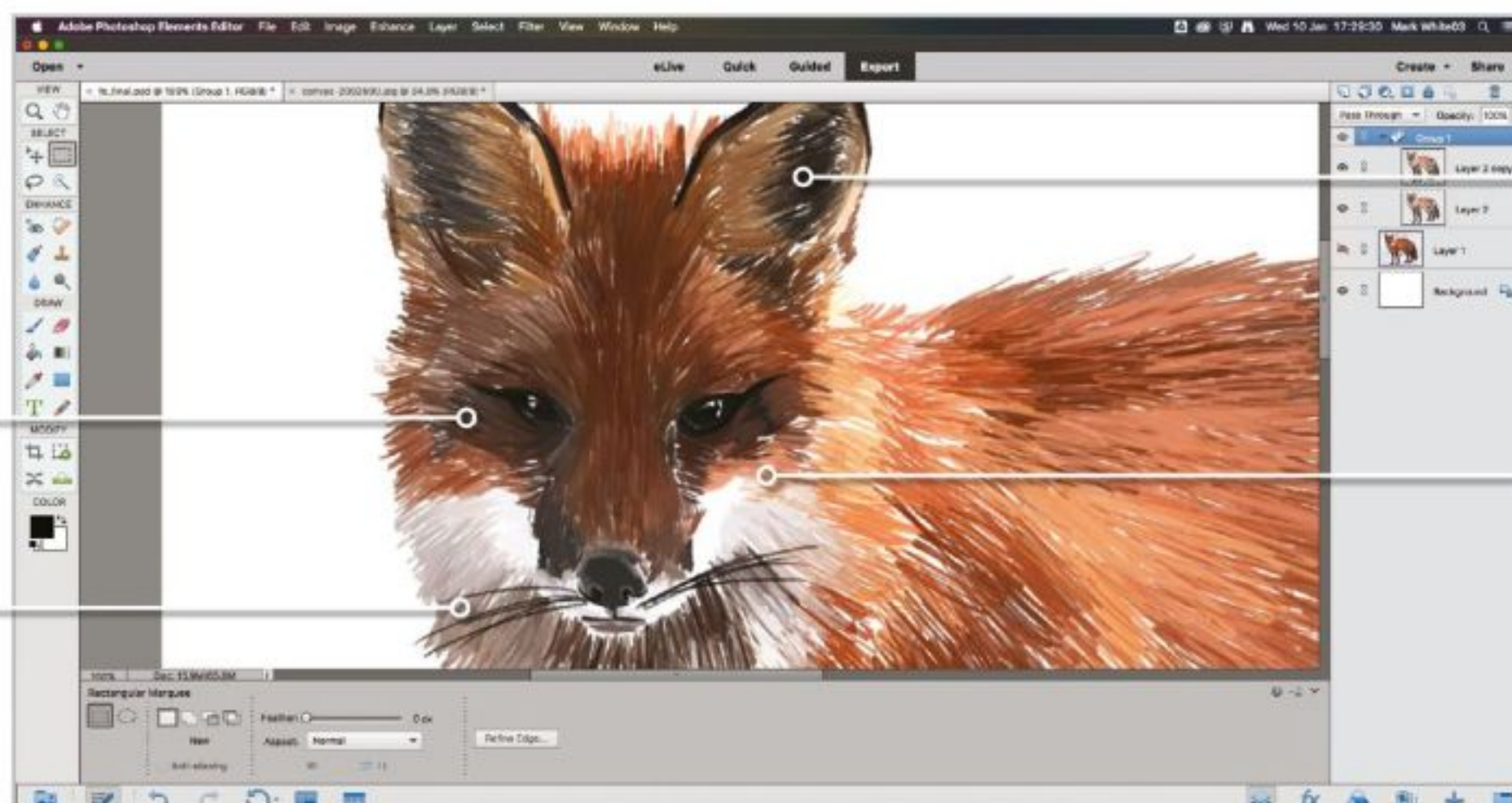
Once the fox is complete, make sure to sketch over any the places you may have missed. Then, Alt/Opt-drag the sketch layer above itself to duplicate it. This will thicken out your brushstrokes and make the fox's fur look a little denser.

Eyes

With a really dark colour, brush upward away from the eyes to almost suggest eyeliner on the fox.

Whiskers

Draw the whiskers freehand, just flicking the brush sideways to create the effect.

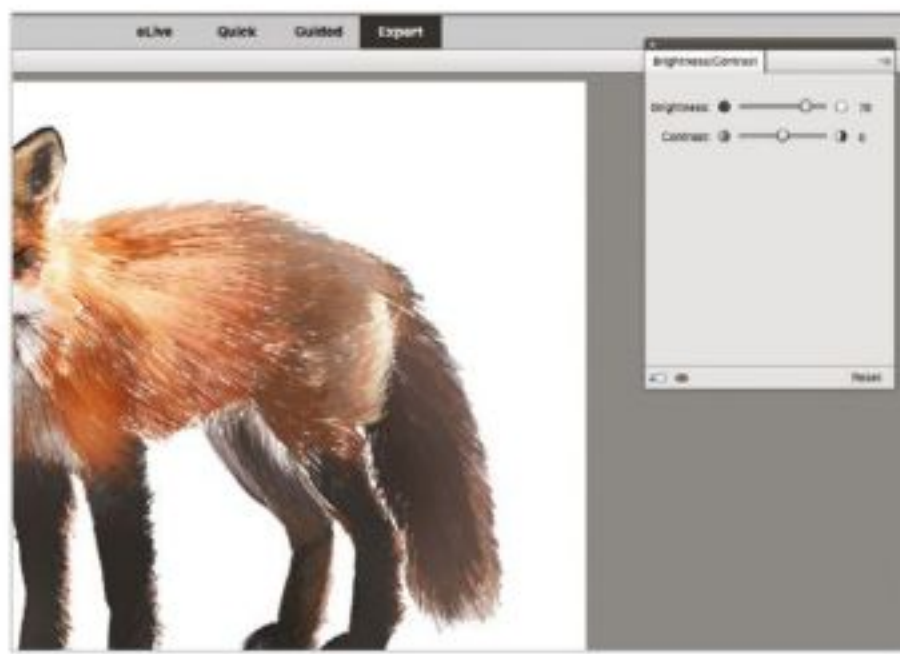


Ears

Flick the fur from the ears outward, following the fur in the real fox's ears, and don't be afraid to overlap strokes, as this looks natural.

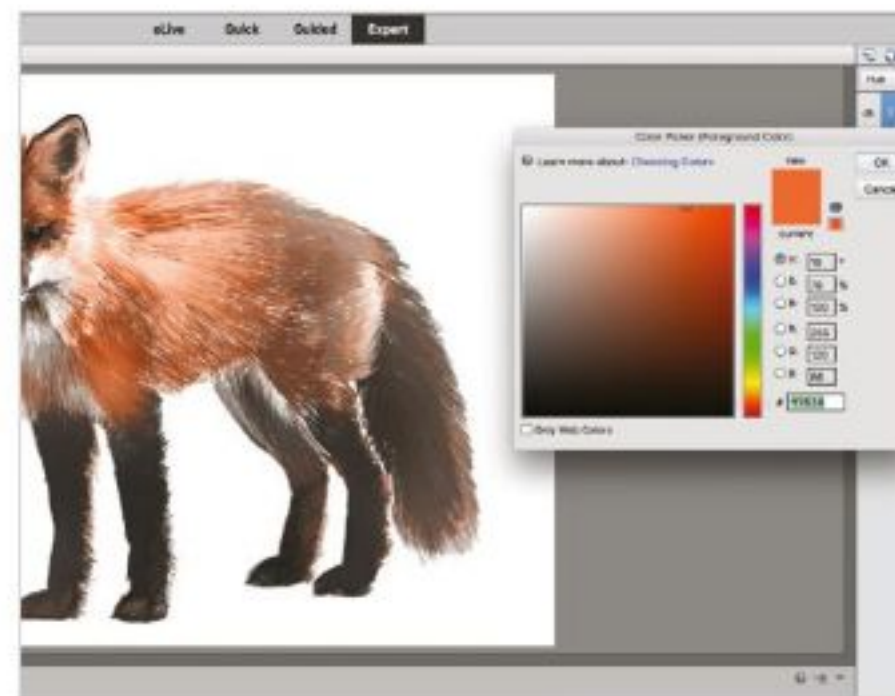
Face

Follow the direction of the fur on the fox's face, whether around the eyes, down the nose or facing outward on either side.



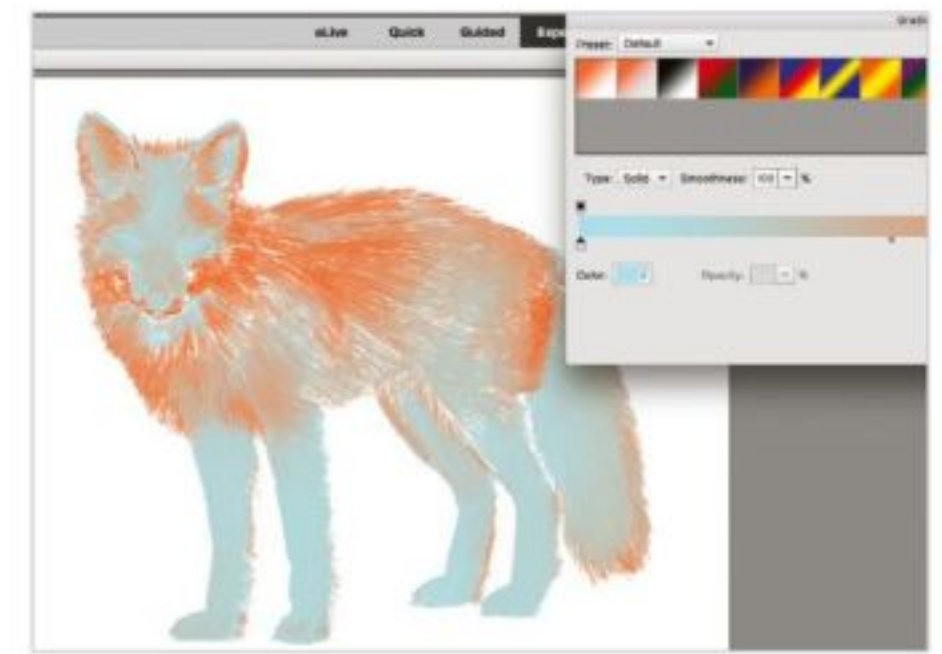
11 Increase brightness

Go to the Fill Layer icon and choose the Brightness/Contrast option. Increase the brightness of the fox and then hit Mask, before inverting (Cmd/Ctrl+I). With a big, soft, white brush, mask in the brightness back over key areas of the image. Clip to the sketch (Alt/Opt-click).



12 Recolour slightly

Create a new layer again and clip to the Brightness/Contrast adjustment. Fill with #ff7838 and set to Hue. This will lightly recolor your fox without being too overwhelming, and it will leave in some of the tones from the original sketch.



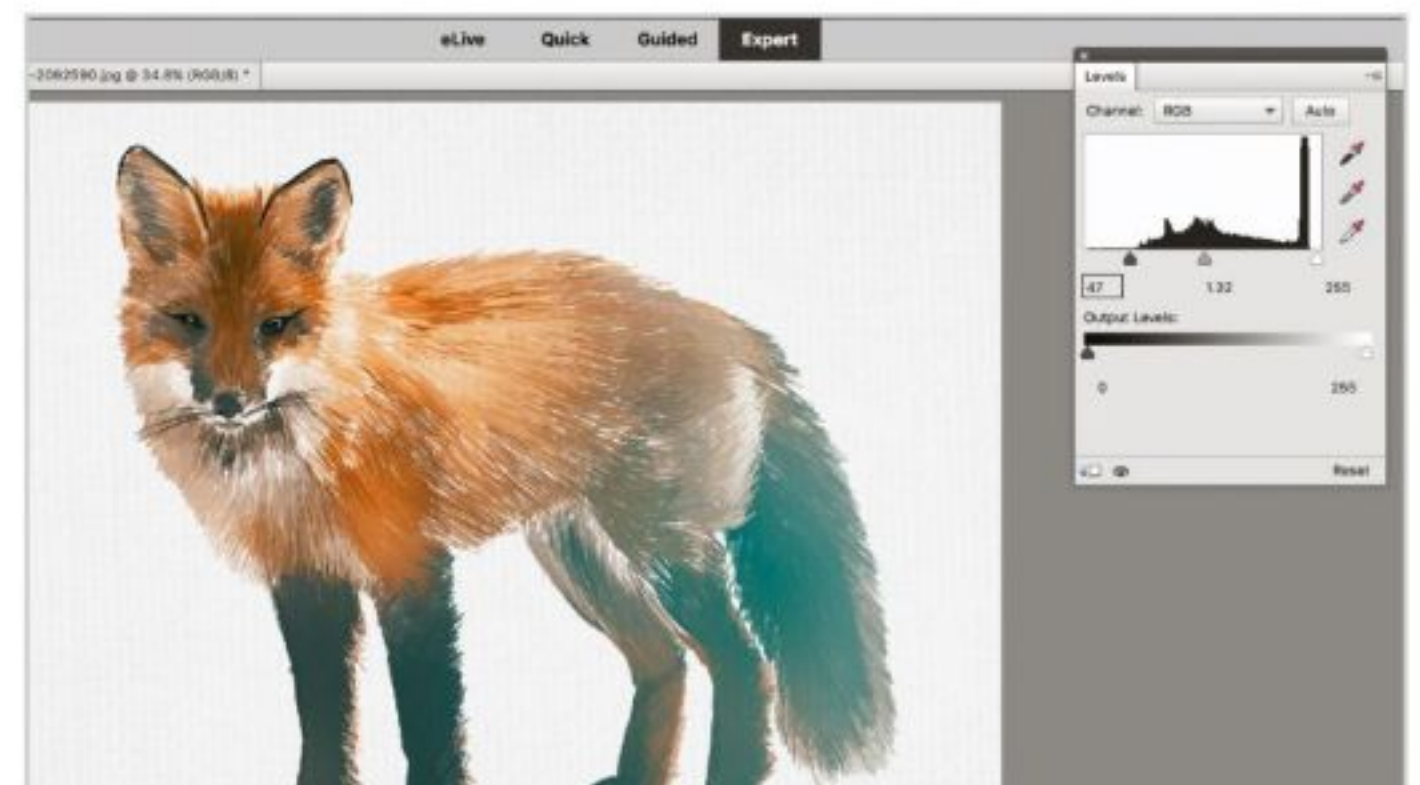
13 Gradient Map adjustment

Set up a Gradient Map adjustment of #aed0d4 to #ff7838 above the fox and again, clip the adjustment to the image. Mask, invert, and mask in this coloring over the tail, partially over the legs and a bit over the back to add cool and warm tone to the image. Set to Soft Light blend mode.



14 Add texture

Insert the supplied canvas texture and hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U to completely desaturate it. Set the layer to Multiply and reduce the opacity to 30% to keep the canvas subtle in the background of the picture.



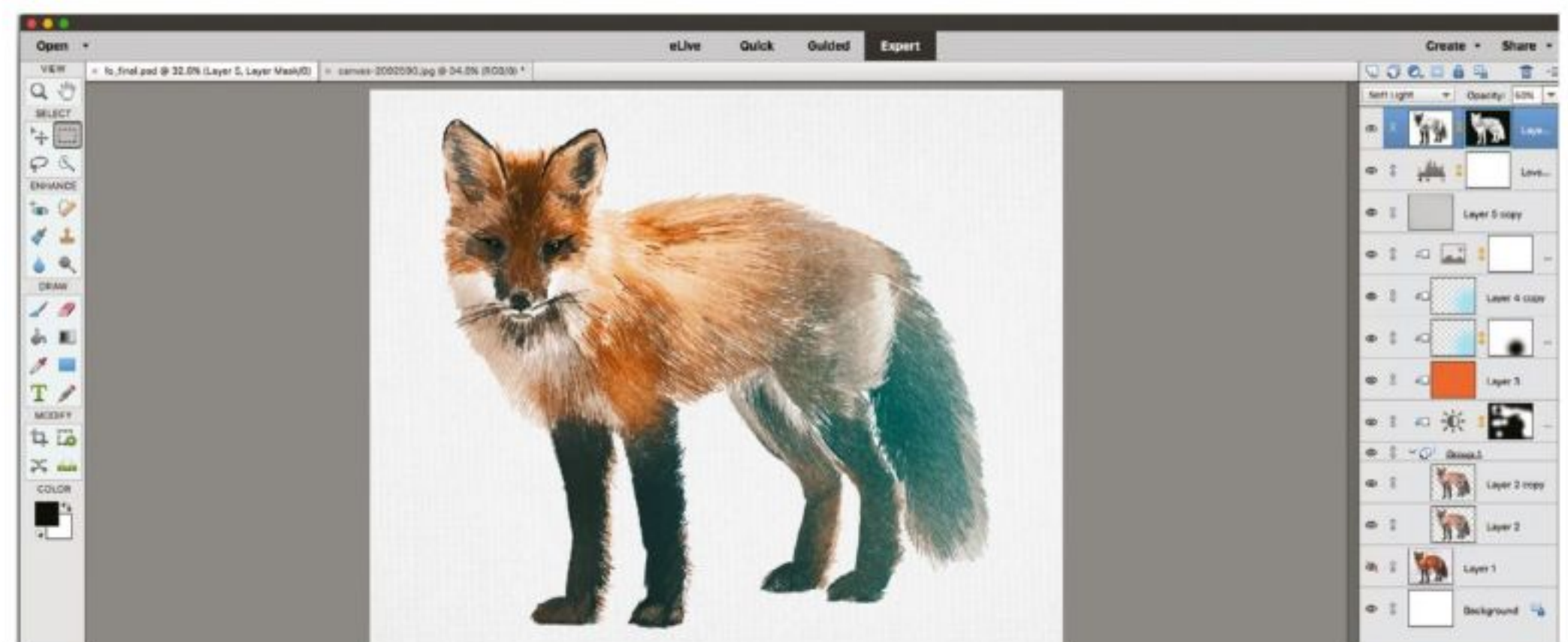
15 Adjust contrast

Use Levels in the Fill Layer icon to tweak the contrast of the image a little more, and drag the stoppers across the histogram. This should boost the blacks and make your brushstrokes a lot more visible in the image.

Focus attention on the fox How tone can affect where your eye is drawn

This is a project that involves a lot of brushing, but as you might have noticed, the adjustments are just as important a part of the process as the creation of the image itself.

As with most art projects, the first draft – in this case, the constant tracing of the fox – can always be improved, and in our case, we're going to use adjustments to increase contrast, work on tone, and brighten up certain areas of the picture. The brightness should focus more on the face and the blue tones should appear over by the tail, to make the face look warmer.



Creative projects



Add clouds
Create a new layer and go to Filter> Render> Clouds. Set this to Screen and mask in your clouds over the mountains.

Rotate if necessary
Use the Transform options to rotate your panosphere until it's in an optimum position that looks good.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE



Create a panosphere

Build a world of your own using Elements' magical distort ability

They're sometimes referred to as 'panoramic planets' or 'creative worlds', but whatever you call them – we're going with 'panosphere' – they're a great use of the Distort filters. Panospheres are a cool way to display a panoramic image in a much smaller space. We're going to get as creative as we possibly can in this image by compositing together a brand-new environment from terrain, lakes and landmarks, but it's totally possible to create a panosphere from a single

panorama. Just make sure that the edges blend seamlessly together when you apply the Polar Coordinates filter (see later), and you're fine!
Aside from looking cool, panospheres teach you a lot of useful editing techniques. There are masking and retouching skills involved in making this, not to mention the adjustments that go into blending the whole piece together into a unified planet. This is a great project to try out if you're looking to push your creativity, and it can help you practice a world of editing techniques!

Build the world Create a skyline before looping it into a sphere with filters



01 Split your picture

Start off by importing your image of a horizon. Select a portion of it, Ctrl/right-click and choose Layer Via Cut. Move the two parts of the image to opposite sides so that when they join again, the two sides match up together.



02 Bring in the mountains

Repeat the previous step with the mountains. Repair the split down the centre of the image by using the Clone Stamp Tool and start to make the landscape look like a continuous panorama rather than a comped-together set of photos.



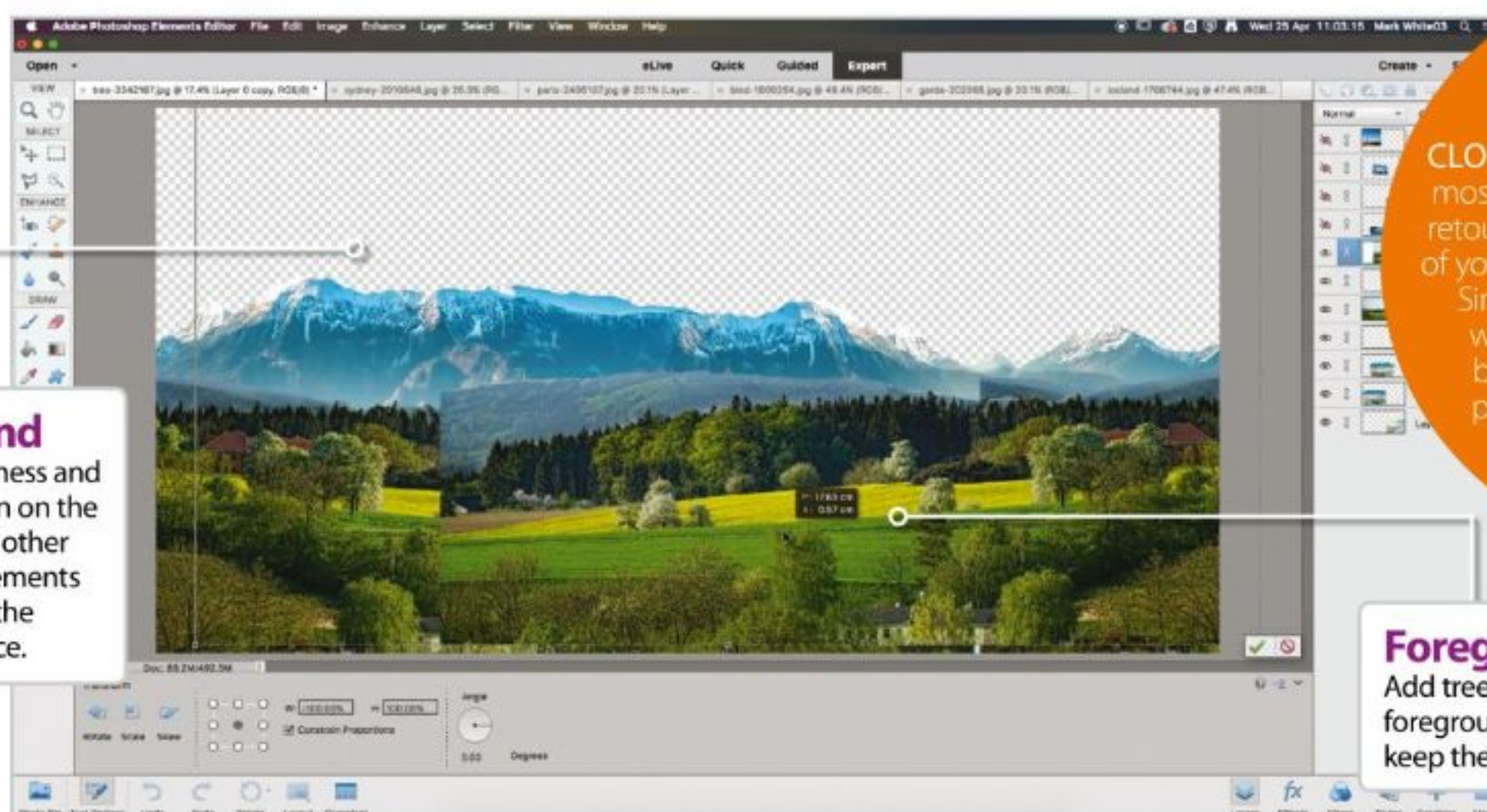
03 Mask in some water

Add in the water image and move it to wherever you'd like it in the scene. Hit Mask and then Invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I). With a soft, white brush of around 20% Opacity, fade in the water across the area you've placed it.



04 Blend the scene together

Insert more images such as grassy ridges to link the water to the land and using the same masking techniques, blend the image as a whole together. You can make whatever edits you see fit to the terrain; just study images of real places to see what needs to be edited.



Background

Turn the brightness and saturation down on the mountains and other background elements slightly to give the effect of distance.

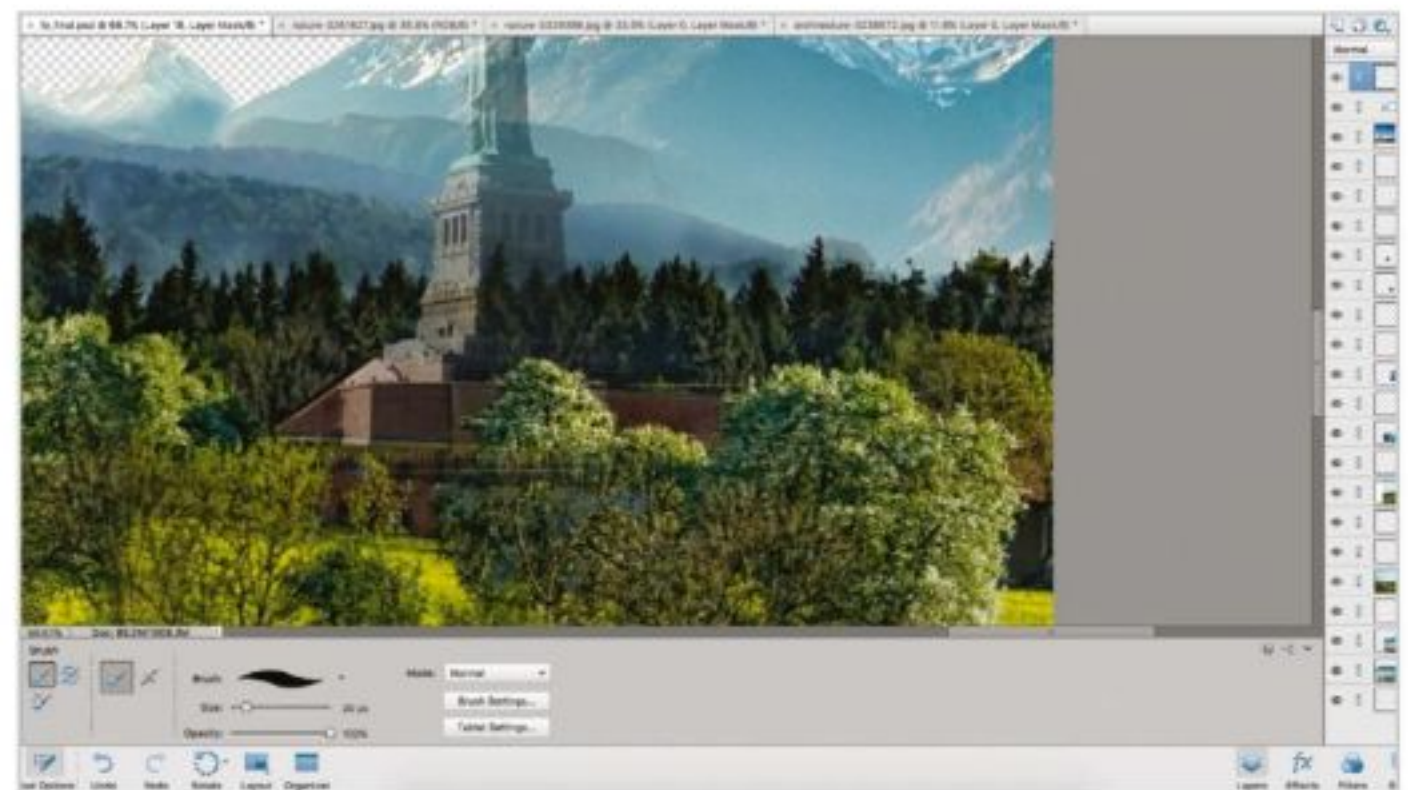
What does it mean?

CLONE STAMP TOOL – One of the most trusted tools when it comes to retouching, as it can duplicate parts of your image across to other places. Simply Alt/Opt-click where you want to copy the pixels from, before drawing over another part of the image. Use it with low Opacity and build up the strokes.

Foreground

Add trees, fields and landmarks to the foreground of the image to populate it, and keep these elements bright and saturated.

Creative projects



05 Add some elements

As you build up your image, you can insert any elements you like into the piece, such as this waterfall or the rocks that are blended into the final piece. Feel free to build over elements that you've already blended into the project so far.

06 Insert monuments

A skyline wouldn't be the same without a couple of landmarks, and we're going to use a few famous ones – the Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty and Sydney Opera House – to make our piece look more recognisable. Blend them in with the same techniques.



07 Recolour the scene

Create a new layer. Work on harmonising the tones of your piece by selecting new colours and with a soft, low Opacity brush, touching over the scene to give it new shades. The water, the grass and some of the rocks may benefit from new colours in particular.

08 Tie it together

Make little changes here and there to ensure that your whole scene is blended together effectively. These might include masking in a beach between the sea and the land, and adding some smoke over the water using Filter> Render> Clouds.

09 Adjust

With the skyline complete, let's adjust it. Use the Levels command (under the Fill Layer icon above the Layers panel) to tweak the tone and contrast of the piece, and add a white to black gradient, set to Soft Light, to the image as a whole.

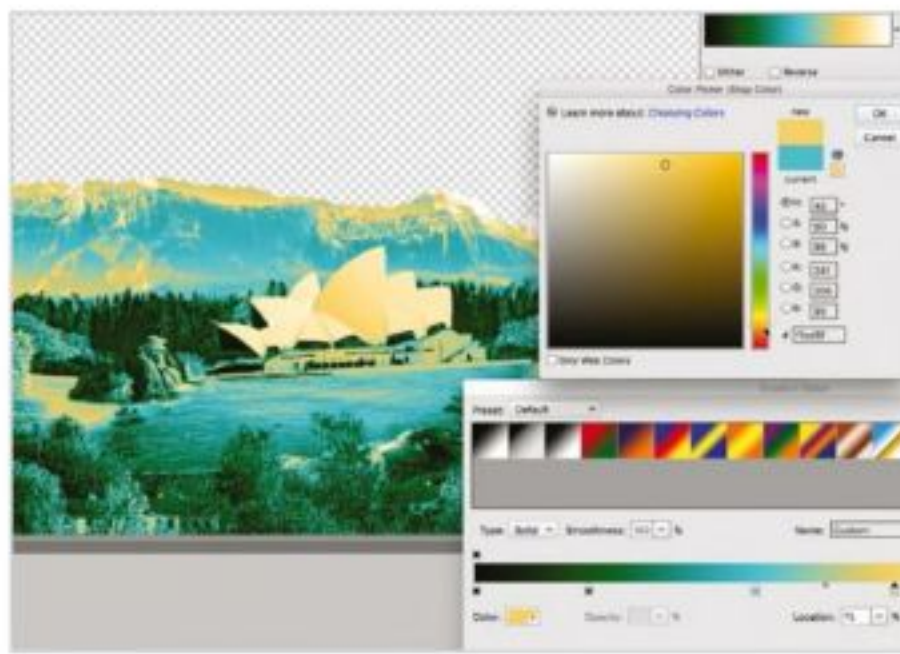
Photo Filter
Add a warm Photo Filter so that the image stands out against the blue of the sky.

Gradient
Add a light to dark gradient, set to Soft Light, to make the bottom of the image darker; this improves the perspective when the landscape is turned into a sphere.

Levels
Use the Levels to adjust the tone of your image, by tweaking the stoppers along the histogram.

Gradient Map
Using Gradient Maps on new layers, set to Soft Light, can help make your image look a little more cohesive.

The screenshot shows the Photoshop interface with the composite image. Three callout boxes with white backgrounds and black text point to specific areas of the image and the software's panels. The 'Photo Filter' box points to the sky area. The 'Gradient' box points to the bottom of the image. The 'Levels' box points to the Levels adjustment panel. The 'Gradient Map' box points to the Gradient Map layer in the Layers panel.



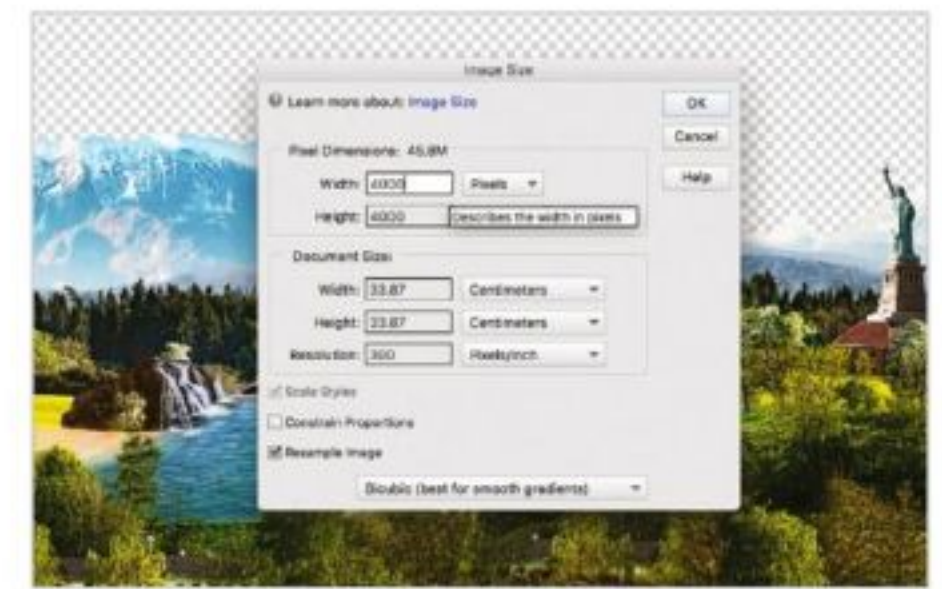
10 Harmonise colours

Apply a Gradient Map. Grab colours from the composition to form a gradient that goes from darker colours to lighter colours, and then set to Soft Light, 30% Opacity. This will give a more cohesive overall tone to the image.



11 Soften and sharpen

Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E and duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J). With the first layer, go to Filter> Noise> Reduce Noise and choose Strength: 10, with other values at 0. With the second layer, go to Filter> Other> High Pass; choose 5px, hit OK and set the layer to Overlay.



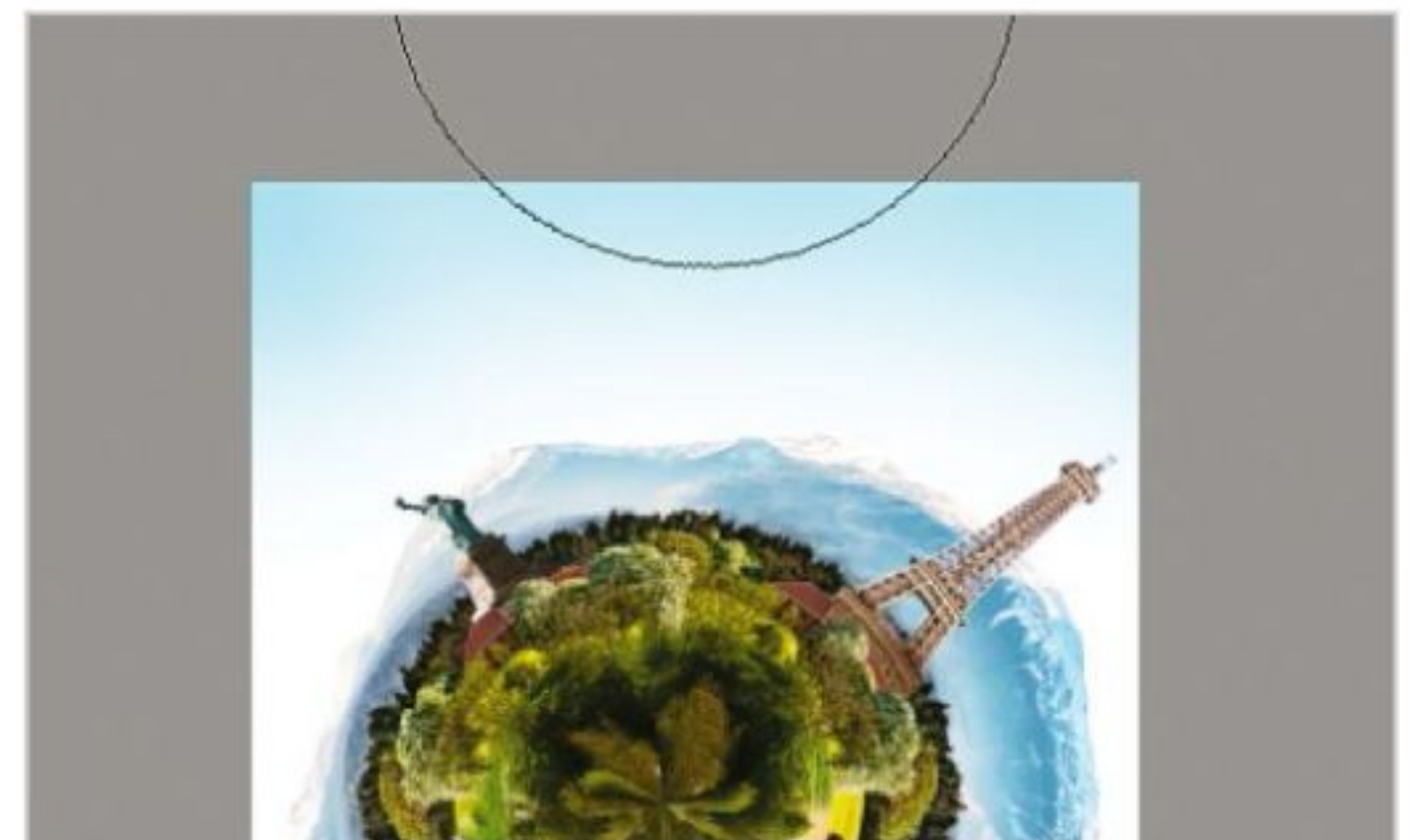
12 Resize

Merge all your layers together and go to Image> Resize> Image Size. Uncheck the Constrain Properties box and reduce the Width setting so that it's the same size as the height of your image, to make it a square. Hit OK. Use Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T) to flip it vertically.



13 Distort

Go to Filter> Distort> Polar Coordinates to loop the skyline around into a sphere. Use the Rectangular to Polar setting and then hit OK. Again, retouch what you have so far using the Clone Stamp to get it looking perfect.



14 Blue sky

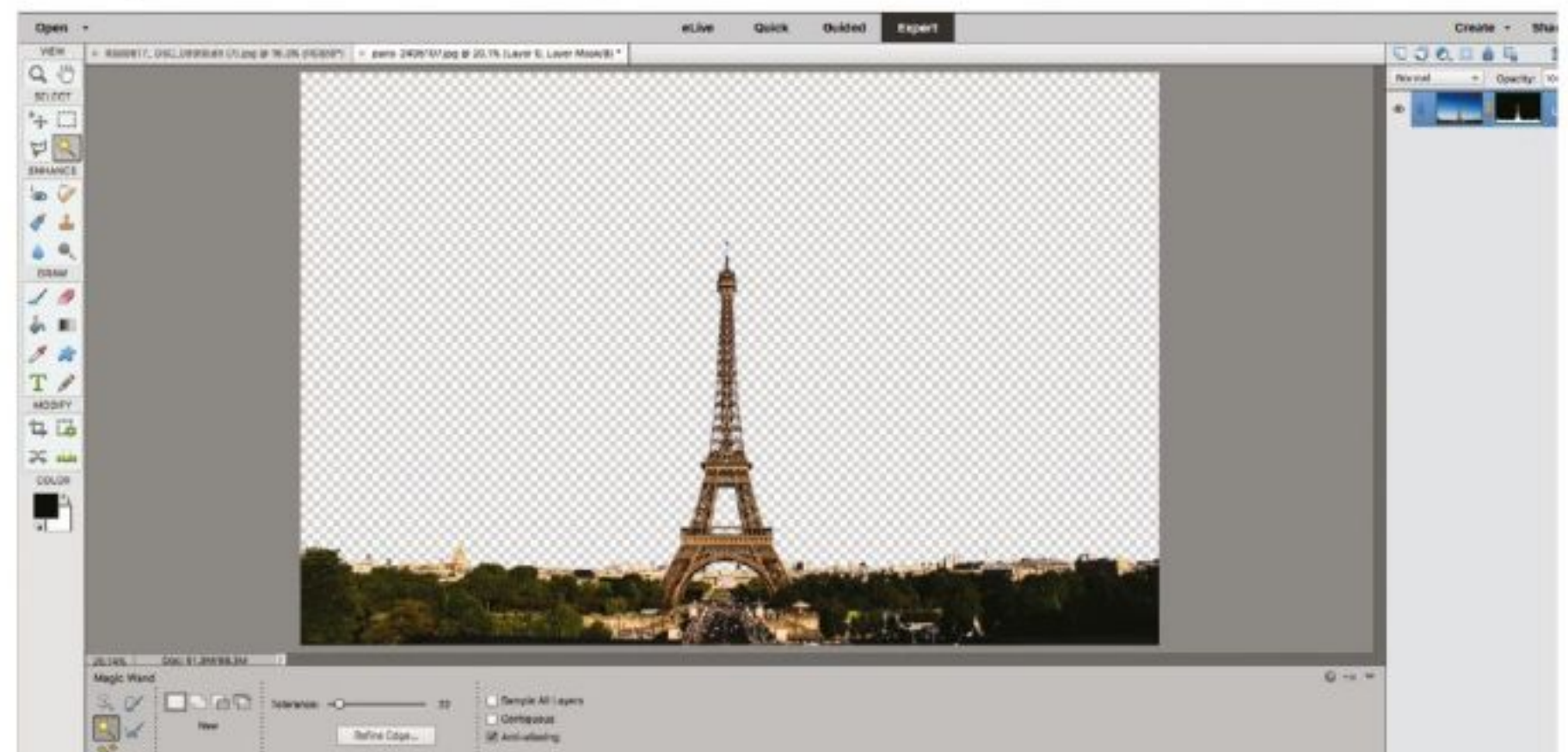
Create a new document and paste your pansphere onto the canvas. Create a new layer just below it and using a big, soft, light blue brush, touch around the edges of the document to create a sky around the world.

Masking landmarks Cut out your monuments with precision

There are plenty of ways to mask in Elements, and when it comes to cutting out buildings to put into your pansphere, there are some methods that are better than others.

The Magic Wand option is one that's surprisingly good in this case. By selecting all of the blue in the image with Contiguous unchecked, you can erase large parts of the sky quickly by simply clicking and masking. Use the Refine Edge Tool once you've got your selection to edit it slightly.

There are lots of other ways to make selections and mask objects in and out of your project. One way is to use the Brush Tool to draw straight onto your mask as in most cases, this will give you the best control over what is visible and what isn't in your image.



Creative projects

What does it mean?

AUTO SELECTION – One of the newest additions to Elements, the Auto Selection Tool offers traditional Marquee and Lasso tools but instead of cutting around the edge, it intuitively works out the nearest edge and selects it for you. This means you can make rougher selections with more precision.

Textures

Add a texture such as Noise or Canvas to the finished image to add a little more interest to the background than just white space.

Mask over one side

Masking the city image out from one side of the portrait means that you can still focus on the subject's face and the city.

SOURCE FILE AVAILABLE

Create double exposures

Blend two images with Screen, layers, masks and adjustments

Double exposures were originally a mistake of traditional photography, and now they're one of the most striking effects seen in digital art all over the internet. They rely on overlaying one or more images over an existing portrait and blending them together to suggest that they're somehow connected. They're somewhat straightforward to create, and so popular in fact, that Photoshop Elements includes a Guided Edit of how to make a double exposure in the 2018 version of the software.

Well, in this tutorial, we're going to be focusing on how to make a double exposure the long way, using the Expert mode in Elements. We will

freely admit that it's not the easiest path to creating one, but it is the best way to ensure that you have complete creative control. The Guided Edits are great for speed and ease, but the Expert mode enables you to delve a little deeper.

Double exposures are particularly great because there really aren't any rules about what does or doesn't look good: it's all in the experimentation. You may find yourself searching for more stock photos to add, or adjusting your images differently to how we suggest; sometimes the most amazing work is created by experimentation or mistake, after all.

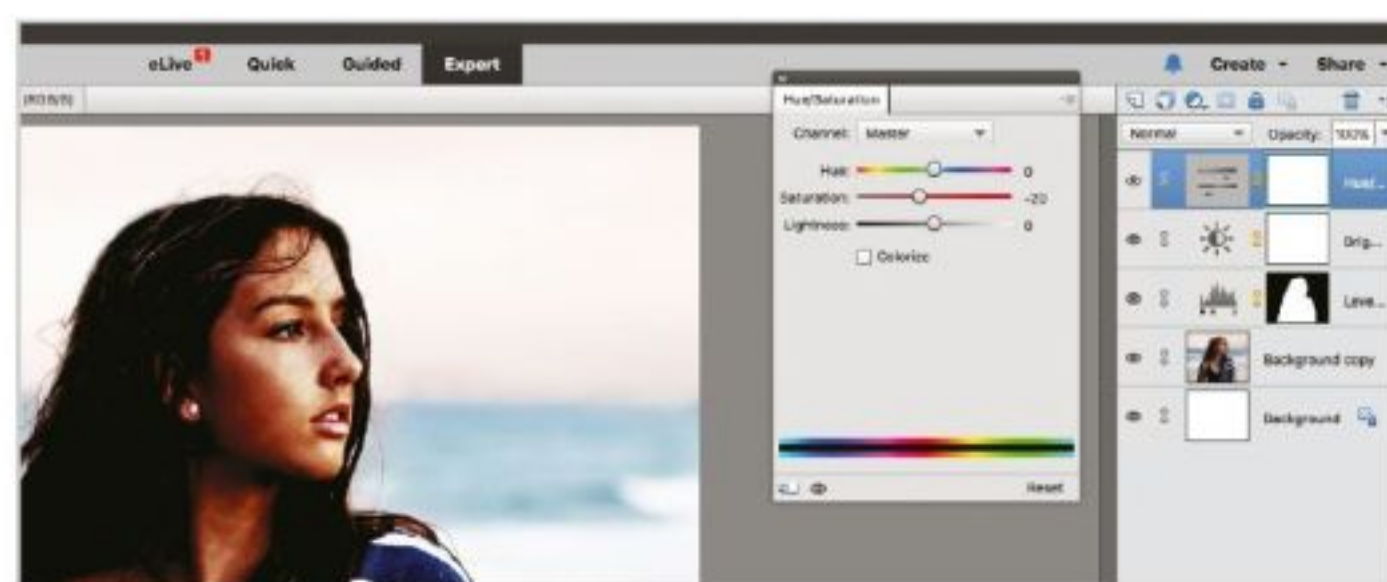
ORIGINALS

A little exposure Start blending to create a photographic masterpiece



01 Tweak the portrait

Start off by dropping the supplied portrait image into Elements and use the Levels to adjust the contrast of the subject. Slide the stoppers along the bottom of the histogram until you have clear shade as well as light in the face.



02 Adjust further

Continue with the adjustments; grab the Auto Selection Tool and make an outline around your subject before setting it as the mask. Open the Brightness/Contrast adjustment and increase, then reduce Saturation in the image as a whole with Hue/Saturation.



03 Add the beach

Drag in the beach image, set to Screen and hit Mask. Cmd/Ctrl-click on the layer mask preview on the Levels layer; touch over the face and right-hand side of the subject to lessen the double-exposure effect on that side.



04 Finish with more adjustments

Create a black to white Gradient Map and set to Soft Light; continue with another Levels adjustment, this time focusing on the red, blue and green channels. Use Brightness/Contrast to finish up the image, group these layers, and set the group to 30% opacity.

TAKE IT FURTHER Guided Edit Get a little help in creating the double exposure



01 Crop and cut

Go to the Guided tab, click on Fun Edits and select Double Exposure. From there, the first thing to do will be to crop the image and select the subject using either Auto or Quick Selection. This helps to frame your image.



02 Choose an overlay

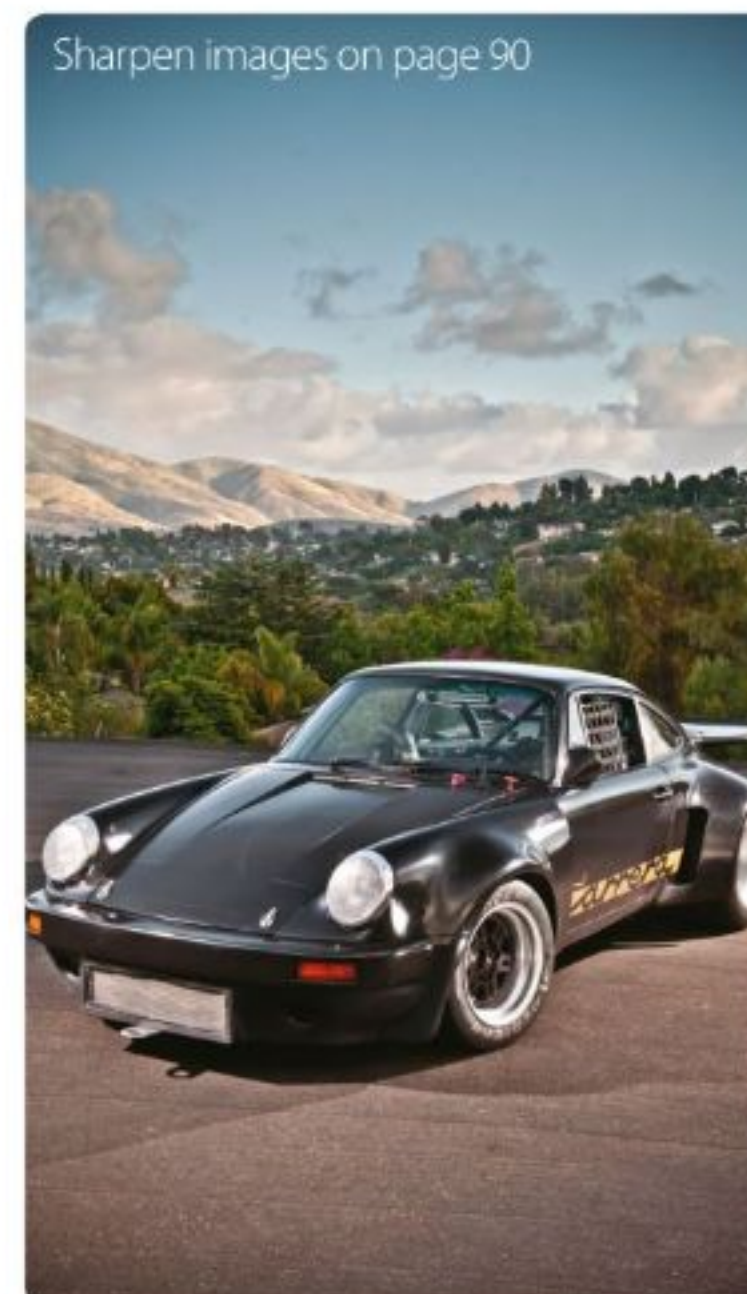
Pick between the three options for picture overlays – Forest, City or Cloud – or import your own image. You can change the intensity by using the corresponding slider and you can use the Move Tool to adjust the positioning.



03 Effects

Use the Effects panel to choose a colour style to blend into the image; again, use the Intensity slider to tone down the effect you're applying to the composition for a subtler finishing touch. This step is, of course, completely optional.

Glossary of key terms



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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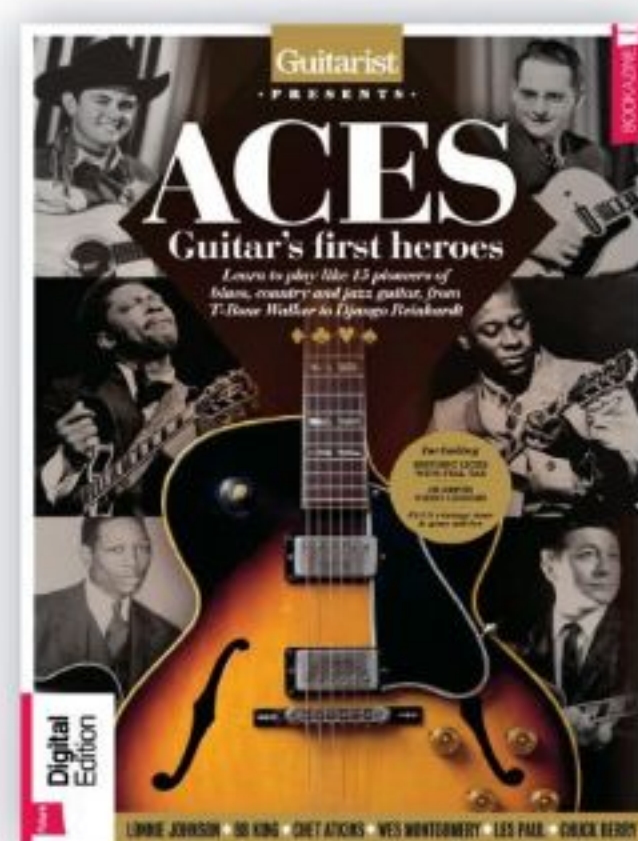
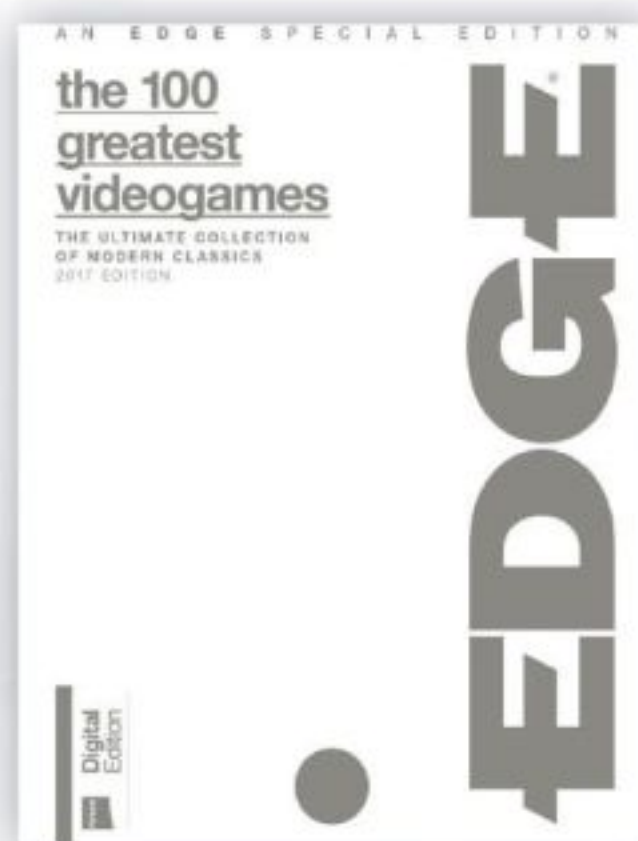


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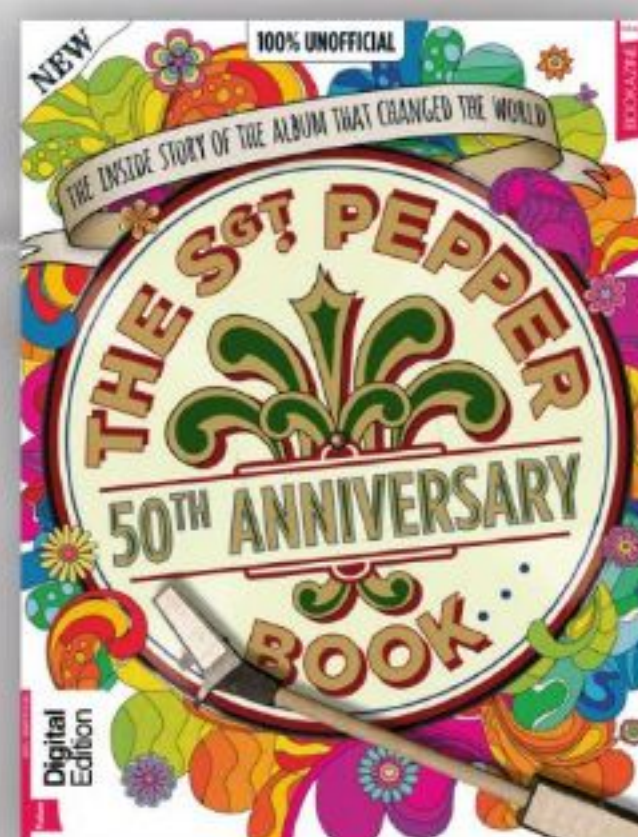
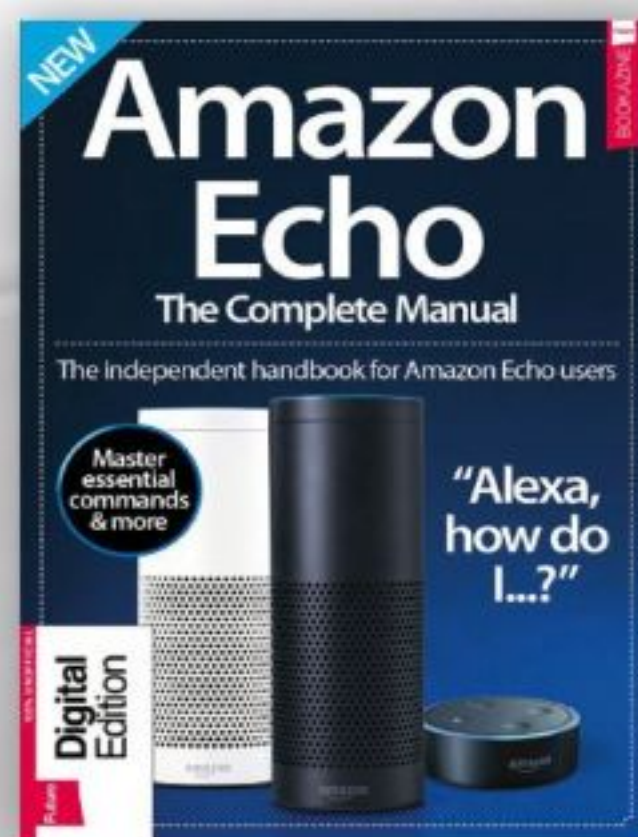


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