

Introduction to PhotoShop Elements 7

*What is
PhotoShop
Elements 7?*

PhotoShop Elements 7 is a version of the popular Photoshop Elements program that allows you to make changes to images. What kinds of changes? Almost anything you can imagine! At the simple end, you can adjust the brightness, colors, and contrast. At the more complicated end of things, you can paint, copy, paste, blur, distort, and even alter the photograph to look like a painting.

*How do I get
started?*

Click on the *Start* button in the lower left corner, go to the *Programs* option, and in the list that appears find *PhotoShop Elements 7*. (It may be in a folder labeled *Adobe*.)

*The Opening
Screen*

The first window that appears will look like this –



The large image will vary – it's sort of an advertisement for new functions in Photoshop Elements. What doesn't change is the four buttons across the top that look like this:



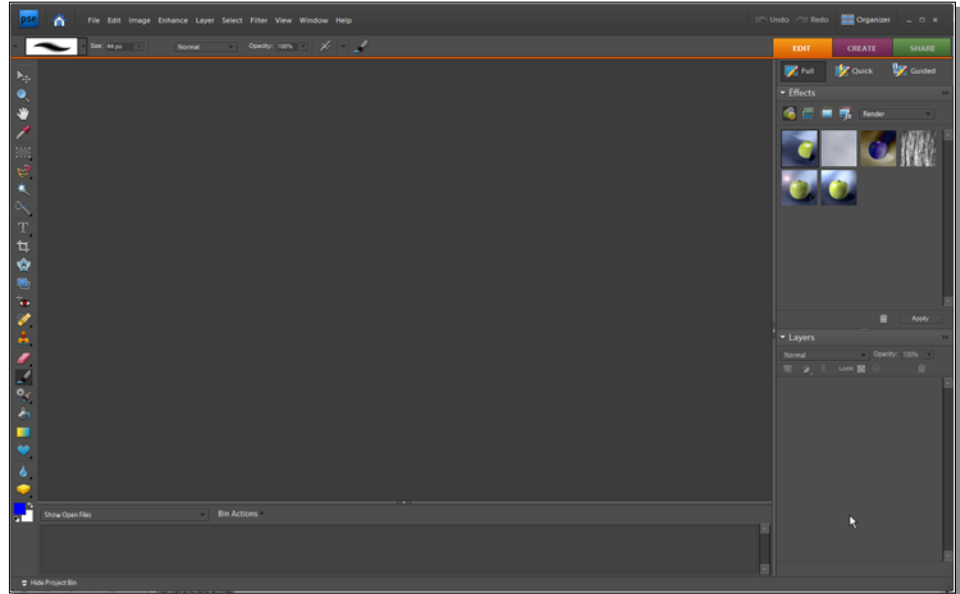
The *Organize* button opens the picture catalog function of Photoshop Elements. The *Edit* button opens the image editor (where you will spend the most time). *Create* opens the Organizer with selected project options such as slide shows, collages, and so on. *Share* opens the Organizer with selected sharing options such as uploading images and burning CDs.

For now, select the *Edit* button.

What are all those boxes on the screen?!

PhotoShop uses a variety of small windows to display information and controls for the various tools in the program. These are called “palettes” and “bins.” Photoshop Elements has gotten more restrained in the use of them, so the screen isn’t as cluttered as older versions were.

For now, we’ll just leave them all as they were when you opened the editor. It should look like this:

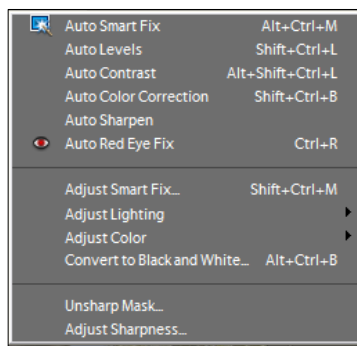


Before we look at what any of these tools do, however, you need to open a file to work on. Go to the *File* menu, and select *Open*.

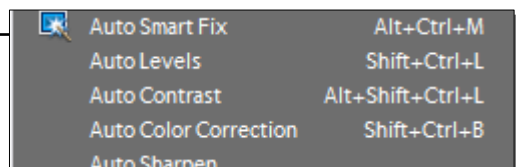
Find a file that you want to open. For starters, let’s go to *Samples II* CD, and open the *totem1.jpg* file.

How do I make overall adjustments to the picture?

To start making adjustments to the whole picture, go to the *Enhance* menu. You’ll see a set of selections that looks like this.



The first six options will



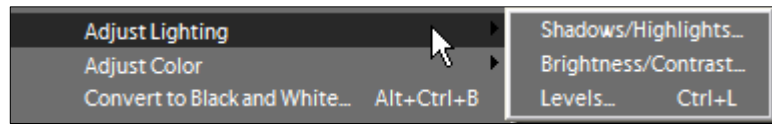
automatically adjust your picture for a variety of issues. *Auto Smart Fix* tries to fix colors and lighting in one jump. *Auto Levels* works on light and shadow, while *Auto Contrast* affects the contrast. *Auto Color Correction*, *Auto Sharpen* and *Auto Red Eye Fix* do what the names imply.

It's worthwhile trying these tools. Sometimes they help, sometimes they don't. If something doesn't work out right, you can always go to *Edit* and select *Undo*. (I do that a lot!)

Adjust Smart Fix gives you some control over how much change the computer makes to your picture. It presents you with a slider that can make the effect more intense.

What are the *Adjust Lighting* options?

Things get more interesting with *Adjust Lighting* and *Adjust Color*. Selecting *Adjust Lighting* gives you these options:

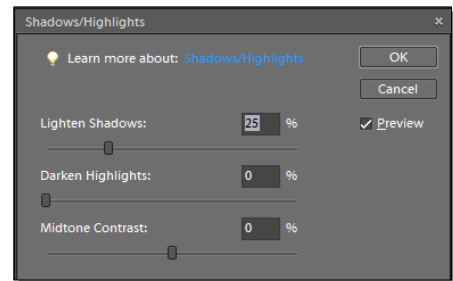


Shadows/Highlights is for fixing images where the background is too bright or the shadows are too dark. It gives you a control that looks like this:

Lighten Shadows makes darker areas of the image brighter. Notice how it brings out the detail in the carving on the totem pole as you move the slider to the right.

Darken Highlights makes brighter areas darker. It will darken the sky.

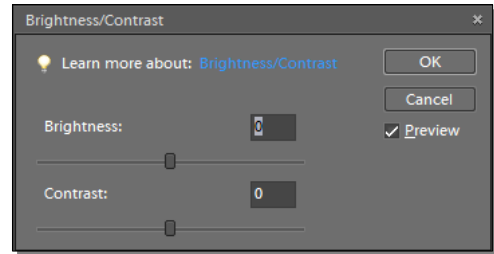
Midtone Contrast increases the contrast for middle-range colors.



When you have finished tweaking the picture, click *OK*.

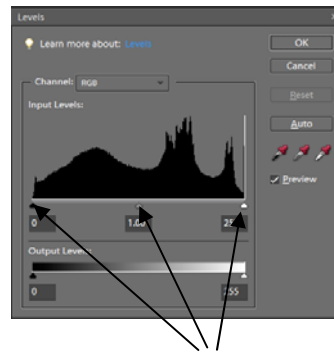
Brightness/Contrast lets you adjust the overall brightness and contrast of your image.

Brightness lightens the whole picture. Increasing the *Contrast* makes dark colors darker and light colors lighter; decreasing the *Contrast* makes all colors faded.



Levels is similar to the previous tools but works a little differently. It gives you a little more control as you adjust the brightness of your image.

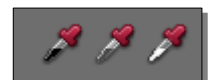
Once you select *Levels*, you'll get a somewhat intimidating window that looks like this:



For now, we'll just worry about these little arrows.

Moving the black arrow to the right will make the darker colors darker. Moving the white arrow to the left will make the lighter colors lighter. Moving the gray arrow to the left will brighten the mid-range colors, while moving it to the right will darken them.

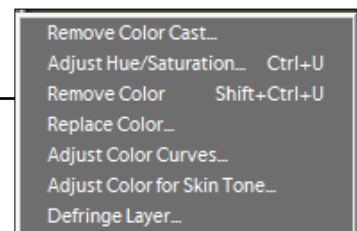
The eye droppers are another way of controlling the levels. If you select the black eyedropper and click on any spot on the image that should be pure black, it will adjust the color range of your picture to make that spot (and similar colors throughout the picture) pure black. The white eyedropper does the same thing for white areas.



The middle eyedropper is for a neutral shade of gray. If you select a spot that should be a mid-level of gray, it will adjust all the colors in the image. This works really well for older pictures that have a shifted colors.

What are the

Remove Color Cast will help you adjust a



Adjust Color options?

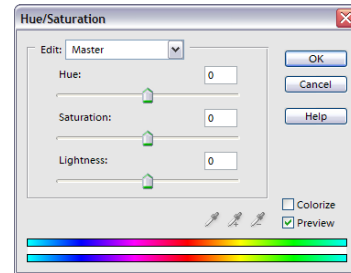
picture that has an overall color problem.

Adjust Hue/Saturation adjusts the color range and color intensity of your image.

Selecting this option gives you these controls:

Sliding the *Hue* left and right shifts all the colors in the image to bizarre hues.

Moving *Saturation* to the right makes the colors more intense, even unnatural. Moving the slider to the left fades the color intensity. It can make the image look like a faded old color photo, or even make it black and white.



Remove Color turns a color picture into a black-and-white image.

Replace Color lets you pick one of the colors in your image and change it to another color.

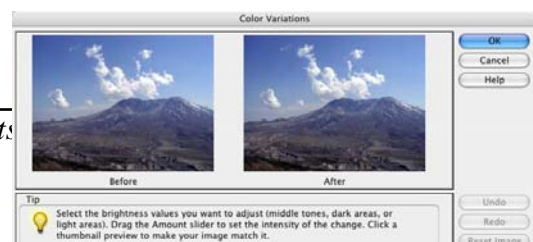
Adjust Color Curves the intensity of the colors within certain ranges; the samples in the control panel give you present controls, or clicking on *Advanced Options* will let you explore on your own.

Adjust Color for Skin Tone will let you tell the computer what part of the image should be skin tone, and it will adjust the entire image to make the skin tones look natural.

Defringe Layer is a control that you can use if you are cutting and pasting different images together. Each new item will go into a *layer* (more on this later). Sometimes there are fuzzy edges to a layer when you do this; *Defringe Layer* tries to remove the annoying fuzzies.

Color Variations gives you a display that looks like this:

To adjust your color, look at

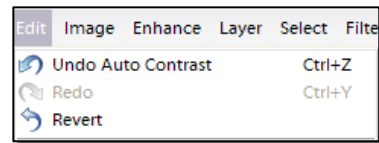


the samples across the bottom and select the one that looks the closest to the way you want your picture to look. You can also choose whether you are adjusting just the Midtones, Shadows, or Highlights. When you are done, select *OK*.

If things get messy, you can select *Reset Image* and start over.

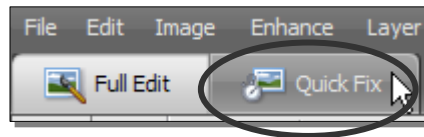
What if I've really messed things up?

If you made a total mess of your image, go to *Edit* and select *Revert*. It will reset your picture to the last saved version.

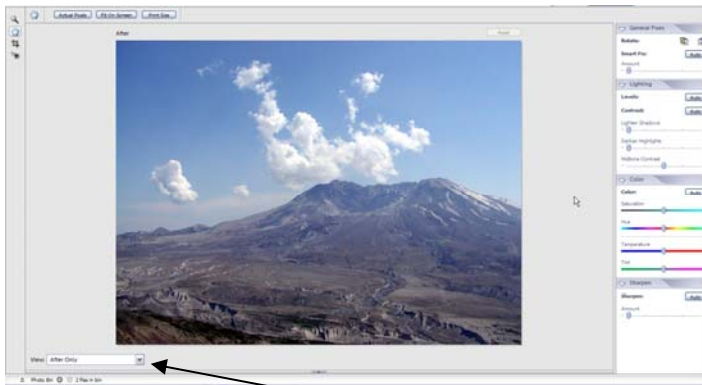


What does Quick Fix do?

Quick Fix gives you access to all the main image enhancements in one screen. Switch this on in the upper left-hand corner of your screen.

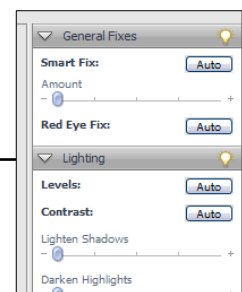


This will open a screen that looks like this:



The first thing I recommend is selecting a different *View*. Click on the button in the lower left-hand corner and select one of the *Before and After* views. (It doesn't matter which one.) This will let you compare the changes you make to the original.

The buttons on the left let you select which aspect of the picture that you want to correct. Some of these are the same fixes that were under the



What are the symbols on the tabs?

Enhance menu, and some are subtly different.

Under **General Fixes**, *Smart Fix* and *Red Eye Fix* are the same as above.

Under **Lighting**, *Levels* and *Contrast* have only the “Auto” option. *Lighten Shadows*, *Darken Highlights* and *Midtone Contrast* are the same as in *Shadows/Highlights*.

Under **Color**, *Saturation* and *Hue* work the same as in *Adjust Color* above. *Temperature* shifts the overall color from blue to red, and *Tint* shifts the overall color from green to magenta.

Sharpen gives the illusion of sharper focus. Use it sparingly, or it starts to look pretty ugly.


As you make changes to your picture, the tabs down the side will display symbols. For instance, the *Lighting* tab will change like this:


Before making edits



After making edits



The first symbol  is *Undo* and will remove the changes you have made.

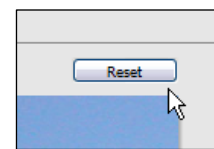
The second symbol  is *Accept* and will keep the changes.

The little light bulb opens the Help file.

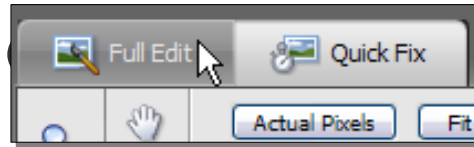
Why don't the symbols appear if I use the **Auto** functions?

For some reason, the little symbols don't appear if you use the *Auto* fixes. If you want to undo those changes, you need to click the *Reset* button above the upper left-hand corner of the picture.

Unfortunately, this resets the whole picture, including any changes that you made with other *Quick Fix* tools. No, I don't know why this is.



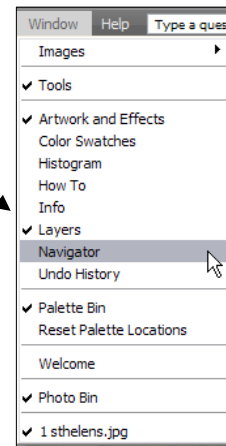
When you are done with all of your adjustments, click *Standard Edit* in the upper right-hand corner.



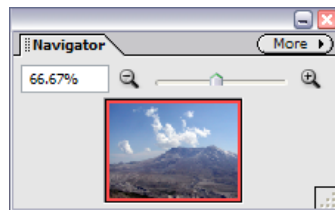
This will save all adjustments you have made.

Opening the Navigator

An important palette for editing your picture is the *Navigator* palette. Go to the *Window* menu and go down to *Show Navigator*.



That will open a window that looks like this:



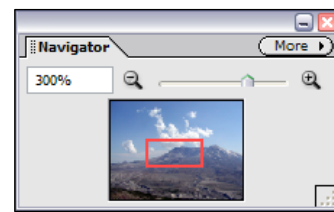
Moving this slider will zoom you in and out of the picture. (You can also just click on the magnifying glasses.)



How do I control which part of the picture I've zoomed in on?

If you zoom in on the picture using the Navigator, you'll zoom in dead center. If you look at the Navigator palette, however, you'll see a small red square in the preview window.

If you click on the square you can drag it around, and that will change which part of the image you see in the main window.



The Main Tool Palette

On to the main tool palette! That's the box on the left side of the screen that looks like this.

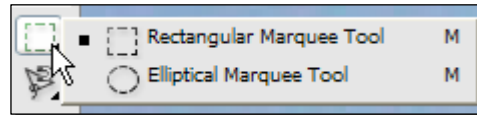
I'm not to explain every single tool here. (That's what the manual is for!) I will cover the most important.

Many of the tools have a small triangle in the lower left corner. This means there is more than one tool in that part of the palette; click and hold on it for the others to appear.

Click and hold on



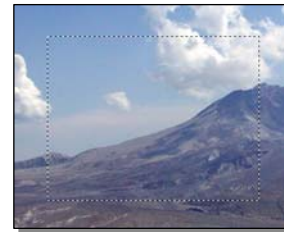
And you will see



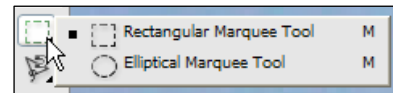
How do I select just one area of the screen to adjust (or cut and paste)?

There are four different sets of "selection tools" that let you pick one part of the screen. Once an area is selected, any changes that you make with *Enhance* or other tools will only affect the area that you've chosen.

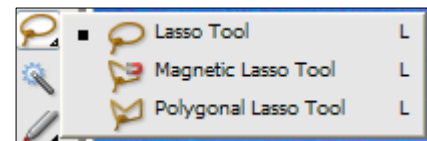
Selected areas are defined by having sparkling dotted lines around them.



The *Rectangular Marquee Tool* lets you pick a rectangular part of the screen; the *Elliptical Marquee Tool* lets you select ovals or circles.



Clicking and holding on lasso lets you choose from these options.



The *Lasso Tool* lets you choose a freehand selection. As anyone with any experience wielding a mouse knows, tracing around something is very difficult. That's why you have the choices of the *Polygonal Lasso* and the *Magnetic Lasso*. Let's see how they work.



How can I move something from one picture to another?

Go to the *File* menu, and open the file *totem1.jpg*.

If you use the *Polygonal Lasso*, you define the edges of your selection by clicking on the edge of the item you want to select, then letting go of the button and moving to the next spot along the edge. Think of it as drawing a dot-to-dot picture around the edges of area.



Tip #1: If you have trouble and want to bail out, press the *esc* key on your keyboard.)

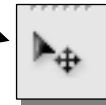
Tip #2: If you use the *Magnetic Lasso*, you click and drag along the edge of the area that you want to select. The lasso picks up the color difference along the edge and places a selection line. It only works if there is a distinct color difference, however.

When you have gotten all the way around the totem pole, double-click to close the selection. You'll see sparkling lines around the pole.

How do I move the totem after I select it?

To move the pole, click on the *Move Tool*.

Then click on the middle of the pole, and drag it until your cursor is over the picture of the Mt. St. Helens. Let go, and the pole is in a new location!



(If you can't see Mt. St. Helens and the totem pole at the same time, go to the upper right corner of the screen and click the button to turn on *Multi-window mode*.)

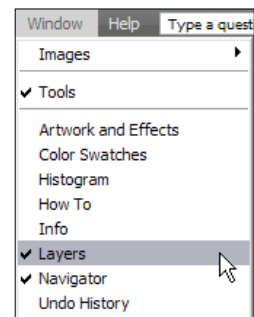


How do I move the pole around in the volcanic monument?

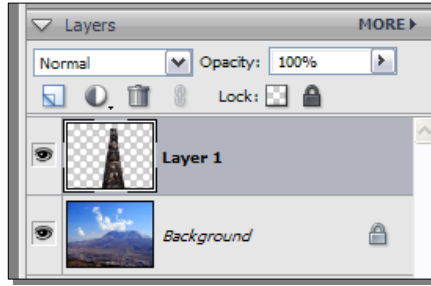
When you dragged the pole to the mountain, it created a new **layer** in the picture. Layers let you keep the different parts of the picture separate, which gives you great control over the image.

Since the pole is in its own layer, you can click on it and drag it around all you want. If the totem won't move, then you might need to make sure you're working in the right layer.

To do that, open the *Layers* palette by going to *Windows* and selecting *Layers*.



The *Palette Bin* will open on the right side of the screen, and it will show something that looks like this.

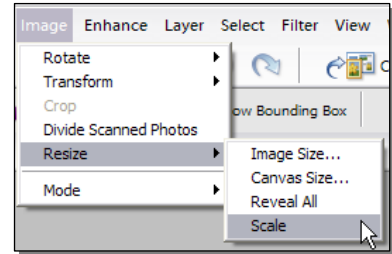


Notice that the top layer (Layer 1) has a gray highlight. This means it is the *active layer*. When you click on the totem, you can move it. To change which layer is active, just click on the name of the layer.

How do I resize the totem?

Go to the *Image* menu, and go down to the *Resize* menu.

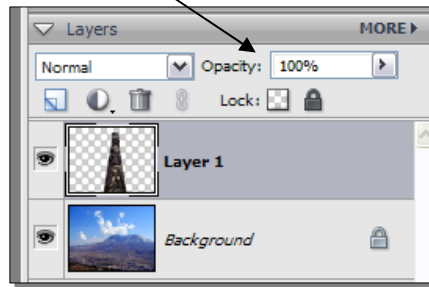
Select *Scale*. Click one of the corners and drag towards the opposite corner. Press *Enter* when you are done.



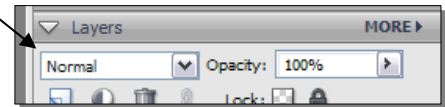
Tip: Holding the *shift* key will keep the image in proper proportions.

What other layer tricks can I do?

You can make a layer transparent by adjusting the *Opacity*. Click here and move the slider to the left.

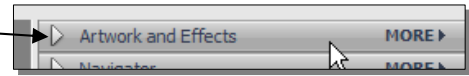


Clicking this button will change how the top layer blends with the layer below it. Experiment and see what they do!

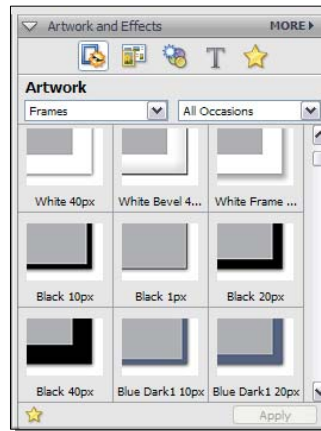


You can also apply a variety of effects to a layer using the *Artwork and Effects*. You can find this option under the *Window* menu, or in the *Palettes Bin* above the *Layers* palette.

Click the white arrow to see your options.



Once you open it, you will see something that looks like this



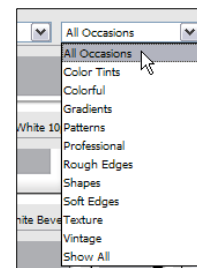
The default choice will be *Artwork*, with the *Frames* option selected. Clicking on any of these options will create a frame around your picture, but only if there is a single layer. If there are two or more layers, you will get a frame with text inside that says this:

Normally you will only use this in an image with a single layer, but if you want to import an image into a frame within a larger image, you could follow the directions and place a new image in the frame.

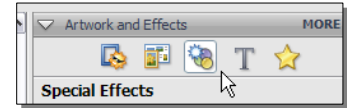
Click here to add photo
OR
Drag photo here

There are many frames you can try out. Click on the drop-down box on the left to see the list of frame types.

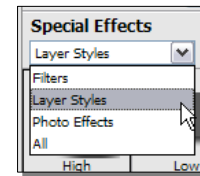
Don't worry about messing anything up while exploring. If things go wrong, simply to go *Edit* and select *Undo*.



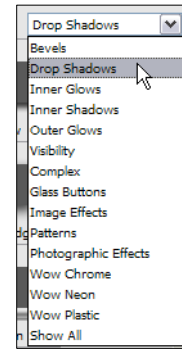
There are lots of other options, too. The most useful will be in the section called *Special Effects*, the third button across the top.



If you click the dropdown box on the left, you'll see a list of kinds of effects you can try. *Filters* we will come back to later. *Layer Styles* is the one with the most interesting options. But note – as the name implies, these effects only work in images that have more than one layer!



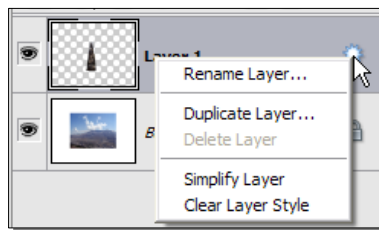
If you click the box on the right, you'll see a dropdown that lists many other sets of effects you can try on your layer. *Bevels* make a layer pop up as if they have carved edges. *Drop Shadows* is one of the most used, and gives a cool 3-D effect behind layers.



Many of the bottom ones (*Glass Buttons*, *Complex*) completely obscure the original image in the layer.

My layer is a mess! Help!

After playing around with all these styles, if your layer is a total mess go back to the *Layers* palette. You'll see a little blue-and-white starburst to the right of the layer name. Right-click on the circle and you'll see this menu pop up:

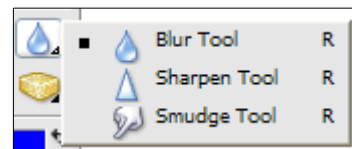


Selecting *Clear Layer Style* will delete all of your experiments on that layer.

How can I touch up just one part of the picture?

Many of the tools in the palette are for spot changes to your image. They only work on a single layer at a time.

Near the bottom of the palette you'll find the *Blur*, *Sharpen*, and *Smudge* tools. (You'll only see one tool on the palette unless you click and hold on it.)



The *Blur Tool* makes the image blurry. This can soften wrinkles, or

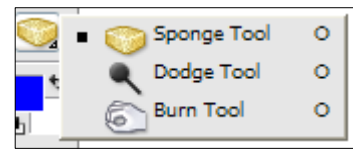
make a distracting background out-of-focus.

The *Sharpen Tool* can make the image look (a little bit) more focused. Use it too much, and it just makes a mess.

The *Smudge Tool* moves the picture around as if it's wet ink. This can minimize blemishes. Or just be really fun.

Right below these tools are the *Dodge*, *Burn*, and *Sponge* tools.

The *Sponge* tool either increases or decreases the color intensity. Check the box in the *Tool Options* bar across the top of the picture. (More on that later.) If it says *Desaturate*, it will fade the colors. If it says *Saturate*, it will make the colors more intense.

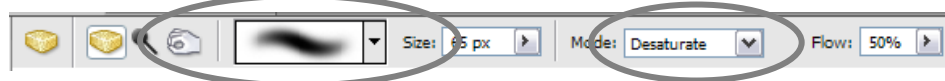


The *Dodge Tool* lightens where you paint.

The *Burn Tool* makes the image darker where you paint.

How do I control the tool settings?

Whenever you select any tool, the strip across the top of the image changes to show the options for that particular tool. This is the *Tool Options* bar. For instance, for the *Sponge* tool, it looks like this:



For this tool, the most important controls are the brush size and shape, and the “mode.” Each tool will have different settings, although almost all of them have the brush size and shape controls.

How can I fix a scratch or other damage?

The tool for fixing many kinds of damage is the *Spot Healing Brush*.



For an example, I have drawn a line to represent a scratch on the totem image.



When you select the *Spot Healing Brush* tool, the cursor will change to a circle shape, indicating a brush. Use it to paint over the damage. It will



How do I copy things from one part of the picture to another?

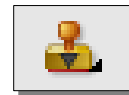
show sparkling lines like a selection tool.

When you let go of the mouse button, it will look at the area around the damage, and use it to fill in. When this works, it's pretty cool! How well it works depends on the match between the damaged area and the image around it.



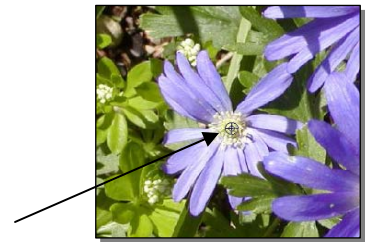
There are other adjustments you can make to this tool to change how it functions, but I'm not going to go into detail here.

One of the most interesting tools in Photoshop Elements is the *Clone Stamp Tool*. This tool copies one part of your picture into another area. You can use it to fix damage, or to do things like increase the number of flowers in your image.



I'm going to use the image *anemones.jpg*.

After selecting the *Clone Stamp Tool*, you first need to choose the part of the image that you want to copy. To do that, position the cursor over the middle of the flower on the left. Next, hold down the **Alt** key (on a Mac, that's **Option**). While you hold that down, the cursor changes to a circle to a crosshair shape.

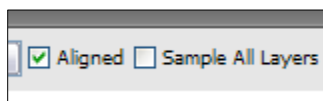


While you continue to hold down the **Alt** key, click once on the center of the flower. You won't see anything happen. Let go of the **Alt** key.

You have told the computer that the center of the flower is where you want to start copying *from*. To begin copying, move the cursor over to the right of the flowers. Hold down the mouse button and start to "paint." You will start to create a new flower!



The *Clone Stamp Tool* has two major ways of working. If you look at the *Options Toolbar* across the top, you'll see a little box with the word *Aligned*.



You want to have *Aligned* checked if you are copying an object, such as a flower. However, if you are going to copy a pattern, such as grass, you want to uncheck it. With *Aligned* turned off, as you copy from one area to the next, you can reset the pattern just by letting go of the mouse button for a moment. When you begin painting again, it will start from the first point you targeted with the **Alt**-click.

Use All Layers will let you copy from one layer in the image into another layer.

(Yes, this is confusing. No, it's not just you. This is one of those things that you have to try and repeat several times before it starts to make sense. However, when you get the hang of it, this is one of the most powerful tools you can use.)

How do I add text to my image?

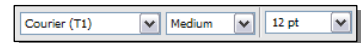
The large black letter **T** on the toolbar is the *Text Tool*.



Once you have selected the tool, next look at the *Options Toolbar* across the top of the screen.



Select the font, style, and size of your text with these drop-down boxes.



Select the color of your text with this box.



Once you have made your choices with these options, position your cursor over the part of the picture where you want the text, and click. Then you can begin typing.

Your text will be in a separate layer. This means *don't worry about where it ends up while you are typing*.



To move the text after you've typed it, select the *Move Tool*. Click on one of the letters and drag the text to where you want it to go.



What about the other Tools?

The *Shapes* tool will let you create a variety of different shapes on your image. Each new shape you create will be in a separate layer. The color of the shape will depend on the *Foreground* color. After you have created your shape, be sure to select *Simplify* in the options bar across the top of the screen if you want to modify the shape.



The *Paint Bucket* tool will take the *Foreground* color and fill areas of color on your image.



The *Gradient Tool* will fill your image with a range of colors. The gradient and style is controlled in the Options bar across the top of the screen. **Note: It will fill your whole picture and cover anything already in that layer!**



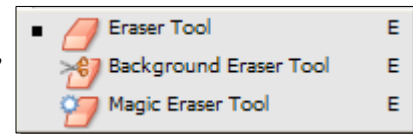
The *Brush/Pencil Tools* let you paint or draw on the image. You have a wide variety of brush shapes and sizes to choose from in the Options bar. The *Impressionist Brush* makes your image look like an impressionist painting. The *Color Replacement Tool* lets you paint over one color with a different color.



There are three *Eraser* tools. The *Eraser* just erases. (The color it leaves is the “background” color.)

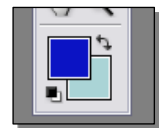
The *Background Eraser*, properly used, parts of the picture you don’t want and leaves the parts that you do. It watches the color you first start erasing, and tries to ignore other colors. (Adjust the *Tolerance* down to make it more “selective.”)

The *Magic Eraser* will remove whole areas based on color. For instance, if you click in blue sky, it will erase all parts of the sky with a similar shade of blue.

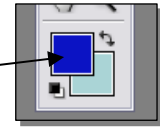


How do I control the colors?

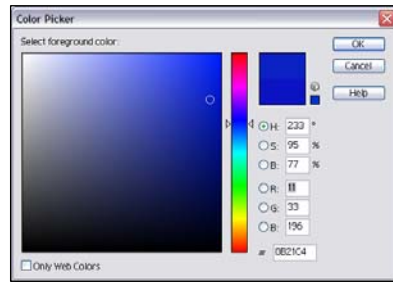
The colors of these tools are controlled by the *Foreground/Background* color tool at the bottom of the toolbar. The top box is the *Foreground* color, which is the color that the tools above will paint on your picture. The bottom box is the *Background* color, which is the color that the eraser will leave, or that will be left if you delete part of your picture.



If you'd like to select different colors for the *Foreground/Background* colors, click on the colored box that you want to change.

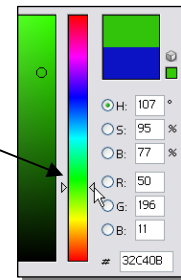


This will open a somewhat confusing box called the *Color Picker*. It takes two steps to select your color.

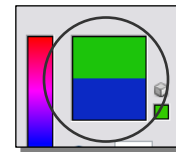


Step 1 is to pick the hue of your color by moving this slider up and down.

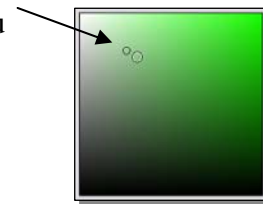
You'll notice that the color in the large box changes as you move the slider up and down.



Note the little box that now has two colors in it in the upper right. The color on the bottom is the color you started with, and the color on top is the color you have currently selected.

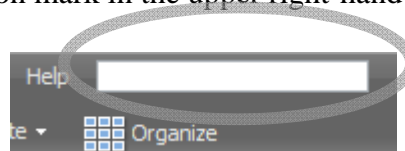


If the shade in the upper box isn't quite what you're looking for, look in the large color box. You'll see a little circle. Move it around in the large box until you have the right brightness or darkness for the color you want. Then click *OK*.



Where can I find info that isn't in the handout?

Photoshop Elements has an extensive help section. To access it, click the little question mark in the upper right-hand corner:

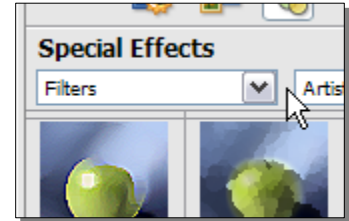


Many of the tools have blue hyperlinks in their names. If you click these links, they will open up that portion of the help section.

What are Filters and how can I use them?

There are also some mini-tutorials under *How To* in the *Window* menu or in the *Palette Well*.

There are many special effects called *Filters* that you can apply to your pictures. They will affect only one layer, or any area that is selected. There are two ways to get to the Filters. If you like to see a preview to help you select, then you should go back to the *Styles and Effects* palette and select *Filters*:



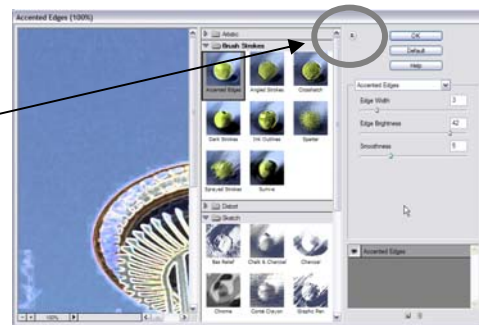
You will see a long display of images that looks like this. Each one represents a different *Filter* and what it looks like when you apply it. There are several dozen of them. It's a long list, so you will need to scroll down to see all of them. Which, of course, you have to do.



Once you find one you want to try, double-click it.

If you choose *Accented Edges*, and it gives this window.

I find this window kind of busy, so to make things a little less cluttered, click on this button.



This hides all the previews of other filters, and gives a clearer view of the filter effects.

The screen now looks like this:



The controls down the right side adjust the effect of the filter. They can vary the results quite dramatically. If you like the effect, click *OK*. If you don't, click *Cancel*.

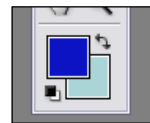
How many filters can I use?

There is no limit on the number of filters you can use on the image. Photoshop junkies often use many different filters on a single picture to create the look they want. Even repeating the same filter multiple times can create unusual results.

The filter preview was black and white, but my picture turned different colors. How come?

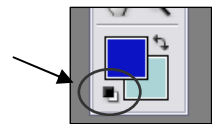
A number of the filters (such as *Bas Relief* and *Charcoal*) appear black and white in the previews, but then strangely appear in different colors when you preview or apply them.

This is because the colors of the filters are set by your *Foreground* and *Background* colors in your tool bar. These are the two little boxes at the bottom of the toolbar discussed on page 15.



For instance, if you choose the *Chalk* filter, the color of the “chalk” in the picture will be the *Foreground* color, and the color of the “paper” will be the *Background* color.

You can change the colors as described above, or you can reset the colors to just black and white. To do this, click on the little black and white boxes in the lower left corner.



Why don't the filters work?

Filters only work on the currently active layer, or in areas of the picture that have been selected. Make sure you're in the right layer, and make sure there isn't an active selection by going to the *Select* menu and checking *Deselect*.

Notes

